

**Relationship-centred strategies for  
improving discipline in rural secondary  
schools:  
A PALAR approach**

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## **DECLARATION**

I the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation / thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line that tapers to a point.

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## **ABSTRACT**

After corporal punishment was prohibited in schools in South Africa, learner behaviour in general, and specifically in secondary schools has worsened notably. Learners are becoming more violent and dangerous, and indiscipline in the classroom deprives other learners of their right to learning. Educators must spend valuable teaching time on managing behaviour and dealing with disciplinary issues. Ineffective management of discipline in the school may lead to learners dropping out of school, which in turn influences the country's economy. Research found that indiscipline in schools is one of the factors leading to educators leaving the profession. Educators complain that they are not trained to deal with the behavioural challenges they experience in the classrooms. There is a renewed interest in the role of educators regarding the management of learner behaviour at the schools because indiscipline affects their motivation and professional conduct and the academic progress of the learners. Through a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach, this research aimed at finding strategies to improve educator-learner relationships to assist educators to deal with discipline-related challenges in the classroom.

Positive educator-learner relationships were identified as the foundation of dealing with disciplinary issues in the classroom. Positive educator-learner relationships are based on mutual respect between educators and learners. The educator as the adult must lead the way in building positive educator-learner relationships through unconditional respect and acceptance of the learners in their classrooms. In doing so educators must endeavour to earn the respect of the learners. Respect can be acquired by respectful language, respectful social encounters, and unreserved acceptance of the learners. These mentioned factors, in turn, help to facilitate a supportive teaching and learning environment.

Keywords: Educator-learner relationships, discipline, secondary schools, Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR).



## OPSOMMING

Nadat lyfstraf in Suid-Afrikaanse skole deur wetgewing verbied is, het leerdergedrag in die algemeen, maar spesifiek in sekondêre skole, merkbaar verswak. Leerders word meer gewelddadig en gevaarlik en ongedissiplineerde gedrag in die klaskamer ontnem ander leerders hulle reg om te leer. Onderwysers moet kosbare onderrigtyd gebruik om dissiplinêre aangeleenthede in die klaskamer te bestuur. Ondoeltreffende leerder gedragbestuur in die klaskamer het tot gevolg dat leerders uitsak uit die skool met negatiewe gevolge op die land se ekonomie. Navorsing het bevind dat onderwysers ook die professie verlaat as gevolg van ongedissiplineerde gedrag. Onderwysers verduidelik dat hulle nie voldoende opgelei is om ongedissiplineerde gedrag in die klaskamer te hanteer nie. Daar is dus 'n hernude belangstelling in die rol van die onderwyser om leerder gedrag in skole effektief te bestuur as gevolg van die nadelige uitwerking op die motivering en professionele gedrag van die onderwysers asook die akademiese vordering van die leerders. Deur middel van 'n Deelnemende Aksieleer en Aksienavorsingsbenadering beoog hierdie navorsing om strategieë te ontwikkel om onderwyser-leerder verhoudings te verbeter om sodoende onderwysers te bemagtig om dissiplinêre aangeleenthede in die klaskamer te hanteer.

Positiewe onderwyser-leerder verhoudings is geïdentifiseer as die vertrekpunt in die hantering dissiplinêre aangeleenthede in die klaskamer. Positiewe onderwyser-leerder verhoudings berus op wedersydse respek tussen onderwysers en leerders. Die onderwyser as die volwassene in die verhouding moet die leiding neem in die bou van onderwyser-leerder verhoudings deur onvoorwaardelike respek en aanvaarding van die leerders in die klaskamer. Sodoende kan onderwysers poog om die respek van leerders te verdien. Respek kan verkry word deur respekvolle taalgebruik, respekvolle sosiale kontak en onvoorwaardelike aanvaarding van die leerders. Hierdie genoemde faktore help weer op hulle beurt om 'n ondersteunende leeromgewing te skep.

Kernbegrippe: onderwyser-leerder verhoudings, dissipline, sekondêre skole, Deelnemende Aksieleer en Aksienavorsing

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

|          |                                                              |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACEI     | Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute                    |
| ALS      | Action learning set                                          |
| ANC      | African National Congress                                    |
| ARC      | Australian Research Council                                  |
| CEC      | Commission of the European Communities                       |
| CHE      | Council for Higher Education                                 |
| CIA      | Cedar International Academy                                  |
| COGTA    | Department of Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs |
| DBE      | Department of Basic Education                                |
| DHET     | Department of Higher Education and Training                  |
| ECED     | Eastern Cape Education Department                            |
| EWP6     | Education White Paper 6                                      |
| FCW      | Future Creating Workshop                                     |
| FET      | Further Education and Training                               |
| HEI      | Higher Education Institution                                 |
| HSRC-EPC | Human Sciences Research Council-Education Policy Centre.     |
| ISRA     | International Society for Research on Aggression             |
| ISTE     | International Society for Technology in Education            |
| NACOSA   | National Aids Convention of South Africa                     |
| NEEDU    | National Education Evaluation and Development Unit           |
| NGOs     | Non-Governmental Organisations                               |
| NICE     | National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence        |

|          |                                                                  |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OECD     | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development           |
| PALAR    | Participatory Action Learning and Action research                |
| PTR      | Pupil Teacher Ratio                                              |
| ReSEP    | Research on Socio-Economic Policy                                |
| SACE     | South African Council for Educators                              |
| SADTU    | South African Democratic Teachers Union                          |
| SAPS     | South African Police Service                                     |
| SBST     | School-Based Support Teams                                       |
| SGB      | School Governing Body                                            |
| SLP      | Short learning program                                           |
| Stats SA | Statistics South Africa                                          |
| UNESCO   | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNICEF   | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund           |
| WCA      | World Changers Academy                                           |
| WCED     | Western Cape Education Department                                |
| WHO      | World Health Organisation                                        |
| YM       | Youth mentors                                                    |

# **CHAPTER 1:**

## **BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

During the apartheid era, school violence and violence against learners were common occurrences. Power (2016) explains that, during the middle of the 1980s, the country was hit by a wave of violence that became deeply rooted in societies, and many people adopted an ideology of violence. This happened due to the long history of oppression in South Africa, where everyday life has been politicised resulting in high levels of conflict. Kipperberg (2007) reports that, during the apartheid era, youth violence became part of everyday life in the attempt to overthrow the oppressive apartheid regime. Thousands of children and young people were engaged in this struggle.

The country is currently managing the aftermath of the Apartheid regime, during which the youth, especially the black youth, were raised in a context of violence as part of their everyday lives. Thousands of youths and children were involved in this political struggle aiming at overthrowing the Apartheid regime (Burton, 2008; SACE, 2011a). Not only did the youth's struggle during the 1980s contribute to school violence but, at present, urban and township schools are regularly targeted by gangsterism which causes violence and results in unsafe schools, while this violence has been flowing over from the mentioned youth struggle (De Wet, 2016; Nkosi-Malobane, 2019).

Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) state that school violence results in indiscipline and disrespect towards educators and older people. This indiscipline has serious effects on learning and teaching. Mestry and Khumalo (2012) iterate that, in general, learners lost a culture of trust and respect for educators as well as the education system and that this is still visible in education today. Ramadwa (2018) highlights that schools are out of order and learners do not respect their educators, while McMahon et al., (2013) add that learners are aggressive towards educators. Apart from history, underlying issues such as drug and substance abuse, poverty, and dysfunctional families all add to discipline-related problems.

Weeks (2012) and Prew (2013) state that, due to these factors, the education system is struggling to bring about a culture of teaching and learning. Inadequate funding from the department and challenging behaviours, along with violence, dishonesty and various problematic social evils as reported in the mass media (Aneja, 2014) have drastic consequences for schools and life outcomes of the youth involved (Khumalo, 2019). Amnesty International (2020) reports that, after nearly thirty years of democracy, numerous schools in South Africa still do not meet the requirements for effective education.

It is against the background of socio-economic deficiencies and violence that Ferreira and Schulze (2014, p. 1) plead “that educators have to implement values in education” urgently. Amollo and Lilian (2017) emphasise that moral values are important and necessary components in the holistic development of the child and need to be enhanced. Moral values are declining in schools, resulting in indiscipline (Turker et al., 2016). Segalo and Rambuda (2018) perceive the deteriorating learner discipline as a threat to the development of the country as a whole.

Researchers such as Burton and Leoschut (2013) and De Cordova et al. (2019) confirm that not only educators but also learners are exposed to serious cases of learner misconduct. Cases of violence and crime relating to educator misconduct and learner indiscipline in secondary schools globally and South Africa have been reported, which heightens concerns about general safety in schools (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Herrero Romero et al, 2018; Khumalo, 2019). Independent Online and affiliated companies (IOL News) (Somduth, 2021) report that schools are not the safe places they are supposed to be. They use the example of grade-R learners who had to watch while their educator was robbed at gunpoint. The learners were so traumatised that some did not want to return to school.

Research indicates that school-based violence and indiscipline has increased in high schools within socio-disadvantaged areas over the last ten years due to the tendency where some learners use violence on educators and other learners so as to have their own way (Sibisi, 2016; Khumalo, 2019). In 2019, for example, a KwaZulu-Natal learner was sentenced to 17 years imprisonment for assaulting, hijacking and attempting to kill an educator (Singh, 2019). During 2012, 22.2% of learners in secondary schools experienced physical assaults, violence, threats, sexual assaults and robberies during school hours, with the most common perpetrators against learners having been identified as other schoolmates (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Makota & Leoschut, 2016). Research done by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) produced statistics indicating that 83.8% of learners experienced bullying, 60.0% experienced corporal punishment although it is outlawed, 21.3% experienced sexual harassment, 37.5% experienced gangsterism and 52.5% experienced vandalism at school. The South African Police Service (SAPS, 2019/2020) reports that, during the mentioned period, 380 rape cases, 1 784 common assault cases, 1 178 assault cases with the intention of causing grievous bodily harm, 64 cases of attempted murders and 52 murders were reported at educational institutions. The seriousness of school-based indiscipline and violence as described forced the South African Council for Educators (SACE) to compile a 124-page text entitled *Handbook for Educators’ Rights, Responsibilities and Safety* for educators on how to protect themselves in violent situations (Pijooos, 2020).

These phenomena underline that the disciplinary problem in South African schools is getting worse and, in some cases, even out of hand (Du Plessis, 2017). As far back as 2006, at a colloquium hosted by the DBE in Pretoria, the previous minister of basic education, Naledi Pandor, prioritised school violence and asked the police to help combat the flare-up of violence that had disrupted education in schools (Nthite, 2006).

Interesting research done by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) found that learners perceived corporal punishment as the second-highest form of violence in schools. Rimal (2013) investigated the effects of corporal punishment on learners and concluded that it was associated with indiscipline, youth depression, substance abuse, poor academic performance and juvenile delinquency. Despite the negative effects of corporal punishment on learners, educators still use corporal punishment. They perceive it to be the only effective way of discipline, despite the fact that it is banned (Naicker, 2014), because they still believe it is the best method for discipline (Veriava, 2013; Mamacos, 2020).

When corporal punishment was outlawed in 1996 (Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014), educators felt disempowered because alternative measures to traditional corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure were not effective. This ushered in an era where learners felt that they were free to do as they liked, and they have no further fear or respect for their educators (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010).

Lessing and De Witt (2011) and Reyneke (2013b) state that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has an indifferent attitude about the disciplinary problem and does not render assistance, because it hopes that if they ignore the problem long enough, it will go away. Codes of conduct drafted by schools struggling with challenging behaviour of learners are presented to the DBE, but there is no feedback. Since educators do not get much support, they tend to leave the profession or are absent from work due to stress and anxiety (Anthony, 2018).

Educators at grassroots level experience a need for skills to deal with discipline-related issues in the classroom because indiscipline influences the morale of the educators. Lessing and De Witt (2011), Matoti (2010) and Reyneke, (2013b) state that insufficient training and unsatisfactory educator-learner relationships contribute to the mentioned inability of educators to deal with indiscipline. These and other factors have a negative influence on education and the academic progress of learners (Du Plessis, 2014).

Bearing the above in mind, this study was undertaken with the aim of exploring strategies to assist educators to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of enhancing teaching and learning.



## 1.2 THE TEACHING AND LEARNING SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Based on these considerations, it is clear that education in most South African schools is in crisis and is generally perceived as poor (Bergman & Bergman, 2011; Pitsoe & Maila, 2012; Spaul, 2013). Many educators have become disheartened by their challenging working conditions (Pretorius, 2014) such as the lack of skills to address indiscipline of learners in the classroom (Matoti, 2010; Reyneke, 2013b; Walton, et al., 2016) and they are struggling to cope with these demands in class.

These challenges resulted in the demoralisation of educators, as they feel they are fighting a losing battle (Gu & Day, 2013). Subsequently, effective learning is not always taking place. In rural areas, where this research was done, educators are the most important knowledge resource in the school community and the immediate environment (David & Bwisa, 2013) and it is important that they stay motivated to continue with this role.

The reality at hand is a clear indication that the current education system cannot match the challenges it faces, especially due to external risk factors such as poverty, diversity, and functionally illiterate and absent parents (Lessing & De Witt, 2011; Reyneke, 2013b). Educators must find new ways of dealing with these risk factors to stabilise the teaching and learning environment. During this research, positive educator-learner relationships were identified as an alternative way to ensure a more stable teaching situation.

The World Health Organisation, (WHO, 2004) and Education White Paper 6 (DBE, 2001) assert that professionals such as educators, psychologists and social workers must play an important part in assisting the former and youth originating from disadvantaged backgrounds such as dysfunctional homes or homes with absent parents, to become responsible citizens.

Knoell (2012) states that relationships have a far-reaching impact on people. Liberante (2012) argues that the educator-learner relationship is one of the most important factors that affect learner engagement, academic motivation and learner behaviours. With this in mind, educators, as in the case of *loco parentis* (Mohammed et al., 2014), need to address disciplinary challenges from a different angle by employing a positive, friendly, caring and respectful educator-learner relationship conducive for teaching and learning. This will ensure that learners who became victims of a society where morals and values are fast declining (Basha & Ramana, 2018) will feel valued and safe, which will have worthwhile effects on long-term learning outcomes and (O'Connor et al., 2011; Mihalas et al., 2008).

Action must be taken to equip educators with skills to deal with learner discipline. There are many studies globally on indiscipline in secondary schools, but not many of them seem to

address the specific needs of educators when it comes to dealing with discipline-related issues in the classroom within rural and semirural areas in South Africa. Learner discipline is an ongoing process (Wolhuter & Steyn, 2010; Kourkoutas, & Wolhuter, 2013; Ngoqo, 2016; Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018) and an issue of concern in most South African schools.

As the rest of South Africa educators, in the uMzinyathi District where this research was done, they also complained about indiscipline.

### **1.3 UMZINYATHI DISTRICT AS THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY (cf. 5.2)**

The situation in the uMzinyathi District comprises 498 public and seven independent schools. KwaZulu-Natal is not different from the rest of South Africa. The uMzinyathi District Development Model reports that 66% of the uMzinyathi population (mainly black people) live in poverty (COGTA, 2020).

Mabizela, a principal of a local school, explained on 12 February 2019 (pers. comm.) that, due to poverty, learners cannot always afford transport costs and sufficient clothing, resulting in absenteeism, especially during winter or in undesirable weather conditions. In some schools, feeding schemes are reasonably effective but, due to a lack of supplies (especially in the more remote schools) and ill-management, the feeding schemes are not effective. Contextual constraints such as the lack of electricity and load shedding hamper the teaching and learning environment. If the parents do have work, it is far away in towns or cities and the children are left by themselves, form child-headed households or stay with other family members during the week. In most cases, it becomes the responsibility of the school to take over the role of the parents to a large extent. Moreover, there is an absence of support from the DBE for these educators, although they carry the mentioned additional responsibilities.

Educators in the uMzinyathi District also complained about deteriorating discipline arising from the use of drugs and the negative influence of the mass media, aggravated by the lack of parental support and learners disrespecting them. Political interference often aggravates the already tense disciplinary problem. During data generation in this research project, the co-researchers complained that political parties often took the side of the learners to gain their trust in exchange for their votes. This again complicated matters further when the educators try to discipline the learners.

It is against this background that this research was initiated, since educators from nearby schools often expressed their need for dealing with discipline-related challenges around learners in secondary schools. This made me realise that the teaching environment was faced

with a multiplicity of challenges. Amongst others, educators are not sufficiently trained to deal with indiscipline in their classrooms, as emphasised by Walton et al. (2016). Educators from nearby schools in the uMzinyathi District often came to the independent college, also in the district, for help and advice.

The independent college train educators and is the only institution of higher education in this part of the uMzinyathi District. Part of the research site houses a restoration centre for young men from the district. Many of these young men dropped out of school because of external and internal risk factors such as poverty, strained parental relationships, peer pressure and academic failure. Internal risk factors include depression, anxiety and stress (Gubbels et al., 2019). These risk factors often result in many of them giving up hope on life. Respectable relationships with their councillors often help these boys gain the resilience to face life's challenges again. My experience with some of the young men led me to believe that improved relationships between educators and learners, that is, a relationship-centred approach (see Hughes et al., 2013; Walton et al., 2016), could be of use when it comes to indiscipline in secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District.

#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT (cf. 1.6)**

The problem that this research addresses is finding strategies to deal with indiscipline in secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District as expressed by educators and principals. Learner discipline is getting out of hand and educators need skills to deal with the challenges, and these were pinpointed during this project as major problems in secondary school in South Africa. Educators are not sufficiently trained to deal with discipline-related problems and expressed a dire need (see Chonco, 2019) for guidance and skills to deal with indiscipline in the classroom (Ntuli, 2012; Reyneke, 2013b). Caring and supportive educator-learner relationships have been described by researchers such as Tuckman and Monetti (2012) as ways of assisting educators to deal with indiscipline in a supportive manner.

As described in the problem statement, educators are at a loss to deal with indiscipline in the classroom. The research project attempted to answer the following research questions to address this.

#### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS (cf. 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3)**

##### **Primary research question**

*How can a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

The emphasis of the primary research question is twofold. It firstly focusses on PALAR as an applicable research design to develop relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools and secondly focusses on how the action learning set (ALS) participants, who acted as co-researchers of the project, collaborated to develop strategies in the form of a SLP to support educators in the district when it comes to dealing with indiscipline.

The primary research question could only be answered effectively once the secondary ones had been explored and answered, as engendered by the problem statement and explanation above:

### **Secondary research questions**

*How did educators understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?*

*What were the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?*

*What were the educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?*

*What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies could collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

*How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?*

### **1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (cf. 1.7; 1.10.2.3.3; 8.3.1; 9.4.3)**

Indiscipline was established to be a major problem in secondary schools in South Africa in the present project. Educators complained that they were not sufficiently trained and needed skills to deal effectively with discipline-related problems in the classroom and expressed a dire need (see also Chonco, 2019) for guidance and skills to deal with indiscipline in the classroom, a challenge for which many educators were not sufficiently trained (see Ntuli, 2012; Reyneke, 2013b), as confirmed also in the present project.

The main objective of the project was to determine how a PALAR approach could support educators in the uMzinyathi District to find strategies to assist them to improve discipline by building a positive educator-learner relationship by means of a SLP (cf. 1.5; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3).

To be able to reach the mentioned objectives, it was necessary to determine how we as educators understood learner behaviour and discipline in schools and what day-to-day

challenges we were confronted with and determine our views on positive educator-learner relationship. With this in mind, we collaboratively developed strategies centred on a SLP to support educators in the district to deal with indiscipline. To contextualise the SLP, we collaborated with willing educators at respective schools to form a Future Creating Workshop (FCW) in which we formulated educator-learner relationship-building strategies. These strategies were tested and reflected on and then compiled in the SLP as a resource for the wider school community in the uMzinyathi District. Lastly, we endeavoured to determine how effective the relationship-centred strategies could be developed through a PALAR research design. Through this research, we determined the effectiveness of a PALAR approach to develop strategies for effective educator-learner relationship-building.

These objectives were aligned with Okonofua et al. (2016), who state that the school climate must enhance relationship building for the entire school community by creating a connectivity culture. Such endeavours will, among others, facilitate educator-learner relationship building, give educators a better understanding of their learners and their needs, humanise learners and foster stronger community ties. Effective educator-learner relationships have far-reaching implications for learners (Knoell, 2012). Liberante (2012) argues that positive educator-learner relationships enhance learner academic engagement, academic motivation as well as the behaviour of learners, while it is a critical component (Tuckman & Monetti, 2012) in establishing positive discipline in the classroom.

I therefore argue in this research that the professional learning and development of educators should be a collaborative lifelong activity with a view to allowing educators as lifelong learners so as to become active and informed.

The overall objective of this research project was then to enable the co-researchers to develop a SLP for educators in the uMzinyathi District to develop strategies for implementing a relationship-centred approach for improving discipline in secondary schools. The research process simultaneous provided an opportunity for the personal and professional development of the educators, including myself, to reflect on our preconceived perceptions about learner behaviour and the ways in which we solve discipline-related issues in the classroom.

### **1.7 PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH (cf. 9.4.3)**

The purpose of this research was to engage local secondary school educators in the uMzinyathi District to collaboratively explore relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in secondary schools. The participants, who acted as co-researchers, argued that a positive classroom climate through building positive educator-learner relationships could

contribute to more acceptable behaviour by the learners and deter the escalation of indiscipline (Brown et al., 2015b).

Diagram 1.1 below depicts the purpose of this study. Six educators from five different secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District formed the ALS. The ALS joined hands with the educators in their respective schools during the research process in the form of a FCW to ensure more authentic research data. Together we embarked on creating new knowledge through interaction between the theoretical framework and practice. We explored relationship-centred strategies to improve discipline in the classroom. This new knowledge was ploughed back into the micro-level (the classroom) the meso-level (the school) and the macro-level (the community) (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

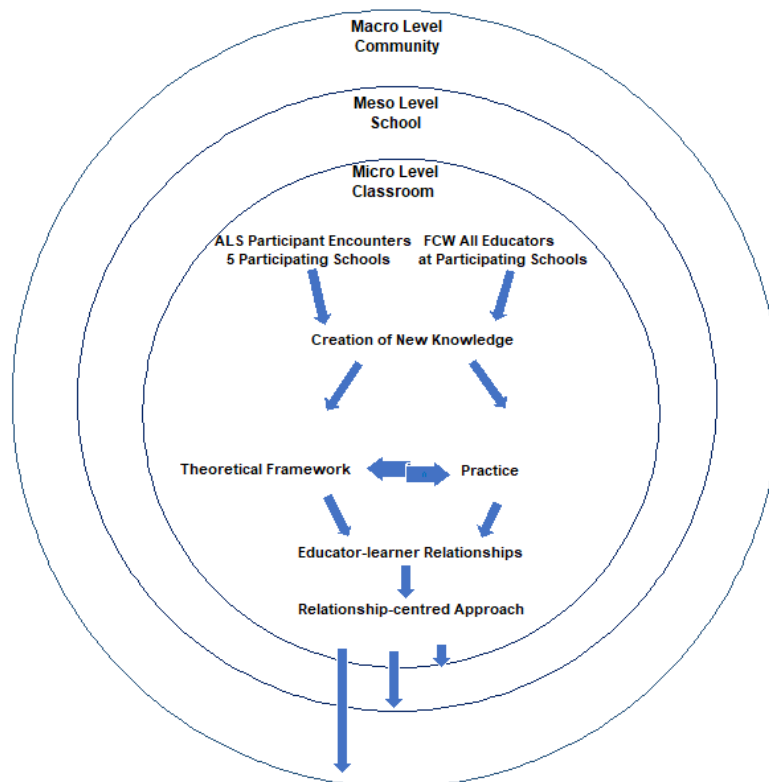


**Diagram 0.1:** The Aim of this research

Educators had the opportunity to voice their unique discipline challenges in their school context through the FCWs. They could determine their own unique training and support needs. Brown et al, (2015a) claim that research proved that when educators improve their educator-learner relationships and take ownership of the relationship-building process, the performance of learners can improve. This aim can be accomplished only if educators and learners take hands

and work “inter-dependently” and collaboratively instead of “independently” (Harris & Jones, 2010, p. 175). Zuber-Skerritt et al. (2015a, p. 43) similarly foreground “the intricate role participants must play within an action research learning context”.

## **1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATIONS**

### **1.8.1 Indiscipline**

Blegur et al. (2019, p. 37) describe indiscipline as deviant behaviour “which contravenes with both formal and informal applicable regulations in social communities (family, community, and school).” Indiscipline includes behaviours such as fighting and assault, rebellion, repeatedly breaking rules, disrupting friends, plagiarism, disrespectful behaviour, stealing, substance abuse, disobedience, vandalism, intimidation, physical abuse, attacking other people and wicked actions (Bharadwaj, 2012; Simuforsa & Rosemary, 2014).

### **1.8.2 Rural secondary schools**

Rural schools are classified mostly as high need schools (Teach.com, 2021). The Rural Health Advocacy Project (RHAP, 2013) defines rural areas as characterised by geographical remoteness, low population density, no proper infrastructure such as roads and other facilities and usually characterised by higher levels of deprivation and poverty. It is also difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff in schools in rural areas.

Secondary school education in South Africa comprises six years (grades 7 to 12) and is divided into two sections: the lower secondary phase (grades 7 to 9) and upper secondary phase (grades 10 to 12) (Wilson & Aditi, 2017).

### **1.8.3 Relationship-centred approach to school discipline (cf. 2.2; 2.2.1; 2.2.2)**

Wubbels et al. (2014) define a relationship-centred approach as “the generalized interpersonal meaning learners and educators attach to their interactions with each other” (p. 364) in their day-to-day interactions with one another. The relationship-centred approach, which is also associated with a person-centred approach, was designed to promote openness, growth and change in personal development. Some accelerating aspects, such as acceptance, empathy and mutual respect must be incorporated into the process (Freiberg, & Lamb 2009; Konishi, & Wong, 2018).

## **1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING THIS RESEARCH**

Scientific research should be derived from a theoretical perspective and research questions should be informed theoretically (Koh, 2013; Chun Tie et al., 2019). It must be noted that, in this study, theory and research are interrelated (Neuman, 2014), while Glanz et al. (2015) state

that “the best theory is informed by practice and the best practice should be grounded in theory” (p. 24). The theoretical orientation of this study is action learning (AL), which means that learning is supported in the task itself, taking place in the here-and-now, in a small group known as an action learning set (Revans, 1982; 1998; Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). The objective of this research was to determine how a PALAR approach could support educators to find strategies to assist them to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of improving learner indiscipline. This required drawing from relationship-centred approach theory (Curwin et al., 2018; Rodgers, 1969) and critical transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991, 2000, 2003). The reasons for these theories will follow.

### **1.9.1 Relationship-centred approach (cf. 2.2; 2.2.1; 2.2.2)**

Relationship-centred approaches in education assume that transformative and revived educator-learner relationships must be built. Scholars agree that positive educator-learner relationships promote an effective classroom climate, better academic progress and emotional well-being (Agesa, 2015, Pitsoe & Letseka, 2014), while it strengthens desired behaviour in learners (Khewu, 2012).

The educator is regarded as a leader and must therefore take the lead in building positive, productive and caring relationships in the teaching and learning environment (Lasater, 2016; Cicolini et al, 2013). Productive leaders “must consider effective relationships and practices that are made within contexts and through social interactions while learning with people who share these contexts” (Fulop & Mark, 2013, p. 257). The relationship-centred approach has been characterised by Grimova (2014) and Binns (2008, p. 601) as “a practice of caring for colleagues, enabling others to act, acknowledging and learning from one’s mistakes and being emotionally authentic.”

Relationship-centred approaches can be used in the classroom to build positive educator-learner relationships to enhance teaching and learning by improving learner discipline (Chen, 2018) and are therefore appropriate for this study.

### **1.9.2 Critical transformative learning theory (cf. chapter 4; 4.4)**

Critical transformative learning, as described by Mezirow (2011), is a process of change brought about within a person’s own frame of reference. The adult lifeworld or frame of reference consists of concepts, associations, values, conditioned responses and feelings through which the world is understood. These theories determine a person’s actions. Once they are rooted in our beliefs, we automatically move from one activity to the other. Having this set frame of mind (cf. 5.7.2), we tend to reject new ideas that do not fit into our way of perceiving



things. But through conducive circumstances, transformative learners can change to a frame of reference that is more acceptable and facilitates a better understanding of the need for change (Margot-Gattin et al., 2018). Sometimes when things happen that we do not understand or work in a way other than we expected it to go, we need to modify our beliefs. In such a case it is necessary to see things from other people's point of view. Mezirow (2011) explains critical transformative learning by saying that when "circumstances permit, transformative educators move towards a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience (p. 5). Christie et al. (2015) state that transformation in learning supports objectivity towards, for example, values and hindrances: therefore, action research, as emphasised by Christie, and critical transformative learning, can support educators to understand and apply knowledge in discipline-related problems in the classroom. Through critical transformative learning, the educators can change, where necessary, their invalid and outdated assumptions and in so doing, become lifelong learners liberated their way of thinking Hodge (2019). Lifelong learning is one of the building blocks of professional development and facilitates professionalism.

Evans (2011) mentions the connection between professional development, professionalism and lifelong learning. The main goals of professional development for educators are changes in classroom practices, changes in educators' attitudes and beliefs and changes in the outcomes of learning through a lifelong approach. In this case, professional development will focus on improving the educator-learner relationship so as to enhance learner discipline (Chen, 2018). There is a strong correlation between critical transformative learning theory and professional development, therefore Swanson (2010) applied critical thinking, reflection and a learning partnership to enhance transformative educator development. Educators learn to value their personal experiences and build on this knowledge through social and personal learning. Learning takes place through continuous feedback and testing of assumptions in the classroom. Mezirow (2003) and Kligyte (2011) describe critical transformative learning as a move from habitual non-reflective ways of thinking and teaching to a more critical way of teaching, realising that teaching practices can be controlled and shaped according to the need of the learners and result in a more sensible work environment.

Critical transformative learning is therefore a significant element of the action research process. It encourages critical thinking about prior knowledge and existing practices that facilitate transformation to improve actions where necessary. This happens through a collaborative learning process to ensure transformative learning (Knowles et al, 2012; Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). In the present project, the co-researchers facilitated the formation of a closely connected group with a common problem aiming at finding solutions. This process was in other

words a critical transformative learning experience for the co-researchers (see Smith et al., as cited in Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013).

## **1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (cf. 5.4; 9.4)**

The research methodology describes the research paradigms, Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) as the research design, as methods for generating data along with the analysis and findings engendered by this (Hartas, 2010). The research methodology will be explicated in detail in Chapter 5.

### **1.10.1 Research paradigm**

Neuman (2014) defines a paradigm as a “general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, key issues, models of quality research, and methods for seeking answers” (p. 96). Taylor and Medina (2013) explain that a paradigm comprises a view of the nature of reality on different levels, and Denzin and Lincoln (2017) aver that ontology (being), epistemology (knowing) and axiology (acting or doing) inform the research philosophy. As the research paradigm within which the present project occurred, PALAR was positioned as a methodology and means of facilitation within the context of professional development and community-based research (see Wood, 2020, p. 1). PALAR consists of a substantive network of approaches to research that is participative and rooted in actions and experiences. As Zuber-Skerritt (2011, p. 6) states: “It is a way of thinking, feeling, living and being that influences our values, worldviews, paradigms of learning, teaching and research. It influences our behaviour, strategies, methods, and therefore the capacity for improving practice.”

#### ***1.10.1.1 The ontological assumption (cf. 5.3.2)***

Scotland (2012) indicates that the ontological paradigm has far-reaching effects on the research study's outcomes, and it further encourages intense learning and growth. All participants must take equal responsibility for the results of the research (Maree & Pietersen, 2011) and achieve the outcomes aimed at. Participants must negotiate their values of living with others (McNiff, 2017). My ontological assumption in this study was grounded in the participatory and relational ontology (Wood, 2020, p. 23), since the participants in this research, referred to as co-researchers in the ALS, related to diverse social views among all members regarding educator-learner relationships in the classroom.

PALAR advocates a relationship between the co-researchers before moving into empirical inquiries (Wood, 2020). The views of the co-researchers were taken into consideration through a full and open relationship when real-life collaboration took place within critical transformational opinions of knowledge creation. Thus, the co-researchers collaborated as a

team and resonated with the idea of ubuntu (cf. 2.2.2). Ubuntu, well known in Africa societies, is commonly interpreted as follows: “I am because we are,” which points to the interdependence of humanity and, in this project, the co-researchers (Eze, 2010, p191). It needs to be understood that collaboration in the ALS could only bring about change in views and actions when participants respected the value of each member in the set. For ontology to be applied in this research, the needs of the participants, as determined and shaped by local moral, social, political, cultural and economic values acceptable to the social settings were considered. All participants engaged fully in the research and stated their views openly and clearly.

#### ***1.10.1.2 Epistemological assumptions (cf. 5.3.1)***

Epistemology, the creation of knowledge, was implemented here through collaborative dialogue (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013) and the development of critical subjectivity, where all co-researchers of the ALS developed an awareness of the self and others as persons with knowledge, experience, identities, feelings, beliefs and desires. Dialogue within the ALS was thus imperative, since every co-researcher brought authentic context-related cultural knowledge to the meeting, on which we all reflected. Wood (2020, p. 27) refers to this kind of process as a “reflexive dialogue where all the members are active seekers and producers of multiple forms of knowledge.” In this research, the co-researchers reflected on the effective building of educator-learner relationships as the foundation to effective day-to-day classroom management of indiscipline. They identified factors that needed to change and provided both clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for social transformation (Bohman, 2012). In this research, many strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships were suggested by the co-researchers and the willing educators who formed part of the FCW. This dovetails with a statement by Wood (2020, p. 27) that if we fail to recognise the contextual knowledge and culture our research will continue to “colonise others through the imposition of our assumption.”

#### ***1.10.1.3 Axiological assumptions (cf. 5.3.3)***

Axiology sets the standards and ensures a balance between ontological and epistemological assumptions (Aliyu et al., 2015). It refers to how one acts on the value of inclusivity and respect towards others in the world. In this research, the co-researchers were aware of how our different social and cultural histories shaped our thinking, yet we created a safe space for dialogue. Axiology has to do with how one thinks about and acts during the inquiry and research process as underpinned by ontological and epistemological assumptions.

When planning research, it is imperative to consider ethical issues, that is, the study of moral principles and axiology, the study of values (Nguyen, 2019). This includes core values rooted

out of respect for the participants and the experience and knowledge they bring to the research process and “a belief in the ability of democratic processes to achieve positive social change and commitment to action” (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003, p. 15). The results of this research will be ploughed back into the teaching community to address indiscipline and, as a result, enhance teaching and learning.

Axiology addresses questions such as: *What is ethical behaviour?* (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). To answer this question, I, as the researcher facilitator but also co-researcher of the ALS, considered the value and contributions of all the participants and respected them as such. I tried to research in a just and respectful manner. We must also consider cultural issues and research in a socially just and respectful way (ARC, 2015). To do this, I drew on the four ethical principles of Slote (as cited in Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017), namely privacy, accuracy, property and accessibility. These principles will be discussed in Chapter 5

Apart from these ethical matters, other moral issues, such as building a relationship of trust with and between the co-researchers, were also ensured. Collaboration made us aware of the real challenges that arise around dealing with indiscipline in the classroom. We critiqued ourselves to consider alternative viewpoints and creative ideas to facilitate a deeper understanding of addressing indiscipline through improving educator-learner relationships. We shared newly created knowledge, challenges, values and fears, rather than handing out ready-made truths as solutions to our problems.

Thus, from an epistemological point of view, PALAR assisted all of us to understand our own thought processes.

### **1.10.2 Research design (cf. 5.4; 5.4.3)**

#### ***1.10.2.1 Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR)***

The South African Council for Higher Education (CHE, 2010) emphasises that many researchers currently have very little experience in engaging with educational research with communities for social and educational improvement. Action research, as a systematic design, can bring about change and deepen understanding in a community (Dana, 2013; Steele, 2012; Young et al., 2010). The research design of PALAR was established to be appropriate for this research, because it opened the way for the relevant educator community to participate and collaborate around finding ways to improve educator-learner relationships as a means of addressing indiscipline in the classroom according to specific needs. Zuber-Skerritt (2018) defines PALAR as “a special kind of action research that integrates various concepts and

processes, including lifelong learning, collaborative action learning, participatory action, and action leadership” (p. 3).

For this reason, the present research will not only help the wider educator community to find solutions to deal with indiscipline, but also provide them with a framework to deal with future problems they might encounter. This aligns with the 7C principles of PALAR (cf. 4.5) to cultivate personal and professional development so as to promote collaboration towards attaining a shared vision (Wood, 2020).

Because of the people-centred nature incorporated in this approach, the suggested changes were more sustainable, because the participants saw themselves as co-researchers who form an integral part of the search for strategies (see Ferreira et al., 2013; Wood & Zuber-Skerrit, 2013) to improve discipline in their schools in this research.

#### 1.10.2.2 The PALAR process (cf. 5.4.3)

Wood (2020) illustrates the PALAR process as an infinity sign moving constantly through two cycles.

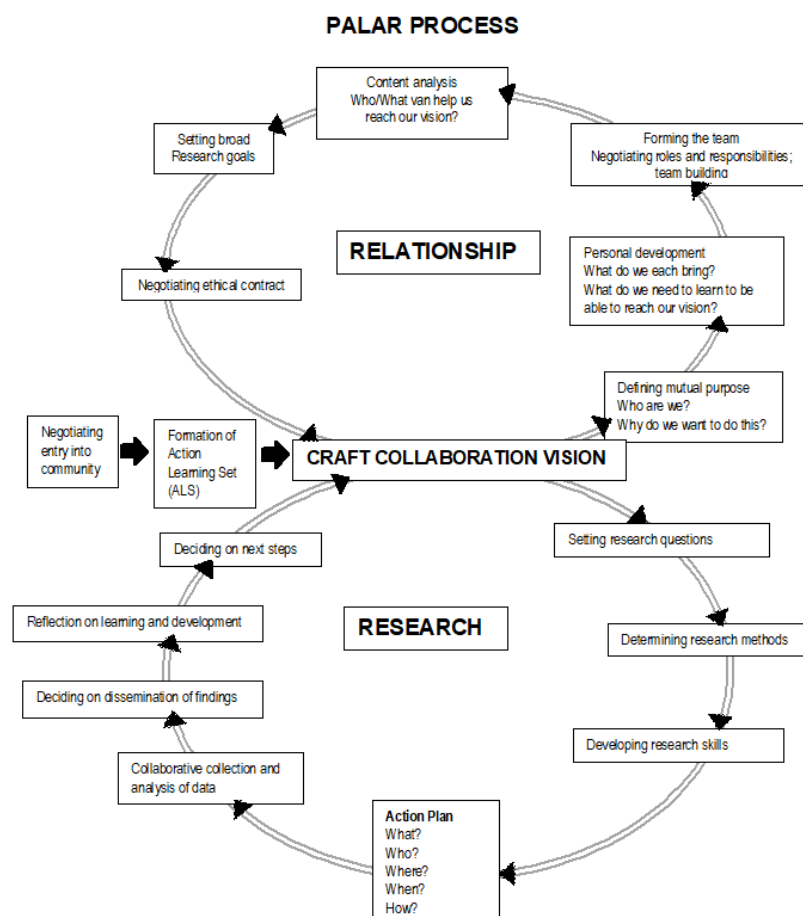


**Diagram 0.2:** The PALAR cycle (adapted from Wood, 2020).

The two cycles are fully integrated and function as one but need to be discussed as different for a clear understanding of the process to occur. The relationship part is the backbone of the research process, as mentioned (cf. 1.10.1.1). In this cycle, a mutual purpose is clarified, personal development is emphasised by forming the ALS and negotiating their different roles and how the co-researchers will all collaborate and support to research the shared vision and the research goals. During this process, the ethical aspects of the research will also be clarified.

The research part focusses on setting the research questions, determining the research methods, working out an action plan and strategies to collect and analyse data with ample creativity and adjustments, reflecting on learning and development and finding of a vision for the way forward. This gave rise to a challenge during the present project because the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations debilitated meeting, as will be discussed in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

#### ***1.10.2.3 The cycles (cf. 5.4.3.4)***

In this research, three iterative cycles of action and reflection were employed for the development of strategies compiled in an SLP to assist the wider educators' community through workshops to address indiscipline in their respective classrooms (Worall & Harris, 2013, p. 116). The co-researchers negotiated six interactions during the pre-meeting to cycle 1 where strategies to create a climate of collaboration were discussed.

It is worth mentioning that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cycles in the PALAR process were adapted since, although permission was given for these by the North-West University (Addendum B), face-to-face data generation meetings were not possible, but were replaced by electronic interactions utilising informative online discussions, photo/ picturevoice, open-ended questionnaires, cell phone conversations, WhatsApp encounters, emails and reflective journals employing a qualitative method.

In all three cycles, the co-researchers focussed on team building, personal development and collaborating in addressing the mutual problem. The process enabled the participants to create a vision for the research before moving to the research component, which is the lower cycle of the infinity model.

The following is a short summary of each cycle, anticipating that Chapters 6, 7 and 8 are centred on these.

### **1.10.2.3.1 Cycle 1**

#### **Pre-meeting (cf. 1.13; 4.5; 5.7.5)**

The gatekeeper (cf. 1.11; 5.4.3.4) scheduled a face-to-face pre-meeting with the educators before the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. This pre-meeting focussed on relationship building where the educators got to know one another as possible members and co-researchers in the ALS. The research procedures were explained, putting forth our needs, and ethical requirements were addressed (see Wood, 2020). Between the gatekeeper and myself, that is, the research facilitator, we explained the vision of the research project to educators as aligned with the primary research question:

*How can a PALAR approach enable educators to develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

#### **Establishing the action learning set**

According to Wood (2020), PALAR focusses on small numbers of people to act as co-researchers in the context of research. The small group of co-researchers forms the ALS. Five educators volunteered to act as co-researchers. We negotiated our different roles by answering specific questions (cf. 5.4.3.3).

The focus of the ALS aimed to support educators in the uMzinyathi District to find strategies to determine educator's understanding of learner behaviour and discipline in schools. We aimed to determine the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with. We reflected critically on the action research process where the co-researchers worked collaboratively towards a collective goal.

#### **First electronic encounter**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown regulations, ALS meetings were replaced with electronic means of data generation strategies. An informal estimation employing emails was done to determine the co-researchers' facilities and how data could be collected best so as to ensure reliability, collaboration, reflection, democracy and trustworthiness. It was suggested in the ALS meeting that electronic interactions be used, utilising informative online discussions, electronic open-ended questionnaires, email, photo/ picturevoice sent by email, cell phone conversations, individual and group WhatsApp encounters and paper-based reflective journals.

Cycle 1 was initiated by email and focussed on secondary research questions one and two:

*How did educators understand learner behaviour?*

*What were the challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?*

#### **1.10.2.3.2 Cycle 2**

Cycle 2 (the second electronic encounter) commenced with relationship building and aimed at answering the third and fourth research questions: *What were educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?* and *What relationship-centred strategies could be developed to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

In this cycle, the main focus was to transform or disturb (Mezirow, 2000) the co-researchers' ways of understanding educator-learner relationships and introduce more constructive alternatives with a view to building relationships.

#### **1.10.2.3.3 Cycle 3**

Cycle 3 (third electronic encounter) centred on the effectiveness of strategies to build educator-learner relationships and to answer the fifth secondary research question: *How effective were the strategies for improving learner behaviour in the classroom?*

The ALS convened a FCW (Gabriel et al., 2015) (cf. 6.3.1) with volunteering educators at their respective schools to generate more authentic strategies to build educator-learner relationships.

#### **Future Creating Workshop (cf. 8.3.1) as part of Cycle 3**

In a fast-changing world, businesses and professionals must continuously adapt to challenges and changes (Strohmann et al., 2018). Creative thinking can be enhanced by dedicated people through FCWs. An FCW is a dynamic, flexible workshop that may change during the presentation depending on the context, knowledge and skills of the attendees. Because of their flexibility, FCWs have become increasingly popular in recent years (Gabriel et al., 2015). These workshops aim at involving people directly in decision-making processes with future benefits.

The FCW was developed by Jungk, Muellert and Lutz in 1970 (Husted & Tofteng, 2015; Drotner et al., 2018) as a problem-solving technique, and it was aligned with PALAR in this research. Lauttamaki (2014) states that FCWs bring people from different backgrounds who share a common interest together to allow them to solve future problems collectively. Lauttamaki (2014, p. 5) describes the four phases of the process as follows:



- Preparation Phase: the method, its rules, and the scheduled course of the workshop (in accordance with the participants, in this research) are introduced. The rules for this research comprise no criticism, more quantity than quality ideas, freewheeling (producing ideas in a relaxed and casual way) and ideas for improvement of the situation must be focussed on (Sørensen, 2009).
- Critique phase: The problem is investigated critically and thoroughly. First of all, a visualised brainstorming session is performed and a general and critical question concerning the problem is framed. During this research, the brainstorming session revolved around learner discipline and ways to build educator-learner relationships as a means of assisting educators to solve indiscipline in the classroom.
- Fantasy or visionary phase: All participants try to work out a vision of the future, to draw a picture of future possibilities. During this phase, the educators described possible ways of building relationships in the classroom. Some of these ideas were tried out in the classroom and reported back to the ALS. Some educators described strategies that they are using and how and why these strategies were effective. These effective strategies were also included in the lists supplied to the educators.
- Implementation phase: The ideas found are checked and evaluated regarding their practicability. Discussions are related to the first step to achieve the vision. During this research, the vision was to build effective educator-learner relationships as a means of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom. Through this, a classroom climate can be created to enhance teaching and learning.

The FCW was found to be an experience well worth it for the educators, providing an opportunity to air their views and frustration as well as their dreams of an ideal classroom conducive to teaching and learning (see Brydon-Miller et al., 2017).

### **1.11 RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

As a lecturer at an independent college (cf. 1.3; 5.2), I was approached by a local principal who asked for advice on how to deal with indiscipline in schools. I proposed a research project and suggested that secondary schools in the area be involved. This principal acted as the gatekeeper (cf. 1.10.2.3.1; 5.4.3.4) and took this idea to local secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District, informing them about the possibility of such a project. Five secondary schools volunteered to form part of this project and each supplied the name of one volunteering educator to represent it. During Cycle 2, a sixth educator volunteered to take part. During the research, the co-researchers in the ALS were labelled E1 to E5 and the schools S1 to S5. These educators and I formed the ALS and acted as co-researchers. Ethical processes followed, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Two public schools with more than 1 000 learners each were involved in addition to two public schools with just over 500 learners each as well as one independent school with 173 secondary school learners. One of my colleagues from independent college, fluent in isiZulu, acted as an independent translator to explain the research process to all the educators in English and Zulu (Addendum O). As it turned out, the interpreter was not needed, because all the participants were fluent in English. Acting as the gatekeeper, the mentioned principal attended but did not participate in the ALS.

## **1.12 DATA GENERATION METHODS**

PALAR enables participants to generate data by using methods designed to bring change in their thinking and assumptions. The methods simultaneously generate data, document these and introduce change. Artefacts such as photo/ picturevoice and reflective journals require that participants act as co-researchers and critically self-reflect on their conceptualisations of the phenomenon in question and articulate their thinking in dialogue with others.

When the co-researchers share and reflect their thoughts with others in the ALS, these artefacts become valuable tools for education and advocacy (Wood, 2020).

### **1.12.1 Transcription of ALS encounters**

One of the main sources of data within a PALAR project is transcribed audio material of the ALS meetings. Valuable, rich data are generated among co-researchers in dialogue and reflections. During all three cycles, I documented the participants' comments as received through emails, WhatsApp, photo/ picturevoice and other conversations and recirculated them to the ALS to verify and reflect on their own and the other participants' comments to ensure the correctness of the recorded data. (Trehan & Pedler, 2011; Wood, 2020; Zuber-Skerritt, 2015b).

### **1.12.2 Photo/ picturevoice**

Olivier et al. (2009) refer to photovoice as an artefact. An artefact is an artificial product produced extraneous agency such as humans. This was introduced to the co-researchers in Cycle 1. In view of a relative lack of skills and technological devices, we decided in the ALS that photovoice would be adjusted to photo/ picturevoice. As an artefact, photo/ picturevoice (see Olivier et al., 2009) was introduced to participants in Cycle 1 as a means of expressing their feelings. A photo or picture can in some ways say more than words. These photos or pictures reflected the effects that discipline-related issues had on participants' job satisfaction, their motivation to teach and their feelings about the teaching profession as a whole (cf. 6.4). They wrote narratives to explain why they took a given photo or picture. As had been done

with preceding comments, these photos or pictures were compiled in one document and resent to the ALS with a view to verifying the correctness of the compiled data. In Cycle 3, photo/picturevoice was again used to express their feelings about the future of the education profession.

### **1.12.3 Reflective journals**

Reflective journals were used throughout the cycles. It is one of the most well-known tools used by educators for reflective purposes, because it provides educators with a "container for writing that provides a person with a framework to structure their thoughts and reflections" (Wallin, & Adawi, 2018 p. 6). Reflective journals centre on educator-centred activities that assist educators with self-education and performance improvement, and are a valid way of capturing observations, thoughts and feelings of educators when they reflect on their own teaching practices (Neethling, 2015). Reflective journals are easy to manage and can be used at any time and place (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Zuber-Skerritt, 2011; Travers, 2011).

During this research, the co-researchers kept reflective journals and used the resultant written information to comment on the issues under discussion. The reflective journals were solely used for the co-researchers to express their views, thoughts and feelings. It served the purpose of assisting all to remember ideas that they wanted to share with the participants. Each co-researcher's reflective journal was kept private, while only the individual member had access to it.

### **1.12.4 Open-ended questionnaires**

Open-ended questionnaires were used to initiate each cycle. The completed questionnaires were compiled into one document and recirculated to the ALS for reflection. These engendered further electronic conversations among the co-researchers via emails, WhatsApps and telephone conversations.

One of the co-researchers without any form of electronic support visited me personally to fetch the open-ended questionnaires and supplied me with his or her handwritten comments and reflections as often as needed. This way of doing emphasised the contextual restraints and lack of infrastructure as experienced by some of the educators in the uMzinyathi District.

## **1.13 DATA ANALYSIS (cf. 1.13; 5.5.2; 5.6; 5.8.2; 6.4)**

Agee (2009) and Xia and Gong (2015) describe data analysis as the process of turning the obtained data into an organised format to answer the research question. Data can be analysed and interpreted to facilitate a deeper understanding of the materials at hand. Interpretation of

qualitative data endeavours to answer the “why”, “how”, and “what” questions (Bhattacharjee, 2014). Data obtained through group discussions, experiences and observations were used to identify behavioural patterns and themes, which were further explored to find ways of dealing with indiscipline through effective educator-learner relationships.

All the data obtained through reflective journals, open-ended questionnaires, face-to-face meetings, informal telephone and WhatsApp discussions, photo/ picturevoice and electronic encounters were eventually reduced through a process of inductive and deductive coding according to the significance as found within a specific context. Coding in research is described by Saldaña (2015) as a word or a phrase “that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). Codes facilitate the drawing up of categories and analyse the connections among them (Saldaña, 2015). Pattern coding, that is, looking for specific patterns, and simultaneous coding, that is, multiple codes to the same text, seem to be the most relevant ways of coding the information collected in this research. I used pattern coding as an effective way of dividing the data into themes. After consultation during the pre-meeting (cf. 1.10.2.3.1; 1.13; 4.5; 5.7.5; 6.2), the co-researchers decided that the five secondary research questions had to be the main themes during the discussions. The main themes constituted 1) the educators’ understanding of learner behaviour, 2) the day-to-day challenges educators faced daily, 3) the educators’ view of educator-learner relationships, 4) possible strategies to build educators-learner relationships and 5) the effectiveness of the proposed strategies to build educator-learner relationships. During the data generation process, the co-researchers agreed that I, as the researcher facilitator, had to divide the data into subthemes to strengthen the main themes according to the coding method that I had explained to them.

This information was organised in manual format, as agreed upon by the co-researchers, as a guide for educators in rural areas to deal with indiscipline.

#### **1.14 MY ROLE IN THE RESEARCH (cf. 5.9)**

Although I was part of the ALS, I also acted as a research facilitator to initiate informative encounters by preparing open-ended questionnaires, sending emails to the co-researchers, asking their views on certain aspects, asking them to reflect on specific comments, do research, ensuring credibility of the process and keeping the discussions neutral and objective (see Biermann et al., 2018). I guided the process during each cycle and kept co-researchers informed as to the progress made during data generation.

### 1.15 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS (cf. 5.8)

I made use of the five validity criteria of Herr and Anderson (2005), as these are connected to the purposes of action research. These purposes, stated below, form the foundation by means of which the quality of action research studies can be confirmed.

- **Outcome validity** refers to the degree to which the actions of an action research project result in finding the solution to the research problem under investigation. It, therefore, determines whether the research project has been successful. I made sure that the participants reflected on all stages of data generation and data analysis to give credibility to my research.
- **Process validity** alludes to the degree to which problems are shaped and resolved in ways that allow the individual or organisation to learn on an ongoing basis. The desired outcome can only be achieved if the desired processes have been put in place. In this research, it was my responsibility as the researcher facilitator to ensure that the participants consistently followed the correct processes to ensure ongoing learning so as to enable us to achieve our goals.
- **Democratic validity** or ecological validity touches on the level of working equally and collaboratively during all the interactions by involving all the participants around discussing the problem under investigation. I ensured that each co-researcher had the opportunity to fully participate in all discussions by giving their own perspectives that resulted in decisions being made by the ALS as a collective attempt. The research was done in full cooperation with all the co-researchers. Their comments were documented and returned to them to reflect on the accuracy of the research data. As the researcher facilitator, I refrained from influencing them.
- **Catalytic validity** involves the degree to which the research process functions as a catalyst to enable the participants to be enthusiastic about understanding reality to change it. It is significant, as it illuminates the transformative capacity or power of action research. The action research process in this research served as a catalyst and the driving force for participants to act to bring about positive change to the research site.
- **Dialogic validity** refers to the space created for dialogue among participants in the ALS where they could listen to and learn from each other. Some scholars maintain that action research should only be executed as a collaborative inquiry, while others merely propose that action researchers engage in critical and reflective discourse with other action researchers (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Riel, & Lepori, 2014). The ALS

encounters took place regularly to reflect critically on assumptions and teaching practices.

#### **1.16 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS (cf. 5.7)**

Townsend (2013) points out that all research, regardless of form or emphasis, should be conducted ethically. It is thus my responsibility as a research facilitator to ensure that my research project conforms to ethical standards. Ethics clearance (clearance number NWU-01206-20-A2) was obtained from the Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC) of the North-West University (Addendum J and K). This clearance is not granted unless the committee is satisfied that all ethical requirements have been met.

Permission was obtained from the school principals (Addendum M), the schools' SGBs (Addendum L) and the educators (co-researchers) who were part of the ALS (Addendum A) as participants as well as the DBE of KwaZulu-Natal. The nature of the research, the degree of engagement by participants as well as the duration of research were accurately and honestly disclosed. Participants received adequate information before they voluntarily decided to take part and could withdraw from the research at any time. I was concerned about protecting the rights and privacy of the co-researchers in the ALS. To achieve this, the co-researchers were referred to only as E1 to E5 when their comments were used. Privacy was only observed partially, because they operated in a group, but they orally agreed to this. In the case of some suggestions, a few of the co-researchers requested that the E1 to E5 not be used so as to protect them from criticism from the management of the school. This was honoured. They could also decide what they wanted to share and what could be revealed. An informed consent form was signed by participants (see Mertler, 2012). Throughout the research, the dignity of the co-researchers as human beings was respected (Cohen et al., 2011). The research was conducted according to the principle of beneficence in such a way that individuals, as well as groups of individuals, benefitted by obtaining new knowledge about their own learning and development, the teaching process and learner behaviour (see Mertler, 2012).

Ethical considerations can be summarised as follows as described by Gajjar (2013):

- Participation must be voluntarily and consented to. The co-researchers signed consent forms and volunteered to partake in the research. They could withdraw from the project at any time.
- No harm must be done to any of the participants. The co-researchers could only mention what they felt comfortable with and, when they requested not to be identified,

the request was honoured. In some cases, it was requested by some not to be mentioned around some information they sent to me in emails or WhatsApp.

- Confidentiality and anonymity (Addendum N). As explained above, some sensitive information was kept anonymous. The information was mainly centred on explaining the background to some comments.
- Avoidance of deception and misleading information. Through the transcriptions of the comments and the reflection of the participants on the transcriptions, the co-researchers could verify their comments and no misleading could take place.

### **1.17 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

The chapter outline for the present study is as follows.

- Chapter 1** focusses on the background to the research and the rationale as well as the problem statement and ethical considerations.
- Chapter 2** presents a literature review of a relationship-centred approach to classroom and discipline management in schools.
- Chapter 3** comprises an overview of learner discipline in secondary schools in South Africa.
- Chapter 4** describes transformative learning as a tool for the personal development of the co-researchers.
- Chapter 5** describes the theoretical justification of the research methodology.
- Chapter 6** describes the findings of Cycle 1 of the PALAR process and offers a discussion on the findings.
- Chapter 7** states the findings of Cycle 1 of the PALAR process and offers a discussion on these.
- Chapter 8** explains the findings of Cycle 1 of the PALAR process and offer a discussion on the findings
- Chapter 9** constitutes a summary of the research as well as concluding remarks.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: A BROAD OVERVIEW OF A RELATIONSHIP- CENTRED APPROACH TO CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 1 presented a brief overview of this research which included a synopsis of learner behaviour in secondary schools globally and in South Africa. The participant selection, data generation methods and research design were discussed.

In this chapter, educator-learner relationship building in the teaching and learning environment is explored. Educators must take the lead in building effective educator-learner relationships as the foundation to exercise discipline related issues in schools (cf. 2.6; 7.3.1). In doing so, educators and learners can make a difference to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom to the benefit of the school and eventually also the community. Classroom management will also be discussed, because educator-learner relationship-building is an important component of classroom management. I conclude this chapter with a description of the role of the educator, not only in school but also in the community.

### **2.2 EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP APPROACH (cf. 1.8.3; 1.9.1; 7.4.1; 7.4.2)**

As early as the fifth century, Socrates (469-399 BC) held the relationship between himself and his learners in high esteem when it came to discovering truths about human existence (Ducharme & Ducharme, 2020), and he believed that a devoted educator and a willing learner embraced a pure and intensely inspirational educator-learner relationship (Lee, 2019). Educator-learner relationships impact learner engagement positively in schools and shape learner attitudes towards learning including preparedness to adjust emotionally and socially (Spilt et al., 2011)

Giroux (2011) indicates three premises that underpin education and can be achieved through positive educator-learner relationships. Firstly, education changes lives (see Belle, 2016; Keddie, 2012). Secondly, education is never neutral because it does not only apply to the teaching of techniques, principles and content but also teaching values and beliefs to the learners (see Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011). Thirdly, when it comes to designing educational material, the designer must bear the target group in mind (see Giroux, 2011). Since positive educator-learner relationships lead to human dignity and a feeling of self-worth, while these are moreover built on moral values such as respect and, in addition, centre on the group and togetherness, they offer the ideal ways for enhancing the teaching and learning environment (Cook et al., 2018; Sparks, 2019).



This study explores educator-learner relationships in terms of a person-centred or, in the school environment, a child-centred approach (see Hughes et al., 2013), holding this to be an innovative approach to assist educators to cope with disciplinary problems in the classroom.

### **2.2.1 What is an educator-learner relationship approach in teaching and learning? (cf. 1.8.3)**

Wubbels et al. (2014) define educator-learner relationships as “the generalised interpersonal meaning” (p. 364) that learners and educators ascribe to their day-to-day and moment-to-moment interactions as building blocks to their reciprocal relationship with one another.

Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) aver that learner in rural schools (where this research was done) are subjected to challenging situations such as a lack of parental support, an unsupportive school environment in view of a shortage of funds and overcrowded classrooms (cf. 3.4, 3.6.5). When learners realise that the educator is not only interested in their academic performance but also in them as persons, their level of trust expands. Hart and Hodson (2004) hold that “relationships in a classroom are essentially the interplay of needs—needs of the learners and needs of the educator” (p. 25). Learners come to class not only with the need to learn but also the need to belong and the need for freedom, competence, fun and autonomy. Educators in the relationship-based classroom must acknowledge and meet these needs if they want learners to feel safe and respond to classroom activities (Brown et al., 2015a). When these support needs are met in the classroom, learners are motivated and more willing to participate in activities (WCED, 2007; Davies et al., 2013). Educators and learners must endeavour to become aware of each other’s needs in a relationship-based classroom and try to respond to these needs (Hart & Hodson, 2004; Drinkwater et al., 2018; Koenen et al., 2019).

Educators desire that learners assume increased responsibility for their learning and behaviour and would be more engaged in learning activities in the classroom. If learners comply with these needs, educators will have more time to pay attention to individual learners in need of support. For the mentioned reason educators must convey their needs to the learners as well as the reasons for these needs. The educators, however, must inform themselves about the needs of the learners by discussing their needs with them (Curwin et al., 2018; Neto, 2015). Glasser suggests that educators must change from disciplining learners to meeting their needs (Hart & Hodson, 2004). Such a relationship-based classroom provides for all these needs to be met.

Educator-learner relationships comprise components such as support, nurturing, acceptance, understanding, consideration and a sense of belonging. Learners need to be rooted in an environment where these components prevail. When educators purposefully teach relationship

skills, they model a caring relationship, enhance strong trustworthy foundations in an atmosphere of mutual trust (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014; Varga, 2017). Caring is not a one-sided affair: both parties, learners and educators, must be involved in the process (Kim & Schallert, 2011; Bovill et al., 2011; Bovill et al., 2015). In secondary education, there are many opportunities to engage learners in caring activities, including acting as partners in the education process. Partnership refers to respect for another's views, sharing of responsibility and a reciprocal relationship (Cook-Sather et al., 2014). Learners can be engaged in co-research activities, assessment activities and, as consultants for other learners such as peer tutoring activities, give them a sense of belonging and ownership. Participation, however, must be voluntary, well planned and controlled by the educators (Bovill, 2014).

Educator-learner relationships have been receiving new interest since corporal punishment was outlawed. Innovative approaches were sought to deal with behavioural problems. These approaches included restorative elements that aimed at making it possible for learners to progress academically, experience a sense of well-being and build positive relationships with peers and educators (WCED, 2007). In the 1980s, educator-learner relationships as a tool for improving learner behaviour was a new concept. Today, however, it is widely accepted as an effective way of dealing with discipline (Curwin et al., 2018) and a proactive approach to safeguarding teaching and learning (DBE, 2000), because positive educator-learner relationships decrease the indiscipline of learners in the classroom (Ntuli, 2012; Obadire, & Sinthumule, 2021)

Positive educator-learner relationships are important for learners to progress at school (Bird & Markle, 2012; Claessens et al., 2017; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015), because learners living in socio-disadvantaged communities are often subjected to broken homes where family relations and support are limited and where high crime rates prevail (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Petersen et al., 2010). If these learners receive effective support and encouragement from school through caring educator-learner relationships, it could help them develop stable mental health and balanced self-esteem that generally result in good academic performance in the classroom (Bird & Markle, 2012). Educator-learner relationships can be seen as the foundation for assisting learners to become engaged in their schoolwork and motivate them to study (Varga, 2017). The educator can act as a role model outside the home to support these learners by building positive educator-learner relationships (Smith et al., 2015). These relationships foster a nurturing environment where learners can feel safe and free and become willing to cooperate in class (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). Eventually, all learners in the class, despite their circumstances, will benefit from caring and supportive relationships with their educators (Wanders et al., 2019). The educator's role is fundamental to building educator-

learner relationships which improve the total learning environment for all learners (Sutherland et al., 2010) in the short- and long terms with a wide range of improvements such as better academic results, school attendance and improved learner behaviour (Turner et al., 2013; Konishi & Wong, 2018; Sparks, 2019). It is therefore important for educators to understand the components necessary to assist in building positive educator-learner relationships.

## **2.2.2 Components of educator-learner relationships (cf. 1.8.3)**

As stated, educator-learner relationships are essential aspects of classroom management so as to promote satisfactory academic development of all learners in the school (Claessens et al., 2017; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015). Respectful educator-learner relationships must be nurtured, because they contribute towards a successful teaching and learning environment (Grimova, 2014).

Roffey (2012b) states that three aspects are necessary to build positive educator-learner relationships, namely 1) physical capital (including buildings and equipment), 2) human capital (including knowledge and skills) and 3) social capital (including levels of trust, the quality of relationships and mutual responsibility). All these components are important but, for this research, I focus mainly on social capital, as it involves relationship-building, trust and mutual responsibility by educators and learners.

Roffey (2012b, 2015) refers to social capital as trust and respect experienced by people in a community who share a sense of belonging, identity and values for the benefit of the whole group. Educator-learner relationships flow from social capital. Adler and Kwon (as cited in Roffey, 2012c) confirm that social capital enhances feelings of well-being and safety as well as encouraging the working together of groups of people in many ways to enhance the flow of information, advice and help. Roffey (2012c) holds that the development of positive social capital benefits the prosperity of the whole school and all the learners.

Thus, social capital can be viewed as a form of ubuntu (cf. 1.10.1.1; 2.2.2; 5.7) (Aranda, 2017; Nel et al., 2016; Nussbaum, 2003; Phasha, 2016). Phasha (2016) highlights the three values on which ubuntu is based, namely 1) humaneness – the intrinsic worthiness of human beings, 2) interdependence – the need of people to be supported by other people through interconnectedness and 3) communalism – the importance of the role of the community in education. Fraser-Moloketi (2009) explains that the word ubuntu originated from the isiZulu aphorism “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” which, translated, means “a person is a person because of or through others” (p. 243). Humaneness centres on human dignity, humanity and the building and maintaining of communities (Tutu, as cited in Khomba, 2011). Interdependence refers to the fact that the ubuntu way of thinking emphasises group solidarity

which facilitates the survival of communities. Communalism implies that an individual is a person living in a community and, through this living together, issues such as isolation, hunger and poverty can be overcome. Ubuntu underpins a way of life and living. If people are treated well, they are inclined to perform better. The African society is thus humanistic, community-based and socialistic in nature (Khomba, 2011). Ubuntu ties in well with the relationship approach which emphasises relationships between people, care and partnerships. Roffey (2012a) pleads for an increase in skills to build positive relationships, because societies are in crisis due to a rise in anti-social behaviour and the predominantly strong emphasis on human rights instead of community well-being.

The educator-learner relationship approach comprises five components, namely 1) the relationship between educator and learners, 2) the relationship between learners, 3) the relationship between the educator and his or her feelings, 4) the relationship between the learners and their feelings and 5) the relationship between the learners and the learning process and the curriculum. In the relationship-based classroom, not only the educator but also the learners are responsible for the learning process (Roffey, 2012a).

Diagram 2.1 reflects the nature of the educator-learner relationship:

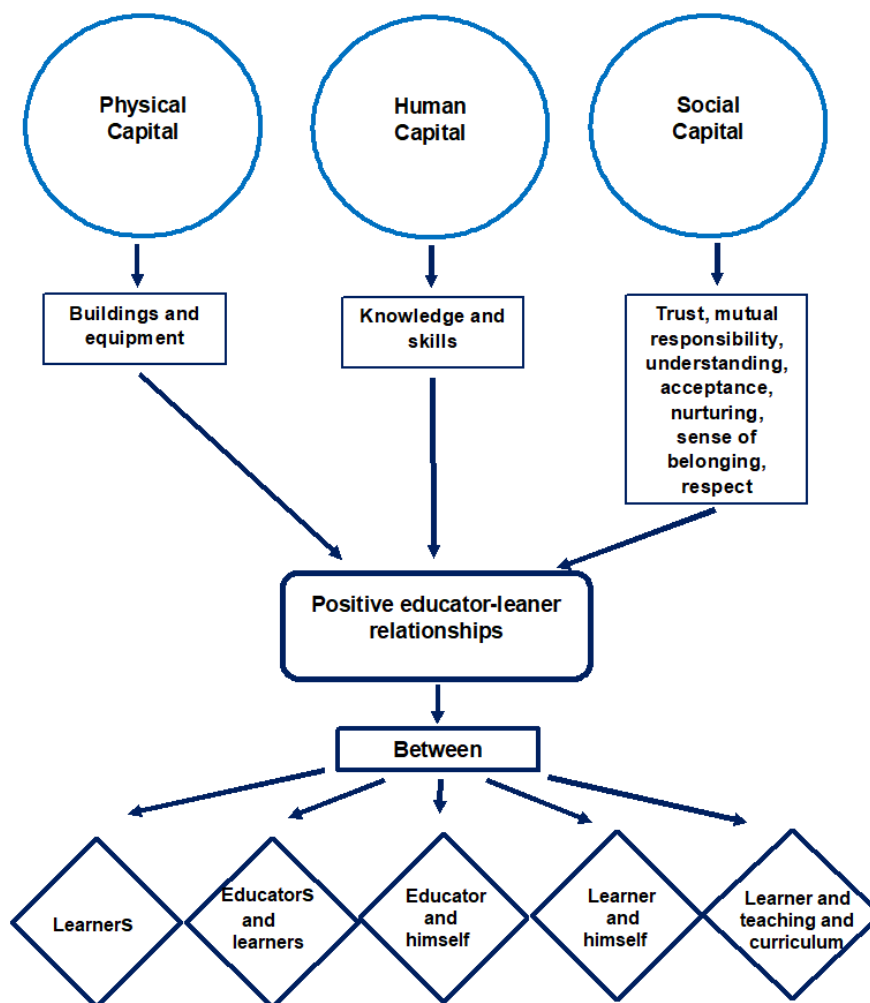


**Diagram 2.1: Educator-learner relationships.**

### **2.2.2.1 Educator-learner relationships**

The importance of educator-learner relationships must not be underestimated. For a long time, positive educator-learner relationships have been viewed as a foundational aspect of effective school experiences for learners (Sparks, 2019). Damaged relationships impact negatively on learner well-being and academic progress and lead to learner behavioural problems (Terada, 2019). Scholars agree that learners who experience their educators as supportive and caring and perceive that they are listening to them are more eager to work in class because they feel safe and welcome (Furrer et al., 2014; Hamre et al. 2013; Wentzel & Brophy 2014).

Educators must lead (cf. 2.2.2.1; 7.3.1) the way to establish respectful educator-learner relationships by displaying respect towards the learners and treating learners in a dignified way. Through unconditional respect and acceptance of the learners in their classrooms, educators in return earn the respect of the learners (Johnson, 2016). Respect can also be

earned by respectful language and respectful social encounters (Ministry of Education Guyana, 2019). This means that educators must be friendly, accommodating, respectful and unthreatening (Barr, 2016; Herald, 2015). These mentioned factors, in turn, help to facilitate a supportive learning environment and fulfil the learners' need to belong (Johnson, 2016). Positive educator-learner relationships must be reinforced and the best method to use is love, care, encouragement, appreciation and attention. A simple way to start implementing the educator-learner relationship is for the educator to know the learners by name, look them in the eye when addressing them and give them a voice and ownership of situations in the class (WCED, 2007).

Disrespect characterised by ignorance, discrimination and disregard damage the educator-learner relationship (Kitching et al., 2011; Ramadwa, 2018). Repeated unfriendly interactions are responsible for hostile relations that eventually are very difficult to change into friendly ones (Claessens et al., 2017).

For educators to create positive educator-learner relationships, they must go beyond the classroom and take contextual factors and physical and temporal conditions into consideration (Frelin & Grannas, 2010; Charles, 2012). Negative educator-learner relationships create stress, while positive ones produce job satisfaction for educators and learners eager to participate in class (Veldman et al., 2013).

Informal relationship interventions bring about more change than formal processes. If you lead by example and treat learners with dignity you build trust and thus also improve the educator-learner relationship. In this way, it is easier to solve conflict and other problems in the classroom (Curwin et al., 2018).

Healthy educator-learner relationships assist the progress of learners at school, and positive learner-learner relationships also play a role in this.

#### **2.2.2.2 *Learner-learner relationships***

Effective educator-learner relationships foster good learner relationships between learners and their peers. Research done by Slee and Skrzypiec (2016) indicates that learners who experience good relationships with their peers are more inclined to be actively involved in class, feel more secure and are more motivated. Louw and Louw (2014) hold that peer relationships in adolescence become very important during adolescence when young people endeavour to seek independence from their parents. Undesirable peer relationships such as bullying and other forms of harassment are associated with poor academic achievement and a negative influence on the learners' overall well-being. Learners subjected to negative peer

relationships cannot focus on their schoolwork (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015). Happier and more healthy peer relationships facilitate better academic outcomes and socio-emotional well-being (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016).

For educators to facilitate positive relationships in their classroom and at school, they must have a positive feeling towards the teaching and learning profession.

#### **2.2.2.3 *The feelings of the educators***

The feelings of the educator impact strongly on relationship-building. If the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the management of the school promote and enhance the educators as social capital and improve their working conditions, it will improve relationships among colleagues and the well-being of educators. Educators will experience an increase of satisfactory feelings of trust, safety and tolerance towards diversity and encourage educators to take ownership of the teaching environment (Roffey, 2012a). A study done by Koenen et al., (2019) highlights the need for interventions focussing on educators' emotional needs to enhance educator-learner relationships. Keller et al. (2016) argue that negative relationships impact profoundly on the educators' job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion and stress (cf. 2.2.4.3.1, 3.5.3). Makhwathana et al. (2017) contend that negative educator emotions and feelings influence their interactions with learners which in turn has an anti-cooperative effect on learners academic and socio-emotional development (Becker et al., 2013; Keller et al., 2016).

Educators' emotions and feelings have numerous important effects on learners because they influence the learners' emotions and perceptions, motivation, learning and academic performance, classroom discipline, emotional competence and social behaviour (Rodrigo-Ruiz, 2016).

Not only does positive educator feelings facilitate good relationship-building but also productive learner feelings.

#### **2.2.2.4 *The feelings of the learners***

Positive educator-learner relationships enhance positive learner feelings of safety and encourage them to be part of activities in class (Makhwathana et al., 2017) and, in doing so, learner achievement improves (Wanders et al., 2019). Learners feel valued when they experience respect from educators. In this way, a positive school climate is created and learners feel safe in the school environment (De Klerk, 2013). When learners feel safe at school, they tend to be more engaged in the classroom and display vigour and enthusiasm. Such learners take ownership of their education (Maulana et al., 2013). On the other hand,

learners who experience unsupportive educators are less likely to engage actively in the classroom (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2012). This important situation stresses the fact that educators must foster an encouraging learning environment and must make time to show learners that they belong there (Varga, 2017)

For these reasons, educators must stay involved with the emotional levels of their learners so as to remain in tune with their feelings and respond in an appropriate way (Van Loan & Marlowe, 2013). Knowing the feelings of the learners will help the educators to mend possible broken educator-learner relationships (Kennedy & Haydon, 2021).

Enhancing positive feelings such as enjoyment, optimism, achievement, a sense of belonging and safety among educators and learners creates an environment in which educators and learners can prosper (Roffey, 2012c). To share in the learning experience, educators and learners must meet on common ground to create enjoyment of the learning activity. This form of sharing promotes positive well-being and emotions (Zuffianò et al., 2015).

Educator-learner relationship-building has many facets. The learning process and the curriculum also play an important role in this respect.

#### ***2.2.2.5 Learners, the learning process and the curriculum***

The school and the classroom are places for teaching and learning. For teaching and learning to be effective, the classroom environment must be effective (Mehraj, 2014). The effectiveness of the teaching environment does not only depend on the curriculum but also its accessibility. Negative feelings can hamper constructive engagement with the curriculum. Educators must endeavour to promote positive feelings such as achievement, optimism, enjoyment and a sense of safety in their learners to facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom (Roffey, 2012a).

Even mistakes must be welcomed and used as part of the process to make learners feel welcome and safe. Constructive feedback from educators is part of relationship-building, but they must also ask learners for feedback concerning the lessons to help them plan meaningful presentations (Roffey, 2012a). In some cases, such as when it comes to learners with disabilities, it may even be necessary for educators to teach friendship and relationship-building skills (Ugbo, 2017).

The basis upon which to build educator-learner relationships is a climate of care, with focus on trust, hope and partnership, as well as mutual respect between educators and learners (DBE, 2010; Johnson, 2016).



Educator-learner relationship building is extremely important and multi-faceted. Many strategies have already been proven to facilitate relationship building. Some of these will be discussed below.

### **2.2.3 Strategies to build educator-learner relationships (cf. 7.3.2; 8.3.2.1)**

Although educators have to take care of learners, teaching about relationship-building receive less priority compared to teaching subject content (Sachs, 2016), even though educational research clearly holds that educator-learner relationships are fundamental to learner well-being and learning (McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015). Considering this, the present study aims at exploring strategies to assist educators to build positive educator-learner relationships.

Anyon et al. (2018) endeavoured to describe a few proven strategies that could assist educators in building positive educator-learner relationships. Some strategies are less time consuming, such as morning meetings with the class to discuss relevant issues and build rapport with learners (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014). During class transitions, educators must be present in the passages and show interest in the learners. Breaks and lunchtimes could also be used as a valuable time to connect with learners and show an interest in them. These interactions set a positive tone for the day to proceed.

Anyon et al. (2018) explain that some strategies are more time consuming and challenging, such as home visits and phone calls to strengthen ties with the family or caregivers. Home visits may have financial implications for educators. Advisory periods for individual learners and classes could be set to assist them with their needs. There is evidence that educator involvement with the family often prevents problems before they begin and has a positive effect on learner attendance and learner performance, but this needs to be researched in greater depth (Christiansen, 2015; Sheldon & Jung, 2015).

Van Loan and Marlowe (2013) suggest that educators should spend time with individual learners on a one-to-one basis to find out more about their interests and learn to know them better and check up on the state of the educator-learner relationships (Van Loan & Marlowe, 2013; Cook et al., 2018). Educators must endeavour to maintain regular eye contact with learners, interact and encourage them frequently (Stevens & Lingo, 2013; Gage et al., 2020). Educators must communicate rules and regulations clearly to avoid misunderstanding and conflict (Murray & Pianta, 2007; Van Loan & Marlowe, 2013). They must address misbehaviour in a calm tone of voice, reteach concepts if needed and avoid power struggles (Van Loan & Garwood, 2020). Sporadically, educators must provide genuine age-appropriate, compliments from the heart to learners (Cook et al. (2018). More compliments than reprimands are necessary to create a warm classroom climate (Downs et al, 2019; Sabey et al., 2019).

The importance of positive educator-learner relationships on the progress of the learners has already been touched on. However, it must further be considered that relationships have to do with values.

#### **2.2.4 The value of educator-learner relationships**

A positive educator-learner relationship is a core principle of the teaching and learning environment and presents the profession and its people with such a wide range of possible benefits that it is a bonus for teaching and learning (Brinkworth et al., 2018). Healthy educator-learner relationships impact immensely on a wide range of educational issues and, as such, learner performance (Claessens et al., 2017; McGrath, & Van Bergen, 2015). For learners to have a positive relationship with supportive educators combined with early specialist intervention can prevent a spiral of behavioural problems such as rejection by peers and educators, social and academic failure and school dropout (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013; Kourkoutas, 2012).

Educator-learner relationships through informal day-to-day interventions impact more on changing learner behaviour than regulations, rules and formal interventions. Meeting the needs of the learners and managing behaviour require an intricate balance of strategies. Norms and values that protect the dignity of learners remain necessities. Educators must seek the input of the learners, teach them the value of obedience and decision-making skills early in their school career, as behaviour change is a long process when learners are older. The education system should focus on teaching learners to value teaching and learning rather than focusing on punishment and retribution. This approach will assist learners to flourish in their communities and later in life (Curwin et al., 2018). Extant research often ignores the fact that an effective educator-learner relationship is a major fount of well-being for educators and learners (García-Moya et al., 2019). Hussain et al. (2013) argue the positive educator-learner relationships, though time-consuming, facilitate better understanding among educators and learners.

##### ***2.2.4.1 The effect of educator-learner relationships on the academic progress of learners***

Learners who experience positive educator-learner relationships achieve higher grades (Konishi & Wong, 2018), because they might be fonder of their educators and try harder to please them. Positive educator-learner relationships make learners and educators feel better about themselves (Roorda et al., 2011; Mahvar et al., 2018; Mardliyah, 2019). Educator-learner relationships are central to the success of teaching and learning and, by improving these relationships, learner outcomes can be largely improved (Gehlbach, 2010; McGrath &

Van Bergen, 2015; DBE, 2000; Verschueren & Koomen, 2012; Wanders et al., 2019). For example, Mahvar et al. (2018) indicate that, if an educator can win the hearts of his or her learners, he or she encounters fewer behavioural problems as well as higher academic performance.

For learning to be effective, a controlled classroom environment embedded in effective educator-learner and peer relationships is necessary. Such a controlled classroom can have a major impact on learner behaviour which, as indicated, is a considerable problem in schools (Mahvar, 2018; Mardliyah, 2019). Discipline is so crucial in the teaching and learning environment that it can make or break the teaching process (Mardliyah, 2019).

Positive educator-learner relationships not only improve academic progress but are means of rectifying the damage done to relationship-building by digital and electronic mass media. Learners spending lots of time watching television or doing schoolwork through other digital media lose the ability to build positive relationships with people. It is not required of them to build personal relationships with television characters or other digital media such as computers. This influences their academic progress (Rowan et al., 2010; Rowan, 2017).

Gonzales-Ball and Bratton (2019) summarises the benefits of the positive educator-learner relationship: it is the cornerstone of assisting the learners to develop maturity, adapting to the environment, be more active in class, make better academic progress and grow emotionally

As a component of classroom management, educator-learner relationships affect discipline.

#### ***2.2.4.2 Educator-learner relationships as a proactive approach to restore discipline in the classroom***

Oosthuizen (2009) as well as Darjan and Tomita (2014) distinguish between two approaches to the management of discipline, namely 1) the reactive approach and 2) the proactive approach. The reactive approach includes punishment after learners behaved in an undisciplined manner. Punishment can include the taking away of privileges, detention, a merit system and corporal punishment. Reyneke and Reyneke (2012) hold the opinion that this approach can cause rebellion and negativity. Liebenberg (2013) argues that the reactive approach aims at stopping undesirable behaviour but does not teach responsible behaviour or explore the reasons for bad behaviour. Darjan and Tomita (2014) state that traditionally aggressive behaviour has been dealt with in more reactive than proactive ways. Proactive activities are restorative disciplinary methods that are supportive and aim at creating conditions that prevent or deter indiscipline and, when it does arise, educators have the skills necessary to deal with it and restore the situation (Ministry of Education Guyana, 2018). Proactive instead

of reactive measures facilitate positive relationship building. Educators must focus on what goes right and not on what goes wrong (Prins et al., 2019)

Liebenberg (2013) and Turnaround for Children (2016) plead for a proactive or preventative approach that focusses on proper behaviour and emphasise the strong points of the learners. Like the proactive approach, this approach promotes values, responsibility, insight and understanding of behaviour and the consequences of undisciplined behaviour. Broken educator-learner relationships can be healed through this approach and indiscipline can be restored. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED, 2007) states that a restorative approach, as a component of the proactive approach, is necessary. A restorative approach is new and a shift from control to restoration. This approach facilitates responsibility, an awareness of well-being and more effective educator-learner relationship-building among learners. The approach is also incorporated in the South African Constitution, the South African Schools Act and the specific outcomes as described in the National Curriculum Statement, which prioritise responsibility as a concept. Weaver and Swank (2020) call this restorative approach restorative justice and deem it as the opposite of the punitive approach (cf. 6.5.1.1).

Restorative practices are described as an action where learners are encouraged to reflect on previous behaviour (McCluskey et al, 2008) and eventually take responsibility for their actions and behaviour (Kehoe et al, 2018). As indicated, it is based on healthy relationships as a core component (Evans, & Vaandering, 2016) for the processes of building as well as restoring relationships (Darling-Hammond, & Cook-Harvey, 2018). Gregory et al. (2016) argue that a healthy relationship is a core component of a healthy classroom and not only improves educator-learner relationships but also relationships among peers (Ortega et al., 2016). Healthy relationships facilitate a feeling of safety with the learners and encourage them to return to the classroom after a dispute (Darling-Hammond, & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Lockhart et al. as cited in Weaver and Swank, 2020). In this way an unbiased classroom climate is achieved (Evans & Vaandering, 2016). Positive educator-learner relationships help educators not only to overcome prejudices such as racism, but also feelings of rejection towards learners who display indiscipline (Okonofua et al, 2016).

Research done by Egeberg et al. (2020) indicates that the use of punishment not only impacts negatively on relationship-building, but also harms what has been achieved previously. Punishment angers learners without changing their behaviour.

Sparks (2019) advocates the strong educator-learner relationship as a proactive approach to deal with discipline in the classroom, because it is associated with long and short-term benefits on just about every aspect of school life, namely 1) curbing indiscipline, 2) better academic

engagement, 3) better academic performance, 4) fewer school dropouts and 5) benefits for the educator for positive relationships predict work satisfaction. Zolkoski (2019) emphasises that positive educator-learner relationships impact strongly on behavioural, academic and social-emotional development as well as willingness to engage in acceptable behaviour.

A critical component for educators to successfully deal with undisciplined and interruptive behavioural problems in the classroom is to establish and maintain a positive and caring relationship with the learners (Tuckman & Monetti, 2012). Liberante (2012) points out that learners who experience supportive educator-learner relationships are less inclined to engage in undisciplined behaviour and experience a greater degree of successful academic outcomes. A positive relationship-centred approach can influence the dynamics and discipline in the class (Riley, 2010; Nortje, 2017), and enhance the well-being of educators and learners, which is important when it comes to communicating change in the classroom and creating an atmosphere for the learners to thrive in (Walton et al., 2016).

Walker and Newman (as cited in Marciniak, 2015) claim that disciplinary measures will be more successful if they are part of a whole-school effort with all the educators involved. Okonofua et al. (2016) states that the school climate must enhance relationship building for the entire school community by creating a connectivity culture. Such endeavours will among others facilitate educator-learner relationship building, give educators a better understanding of their learners, humanise learners and foster stronger community ties.

Curwin et al. (2018) place positive educator-learner relationships above rules and regulations when it comes to changing the challenging behaviour of learners. Greenberg et al. (2016) hold the same opinion and add that informal educator-learner intervention produces more positive results than formal processes. Yuan and Che (2012) and Mardliyah (2019) point out that building good educator-learner relationships may prevent other punitive measures and promote teaching and learning.

#### ***2.2.4.3 The effect of educator-learner relationships on educator and learner well-being***

As far back as 1989 (Department of Education and Science, England, 1989), the Elton Report on Discipline in Schools advocated the importance of a whole-school approach to discipline, which is based on maintaining caring partnerships so as to enhance educator and learner well-being. Positive relationships are essential components of complete well-being and flourishing among people (Seligman, 2011). Zolkoski (2019) highlights that positive educator-learner relationships assist the emotional, academic and social-emotional growth of learners and the

well-being of educators. The positive influence of educator-learner relationships on the educators as well as the learners will be examined in the following paragraphs.

#### *2.2.4.3.1 The effect of educator-learner relationships on the well-being of educators*

A positive educator-learner relationship can rectify the effect of indiscipline on educators' well-being and can be a useful tool in predicting long-term educator well-being and educational outcomes (Spilt et al., 2011). Educators must realise the importance of educator-learner relationships when it comes to supporting teaching and learning and the maintenance of their mental well-being (Konishi, & Wong, 2018).

Educators must also be aware of the role they play in the development of these relationships as well as the influence these have on their well-being (Claessens et al., 2017). If circumstances are not conducive for educators to manage their stress levels, their well-being will suffer, resulting in low learner achievement (Swartz, & McElwain, 2012). The absence of psychologists in rural and poverty-stricken areas places an extra burden on educators to provide psychological service to learners (Setlhare et al., 2017), often with the result that the educator's professional and personal well-being is undermined (Setlhare et al., 2016; Trangos 2017). Spilt et al. (2011) hold that educators who experience positive educator-learner relationships are more fulfilled and satisfied in their profession, resulting in added motivation to contribute to it. Research by Fredrickson and Joiner (as cited in Weaver and Swank (2020) contend that this surge in motivation brings about an upward spiral of hopeful emotions with the expectation of more positive emotions in future as well as increased educator well-being. Spurgeon and Thompson (2018) stress the fact that educators who display emotional well-being can produce higher levels of learner engagement and enthusiasm, more satisfying relationships, induce better learner behaviour and, on the whole, facilitate a more satisfied socio-emotional adjustment for educators and learners and, as such, boost the upward spiral of well-being.

Strategies to prevent or reduce educator stress must include interventions to build workplace relationships and support (Greenberg et al., 2016) so as to enhance learner well-being.

#### *2.2.4.3.2 The effect of educator-learner relationships on the well-being of learners*

Spilt et al. (2011) stress the fact that educators play an important role in the socio-emotional lives of the learners, promoting better adjustment and performance. When educators experience positive learner well-being, it enhances their own well-being and fulfilment (Varga, 2017).

A study done by Johnson (2016) reveals that learners feel a need to belong and call for school connectedness and a caring safe environment where educators fulfil their parental role. Especially those learners who experience hardships at home or come from poverty-stricken single-parent homes require stable adult educators to guide them in decision-making skills. Ebersöhn (2015) argues that schools and educators should fulfil that role. Koenen et al. (2019) emphasise that the educator-learner relationship is a significant component in the development of learners, especially for those with behaviour and attachment problems (Verschueren & Koomen, 2012; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015). Children develop the skill to form attachments with parents and caregivers early in life, and this skill is crucial for secure relationships later in life (Brumariu, 2015). Children who experience stable parent relationships form secure friendships and are socially more competent (Pallini et al., 2014). On the other hand, children with insecure personal attachment experiences suffer from mental and physical ill-health as well as impaired social relationships and dysfunctional behavioural problems (Snyder et al., 2012; Mikic & Terradas, 2014). Attachment disorders develop in children who experience serious neglectful and uncaring environments (Zeanah & Gleason, 2015), and this is related to indiscipline and antisocial behaviour (Groeneveld & Mesman, 2017). An educator sensitive to the needs of the learners can assist them to feel safe and be prepared to cope with the demands of school. Educators can fulfil their temporary *ad hoc* attachment role to supply a safe haven for learners in need of an attachment figure (Verschueren & Koomen, 2012).

Learners who experience positive relationships with their educators, progress significantly better academically and identify more easily with the school situation (Tian et al., 2014). Effective and positive educator-learner relationships promote learner well-being and facilitate the resilience of learners facing hardships (LeeFon et al., 2013; Pring, 2012; Van Schalkwyk & Wissing 2013) But the opposite is also true. Ineffective educator-learner relationships lead to poor mental health and slow academic progress (Greenberg et al., 2016; Lang et al., 2013). Roffey (2012c) affirms that formal and informal education not only play a role in learner well-being but also the well-being of their families and communities. Well-being includes physical and emotional health. The Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute (ACEI, 2014) envision schools as safe havens for children where they can be supervised and supported through effective educator-learner relationships.

Building positive educator-learner relationships to cope with discipline-related issues to enhance teaching and learning and effective classroom management is necessary.

## 2.3 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Educators must develop a classroom management vision to foster an atmosphere of engagement so as to enhance successful learning. Such environments must be carefully constructed to accommodate different personalities and learning styles (Franklin, & Harrington, 2019). Successful classroom management can be achieved by fostering caring relationships, positive behaviour management, effective instructional learning (Egeberg, & McConney, 2017) and a functional classroom environment (Franklin, & Harrington, 2019).

Classroom management is the process whereby the educators apply various strategies to enhance teaching and learning and cope with discipline-related issues in the classroom. Strategies around this include class procedures, supervision of learners' progress, time frames and predicting and solving problems (Mahvar et al., 2018). Very often, both educators and learners have strong feelings surrounding what classroom management must include (Sullivan et al., 2014). Educators must endeavour to consider the learners' views (Egeberg et al., 2020) and institute effective classroom management strategies to create an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning (Zee et al., 2017).

Extant studies identify four directions in classroom management, namely 1) the traditional way of thinking (which includes interventions, rules and rewards), 2) the liberal-progressive view (a democratic perspective where learners are part of decision-making and power-sharing), 3) the socially critical stance (where learner misbehaviour is seen as rebellion against an unfair social system) and 4) the laissez-faire way of thinking where the principle of non-intervention is propagated. Most educators use a mixture of these management plans, while 70% of educators hold a more traditional view and 30% present prefer the liberal-progressive view (Egeberg et al., 2020). Research done by Van Tartwijk et al. (2009) established that many educators preferred liberal ways of classroom management, which requires that educators use rational arguments when speaking to learners instead of power arguments, respond in a positive way to objective and justified criticism, allow learners to give inputs when making rules and be respectful to learners and compliment them when necessary. Maphalala (2017) explains that the liberal progressive approach is based on democratic concepts where learners are involved in problem-solving and decision-making in the classroom.

The liberal-progressive way of classroom management includes the view of Bailey-Ramos (2016), who holds that educators must endeavour to know their learners, build positive educator-learner relationships and honour the importance of seeing the classroom as a community. Schools must be viewed as part of the community in which they function and, as such, families and learners must become agents of social change. In this way, multicultural



education will be promoted. This way of classroom management embraces the values of ubuntu (cf. 2.2.2; 5.7) of learner participation, cooperation and coexistence and the establishment of a favourable classroom climate that is conducive for learner progress (Maphalala, 2017).

Research done by Egeberg and McConney (2017) confirms that learners view caring educator-learner relationships, a controlled classroom environment and the enhancement of learner responsibility as effective classroom management strategies. Egeberg et al. (2020) describe classroom management as centred on caring relationships, instructional management and behaviour management.

Classroom management aims at facilitating proper discipline and motivation, and if this is not done well, the teaching process will suffer (Graham, 2017). If educators will endeavour to establish stronger bonds and an interactive educational classroom climate among learners, it can assist them to cope with learners' indiscipline (Abry et al., 2017; Rad & Moonaghi, 2016). If educators can create a sense of belonging with the learners, their desire for learning will increase, with positive effects in the teaching and learning environment (Rahimi, & Karkami, 2015). Peters (2012) indicates that classroom management is the most challenging area of the educator's job.

For the classroom climate to be effective, educators must know their learners and be able to tell if learner misbehaviour is due to emotional problems (personal stresses, rejection, bullying), physical problems (illnesses and other physical barriers) or environmental factors (poverty, family related problems, distance from school) (Ali & Gracey, 2013).

Research done by Doyle (1986), as early as the 1980s, found that classroom management and classroom instruction are not separate entities but intrinsically woven together. Classroom management involves planning, behaviour management of learners, classroom organisation, the nature of the classroom environment and the learning process. It is clear that classroom management comprises a critical component for an effective teaching and learning process (Scott, 2017). "Everything an educator does has implications for classroom management, including creating the setting, decorating the room, arranging the chairs, speaking to children and handling their responses, putting routines in place (and then executing, modifying, and reinstituting them), developing rules, and communicating those rules to the learners" (Sieberer-Nagler, 2015: p. 163).

Subsequently, successful classroom management must strive to maintain positive learner behaviour, engagement and progressive academic achievement (Gage, & MacSuga-Gage, 2017).

A literature study revealed methods that were found to be effective. These will be briefly discussed next.

### **2.3.1 Learner responsibility**

Educators must assign responsibilities to learners with good behaviour to encourage them to keep it up. This will serve as an encouragement to other learners to behave better; it further encourages that responsibilities be given to them (Farmer et al., 2014).

### **2.3.2 Communication as a strategy**

The physical environment of the classroom is very important for effective learn-learner as well as educator-learner communication. For instance, arrange the chairs in a U-shape to facilitate eye contact where learners and educators face one another (Hershner, & Chervin, 2014).

### **2.3.3 The physical classroom environment**

The classroom décor must be interesting, inviting and lively to prevent inactivity and encourage lively and energetic participation (Hershner, & Chervin, 2014). Franklin and Harrington (2019) allege that the classroom must be uncluttered, with areas that allow for group work and hands-on learning activities. It must be possible for learners to move about the classroom in an orderly way. Educators must teach learners to clean up after activities and push in their chairs when they get up. Educators and learners must watch out for excessive noise, crowding and visual distractions. Research done by Egeberg and McConney (2017) describe effective teachers as those who provide a controlled classroom environment where learner engagement and responsibility can thrive.

### **2.3.4 Encouragement**

This brings the matter of encouragement into focus (see Hershner, & Chervin, 2014). In research done by Yusoff & Mansor (2016), educators stated that they used encouragement and discussions as ways of controlling learners (Egeberg et al., 2020). Positive educator-learner relationships must be reinforced, and the best method to use is love, care, encouragement, appreciation and attention. A simple way to start implementing the educator-learner relationship is for the educator to know the learners by name, look them in the eye when addressing them and give them a voice and ownership in the class, as has been indicated (WCED, 2007).

### **2.3.5 Behaviour management**

Indiscipline can be lessened if learners know the rules, the educator's expectations of their behaviour and the extent of their class participation. The educators have to implement strategies that will help reduce misbehaviour so as to avoid bad behaviour to escalate (Khasinah, 2017). When learners know that there are rules and regulations in the classroom and that misbehaviour has consequences, learner behaviour can improve (Sueb et al., 2020).

Teaching techniques such as role-play, holding debates and conferences as well as the promotion of proper and polite behaviour can be used to teach learners how to behave (Voltz, Sims, & Nelson, as cited in Mahvar et al., 2018). Social skills can also be taught through ordinary everyday teaching methods (Mahvar et al., 2018). Very often educators do not respond to mild or moderate indiscipline (Sullivan et al., 2014), but this is necessary to prevent its escalation (Parsonson, 2012; Sun, & Shek, 2012).

Inefficient educators use strategies such as criticism, punishment, removing learners from class and taking away privileges (Sun, & Shek, 2012). If educators consider themselves as more superior to the learners and humiliate them by being sarcastic, it will result in impolite learners and an inefficient classroom climate (Eriyanti, 2018). Research done by Lewis (2001) found that "learners who receive more relationship-based discipline are less disrupted when educators deal with misbehaviour and generally act more responsibly in that educator's class" (p. 4). In contrast, more severe forms of discipline distract learners from work and do not add to teaching them responsibility for the sake of their own behaviour.

### **2.3.6 Teaching strategies**

Educators must convince learners to keep a learning journal to reflect their feelings and experiences. This will give educators an insight into what the learners want and need, and can be used by educators during lesson planning. Learning journals can also help educators to understand their learners better (Fajriah, 2017).

Subject content must be presented in an attractive and differentiated way to keep the lessons interesting and learners interested (Mahvar, 2018). Some strategies related to this and mentioned by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010) include inquiry, cooperative learning, contextual teaching, expository learning, problem-based learning and problem-solving. But it must be noted that strategies must be selected to fit the necessary contents as well as learners' age. Balachandran (2015) emphasises that the personality of the educator and the learners, available resources as well as the environment must be taken into consideration when choosing a teaching strategy. Bennett and Smilanich

(2012) assert that educators must not only know what they must teach, but also how to structure and organise the teaching environment to create a healthy classroom climate where all learners and educators can flourish.

### **2.3.7 Assessment**

Learner assessment is mostly challenging (Khosravi et al., 2012). Educators must use specific criteria and tools to assess learners, because a subjective assessment is bound to cause conflict and interfere with the educator-learner relationships. Research emphasises the fact that learners must be taught self-assessment skills, and their views on the teaching process must be taken into account. Indiscipline can be reduced in this way (Aliasgharpour, 2013). Learners must be offered opportunities to be part of the decision-making process: for example, around how they want to display their knowledge. They must be taught self-assessment skills utilising a checklist or rubric. In this way, learners can practice ownership of learning and monitor their own progress, learn to manage time effectively and set achievement goals (Conley & French, 2014).

The educator's role in classroom management is often seen as the most challenging part of an educator's work (Peters, 2012).

## **2.4 THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Scholars agree that educators have the strongest influence on learner performance, their motivation to study and their self-efficacy (Chetty et al., 2014; Lee, 2018; Jackson, 2018). Classroom management skills are described as the most challenging domain of educators' training (Peters, 2012). Educators are responsible to create a classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning: the creation of an atmosphere that fosters enthusiasm and motivation (Franklin, & Harrington, 2019).

Grobler (2018) and the revised policy on the minimum requirements for educator education qualifications (DHET, 2015) describe the seven roles of the educator as 1) being a specialist in a phase, 2) maintaining subject discipline or practice, 3) acting as a learning mediator, 4) acting as a leader, administrator and manager, 5) being a scholar, researcher and lifelong learner, 6) acting as the assessor and 7) his or her actions around community, citizenship and the pastoral aspect.

As a specialist in a phase, subject discipline or practice educators must be well-grounded in skills, knowledge, principles and values as well as teaching methods and procedures relevant to the subject and the phase. Educators must also be updated on different teaching

approaches and new developments in the subject, and how these may be applied in an appropriate way to the benefit of the learners (DHET, 2015).

As mediators of learning, educators can help learners to engage in classroom activities. Educators can facilitate interaction between the learners in the classroom by introducing interactive activities such as group work. Moreover, educators can create a safe and unstressed learning environment as a motivation for learners to learn. Positive feedback without criticism provides learners with knowledge about their progress and also enhances motivation (Hamamrad, 2016). To do this effectively, educators must demonstrate a sound knowledge of the subject content, principles, strategies and appropriate resources (DHET, 2015). As mediators of learning, educators do not only teach content to learners (that is, the first-order or initial teaching), but also teach future educators (that is, second-order teaching). For this reason, educators must be an example and model of proper behaviour. They must therefore practice what they preach. The learners of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and educators must lay a proper foundation in their lives. This places an obligation on educators to reflect on their actions and feelings and make changes in their lives to support the personal development of their learners (Dengerink et al., 2015).

As interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials, the educator must design original learning programmes by identifying requirements for subject content selected for learning and prepare and select appropriate visual teaching and learning resources (DHET, 2015). As designers and interpreters of learning programmes, educators must realise that their education must be designed around central curriculum practices to enhance competency-based education (Dengerink et al., 2015). However, research shows that educator participation in curriculum development centres mainly on the development of that part of the curriculum for which they are responsible (Kosnik & Beck, 2008). Educators must stay informed about changes in the education environment and adapt the teaching and learning environment accordingly. The COVID-19 pandemic moreover necessitated design challenges. Educators needed to evaluate the problem and adapt teaching and learning strategies accordingly (Grubbs, 2019). This way of doing requires a collaborative attempt by all the stakeholders (Ellerton, 2020).

As a leader, administrator and manager, the educator must make relevant decisions appropriate to the teaching level of the class to manage learning in the classroom. Educators must manage classroom learning effectively and classroom administration in a democratic way to support learners and colleagues (DHET, 2015).

As a scholar, researcher and lifelong learner, the educator must continuously be involved in academic, occupational and professional growth activities in his or her field to broaden their professional knowledge (DHET, 2015). As lifelong learners and scholars, educators must endeavour to keep updated not only with subject knowledge but also other forms of professional development. They must engage with professional development activities that are designed to fill up gaps in their prior knowledge. Learning can take place formally or informally. Educators do not only learn from one another but also through learning communities such as workshops and conferences. To be a lifelong learner, an educator must do research to keep up with academic and educational developments (Dengerink et al., 2015).

As assessors, educators must understand the importance, methods and purpose of assessment in the teaching and learning environment to execute effective and meaningful assessment and give constructive feedback to learners. They must keep detailed records of assessment results and use these as resources to improve the progress of the learners (DHET, 2015). As an assessor, the educator must monitor the access and progress of the learners based on prior-defined standards of assessment. The role of school-based educators is crucial to maintain professional standards (Struyven & De Meyst, 2010).

In their roles on the levels of community, citizenship and pastoral care, educators must be committed to obtaining an ethical attitude towards other people. They must uphold the constitution of the country and, in doing so, promote democratic practices and values. They must develop supportive relationships with parents and community members to enhance development in the community (DHET, 2015). In South Africa, educators must register with SACE and adhere to the SACE Code of Conduct for educators. SACE is a professional body that enhances the status of the teaching profession and the professional development of educators (SACE, 2017). The role of the educator in rural communities will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.

It is thus the responsibility of the educator as a manager to manage indiscipline, as summarised in the seven roles of the educator (Jacobs et al., 2016). Educators are expected to maintain discipline in the classroom as well as on the school grounds (Tiwani, 2010; Chonco, 2019).

For an educator to fulfil the seven roles effectively, and in particular classroom management, it is necessary to operate in an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Such an environment must be free from continuous emotional frustration and physical intimidation (Herald, 2015). Indiscipline, unfortunately, affects many schools to the point where management conditions are unstable (Kutame et al., 2014; Pretorius, 2014). The educators

furthermore have the responsibility to maintain the classroom environment (Emmer, & Sabornie, 2015) and protect learners during school hours (Allen, 2010; Pane, 2010). Mokati (2018) postulates that the government, the principal, the whole school community, the educators and the parents must all share the responsibility to make schools safe places for teaching and learning.

Learners will be more successful in their studies if educators create a conducive classroom environment through positive interpersonal relationships with them (Johnson & McElroy, 2010). The responsibility for establishing a classroom atmosphere that is conducive for teaching and learning and free from indiscipline rests primarily with the educators (Jacobs et al, 2016). For educators to deal successfully with learner behaviour, they need effective guidance from their principals. Competent principals endeavour to instil a school environment conducive for teaching and learning (Bendikson et al., 2012) and, as such, transform the school into an institution of high performance (Naidoo & Petersen, 2015). Effective principal leadership can have far-reaching effects on learner and educator behaviour (Soehner & Ryan, 2011) and can make a huge difference to bringing about positive change in the school climate (Khanal & Park, 2016). The management of the school should provide clear policies and guidelines to direct the educators on managing problematic learner behaviour. To manage behaviour requires a coordinated approach by all role players, including a comprehensive task description for each role player (WCED, 2007). For the sake of overall well-being, educators must be able to trust their colleagues, administrators and managers so as to decrease their stress levels, while dissatisfying relationships among stakeholders in the school community cause stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction and low commitment to learners (Van Maele, & Van Houtte, 2012; Greenberg et al, 2016).

Learner discipline is a team effort. Manamela (2015) reasons that, unless parents involve themselves in the discipline of their children, the school will not be successful in dealing with learner discipline. Interestingly, in the present research process the co-researchers complained that parents were not playing their part in teaching their children proper ways of behaving, as reflected in the following remarks by the co-researchers:

*E1, E2 and E3 Parents are not involved in the school situation or the discipline of their children. Parents must help us to build relationships with the learners.*

*E2 Parents are not doing their jobs. They leave it to the educators to teach their children basic manners, respect and discipline. They don't want to take responsibility for their children's behaviour and love blaming it on the schools. Too many parents (especially young, single ones) want to be their children's friend,*

Not only must learners achieve academic success, but also emotional well-being (Pring, 2012). At school and in the classroom, educators play an important role in the protection of learners and contribute to the well-being and resilience of at-risk learners (Sammons et al., 2013), in particular when primary caregivers do not provide this at home (Sierra, 2012).

As has been described, the educator fulfils a huge role in the school setting, and also in rural communities. Rural communities look up to the educator as a source of information and expect their support in many ways.

## **2.5 THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Within the school community, especially in rural communities, educators are seen as examples of educated persons and expect their support (Ansell, 2018). Ntini (2006) identifies 22 roles expected of educators in rural areas in community life, apart from being educators. These roles, among others, can be summarised as follows: they must act as 1) community development planners and implementers, 2) writers of reports and proposals, 3) performers of public speaking and 4) counsellors and trainers. Although it is generally accepted that educators cannot always fulfil these roles, because they are not trained to do so, community members in rural areas still look up to them and perceive them as capable of these. In some areas, it is expected of educators to play a role in agricultural developments by teaching community members about farming. Educators are also expected to be involved in health matters, community development and environmental conservation.

Very often, support services are not freely available to educators in rural areas, and they must fulfil various tasks for which they are not always qualified. The learners' social, behavioural and emotional needs place a high demand on educators (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013).

Rural educators must be prepared to teach even multigrade classes or many subjects and to be involved in extra-curricular activities and community activities in the local school community. Rural educators also have fewer possibilities to attend professional development training to update skills needed to fulfil extra community obligations (Du Plessis, & Mestry, 2019).

Apart from the mentioned roles of educators in rural communities, the most prominent task they have to cater for, while not having been trained for this, is counselling, pertinently crisis counselling. This obligation is difficult for them to fulfil (Duma, 2014). Educators need special support and training for these extra demands placed upon them (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013). Specialists acknowledge the counselling and therapeutic role of educators in their communities (Elliott & Place, 2012; Kourkoutas, 2012) and the academic and psychological benefits of social-emotional programmes in which they are involved (Kourkoutas & Giovazolias, 2015).



Very often as part of the counselling process, a relationship with the learner's family and parents develops around guiding them, which is of the utmost importance. This is done not only as an intervention, but also as a preventative measure of indiscipline. Very often, family counselling involves socio-economic and emotional problems, because the family has nowhere else to turn (Georgiana, 2015).

Educators in rural areas must be seen as key role players for bringing about change in communities (HSRC-EPC, 2005). They can play this important role by encouraging critical reflection on people's lives and taking actions to improve issues such as violence, inequality and insecurity. Cappy (2016) avers that by doing so, people can learn how to behave as moral beings. This good influence will also affect the whole community. In this way, educators can be agents for social change in communities.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the educator-learner approach as an important component when it comes to dealing with indiscipline in the classroom. The educator, as the adult in the relationship, takes the lead in the classroom around building positive educator-learner relationships so as to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. Often, learners lack parental support at home and educators acting as *in loco parentis* must fulfil this role in the school by supporting the learners and seeing to their needs. Through supportive educator-learner relationships, educators must provide a safe and welcoming class environment for learners to thrive in.

Educator-learner relationships enhance five components of teaching, namely educator-learner relationships, learner-learner relationships, the feelings of the educators, the feelings of the learners and the learners' attitude towards the learning process and the curriculum. Strategies for building positive educator-learner relationships were discussed briefly as well as the value of educator-learner relationships in the school environment and the lives of educators and learners. Positive educator-learner relationships have a positive effect on learner discipline and, as such, enhance the progress of the learners.

Effective educator-learner relationships strengthen educator and learner well-being and thus provide a classroom atmosphere conducive for teaching and learning. As managers, educators must organise their classrooms in such a way that it facilitates positive educator-learner relationships. A few classroom management strategies were discussed briefly.

This chapter concluded with the seven roles of the educator in classroom management as well as the role of the educator, in particular the role of rural educators in their respective communities.

In Chapter 3, the reader will be presented with an overview of discipline-related issues in schools, the reasons for indiscipline among learners as well as its consequences in their lives as well as those of educators as related also to the economy of the country.

Educator-learner relationships have been identified as important in whole-school well-being. It not only enhances academic progress and learner discipline but impacts positively on the mental health and well-being of the learners as well as the educators.

Effective educator-learner relationships strengthen educator and learner well-being, preventing learners from dropping out of school and educators leaving the profession. All of these aspects have a positive effect on the economy of the country, because money spent on education produces positive results (cf. 3.1, 3.5.1)

## **CHAPTER 3: AN OVERVIEW OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The present chapter serves to contextualise learner discipline in secondary schools in South Africa. It will proceed as follows. Firstly, a historical perspective of corporal punishment will be discussed, followed by an overview of indiscipline in secondary schools. Secondly, the importance of managing learner behaviour will be discussed as well as the consequences of indiscipline not only in the lives of educators and learners but also in terms of the economy of the country. Thirdly, a brief theoretical grounding of managing learner discipline in the classroom and the reasons for indiscipline in the classroom will be given. A few behaviour management strategies will be briefly discussed.

Magwa and Ngara (2014) claim that the management of learner behaviour has been debated extensively. Worldwide learner behaviour in general and in secondary schools have worsened notably (Beebeejaun-Muslum, 2014; Power, 2016) and poses a major problem to effective teaching and learning (Mohapi, 2013; Reyneke, 2013b).

### **3.2 THEORETICAL GROUNDING OF MANAGING LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM.**

The ultimate goal of teaching is learning, which educators must bear this in mind when disciplining learners and managing their classrooms (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017).

#### **3.2.1 Effective classroom management (cf. 2.3)**

Teaching and learning rest on two intertwined components, namely 1) how the educator's way of behaving promotes learning and 2) how the classroom is managed (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017). Research done by Egeberg (2020) points out that effective classroom management constitutes warm-hearted relationships, instructional management and behaviour management. Learners perceive effective classroom managers as those educators who endeavour to build caring, respectful relationships and at the same time cultivate learner responsibility when it comes to their learning and progress (Egeberg, & McConney 2017). An educator's professional way of behaviour centres on to the educators' way of thinking, his or her actions and the way they communicate, which are not negotiable. Educators must model appropriate behaviour daily, because their actions reinforce learner behaviour. Disorganised, ill-prepared educators who are always late cannot expect the opposite from their learners (Franklin, & Harrington, 2019).

Another important fact that educators must remember is that everything he or she does have significance for classroom management and discipline management, because the two are interconnected. Classroom management includes discipline management. These actions include room decorations, classroom settings, chair arrangements, speaking to learners, how learner responses are handled, setting classroom rules and routines and the communication of these rules to learners (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline, but separately from classroom instruction (Egeberg et al., 2016). The educator's role in classroom management is emphasised by Sullivan et al. (2014), who establishes that learners' different behaviours "have more to do with factors within a teacher's control than with those located within the student" (p. 53).

Skilful educators experience fewer disciplinary problems, because they are good at instituting procedures in the classroom that maximise the time available for instruction, which minimises disciplinary problems. These educators make sure that the lesson is not too fast or too slow and they ensure learner task-on behaviours, for instance (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017). Management issues can be far less problematic when educators employ a stimulating curriculum integrated with engaging and supportive guidance (Košir et al., 2015).

Oyira et al. (2016) suggest that possible behaviour challenges must be addressed as early as the planning stage of the lesson, where educators need to use methods that further the academic success of all the learners and also prevent behaviour or learning problems (Mahvar et al., 2018). Bechuke and Oduaran (2020) believe that a lack of effective planning for possible behaviour challenges can be the reason why a lesson fails because, in a chaotic classroom, teaching and learning cannot be optimised. Therefore, educators should plan and incorporate classroom activities to support the appropriate behaviour of the learners.

Educator intervention in the discipline process must be based on the changing of behaviour (Erchul, 2013) and the development of the child as a whole (WCED, 2007). Schools must teach learners the difference between behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable and how negative behaviour disrupts educator-learner relationships. Learners must learn that the breaking of school rules is a negative action and a disruption of mutually acceptable relationships. School rules and regulations are important for a positive school climate, but they must be enforced by a positive educator-learner relationship (WCED, 2007).

### **3.2.2 The learner-centred classroom**

Holtman et al. (2018) argue that South Africa encourages learner-centred teaching techniques where the interest of the learners, their prior knowledge, interests, strengths, and linguistic abilities are recognised. Keiler (2018) describes the learner-centred classroom as one where

the learners are actively engaged in the learning process and their own learning and educators are mostly facilitators. Group work is a learner-centred approach practised often in schools; it can pose a disciplinary problem if not managed well. Learners must often move around in class to discuss topics, and this can be challenging to the educators (Du Plessis et al., 2012). With effective procedures, planning and educator-learner relationships, these methods can be successful (Jacobs et al, 2016). Learner-centred approaches prefer an open classroom with a variety of teaching aids. Ito and Yokoyama (2018) describe open classrooms as spaces where learners can move around freely between spaces for activities. Kirk (2017) states that such classrooms are flexible areas without the usual desks in fixed rows, which provide opportunities for individual learning and instruction. Pictures, appropriate language, music, posters and a wide range of magazines that cater for diversity strengthen the open classroom. Educators must make time to acknowledge and discuss religion and culture, and teach the learner to respect other people's points of view (DBE, 2012b).

The open classroom takes the diverse needs of learning into consideration, and addresses individual needs and competencies to encourage self-regulation and autonomy (Prain et al, 2013). The open classroom, however, has disadvantages. A national survey in Japan revealed that 6.5% of all school children and 7.7% of elementary school children displayed notable behaviour and learning problems although they had no intellectual disabilities. The openness of the classroom may distract some learners and, when planning for an open classroom, this must be taken into consideration (Ito & Yokoyama, 2018).

To create an open classroom climate, two important components are necessary, namely 1) the relationship between learners and 2) the relationship between learners and educators. Relationships between educators and learners are steered in a positive direction if learners can voice their opinion without fear while being taken seriously. Such a climate contributes to learner involvement in class activities, motivation and improved educator-learner relationships (Dijkstra, 2015; Geboers, 2013; Furrer et al., 2014; Keating, & Janmaat 2016). The point of departure to manage discipline in schools must be based on the educator-learner relationship as a prerequisite for effective classroom management. Learners must learn to value the educator-learner relationship (WCED, 2007). Bechuke and Oduaran (2020) propose good planning and teaching and learning processes to manage the open classroom effectively. Glasser (2009) also emphasises that challenging learner behaviour can be managed through proper planning of the lesson.

The open classroom prepares learners to be the leaders of tomorrow, which will subsequently be discussed.

### **3.2.3 The open classroom and citizen education**

The open classroom is closely connected to citizenship education, which brings the fact that the learners of today are the leaders of tomorrow into focus (cf. 3.4). Due to the erosion of socially acceptable behaviour, there is renewed interest in citizenship education (Wanders et al., 2019). Worldwide, many countries appeal to schools to enhance and promote the knowledge of learners about responsible citizenship (Eurydice Reports, 2017). Citizenship education includes the relevance of a positive and open climate in schools that will prepare learners for life after school (Geboers et al. 2013; Schulz et al. 2018). It uses hands-on activities to teach learners citizenship skills that can have long-term effects on positive citizenship once they have left school (Keating, & Janmaat. 2016). An open classroom climate enhances civic competencies and paves the way for improved dialogue, discussions and positive interpersonal relationships around the roles of responsible future citizens (Geboers et al. 2013; Isac et al., 2014; Keating, & Janmaat, 2016). A willingness to participate in classroom discussions stimulates the further willingness to be involved in communities and societies to a greater extent in later life (Koskimaa, & Rapeli 2015; Levinsen & Carsten, 2015). Apart from facilitating learning, educators can play a key role in assisting learners to achieve their potential and develop into productive and responsible citizens (Allen & Kelly, 2015). If citizenship education is integrated into the school curriculum, it can be the driving force behind the United Nations' attempts at attaining a sustainable developmental goal (UNESCO, 2019). Global citizenship education will empower learners to become more tolerant, inclusive, secure and non-violent members of society, while fostering good relationships (Harshman & Augustine, 2013; Tawil, 2013). The citizenship curriculum should create opportunities for learners to practise and display relationship-building in their communities (ISTE, 2018).

Classroom management is not only the educator's responsibility: learners should also play a role in this. Educators must endeavour to engage learners in classroom management.

### **3.2.4 Class representatives or mentors**

There are many other activities that educators can put in place to enhance classroom management and facilitate the improvement of discipline. Research done by Makhoul et al. (2012) suggests that youth mentors (YMs) can play an important role as liaison officers between educators and learners. YMs understand the learner and their situations better and can identify with their feelings. YMs assist with classroom control, spend time with the learners and answer questions that they are not free to ask their educators. Learners identify with these YMs and relate to them more easily. In this way, the YMs can be "narrowing the gap" (p. 919) between educators and learners as a way of creating positive discipline in schools. Carmel and Paul (2015) confirm these notions. Learners feel freer to ask questions to these YMs than

asking their educators, due to the age gap between learners and educators. YMs can assist learners to set an agenda to facilitate their own learning and therefore make learners partners in the learning process.

In contrast to the traditional approach to discipline, a literature study in rural schools done by Lapperts (2012) shows that educators who practice non-violent and relationship-centred approaches to classroom discipline have fewer behavioural problems. This study, among other studies, indicates that disciplinary problems often result from circumstances at home, barriers to learning, trauma and inadequate teaching methods. Not all alternatives to corporal punishment, including detention and suspension, sarcasm and humiliation produce satisfactory results and most educators, as pointed out, still perceive corporal punishment as the only effective way for inculcating discipline (Lapperts, 2012; Riley, 2010). These measures tend to aggravate the problem, however, because they are more harmful in the long term, as they contribute to disrespect for educators and making learners reluctant to go to school (Eriyanti, 2018; Riley, 2010).

### **3.3 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Before 1994, corporal punishment was acknowledged as an important component in the school system when it came to ensuring the discipline of unruly learners and toughening up boys. Educators relied heavily on corporal punishment, and it became deeply rooted in the South African school system as a whole (Veriava, & Power, 2017). When the new democratic South African Constitution came into effect after the democratisation of the South African school system, children's rights came into the spotlight.

#### **3.3.1 Children's rights**

As a result of the new emphasis on children's rights, corporal punishment as a form of behaviour management was abolished in South African schools in 1996 (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). Corporal punishment conflicted with the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996, which affirms that "everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way" (South Africa, 1996b, p. 6). Dovetailing with this, the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996c) states that "no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a learner to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution" (South Africa, 1996b, p. 6).

South Africa distinguishes between two different forms of punishment that are in violation of children's rights, namely 1) corporal or physical punishment and 2) degrading and humiliating punishment (Mayisela, 2017). In his judgement against corporal punishment in the

Constitutional Court, judge Pius Langa concluded that corporal punishment was both degrading and humiliating (Skelton, 2015).

While showing respect for children's rights, educators are expected to design new and adequate ways to deal with discipline (Chisholm as cited in Maphosa & Shumba 2010; Marais and Meier (2010). Previously, corporal punishment was the preferred way of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom, but it is no longer allowed.

### **3.3.2 What is corporal punishment? (cf. 1.1)**

The Departmental document entitled *Alternative to Corporal Punishment*, defines corporal punishment as "any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him or her. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling or hitting a child with a hand or with an object; denying or restricting a child's use of the toilet; denying meals, drink, heat, and shelter; pushing or pulling a child with force; forcing the child to do exercise" (DBE, 2000, p. 6).

### **3.3.3 Arguments for corporal punishment (cf. 1.1)**

After corporal punishment was outlawed, learner discipline deteriorated drastically (Foncha et al., 2017; Maphosa & Shumba 2010; Ngubane, 2018; Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014), suggesting that educators were unable to exercise effective disciplinary measures to combat indiscipline (Maphosa & Shumba 2010; Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014; Ngubane, 2018).

Even though the Department of Basic Education (DBE), in their endeavour to assist with the management of discipline in schools, introduced a document entitled *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* in 2000 (Mayisela, 2017), research claimed that indiscipline in schools continued to grow (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Marais & Meier, 2010). Despite the new initiative, as proposed by the education department, academic performance and discipline deteriorated rapidly and educators were losing hope (Olivier, 2013). Alternatives to corporal punishment such as sarcasm, humiliation, detention and suspension did not bring about effective results but often aggravated the situation (Eriyanti, 2018). Many educators reverted to corporal punishment to deter the escalation of indiscipline (Lapperts, 2012).

The abandonment of corporal punishment leads to poor discipline with indiscipline as the result (Ferreira et al., as cited in Shaikhmag, & Assan, 2014; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). The unfortunate situation is that educators today often fear that if they relate to learners in a friendly way, it would lead to a loss of authority in their classrooms (Mokhele, 2006). Mokhele further states that educators indicated that it was much easier to discipline learners employing corporal punishment, while maintaining this approach to discipline in the classrooms was less



time consuming and more effective, and teaching could proceed unhindered. Research done by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) summarised the situation as follows: in the past, learners who were reprimanded and beaten took their educators seriously and tried to behave better. Today, learners know that they cannot be beaten, and because human rights are overemphasised, they feel liberated and are not scared of their educators anymore. Educators feel humiliated if they want to reprimand a learner when the learner tells “you in the face that you are abusing him or her. In the eyes of our learners, we are now weak as far as maintaining discipline is concerned” (p. 393). There is an observable trend that learners, because they know that corporal punishment has been abolished and are nurtured in their human rights values, have the right to rebel against authority without any consequences.

Smit (2013) accentuates that educators feel weakened because corporal punishment was banned, and they are not sufficiently trained to apply alternative forms of discipline in the classroom.

### **3.3.4 Moral arguments against corporal punishment (cf. 1.1)**

Not only do legal considerations necessitate the abolition of corporal punishment, but moral arguments viewing corporal punishment as a form of child abuse, strengthen this decision (Mayisela, 2017). Corporal punishment is viewed as the most common form of violence against children and may be the cause of asthma, obesity, arthritis, cardiovascular disease, neoplasia and a decrease in the volume of grey matter in the brain (Mayisela, 2017). Psychologically, corporal punishment causes aggression, violent behaviour, antisocial behaviour, anxiety disorders and delinquency in children (Bassam et al., 2018; Durrant, & Ensom, 2012). Corporal punishment negatively affects the incorporation of moral values in the behaviour of children (Gershoff, 2002).

Cuartas et al. (2020) report that corporal punishment results in slow cognitive development. Mthanti and Mncube (2014) add to this fear, absenteeism, lesson bunking, anti-social behaviour, negative attitudes, low self-esteem and feelings of revenge and Afifi et al. (2013) and duRivage (2015) point out that several studies show a significant connection between physical punishment and mental disorders, substance abuse and personality disorders. Lenta (2012) asserts that corporal punishment feeds violent behaviour because learners perceive it as the right thing to do.

### **3.3.5 Corporal punishment and violence**

There is a serious need for effective learner discipline management in schools today (Chonco, 2019). School premises have been turned into sites of violence; not only among learners, but

between learners and educators as well as among rival schools (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). Gangs and gangsterism cause violence on school premises as well as violence between schools (De Wet, 2016; Nkosi-Malobane, 2019).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (comprising 37 countries) compared violence in South African schools with member countries of the OECD. It became clear that South Africa led the way when it came to school violence, including bullying, intimidation, vandalism, verbal abuse by educators, violent theft, physical assault and injuries and drug and substance abuse (Gous, 2019).

The management of learner behaviour is important, because indiscipline not only harms the well-being of educators and learners, but also the academic progress of the learners.

### **3.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGING LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS**

“The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.” Nelson Mandela (Tolentino, 2019).

The children of a country are seen as the leaders of tomorrow, for they are the human resources that must replace the older generation (Tolentino, 2019). For this reason, it is not only necessary to preserve the children, but also to discipline them in an attempt to build good citizenship (Foncha et al., 2017). Indiscipline is not conducive for co-existence in a society and must be managed effectively (Clinard & Meier, 2015). If proper discipline is not executed, learners become the victims, and teaching and learning deteriorate (Olivier, 2013).

Schools in South Africa are becoming more dangerous and violent (Daniel, 2018). Learner indiscipline in the classroom deprives other learners from learning, since educators must spend valuable teaching time on managing behaviour and dealing with discipline issues (Wolhuter & Russo, 2013; Chonco, 2019). Ineffective management of discipline in the classroom leads to ineffective schools (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012).

Globally, and in South Africa, classroom discipline is a prerequisite for functionality (Ouma et al., 2013; Eshetu, 2014; Van Wyk & Pelsner, 2014; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). Effective discipline is widely acknowledged as a primary requirement when it comes to accomplishing successful teaching and learning in the school environment so as to enhance the academic progress of the learners (Gitome et al., 2013; Eshetu, 2014; Njoroge & Nyabuto, 2014; Du Plessis, 2015; Simba et al., 2016; Masingi, 2017), while discipline is important for schools to achieve academic success (Masingi, 2017; Njoroge & Nyabuto, 2014). Disciplined learners conform to rules and regulations (Ali et al., 2014) and thus ensure, among others, an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (cf. 2.4; 2.6). For effective learning to

take place, a controlled classroom environment, positive educator-learner relationships and learner collaboration are necessary (Mardiyah, 2019), as described in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.4; 2.6). Teaching implies human interactions, and for this reason, educator-learner relationships can make a significant contribution to the creation of a conducive learning environment (Ramani et al., 2018). Positive educator-learner relationships have a snowball effect on the teaching and learning environment, because it is based on reciprocal respect between educators and learners. Respect creates a safe atmosphere where learners feel welcome and are prepared to get involved in classroom activities. Positive educator-learner relationships assist educators to deal with discipline more effectively (García-Moya et al., 2019). If educators provide a strong, supportive and healthy educator-learner relationship, it contributes towards the healthy self-concept development of all learners in school (Wang et al., 2013). Better learner performance may improve self-concept (Huang, 2011) and reduce psychological distress in educators and learners. In this way, violence and indiscipline are lessened (Jolliffe et al., 2016). The prevention or minimising of disciplinary problems in schools will facilitate a safe environment conducive to teaching and learning (Belle, 2016).

Disruption in the classroom is a huge problem faced by educators (Simón & Alonso-Tapia, 2016). Research constitutes that one in every three educators in South Africa state that indiscipline in school is a major factor causing a loss of time in the teaching and learning environment (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2012; Chonco, 2019; OECD, 2014). In the United States of America, educators claim that they spend nearly 50% of their time dealing with discipline-related issues (McKenna & Flower, 2014). Managing indiscipline in the classroom is one of the biggest threats facing educators and it is most demanding (Brunila & Siivonen 2016; Närhi et al., 2015)

To manage indiscipline, educators must have a positive relationship with their learners and know them well. By knowing the circumstance of the learners, educators will be able to tell what the reason for learner misconduct is and if the learners need individual intervention (cf. 2.3). (Ali & Gracey, 2013).

Educators with fewer disciplinary problems are usually those who can establish effective classroom procedures and utilise available instruction time effectively (Lopes, & Oliveira, 2017). To lessen the consequences of indiscipline in school, learner behaviour must be managed.

### **3.5 THE CONSEQUENCES OF INDISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

As mentioned, indiscipline, characterised by school violence and aggression, is a prominent issue that has a serious influence on the teaching and learning environment and the

performance of the learners (Mudau, 2014). Aggressive and violent behaviour has become a cause of great concern among role players in the education environment, because it has a destructive effect on the school system (Khumalo, 2019). Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) hold that this leads to a reduction of teaching time, because these behaviours must be attended to, with the result that learners suffer in class.

### **3.5.1 What is indiscipline?**

Naicker (2014) divides indiscipline into three groups, namely “disruption to teaching, defiance and disrespect towards teaching, and educator targeted bullying” (p. 6). These behaviours include extreme “noise, tardiness, showing-off, teasing, irritating or disturbing peers, walking around without permission, incomplete homework, playing with cellular phones, making improper noises, inattentiveness, physical violence and verbal abuse” (p. 6) (Tiwani, 2010; Ali et al., 2014; Magwa, & Ngara, 2014; Alsubaie, 2015; Power, 2016; Masingi, 2017). Burden (2020) and Power (2016) add unnecessary talk, defiance of authority and hostility to the list of aspects of indiscipline.

Indiscipline has serious consequences on 1) the lives of learners, 2) the lives of educators and 3) the economy of the country, as has been indicated.

### **3.5.2 The consequences of indiscipline on the lives of the learners**

Indiscipline impacts negatively on learners not only in school, but sometimes they also carry the consequences with them for the rest of their lives. These behaviours, especially violent behaviour, have physical, psychological and emotional consequences (Khumalo, 2019).

Physical school violence constitutes bullying (Gous, 2019), assaults, rape, corporal punishment and armed robbery (UNESCO, 2017). Psychological violence includes verbal abuse, ridicule, threats and humiliation, while emotional violence includes name-calling, ignoring, rejecting and spreading rumours (Ferrara et al., 2019).

Physical violence is the most obvious form of it at school, and the results are visible in the forms of physical disability and long-term physical or mental ill-health (Ministry of Education (Korea), 2015). Physical violence may also include bruises, fractures, wounds and even death. A significant number of studies confirmed a correlation between corporal punishment and mental health problems (Moran et al., 2017).

Physical and psychological violence have serious emotional consequences for learners. Such children develop a reactive form of attachment disorder, a traumatic stressor-related condition. Children with this disorder find it difficult to bond emotionally with other people and experience

positive emotions. Such children reject physical closeness and, for this reason, are rejected by educators and other learners (Milot et al., 2010; Ministry of Education (Korea), 2015). Other emotional consequences suffered from violent behaviour are lowered self-confidence, depression and proneness to commit suicide. Psychological results of violence influence learners to stay away from school, debilitate their ability to concentrate and participate in class and eventually force them to drop out of school (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014)

Worldwide, education is a strong forecast of the well-being of a country. In South Africa, the school situation does not predict a healthy picture. The fact that only 52% of grade 12 learners remain enrolled for the full year is not a good prediction for well-being (Weybright et al., 2017). School dropout in South Africa has reached crisis proportions, where nearly 60% of all learners starting grade 1 in public schools will drop out of school before completing grade 12 (Makou, & Wilkinson, 2018; Smillie & Mabotja, 2019; DBE, 2015b). Chaudry and Wimer (2016) indicate that learner repetition and dropping out of school were twice as high among poor high school learners than among their wealthier peers. A survey done by Amnesty International found that out of every 100 learners that started school in South Africa, only 50-60 would make it up to matric and only 40-50 would eventually pass matric (Amnesty International, 2020). Moore (2017) describes the reasons for the dropout epidemic as complex and multifaceted. Learner factors that lead to school dropout are drug abuse and early parenthood, whereas “ineffective discipline procedures, retention, educator-learner relationships, ineffective learning environments, school climate and school vision” are school factors that prompt learners to drop out (Moore, 2017, p. 65). Alcohol and drug abuse are two of the main reasons why learners drop out of school (Esch et al., 2014; Patrick et al., 2016). Jaafar et al, (2013) underline this by stating that high school absenteeism and dropout figures of learners are associated with a large range of problems such as risky sexual behaviour, teenage pregnancy and alcohol and substance abuse. Substance abuse also relates to deviant behaviour and reduce the time learners spend on schoolwork and attending school. Eventually, learners lose interest in obtaining academic goals and drop out of school (DuPont et al., 2013).

Amongst others, Gubbels et al. (2019) identified inadequate workloads given to learners, poor classroom management and non-effective school discipline methods as some of the reasons why learners drop out of school. A negative and unsafe classroom climate also play a role in school dropout and high absenteeism among learners. The DBE (2015b) reports that more than 18% of learners at school were subjected to violence, verbal abuse and corporal punishment in 2012. Burton and Leoschut (2013) add that 22.2% of learners experienced physical violence while at school during 2012.

Indiscipline in schools not only causes learners to drop out, but is one of the major reasons why educators leave the profession (Mampane, 2012).

### **3.5.3 The consequences of indiscipline on the lives of the educators**

Globally and in South Africa, educators are reported to be demoralised (Santoro, 2011; Wang, 2013). Santoro (2012) explains that demoralisation is caused by social factors and external conditions such as crime and violence on the school premises. Lightfoot (2016) reports that, in England, half the educators interviewed stated that they planned to leave the profession within five years. Uncooperative learners and little or no assistance from parents caused an increase in educators' stress levels and eventually forced them to resign (Mudau, 2014; Greenberg et al., 2016).

A significant number of educators leave the teaching profession for various reasons (Mampane, 2012; O'Connor & Mooney, 2014). Wolhuter and Russo (2013) argue that matters relating to learner discipline pose great challenges for educators (Beebeejaun-Muslum, 2014; Power, 2016), while indiscipline in schools is one of the factors that leads to educators leaving the profession (Singh & Steyn, 2014). Educators from a high school in Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal, reported that disciplining learners was very hard, because they ridiculed and swore at them in front of other people (Miya, 2017). Mudau (2014) states that indiscipline, unsafe school premises and school violence are some of the major reasons why educators leave the profession.

O'Connor and Mooney (2014) and Grobler (2018) emphasise that, if the school system fails to assist educators suffering from psychological trauma, it will have negative effects for both educators and learners. Educators develop stress disorders because they are not able to teach effectively and engage learners in their studies. Eventually, educators leave the profession.

Bechuke and Oduaran (2020) underline that educators' frustration in managing learner misconduct is "common practice" (p. 92) and on the rise; they therefore plead for all possible assistance from other role players before schools turn into warzones and inflate the disciplinary problem. Educators become demoralised, which affects teaching and learning, and a sense of helplessness urges educators to revert to more forceful physical forms of discipline (Govender & Sookrajh, 2014), even though corporal punishment is banned in South African schools (Magaba, 2018).

As stated earlier, educators report that the most difficult part of their work is to deal with indiscipline, and they feel unqualified and unprepared to deal effectively with such behaviour (He & Cooper, 2011; Reyneke, 2013b). Schleicher (2012) and Eun (2011) reveal that, because

of the cultural environment that constantly changes around the role and functioning of schools, educator roles become more demanding. The “one size fits all” model (Gabriel 2010, p. 86) for educators' training is inadequate, as it fails to create educator proficiency and participation (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Gabriel, 2010; Reyneke, 2013b). Insufficient educator education when it comes to equipping educators with cultural strategies to deal with indiscipline aggravates the disciplinary problem (Mayisela, 2017).

Educators complain that learners are disobedient and ill-mannered and determine the school agenda for themselves, because they have too many rights; for many learners, the principle of *in loco parentis* no longer applies. Since corporal punishment has been outlawed, educators feel powerless to deal with discipline in schools (Mampane, 2012). Nomusa Cembali, South African Democratic Educators Union (SADTU) spokesperson, emphasises that educators leave the profession because they are unable to handle the violence (Masweneng, 2018).

The teaching profession has been and is still known to be very stressful (Kovess-Masféty et al., 2007; Mampane, 2012; Greenberg et al., 2016; Newberry & Allsop, 2017). A large percentage of educators have reported high levels of work-related stress, which impacts severely on their health (Shernoff et al., 2011; Segalo, & Rambuda, 2018). It is not surprising that educators suffer from abnormal stress levels due to significant challenges such as overcrowding, limited resources, lack of support from the DBE and ongoing indiscipline (Shernoff et al., 2011), so that they are taken up in hospitals due to stress (Miya, 2017). To aggravate matters, educators in poverty-stricken areas must provide psychological support to learners as an additional burden. This extra burden often impacts negatively on their professional well-being (Setlhare et al., 2017; Trangos, 2017).

The National Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (NEEDU, 2013, p. 15) stipulates that district offices and the circuit must oversee “school visits, classroom observation, consultation, cluster meetings, suitable feedback reports” and other means of providing an enabling environment and organising provision and support for the professional development of managers, educators and administrative staff members, but this oversight often does not happen (Van der Berg et al., 2016). This unsupportive and discouraging environment adds to educator stress and impacts educators' well-being and job satisfaction (Evans et al., 2019). Negative job satisfaction (Split et al. as cited in Kennedy & Haydon, 2021) not only weakens the education system, but contributes to educators leaving the profession (Child, 2017).

Educators must be able to trust their colleagues, administrators and managers to decrease their stress levels, but dissatisfying relationships among the school community causes stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction and low commitment to learners (Van Maele, & Van Houtte, 2012).

Mostly under-performing schools are subjected to high educator turnover. This may cause weak academic progress among learners, while the latter promotes high educator turnover (Ronfeldt et al, 2013) which, in poorly performing schools, leads to further disruption of the schools' performance (Greenberg et al., 2016).

Another effect of high educator turnover is that the previously developed educator-learner relationship is short-lived. It leaves learners rootless, causing learner achievement to suffer, because educator-learner relationships are damaged or never realised to the full. Well established educator-learner relationships have been identified as a major factor towards improving learner performance (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). When educators leave a school, they take their experience and knowledge with them, thus harming the school climate and effecting teaching and learning (Simon & Johnson, 2015). High educator turnover is a notable factor in educator shortages in urban and rural areas (Ingersoll & May, 2012; Goldhaber et al., 2015; Ingersoll et al., 2018).

The primary reason why educators stay in the teaching profession is seen as positive educator-learner relationships (Veldman et al., 2013). Mokhele (as cited in Segalo & Rambuda, 2018) states that, for educators to stay in the profession, the educator-learner relationship must develop well to achieve educational outcomes. Juvonen (as cited in Brinkworth et al., 2018) argues that good educator-learner relationships foster a large array of health benefits and motivation for educators (DBE, 2015a). To develop effective educator-learner relationships, educators must endeavour to understand and know their learners' cultural and social backgrounds, as indicated, to help them understand the reasons why learners behave the way they do (Gordon & Browne, 2014). Education leadership must endeavour to equip educators at schools with skills to cope with teaching and learning so as to prevent educators from leaving the profession (Burns, & Lawrie, 2015).

Considering these matters, it becomes clear that educators suffer as much as learners and require effective alternative approaches to discipline in their classrooms. Not only do educators and learners suffer due to indiscipline, but the country as a whole is affected by bad behaviour.

#### **3.5.4 The consequences of indiscipline for the economy of the country**

Learner dropout rates influence the economic growth of a country. A systematic country diagnostic report (World Bank, 2018) concluded that insufficient skills stemming from weak



educational outcomes were some of the key constraints to economic progress and growth in South Africa. Low school completion and high dropout rates undermined the success of money spent on education in South Africa (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019).

Repeating grades and dropping out of school go hand in hand (Andrew, 2014; Smillie & Mabotja, 2019). A report compiled by ReSEP (Research on Socio-Economic Policy) (Hofmeyr, 2019) produced by the Department of Economics at Stellenbosch University, estimates that over a million learners per year repeat grades. The cost, based on 2018 data, is approximately R20-billion, that is, 8% of the total budget for education. Dropouts add another R4-billion per year. There is also a huge economic complication in terms of loss of income for the dropouts, the society and the country when learners do not obtain a qualification at tertiary level or at least pass matric (Smillie & Mabotja, 2019; Van der Berg et al., 2019).

High educator turnover can be very costly for a country, because money must be spent on recruiting and hiring as well as the training and induction of new staff instead of academic services and the development of programmes (Haynes, 2014; Sørensen & Ladd, 2018). The continuous replacement of existing staff is destructive and very costly for any organisation (Greenberg et al., 2016; Mampane, 2012).

It is, therefore, necessary to know and understand the reasons for indiscipline.

### **3.6 REASONS FOR INDISCIPLINE**

Discipline in schools is the combined responsibility of all the stakeholders in education and no single aspect can be blamed for indiscipline in schools. A combination of elements combines to determine the state of discipline in schools (Reyneke, 2013b).

Yuan and Che (2012) hold that educators must endeavour to understand the reasons for learners' misbehaviours. If educators show insight into the indiscipline of their learners, they will be better equipped to construct conditions that deter troublesome behaviour. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1976) emphasises the fact that human development is shaped by a complex process of reciprocal interactions of environmental components that take place over time (Ettekal, & Mahoney, 2017). To understand troublesome behaviour, the educator must take the classroom, the school, family, the individual, the community and the whole society into consideration, because learner misbehaviour does not happen in isolation. After considering all the options, educators might find it easier to pursue ways of coping with indiscipline effectively (Yuan & Che, 2012).

Ngwokabuenui (2015) distributes the causes for indiscipline across three levels: 1) learner-, 2) school-based and 3) society-based. These will be discussed briefly, with the addition of poverty as a topic in its own right, due to its tremendous effect on the behaviour of learners and the fact that it includes all three of the mentioned categories. Reyneke (2013b) adds parent-based and government-based causes for indiscipline, which I will add here as fourth and fifth categories.

### **3.6.1 Learner-based causes of indiscipline**

Learners displaying poor study methods, while not making satisfactory progress as a result, become restless and inattentive in class, resulting in indiscipline.

Peer pressure among learners is another aggravating factor because learners want to belong to a group and in many groups: there are leaders and followers (Jinot, 2018), and often learners misbehave because of the pressure from the group. They feel they must conform to the group, because they fear exclusion if they do not (Njoroge & Nyabuto, 2014).

Another aggravating personal factor explained by Louw and Louw, (2014) is that these learners in secondary schools are in their “stormy” adolescent years (p. 304) characterised by mood swings and indulging in high-risk behaviours. They tend to challenge authority and want to decide for themselves what they want to do and believe, and what not. This often leads to clashes in the classroom, making it difficult for educators to exercise discipline.

Secondary school learners in Africa and also in South Africa are ignorant of education and the education system (Modiba, 2015). They are unaware of the importance of education, bunk classes and do not do their homework (Jinot, 2018).

Learners not only display unacceptable behaviour inside the classroom, but also on the school premises (Tiwani, 2010; Chonco, 2019). One of the reasons for indiscipline is the abuse of alcohol and drugs (Ncontsa, & Shumba, 2013). The Youth Risk Behaviour Survey in South Africa reported that 49% of youth consumed alcohol while 25% of young people admitted to binge drinking (Reddy et al. 2012). Akeso clinics (Parker, 2019) compiled statistics showing that alcohol consumption in South Africa was twice the worldwide norm and 80% of male youth deaths were related to the use of alcohol.

SACE (2011b) describes drug deals, assaults, rape, shootings and murder on the school premises as forms of violence and as crucial concerns. During a talk on Cape Talk Radio, Angie Motshega, the Minister of Basic Education in South Africa, regarded reports of school stabbings and attacks on school premises as of major concern and called an urgent meeting

with law enforcement departments to discuss school-based violence on school premises (Daniel, 2018). In a collaborative agreement with the DBE, the police undertook to intensify school-based crime prevention by implementing specific programmes for boys and addressing the unprotectedness of girls so as to improve their access to sports and cultural events. (Jordaan, 2019).

### **3.6.2 School-based causes of indiscipline**

The late-coming and absenteeism of educators, leaving learners unsupervised, in addition to poor teaching methods, are major reasons for indiscipline. Furthermore, educators disregard the fact that their attitudes and conduct in the class influence learner behaviour. For this reason, they do not model socially acceptable behaviour and do not lead by example (Van Breda, 2014). Many educators lack effective classroom management skills and therefore feel disempowered and are unwilling to discipline learners. This results in learners displaying indiscipline (Jinot, 2018)

Ineffective school policies and unrealistic school rules combined with weak school leadership also cause indiscipline (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). Effective school policies must be put in place and educators and learners must adhere to them (Jinot, 2018). Yaroson (as cited in Ngwokabuenui, 2015) explain that school policies and regulations (see SACE, 2020) and rules must guide educators to enforce discipline, but if these rules and regulations are too many and not implementable, it breeds indiscipline. The school principal, in cooperation with school management, must be the cornerstone of effective discipline management (Belle, 2014). All the stakeholders in the school environment should work together by agreeing on rules and regulations, discipline policies, work ethics and codes of conduct for learners and educators to ensure effective discipline in schools (Ngoqo, 2016; Reyneke, 2013a; SACE, 2020).

Another factor aggravating the already deteriorating discipline in schools in South Africa is the overcrowded classroom, which exceeds the maximum of 40 learners per class (UNESCO, 2012). This results in ineffective teaching and learning as well as bored and uninterested learners, affecting the discipline in the classroom in a negative way (Reyneke, 2013a).

Labelling learners negatively is another reason for indiscipline, because it causes low self-esteem. Such learners eventually believe that they cannot progress. They become rude, disrespectful and uncooperative in class (Ngwokabuenui, 2015).

Wolhuter and Russo (2013) explicate that educators are battling with learner discipline and do not know how to deal with indiscipline effectively, because they are not equipped with the necessary skills given that they are not trained to do so (Garner, 2014; Freeman et al., 2014;

Mahvar et al., 2018). There is a considerable global and South African concern that educator training programmes do not provide adequate training for the needs of educators to be met (Korthagen, 2010). This gap can be filled by incidental learning through off-campus educational outings that “appear to hold the promise of developing caring dispositions, motivation and passion towards the profession, and intention to transform classroom interaction as main drivers of teacher professional identity” (Steenekamp et al., 2018, p. 7).

Given this, it is important to note that educators identify skills training to cope with indiscipline as a vital need (Shernoff et al., 2016). To ensure effective teaching and learning, educators must acquire a collection of skills to improve educator-learner relationships and classroom management so as to cope with indiscipline (Bechuke & Oduaran, 2020). School management must provide opportunities for educators to collaboratively solve problems, be assisted by their peers, be assisted through co-teaching and be encouraged to promote cooperative learning (Makoelle & Van der Merwe, 2014).

In this way, schools can contribute to the development of learners and educators in schools as well as outside or after school so as to ensure participative citizens and promote well-being (Wanders et al., 2019).

### **3.6.3 Society-based causes of indiscipline**

Societal ills such as corruption and a poor value system, as maintained by the society to which the learners are exposed, gives them no other options to follow. Societies reveal an absence of moral leadership for learners to follow (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). Muhammed and Mohamedunni Alias Musthafa (2015) state that the mass media learners is exposed to contributes to the normalisation of deviant behaviour. The International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA) (Krahé, 2012) confirms this by explaining that some television programmes that learners watch on television promote violence.

Another reason for indiscipline in schools is the perception of violence portrayed by the mass media because it desensitises children. The mass media encourages anti-social behaviour by advocating pornography, substance abuse, aggressive behaviour and the normalisation of deviant sexual behaviour (Tamborini et al. (2018). Children learn social norms by being exposed to influences from the environment and by observing other people (Bandura, 2009). The exposure to mass media violence and anti-social behaviour results in children perceiving real-world violence as less disturbing and even acceptable (Tamborini et al., 2018).

Not only the mass media, but also violence on the school premises influences school violence. Violence in the form of gangs and gangsterism (De Wet, 2016) fuelled by substance abuse is

a common sight on school premises (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). A large number of rural schools experience regular faction wars (Tugli et al., 2014) that disrupt matric examinations Wolhuter and Magubane (2016). Macupe (2019) reports that long-standing arguments between rival adults are fought out on school premises, exposing learners to violence and violent behaviour.

Crime statistics in South Africa disclosed by Bheki Cele, Minister of Police, reveal that from April 2019 to March 2020 19 attempted murders and 9 murders were recorded at schools. During this same period, 345 serious assault cases and 546 common assault cases were opened (SAPS, 2019/2020).

### **3.6.4 Parent-based causes of indiscipline**

The main causes of learner misbehaviour are found in the learners' homes (Oloyede & Adesina, 2013), because the home is the primary institution in which he or she grows up (Noum, 2015).

Mweli (2017), Director-General (DG) of the DBE, blames the indiscipline of learners on a lack of parent involvement. Segalo and Rambuda (2018) hold that parents are central to forming their children's character and promoting their well-being. Robarts (2014) avers those educators see indiscipline as a lack of discipline at home (cf 2.4). Ngcobo (as cited in Kapueja, 2014) explains that discipline at school must be an extension of discipline at home, because the home is its primary source, where the child must learn acceptable behaviour (Noum, 2015; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). Parents are not doing their duty. Learners arrive at school with unacceptable social behaviours, bad manners and a self-centred attitude. (Sax, 2015). Oloyede and Adesina (2013) confirm that the home is the main cause of learner indiscipline since they are not brought up in the right way and due to a lack of discipline at home (Robarts, 2014) (cf. 2.4). Mweli (2017) the DG of the DBE blames the indiscipline of learners on a lack of parent involvement.

Mbibiti (as cited in Kiwale 2017) complains that parents are not the role models they are supposed to be, and behave badly in the presence of their children, but expect them to behave better. Yuan and Che (2012) confirm that we cannot isolate problematic learner behaviour from societal influences, because children imitate what they observe. Learner behaviour in schools reflects the morals of the societies in which they live (Mweli, 2017). The influence of the family must not be underestimated, because learners coming from broken homes, single-parent homes, poor backgrounds and poorly managed home environments usually display behavioural problems at school (Yuan & Che, 2012). Silva et al. (2016) include in the influence of the family on the behaviour of their children domestic violence, lack of guidance from

parents, interference from grandparents, lack of proper guidance from home, conflict between parents and children and the absence of clear rules.

Parenting styles differ and may influence learner behaviour. Some parents are too strict, and the child experiences this as a lack of love, while other parents tend to overprotect their children and allow them to do as they like. Both styles result in unaccepted social behaviour at school.

### **3.6.5 Government-based causes of indiscipline**

Since the abolition of corporal punishment in schools in 1996 the powers of principals and educators to discipline learners were drastically influenced since no effective discipline measures were put in place (Mayisela, 2017). Educators complain that they are efficiently trained to administer other forms of punishment to deal with indiscipline. Educators still prefer corporal punishment (Coetzee et al. as cited in Reyneke, 2013b) and that the department does not assist them concerning the discipline of learners (Ramalepe, 2014). Expulsion of learners never realises even after serious misconduct (Lessing & De Witt, 2011). Complaints such as learner abuse by educators and the use of corporal punishment are not followed up by educators (SACE, 2012/2013).

Maphosa and Shumba (2010) hold that children's rights (as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa), misinterpreted by learners, give them more rights than educators. Learners are aware of this, and they fear no form of punishment. This way of thinking on the side of the learners results in a power play between them and educators.

Pahad and Graham (2012) emphasise that under-resourced schools, where there is a lack of furniture, cloakrooms and textbooks, cause discipline-related issues, because the physical environment of the school is not conducive for teaching and learning. The DBE (2012a) reports that not enough textbooks were delivered in 2012, resulting in a court case against the Department. Mgwangqa and Lawrence (as cited in Reyneke, 2013b) report that under-resourced schools have no facilities for learners to take part in sports and other extra-curricular activities, which leaves them bored, forcing them to involve themselves with antisocial activities in their communities.

### **3.6.6 The effect of poverty on learners and their behaviour**

As early as 1995, the African National Congress (ANC) (1995) stated that rural South African schools are under-resourced and marginalised. Today, nearly 30 years later, learner achievement and educational standards in rural communities show little or no improvement (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

Many African countries, as in South Africa, are subjected to poverty, which poses severe challenges to rural areas (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). The influence of poverty on families and especially children are devastating and long-lasting in most cases (Carter, 2014). Poverty creates poverty, and to break the cycle, education must be a high priority (Carter, 2014; Mihai et al., 2015; Nortje, 2017). Mihai et al. (2015) explain that effective education can make the difference around breaking open the poverty trap, and Du Plessis (2014) confirms this when he states that a good education can break the poverty pattern for learners in rural areas. Effective and supportive educator-learner relationships can be a protective factor here and help learners escape the poverty cycle and make academic progress (Teo, 2018).

Poverty is on the rise in South Africa (Stats SA, 2017). Over 60% of children in South Africa live in poverty (Stats SA, 2020). Chris Klopper (2020), chief executive officer of the South African Educator's Union, states that only 5% of South African schools are affluent. Poverty in rural schools has persisted over the past years (Sartorius, & Sartorius, 2016; Du Toit, 2017).

Various external risk factors play a role around aggravating discipline issues in classrooms. An external factor that must be considered in any discussion on discipline in South African schools is the reality of poverty, especially in rural areas. Lehohla (2017) argues that poverty is on the rise in rural areas in South Africa and, as a result, learner misconduct is aggravated (Jensen, 2009; Boroughs et al., 2010; Stats SA, 2017). Research indicates that impoverished areas have a higher risk for violence, abuse of drugs and alcohol, violence at school and in the community, gangsterism, theft, rape, HIV and other diseases, vandalism, early parenthood and death of parents (Appleby & Lorinc, 2008; Florian & Linklater, 2010). Research done by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) found that poverty is a major factor in crime and violence.

These facts indicate that poverty plays a major role in most South African schools. Learners in rural schools are at a disadvantage due to socio-economic realities such as the lack of basic sanitation, roads, electricity and properly equipped schools. Parents are mostly illiterate and unable to supply their children with school necessities (Du Plessis, 2014).

Rural schools such as those in the uMzinyathi district, where the research took place, are situated in poor socio-economic areas. The uMzinyathi district's socio-economic rating is quintile 1, which means it is one of the poorest districts in the country. Caleb (2017) reports that 87% of schools in quintiles 1-3 have been classified as no-fee ones, which is an indication of the poverty level of learners there. Consider here that poor socio-economic status is linked to behavioural problems in learners (Nortje, 2017).

Stofile et al. (2011) describe poverty as a major barrier to the education of children and the participation of parents in the education of their children (Wiseman, 2012), and there is an undeniable link between poverty and the standard of education in South Africa (Nortje, 2017). Not only does poverty impact seriously on education, but it also considerably influences the behaviour of learners (Ngwokabuenui, 2015).

Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) state that provincial governments cannot supply rural schools with financial support with a view to physical and human resources, with the result that disadvantaged communities often lack professional help and support from government structures (Lessing and De Witt, 2011; Gilili, 2020). In general, rural and semirural schools are remote and often underdeveloped, resulting in a lack of proper sanitation, water, roads, electricity and technology as well as overcrowded classrooms with insufficient seating space (Beckman & Gallo, 2015). These aspects impact severely on the emotional well-being and motivation of educators, resulting in educator stress. When educators feel that they are not capable of teaching effectively and not engaging learners in their studies, they leave the profession or are absent for long periods, as indicated (O'Connor & Mooney, 2014; Grobler, 2018). This results in ineffective teaching and learning as well as bored and uninterested learners which, again, affect the discipline in the classroom in a negative way (Reyneke, 2013a).

Parents in rural areas often cannot provide their children with the basic necessities for school due to poverty, because they often do unskilled work and have lower levels of education (Stofile et al., 2011; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Low-income parents often suffer from depression, reduced self-esteem and a feeling of powerlessness when it comes to coping with the demands of school and parenthood (Jensen, 2009, 2013; Nortje, 2017). Although the inclusive education policy in South Africa, the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) (DBE, 2001), states that parent support and involvement are important to ensure successful education, but many parents believe that education is mainly the educator's responsibility and that he or she must teach and support their children (Marais & Meier, 2010; Modisaotsile, 2012). This, and parental non-involvement in learner education, can result in learners developing indiscipline (Reyneke, 2013b; DBE, 2010; Swart & Phasha, 2016). The South African Schools Act of 1996 (South Africa, 1996a) states that parents need to form a large percentage of the school governing bodies (SGBs) and take part in compiling and enforcing a learner code of conduct to give guidance to educators on learner discipline. However, different social backgrounds and family structures (Chimere-Dan, 2015) along with low functional literacy levels of the parents make it difficult to draw up and enforce a code of conduct (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Reyneke, 2013b).



Jensen (2009, 2013) and Reyneke, (2013b) point out that children raised in poverty have limited exposure to proper ways of acceptable social behaviour and experience gaps in politeness and graceful social manners due to a lack of proper parental involvement in their upbringing. Very often, these children tend to be impatient and impulsive and behave in an inappropriate way emotionally and, in doing so, frustrate and irritate educators (Nortje, 2017). Educators condemn this kind of behaviour and label the learners as ill-behaved. The reasons for this vicious circle of learner indiscipline are not always understood (LeeFon et al., 2013).

Research demonstrates that low family income and poverty linked with low socio-economic status are coupled with behavioural problems in adolescents (Fitzsimons et al., 2017; Mazza et al., 2017), and that these aspects engender disturbed peer relationships (Fitzsimons et al., 2017). Evans and Miguel (as cited in Kagema & Kagoiya, 2018) established that poverty is an important factor in indiscipline. If parents are not able to fulfil the basic needs of their children, the latter may revert to prostitution and theft as well as bunk classes to do odd jobs for an income. Kaiser et al. (2017) suggest that the financial difficulties of families force parents to focus on present financial needs, leading to the neglect of their supportive roles in educating their children. The inevitable result is behavioural problems. It must however be noted that poverty alone is not always the cause of indiscipline, but it does to a certain extent: it causes it in combination with socio-economic factors and poor parenting skills (Andresen & Meiland, 2017), as mentioned. Mabitla (as cited in Naicker, 2014) states that learners who do not enjoy a safe and nurturing family life may turn to gangs to find an identity, which usually results in indiscipline.

Leroy and Symes (as cited in Du Plessis, 2014) suggest that poverty is a major at-risk factor. Uneducated parents, abuse, neglect, homelessness, unemployment and parents moving around to find work hamper the academic progress of learners. Research done by Grimova, (2014) underlines that many learners from disadvantaged areas experience domestic violence and substance abuse in schools as well as dysfunctional families and, according to interviews with the learners from disadvantaged areas, poverty is to blame. Police statistics (SAPS, 2013) confirm these tendencies. Children in rural areas are also more inclined to live with grandparents or without any adult supervision, and 35% of children live with none of their biological parents, whereas this impacts severely on their family life and behaviour (Martin, 2016). Parents must leave home to find employment, which impacts dearly on family relationships and the overall well-being of families and children (Davids, 2009; Davids, & Gouws, 2013).

It must be noted that learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds are not as motivated as are those in more affluent backgrounds to master academic subjects and thus to progress in class (Berger & Archer, 2016; McCoy et al., 2015).

These effects clearly define the impact of poverty on teaching, learning and indiscipline. To enhance the teaching and learning environment, learner behaviour must be managed.

### **3.7 STRATEGIES TO MANAGE LEARNER BEHAVIOUR**

As an alternative to corporal punishment, Mardliyah (2019) suggests that building a “mutually respectful relationship with learners” (p. 7) may have a positive effect on discipline management strategies in the classroom, as described in Chapter 2.

#### **3.7.1 Discipline management entails a whole-school approach**

To manage discipline requires a complete paradigm shift. The emphasis must comprise a move from controlling learner behaviour to a more “developmental approach that equips children with the knowledge and skills to better moderate their own behaviour” (DBE, 2012b, p. 9). Managing discipline must be a whole-school coordinated approach by all the role players (DBE, 2012b).

The school governing body must develop and uphold a school code of conduct that emphasises positive discipline. The principal and the school management team must provide leadership on positive discipline and oversee the implementation of discipline policies. Educators must create a learner-centred classroom to promote orderly teaching and learning so as to deter indiscipline. Not only must parents update themselves on the school’s code of conduct and uphold it, but they must also teach their children respect for the school rules (DBE, 2012b).

Parents must take hands with the school to ensure consistency between the school and home. Researchers such as Maphoso and Mahlo (2014) suggest that parental involvement has a positive correlation with learner academic achievement. Parents can take hands with other community members such as the SGB and other appointed committees to assist them to see to the needs of their children.

All stakeholders in the school environment must strive to implement positive discipline.

### 3.7.2 What is positive discipline?

The DBE (2012b, p. 13) states that positive discipline rests on several principles and describes these as follows.

**Table 3.1: Principles of positive discipline**

| <b>Principles of positive discipline</b>   | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Positive discipline must be holistic       | All aspects of children's development and learning must be understood, because these are interconnected. If educators understand the development of the child, they will understand the reasons for their behaviour.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Positive discipline must be strength-based | All learners have strengths, and discipline must concentrate on building on these. Mistakes must be seen as learning opportunities and not as failures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Positive discipline must be constructive   | Through positive discipline, educators must endeavour to build the learners' self-esteem and confidence. Educators must foster learner independence and build a sense of self-efficacy instead of punishing mistakes. Educators must guide learner behaviour in a positive direction by teaching and modelling acceptable behaviour.                                                                              |
| Positive discipline is inclusive           | Positive discipline respects equal rights and individual differences. Educators must teach according to the needs of each child and know that all learners have the right to the same educational standard within an inclusive classroom. To achieve this, the classroom environment must be adapted to accommodate teaching aids and strategies conducive to inclusive education.                                |
| Positive discipline is proactive           | Discipline measures must aim at assisting learners to succeed in the long term.<br><br>Burden (2020) describes the essence of positive discipline as educators showing concern for the learners by involving them so as to see the consequences of their actions. In doing so, the educators must guide learners to come up with their own solutions to problems. Educators must teach learners to behave better. |
| Positive discipline is participatory       | When learners feel part of the class and the learning process, they are motivated and more eager to participate. Educators must make learners feel welcome by asking their opinion and by including                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|  |                                                                                                |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | them in decisions. When learners feel out of control, they behave in an out-of-control manner. |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 3.7.3 Ways of implementing positive discipline

There are many ways to implement positive discipline. The DBE (2012b) suggests the following strategies,

**Table 3.2: Ways of implementing positive discipline**

| <b>Ways of implementing positive discipline</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus on the positive                           | Educators must support positive behaviour, because this encourages the possibility of learners wanting to repeat that behaviour.                                                                        |
| Educators must set a good example               | Learners observe what people do around them and, if educators model acceptable behaviour, learners have good role models to follow.                                                                     |
| Listen before judging                           | Educators must first endeavour to find out why the learners misbehave before making an issue out of it. Maybe they have a good reason and can explain this.                                             |
| Educators must be fair and consistent           | Avoid showing favouritism. Be fair and consistent by applying the same rules to everyone.                                                                                                               |
| Separate the child from the behaviour           | If a learner made a mistake, it does not make him or her a bad person. Focus on the behaviour and what needs to be done to change the behaviour so that the learner can learn from his or her mistakes. |
| Cultivate mutual respect                        | If educators respect learners and treat them with the dignity it is more likely they will return that respect.                                                                                          |

### 3.7.4 The classroom environment must be conducive to implement positive discipline

The DBE (2012b) advocates that, to implement positive discipline, the classroom environment must be conducive, and suggests the following strategies.

**Table 3.3: Classroom environment**

| <b>Classroom environment</b>                     | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ground rules must be established                 | Involve learners in setting class rules and re-evaluate them regularly if necessary. Make sure that they understand these rules and the logic behind them. The rules must be visible; each learner can get a copy of these.                                                                                                       |
| Implement these rules seriously and consistently | To be fair and consistent, classroom rules should apply to all the learners firmly. Fairness and consistency assist with relationship-building, which is a very important component when implementing discipline procedures.                                                                                                      |
| Focus on building relationships                  | To build relationships, educators must listen to learners and talk to them. Lay a foundation for free and open communication. Respect the learners for whom they are.                                                                                                                                                             |
| Behave in a professional way                     | Educators must prepare thoroughly, be on time, have activities ready for fast learners ready so as to keep them busy while others are still working on their assignments. Be prepared to evaluate your own behaviour and try to improve.                                                                                          |
| Ensure that learning material is appropriate     | Make sure that learning and teaching material is relevant to the topic and facilitate opportunities for learners to practice their skills. Employ a cooperative learning environment where learners learn to work together. Use learning and teaching materials relevant to the needs of all the learners to further inclusivity. |
| Give learners opportunities to succeed           | If learners feel successful, they tend to behave better. Educators must not always acknowledge the learners who do well, but the efforts of slow learners must also be praised and rewarded.                                                                                                                                      |
| Involve the learners                             | Learners must be involved in making rules. If they feel part of the process, they will be more willing to follow these. Make learners responsible for certain duties in the class and stress their responsibility and successful execution of their tasks.                                                                        |
| Make use of professional assistance              | Educators must identify and make use of resources and experts from the community such as psychologists, counsellors, other professionals and social workers, using them to build a support structure. Websites are important sources of information for educators and learners.                                                   |

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided an overview of learner discipline in schools in South Africa. A historical perspective of corporal punishment was given. This historical perspective was followed by an overview of indiscipline in secondary schools in South Africa. Subsequently, the importance of managing learner behaviour and the consequences of indiscipline were discussed.

Educators must understand why learners misbehave and, with that in mind, a few reasons for indiscipline were discussed. This was followed by a brief discussion of strategies to manage learner behaviour in the classroom.

Chapter 4 will be a discussion of transformative learning and its place in the adult education and learning environment.

## **CHAPTER 4: TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AS A TOOL FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter endeavours to explain the concept of “transformative learning” and its place in the adult education and learning environment. Education lays the foundation for obtaining new knowledge and skills (Dreyer, 2017). Through the process of learning, prior knowledge is used to construct new knowledge and give meaning to experiences for future guidance. Transformative learning is the process of intentionally transforming an established frame of mind into a perspective that is more inclusive, reflective, integrative of experiences and open to different viewpoints (Foote, 2015).

The chapter begins with an explanation of what adult learning is and how it is connected to transformative learning. It is followed by an outlay of the transformative learning process and the connection between action learning and action research. The discussion would not be complete if the value of transformative learning to enhance citizen education, were not highlighted. To understand adult learning, it is necessary to follow up on the history of adult learning.

### **4.2 WHAT IS ADULT LEARNING?**

Learning is a social, affective and cognitive process (Fletcher, 2015). Mezirow (2003) states that adult people make use of previous social and work experiences that shape their way of thinking and facilitate learning. Knowles (1990), however, views this way of learning as vulnerable, because knowledge evolves, and prior knowledge becomes redundant or outdated. For this reason, Mezirow (1991) emphasises transformative adult learning in a continuously changing knowledge environment.

Knowles (1988), the father of andragogy (adult learning), states that pedagogy is derived from the Greek word meaning *child*. It is therefore the science and art of teaching children. The foundation of pedagogy was laid in the monasteries in Europe during the seventh to twelfth centuries as the dominant teaching and learning method. Towards the turn of the twentieth century, scientists experienced limitations to pedagogy when it came to teaching adults. Up to that point, education strategies (pedagogy) were seen as “fact-laden lectures, assigned readings, drill, quizzes, rote memorizing, and examinations” (p. 40). Pedagogy was seen as the transmission of skills and knowledge. To satisfy adult learners, this was not enough, and adults showed resistance to these methods. Knowles emphasises major changes in this situation, including “massive inputs of new knowledge, technological innovation, vocational

displacement, population mobility, change in political and economic systems” (p. 41), which necessitated a new approach to adult learning. New knowledge and skills gained by adults were quickly outdated. Learning, as the process of knowledge transmission, made way for lifelong learning in order to keep up with the ever-changing needs of society. The most important skill of learning for both adults and children is self-directed, where learners take responsibility for their learning. How to learn instead of being taught became the objective of adult teaching and learning. Houle (1961) found that adult learners are goal-orientated, activity-orientated and learning-orientated.

Much knowledge about adult learning was accumulated during the 1960s, and the term “andragogy,” derived from the Greek word *aner* (with the stem *andr-*), meaning “adult” was given to adult learning (Knowles, 1970). Whitby (2013) describes the difference between pedagogy and andragogy as follows.

**Table 4.1: Comparison between Pedagogy and Andragogy (Adapted from Whitby, 2013)**

| <b>Criteria</b>                | <b>Pedagogy</b>                                                                                                            | <b>Andragogy</b>                                                                                |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The learner                    | The learner is fully dependent on the teacher who takes responsibility for the content and the assessment of the learning. | The learner is self-directed and responsible for his or her learning as well as assessment.     |
| The role of learner experience | The learning experience of the learner has little or no relevance, while the experience of the teacher is more important.  | The learner brings more experience to the learning situation and adults learn from one another. |
| Learning readiness             | The student must master a certain amount of knowledge before they can be promoted to the next level.                       | Adults learn and assess gaps because they want to perform better in future.                     |
| Learning orientation           | Prescribed subject matter is sequenced according to difficulty.                                                            | Learning is organised against real-life situations to solve problems and to live a better life. |



| Criteria            | Pedagogy                                    | Andragogy                                                                                                            |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learning motivation | Learning is motivated by external pressure. | Learning is motivated internally, because learners strive for recognition, self-esteem and a better quality of life. |

Stein (as cited in Mezirow, 1997) describes the general aims of adult learning as 1) a way to gain access to information, 2) a way to give voice to their opinions, 3) a means of making decisions to empower them to be independent and 4) a way of facilitating future growth. Adult learners mostly focus on short-term goals such as the mastery of subject content. Educators must endeavour to assist learners to become more autonomous in their thinking.

Mezirow (1991) avers that adult learning is not only self-directed, but also that the new learning must be tested and approved and have future value. During a filmed interview (Bloom & Gordon, 2015), Mezirow links his work with that of Freud, Marx, Habermas, Freire and Socrates, and proclaims that critical thinking (to be explained immediately) must lay the foundation for new learning. It is of great importance in transformative learning that critical thinking develops a deep understanding of knowledge and skills within a certain field.

Greene (2013) asserts that it is very difficult for a person to change well-established assumptions, behaviours, opinions and attitudes, because these attributes lay the foundation for an own identity, with the result that people exclude or discriminate against other people. Archer (2012) claims that, these mentioned habits, are obtained through socialisation, and necessitate re-evaluation from time to time in order to incite change. Cohen and Heinecke (2018) reason that this “us-versus-them phenomenon” (p. 269) is particularly notable when minority groups are involved, and they urge society to break down this frame of reference and the concomitant biases, and make room for a more open-minded way of thinking. Transformative learning, as explained in the paragraph below, can be seen as the process through which a person’s assumptions, beliefs and attitudes can be changed to make these “more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and options that will prove truer or more justified to guide action” (p. 270).

#### **4.3 WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING? (cf. 1.9.2)**

The transformative learning theory was developed in North America by Jack Mezirow in the late 1970s, and has gained widespread acclaim and amongst other theories, is seen as the leading and dominant theory explaining human learning (Biasin, 2018). It is therefore rightfully

viewed as an established theory in various disciplines in higher education (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2019). Mezirow (1996) describes it as a process of using prior knowledge and past experiences to construct revised or new interpretations as a guide for future action. Transformative learning brings about constant change; change in our own beliefs and practices and beliefs about other people according to what we have experienced about them (Zodpey & Sharma, 2104; Grapczynski et al., 2015). It is based on prior learning (Manninen et al., 2013; Cohen et al., 2015; Garneau, 2016) and learning through our mistakes (Young et al., 2016).

Globally, transformative learning is accepted as a new form of andragogy. Transformative learning has achieved far more than that which andragogy had achieved in the past. Andragogy provides a framework for teaching adults but does not explain adult learning as such (Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Transformative learning outweighs andragogy by explaining adult learning and guiding adult education (Cranton & Taylor, 2012). It has exceeded andragogy and provided a new recognition for learning, so much so that other disciplines have exhibited an interest in engaging it as a means of making sense of education (Cranton & Taylor, 2012). It has become “an internationally well-known and recognised contribution to the understanding of what may be perceived as the most advanced kind of human learning” (Illeris, 2014, p. 149).

Transformative learning is presented in many different forms, of which Mezirow's Habermasian/ Socratic model is the most important (Mezirow, 1991, 2000, 2003). Freire (1972) emphasises liberatory transformative learning, which in turn emphasises feminist consciousness, while Boyd (1989) emphasises the in-depth transformation of the psyche. Keagan (as cited in Dix, 2016) formulates the subject-object model. Despite these differences, transformative learning involves transformation, as viewed by Mezirow, as giving meaning to experience, which indicates that learning is not only gathering about information, but instead challenges previous ways of perception, thinking, feeling and acting.

Mezirow and Associates (2000) define transformative learning as the process of changing a problematic standpoint or frame of reference to make it more acceptable and trustworthy as well as more in line with justifiable interpretations and opinions. Through this process of critical reflection, adult learners become aware of problematic attitudes and beliefs, which can then make way for transformative ideas and viewpoints. Mezirow emphasises that transformative learning effects change in the frames of reference that define people's worldview. This change in frame of reference facilitates movement from one mental or behaviour activity to another that is more inclusive, self-reflective and integrative of experience. A frame of reference includes conative, cognitive and emotional elements and comprises two facets: 1) habits of mind and 2) points of view. Habits of mind refer to a broad, abstract and habitual ways of

thinking and feeling, such as holding other groups of people to be inferior. This frame of reference relates to the results or influence of culture and primary caregivers and are more lasting than viewpoints. Viewpoints are subjected to constant change when we reflect on our problem-solving methods and the reasons for failure. Through dialogue with other people, we try new ways of solving problems, but a habit of mind often hinders this process. Points of view are more approachable and open to feedback from others.

Vasylenko (2015) defines transformational learning as that which induces far-reaching changes in the learner to a greater extent than any other kind of learning, especially learning experiences that shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or mind shift, to bring about change to the learner's future experiences and perceptions. Transformative learning is a deliberate, intentional act that happens within the cognitive (Kearsley, & Lobb, 2014; Cohen et al., 2015; Eichbaum, 2017) and affective domains (Fletcher, & Meyer, 2016) through the process of critical thinking (Cohen et al., 2015).

Christie et al. (2015) accentuates that every person holds an opinion of the world based on experiences, assumptions, upbringing, culture, education and prior learning. Promoters of transformative learning are becoming increasingly aware of the role that prior assumptions play in a personal worldview (Manninen, 2016; Neve et al., 2017). Learning environments must be liberated before experiences can be reinterpreted in a transformative way (Hanson, 2013).

Taylor (2008) states that we learn through experience, while the way we see the world is a result of our interpretations and perceptions. In contrast, transformative learning is a process of questioning, examining and revising those perceptions to bring them in line with a philosophical viewpoint that universal truths exist, where education must be the vehicle to find those truths. Taylor (2008) explains that people are inclined to believe, without questioning, the beliefs and values of their society and adopt the dominant worldview as normal and a natural way of thinking. When they realise that some of those views are not in the best interest of society, they can use transformative learning to change their point of view. Transformative learning is constantly evolving and therefore can assist people to change or broaden their viewpoints.

For transformative learning to be successful, there must be a process of questioning existing beliefs, habits and preconceptions and determining the values upon which these preconceptions are based (Grapczynski et al., 2015; Cohen et al., 2015; Garneau, 2016). Brookfield (as cited in Taylor and Cranton, 2012) proposes that learning can only be referred to as transformative if basic changes in beliefs and behaviour are involved. Therefore, transformative learning implies freedom and autonomy to make one's own choices to become

involved with new perspectives instead of being manipulated by others (Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Transformative learning centres on personal as well as social changes (Taylor & Cranton, 2012), and consists of the elements on which it is based, namely 1) the person must be aware of shortcomings in behaviour and attitude and 2) he or she must be prepared to question and reflect on these shortcomings (Bochman & Kroth, 2010; Barner & Barner, 2013).

Transformative learning envisages that, at the end of the learning process, new knowledge would have been created, bringing about change in the learners and their way of thinking (Rushton, & Temple Clothier, 2014). When students realise that the new knowledge to be produced might lead to positive change, they are motivated to cooperate and thus facilitate professional development (Bovill et al., 2015). García-Peñalvo et al. (2015) allege that transformative learning takes students “out of their comfort zone” (p. 17) and teach them problem-solving skills through creativity and resilience. Thus, decision-making becomes transformative and meaningful (Rushton & Temple Clothier, 2014).

Educators across the world embrace transformative learning as a theory that has been described as a process that poses a challenge to the initial way of human thinking (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2019). Transformative learning necessitates the adjustment of learners from being dependent upon the knowledge supplied by the teacher to developing into critically engaged and independent learners (Lindhult, 2019).

Joubert and Slabbert (2017) compare Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development with transformative learning. The quality of the learning process determines “how well the learner transcends the gap to a higher order of knowing and being. Transformative learning can thus be defined as the transformation required by the student to move from the zone of actual development to the zone of proximal development’ (p. 5) through a process called scaffolding. This view of educational intervention is learner-centred and facilitates genuine transformation in learners to think on a higher level.

As stated by Mezirow and associates (2000), transformative learning is seen as a process whereby we transform our frame of reference to become more inclusive, emotionally open to change and reflective in order to produce more truthful beliefs and opinions. Mezirow bases his theory of transformative learning on the work of Jürgen Habermas (Fleming, 2018), among others. These theories comprise four important components, namely 1) learning domains, 2) independent learning, 3) critical reflection and 4) dialogue in the form of active discussions (Fleming, 2018).

Constructivist theories, a humanistic worldview and critical theory lie at the roots of transformative learning (Cranton & Taylor, 2012). Yamaguchi and Chang (2014) confirm that a new approach is needed that must be based on 1) creativity, 2) self-reliance and 3) collaboration, where these will be essential elements of critical and transformative thinking.

García-Peñalvo et al. (2015) describe transformative learning as peer-based support through educational facilitation with a view to achieving learner self-efficiency. It is facilitated by a learning partnership model that suggests a different way of thinking, while mutually constructing new knowledge (Swanson, 2010; Willis, 2012). For this reason, the approach known as participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) has been chosen for the present project: it fits in well with the purpose of action research that urges participants to reflect on present knowledge and experience while encouraging them to transform and accept more appropriate ways of thinking and doing. PALAR is a holistic and inclusive way of thinking, living, feeling and being, influenced by our worldviews, learning paradigms and values that, in turn, affect our behaviour with an ability to improve our practices (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Laininen (2019) explains that transformative learning reshapes our understanding of the nature of humanity and the fundamentals of well-being. Through transformative learning, we develop a holistic world view by discovering the purpose, direction, values, actions and choices of life. Transformative learning “accumulates into the emergence of learning communities and ecosystems demonstrating new, resilient sustainable lifestyles, which finally lead to a cultural transformation into a sustainable society and the world” (p. 180). A strong component to aid this mind shift lies in a sense of unity that assists participants towards understanding the complexity, manageability and meaningfulness of life (Laininen, 2019). Transformative learning is not only achieved through reflection, but also through a conscious engagement in the reflective process that brings about change in previous assumptions resulting in a transformed way of thinking (Sakinofsky, & Amigó, 2018). Sheahan (2013) claims that learners who show proof of metacognitive learning are better equipped and ready to be reflective, and envisages that transformative reflection links with metacognitive learning, especially in connection with self-knowledge. Rarieya (2005) compiles four levels of reflection and Sakinofsky and Amigó, (2018) note that these correspond with four of the revised levels of Bloom’s taxonomy in the following way (p 137).

**Table 4.2: Similarity between reflection and Bloom's taxonomy (Adapted from (Rarieya, 2005 & Sakinofsky & Amigó, 2018))**

| <b>Rarieya's four levels</b> | <b>Bloom's taxonomy</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Noticing                     | Factual knowledge       |
| Making meaning               | Conceptual knowledge    |
| Making sense                 | Procedural knowledge    |
| Transformative               | Metacognitive knowledge |

Sterling (2011), supported by Hodge (2019), avers that the present education system, including adult education, tends to promote individualism, while it does not support transformational learning. Gokool-Ramdoo and Rumjaun (2017) plead for a different approach so that education will be transformative to a greater degree. The social context of adult learning that goes beyond cognitive activities must become the focal point. All too often, we acquire distorted, stereotyped and prejudiced viewpoints from our social life. At some point, we must reject the conflicting viewpoints and revert to the process leading to a transformational way of thinking. Social change is initiated by individual and organisational change, engendering global change (Cranton & Taylor, 2012: Taylor, 2008).

#### **4.4 THE TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING APPROACH PROCESS**

Transformative learning occurs in phases. In his original work about transformative learning theories, Mezirow (1978) describes ten phases in the transformation process. Other researchers made alterations to these phases (Taylor & Cranton, 2012), as reflected in the table below.

**Table 4.3: Mezirow's ten steps with explanations (Adapted from (Christie et al, 2015; Russel, 2014, p, 23-24).**

| <b>Christie et al., (2015) name the ten phases of Mezirow's transformative learnings as follows:</b> | <b>Russel (2014, p, 23-24) describes Mezirow's ten phases of transformative learning as follows:</b>                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Disorienting dilemma                                                                                 | Experiencing an event in society that disorients one's sense of self within a familiar role.                                |
| Self-examination                                                                                     | Engaging in reflection and self-reflection.                                                                                 |
| Sense of alienation                                                                                  | Critically assessing the personal assumptions and feelings that have alienated the self from traditional role expectations. |
| Relating discontent to others                                                                        | Relating discontent to similar experiences of others; recognizing the shared problems.                                      |
| Explaining the options of new behaviour                                                              | Identifying new ways of acting within the role.                                                                             |
| Building confidence in new ways                                                                      | Building personal confidence and competence.                                                                                |
| Planning a course of action                                                                          | Planning a new or adjusted or alternative course of action.                                                                 |
| Knowledge to implement plans                                                                         | Acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to implement this new course of action.                                        |
| Experimenting with new roles                                                                         | Trying out the planned action and assessing the results.                                                                    |
| Reintegration                                                                                        | Reintegrating into society with the new role behaviours and with new assumptions and perspectives.                          |

Taylor and Cranton (2012) summarises these phases as follow: 1) dealing with opposing emotional responses, 2) reflecting on these, 3) interpreting these and sharing them with others, and 4) adapting new ways of behaving according to the new perspective acquired through transformative learning.

In this study, the research questions guided the members of the ALS to firstly become aware of their perceptions relating to discipline-related problems in the classroom. The first secondary research question which reads *“How did educators understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?”* assisted the educators to reflect on their perception concerning learner behaviour and how they perceived it. They reflected on their assumptions and how these influenced their behaviours towards the learners in their classes. Educators became aware of other educators with the same experiences, and they realised that they shared the same problems.

*“What were the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?”* that is, secondary research question two, assisted educators to reflect on the reasons for their way of thinking about discipline and the challenges they faced in maintaining discipline in the classroom. In their joint discussion, they reflected on the third and fourth secondary research questions: *“What were the educators’ views on positive educator-learner relationships?”* and *“What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies could collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?”* Through their discussions, they acquired new knowledge and skills to plan new strategies to deal with discipline-related issues in the classroom. In this way, they assisted one another to deal with their outdated perceptions and plan a new course of action. This new plan of action could be tested in the classroom and reflected upon during the next round of discussion. The next secondary research question, which reads *“How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?”* could be answered in this way. Guidelines were compiled to assist educators to deal with indiscipline in the classroom and strategies to build effective educator-learner relationships. Answering the secondary research questions paved the way for answering the primary research question: *“How can a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?”*

For transformative learning to take place formally, Taylor (1998) suggests that the educator or facilitator must accept the responsibility for creating an environment that promotes the development of trusting relationships among learners. Every effort must be made to establish learning standards that reduce the influence of power. Neuman (1996) proposes that even the learning facilitator must be a role model and be willing to continue to learn and to change their assumptions if necessary.



Transformative learning not only happens in a formal way. Mezirow (1997) highlights that learning occurs in four ways, namely, 1) through expanding on already existing knowledge or points of view to support their initial perception, 2) by adopting new viewpoints when meeting new people based on their ethnocentric biases and 3) by encountering another group, where they can learn by transforming their point of view through critically reflecting on their misguided perceptions, engendering a changing viewpoint. This new viewpoint then makes them more accepting and tolerant. Lastly, people learn by expanding this new viewpoint to other groups and become more tolerant of groups in general.

To promote transformative learning, learners must become critical about their own and other peoples' perceptions. For learning to be meaningful, it must be incorporated into the learner's established, well-developed frame of reference involving his or her feelings and emotions. The learner must now be assisted through autonomous thinking to transform his or her frame of reference to fully understand the experience. This way of learning is learner-centred, interactive and participatory. Methods that encourage critical thinking are concept mapping, biographies and participation in social actions. In transformative learning, the educator functions as a facilitator instead of a subject matter specialist. In this way, the educator becomes a co-learner (Mezirow, 1997).

The co-researchers in the ALS used their prior knowledge concerning learner discipline to support their initial perception but, through their interaction with other educators in the ALS encounters, they learned and, in doing so, could change their preconceived ideas to fit in with present-day realities. Action research by way of the PALAR process was the vehicle used in this research to achieve transformative learning.

#### **4.5 TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND ACTION RESEARCH**

This research project was underpinned by a critical and transformative PALAR process working in a deductive and qualitative way to collect and generate data. Transformative learning is an essential component of action research. In both cases, participants must critically reflect on prior knowledge and existing practices and afterwards transform to improve practices where necessary (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). The members of the ALS shared their knowledge about their perceptions concerning discipline in schools and discovered a common need to develop knowledge and skills to deal with indiscipline. This resulted in a new way of thinking, resulting in the modification of practices to deal with discipline in the classroom. For this reason, educators facing the research problem, were involved in the process (see Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013).

A critical research approach is necessary to explore and facilitate insight into the problem to bring about effective change. This change is aided by exploring and analysing the problem to create an agenda for effective change (Asghar, 2013). The members of the ALS were critically involved in the research process and formulated their solutions to deal with discipline-related matters in the classroom.

Action research as a means to facilitate transformative learning is usually based on qualitative methods such as case studies, reflective journals, photography, portfolios and videos (Taylor, 2008). Wood (2019) states that action research produces findings that produce knowledge and research skills over time, promote transformative learning and can be a community-based tool that promotes knowledge creation and learning. PALAR is based on life-improving and democratic values and provides a means for all people, regardless of race or educational status, in order to improve their own lives.

Zuber-Skerritt (2018) describes the main characteristics of PALAR as 7Cs (cf. 5.4.3.3; 9.4.1) and 3Rs (cf. 5.4.3; 9.4.1) as follows.

**Table 4.4: The characteristics of the 7Cs of the PALAR research process.**

| Characteristic           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communication            | Communication that facilitates listening. To practice active listening skills, learners must take note of non-verbal as well as verbal and emotional signs, because these encourage openness. Lazarus (2018, p. 54) describes this communication as “listening with the heart.” |
| Commitment               | Commitment happens through the realisation that each participant is a valued member of the team and requires of a member to accept responsibility for this.                                                                                                                     |
| Competency               | Competency builds confidence.<br>Competency is built by employing empathy, critical thinking, problem-solving and communicative skills (Wood, 2019).                                                                                                                            |
| Compromise               | Compromise refers to the ability to make personal sacrifices to the benefit of the programme.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Critical self-reflection | Critical self-reflection as the instrument to learning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Coaching                 | Coaching is a common way within the group for members to teach one another in order to facilitate growth.                                                                                                                                                                       |

|               |                                                                                                       |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Collaboration | Collaboration implies that all members must work together towards a common goal with a common vision. |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Throughout the PALAR process, these values were applied, and will be explained in Chapter 5.

During the face-to-face pre-meeting and during other online interactions, the co-researchers were allowed to air their opinions and critically reflect on what had been said by themselves and the other co-researchers. The members were made aware that they were equal and valued individuals with shared responsibility for the success of the research outcomes. Educators were assured that, although some are better qualified than others, while they may also have been teaching at better-equipped schools, they were equal partners and their opinions mattered and were to be respected. They were further informed that they might encounter a situation where it would be required for them to compromise on their views through transformative learning to the benefit of the other participants and the wider school community as a whole. The transformative learning process can only take place through open and honest communication and collaboration and by reflecting on new ideas that facilitate growth towards a common vision in order to obtain skills and knowledge to deal with discipline-related issues in the classroom. Through transformative learning, participants can learn to apply a different way of thinking about patterns of action. As a result, alternative meaning schemes replace previous meaning schemes to facilitate a better understanding of playing the role of the co-researcher in the development of positive educator-learner relationships in the classroom. They also understood their role as co-researchers in the development of a future creating workshop (FCW), to be discussed in Chapter 8 (cf. 8.3.1).

Through the ALS interactions, the co-researchers learned to critically reflect on their views and the views of the other co-researchers and learned to value the viewpoints of others which, in turn, enhanced and improved relationships within the ALS.

Coherent decision-making as part of the transformative learning process provides the key to long-lasting well-being at all levels of society. School life, as well as social life, when sustained by well-being, should be manageable, comprehensible and purposeful, and can be achieved using coherent decision-making (Hämäläinen, 2014).

Action research as a way for achieving transformative learning can also be problematic, because practitioners are often not interested in doing the research, but prefer to learn through trial and error (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013). Zuber-Skerritt et al. (2015b) foresees another

problem in action research. The moderator or researcher should be skilled in the facilitation, management and organisation of the research group. If the process is not managed effectively, trustworthy data generation and collaborative learning could be at risk. Ethical values that foster inclusion, diversity, critical reflection, collaboration, trust, communication, respect and honesty must also be adhered to for reliable data to be gathered.

The success of the present research project could be a major contributor to the well-being of the participants by providing greater job satisfaction for the educators and better academic progress for learners.

#### **4.6 THE VALUE OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING (cf. 1.9.2)**

##### **4.6.1 Transformative learning and well-being**

Teachers' well-being can be improved by involving them as co-constructors in the research process (Wood, & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013; Wessels, & Wood, 2019). This implies that teachers must work together, share knowledge and aim at a shared goal with sustainable change and well-being in mind, and these elements indeed emerged among participants in the ALS.

Motivated and enthusiastic teachers with a sense of well-being play an important role in quality education (Keller et al., 2016). Teacher's well-being requires critical reflection of their thoughts and feelings to enable them to address the challenges and difficulties of life in order to foster well-being in the workplace and to sustain positive interrelationships (Giroux, 2010; Nussbaum, 2016). The world is becoming more diverse, interdependent and interconnected, and citizens need to develop skills and knowledge to understand and communicate with people from different backgrounds (Mellizo, 2018).

Transformative learning happens within trusting relationships where people are the important component or by-product and produces a sense of well-being and empathy towards others (Taylor & Snyder, 2012). Through communication and collaboration, the members of the ALS endeavoured to develop trusting relationships that facilitated a willingness to learn ways of solving their common problem. The potentially resultant improvement in classroom discipline might enhance well-being among the members of the ALS and eventually the larger school community. Although one member of the ALS was from a poorly equipped small secondary school with hardly any facilities, his viewpoints were accepted and commented on as very appropriate. Even I, as the researcher, was impressed with his comments. What he experienced concerning discipline and the circumstances of his learners was very much in line with my research.

Trusting relationships are based on mutual respect and through these relationship teachers endeavour to transform their lives (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015a). Everyday situations can be improved through PALAR if teachers critically reflect on shared experiences (Helyer, 2015). The members of the ALS teaching who worked in more affluent schools were no better off than those teaching in poorer schools. Research done by Wessels and Wood (2019) highlights that, through this approach, educators experience an improvement in their relationship well-being. Taylor (as cited in Taylor, & Snyder, 2012) emphasises the importance of trustful relationships in the process of achieving meaningful transformation and mutual understanding.

Although decision-making is an extremely important individual act, it can be enhanced through coherent decision-making that will improve decision-making towards sustainable well-being. Educator learning impacts favourably on learners and educators, and brings about well-being for both (Rubin & Brown, 2019). Well-being produces enthusiastic and motivated teachers vitally needed for supplying excellent education (Keller et al., 2016).

Davis (2019) describes the components of well-being as follows: 1) emotional well-being which facilitates resilience, stress management and the generation of satisfactory feelings, 2) physical well-being that includes health and healthy living, 3) social well-being that helps to build meaningful relationships, 4) workplace well-being which provides happiness and enrichment in the world of work and 5) societal well-being which is the ability to be part of and participate in the cultural life of the community and the environment. Transformative learning enhances the teacher's well-being in two ways: it impacts positively on teacher performance and leads to improved learner performance on the academic level (Hansen et al., 2015). An essential component of well-being is a positive relationship (Seligman, 2011) (cf. 2.2.3.3). Konishi and Wong (2018) argue that positive educator-learner relationships assist the academic and emotional growth of learners which, in turn, enhances the well-being of educators and learners. This research project aimed at building positive educator-learner relationships that would enhance educator and learner well-being to the benefit of the whole school and the wider school community.

Educators must learn to overcome challenges to enhance their well-being (McCallum et al., 2017). One of the co-researchers, who had no access to technological facilities through which to report back on his experiences, wrote his responses down and brought these to me in person. Another co-researcher had no technological skills. Her comments were written down by hand. She took a photo and WhatsApped the information to me.

Seligman et al. (2009) indicate that educators must create a positive school climate through engagement with their colleagues to develop a sense of purpose in their teaching in order to

enhance their well-being. Transformative learning that assists educators to overcome their challenges will boost educator and learner well-being. Effective educator-learner relationships can play a major role in uplifting well-being for educators and learners. This research endeavoured to strengthen the idea that educators would realise that they each had an equal part to play and were democratically equal in the learning environment through their engagement in the research project.

#### **4.6.2 Transformative learning and community engagement**

Zuber-Skerritt et al. (2020) states that action learning has a transformative potential in social research in order to bring about positive change. Action learning, “as lifelong, self-directed, collaborative learning” (p. 44), develops systematically for the common good of the community. Participants learn from others and with others concerning challenges faced by all parties to the benefit of all stakeholders. In a constantly changing world, circumstances often force people into transformative learning, which facilitates transformation into something acceptable that is experienced as an improvement in their lives (Illeris, 2014). Through critical thinking, transformative learning brings about a paradigm shift in adult learners towards the development of their social and individual lives (Rahman, & Mahbubul Hoque, 2017). Transformative learning will help community members to adapt to an ever-changing, diverse and interconnected society (Banks, 2013; Banks et al. 2013).

Banks (2015) states that a transformative approach is needed to help students to develop clarified and reflective cultural, national, regional and global identifications as well as the knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to take action to make their communities, nations and world more democratic and just. The PALAR process, through collaborative transformation (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013), helps people to take responsibility for their lives and influence others to do the same (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011) by making their voices heard (Kearney et al., 2013) and recognise indigenous skills and knowledge (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013).

In this research, in line with Zuber-Skerritt & Teare (2013), the PALAR process aimed at collaborative transformation and empowerment of community members by allowing their knowledgeable voices to be heard (Kearney et al., 2013), thus acknowledging existing indigenous knowledge and skills (see Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013).

In today’s world, typified by violence, unemployment, ecological disasters and mental health problems (Cox, & John, 2016), we desperately need the transformative potential of community-based research for positive change and justice to come about. Through the action learning

process, the ALS participants learned to be lifelong and self-directed learners that would bring about positive change in their communities by collaborating with others.

For sustainable development to occur, community engagement must be initiated. Many communities need to transform and, for this reason, it is necessary to find solutions to injustices (Saavedra, & Opfer, 2012) and protect personal lives and shift the emphasis to a position of strength (Brydon-Miller, 2007; Winterbauer et al., 2016). For community members to come together to create meaning and an understanding of shared realities (see Balthazar, 2019) requires dialogue and the development of thinking skills (Saavedra, & Opfer, 2012).

Engagement can be facilitated by creating regional community centres incorporating people with certain expertise or by playing games such as “Catch” aimed at transformative change. Catch is a learning, teaching and researching resource about the management of common pool, renewable natural resources (fisheries, pastures, forests, irrigation systems, etc.) (Glasser et al., 2018). Importantly it also addresses the relationships between human well-being, resources management, learning, planning and decision-making more broadly” (p. 111). Karnani (2010) describes these community improving efforts, started by Judy Wicks, which aim at improving conditions for humans on the planet as “doing well by doing good” (p. 69). Communities must believe in communal and individual capabilities to bring about change (Brydon-Miller, 2007).

This statement is of particular resonance within the school community, because educators must relate to one another to build relationships of trust in order to reduce stress levels (Van Maele, & Van Houtte, 2012, (cf. 2.3.4). Therefore, the present project aimed to assist educators through critical thinking to collaborate to find solutions to their shared problem: discipline in the classroom.

#### **4.7 THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CRITICAL THEORY, TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND REFLECTION**

For critical thinking, transformative learning and reflection to happen, there must be an atmosphere of trust and safety (cf. 2.2.2.3), and discussions must be honest and open. Transformative learning and critical theory are closely related (Zhu & Li, 2019). The two areas were combined in this research project. Educators discussed their mutual problem, namely discipline issues in the classroom and, through critical thinking and reflection, learned from one another and reflected on preconceived ideas, beliefs and attitudes in order to transform their ways of thinking. Collaboratively, they devised possible solutions to the problem in order to bring about change in their future actions.

The relationship between these two vital areas will subsequently be briefly unpacked.

#### **4.7.1 Critical theory**

Critical theory is based on the idea that knowledge and the system in which it occurs go hand in hand, since knowledge is constructed by systems and people (Wang & Torrisi-Steele, 2015). Kincheloe et al., (2011) highlight the idea that race, religion, class, gender and community institutions overlap to construct social systems. Nichols and Allen-Brown (as cited in Wang et al., 2019) explain that critical theory aims at making problematic that which is taken for granted. In doing so, power imbalances among people who respect each other are revealed and a dialectic approach is required to understand each person's contribution to the given project (Bradley-Levine, & Carr, 2015). Paulo Freire and Miles Horton (past adult educators) both use a dialectic approach with their learners who problematised unfair conditions in order to encourage dialogue among them (Ross-Gordon et al., 2017). Freire stresses that learners must become aware of the oppression that goes along with power before they can work for changing these social systems on personal and societal levels (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Gaudelli (2008) hold that critical theory creates disunion among learners, which urges them to rethink their beliefs in order to liberate them from their fears, anxieties and defensive actions. He continues by stating that critical reflection is part of critical thinking and compels learners to think carefully and deeply. Contentment occurs when the normal way of thinking and acting is sustained and continues unexamined (Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Critical reflection facilitates the understanding that transformative learning can make a difference around solving the problems faced by our societies (Kreber, 2012). Transformative learning, as achieved by critical reflection, can make a difference to the way in which educators deal with discipline effectively in the school and the wider community as a whole.

The process of engaging learners and educators in meaningful learning provides them with the freedom to be more critical in their thinking, which leads to transformative learning (Bovill et al, 2015; Kreber, 2012).

#### **4.7.2 Transformative learning**

Baumgartner (as cited in Wang et al, 2019) has established that the principle of the way in which learning occurs is different for transformative learning when compared with critical theory. The transformative learning principle stresses the fact that it is not what we know but why and how we know that are important. Transformative learning penetrates and changes the inner self to bring about change in behaviour and worldviews, rather than merely sticking to pre-transformation. Although transformative learning relies on critical thinking as a necessity, critical thinking is not sufficient for transformative learning to occur (Mezirow, 1995).



Transformative learning is situated within the experiential learning framework built on a constructivist structure (Bamber, & Hankins, 2011).

Hullender et al. (2015) emphasises that the reflective practices is a necessary channel on which transformative learning is based. Through reflection, people experience positive outcomes as well as transformative learning. The reflective process helps them become aware of perspectives different from their own, enabling them to reach new assumptions by renouncing past viewpoints.

Cranton (2016) emphasises that transformative learning is a self-directed, voluntary process where the person has the choice of engaging in critical reflective activities about his or her beliefs and values. Another characteristic of transformative learning is that it comprises relationships with other people. In a learning situation, the dynamic interaction between the teacher and the other participants determines how the participants will engage in the process. The educational context is an ideal situation for transformative learning to thrive because of the critical thinking component and that of previous experience, both of which play a part in the process. Facilitators must provide opportunities where educators as learners can critically reflect on their learning and assumptions (Taylor, & Snyder, 2012).

Brookfield et al. (as cited in Wang et al., 2019) advocate that critical theory activities demand individual introspection, but also the principle of understanding others. For critical thinking to occur and reflection and transformative learning to take place, there must be a mutual feeling of trust and safety and communication through open and honest discussions. All the participants must value the inputs of all the other participants.

Kilgore (as cited in Wang et al, 2019) recaps the essence of the two areas under examination. He explains that critical theory is a process whereby truth claims are challenged, and a conclusion is reached that these are not universally true but merely serve the interests of some at the expense of others. Dovetailing with this, transformative learning requires a change in perspective and beliefs. In the present study, for instance, affluent schools were exposed to less privileged schools, which made them realise that environment influences learner behaviour. Critical theory raises consciousness, while transformative learning facilitates profound change in beliefs, behaviours and values. In this sense, the two areas discussed here complement each other. As indicated, it is important subsequently to consider that transformative learning enhances citizen education.

#### **4.8 TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

Sinicrope et al. (as cited in Mellizo, 2018) reason that the world is evolving into a global society and, for this reason, the citizen of tomorrow must obtain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate with people from various and diverse backgrounds and cultures. Dovigo and Favella (2012) propose specific school curriculum interventions to teach skills, knowledge and attitudes centred on this global development, especially during childhood and adolescence, because that is where intercultural identities are formed. Recently, they included college students and adults in their vision for citizen education.

Finland and Norway developed a societal model for the future centred on sustainable well-being. This model aims at assisting people to live prosperous and meaningful lives. They believe that this model will spur on societal transformation and promote sustainable well-being (Steffen et al., 2015). Finland (Hellström et al., 2015) developed six inter-dependent principles on which to base a transformative cycle for the development of a future society, namely 1) well-being must be addressed holistically with a focus on life management, 2) planetary boundaries must be adjusted to in order to provide for the depletion of resources, 3) individuals must be empowered by giving them a voice, 4) a collaborative economy must be fostered where businesses do not function in isolation, 5) life-long learning must be promoted to cope in an ever-changing complex world and 6) governance must happen both within the government and the different communities.

Education is invented by humans and, as societies develop, it must also develop. Education today needs new visions, transformative change and an entirely new way of thinking (Cook, 2019). To transform schools into centres for sustainable well-being, a paradigm shift is necessary. For schools to become self-renewing entities, we must rethink teaching and learning but also how we support teacher development within schools (Riordan & Caillier, 2019). Teaching only knowledge and cognitive skills is not enough. We must teach what is necessary for real transformative activities, including changes in worldview and reconsidering of values in order to become good citizens (Laininen, 2019).

A transformative approach requires that the learners become actively involved in problem identification within their society and that they should take collaborative or individual community actions to improve the given situation (Banks, 2015). In this way, educators can foster higher-order thinking, especially in conflict-affected countries where it is most necessary (Quaynor, 2012). Educators must share the responsibility of helping their learners on their way to becoming productive and responsible citizens in an ever-changing, interdependent and interconnected global community (Mellizo, 2018).

Not only can educators play an important role in educating their learners to become productive citizens in their communities and the communities of the future but, through transformative learning, educators themselves can benefit in the sense that they transform their outdated beliefs, values and attitudes to a more acceptable way of thinking and behaviour as necessitated by future developments. As stated by Mezirow (1996), "learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience to guide future action" (p. 162).

Transformative learning thus transforms taxing frames of reference, that is, fixed assumptions and mindsets, to make them more inclusive, reflective and open and less discriminating (Mezirow, 2003). It often relates to adult learning in order to enhance transformation, self-reflection and self-management (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2019).

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

The concept of life-long transformative learning has taken on a new meaning in the changing world of knowledge and technology. Adults face a challenge to change by improving their knowledge and skills. This challenge has created the need for a deeper understanding of how adults learn, how their learning can be facilitated and how this process compares to the way children learn. In general, adult education literature supports the idea that teaching adults should be approached in a way different from teaching children and adolescents. The assumption that teachers of adults should use a different style of teaching is based on the theory of andragogy, which states that adults expect learner-centred settings where they can set their own goals and organise their own learning around their present life needs. Transformative learning brought with it a new and stimulating approach to adult education that builds and improve on andragogy (Cranton & Taylor, 2012). Adult learners are encouraged to think critically about their perceptions, feelings and ideas and to adapt to a more relevant and appropriate way of thinking. However, in the field of adult education, debate still is devoted to the efficacy of a separate approach for teaching adults (Vasylenko, 2015).

## **CHAPTER 5: A THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter begins by contextualising the study and describing the research paradigm. This is followed by briefly unpacking the research methodology and a description of the three cycles involved in the research process. The data generation process and data analysis process are explained, followed by a discussion of ethical issues, validity and trustworthiness.

As stated, the Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach was chosen for this research, since it is applicable to contextual community-based research. It pursues sustainable and positive change when involving people in the communities where change is needed (Zuber-Skerrit, 2018).

In this research, the principles of the PALAR design encouraged educators to collaboratively find strategies to improve educator-learner relationships as a means of assisting them towards improving discipline-related challenges in the classroom.

### **5.2 CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH (cf. 1.3)**

As a lecturer at an independent college in rural KwaZulu-Natal and, being involved in the community, I often heard teachers' concerns about indiscipline in secondary schools. During one of my engagements with a principal from the area, she again voiced her concern, and we discussed the possibility of engaging the community to collaboratively explore strategies to improve discipline in secondary schools in the district.

The principal acted as the gatekeeper and took this idea to local secondary schools in the area. Five of the approximately thirty secondary schools volunteered to be part of this community-engaged project, and each school supplied the name of one volunteering educator to partake in this project. The educators, principals and one member of the school governing body (SGB) at each school agreed to take part and, together, the five volunteer educators from five different secondary schools along with myself formed the action learning set (ALS) and acted as co-researchers to address the problem at hand.

Collaboratively, through a PALAR research design, we aimed to support educators in the uMzinyathi District to find strategies to determine educator's understanding of learner behaviour and discipline in schools. We aimed to determine the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with and we further determined our views on positive educator-learner relationships. We also developed strategies, in the form of a short learning programme

(SLP), to support educators in the district to deal with indiscipline. To contextualise the SLP, we collaborated with willing educators at respective schools to form a Feature Creative Workshop (FCW) in which we formulated educator-learner relationship-building strategies. These strategies were tested and reflected on and then compiled in the SLP (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3) as a resource for the wider school community in the uMzinyathi District. Lastly, we determined how effective the relationship-centred strategies could be developed through the PALAR research design.

News travelled in the district about the project, and another educator from one of the schools in the district asked to be included. The co-researchers in the ALS agreed to this request and this educator joined us during Cycle 2.

Table 5.1 below reflects an overview of the participatory schools and co-researchers in the ALS. The uMzinyathi District is classified as a quintile one area, as indicated, which implies that it is one of the poorest areas in KwaZulu-Natal. The five participating secondary schools differed much in circumstances and learner and educator numbers. Three public schools were under-resourced while one public school had no information technology (IT) facilities such as computers or internet. The private school was well equipped. The learners attending the four government schools, in general, came from poor households, mainly speaking isiZulu and travelling long distances to get to school. The language of teaching and learning was English, and the learners were exposed to English mainly at school.

For the purpose of confidentiality, study the co-researchers are referred to as E1 to E5 and the schools as S1 to S5.

**Table 5.1:** Demographic details of the co-researchers in the ALS.

| Names and school          | Sex | Public school in a small rural town | Public school in a rural area | Independent rural school | Number of educators | Number of learners | Qualification of educator | Years of experience at time of research | State of school buildings                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educator E1<br>School S1  | F   | ✓                                   |                               |                          | 40                  | 1100               | ACE,<br>BEd<br>Honours    | 19                                      | Old but in fairly good condition. A full services school without any support from the DBE up to the time of the research |
| Educator E2<br>School S2  | F   | ✓                                   |                               |                          | 26                  | 540                | B.Ed<br>(Snr &<br>FET)    | 15                                      | Old but in fairly good condition                                                                                         |
| Educator E3<br>School S3  | M   |                                     | ✓                             |                          | 18                  | 533                | B.Ed<br>Honours           | 23                                      | Battered, broken windows and doors, unkempt                                                                              |
| Educator E4a<br>School S4 | M   |                                     | ✓                             |                          | 37                  | 1298               | B.Ed<br>Honours           | 25                                      | Old but in fairly good condition                                                                                         |
| Educator E4b<br>School S4 | M   |                                     | ✓                             |                          | 37                  | 1298               | B.Ed<br>Honours           | 19                                      | Old but in fairly good condition                                                                                         |
| Educator E5<br>School S5  | F   |                                     |                               | ✓                        | 26                  | 173                | NPDE;<br>ACE              | 30                                      | Well-kept and well equipped                                                                                              |

### 5.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Huitt (2018) describes a paradigm as a theoretical idea of how a system is structured with a view to the relationships between the parts and how it functions in terms of behaviour within a context or a specific time. In other words, a paradigm is another way of observing the world. Zuber-Skerritt, (2011, p. 6) describes a paradigm as “a way of thinking, feeling, living and being that influences our values, worldviews and paradigms of learning, teaching and research. It influences our behaviour, strategies, methods, and therefore the capacity for improving practice.” Nguyen (2019) highlights the fact that a paradigm consists of different elements. These must be understood to ensure that research will be guided by beliefs, assumptions, values and norms. The elements, epistemology, ontology, axiology and methodology pertaining to the present project will subsequently be described.

#### 5.3.1 The epistemological paradigm (cf. 1.10.1.2)

The word epistemology stems from the Greek word *episteme* and means “knowledge.” Epistemology describes the nature of knowledge, how we know reality or truth in the world and how we come to know something and communicate it with other people. Epistemology answers questions such as this: *Can knowledge be acquired, or must it be personally experienced?* (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). Davidson (as cited in Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017) explains that epistemology helps us find factual answers to factual questions.

This knowledge will facilitate a deeper understanding in the field of research. If the researcher trusts faith, beliefs and intuition as sources of knowledge, the core of the research is intuitive knowledge. If the researcher relies on data collected from knowledgeable people, books and organisations, it will be embedded in authoritative knowledge. If reason is seen as the surest path to acquire truth, the engendered knowledge is called rational or logical. When the researcher bases knowledge on sense experience, objective facts and the knowledge is demonstratable, the knowledge is empirical. With that in mind, epistemology is “important because it helps the researcher to establish faith put in the data” (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017, p. 27).

As a research design, PALAR is characterised by an epistemology that is critical, reflective and transformative in its manner of knowledge creation. Reflection will impact people’s beliefs, opinions, attitudes and emotional reactions (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). As the co-researchers of the ALS, we were “empowered to reflect and transform our meaning schemes” (Neethling, 2015, p. 7), since this research was done authoritatively and empirically. The co-researchers were asked to reflect on discipline as they experienced it in the secondary schools and to

identify ways to address indiscipline in the classroom, which engendered valuable knowledge on the problem at hand.

### **5.3.2 The ontological paradigm (cf. 1.10.1.1)**

Ontology has to do with assumptions about how to verify our belief that something is real or make sense and identify the core of the social occurrence that is being investigated (Scotland, 2012). Ontology answers questions such as this: *Is there a reality out there? Is it just imagination?* Thus, ontology reveals an understanding of the essence of the nature of reality (Creswell, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017) and poses questions about similarities and differences. Like epistemology, ontology encourages a person to challenge his or her belief system about reality and being (existence) where necessary. When applying ontology in research, it orients a person's thinking concerning the research problem and its importance as well as around approaches to follow towards finding solutions (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017).

In this research, the ontological paradigm helped us conceptualise and approach the research problem, facilitated our understanding of the meaning of the collected data and positioned us favourably to answer research questions. Both the ontological and epistemological understanding gained through this learning process contributed towards the sustainable and positive outcomes of collaboration and promised to have long-lasting effects on our thinking (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). The PALAR design applied in this research not only focussed on addressing indiscipline, but also on the learning that flowed forth through collaborative and critical reflection by the co-researchers during the ALS interactions (see Wood, 2020).

### **5.3.3 The Axiology paradigm (cf. 1.10.1.3)**

Nguyen (2019) indicates that, when planning research, ethical issues centring on the study of moral principles and axiology as well as the study of values need to be considered. Axiology addresses questions such as this: *What is ethical behaviour?* To answer this question, the core values of action research grounded in respect for people, while the knowledge and experience they bring to the research process must be adhered to. We must further trust in the ability of democratic processes to achieve positive social change and commitment to action according to Brydon-Miller et al., (2003, p. 15), who further states (2012) that core values can be seen as a set of basic principles that must guide ethical reflection throughout the research process. These principles are autonomy, sovereignty, beneficence, justice, caring, respect, commitment, transparency and democratic practice.

To plan for these ethical issues, concepts such as right and wrong behaviour as centred on research should be understood (cf. 1.16; 5.7). The concepts of right and wrong should be



understood and evaluated before determining the nature of ethical behaviour to be followed. Simply stated, the values and moral principles that will guide you when doing research, must be considered so that all participants can be treated with respect, harm can be avoided and goodwill secured, especially when conducting community-based research in environments, cultures, languages and customs that differ from the known. Overall, research must be approached in a socially just and respectful way (ARC, 2015).

As co-researchers in the ALS, we had to consider and respect the values, morals and contributions of one another as such. Collaboratively we approached our ALS interactions and the research project in a just and respectful manner. The four ethical principles of privacy, accuracy, property and accessibility (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017) guided our research and will subsequently be briefly discussed.

#### **5.3.3.1 Privacy**

Privacy centres on the information participants will be required to reveal for the sake of the research to be effective, while they cannot be forced to do so (Allen, 2017). In the ALS, the co-researchers had the opportunity to voice their opinion freely and say what was on their hearts. Therefore, it needed to be clear to all how the data would be made known and to whom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face data generation was replaced by electronic interactions utilising informative online discussions, photo/ picturevoice, open-ended questionnaires, cell phone conversations, WhatsApp encounters, email and reflective journals employing a qualitative method. It was collaboratively decided that all the data and comments had to be compiled by me as the research facilitator into one comprehensive document. I made use of numbers and not names to protect our privacy. The document recirculated via email to the co-researchers to verify the correctness of the retyped comments as well as allowing room for commenting on the comments of the other four co-researchers, should they have any. In this way, the co-researchers could voice their opinion freely and their privacy was protected. One particular co-researcher did not have email facilities due to contextual restrains. The questionnaires and reflection documents were printed out and hard copies were delivered to that co-researcher and returned by hand.

#### **5.3.3.2 Accuracy**

Accuracy relates to the validity and fidelity of the research information (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). To honour accuracy, it was necessary to cross-check the information, because all discussions took place in English and, although we were fluent in English, it was not our mother tongue. All of the co-researchers checked the correctness of the retyped comments and reflected on the remarks of the others, should they have had any. In this way, trust and respect

were built between all the co-researchers. During one of the COVID-19 lighting periods, the ALS met face-to-face. I circulated a hard copy file with all the correspondence, data and comments that happened electronically. The co-researchers had the opportunity to read through it and acquaint themselves with all the documentation and information. They were requested to sign a register of approval as to the correctness of the data.

#### **5.3.3.3 Property**

Property refers to ownership of the data or results (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). During the pre-meeting in Cycle 1, the matter was discussed, and we decided to compile the data and results into an SLP to be presented by the co-researchers in their schools and schools in the district.

#### **5.3.3.4 Accessibility**

During the pre-meeting, the co-researchers were assured that they would have access to the data at any time (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017).

### **5.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (cf. 1.10; 9.4)**

A research methodology is a process of finding answers to solve a research problem systematically and scientifically. A slideshow compiled by Walwyn (2017) describes the process further as a “body of knowledge which attempts to explain or understand how research is done” and a research method as “the specific steps followed by researchers in undertaking the research” (Slide 8). For a researcher to execute this research process, various tools can be used. These can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed when both are involved. Quantitative data evaluate numerical data and is often presented in the form of tables and diagrams (University of Pretoria, 2020). Qualitative data represents non-numerical information aiming at establishing trends and patterns.

As a qualitative approach, PALAR was chosen as the means of facilitating the research process, because it contains all the elements necessary not only to answer the research questions successfully, but also to benefit the participants personally in a special way. The participants shared their experiences with one another, learned from one another and broadened their way of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

#### **5.4.1 Qualitative research approach (cf. 1.10.2.3)**

A qualitative data generation approach includes the entire process of research from the initial stage of conceptualising of the problem at hand up to the writing up of the results (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). As mentioned, a qualitative approach was adopted for this research. It was found to be applicable further because of its flexibility as we moved iteratively between the

different cycles of action and reflection to generate data. In each cycle, the co-researchers reflected on their practice, took action, reflected again and took further action on the contextualised situation. This gave the co-researchers the opportunity to examine and reflect on their suggestions regarding indiscipline, discuss their challenges and seek opportunities to address the challenges at hand. For this reason, no fixed steps could be followed, neither could the research design be replicated (see Zuber-Skerritt, 2011; Wood 2019).

#### **5.4.2 Elements of PALAR as a research design**

PALAR consists of different elements, which will subsequently be briefly elucidated.

##### **5.4.2.1 The theoretical framework of PALAR**

Zuber-Skerritt (2011) mentions six influential, overarching theories that are combined in PALAR: action theory, grounded theory, critical transformative theory, systems theory, personal construct theory and experiential learning theory. She further underlines and encourages the importance for members of the collective PALAR body to understand and consciously develop individual theoretical frameworks to guide their strategies and behaviour. For this reason, I draw from action learning theory, which emphasises that learning is supported in the task itself, taking place in the here-and-now, in a small group known as an ALS. In this kind of research, theory and practice are integrated into the repeated process of action and reflection (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). Both action learning and action research include inquiry, reflection, problem-solving, learning and research, but action research is more “systematic, rigorous, scrutinisable, verifiable, always made public (e.g., in publications, oral or written reports) and grounded in a certain methodology and rigorous research methods of collecting, analysing and verifying data” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011: p. 6). The critical transformative learning theory was also applicable here, because newly acquired knowledge could be applied to new and challenging situations in the classroom, which assisted educators in dealing with indiscipline of learners.

##### **5.4.2.1.1 PALAR as a philosophy**

As a philosophy, PALAR is based on a critical, emancipatory paradigm concerned with improving social justice through employing diversity and generating understanding of the own role in contribution to an inclusive and democratic society (Wood, 2020). For this reason, the PALAR philosophy was an ideal choice for the present project with a view to achieving its outcomes, as it includes primary aspects such as *epistemology* (the way we understand the origin and the nature of knowledge) (cf. 1.10.1.2; 5.3; 5.3.2), *ontology* (a study of existence, being, becoming and reality and centred on questions about things that exist) (cf. 1.10.1.2),

*axiology* (a study of the things that are valuable, our ethics and beliefs) (cf. 1.10.1.1) and a methodology (the process of doing the research).

#### 5.4.2.1.2 *PALAR as a theory of learning*

As a learning theory, PALAR draws from *experiential learning* (Kolb, 1984), *lifelong learning* (Aspin et al., 2001), and *lifelong action learning* (Zuber-Skerritt and Teare 2013) and *action learning* (Revans, 1982; 1998; Zuber-Skerritt, 2011; Marquardt, 1999). A combination of action learning and lifelong learning are integrated into lifelong action learning and can be explained as voluntary, ongoing and self-motivated (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013). Zuber-Skerritt (2011) further says that lifelong learning refers not only to learning during the whole duration of life but also learning about the nature of life; it is “a multifaceted approach to learning and to life that is a conscious, deliberate, continuous, and a self-directed process.” Action learning centres on learning in groups and learning from one another within the workplace or community. Experiential learning rests on the assumption that the correct answers cannot be foreseen, and people learn by their mistakes or failings. It also makes use of trial and error (Maxwell, 2000), which dovetails with the present project where educator-learner relationship-building strategies were tested in the classroom to determine the relevance of the strategy.

#### 5.4.2.1.3 *PALAR as a facilitation process*

Facilitating a PALAR process is a collaborative contribution to lifelong learning, scholarship and knowledge production. It is an ongoing process of *critical reflection* that challenges boundaries, dependency, ownership and sustainability of the research orientations (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Therefore, *relationship building* in the first cycle is imperative, since it is here where a safe environment can be created for co-researchers to face their own weaknesses, power struggles and challenges, and co-discover opportunities for lifelong learning throughout the cycles that follow (Zuber-Skerritt and Teare 2013; Dick, 2005). Action leadership, that is, *coaching* and *mentoring* during the facilitation process, is an innovative, creative, self-developing and collaborative way to lead and take responsibility for the research while not taking control of the group (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018). Facilitation in this research was challenging because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Permission was given by the North West University (Addendum b) that the research could be done online as an alternative for face-to-face interactions. We strived for and succeed in creating a comfortable, open and democratic atmosphere that prevailed throughout the research journey.

#### 5.4.2.1.4 *PALAR as a methodology*

As a methodology, PALAR makes use of methods and theories compatible with its principles, which can be described as research that focusses on the description of human perception of

experiences in the social world (Van Manen, 2014). During the present PALAR research we made use of information grounded in practical experience and data from knowledgeable educators (Corbin & Strauss, 2013) in order to come to conclusions and solutions.

The Socratic method bears resemblance with the PALAR method and encompasses dialogue between participants to promote critical transformative learning. The Socratic method is a way of argumentative and cooperative dialogue in search of truths and shaping and discovering beliefs. It is not a one-way method but encourages collaboration among individuals to learn from one another (George, 2015; Lee, 2019). Socrates often rectified his students when he performed cooperative dialogue by asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and draw on ideas and underlying beliefs (Ducharme, & Ducharme, 2020).

Taket et al. (2009) describe participatory action research as “unsilencing the silence in communities” (p. 178) to bring them together in order to identify school and related issues that need to be addressed. Action research promotes peer-based support and the co-creation of knowledge through communication so as to facilitate learner or scholarly efficacy (García-Peñalvo et al., 2015). Through this approach, educators and facilitators waive “the teacher-centred power of past models of teaching and learn to become part of the learning experience as facilitators” (Barber & King 2017, p. 1504). Learners and participants are taught to take responsibility for their learning while they experience the freedom of becoming critical thinkers (Bovill et al., 2011).

The PALAR design aims at the improvement of conditions as well as fostering critical and collaborative reflection on personal and community experiences (Wood et al., 2007). Wood and Zuber-Skerritt (2013) argue that PALAR is supported by emancipatory, democratic and participatory values. This, in turn, can lead to openness and respect for different beliefs and the development of shared wisdom to guide the participants in transformation and durable change, while breaking down barriers established by power relationships. The researcher and the participants contribute equally to the research relationship, based on respect and trust to bring about change (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013; Zuber-Skerritt, 2011).

PALAR also makes use of different methodologies such as *case study methodology* (Yin, 2013) grounded in theory, that is, embracing an empirical process by studying a single case to come to an understanding of the activity within context (Harrison et al., 2017); *phenomenography*, that is, a qualitative method with a non-dualistic point of view; and *phenomenology*, the study of how humans experience things and present themselves to others.

Diagram 5.1 depicts a synthesis of these matters, reflecting the philosophy, methodology, theory of learning and the facilitation process within the PALAR design.

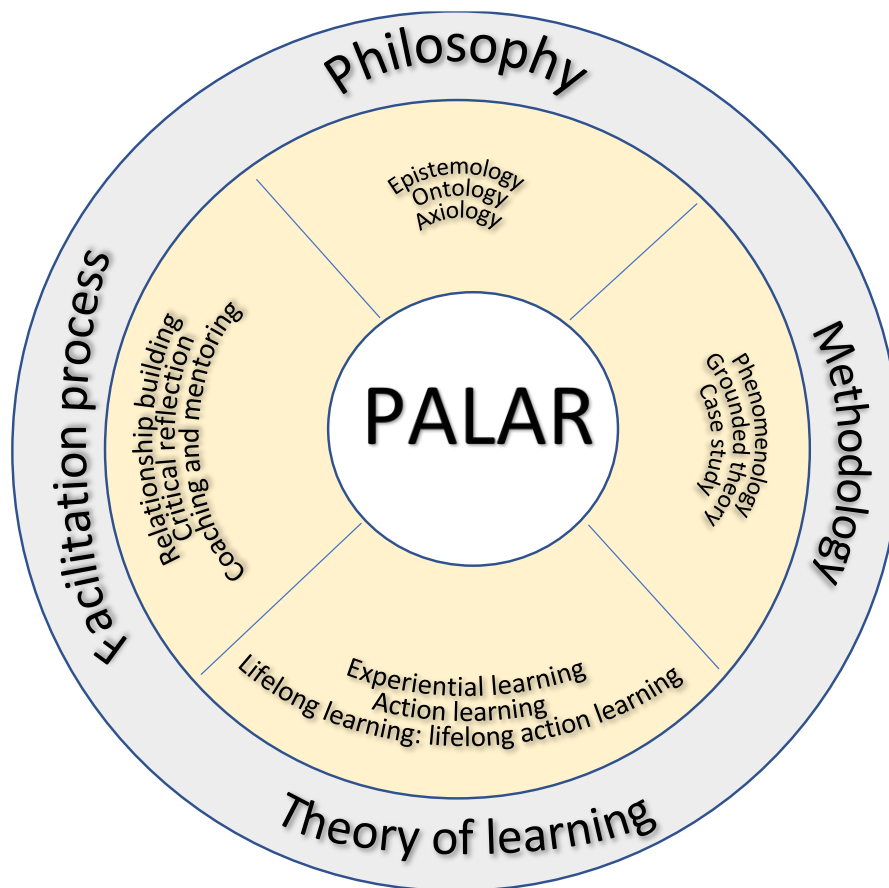


**Diagram 5.1:** Theoretical framework for PALAR (adapted from Zuber-Skerritt et al., 2015b, p. 110).

Three features form part of the PALAR research design journey when striving to develop a collaborative democratic, authentic, trusting and supportive *relationship* between co-researchers to critically *reflect* on and get *recognition* for their achievements, as unpacked below.

#### 5.4.3 The PALAR process (cf. 1.10.2.2)

Kearney et al. (2013) pin down the three necessary features, or the 3 Rs (cf. 4.5; 9.4.1), of the PALAR process that line up with the PALAR paradigm in order to ensure real participation to facilitate knowledge creation and educational, practical and social improvements.

#### **5.4.3.1 Relationships**

For PALAR to be successful, a relationship of team building, trust and cooperation must be established among participants. Relationships underpin questions such as this: *“How can relationships and cooperation be improved?”* (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018). During the ALS interactions, the focus was on building trusting, supporting, democratic and authentic relationships between the co-researchers by open reflection on each other’s comments. Relationship-building (cf. 6.2) was undertaken in the pre-meeting. It must be mentioned that some of the co-researchers already knew one another or were acquainted with the different schools and they felt at home in one another’s company.

#### **5.4.3.2 Reflection**

To evaluate the PALAR research project, critical self-reflection, reflection on the process and meta-reflection are necessary. Through these reflection processes, co-researchers of the ALS became aware of the knowledge they gained, the needs and dependence of other co-researchers as well as their own needs. Reflection allows co-researchers to learn much about themselves and their own worldview, which is useful in their future lives. Reflection underpins questions such as this one: *“How can participants be assisted to reflect on their own learning?”* (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018; Wood, 2020).

In this research, the co-researchers had the opportunity to reflect on their own comments as well as the comments of the other co-researchers. In this way, they could evaluate their way of thinking and adjust it to a more acceptable way if need be. The reflective questionnaires facilitated a supportive process by which the co-researchers could reflect on their present way of doing as a means of improving their teaching and learning practices in future.

#### **5.4.3.3 Recognition**

The recognition of the outcomes of the research the knowledge gained affirms the achievements of the research; for instance, by means of publication of its outcomes. Recognition is usually not the final step in the process, but the end of a cycle that flows into the next one of the PALAR process, that is, “a spiral of AR cycles” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018, p. 519). Recognition underpins questions such as this: *“What is the value of the participants and how it can be enhanced?”* (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018).

Complementing the 3 Rs are the 7 Cs, developed as PALAR principles by Zuber-Skerritt (2012, p. 217-218).

**Table 5.2: The 7 Cs and the underpinning questions (Adapted from (Zuber-Skerritt, 2012, p. 217-218)**

| <b>The 7Cs (Zuber-Skerritt, 2012, p. 217-218)</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Questions underpinning the 7Cs (Zuber-Skerritt, 2012, p. 217-218)</b>                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                                 | Communication, cultivated initially through relationship, vision and team-building activities at the very start of a PALAR project or programme to ensure effective research-oriented exchange of ideas and teamwork throughout the project.         | How effective is my communication?                                                                                                                        |
| 2                                                 | Collaboration among all participants (co-researchers) of the group, generating team spirit, symmetrical communication and synergy.                                                                                                                   | How committed am I to the project, to the participants (co-researchers) and the intended outcome/s?                                                       |
| 3                                                 | Commitment to the group, to completion of the project, and positive, sustainable change and development throughout the project.                                                                                                                      | As the research facilitator of the process, and as a researcher, what do I need to learn?                                                                 |
| 4                                                 | Coaching and learning from one another in dialogue, discussion, and by asking fresh questions that open new lines of inquiry (action learning).                                                                                                      | How willing am I to listen to others' points of view and reach a mutual agreement?                                                                        |
| 5                                                 | Critical and self-critical attitude and reflection on action, which also entails being open to feedback from critical friends and new or different perspectives (action research).                                                                   | How do my feelings, thoughts, motives, and values impact the research process?                                                                            |
| 6                                                 | Competence in facilitating PALAR and research and development activities, using effective processes and methods, with a vision of excellence leading to a high level of performance (action leadership).                                             | How collaborative is the process? What role/s do I and the other participants (co-researchers) play and how could collaboration make them more effective? |
| 7                                                 | Character building as a consequence of the above, characterised by integrity; trust (and being trusted); honesty; respect for others, for diversity and difference; resilience; and an openness to new perspectives, opportunities, and innovations. | How am I directive in the various processes of this research? How can I improve my mentoring/ facilitation skills?                                        |



The 7C principles were adhered to during the research, although face-to-face work could not be done due to the COVID-19 restrictions, as indicated. The *communication* process was productive, because the co-researchers could effectively communicate and reflect on their views. The co-researchers *collaborated* by answering all the requests put to them and were *committed* to the ALS to complete the research process, although circumstances were not always easy. For example, E3, who did not have electronic facilities, approached us regularly to get hold of, amongst other things, questionnaires, discuss the next round of instructions and fetch the documents to be reflected on again. Documentation was brought back to the co-researchers punctually. Co-researcher E4a did not have adequate electronic facilities and skills and Co-researcher E4b aided by fetching and returning his written comments. Co-researcher E1 was not sufficiently computer literate but, with the help of friends or co-researchers, managed the basics adequately.

*Coaching and learning* occurred through dialogue when the co-researchers adjusted their thoughts and *critically reflected* on these to gain new insight from other co-researchers' ways of thinking. Critical and open reflection led to new perspectives amongst us all. This process facilitated change and *character building* where necessary. *Character building* was a high priority, because the co-researchers were forced to trust one another and respect one another's views and were able to accept new perspectives to replace outdated views (Mezirow, 2009; Wood, 2020, Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). The whole research process was helpful and the co-researchers gained confidence in high-level performance, enabling them to initiate their research in the future, should other problems emerge.

The PALAR research process follows iterative cycles of actions and reflections. For this research, the infinity sign proposed by Wood (2020) was used.

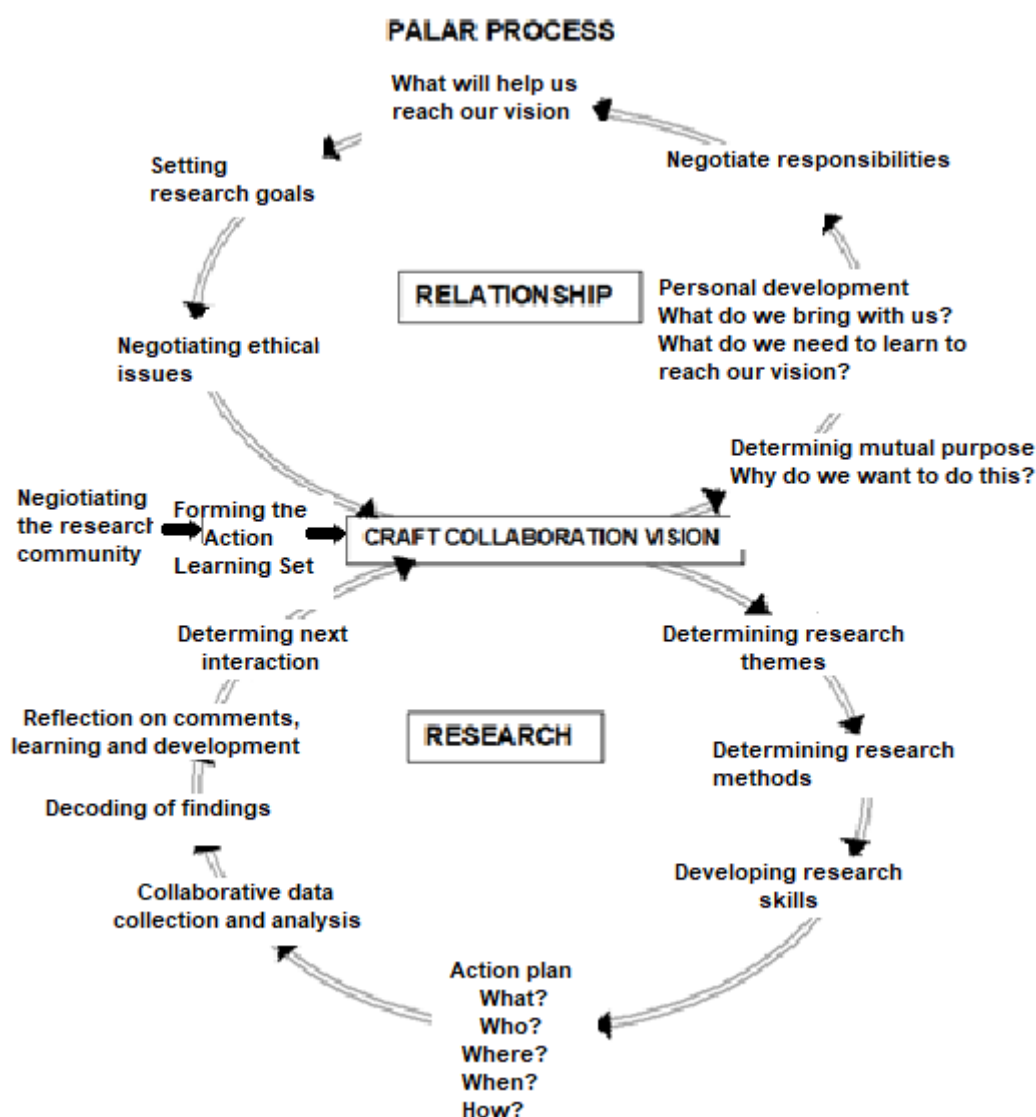


**Diagram 5.2: The PALAR process (Adapted from Wood, 2020).**

This process boils down to 1) vision building, 2) context analysis and 3) planning for improved practices. After the process of revision, analysis and planning, there is usually a spiral of repetitive cycles until all the outcomes have been reached (Wood, 2020). Each cycle involves planning, executing the plan/s, observing the results and then reflecting on the results. Through this repetition of cycles, learning takes place (Zuber-Skerrit, 2011).

This research was guided by a critical transformative theory approach, as indicated. Asghar (2013) states that research done through a critical approach contributes to understanding not only by exploring and analysing the circumstances, but also by providing a programme for change. Through active involvement, the educators involved in this research explored their values and beliefs.

This PALAR research process was conducted in three interactive cycles to be discussed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, which will aim at answering the primary research question: *How can a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

#### **5.4.3.4 The cycles**

The PALAR research process was conducted in three iterative cycles consisting of data generation and reflection.

##### **Cycle 1 (cf. 1.10.2.3.1; 6.2)**

##### **Pre-meeting (cf. 1.13; 4.5; 5.7.5; 6.2)**

The gatekeeper (cf. 1.10.2.3.1; 1.11) scheduled a face-to-face pre-meeting with the educators before the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions came into place. This pre-meeting focussed on relationship building where the educators got to know one another as possible members of the ALS. The research procedures were explained, needs were discussed, and ethical requirements were addressed (Wood, 2020). Between the gatekeeper and myself as the research facilitator, we explained the vision of the research project to the educators, as aligned with the primary research question:

*PALAR approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

##### **Establishing the action learning set**

According to Wood (2020), PALAR focuses on small numbers of people to act as co-researchers in a given context. The small group of co-researchers formed the ALS. Five educators volunteered to act as co-researchers. We negotiated our different roles by answering questions such as the following:

- Who are we?
- Why do we want to take part in the research project?
- What do we want to learn from this project?
- What do we want to achieve in this project?
- What do we each bring to this project?
- What role would each like to take on?

By answering the questions honestly and democratically, each co-researcher had the opportunity to learn from and with one another, which is imperative for relationship building during a PALAR research journey.

When the research engages the community to address a challenge, as in this research project, the co-researchers often originate from different cultures, (Servaes et al., 2012; Servaes & Lie, 2013) languages, religions and age groups. Therefore, a solid relationship built on respect and understanding is of utmost importance from the very first encounter. This solid relationship creates a positive environment in which the co-researchers can be critical and collaboratively reflect on and build skills and knowledge to develop lifelong learning and leadership (Wood, 2020).

The ALS aimed to support educators in the uMzinyathi District to find strategies to determine educators' understanding of learner behaviour and discipline in schools. We aimed at determining the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with. We reflected critically on the action research process where co-researchers worked collaboratively towards a collective goal.

### **First electronic encounter**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of lockdown regulations, the ALS interactions were replaced with electronic means with a view to data generation strategies. An informal email estimation was done to determine the co-researchers' facilities and how best to collect data to ensure reliability, collaboration, reflection, democracy, and trustworthiness. The co-researchers in the ALS suggested electronic interactions utilising informative online discussions, electronic open-ended questionnaires, email, photo/ picturevoice sent by email, cell phone conversations, individual and group WhatsApp encounters and paper-based reflective journals.

Cycle 1 was initiated by email (Addendum C1 and C2) and focussed on secondary research questions one and two:

*How did educators understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?*

*What were the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?*

The ALS collaboratively decided to use photo/ picturevoice with narratives to illustrate their understanding and knowledge of behaviour at the time of the research. We further decided to keep reflective journals of our daily experiences and challenges, which would serve as sources

of information when answering the open-ended questionnaires in all three cycles. We reflected on these matters via email.

We agreed that all emails needed to be sent to a nodal point and then compiled in one document to circulate for all co-researchers for reflection. Collaboratively, the co-researchers agreed that I, as the research facilitator, should act as the nodal point.

After each cycle, all the comments were documented and recirculated to the co-researchers in order to verify the correctness of the captured data and reflect on their comments as well as the comments of other co-researchers.

### **Cycle 2 (cf. 1.10.2.3.2; 7.2) (Addendum D)**

As part of relationship building, the ALS utilised WhatsApp to share the ways in which we were coping with COVID-19 restrictions in our homes and working environments. We further reflected on all the activities taking place in cycle 1 and how they affected our way of thinking.

We discussed research questions three and four via email:

*What were the educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?*

*What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies could collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

The co-researchers were expected to review their opinion on educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with discipline-related issues in the classroom and strategies with a view to improving these relationships. In the absence of corporal punishment, the co-researchers unknowingly applied educator-learner relationship-building ways in the classroom. Collaboratively, we shared and added new strategies to improve educator-learner relationships through electronic open-ended questionnaires through email and WhatsApp where I was again nominated as the nodal point for the discussion. These comments were compiled into one electronic document at the nodal point and recirculated to the co-researchers to reflect on and implement in the classroom. These actions align with Mezirow's (2000) idea of exploring new, transforming knowledge.

During cycle 3, the co-researchers reported on the effectiveness of these strategies.

### **Cycle 3 (cf. 1.10.2.3.3; 8.2)**

This cycle was conducted electronically in the same way as Cycles 1 and 2 (Addendum E). We again started with a relationship activity over WhatsApp and then reported back after the implementation and evaluation of the feasibility of the strategies we chose to implement, as derived from cycle 2 Cycle 2.

The question guiding this cycle was:

*How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?*

Lockdown regulations were eased, and I discussed the possibilities of a FCW with the other educators at their respective schools.

### **Future Creating Workshop (FCW)**

Realising the possible benefits of a FCW, the co-researchers were in favour of it as a means of professional development and, with permission from the principals, we convened face-to-face FCW interactions with the educators at their respective schools as a means of obtaining more valid and factual inputs on the research problem within the school context. During the FCW, educators from the wider teaching school community were requested to reflect on their views and feelings about discipline-related issues at their schools, educator-learner relationship-building and strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships. The FCW served the purpose of assisting the educators to reflect on their own needs as well as those of learners to design a tailor-made plan of action for these (Inayatullah, 2013). The FCWs empowered the educators to implement methods aimed at identifying and solving future problems at their schools. The FCWs was found to be an effective way of bringing together the educators at their respective schools in order to collaboratively discuss the common problem and formulate possible solutions.

Educators attended the FCW, but only some partook in providing ideas on building educator-learner relationships. They further elaborated on the value of educator-learner relationships, followed by further work on ways to build such relationships.

We decided collaboratively on compiling a list of strategies derived from the FCW as well as ideas engendered by the ALS to build positive educator-learner relationships. I was again voted in as the nodal point for compiling the list electronically and send it on to the co-researchers.

Email and WhatsApp encounters proved to be the best options among those available, because comments were written down as proof of what was suggested and could be kept in a file as evidence and for future discussion. This way of doing ensured sustainability of the interventions.

## **5.5 DATA GENERATION PROCESS**

Various means of data generation in the three cycles were employed as discussed briefly below.

### **5.5.1 Reflective journals (cf. 1.10.2.3; 1.12.3)**

Adult learners need an ongoing way of connecting to new learning their previous day-to-day experiences. This makes them co-authors of their learning. For this to happen, researchers must design activities that facilitate reflection. Through keeping reflective journals of their experiences, knowledge of the problem and the new knowledge acquired, learning becomes meaningful (Knowles, 1988). Reflective journals allow for free expression (Ukrop et al., 2019). Vinjamuri, et al., 2017).

In this research, the co-researchers were given reflective journals and were requested to write down experiences relating to discipline in their classrooms. These recorded experiences and information were used in the comments of the ALS to complete the open-ended questionnaires during Cycles 1, 2 and 3.

### **5.5.2 Photo/ Picturevoice (cf. 1.13; 5.8.2; 6.4)**

In this research, due to a lack of skills and/ or facilities, some co-researchers used pictures instead of photos, therefore I will refer to photo/ picturevoice as an artifact (Olivier, Wood & de Lange, 2009).

Photovoice was developed by Caroline Wang in the early 1990s. It is widely used in school and community settings globally to investigate everything from teachers dealing with at-risk learners to ways of healing socio-economic defects in communities (Brydon-Miller, 2012). It involves community participants taking photos of that which represents matters in a context that reflect on their day-to-day lives. It gives marginalised voices expression in communities (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). Photovoice involves a democratic approach that redresses the possible power imbalances among participants and the researcher to ensure that co-researchers become co-producers of knowledge. It is a participatory research method encouraging co-researchers to lead the research process (Liebenberg, 2018). As mentioned, (cf. 1.12.2) in view of a relative lack of skills and technological devices, we as co-researchers

decided in the ALS that photovoice would be adjusted to photo/ picturevoice. It reflected the effects that discipline-related issues had on their job satisfaction, motivation to teach and feelings about the teaching profession as a whole. They wrote narratives to explain why they took a specific photo or drew a particular picture.

### **5.5.3 Informative discussions**

An informative group discussion is a way of generating data and is also a qualitative research method whereby a selected group of people choose a topic to discuss. Through discussions, the co-researchers experience, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions become known (Van Eeuwijk, & Angehrn, 2017).

Through informative discussions, utilising emails, WhatsApps and cell phone conversations, we as co-researchers learned from one another. We were free to ask and answer questions to one another by means of the same media. If a question or an answer was not clear, we could probe to ask for clarity.

## **5.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **5.6.1 Analysis of qualitative data (cf. 1.13)**

Qualitative data must be analysed, and this can be challenging. The most important themes emerging from the data must be identified and penned down systematically and convincingly with a view to answering the research questions (Miles et al., 2013). One way of systemising data is through coding.

### **5.6.2 Coding (cf. 1.13)**

Coding can be defined as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/ or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2015: 3).

Emerging themes from the data can be identified according to certain patterns, such as 1) similarity, 2) difference, 3) frequency, 4) sequence, 5) correspondence and 6) causation. Emerging themes are coded by counting the number of times a particular situation or topic occurs (Miles et al., 2013). Coding for this research was done mainly through an affective method, because the context involved mostly feelings about discipline and experiences involving indiscipline of learners in the classroom.

Several subthemes were identified during the data generation process with a view to strengthening the main ones, acknowledging the complexity of educator-learner relationship-



building. After the FCW that was held during Cycle 3, one new topic, namely *the influence of values, morals and religion on the behaviour of learners* was added as a separate theme, because it was mentioned repeatedly by the co-researchers and partaking educators. The influence of moral and religious values on the behaviour of the learners was constantly touched upon.

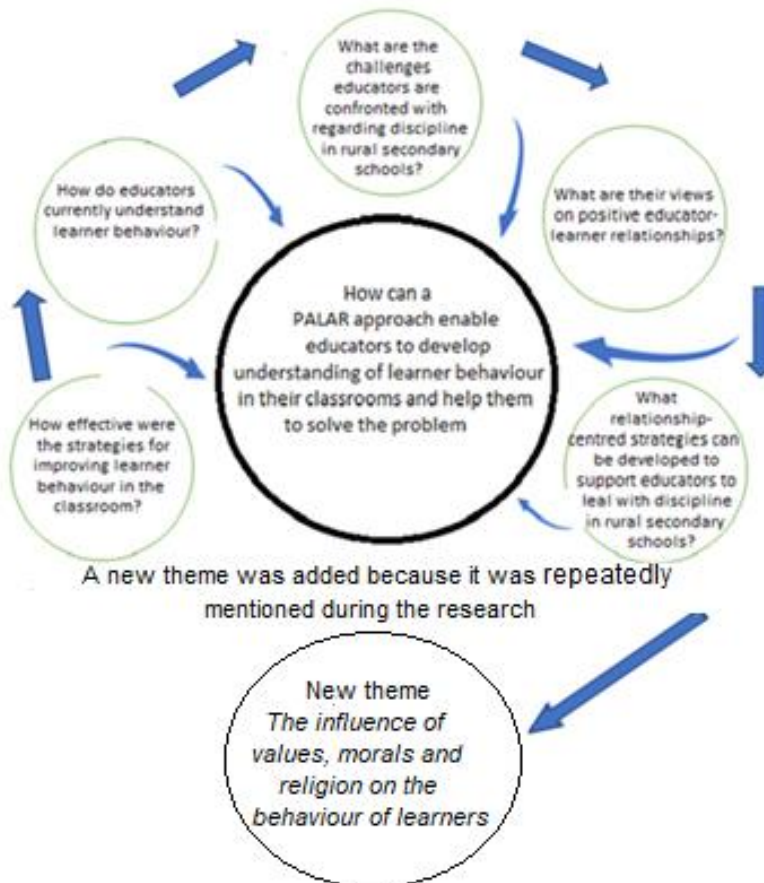


**Diagram 5.3:** *The main themes as determined during this research.*

Strategies to build educator-learner relationships was organised in an SLP. The co-researchers proposed and agreed that I act as the nodal point to guide the SLP for the wider body of educators in the rural areas around dealing with indiscipline.

## **5.7 COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND ETHICAL ISSUES THAT MAY HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING**

Ethical thinking links strongly with empathy, where a working definition of the latter is that we care for things that we are attached to and thus must experience this kind of connection with people to be motivated to care for them (Martusewicz et al., 2014). This resonates with the idea of ubuntu (cf. 2.2.2; 2.3) which, as indicated, holds that humanity is a quality we owe to

each other. We create each other, we participate in our creation: we are because you are, and since you are, “I am.” The “I am” depends upon the relationship between the other and me (Eze, 2010, p. 191).

Wilson et al. (2018) identified five ethical topics that could influence the outcomes of community-based action research, namely the protection of the participants, insiders and outsiders; power; collaboration and partnerships; validity and research integrity and the relational nature of the research. In the following section, I discuss this and align it with other researcher’ views.

### **5.7.1 Protection of the participants**

Brabeck et al. (2015) ask the question if community-based research is always in the best interest for the *protection of the participants*. Morgan et al. (2014) mention that the autonomy of vulnerable groups could be undermined, because the researcher may be overreaching their position of authority (Gustafson & Brunger, 2014, p. 998) when they make recommendations on strength of prior assumptions: for example, based on the view that people with disabilities are vulnerable and need protection, a researcher may tend to be overprotective towards them. Researchers must critically reflect on these predominant prior assumptions that shape their way of thinking in order to facilitate a better understanding of the research topic.

The dignity of the people and their integrity can be compromised in the research process (Gustafson, & Brunger, 2014). Vishalache and Cornforth (2013) argue that, if participants are community members who act in various roles on various levels such as those of teachers, parents and colleagues, while the researcher who participates in the same research project may become a community member who may also influence the outcomes on the basis of preconceived ideas. During the present research process, co-researchers could democratically voice their opinions and, because they were only known by number, they did enjoy protection from being identified especially when sensitive matter were mentioned.

Critical transformative learning achieved through the PALAR approach could also be of value to the researcher in terms of critical reflection on her own outdated and preconceived ideas so as to make room for more acceptable ways of thinking: Mezirow (2011) describes critical transformative learning as a process bringing about transformation in a person’s own frame (cf.1.9.2) of mind.

### **5.7.2 Insiders and outsiders**

If the researcher is an *outsider from the community and not an insider* from, it could cause tension around conflicting expectations, beliefs and assumptions (Castleden et al., 2012;

Richman et al., 2012), and there is a possibility that the benefits that the research holds for the researcher may outweigh the benefits for the community (Chenhall et al., 2011). As the researcher, I am involved in the rural community in terms of having been a lecturer at a college for the past 13 years, meaning among others that I am familiar with the Zulu culture. I am not a real outsider, although I do not have teaching experience in rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. I am, however, acquainted with Zulu educators from nearby schools through community engagement and the college. Most of our students at the college belong to the Zulu culture.

Cultural misunderstanding can arise when the researcher belongs to a different culture or race than those of community partners. The researcher can lose the trust of the community if cultural practices and values are not taken into consideration. Researchers must seek consent for the research within the cultural context of the community in order to ensure that societal values and practices are adhered to (Baydala et al., 2013; Wood 2020).

### **5.7.3 Power, collaboration and partnerships (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3)**

The PALAR process characterised by relationship building and collaborative community engagement provide an ideal vehicle for community research and subsequent transformative learning for both the community and the researcher (Wood, 2020).

It is not always clear who must represent the community and if outcomes are sponsored or academically driven, so that researchers may suppress the autonomy and the rights of the community participants (Banks, 2013; Brabeck et al., 2015). For this reason, it is necessary to pay attention to the establishment of *power, collaboration and partnerships* (Banks et al., 2013). Power differences among community participants and the researcher may lead to resource disparities and exploitation (Puffer et al., 2013; Hunt et al., 2014). It is unethical for researchers to refrain from using researcher resources to address community needs, but it is also unethical for researchers to boost false hopes (Brabeck et al., 2015). Lazarus (2018) alleges that power hierarchies in the communities may prevent equal power distribution in the research project.

Since the ALS followed democratic principles, we rather focussed on stimulating intellectual curiosity in order to become scholars of our own teaching, rather than wasting energy in power struggles.

Each co-researcher was regarded as equally important and honest to the self and others. We focussed on building trust, respecting others, reflecting on viewpoints, valuing opinions and

taking responsibility for our own actions (Neethling, 2015, p. 126) in order to develop an SLP to address indiscipline in the classroom.

#### **5.7.4 Research integrity and validity**

Community research involves community members who participate during all stages of the research but if, in reality, the community participants' expertise levels differ, it could influence the outcome of the research. This could influence the *research integrity and validity* of the outcome. For researchers to balance this validity with the needs of the community can be very challenging (Castleden et al., 2012; DiStefano et al., 2013). Close personal relationships within the group can result in unfair treatment of some of them, thus undermining the results. Researchers can also be tempted to change the outcomes to avoid unflattering conclusions (Bromley et al., 2015). Another risk factor is ownership of the results and how the results will be used and in who's interest (Cordner et al., 2012; Bromley et al., 2015). Since the participants of the ALS were regarded as equal partners and co-researchers, their expertise was valued, therefore each could voice their own opinion in a democratic way.

#### **5.7.5 Ethics review process and the relational nature**

To justify the *ethics review process and the relational nature of the research*, community-based research requires high-level skills and researchers need training to achieve these (Banks et al., 2013; Carter et al., 2013). Wilson et al. (2018) plead for training for ethical committee participants, administrators, researchers and community participants at all levels of research to facilitate reliable and valid results. Training will foster improved communication and highlight awareness of social, political and cultural matters that could lead to ethical challenges.

During the face-to-face pre-meeting of the present project, before the COVID-19 epidemic, procedures and requirements were explained to co-researchers. We shared our concerns about the deteriorating discipline situation in secondary schools and collaboratively aired our need for skills to cope with discipline in the classroom. We agreed that our experience in the teaching and learning environment was valued highly, and that together we could find solutions to the disciplinary problems faced by teachers in the classrooms. We all understood what was expected of us, and also that we must feel free to ask for clarity and advice as we proceeded with the research. The development of social relationships during research necessitates continuous self-reflection and evaluation (Castleden et al., 2012; Banks et al., 2013; Campbell-Page & Shaw-Ridley, 2013). It was interesting to see the physical and situational differences between the partaking schools, although they were not very far apart. This necessitated constant self-reflection from our side to make sure that we did not get biased or looked down

on certain co-researchers, but only maintained empathy for educators from more disadvantaged schools.

Through their participation in this project, the co-researchers gained valuable experience in school community research, which enabled them to engage colleagues at their schools for research purposes, should they experience communal problems in the future. I provided them only with guidance and encouraged them to communicate their own ideas and solutions.

As described in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.15), research results must be valid and trustworthy, as will be explained in the next portion.

## **5.8 VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS (cf. 1.15)**

The validity and trustworthiness of this research were based on the five validity criteria of Herr and Anderson (2005), each of which will be succinctly unpacked below.

### **5.8.1 Outcome validity**

To ensure outcome validity, care was taken that a solution was found for the research problem. Outcome validity is defined by Roach (2006) “as the degree to which an instrument measures what we intend to measure” and “can be determined only in relation to a particular question” (p. 10) (see also Skaaning, 2018; Leuverink & Aarts, 2019; Lindhult, 2019). The co-researchers reflected on each cycle of data generation and the analysis process and commented on the findings to answer the primary research question: *How can a (PALAR) approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

### **5.8.2 Process validity**

Process validity refers to the feasibility of the process around facilitating ongoing learning and reaching the anticipated outcomes (Leuverink & Aarts, 2019). During the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown regulations as well as the closure of schools, regular face-to-face interactions could not be held, as has been indicated; as also indicated, various electronic media were employed to overcome this challenge. The comments received by the ALS were compiled in one document and circulated again for reflection on own comments and those of other co-researchers.

We all learned to value the viewpoints of other co-researchers which, in turn, enhanced and improved relationships. One such example follows: E3 put forward a question to the ALS: *How do you see the way forward to attain an ideal classroom situation?* One co-researcher answered “*I already have this ideal classroom situation in my classes,*” which evoked a lively

discussion. An email was sent to the co-researcher to comment on this statement. All the inputs of the co-researchers were summarised by E3 and recirculated to inform the other co-researchers of the materials. In this way process validity was ensured to the satisfaction of all.

### **5.8.3 Democratic validity**

Democratic validity refers to how all the co-researchers were able to participate in solving the problem at hand (Leuverink & Aarts, 2019), which was ensured by the fact that all co-researchers could fully participate and give their opinions without being influenced by the viewpoints of the others. All the co-researchers could share in knowledge building. Again, all the comments were compiled in one document and circulated to the ALS for reflection and comments. When collecting the initial data, the co-researchers were not always aware of the comments of the others. It was only during the reflection stage, once the comments were compiled in one document and recirculated, that they became aware of how the other co-researchers perceived the problem. The reflection cycle allowed them to reflect on their thinking as well as the thinking of the other co-researchers. One co-researcher who worked at a very disadvantaged school and had very little exposure to affluent schools, felt uncomfortable, and did not take part in conversations. During Cycle 1 he realised that all inputs were valued, that we experienced all as equal, and he loosened up and took part in the discussions. It is worth mentioning that, on answering the questions in the privacy of his home without peer pressure, he displayed his excellent and invaluable insight into the problem.

### **5.8.4 Catalytic validity**

Catalytic validity refers to the way in which the research is able to re-orientate the co-researchers' way of thinking (Leuverink & Aarts, 2019). In a way, the electronic data generation functioned as a catalyst to ensure that co-researchers remained enthusiastic during a very trying time. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, educators were under severe pressure, health-wise and timewise. The adjusted school calendar of 2020 placed additional strain on the educators and available time. At some schools, the educators had to prepare online lessons, which demanded new skills and considerable creativity. Some schools did not have the facilities for this, with the result that learners fell behind and considerable numbers of extra teaching hours were required from them. Mitchley (2020) reports that, during lockdown, 13 million learners were left without proper schooling in South Africa. Only 20% of schools could teach online.

The ALS interactions placed extra strain on the time of the educators. All the co-researchers, although they initially agreed to attend the interactions, would not have been able to keep that commitment in view of these challenges around time. Furthermore, electronic data generation

assisted catalytic validity, because it ensured that co-researchers could still take part, not least because travel time was eliminated. The questionnaires, emails and WhatsApps could, moreover, be attended in spare time and at a time when co-researchers were relaxed and felt that they could cooperate fully.

#### **5.8.5 Dialogic validity**

To reach dialogic validity, the research must be exposed to all the stakeholders as an ongoing process for critical and reflective dialogue and approval (Leuverink & Aarts, 2019). At the pre-meeting of the present project, team building took place and arrangements were explained. During this meeting, we as co-researchers collaboratively identified aims and objectives for the research process. Contextual factors included aspects such as *who* we are as well as our *assets*. We discussed our expectations about this research. Educators expressed their feelings about discipline and also what they expected from this research. Being satisfied that we all understood what was expected of the research, we could proceed with confidence. Because of COVID-19 the process took longer than initially anticipated, but the results reflected the willingness and honesty with which it was done. Allowing the co-researchers to reflect on each other's comments kept the dialogic validity intact.

### **5.9 MY ROLE IN THE ACTION LEARNING SET (cf. 1.14)**

During the PALAR research process, the research facilitator, is an equal participant and co-researcher, guide the research process and "lead from behind" (Dunigan, 2019, par. 6). Trusting relationships and open and honest communication must prevail (Wessels, 2016). Wood and Zuber-Skerritt (2013) emphasise that, "unless time is taken to discuss collaboration, and what this involves in roles, expectations and responsibilities, the relationship will not be conducive for co-generating knowledge through authentic cooperation in the research process" (p. 11). Co-researchers must reflect on their collaborative learning while generating, analysing and interpreting data (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013; Zuber-Skerritt, 2015).

As a research facilitator, I did not engage with the co-researchers as an expert, but also with the desire to learn from their concerns. I did not only consider myself as an active member of the ALS, but also as the facilitator who convened interactions and made the prospective coresearchers aware of their mutual responsibility and dependence upon one another. I created a support structure for the ALS to function within. I also reflected regularly on my position within the ALS to ensure the creditability and trustworthiness of the research. During the pre-meeting, my role was mainly that of the team builder. The gatekeeper explained the aims and procedures of the research project to the prospective co-researchers (cf. 1.10.2.3.3; 1.11; 5.4.3.4). They voiced their concerns about the total collapse of discipline in schools and

the effect this had on the progress of the learners as well as on their morale. In view of COVID-19, we initiated explorative discussions on new data generation processes and the way forward.

Furthermore, we initiated points of discussion for the various cycles and how to keep the data generation process on track. As indicated, I was elected by the co-researchers as the nodal point for the ALS in accordance with work done by Wood (2020) and Zuber-Skerrit (2013), and therefore documented the final comments of the co-researchers and recirculated the documents for reflection. Overall, it was found that the research process as a whole was a worthwhile experience and we all learned from one another.

### **5.10 DATA STORAGE**

As stipulated by the North-West University, data will be stored for seven years once the project had run its course. Hard copies of raw data will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked storeroom at the College. Electronic data will be stored in a password-protected folder on Google Drive. Only the co-researchers of the ALS and the supervisor and co-supervisor will have access to the data. After the lapse of seven years, paper data will be shredded, and electronic data will be deleted by a member of the research team or somebody with permission from the research team to do so.

### **5.11 CONCLUSION**

The chapter discussed the choice of a PALAR approach for this research project. Research shows that PALAR is an ideal vehicle for on-the-spot research in communities, because it is designed to pursue sustainable and positive change by involving the people in the communities where the problem is experienced, and where change is needed. The co-researchers collaboratively investigated the problem and shared their ideas about solutions.

The elements of a paradigm, namely a methodology, epistemology, ontology and axiology as well as ethical requirements were discussed in terms of acting as guidelines for the research project.

The discussion further centred on the fact that, through data generation and reflections during three iterative cycles, the co-researchers would employ strategies to create educator-learner relationship-centred approaches in some schools in the uMzinyathi District. The utilisation of a FCW in schools, by means of which educators would the ideas in their classrooms and reflect on their applicability, was discussed.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PALAR process had to be adapted, and data generation was done through informative electronic interactions, as unpacked in the paragraphs above. This way of data generation made it possible for the research project to continue unhindered, and excellent results were generated.

## **CHAPTER 6: CYCLE 1 OF THE PALAR PROCESS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims at explaining how the pre-meeting of the ALS initiated the research project whereby the general needs of the educators concerning discipline in schools were determined. Secondly, during Cycle 1, the co-researchers endeavoured to answer the first two secondary research questions:

*How did educators understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?*

*What were the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?*

Throughout the research process, co-researchers were engaged in a collaborative process to explain their current understanding of learner discipline as well as the challenges faced in dealing with discipline-related issues in the classroom.

The pre-meeting will be discussed first, followed by discussion of the comments of co-researchers during the first electronic encounter.

### **6.2 CYCLE 1**

#### **Pre-meeting (cf. 1.10.2.3.1; 1.13; 4.5; 5.7.5)**

The participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) process consists of three main features: 1) a pre-meeting, 2) formation of the ALS and 3) fostering of relationships through the achievement of goals and, ultimately, collaborative participant learning. The pre-meeting is a way of getting all the co-researchers together to negotiate the way forward in a collaborative partnership agreement (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011).

As indicated, the co-researchers were five volunteer educators from five different secondary schools near a college (cf. 1.3) in the uMzinyathi District in KwaZulu-Natal. The face-to-face pre-meeting provided the co-researchers with an opportunity to meet one another and form a collaborative partnership. In line with Wood (2020), the co-researchers needed to build a relationship and learn about one another and the different contextual circumstances of the schools. The co-researchers decided on how and where the next upcoming interactions would take place and how we would communicate with one another.

The discussions centred on the following questions:

- Who are the co-researchers?
- Why do we want to take part in the research project?
- What do we want to learn from this project?
- What do we want to achieve in this project?
- What do we each bring to this project?
- What role would each like to take on?

The participating schools differed in size and circumstances (cf. 5.2). All the co-researchers were experienced educators, enjoying between 15- and 30 years' experience. The demography of the schools was described in Chapter 5 (cf. 1.3).

All five co-researchers were teaching at local secondary schools in the rural uMzinyathi District setting. Together, we strove for finding ways to address indiscipline in the classroom. We all brought our past experiences to bear on building a future for the learners in the community. The co-researchers reflected on the need for change in the classroom in order to facilitate teaching and learning. We shared our concerns about the deteriorating discipline situation in the classroom as well as our thoughts on a vision for a more ideal teaching and learning situation tailored for this rural context.

The following section will encapsulate typical comments from the co-researchers during the pre-meeting on general discipline issues dealt with in the classroom.

*Disciplinary problems in the classroom are getting worse. It is difficult to reach the learners and to make friends with them (E1, E3 and E4).*

*There are many reasons why discipline is deteriorating. Grannies want the daughters to have babies so that they can get the grant money. These girls are not interested in schoolwork (E1 and E3).*

*Children come from different backgrounds and different home situations. They have different ideas about acceptable behaviour (E2, E4).*

*Parents are not involved in the school situation or the discipline of their children. Parents must help us to build relationships with the learners.*

*Life Orientation is not used to guide learners at school regarding behaviour (E1).*

*It is difficult to discipline learners because corporal punishment is outlawed, and learners don't fear anything else (E1, E2 and E3).*

*They tell the educators straight in their face that they have rights, and the educators can do nothing to them. You can't even expel a learner (E1-E5).*

*Drugs, truancy and alcohol are taking over the schools (E3, E4).*

*I only want to teach and know that I am doing what I am supposed to do (E1, E3, E4b).*

*As part of relationship-building among the co-researchers, we shared some of our experiences and thoughts about discipline in the classroom. The following summarises these.*

*We had a problem of school bag thefts at my school. One of my learners reported that his bag was stolen. I had to start investigating the case. I find three suspects who had bad records of behaviour. When I questioned them, they denied stealing the bag, but my guts told me it was them. I told them that for the next few days they were not going to enjoy their break time. I made sure that I collected them ten minutes before break. I did that the first two days. Even other educators started to think that the boys were innocent. On the third day one boy broke their agreement and confess that they stole the bag and sold it outside the school to the man at the taxi rank. I send them to collect it and they brought it back. After that we started the disciplinary process (E3).*

*Right now I am at work in a deep rural school. Sometimes our learners get sick in such a way that they can neither be kept at school nor be released to go home on their own. At some instances you cannot get the parents to come and fetch them because they live with their grandparents. So we use our cars to take them either to the clinic or home. One girl got seriously sick. She had something that look like fits. She was shaking and something feverish. I had to take her home. She was crying and sobering. I drove for about a kilometre and she went quiet. I suspected that something is wrong. I told the girl who was going with (a classmate) to hit her to wake up. She was quiet and did not move. I thought she was dead. I never had the experience of a person passing out. We took her outside the car. Fortunate I had water in the car. We hit her with that water in her face. After some time she woke up. I thank God for that. When we arrived at her home we find they know that she pass out when she is sick (E3).*

*I once had a learner that was not liked by the other learners. He tried to get their attention by making silly jokes end pester them all the time. The more he did it the more they disliked him. I thought of a plan to help him. I introduced the topic "How can I make sure that other children like me" to the class for discussion. They discussed ways of behaviour that learners like and way of behaviour that learners don't like. This boy listened very attentively and later approached me to tell me that he now knows why they don't like him. He asked me to help him change his ways. It*

*is good to ask them about their views. I discuss many such relevant issues and it helps the learners. They can see that I only want to do my best for them (E4b).*

*I also involve social workers to come and address the learners on certain issues. The learners use these opportunities to speak to these people about their problems and I allow them time from off from my classes to do this. In such a way they are helped and they respect me for helping them (E4b).*

*I always make sure that I listen well to the learners. I summarise what they said to make sure I heard them correctly. I do this to avoid misunderstanding. It works every time (E2).*

*I always try to be enthusiastic and well prepared and leave my stress at home. I get advice from other educators. I involve the learners in the lesson and ask them to help me find pictures and be very appreciative if they do. This make them feel part of the class and important. They are eager to be involved. I even let them explain their pictures or other LTSM material they brought to class (E1).*

*To save time I try to use my normal duties and responsibilities to build relationships with the learners. I watch their sports games and offer advice. I read about strategies to improve their sports skill and share worthwhile websites with them. They come to me for advice and help and even tell other learners that they must ask me because I feel for them. I believe it is due to this method that I have very little discipline problems in my class (E2).*

These comments paved the way for the co-researchers to reflect on their own thoughts and ideas and to challenge their present perceptions. The pre-meeting created a relaxed climate for collaboration and personal and professional growth and development (Wood, 2020). The hope was expressed that the research results could make a positive change at their respective schools.

We discussed and reflected on the primary and the secondary research questions and collaboratively agreed that the secondary research questions would be used as guidelines for themes to discuss. The comments of the educators on the different themes were redivided into subthemes employing the coding method.

The first electronic interaction with the co-researchers is described below. First, the comments are described and, subsequently, these are discussed under the same headings. The following section presents the electronically-mediated discussions that still formed part of Cycle 1.

## 6.3 FINDINGS ON SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 1 AND 2 IN CYCLE 1

### 6.3.1 Findings engendered by secondary research question 1

#### Theme 1 General view of learner behaviour

HOW DID THE CO-RESEARCHERS UNDERSTOOD LEARNER BEHAVIOUR AT THE TIME OF THE RESEARCH?

#### Subtheme 1 Learner behaviour is typical for their age

The co-researchers expressed their general views on learner behaviour in secondary schools as follows:

Behaviour is typical for their age

The following explains how the co-researchers responded to the specific themes and is applicable to all comments:

All = 5

Most = 4

Some = 3

A few = 2 or less

**Table 6.1: How the co-researchers see learner behaviour?**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers                           | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The co-researchers see learner behaviour in secondary schools as typical for their age. | <p>All the co-researchers agreed that <i>learner behaviour is normal to problematic</i>.</p> <p>E3 and E1 highlighted the fact that <i>they are in a “stormy phase” (adolescence). They come to school with bad manners and attitudes but it is manageable and must be managed</i>.</p> <p>E2 argued that <i>all children go through “grow-up” phases, but most are very pleasant children</i>.</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>E4 however, linked the bad behaviour to stress by explaining <i>that individuals have unique traits. Some learners are more prone to stress than others.</i></p> <p>E4 and E5 said that <i>each learner is created after the image of God with unique traits and only need proper training.</i> E5 stated that <i>it is possible that some behaviour can be [a] a result of young children finding it difficult to deal with new and different experiences, or maybe because they enjoy the freedom that increased responsibility and societal expectations place on them but they must still learn how to manage that freedom. Educators must teach them.</i></p> |
| Every learner is unique                                       | E5 commented that <i>each learner is an individual with a unique story and background created as a very special person in God's image. We must not generalise. Behaviour is caused by external and internal factors</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Subtheme 2 Learner behaviour is a cry for help

Although the co-researchers saw the behaviour of secondary school learners as typical for their age, they felt there might also be some emotional reasons for indiscipline.

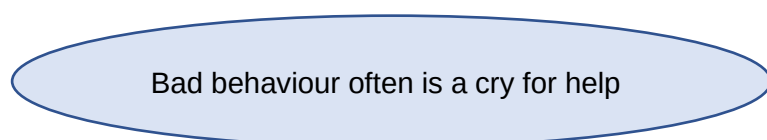


**Table 6.2: Learner behaviour is a cry for help.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bad behaviour is a cry for help                               | <p>Four out five co-researchers believed <i>that bad behaviour often is a cry for help</i></p> <p>E2 believed that <i>there is no excuse for constant bad behaviour can be cured by God</i></p> |

### Subtheme 3 How the co-researchers dealt with discipline in the past

Since corporal punishment had been outlawed, the co-researchers reverted to other measures for dealing with discipline. They stated clearly that many of these methods were used even while corporal punishment was still legal, because they believed that these alternative measures were more effective. These methods were tried and tested, but it was admitted that more could and had to be done to normalise learner behaviour to enhance teaching and learning.

How the coresearchers dealt  
with discipline in the past

**Table 6.3: How the co-researchers dealt with discipline in the past?**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Try to involve educators and other stakeholders               | <p>All the co-researchers agreed that it is good to consult with other educators when it comes to discipline-related matters because <i>other educators sometimes know the parents well and have more information about the home situation and they can also persuade the parents to come to school. Inexperience teachers can learn from more experienced teachers. Sometimes other educators can give you better advice.</i> E4a advised that <i>educators must try to deal with the problem first before they consult with educators because it facilitates trust with the learner. Consulting with other educators might help to decrease anger or frustration before you deal with the child. Other educators might come up with better alternatives than what you have in mind. No one has a single solution that fits to all situations. It depends on the nature of a problem.</i></p> <p>The co-researchers were in agreement about involving stakeholders when dealing with discipline and explained it as follows: <i>"We try to involve the parents but it is not always easy, we also involve the police in more serious cases and the welfare department for social problems. Sometime the Department is asked to intervene but is often not available".</i></p> |



| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ignore learners                                               | E1 suggested to the other co-researchers <i>that they must first try to avoid learners who are constantly looking for attention and not react to every misbehaviour. Sometimes the problem goes away by itself</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Motivation                                                    | E4a preferred to <i>motivate learners because modern children can change. I use my mistakes to motivate the children. They see that I am human as well. For their mistakes I give them good advice. Instead of always reprimanding them rather give them activities that involve them and this keeps them busy and they forget about being naughty.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Think before you speak                                        | The majority of co-researchers agreed that <i>educators must not be in a hurry to reprimand learners and first see if it is really a problem. Sometimes it passes by itself.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Learners who need to be reprimanded                           | <p>The co-researchers suggested that certain learners definitely needed to be reprimanded seriously:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Those that bunk lessons</i></li> <li>• <i>Those learners with poor results</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners that are always absent</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners with bad attitudes</i></li> <li>• <i>Children who talk non-stop</i></li> <li>• <i>Children that consistently break the Code of Conduct.</i></li> <li>• <i>Uncooperative learners</i></li> <li>• <i>Disrespectful learners</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners who are not honest in all respect</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners who are bullies to others</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners who are always angry to other learners and educators</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners with lots of petty cases</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners that always fail to meet deadlines</i></li> </ul> <p>The co-researchers agreed that <i>naughty learners have all the same characteristics as mentioned above.</i></p> |
| Do not label learners                                         | To label learners was not correct, as the all the co-researchers put it: <i>"Sometimes children only need encouragement and guidance because of personal problems and issues at home".</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p><i>Teachers must endeavour to understand the learners and their cry for help. Labelling learners lead to more serious behavioural problems. Learners that often don't do homework may have sick parents or is the head of a child-headed household and need encouragement. Labelling is stigmatisation and makes the problem worst. Labelling ignores the child's intrinsic value as a human being created by God.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Classroom management practices                                | <p>All the co-researchers emphasised proper classroom management <i>stating that teachers must teach for the full duration of the period to avoid boredom and mischief and unnecessary chatter, do not show anger, speak softly, try to involve the parents, discuss relevant topic related to everyday matters, attend promptly to small disturbances before it get out of hand, treat children like your own and be innovative when dealing with discipline. Teachers must be well prepared and keep the children busy for the whole period.</i></p> <p>E1 constituted that a warm, safe and comfortable classroom is a way of making the learners feel happy and cooperative. Classroom rules helps a lot because learners must know their boundaries.</p> <p>E4b suggested a <i>defaulter's book for transgressions. The children and the educators must sign that book and keep it up to date.</i></p> <p>E3 found it useful to have regular classparent [parents of the learners] meetings to keep the parents informed. Inform the children of your expectations for the year.</p> <p>E1 admitted that you will never reach all the children and educators must accept the fact and not be bothered about that for their own peace of mind. As a teacher you can only do so much.</p> |
| The child is a holistic being                                 | <p>The co-researchers approached the disciplinary problems at their schools in a holistic manner as explained by E4a: <i>Normally I don't look at a child but look at his/her background. The best thing is to heal them psychologically. Create a suitable environment.</i> Building onto this idea the co-researchers endeavour to treat all learners like normal learners but make</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <i>provision for their deviant behavioural problems. We address learners in private and don't mention their naughtiness before the whole class. In class, we treat them like all the rest.</i> |

E5 evoked a very lively conversation by stating that she *already has an ideal classroom situation in her class*. She related this as follows:

*Considering the hopeless situation of discipline at some other schools, I would like as to give the Action Learning Set (ALS) more advice and information on how to achieve this:*

- a. *Routine and active learning: A daily routine is well-established in our school. I start each of my lessons with a prayer – that immediately settles the children and it sets the tone for the lesson. E.g. I pray thanking the Lord for the privilege that we have to learn when others do not have this privilege, or thanking the Lord that we have the opportunity to learn new things and to expand our knowledge, etc. Once I have finished praying all the learners are then focused on me and will listen to my instructions – I explain very clearly what books they need to get out, what the work for the day will be, settle them at their desks, and then the lesson can begin. I make sure that all learners are kept on task. If I am checking homework, then all those who had no problems will have something else to do while I help those who struggled. When I teach, I keep tabs on who is not concentrating and who needs extra help. My goal is to keep every child busy all the time – a bored child is a naughty child.*
- b. *Another thing I do is to make an effort to make [my] children [learners] feel welcome in my class. Impatience and moodiness are two things I had to deal with [as] an inexperienced teacher, and I had to learn to overcome my own emotions – the children may never see my reactions to my own problems and burdens displayed before them. The less they know about my own struggles the better. My focus while they are with me should be themselves as individuals and helping them in their struggles.*
- c. *The final thing I'd mention here is to make sure I establish a relationship with each child – to treat each child with respect and dignity, and not to allow bullying or petty argumentation in my lessons. I generally find this works well and that hardly any child does not respond to this.*

E3 summed up the co-researchers' reflections to this remark as follows:

*A nice response and we hope the educator keep on maintaining that.*

*a) With routine and active learning*

*We like the praying part. It set up the tone for the day and this educator seems to plan her day well. Every minute count, which is very important. Some mentioned the use of videos from YouTube as a means of capturing the attention of learners before you start a lesson. If everyone could contribute positively to teaching and learning, such ideal classroom situation could easily be achieved. Two important points I draw upon this one:*

*1. Prayer – we like the praying part.*

*2. Preparedness*

*b) Positive educator-learner relationships.*

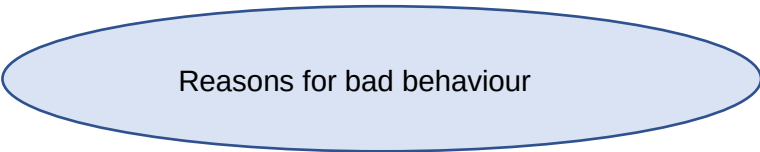
*The educator makes an effort to prioritise her learners. She forgets about herself and focus on the learners. This is good. However, one is tempted to think that the educator is running a smaller number of learners in her class. But her approach is wonderful. It also helps if you could call your learners by their first name. If they are not overcrowded there is time for individual attention and get to know each learner better. I like the issue of respect. It is true. If you give respect to learners, chances are that you get a lot of it in return.*

*c) Conclusion*

*The ideal classroom is attainable. I agree that before we look at the collective effort as the school, the individual contributions, forums of educators, plays a very important role. But this requires that an educator be prepared, like and respect her work, love to work with learners and respect them, honor [honour] all his teaching periods. Give support to the management and positively contribute to the school management so that it becomes easy to achieve school goals and objectives.*

**Subtheme 4 Reasons for bad behaviour**

Several reasons for indiscipline were mentioned by the co-researchers.



Reasons for bad behaviour

**Table 6.4: Reasons for bad behaviour.**

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Arrogance                                                     | <p>The co-researchers reflected positively on E3's statement that <i>some learners are arrogant by nature. They don't care how they treat other learners and educators. They are too important and treat school as they treat their home. Some learners are from affluent families therefore they feel that this status gives them the right to disrespect their teachers and other learners.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Societal ills                                                 | <p>Societal ills were seen as a major factor by the co-researchers <i>because the mass media is wreaking havoc on the moral values of the learners. Some communities who have a history of fighting or have been involved in tribal wars. It becomes easy for learners to form gangs or wrong groups. We have experienced such problems in the past few years where we have to involve community structures to solve such problems</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Poverty                                                       | <p>Most co-researchers accepted that poverty could be a reason and explained <i>that it is not an excuse, but poor learners can be jealous on other children and then start bullying or suffer from low self-esteem.</i></p> <p>Most co-researchers rejected the idea that poverty is an excuse for bad behaviour <i>because there are many learners that come from very poor environments and homes, yet they behave well.</i></p> <p>Although four of five co-researchers rejected poverty as a reason for indiscipline, E3 mentioned that <i>he has noted two important aspects about poor learners. Stubborn and reserved learners. They do not do homework, do not study at home, always have excuses that are related to their home situations. The second group are the ones who such as bullying other learners to hide their situations. They want to be seen as better, feared and celebrated for the wrong reasons. Most of them do not do homework but demand to copy or bully other learners to do it for them. They steal everything. E4b admitted that socio-economic issues usually do lead to other social ills in the society. Some children become criminals, others decide to live a [loose] life full of immorality and negative social norms and standards. School</i></p> |

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <i>nutrition programme plays a decisive role in those that are willing to be helped.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| No positive role models                                       | A lack of proper role models could cause bad behaviour as stated by E1, E2, E3 and E4b: <i>no proper role models in their homes which leads to a lack in motivation, lack of encouragement and emphasis on the importance of being educated which leads to low self-esteem etc.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Bad examples from the society members                         | All five co-researchers agreed that learner behaviour is a product of society and claimed that <i>sometimes good learners are influenced by elders, older children in their communities to smoke dagga, take drugs and get involved in relationships with older men. Some communities who have a history of fighting or have been involved in tribal wars have a high number of rude boys and girls. It becomes easy for learners to be involved in gangs gangsterism. We involve community structures to solve such problems</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| The media                                                     | E2 blamed the mass media by stating that <i>the media is wreaking havoc on the values, ethics and morals of our children. Children have become very entitled.</i> This statement was supported by all the co-researchers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Parents not realising their role in teaching their children   | The role of the parents in the behaviour of their children must not be underestimated. All the co-researchers elaborated as follows around this: <i>Most learners have single parents or are living with grandparents without parental support and lack of parental guidance leads to behavioural problems. Parents are not doing their jobs. They leave it to the teachers to teach their children basic manners, respect and discipline. They don't want to take responsibility for their children's behaviour and love blaming it on the schools. But the bottom line is that many of the disciplinary problems will be 100% solved if parents did their job! Parents have a huge influence on children. Their own example, their own prejudices, their own acceptance of their children, helicopter parenting – all these impact on children and have a long-term effect on their successful integration into society.</i> |

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adolescents                                                   | <p>Most co-researchers blamed adolescents for bad behaviour. E1 declare that <i>when they come to gr 10 there is a change in their behaviour for the better</i>. E3 stated clearly that such “grow-up phase” cases of behaviour are manageable. E5 declared that <i>it could be or maybe because they enjoy the freedom that increased responsibility and societal expectations place on them but they must still learn how to manage that freedom. Educators must teach them</i>.</p> <p>E4 highlighted the fact that the grow-up phase also <i>has a good side [is], good children are more than the bad ones. When bad one ill-behave say in the classroom environment, others even reprimand that learner even before an educator takes an action</i>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Children’s rights                                             | <p>All the co-researchers agreed that <i>children have all the rights, teachers have none, fuelled by parents who think that their children are angels. Too much of learners’ rights and less accountability by parents lead to the demise of learner behaviour e.g. if a child chooses to abscond from school with a boy the school becomes responsible, but if the child absconds from home the child is not held responsible. Learners always question the way they should be punished or disciplined. They know their rights more than their responsibilities. They always challenge the authenticity/authenticity of the rules and question everything. They do not come to extra classes during weekends or during the day citing reasons that will defend them but also destroy them. If one tells children that they will be punished, they simply say that they will open a court case</i>.</p> <p>E5 added another dimension to human rights by reasoning that <i>it can be problematic – especially for an immature child who is focused on what he or she likes/dislikes and is unable to see the bigger picture of both rights and responsibilities, and the biblical truth that “do unto others as you want them to do to you” as a guiding principle for successful interaction with others. A toxic entitlement culture of “it’s not fair” can develop very quickly and ruin positive behaviour and interaction with others</i>.</p> |

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Socio-economic problems                                       | Some co-researchers affirmed that <i>the majority of our dropouts are due to socio-economic problems. We do experience high teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, gangsterism by our learners because of this situation. The majority of [the] community members are not working and one of the local sectors of employment is the taxi industry. Most of our learners leave school [to] go to the taxi industry which does not assist much in enforcing discipline and respect to our kids.</i> |
| Family-related issues                                         | All the co-researchers agreed that <i>abuse, abandonment, broken homes, raised by grannies and other family-related issues have an influence on learner behaviour. These problems cause learners to commit suicide and drop out of school. Family members disrespect one another and fight with one another. Educators must assist dealing with the root causes in the family before dealing with discipline. If the families have problems, they negatively impact on children.</i>           |
| Substance abuse                                               | All co-researchers agreed that <i>dagga, cigarettes and alcohol are in many cases the root cause of behaviour problems. Learners come to school drunk or under the influence of dagga because it is freely available in the communities. It even leads to brain and other psychological problems</i>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Relationships with older men                                  | Relationships with older men were mentioned as a bigger problem because <i>girls are involved with blessers [sugar daddies] and not interested in school. Girls come to school at the mercy of the boyfriend. These girls are often abused</i><br><br>Some co-researchers mentioned that <i>they don't really have educators involved with learners.</i>                                                                                                                                       |
| Unhealthy learner relationships                               | Three of six co-researchers mentioned <i>that some boy-girl relationships are unhealthy, but it is not a big problem.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| A culture of disrespect                                       | The co-researchers complained <i>that parents don't teach children to respect themselves and others. Drugs aggravate this disrespect. Educators and learners do not uphold the constitution and treat other people with dignity which is disrespectful.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |



| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lack of collaboration                                         | <p>All co-researchers pleaded for a <i>concerted effort between teachers in schools and the curriculum designers from the Department of Education to give input on subjects offered at schools. The subjects offered does not cater for academically struggling learners. They need more practical subjects to cope better. This make learners disbehave because they cannot cope in class. Educators and management must also work to make the workload lighter.</i></p> <p>E1 strongly emphasised that <i>teamwork is important. People are diverse in their thinking and finding solutions to problems. Consulting with colleagues is always helpful in resolving issues. Different people find unique ways to solve problems that might be sustainable in the long run</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Peer pressure                                                 | <p>All the co-researchers agreed that <i>peer pressure, elders, the mass media and other societal ills influence bad behaviour. Drugs aggravate the problem to a large extend and girls having affairs with older men also don't behave well. Tribal wars, gangs and gangsterism have a huge influence. Children reflect the morals of the society they live in. Issues like smoking take place by peer pressure. They are oversensitive over minor issues. Most cases of fighting we deal with are because of peer pressure. They get irritated easily and want to prove a point by fighting their rivals especially during adolescence.</i></p> <p>E1, E3 and E4 blamed the <i>lack of self-esteem, encouragement, and no positive role models at home for bad behaviour.</i></p> <p>E2, however, held a different idea about peer pressure by stating that <i>I don't believe in peer pressure. But that's from a personal perspective. My mom taught me better than to do things I don't want to just for acceptance. But peer pressure could stem from a lack of love from home.</i></p> |

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Uninvolved parents                                            | A huge problem experienced by all the co-researchers was that <i>parents are not supportive of their children. Parents lack total responsibility in the upbringing of their children and leave it totally over to the school. They don't make sure that the school has correct contact details and learners refuse to give the details also. Some parents are children themselves and also were not brought up properly.</i> |
| No positive relationships                                     | When the importance of relationships was mentioned all the Co-researchers agreed that <i>without effective interconnectedness [relationships] between teachers and learners no proper discipline can be maintained in the classroom.</i><br><br>E3 mentioned that <i>without relationships the learners cannot make any proper progress even academically. They will not reach their full potential.</i>                     |

### 6.3.2 Findings of secondary research question 2

Educators face many challenges in schools today (Kalam et al., 2016). As explained, issues such as socio-economic problems, societal ills, uncooperative parents and dysfunctional families as well as drugs and alcohol and an inflexible curriculum pose challenges for the educators. Not only does it impact their motivation, but also their job satisfaction. When discussing the challenges and hindrances in dealing with discipline, the parents again featured strongly as a matter of concern, and new matters were raised as a consequence of discussing this. When the co-researchers discussed their biggest challenges in dealing with discipline in the classroom they commented as follows:

#### Theme 2

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES THE EDUCATORS  
FACED WHEN DEALING WITH DISCIPLINE?

**Table 6.5: Challenges faced by educators.**

| <b>Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b> | <b>Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Corporal punishment is outlawed                                      | Most co-researchers felt that, since corporal punishment was outlawed in schools, they <i>have no working alternative and the issue of parents who side with the learners even when they have done something wrong make it difficult for them. Not easy to apply detention to these learners due to the remoteness and the safeness of the learners could be highly compromised. Could not send learners back home during teaching and learning time. It is against the law.</i>                                                                                                   |
| Parents are a challenge                                              | All the co-researchers agreed that <i>parents are unavailable when needed and have no care attitude. They take the side of their children above the teachers. Parents do not attend school meetings and there is a lack of cooperation between parents and other stakeholders.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| An inflexible curriculum                                             | E1, E3 and E4 explained that the way in which learners are promoted poses a problem. <i>Learners find themselves in the next grade but not ready for that grade. This results in discipline problems and teaching problems for the educator. They fail all the time and do not do homework because they don't understand the work. They become naughty.</i><br><br>E1 and E2 complained about the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements curriculum [CAPS] <i>because it is too rigid and make no provision for learner that are battling. They need skills related subjects.</i> |
| Political interference                                               | Political interference was seen by most co-researchers as a major problem because <i>political parties in the area at times side with learners when they are wrong because they want their votes.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Lack of support from the department                                  | It became evident by all the co-researchers' comments that <i>the department is not supportive when it comes to discipline of learners. Classrooms are overcrowded and it has an influence on the discipline.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Uninteresting educators                                              | Educators themselves were often the problem causing poor discipline in the classrooms. As one co-researcher puts it, which                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Themes identified from data collected from the co-researchers   | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                 | was confirmed by most: <i>The entrance requirements for studying teaching is not so strict, many teachers who have low matric passes are also able to get into the teaching profession from various colleges, which further undermines the profession. There are no strict requirements for teachers studying the profession. These educators are not motivated to deal with discipline and other problems</i>       |
| Other general challenges influencing the discipline of learners | Many other problems posed a threat to most of the co-researchers to exercise proper discipline <i>such as tribal wars, lack of support from the communities, child-headed families, teenage pregnancies, late coming, long-distance travelling and abuse of school infrastructure by the community. All these cause behaviour problems but is not easy to deal with because the child is not always responsible.</i> |

The discussions on learner discipline concluded with the following remarks, which also included picturevoice as a way of communicating their thoughts and feelings. Co-researchers were asked to take a photo (or alternatively, find a picture if they were not able to take pictures and forward it) that would electronically reflect their feelings about discipline in their respective schools at the time of the research. The views corresponded with the size and the general circumstances of the school, as will be discussed later.

#### 6.4 PHOTO/ PICTUREVOICE ACTIVITIES (cf. 1.13; 5.5.2; 5.8.2)

(Some co-researchers took photos and other co-researchers used pictures. For privacy reasons photos or pictures of the actual co-researchers are not shown).

**Table 6.6: Photo/ picturevoice topics.**

| Nr. | 4 topics were addressed by asking the co-researchers the following questions:   |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | How do you feel about the discipline in your school at the moment?              |
| 2   | How do you experience the influence of indiscipline on your job satisfaction    |
| 3   | How do you experience the influence of indiscipline on your motivation to teach |

|   |                                                                                                    |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | How do you experience the influence of indiscipline on your feelings about the teaching profession |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### 6.4.1 How the co-researchers felt about discipline in their schools during the time of the research

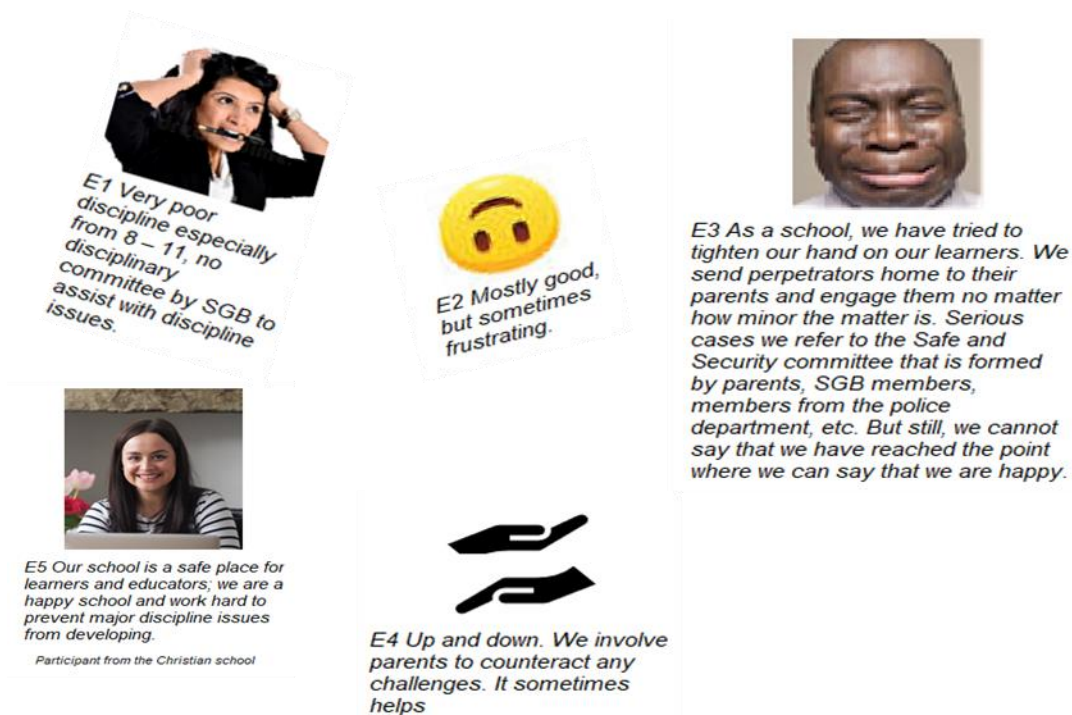
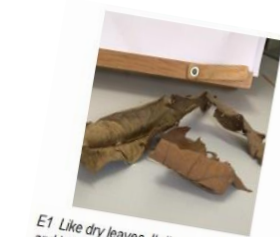


**Diagram 6.1:** The co-researchers' feelings about discipline in their schools during the time of the research.

#### 6.4.2 Findings on how the co-researchers experienced the influence of indiscipline on their job satisfaction



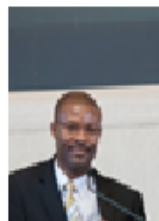
*E1 Like dry leaves. It disrupts teaching and learning and results of learners are poor. When learners disrespect teachers, teachers develop a low morale leading to poor job satisfaction. We as teachers become demotivated, makes us unhappy to be in a classroom where our worth/knowledge/experience is undermined.*



*E3 It demotivates me. It kills morals. It feels as if my contribution is useless and I am neglected as the educator. I feel that my hands are tied and there is nothing I can do.*



*E2 I really love my job and that's why ill-disciplined children make me so mad. I give and give and give so much, just to be treated like I don't deserve respect.*



*E4 Fair. It doesn't impact negatively if teaching is a calling.*



*E5 It must be heart-breaking and morale destroying.*

**Diagram 6.2:** *How the co-researchers experience the influence of indiscipline on their job satisfaction.*

### 6.4.3 Findings on how the co-researchers experienced the influence of indiscipline on their motivation to teach

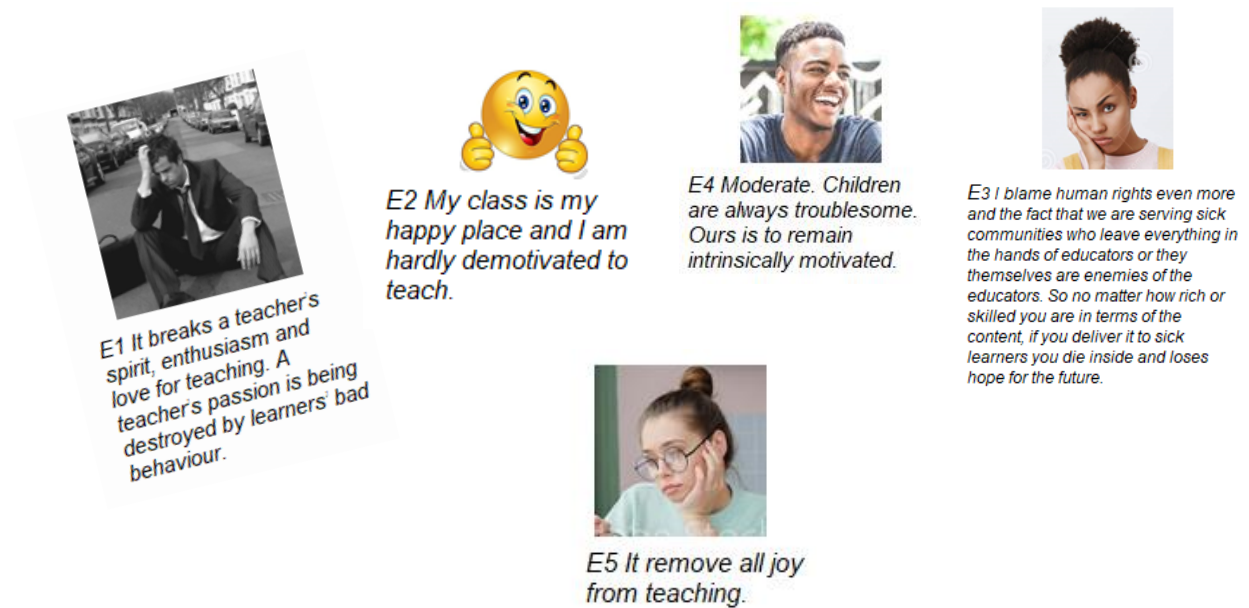


**Diagram 6.3:** *How the co-researchers experience the influence of indiscipline on their motivation to teach?*

#### 6.4.4 Findings on how the co-researchers felt about the teaching profession at the time of the research



**Diagram 6.4:** The co-researchers' feelings about the teaching profession at the time of the research.

### 6.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1 AND 2

#### 6.5.1 Discussion of the findings on secondary research question 1

The discussion of the findings on research questions 1 and 2 will be given according to the subthemes, as mentioned.



### 6.5.1.1 General view on learner behaviour

#### Subtheme 1 Learner behaviour is typical for their age

Table 6.7: A literature review of learner behaviour.

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learner behaviour is typical for their age                    | <p>The co-researchers viewed the behaviour of secondary school learners as normal for their age. Secondary school learners were in the adolescent phase. Adolescence begins at about 11 to 13 years and ends between 17 and 21 years of age. Another factor was that in secondary schools these learners are in the “stormy” adolescent years (Louw &amp; Louw, 2014, p. 304) characterised by mood swings and indulging in high-risk behaviours. Adolescents tend to challenge authority and want to decide for themselves what they want to do and believe in and what not. This often leads to clashes in the classroom, making it difficult for educators to exercise discipline (Landicho et al., 2014; Louw &amp; Louw, 2014).</p> <p>McLeod (2016) makes clear that behaviour can be managed. People can control behaviour and choose what they to do. The co-researchers confirmed that behaviour was manageable and suggested strategies that they tried out and found to be effective. (These strategies will be discussed later). Educators must be innovative in classroom management, which includes behaviour management. Poor behaviour must be managed effectively, because it impedes learning and prevents access to normal opportunities and activities. However, it takes a substantial number of financial resources and manpower to manage indiscipline (Emerson, 2001).</p> |
| The uniqueness of every learner                               | <p>Every human being consists of a physical body, a cognitive dimension, an emotional side and a social side. To help learners academically, educators must also focus on their social, emotional and physical needs (Diamond, 2010). School programmes should be designed and adapted to the individual needs of every child to be truly inclusive in order to benefit the well-being and development of the learners (Imms et al., 2016).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## **Subtheme 2 Learner behaviour is a cry for help**

Bad behaviour is not always a result of external factors, but it is a cry for help.

**Table 6.8: A literature review of learner behaviour as a cry for help.**

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b> | <b>Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| It is a cry for help                                                 | Very often, challenging behaviour is a way of seeking attention or a way of expressing limited communication skills. Adolescents with challenging behaviour often struggle to express themselves in an appropriate manner (Waller et al., 2017). Indiscipline can be the result of unsuccessful coping strategies or weakened social skills. Neurodevelopmental disorders (autism, learning disabilities, intellectual disability, conduct disorders, cerebral palsy and impairments in vision and hearing) can cause challenging behaviour (NICE, 2015). Aggression is often linked to poor parenting, disturbed family relations, exposure to violence and the influence of attachment disorders (Reebye, 2005). Poverty, anxiety or death in the family constitute further reasons for challenging behaviour (HealthLine, 2021). Educators must know their learners and their unique needs and characteristics before seeing learners as problematic. |

## **Subtheme 3 How the co-researchers dealt with discipline in the past**

In the absence of corporal punishment, the co-researchers reverted to other ways of dealing with indiscipline.

**Table 6.9: A literature review of how the co-researchers dealt with discipline in the past.**

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b>          | <b>Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The co-researchers consulted with educators and tried to involve stakeholders | All the co-researchers mentioned collaboration with stakeholders such as community members, the DBE, the police, social workers, other educators as well as the school management and the school governing body.<br><br>This is confirmed by Mtsweni (2008), who states that dealing with discipline is a team effort. He proposes that school management, |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>educators, relevant community members and non-governmental organisations, correctional services, the health sector, social workers, psychologists and parents must be involved in school activities to assist with discipline and other teaching and learning endeavours. This view corresponds with McLaughlin (2000), who holds that the whole teaching and learning community, including the church and other educators, should be involved and work together to maintain discipline in the schools. Classroom management can be enhanced if all stakeholders collaborate in the teaching and learning environment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Classroom management                                          | <p>The management of indiscipline has long since been contested (Magwa &amp; Ngara, 2014), because learner behaviour in schools has worsened considerably (Beebeejaun-Muslum, 2014; Power, 2016) and poses a major problem to effective teaching and learning (Mohapi, 2013; Reyneke, 2013b). Ineffective management of discipline in the classroom leads to ineffective schools (Mestry &amp; Khumalo, 2012). Many educators lack effective classroom management skills and therefore feel disempowered and are unwilling to discipline learners. This results in learners displaying indiscipline (Jinot, 2018). The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention in cooperation with the DBE (2015a) and Mardliyah (2019) propose that building a “mutually respectful relationship with learners” (p. 7) may have a positive effect on discipline management as part of classroom management.</p> <p>All stakeholders, including the school principal in cooperation with school management, must act to form the cornerstone of effective discipline management by drafting effective school policies and codes of conduct (Belle, 2014; Ngoqo, 2016; Reyneke, 2013a; SACE, 2020) in order to ensure this. Educators must strive to acquire skills to build and improve educator-learner relationships as a way of solving discipline-related issues in the classroom (Bechuke &amp; Oduaran, 2020). In this way, schools can contribute to the development of learners in schools as well as after school in order to ensure participative citizens and promote well-being (Wanders et al., 2019).</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Some co-researchers ignored learners at first                 | <p>As a further measure for ensuring discipline, some of the co-researchers stated that they ignored minor incidences at first. This corresponds well with research that was one by Sullivan et al. (2014), who claim that educators tend to use “a ‘step’ system involving an escalation of actions if the behaviour does not change, reasoning with a student in the classroom setting and deliberately ignoring minor disruptions or infringements” (p. 52). Extant studies reveal that some educators at first behave in a passive way to slight or moderate indiscipline (Sullivan et al., 2014). On the other hand, Albert (2003) advises that educators should act quickly on indiscipline before it escalates. Some indiscipline cannot be tolerated, because it disturbs the other learners.</p> <p>The co-researchers mentioned some of these behaviours and agreed that the real disruptive learners had traits in common and that these could not be ignored. Although the co-researchers mentioned that learners who bunked lessons or were always absent, learners who talked non-stop, learners with poor results who always failed to meet deadlines or were disrespectful, dishonest and uncooperative, while displaying bad attitudes and always felt angry as well as bullies and learners with lots of unimportant cases must be addressed seriously.</p> |
| Do not label learners                                         | <p>All the co-researchers agreed that, although you had to identify troublesome learners, it was wrong to label them. Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018) state that educators should avoid labelling learners. Educators must rather provide positive feedback about personal or group abilities and explain to the learner/ learners that, with the special effort, they will make progress.</p> <p>Howard Becker formulated the labelling theory in 1963 to explain the negative impact of such labelling. Learners tend to behave in the way in which they are labelled. Labelling can lead to stigmatisation, because people in society tend to make labels stick. This stigmatisation can last for a lifetime (Samkange, 2015). Crossman (2020) affirms that once a person is labelled as</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>deviant in terms of behaviour, it is very difficult to remove that stigma.</p> <p>Greer and Reiner (2014) argue that labelling is the process of normalising a deviant act. Sowards (2015) expands on this by explaining that the act of labelling is to recognise only a small aspect of a complicated human being, which results in name-calling and verbal abuse, with negative emotional effects. Educators must avoid labelling learners in the classroom. They must understand how their attitude towards their learners shapes the learners' efforts and progress. They must rather provide productive academic support in the classroom and practice restorative actions to restore discipline (Darling-Hammond, &amp; Cook-Harvey, 2018). The motivation of students can be seen as a restorative action that works well.</p> |
| Motivation                                                    | <p>Instead of ignoring learners' indiscipline, the co-researchers agreed that motivation worked well. Research done by Adie et al. (2012) supported by Sánchez-Oliva et al. (2015) confirms that motivation, especially of an autonomous and intrinsic nature, assists learners to behave well and perform better academically.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Think before you speak                                        | <p>The <i>Handbook for Teachers Rights Responsibilities and Safety</i> (SACE, 2020) emphasises that educators should listen before speaking and should speak softly. Rahimi and Karkami (2015) suggest that educators should use an applicable tone of voice, talk clearly and listen carefully. Through effective listening and communication, educators can learn much about the learners in their class.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Take the whole child into consideration                       | <p>As mentioned, every human being consists of a body, a cognitive dimension and social and emotional sides. To assist learners academically, educators must also focus on their social, emotional and physical needs (Diamond, 2010). School programmes should be designed and adapted to the individual needs of every child in order to be truly inclusive and benefit the well-being and development of the learners (Imms et al., 2016). Rahimi and Karkami (2015) argue that educators must create a classroom climate that nurtures the learners' sense of belonging</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|                                                               | to enhance their feelings of self-confidence and their desire for learning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Classroom management skills                                   | <p>Classroom management skills include discipline management. Indiscipline has many sources and dealing with such behaviour poses many challenges for educators. Discipline management and punishment are not the same. Discipline refers to the act of leading and training learners to obey codes of conduct and rules. It teaches self-control and is meant to develop acceptable behaviour and teach learners to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Punishment, on the other hand, is the act of controlling the learners' behaviour. Punitive measures such as extra homework and detention very often have negative effects on learners (Rahimi &amp; Karkami, 2015).</p> <p>Discipline management and classroom management go hand in hand (DBE, 2012b).</p> <p>To strengthen the idea of effective classroom management skills, UNESCO (2006, pp. 26-27) proposed the following strategies to deal with discipline in the classroom, as opposed to punishment:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Discipline</th><th>Punishment/ punitive measures</th></tr> <tr> <td>Giving children positive alternatives</td><td>Being told only what not to do</td></tr> <tr> <td>Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour</td><td>Reacting harshly to misbehaviour</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon</td><td>When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed</td></tr> <tr> <td>Consistency and firm guidance</td><td>Controlling, shaming and ridiculing</td></tr> <tr> <td>Positive, respectful of the child</td><td>Negative and disrespectful of the child</td></tr> </table> | Discipline | Punishment/ punitive measures | Giving children positive alternatives | Being told only what not to do | Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour | Reacting harshly to misbehaviour | Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon | When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed | Consistency and firm guidance | Controlling, shaming and ridiculing | Positive, respectful of the child | Negative and disrespectful of the child |
| Discipline                                                    | Punishment/ punitive measures                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Giving children positive alternatives                         | Being told only what not to do                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour                      | Reacting harshly to misbehaviour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon | When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Consistency and firm guidance                                 | Controlling, shaming and ridiculing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |
| Positive, respectful of the child                             | Negative and disrespectful of the child                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |                               |                                       |                                |                                          |                                  |                                                               |                                                                  |                               |                                     |                                   |                                         |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | Physically and verbally non-violent                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Physically and verbally violent and aggressive                                                                                                              |
|                                                               | Logical consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour                                                                                                                                                                                     | Consequences that are unrelated and illogically related to the misbehaviour                                                                                 |
|                                                               | Children must make amends when their behaviour negatively affects someone else                                                                                                                                                                         | When children are punished for hurting others, rather than shown how to make amends                                                                         |
|                                                               | Understanding individual abilities, needs, circumstances and developmental stages                                                                                                                                                                      | Inappropriate to the child's developmental stage of life                                                                                                    |
|                                                               | Teaching children to internalise self-discipline                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Teaching children to behave well only when they risk getting caught doing otherwise                                                                         |
|                                                               | Listening and modelling                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Constantly reprimanding children for minor infractions causing them to tune educators out (ignore them; not listen to them)                                 |
|                                                               | Using mistakes as learning opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Forcing children to comply with illogical rules "just because you said so"<br>Directed at the child's behaviour, never the child – your behaviour was wrong |
|                                                               | <p>The comment of E5 resonates with the importance of effective classroom management. This co-researcher stressed the importance of a daily routine and clear instructions. She made sure that learners were busy to avoid boredom and she kept an</p> |                                                                                                                                                             |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | eye on them all the time. She ensured that learners felt welcome and that she had a pleasant demeanour by keeping her own struggles to herself. She went out of her way to build a relationship with each child. The co-researchers agreed with this statement and the importance of good classroom management skills. |

#### **Subtheme 4 Reasons for bad behaviour**

The co-researchers experienced that indiscipline had many different sources. This made it all the more important for them to understand the background of their learners in order to fully comprehend why learners behaved in the ways they did.

As explained, issues such as socio-economic problems, societal ills, uncooperative parents and dysfunctional families as well as drugs, alcohol and an inflexible curriculum cause not only behavioural problems, but also poses a challenge to educators who try to deal with discipline in the classroom effectively. Educators are at a loss regarding indiscipline in school (Du Plessis, 2017). The educators (Herman & Reinke, 2015; Prilleltensky et al., 2016) and learners are suffering due to a lack of proper learner discipline management (Ali et al., 2014). These factors impact negatively on their motivation and job satisfaction, as has been mentioned.

The reasons for indiscipline and the challenges educators face in dealing with such behaviour in the classroom overlaps to a large extent and will therefore be discussed simultaneously. The comments of the educators corresponded well with relevant extant literature and research done on these topics.

#### **6.5.2 Discussion of reasons for indiscipline and the challenges educators faced when dealing with behaviour issues in the classroom**



**Table 6.10: Literature review of reasons for indiscipline and the challenges educators faced when dealing with behaviour issues in the classroom.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Arrogance                                                     | <p>Singh (2014) demonstrates that learners behave arrogantly towards their teachers. Learners are disrespectful and lacking in moral and values. They also tease and disrespect one another.</p> <p>Arrogance or dismissive behaviour are caused by a superior way of thinking about oneself. Such people treat other people with discontent (Hall, &amp; Livingston, 2012; Milyavsky et al., 2017) and reject their opinions (Gregg, &amp; Mahadevan, 2014). In the teaching and learning environment, even parents are arrogant, claiming to be the more competent and taking the side of their children (Johnson et al 2010). Parents defend their children's bad behaviour and weak performance (Anho, 2011). Staff reporters (2017) allege that, if educators punish the learners, the parent would come to school and reprimand the educators, sometimes even in front of the learners. Parents have no respect for the educators.</p> <p>This attitude makes it all the more difficult for educators to reprimand learners. Together with this attitude goes the fact that secondary school learners are in their adolescent years (Louw &amp; Louw, 2014).</p> |
| Adolescence                                                   | <p>Literature describes the unacceptable behaviour of the adolescent child as going through a "stormy" phase. Recent views on adolescent behaviour sees this stormy phase as normal and hold the view that many adolescents display no abnormal behaviour. The perception of the educators corresponds well with both of these viewpoints. (Louw &amp; Louw, 2014, p. 304). Some adolescents display indiscipline while other learners behave well. E2 confirms this by contending that <i>my mom taught me better than to do things I don't want to just for acceptance. Upbringing plays a major role. We have children that come from dire backgrounds who are very well behaved.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers              | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Parents are not fulfilling their parental roles</p>                     | <p>The home in which the child grows up is the primary institution where he or she must learn proper behaviour (Noum, 2015; Segalo &amp; Rambuda, 2018). Oloyede and Adesina (2013) claim that the home is the main cause of learner indiscipline if they are not brought up in the right way Robarts (2014) (cf. 2.4). Mweli (2017), DG of the DBE, blames the indiscipline of learners on a lack of parent involvement. Sax (2015) emphasises that children come to school with unacceptable ways of social behaviour, bad manners and a self-centred attitude.</p> <p>Kaiser et al. (2017) suggest that financial difficulties of families force parents to focus on present financial needs and, in doing so, they neglect their supportive role in educating their children. The inevitable result is behavioural problems. It must however be noted that poverty alone does not always contribute to indiscipline, but it does so in partnership with socio-economic factors and poor parenting skills (Andresen &amp; Meiland, 2017), as mentioned.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>Poverty as a hindrance and a challenge in dealing with indiscipline</p> | <p>Literature reveals that socio-economic circumstances can influence behaviour. Poorer learners are subjected to mental illnesses, lower rates of well-being, higher rates of teenage pregnancy (Singh &amp; Ghandour, 2012), school bullying and alcohol misuse (Elgar et al., as cited in McGrath &amp; Elgar, 2015) as well as school dropout (Pickett &amp; Wilkinson, as cited in McGrath, &amp; Elgar, 2015). Low levels of parent education and adolescent parenthood may aggravate poverty so that serious behavioural problems result, even for generations (Singh &amp; Ghandour, 2012; McGrath, &amp; Elgar, 2015). Unsafe and poverty-stricken neighbourhoods with garbage messing the streets and vandalism in the community further impact learner behaviour due to the negative effect of these on their self-image (Singh &amp; Ghandour, 2012). Hosokawa and Katsura (2018) further note recent life events, negative relationships and child-rearing styles to be part of the list of factors that influence child behaviour. In contrast to this view, the co-researcher rejects the idea that poverty is always an excuse for indiscipline because they <i>have children that come from dire backgrounds in their classes that behave well and are eager to learn.</i></p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Societal ills                                                 | <p>The co-researchers complained that the mass media is causing havoc on the morals and behaviour of learners. Bandura (2009) explains that social norms are developed by people's exposure to influences from the environment. This exposure results in children "cued into social norms through media exposure" as an attractive model (Tamborini et al., 2018, p. 2) and children, therefore, experience real-world violence as less problematic and acceptable. Yuan and Che (2012) confirm that we cannot isolate problematic learner behaviour from societal influences, because children imitate what they observe other people to be doing. Learner behaviour in schools reflects the morals of the societies in which they live (Mweli, 2017).</p> <p>Corruption and poor moral values as displayed in societies to which learners are exposed influence behaviour. Learners have no positive leadership to follow (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). To understand indiscipline, educators must take the school, the classroom, the individual and the whole of society into consideration, because all these factors impact behaviour (Yuan &amp; Che, 2012).</p> <p>The influence of the mass media and society can be lessened if educators are positive role models (Walton et al., 2016; Zolkoski, 2019). Learners do not always have positive role models at home and come to school ill-mannered (Sax, 2015).</p> <p>Distractive societal ills include drugs and substance abuse.</p> |
| The influence of drugs on violence and school discipline      | <p>Violence and drug abuse go hand in hand. Drug abuse in South African schools is widespread and increasing (Van Rensburg et al., 2018). Hlongwane (2013) confirms that drug abuse is also an aggravating factor in the uMzinyathi District and a cause of the deterioration of discipline in the schools. Drugs, truancy and alcohol are taking over the schools. Learners come to school drunk. Drug and alcohol abuse by learners lead to learner dropout, risky sexual behaviour, deviant behaviour and teenage pregnancies (DuPont et al., 2013; Park &amp; Kim, 2016; Jaafar et al, 2013).</p> <p>Violence is aggravated by gangs and gangsterism (De Wet, 2016; Nkosi-Malobane, 2019) as well as drug and substance</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|                                                               | <p>abuse (Ncontsa &amp; Shumba, 2013). Khayelitsha Commission Report (2014) states that organised crime often is the result of getting involved in gangs and gangsterism. Gang members seek revenge by killing members from other gangs. Research done by Tugli et al. (2014) reveals that large numbers of rural schools experience regular faction wars. Mabitla (as cited in Naicker, 2014) states that learners who do not enjoy a safe and nurturing family life may turn to gangs to find an identity, which usually results in disruptive and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Positive role models can counteract the influence of societal ills.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| No positive role models at home or in the society             | <p>To combat the influence of societal ills, learners must have good role models. Children arrive at school with bad manners, unacceptable ways of social behaviour and a self-centred and arrogant attitude (Sax, 2015). Mbibiti (as cited in Kiwale 2017) complains that parents behave badly in the presence of their children but expect them to behave better and are not the role models they are supposed to be. Silva et al. (2016) state that children are bad-mannered because they experience domestic violence, a lack of guidance from parents, interference from grandparents, a conflict between parents and children and the absence of clear rules at home.</p> <p>Learners often do not have role models at home and therefore it is all the more important for educators to fulfil that role. For this reason, educators, as the only constant adults in the lives of the learners, must be examples and model proper behaviour. They must therefore practice what they preach (Dengerink et al., 2015). The educator, sometimes as the only constant educator in the lives of learners, can act as a role model outside the home to support those learners by building positive educator-learner relationships (Smith et al., 2015). Very often, the educators who are supposed to lead and guide the learners as role models are morally corrupt themselves (Njoku &amp; Njoku, 2017). Fengu (2017) and SACE (2019) report a substantial rise in educator misconduct. Pijoos (2020) reports that several educators only in one school in Gauteng are under investigation for sexual misconduct; unfortunately, there are many more.</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|                                                               | <p>Silva et al. (2016) describe the influence of family circumstances on the behaviour of their children as comprising domestic violence, a lack of guidance from parents, interference from grandparents, a lack of proper guidance from home, conflict between parents and children and the absence of clear rules at home, as indicated. Not only the parents are to blame but the influence of peer pressure cannot be ignored either.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Peer pressure                                                 | <p>Most of the co-researchers view peer pressure as a contributing factor to bad behaviour. This viewpoint corresponds with research done by Tomé et al. (2012), who found that peer pressure does influence behaviour in adolescents. Learners want to belong to a group, and in many groups (Jinot, 2018), learners misbehave because they feel they must conform to the group for fear of exclusion (Njoroge &amp; Nyabuto, 2014).</p> <p>To some extent peer pressure could influence relationships.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Relationships                                                 | <p>The comments of the co-researchers regarding unhealthy girl-boy relationships as well as their responses on unhealthy educator-learner relationships vary between a definite yes and that the problem is not so serious. These statements to a certain extent contradict the findings of the South African government report stating that South African schools are plagued by sexual abuse, since society as a whole and many schools in South Africa lack effective management systems and basic regulations and rules, or rules are applied inconsistently (South African Government, 2021). The rural school settings and the size of the schools may influence the relationships among the learners. NACOSA (2018) reports that, of the approximately 1 million babies born during 2017, a staggering 6.8% were born from teens between the ages of 10 and 17, while the majority of South African young women were found to be sexually active by the time they turned 18 and 14.8% of these young women had fallen pregnant.</p> <p>A prominent phenomenon emerged in South Africa during 2016. Young women, especially in poverty-stricken rural areas, engaged in sexual relationships with older men (so-called “blessers”) for material or monetary gain (MacPherson et al., 2012; Zembe et al., 2013). The co-researchers complained that</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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|                                                               | this was a common problem and that these “blessers” ruled the lives of the girls and hampered their education (Mampane, 2018a).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| A culture of disrespect                                       | <p>All over the world, there is a tendency towards disrespect in school, especially among different cultural groups as related to educators and learners (Aslan, 2017). Disrespect among learners in schools is extremely common, resulting in physical and verbal bullying (Khalifa, 2018; Mestry &amp; Khumalo, 2012). Kumar et al. (2014) found that urban schools were more plagued by violence than schools in rural settings. Research done by Segalo and Rambuda (2018) revealed that there is a complete lack of respect from the side of the learners towards their educators. Taylor (2014) advocates that the lack of respect will be responsible for producing future generations that will despise elders and not allow them to make choices for them.</p> <p>Kant (1855) constitutes that, when a person is esteemed by others, he or she feels respected, and it is correct to argue that this is an important factor in building educator-learner relationships. This impact on the learner’s dignity and this respect compels the learners to do similarly to others. Respect thus has a reciprocal nature and improves socialisation.</p> <p>The co-researchers experienced this same trend in their schools. Disrespectfulness and many other challenges impacted their motivation.</p> |
| Unmotivated and uninteresting educators                       | <p>The co-researchers experienced that many educators were unmotivated and that there were many reasons for this. The teaching profession has been and is still known to be very stressful (Newberry &amp; Allsop, 2017). Segalo and Rambuda (2018) report that educators suffer from high levels of work-related stress. This is caused by overcrowding, limited resources, lack of support from the DBE and ongoing indiscipline (Shernoff et al., 2011), while educators are taken up in hospital due to the stress (Grobler, 2018; Miya, 2017). This unsupportive and discouraging environment adds to educator stress and impacts educators’ well-being and job satisfaction (Evans et al., 2019).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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|                                                               | <p>Spilt et al. (2011) stress that educators play an important role in the socio-emotional lives of the learners, promoting better adjustment and performance (Varga, 2017). For overall well-being, educators must be able to trust their colleagues, administrators and managers in order to decrease their stress levels, but dissatisfying relationships among the school community cause stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction and low commitment to learners (Van Maele, &amp; Van Houtte, 2012; Greenberg et al, 2016). When educators feel that they are not capable of teaching effectively and not engaging learners in their studies, they leave the profession or are absent for long periods of time (O'Connor &amp; Mooney, 2014; Grobler, 2018) (cf. 3.6.6). The complaint by the co-researchers that bursaries are easily available for students to study education, while they are not really interested in teaching, could not be substantiated by a survey of extant literature. However, research done by Ngesi (2003) indicates that students from poverty-stricken environments often avoid educational programmes that require long training periods and are very costly. These students do not have any other option but to enrol for careers where bursaries are available even if it may be not their first choice. Bozalek and Boughey (2012) confirm that rising university costs and reduced funding for studies made higher education very difficult for students.</p> <p>The mentioned factors may contribute to disinterest among educators when it comes to teaching and learning and may facilitate a lack of interest to cooperate with other stakeholders.</p> |
| Lack of cooperation between stakeholders                      | <p>The co-researchers complained that they were not supported by the DBE. This lack of support made it difficult for them to fulfil their daily duties. Sadly, the DBE does not fully assist the educators, as stated by Van der Berg et al. (2016). The National Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (NEEDU, 2013, p. 15) stipulates that the district offices and circuits must oversee "school visits, classroom observation, consultation, cluster meetings, suitable feedback reports and other means of providing an enabling environment and organising provision and support for the professional development of managers, educators and administrative staff</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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|                                                               | <p>members,” but this supervision frequently does not happen (Van der Berg et al., 2016). This oversight contributes to educator stress and less job satisfaction (Evans et al., 2019).</p> <p>Research done by Gcelu (2019) found that collaboration between all stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment improves the smooth running of the schools. When stakeholders join hands and work together to solve problems, it results in effective teaching and learning.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| No positive relationships                                     | <p>As explained previously, educators suffer from stress and burnout (cf. 3.5.3). Such educators struggle to build and maintain strong relationships with their learners (Becker et al., 2013; Keller et al., 2016). Educator-learner relations are dealt with comprehensively in Chapter 2.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Political interference                                        | <p>Political interference on school premises is not a new trend. Already during 2011, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) tried to stop all political activities, rallies, distribution of party literature and campaigning on school premises during school hours. They acted on reports received that political parties targeted schools for political gain before the upcoming municipal elections (WCED, 2011). Nene (2013) mentions that even the learners are involved in political affairs and are rude towards educators as a result.</p> <p>The education sector has become a political battlefield and the learners are suffering. This statement corresponds with recent news articles. Lovemore (2015) states that the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), through unlawful strike actions, reduced teaching time and widely interfered with the management of the education department. Doing such, SADTU violates children’s rights. It also influenced the department during 2015 to postpone the Annual National Assessments (ANA) for a year, which was detrimental to the progress of the learners. A report written by Professor John Volmink (Masondo, 2016) indicates that corruption is widespread in education due to the endemic sale of principals and educators’ posts for sex, cash and other favours. SACE must uphold the accountability of the educators through enforcing a Code of Professional Ethics for</p> |



| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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|                                                               | <p>educators. SADTU, however, dominates the SACE council as well as the ethics committee and causes ethical behaviour in education to be a farce (Van Onselen, 2012).</p> <p>The co-researchers complained that political parties took the side of the learners when they tried to discipline them, because they wanted their votes. This interference hugely complicated matters for the educators.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Children's rights                                             | <p>Educators complain that learners are disobedient and ill-mannered, and learners determine the school agenda for themselves, because they have too many rights and for many learners, the principle of <i>in loco parentis</i> no longer applies (Mampane, 2012). Maphosa and Shumba (2010) hold that children's rights (as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa), misinterpreted by learners, give them more rights than the educators. Learners are aware of this, and they fear no form of punishment. This way of thinking on the side of learners results in power play between themselves and educators. Since corporal punishment has been outlawed educators feel powerless to deal with discipline in schools (Mampane, 2012; Naicker, 2014). These comments are affirmed on careful examination of work done by Smit (2013), who states that, in present-day South Africa, educators are confronted by learners about their human rights for inappropriate purposes with questionable entitlement. Many students exaggerate their rights but neglect their responsibilities, which causes disciplinary problems and conflict.</p> |
| Corporal punishment                                           | <p>Since corporal punishment has been outlawed, as indicated, educators feel powerless to deal with discipline in schools (Mampane, 2012). Educators claim that no working alternative to corporal punishment is put in place. There is a serious need for effective learner discipline management in schools today (Chonco, 2019). School premises have been turned into sites of violence; not only among learners, but also between learners and educators, as well as between rival schools (Burton &amp; Leoschut, 2013; Ncontsa &amp; Shumba, 2013). Due to a culture of violence among young people, educators and parents are scared of them and this harms the management of discipline (Mokhele, 2011).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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|                                                               | <p>However, research done by Ngubane (2018) suggests that the document entitled <i>Alternative to Corporal Punishment</i> must be revised and educators must be thoroughly trained to understand and employ these methods. Training must be ongoing, and schools must be encouraged to conduct their own workshops on discipline management and endeavour to learn from other schools. The department must explain straightforward ways of discipline and not just guidelines. Teamwork is necessary by all stakeholders and psychologists must be involved to assist the educators and learners. Educators must not try to replace corporal punishment with other punitive measures. Instead, they should utilise measures such as building positive educator-learner relationships. This will protect learners from all kinds of humiliating punishments. Good discipline must boost self-discipline.</p> <p>These statements again emphasise the importance of collaboration and training of educators.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Inflexible curriculum                                         | <p>A rigid and inflexible curriculum that does not take the individual needs, interests and differences of learners into account can cause a breakdown in learning. The curriculum must be more flexible and learner-centred to accommodate all learners. More practical subjects must be offered to accommodate learners that are not academically strong (Hodgson, &amp; Khumalo, 2016; Motitswe, 2012).</p> <p>Zwane and Malale (2018) conclude that the Ministry of Education must draft an inclusive curriculum for schools to cater for diversity in the classroom and educators need a “vibrant in-service and pre-service teacher training programme by the Ministry of Education and Training that will increase teachers’ capacity to a level where teaching in inclusive classrooms does not negatively affect their competence” (p. 1). This statement dovetails with the aims of the CAPS, that centre on learners’ interests, ability levels and backgrounds. Wium and Louw, (2015) affirm the fact that educators need more training and support to meet additional learner needs in the classroom.</p> <p>President Cyril Ramaphosa, speaking at the launch of the Basic Education Sector Lekgotla (Staff Writer, 2021), endorsed this</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Summary of literature from chapters 2, 3 and 4 to confirm the findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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|                                                               | <p>endeavour in his address by highlighting the fact that schools must teach skills that will support the economy and the growth of the country. To achieve this vision, a critical review of subject areas and the curriculum is necessary.</p> <p>In this regard, it must be mentioned that the Technical Occupational Curriculum has been developed in South Africa and has been in a pilot phase (ECED, 2020) since 2017 and is to be implemented in 2022. Ordinary schools will be able to teach technical subjects from grade eight, with emphasis on skills development. This qualification will enable learners with mild to moderate learning barriers to acquire an accredited certificate or qualification ideal for their entry into career opportunities (DBE, 2017). However, it seems that schools are not adequately informed about this.</p> |

## 6.6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF STATEMENTS THROUGH PHOTO/ PICTUREVOICE

### 6.6.1 Discussion of photo/ picturevoice activity on the feelings of the co-researchers concerning discipline related issues in the classroom.

During the time of the research, the educators experienced discipline in their schools to be mainly frustrating. The co-researchers tried their best to manage discipline positively, but discipline remained a sticky issue. It was found to be up one day and down the next. Interestingly, the co-researcher from the independent school was happy with the discipline there.

### 6.6.2 Discussion of photo/ picturevoice activity on the influence of indiscipline on the job satisfaction of the co-researchers

Indiscipline is demotivating. The co-researchers loved their jobs, but it was destroying their morale. E4b approached the problem from another angle by stating that *if teaching is a calling it should not have a negative effect on job satisfaction*.

### **6.6.3 Discussion of photo/ picturevoice activity on the influence of indiscipline on the co-researchers' motivation to teach.**

On average, the co-researchers claimed that it could destroy their passion for teaching, and they had to guard against demotivation. E2 however claimed that her class was a happy place and that she was seldom demotivated.

### **6.6.4 Discussion of photo/ picturevoice activity on the influence of indiscipline on their feelings towards the teaching profession**

The co-researchers experienced very diverse feelings on this topic. Public opinion was blamed for the negative image of the teaching profession, which impacts negatively on the feelings of the educators. One co-researcher stated that it was painful and frustrating, while another co-researcher wanted the teaching profession to be scrutinised, blaming the government for the poor image of the profession. The co-researcher from the independent school was satisfied with the profession at her school but did admit that opinions could differ around this.

## **6.7 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS OF SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 1 AND 2**

The first primary research question reads: *How do educators currently understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?* Around this, it was found that co-researchers' comments revealed that they had a definite idea about learner behaviour and the reasons for indiscipline. Secondary school learners were in their adolescent years and the educators were aware of the fact that it was a difficult stage and not easy to manage, although it was mentioned that personal problems could affect behaviour. Educators had to remember that every learner was an individual and had to endeavour to understand their learners' circumstances in order to facilitate understanding of their behaviour. These ideas expressed by the educators are in line with extant literature and confirm that they understand learner behaviour to a large extent.

The suggested strategies make it clear that the co-researchers preferred positive discipline measures instead of punitive ones in most cases.

The second secondary research question reads: *What are the day-to-day challenges educators are confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?* The co-researchers described a whole range of challenges ranging from school-based challenges and home-based challenges to government-based challenges. Learner-based challenges, as well as an inflexible curriculum, posed problems for educators around dealing with discipline in the classroom.

The co-researchers experienced the absence of corporal punishment coupled with children's rights as another problematic issue.

It is clear from the comments of the co-researchers that the first two secondary research questions have been answered comprehensively.

## **6.8 LIMITATIONS OF THIS CHAPTER**

The challenges experienced by educators were only that of the co-researchers and not all educators in the uMzinyathi District. A further limitation was the COVID-19 face-to-face restrictions. The co-researchers had limited personal interaction and, to some extent, this could have hampered relationship building. The lack of technological skills and facilities impacted the flow of data generation.

## **6.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS CHAPTER**

Through relationship building, the co-researchers trusted one another with their opinions and reflections, and this paved the way forward for further collaboration in Cycles 2 and 3.

## **6.10 CONCLUSION**

During the pre-meeting, the co-researchers introduced themselves to one another. The aim of the research process was explained, and the co-researchers were eager to be involved with the project. They related some of their concerns about indiscipline and its impact on teaching and learning.

During research Cycle 1, the co-researchers reflected on how they experienced discipline in schools at the time of the research and the challenges they faced in dealing with discipline-related issues. Many problems and challenges were described giving insight into what they experienced daily. The co-researchers had a well-grounded idea about learner behaviour and the matters that impacted on learner behaviour in their respective schools and classrooms. Their perceptions in general corresponded well with extant research on learner behaviour issues, the latter as discussed in Chapter 2.

It was, however, the desire of the co-researchers to manage discipline in their schools effectively to enhance teaching and learning and they were prepared to cooperate in this research to the benefit of education as a whole.

Chapter 7 will address Cycle 2 of the PALAR process along with research questions 3 and 4.

## CHAPTER 7: CYCLE 2 OF THE PALAR PROCESS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 focussed on the co-researchers' understanding of learner behaviour, while the present chapter will focus on answering the subsequent two secondary questions:

*What were the educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?*

*What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies can collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

During this interaction, after intensive communication, the co-researchers contended that positive educator-learner relationships would be focussed on as the foundation for solving indiscipline in the classroom. This insight will be focussed on from this point forward.

### 7.2 CYCLE 2 (cf. 1.10.2.3.2; 5.4.3.4)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cycle 2 was also conducted online, utilising electronic data generation methods. All the comments were compiled into one document and a round robin was sent to the co-researchers for reflection. Another educator from school four (S4) was interested in joining the ALS discussions. From the second encounter, S4 had two co-researchers, E4a and E4b.

As part of relationship-building in this cycle, the co-researchers were asked to share some interesting experiences through email or WhatsApp. The co-researchers eagerly shared some stories. Following are some of these personal experiences.

*E5 I had a girl in my class that was very disrespectful. I bumped into her during break. Although it was her fault (I think she did it deliberately) I took the responsibility on me and apologised humbly. Her whole attitude changed*

*E3 I find time to sit down with my learners and listen to them without providing them with quick answers. You will be surprised that sometimes they want only to be listened to. Listen and take time to answer. This convinces them that you did think about what you discussed earlier. Find a quiet and relaxed room or space. This will let them know that you care.*

*E1 To build relationships with learners can be very hard at times. If the child's parent is working or teaching at the school it is even harder to discipline them or to build relationships. They have an air about them and try to make you feel inferior. I realised that in a case like that I must build a relationship with the parents and then let them*

*help me to reach out to the child. If the parents are positive about you as an educator, they convey this message to the child and it helps you very much.*

*E4b Drugs have become a serious problem in public schools lately. There are tuck shops outside the main entrance of my school that sell different drugs to the learners. Customers of these drugs are mostly boys in the FET [Further Education and Training] phase. Few girls have also become victims of this substance abuse. When learners are intoxicated, they ill behave to everyone & fight with each other. Boys have recently formed various gang groups due to these drugs. On the 30 of June 2021, two groups of learners fought outside the school and the fight started from one of the tuck shops mentioned above. The SAPS [South African Police Service] came & dispersed them. Their case will be followed up as soon as schools are open. The problem with substance abuse is: It has a direct negative impact on learning & teaching. All those learners who are part of drugs problems under-perform academically. The school was proactive to address the problem by inviting various stakeholders like SAPS, social workers, health workers, NGOs [Non-Governmental Organisations] etc. to address learners, but it has been in vain.*

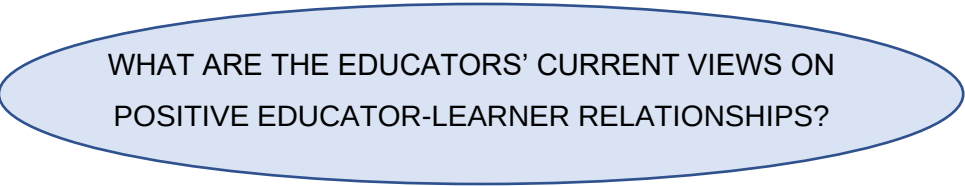
From these personal experiences the co-researchers learned to know more about one another and their school circumstances.

### **7.3 FINDINGS ON SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3 AND 4**

#### **7.3.1 Findings of secondary research question 3**

The first point of discussion was a general view of educator-learner relationships.

**Theme 3      What are the educators' current views on positive educator-learner relationships?**



WHAT ARE THE EDUCATORS' CURRENT VIEWS ON  
POSITIVE EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS?

Positive educator-learner relationship building was touched on as a means of improving discipline in the classroom.

*Positive relations build a good reputation between educators and learners. This is a starting point but must hard to attain because one has to be hard to a learner to reach that stage. Relations are built on respect and it is good if we respect each other (E1, E2, E3, E4a and E4b).*

## Subtheme 1 What are the importance of educator-learner relationships?

What are the importance of educator-learner relationships?

The following explains how the co-researchers responded to the specific themes:

All = 6

Most = 4 - 5

Half = 3

A few = 2 or less

**Table 7.1: The importance of positive educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The importance of educator-learner relationships              | <p>The co-researchers explained that <i>educator-learner relationships are important, and the educator as the adult person in the relationship must take the lead in this (cf. 2.2.2.1; 2.6). E3 added that educator-learner relationships lay the foundation for effective teaching and learning, discipline management and good educator and learner health.</i></p> <p>All the co-researchers regarded <i>educator-learner relationships as very important in classroom management. Without positive relationships with your learners it is difficult to manage discipline because the learners have no respect for you and don't see you as an authoritative person. A learner must be able to find a teacher approachable. Children are looking for adults to give them attention, so sometimes it is good for teachers to listen to learners when they want to express themselves. It makes the managing of discipline easier. It is a starting point but hard to build and to attain. It is a morale booster. It facilitates respect between teachers and learners. A learner must be able to find a teacher approachable. Children are looking for adults to give them attention, so sometimes</i></p> |



| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p><i>it is good for teachers to listen to learners when they want to express themselves. It makes the managing of discipline easier. It is a starting point but hard to build and to attain. It is a morale booster. It facilitates respect between teachers and learners.</i></p> <p>E2 added another dimension to the topic of relationship-building by mentioning <i>that it is not the single most important thing but must be used together with other classroom management techniques to get the best tout of the child.</i></p> |

## Subtheme 2 Educators must be role models at all times in and out of school

After extensive discussions, the co-researchers concluded that educator-learner relationships were not confined to the classroom only but related to everything an educator does at school and after school hours, all of which contribute to building relationships. Puckett (2016) alleges that teachers should model exemplary behaviour both in the class and outside. Once you are a teacher, people are watching you all the time. Educators might not even be aware of that. Parents and learners do not expect to see a teacher acting in an unacceptable way such as extreme drinking out of school. To uphold the honour of the teaching profession, educators must act outside of school in an accountable, supportive, trustworthy, professional, attentive, understanding and fair way, revealing logical judgement at all times.

This view was new to the co-researchers, as anticipated by Phasha et al. (2017), who state that groups should return to the previous dispensation where our schools took hands with community members such as parents, elders and community custodians to supplement the work of the educators and the learners; in turn, they must fulfil a role in their communities. These principles of ubuntu such as togetherness and belonging (Aranda, 2017; Tlale & Mahlo, 2017) encompass the views of all the co-researchers who emphasised that *we must remember that we are in the public eye everywhere we go. The children see us in the shops and on the streets. This is where they learn to respect or disrespect us as role models.*

Further comments resonating with these notions follow.

Educators must be role models at all times  
– in and out of school

**Table 7.2: Educators as role models.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educators must be role models at all times                    | <p>After a thorough discussion of educator-learner relationship building all the co-researchers concluded that <i>educators at all times must behave in a professional and dignified way to serve as a role model to the learners and the community. Negative attitudes, laziness, disrespect, unpreparedness, absenteeism, and many other unprofessional ways of behaviour will have a negative influence on educator-learner relationship-building. Positive educator-learner relationships are essential, and it benefits the teaching and learning environment.</i></p> <p>E3 explained that <i>learners see right through adults and know if you try to sit on two chairs.</i></p> <p>E5 accentuated that <i>adults who don't model positive and respectful behaviour cannot discipline effectively. I agree 100% with E(3)! – so important. Facial expression and body language (signs you make with your hands and arms) are important also the way you dress and conduct yourself in their presence.</i></p> <p>The following comment is a summary of the general feelings of the co-researchers in this regard: <i>teachers are the only "constant" adult in the lives of the learners. As second parents educators must be good role models to fill the gap. Teachers can supply learners with so much valuable information to help them throughout their life. Learners look up to educators because they spend a lot of time with the educators. For the mentioned reason it is very important teachers model ethical behaviour through positive morals and attitudes. Learners watch the educators all the time, in school and out of school, as an indicator of what acceptable behaviour is.</i></p> <p>All the co-researchers explained that <i>kids love role models and if educators behave respectfully, use appropriate language, show respect to the learners at all times, also after hours in the community, it will enhance positive educator-learner relationship-building in a productive way. This statement was endorsed by most co-researchers because we are role models, in and out of school so we must always behave accordingly. Learners are aware of</i></p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <i>what we do in private. Teaching is not isolated to the school situation only. As educators we must remember that the way we speak, look at the children, our face expressions, our body language and everything counts with the children.</i> |

Positive educator-learner relationships have many benefits.

### Subtheme 3 Benefits of positive educator-learner relationships

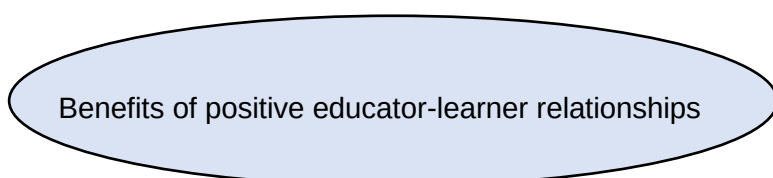


**Table 7.3: Benefits of positive educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers                    | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educator-learner relationships create a safe environment                         | All the co-researchers asserted that <i>the learners have more respect for the educators and feel welcome and safe in the classroom.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Educator-learner relationships facilitate respect between educators and learners | <p>From experience the co-researchers agreed that <i>educators must respect their learners for whom they are. To do this you must know your learners and where they come from. Respect creates a safe classroom climate and learners want to come to such a class. Learners respect you more and want to come to your class if you treat them with respect.</i> E4 professed that <i>the learners even defend you in front of the other learners.</i></p> <p>All the co-researchers underscored this statement as follows: <i>We like the issue of respect. If you give respect to learners, chances are that you get a lot of it in return. A positive educator-learner relationship depends mainly on the example of the educator. They must be exemplary role models in all aspects of life.</i></p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educator-learner relationships enhance academic progress      | <p>E1, E2 and E3 experienced that <i>positive educator-learner relationships help learners to progress better academically, and learners pay more attention in class.</i></p> <p>E3 elaborated on this statement by mentioning that <i>the learners come to me with their problems and listen to my advice. I also advise the learners to make friends with other educators to make the whole school situation a better place.</i></p>                                                                                                          |
| These relationships promote health                            | <p>Most co-researchers experienced that <i>positive educator-learner relationships help us to teach better, sleep better and there is less stress present. Learners also become more obedient and develop a feeling of self-worth. Not only the learners want to come to class but we also want to come to class and not stay home anymore.</i></p> <p>E4a and E4b whole heartedly agreed to the above and added that <i>good relationships with the learners in school helps to promote better relationships with the parents as well.</i></p> |

#### **Subtheme 4 Challenges faced by co-researchers around building positive educator-learner relationships**

To build positive educator-learner relationships can be very challenging at times. The co-researchers also experienced some challenges, and we shared our challenges with the other co-researchers.

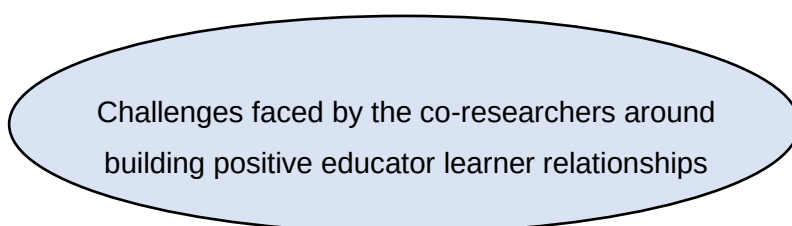


**Table 7.4 Challenges faced by the co-researchers to build positive educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Negative attitudes of some learners                           | All the co-researchers described <i>negative learner attitudes and negative views about teachers in society make it very difficult for teachers to build relationships. Learners are uncooperative and more concerned with their own relationships than building one with the educator</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Time constraints                                              | A major constraint in building educator-learner relationships was time factors as stated by most co-researchers: <i>Educators are often overloaded with admin tasks and battle to get through their work.</i><br><br>E1, E2 and E3 elaborated on this declaring that <i>too much pressure by the Education Department to complete admin tasks, statistics and unnecessary paperwork, which takes the teacher away from the classroom. Too less parental involvement hinder any progress teachers make in managing discipline and build relationships at school.</i> |
| Overcrowded classrooms                                        | Co-researcher E3 complained that <i>overcrowded classes which make it difficult to specific learners without being accused of favouritism by other learners but individual attention, if possible does help</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Stress and frustration                                        | Most of the co-researchers like all other educators as explained in chapter three were experiencing stress due to various reasons. Their advice to other educators were that <i>they must not bring their stress to school and seek medical help as soon as possible. Talk to someone about your stress.</i><br><br>E5 explained the negative effect of stress as follows: <i>Stress and frustration takes away your joy and impact negatively on your behaviour. The learners experience that and it makes them feel unsafe.</i>                                   |
| No common approach to discipline                              | Another challenge as highlighted by the some of the co-researchers in building relationships and to deal with discipline is that <i>as educators we do not have common approaches to deal with learner problems.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lack of parental and community support                        | Most co-researchers complained that sometime there was a <i>breakdown of relationship between educator and parent and community involvement is not at the level that we can say satisfy educators.</i>                                               |
| External bad influences                                       | All the co-researchers experienced that <i>external bad influence destruct the school and often hinder all efforts from the side of the educators to build relationships. They influence learners negative towards the school and the educators.</i> |

### 7.3.2 Findings of secondary research question 4

#### Theme 4

WHAT EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES CAN COLLABORATIVELY BE DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT EDUCATORS?

The co-researchers shared and discussed ideas in the ALS about ways of building educator-learner relationships. Many of these strategies were used by the co-researchers previously and could be shared and recommended. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to try out all the planned strategies, because many learners were not at school for long periods, or they did not have access to remote learning and, when they returned to school, they alternated and could only come to school every second day to respect social distancing (UNICEF, 2021). Building relationships is an everyday endeavour and takes time. Regular interruptions make it difficult for effective progress with relationship-building. Some strategies, such as greeting the learners at the door in a special way, which is not time-consuming, were tried out with positive results. This strategy mediated a change in classroom climate and started the period in a welcoming and friendly way.

## Subtheme 1 Case specific strategies to build educator-learner relationships

Certain types of problematic behaviour sometimes require specific behaviour management strategies. The co-researchers expanded on this with the following advice:

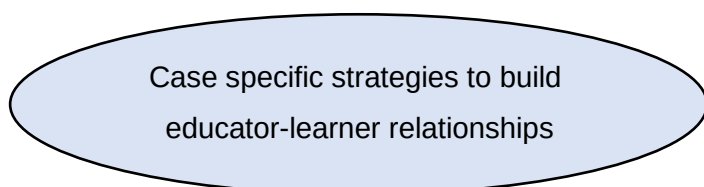


Table 7.5: Case-specific strategies.

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learners using drugs                                          | <p>Most co-researchers proposed that learners using drugs must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Made aware of the fact that he or she has a problem</i></li><li>• <i>Made aware of the effect of drugs on the brain and the health of the child</i></li><li>• <i>Try to convince the child to go for professional help</i></li><li>• <i>Made aware of the disadvantages of using drugs on their life and future</i></li></ul> <p><i>Nevertheless, we must love them regardless.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Learners from a poverty-stricken environment                  | <p>Poverty in rural areas is a reality and all the co-researchers faced this on a daily basis, but they tried to deal with in in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Motivate them by explaining to them that education is a way out of poverty. They must persevere</i></li><li>• <i>Support them to progress academically</i></li><li>• <i>Refer them to psychologist for professional emotional help but don't mention their names to other learners. Respect their dignity. Children from poverty-stricken areas have psychological problems.</i></li><li>• <i>Refer them to social workers to make sure that they are assisted with food and not have to drop out of school</i></li><li>• <i>Make use of other available support structures</i></li></ul> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understand and know the relevance of the problem</i></li> <li>• <i>Protect the learners by not putting them in a position where their lack is shown up.</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Learners with severe emotional problems                       | <p>E1 and E3 proposed that <i>hurt and bitterness often stem from abuse at home and again educators must endeavour to know the home situation of the learners to understand better. Try to find out the reason and deal with that. Involve social workers or the learner support committee at the school.</i></p> <p>As stated by E2, one should <i>motivate them with small gestures such as a sticker or a comment on their assessment paper. Let them know that you notice them... and E3 added to this .... that you must support them as far as possible – emotionally and academically.</i></p> <p>E5's advice is to use a <i>good-humoured, positive approach; model gratitude and never enter a class in a mood</i></p> <p>E2 again stressed the fact <i>that learners must be loved. It is a morale booster.</i></p> |
| Learners without parental support                             | On this point all the co-researchers agreed unanimously that <i>educators must take the place of the parent and take an interest in the child and his or her cheerleader where needed.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Learners with HIV/AIDS                                        | <p>Some co-researchers advised that <i>learners with HIV/AIDS must be treated such as all other learner with a chronic illness. Don't judge them just love them. See that they get medical attention when needed.</i></p> <p>However, E4a asserted that <i>HIV/AIDS is no longer a serious issue at schools.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

Through their comments on educator-learner relationships, the co-researchers revealed an insightful understanding of educator-learner relationships. To test the knowledge of the co-researchers and to expose them to a real-life situation, a case study was employed.



## Subtheme 2 (Case Study)

### Evaluation of a case study

As a conclusion to this interaction, we decided to look for an applicable case study to reflect upon. A suitable video was suggested and agreed upon. Co-researchers with access to data could watch the video or read the transcription of the video and then comment on what they perceived as positive and negative educator-learner relationship strategies used in this video.

Most co-researchers commented on the case study as follows.

#### Link to the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdhwdGFOQIY>

Transcription of the video:

#### *A Real teacher*

*He was in the first third-grade class I taught at Saint Mary's School in Morris, Minnesota. All 34 of my students were dear to me, but Mark Eklund was one in a million. Very neat in appearance but had that happy-to-be-alive attitude that made even his occasional mischievousness delightful.*

*Mark talked incessantly. I had to remind him, again and again, that talking without permission was not acceptable. What impressed me so much, though, was his sincere response every time I had to correct him for misbehaving - "Thank you for correcting me, Sister!" I didn't know what to make of it at first, but before long I became accustomed to hearing it many times a day.*

*One morning my patience was growing thin when Mark talked once too often, and then I made a novice teacher's mistake. I looked at Mark and said, "If you say one more word, I am going to tape your mouth shut!"*

*It wasn't ten seconds later when Chuck blurted out, "Mark is talking again." I hadn't asked any of the students to help me watch Mark, but since I had stated the punishment in front of the class, I had to act on it.*

*I remember the scene as if it had occurred this morning. I walked to my desk, very deliberately opened my drawer and took out a roll of masking tape. Without saying a word, I proceeded to*

Mark's desk, tore off two pieces of tape and made a big X with them over his mouth. I then returned to the front of the room.

As I glanced at Mark to see how he was doing, he winked at me. That did it!! I started laughing. The class cheered as I walked back to Mark's desk, removed the tape, and shrugged my shoulders. His first words were, "Thank you for correcting me, Sister."

At the end of the year, I was asked to teach junior-high math. The years flew by, and before I knew it Mark was in my class again. Since he had to listen carefully to my instruction in the "new math," he did not talk as much in ninth grade as he had in third. One Friday, things just didn't feel right. We had worked hard on a new concept all week, and I sensed that the students were frowning, frustrated with themselves - and edgy with one another. I had to stop this crankiness before it got out of hand. So, I asked them to list the names of the other students in the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a space between each name. Then I told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed me the papers. Charlie smiled. Mark said, "Thank you for teaching me, Sister. Have a good weekend."

That Saturday, I wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and I listed what everyone else had said about each individual. On Monday I gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. "Really?" I heard whispered. "I never knew that meant anything to anyone!" "I didn't know others liked me so much." No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. I never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another again.

That group of students moved on. Several years later, after I returned from vacation, my parents met me at the airport. As we were driving home, Mother asked me the usual questions about the trip - the weather, my experiences in general. There was a lull in the conversation.

Mother gave Dad a side-ways glance and simply says, "Dad?" My father cleared his throat as he usually did before something important. "The Eklunds called last night," he began. "Really?" I said. "I haven't heard from them in years. I wonder how Mark is." Dad responded quietly. "Mark was killed in Vietnam," he said. "The funeral is tomorrow, and his parents would like it if you could attend."

I had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. Mark looked so handsome, so mature. All I could think at that moment was, Mark I would give all the masking tape in the world if only you would talk to me.

The church was packed with Mark's friends. Chuck's sister sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Why did it have to rain on the day of the funeral? It was difficult enough at the graveside. One by one those who loved Mark took a last walk by the coffin to pay tribute. I was the last one to walk past the coffin. As I stood there, one of the soldiers who acted as pallbearer came up to me. "Were you Mark's math teacher?" he asked. I nodded as I continued to stare at the coffin. "Mark talked about you a lot," he said.

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates headed to Chuck's farmhouse for lunch. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting for me. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been folded and refolded many times. I knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which I had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him. "Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it."

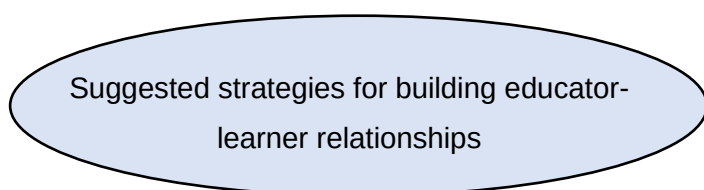
Mark's classmates started to gather around us. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home." Chuck's wife said, "Chuck asked me to put his in our wedding album." "I have mine too," Marilyn said. "It's in my diary." Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," Vicki said without batting an eyelash. "I think we all saved our lists."

That's when I finally sat down and cried. I cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again. ([https://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson012.shtml](https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson012.shtml))

**Table 7.6: Evaluation of case study by co-researchers**

| <b>Co-researcher Number</b> | <b>Positive strategies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Negative Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1                          | <i>Spending just a little time to create a positive relationship can last a lifetime to a child. Patience is very important to build trust and honesty in relationships.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>Saying thing in anger to a child ie “I will tape your mouth shut” has negative repercussions. It hurts feelings and may embarrass learners in front of classmates. It will destroy a teacher-learner relationship</i> |
| E2                          | <i>If you threaten, you must follow through with the punishment (I’ve learnt this especially since having my own kids).<br/><br/>She cared enough for the learners to notice that they were acting strange and then she did something about it.<br/><br/>By going through with the activity, she proved to each child how special they are and improved there feeling of self-worth. So much so that it had a lasting effect on each of the children. And therein lies the joy of teaching - you may not notice the outcome of your hard work now, but if your heart is really in it, it will have far-reaching and lasting effects. Most of these will not know about, but just keep on keeping on. Don’t give up on any child, ever.</i> | <i>Only negative thing I could find is when she lost her cool. I’m sure everyone does this at some stage, but one gets better at keeping cool the older and wiser you get. But it’s not always easy.</i>                 |
| E3                          | <i>Positive educator-learner relationship – Educator love and feel for her class. Mark make an unforgettable presence to the teacher. That exercise made a difference in the lives of people</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <i>Negative educator-learner relationship – Identifying Mark as the only troublesome learner. Masking mark with a tape. Cheering of learners as disapproval of his mask with a tape.</i>                                 |
| E5                          | <i>Teacher using threats to control learners – out of patience; only thinking of the child as an irritant (negative) – very little thought given to any strategies to prevent disruption (neg). Not really noticing individual child (neg)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <i>Ability and humility to laugh at self + adapt to the situation (positive). Change in strategy to remove children’s attention from stressful situation + changing it into a positive exp. (positive)</i>               |

### Subtheme 3 Suggested strategies for building positive educator-learner relationships



The co-researchers proposed the following strategies.

**Table 7.7: Suggested strategies by the co-researchers to build positive educator learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers   | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Respect your learners                                           | All the co-researchers accentuated that <i>they must respect the learners if they want the learners to respect them as educators. Disrespect breeds disrespect. Learners are our clients. Treat the fears of the learners with respect.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Listen attentively to the learners and communicate respectfully | All the co-researchers emphasised the importance of proper communication and stressed the fact <i>the educators must speak to the learners in a respectful way. Don't scream at them or belittle them. Listen to what they have to say and discuss societal issues with them and hear their opinions.</i><br><br>E1 asserted that <i>even if we don't have time to listen and speak to the learners, we must make time and not ignore them. I must make a point of speaking slower so that that they can understand me.</i><br><br>E2 took communication at step further stating that <i>educators must also speak with other educators</i> |
| Be enthusiastic and innovative in your teaching                 | Enthusiasm and innovation were important, and educators <i>must be enthusiastic and innovative about their subject. It rubs off on the learners.</i> E2 expanded on this by highlighting <i>passion, passion, passion, believe it what you teach. Be enthusiastic, even if you feel down. KNOW your subject! Where possible, don't teach from a book, i.e., don't read from the textbook.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>The co-researchers summarised the advantages of enthusiasm as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The learners also become enthusiastic</i></li> <li>• <i>They also become interested in the subject</i></li> <li>• <i>They stay on focus in the classroom</i></li> <li>• <i>Enthusiasm helps educators to teach the full duration of the period and prevent boredom</i></li> <li>• <i>Enthusiasm prevents educators from making certain learners a distressing tool because that is wrong. Learners are not your property</i></li> <li>• <i>Enthusiasm motivates learners</i></li> </ul>                                                                              |
| Be well-prepared                                              | <p>E3 indicated that <i>educators must be well prepared</i> and this was echoed by all the other co-researchers in statements such as <i>it improves work ethics, it makes lessons meaningful, it makes lessons interesting, it keeps the learners busy for the whole period, it improves discipline, it prevents wastage of time, it give me confidence and preparedness is non-negotiable.</i></p> <p>E3 further elaborated on preparedness stating that <i>it assists him to cater for all types of learner needs by using various teaching strategies.</i> E1 fully supported this statement because <i>assisting learners according to their need makes them to respect you mere.</i></p> |
| Be fair and consistent                                        | <p>Fairness and consistency were not negotiable as summarised by E2, E3 and E4a as follows: <i>Don't judge a book by its cover. It prevents favourism and helps the learners to know where they stand with you. Fairness and consistency help to gain the respect of the learners.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Show the learners that you care                               | <p>To show learners that you care the co-researchers elaborated as follows: <i>Take an interest in the child's academic work and help them to improve. Find out if they need anything to complete a project. If they need something help them to obtain it like a pen or food. Remember their birthdays and address them by their first names. Make sure that they know and understand the code of conduct of the school. Make friends with their parents.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers                        | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                      | E5 described care as <i>letting the learners know that you care about them as human beings and not only as a learner in your class.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Motivate and encourage learners                                                      | <p>On a question about the importance of motivation most of the co-researchers responded that <i>educators must encourage and motivate learners to do their best at all times and assist them where possible to do their best.</i></p> <p>E2 indicated that <i>to motivate learners, you must let them know that you believe in them and that they can succeed. They must know that they stand behind them.</i></p> <p>On a similar note, E3 declared that <i>learners must know that they as well as their future are important to you.</i></p> <p>E4a and E4b added that <i>if learners see that they are important to you they will be more eager to cooperate.</i></p> <p>All the co-researchers supported all the statement but emphasised that <i>learners must see in your life and the way you treat them that they are important for you.</i></p> |
| Discuss relevant everyday issues with them                                           | <p>Most co-researchers promoted classroom discussions as a very successful way of building relationships because <i>you can discuss relevant topics with them, hear their opinion and assist them to understand modern trends and help them to make sense of it. By fruitful discussions learners can be taught how to deal with problematic issues. Fruitful, relevant discussions show the learners that you are knowledgeable about what is going on in the world and that you understand the world they live in. They respect you for it.</i></p> <p>E1 endorsed this viewpoint by saying that <i>if you ask their opinion, they feel valued and it let their minds work. No matter how much work you have you must make time for these things.</i></p>                                                                                                |
| Use class representatives to build a network between educators, parents and learners | E4a put forward a tried and tested strategy and advised the other co-researchers to use it: <i>Elect a class rep [representative] and let them relate messages in difficult times to motivate the learners. Informed by this is respect and a smile. Create a network, e.g. educator, parent communication by means of cell phone. Give them gifts and show appreciation for their efforts have been a great help.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Take an interest in your learners                             | <p>It is important to take an interest in your learners and the co-researchers summarised some point of showing this interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Celebrate their birthdays</i></li> <li>• <i>Buy small gifts now and then</i></li> <li>• <i>Learn their name the first day you meet them</i></li> <li>• <i>Do something to show them that you've noticed them</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitor their progress and performance and be supportive</i></li> <li>• <i>Assist learners that stay far during school hours</i></li> <li>• <i>Plan a lesson and ask one of the learners to present the lesson – it makes them feel good</i></li> <li>• <i>Take an interest in their life after school by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Watch their sport games</i></li> <li>○ <i>Enquire about sick family members</i></li> <li>○ <i>Help them with material goods</i></li> <li>○ <i>Discuss with the learners issues that upset them.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Get to the bottom of the problem. Make them see the reality of the problem.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Allow them to talk about their feelings without making them feel guilty about it.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Give learners websites where they can also find help.</i></li> <li>○ <i>A sympathetic (but not a “pally” ear) is needed.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Create a safe environment                                     | <p>All the co-researchers agreed on the importance of a safe school environment and recommend that <i>social ills surrounding the school should be discussed. Learners must be protected from bullies. School security systems must be in place and learners must know how to react to unsafe circumstances.</i></p> <p>E4a warned the other co-researchers <i>to be extra careful not to allow drugs or weapons on the school premisses. Be on the lookout for rifles and hideouts for other unwanted items on the school grounds. Audit the environment regularly.</i></p> <p>E4b mentioned a very important fact considering the COVID-19 pandemic emphasising <i>that all learners must have their own books, pens and pencils to avoid the spread of the virus.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |



| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers                 | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Go the second mile                                                            | <p>Educators are paid to do certain tasks at school, but all the co-researchers explained that <i>once you go that extra mile (do things for the learners that you are not paid to do) speaks louder than words. Help them even after school hours and take an interest in their after-school activities. This help- even extra classes - must be voluntarily and with a smile.</i></p> <p>E5 supported this by affirming <i>that educators must model [what] they want the learners to become.</i></p>                                                                                                       |
| Reprimand learners in a respectful way                                        | <p>To reprimand learners is a skill and the co-researchers advised one another to <i>reprimand learners in private but firm and in a normal voice, discuss the bad behaviour with him/her and ask him/her for a solution, ask polite questions and come to an agreement with the learners about future behaviour.</i></p> <p>For E4a it was important to <i>sense a bad habit before it happens because it is easier to prevent than to cure.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                         |
| Make learners feel welcome                                                    | <p>A few co-researchers mentioned that they <i>find it very effective to meet the learners personally with a smile at the door because it makes them feel welcome and they perceive it as you are keen to teach them.</i></p> <p>E3 expressed <i>the hindering effect of over crowdedness as being a problem but if you adapt a learner-centred approach you can overcome this.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Educators must reflect on their lives, teaching strategies and their mistakes | <p>Most co-researchers declared that <i>educators must be able to reflect openly and honestly on their work and admit if they had made a mistake. Admitting mistakes is also part of teaching. It shows humility. You must be able to identify what works and what doesn't to be able to optimise learning. No use just carrying on with a strategy that doesn't work. What's the point in that?</i></p> <p>E2 and E5 emphasised this point because <i>it will inspire learners to also be willing to admit their mistakes. That is how children learn to handle mistakes/grow [and learn] from them.</i></p> |
| Be friendly                                                                   | <p>E2 argued that <i>educators must be friendly</i> but added that she <i>maintains strict adult boundaries while being friendly and approachable. Do not try to be pally-pally with them.</i> E4a confirmed</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>this by professing <i>that learners like such as a friendly teacher but do not overdo it. For many kids, school is an escape from their home circumstances. Don't make their lives even more miserable by being grumpy to them. It's so much easier to be friendly than a sour grape.</i></p> <p>E3 advised the co-researchers that <i>even when you fight also show that you can't fight with a smile [learners must know that you are angry]</i></p> <p>E5 claimed that <i>moodiness is a killer. A moody teacher who is impatient with his/her learners thinks more of his/her own comfort than the well-being of his/her children.</i></p>                                                                   |
| Involve the parent where possible                             | All the co-researchers agreed that <i>parent involvement is very important, and educators must go out of their way to involve the parents wherever possible.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Teach and model proper values                                 | <p>E1, in agreement with four other co-researchers, indicated that <i>as long as there are societal issues, discipline at school will always exist. If children are taught proper values, morals and respect at home and live as a proper family structure they will feel loved and cared for and disciplinary problems will be minimal.</i></p> <p>E2 added the parents' responsibility to this and said that <i>general parental involvement in their children's lives are very important. Parents must take responsibility for their children's bad behaviour and guide them.</i></p>                                                                                                                            |
| A few general ideas                                           | <p>Although it was important to understand learner behaviour it was important for the co-researchers not to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Compromise the vision and mission of the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be firm on unacceptable behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Be firm on academic performance</i></li> <li>• <i>Manage classes as positively as possible</i></li> <li>• <i>deliver what learners expected from them</i></li> <li>• <i>Love learners unconditionally</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Teach learners to take education seriously</i></p> <p>E4b admitted that <i>it was not easy to have one discipline procedure because what works in our school might not work for school B. It</i></p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <i>depends on the context and relationship of teachers with other relevant stakeholders.</i> |

## 7.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3 AND 4

### 7.4.1 Discussion of the findings on secondary research question 3

#### Subtheme 1 – What are the importance of educator-learner relationships?

The co-researchers agreed that educator-learner relationships were very important. A positive relationship-centred approach as a new innovative way to strengthen desired behaviours in learners (see Khewu, 2012) was identified during this research with a view to influencing the dynamics and discipline in the classroom (Riley, 2010; DBE, 2012a). Positive educator-learner relationships encourage learner-centred classrooms and enhance the right to be treated with dignity and equality (Egunlusi, 2020). Educators have the ideal opportunity to support learners in class through a positive relationships-centred approach (Walton et al., 2016).

**Table 7.8: Importance of educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The importance of educator-learner relationships              | <p>Although the term classroom management is seen as an umbrella, it is often used reciprocally with discipline (Egeberg et al., 2016). A caring and respectful educator-learner relationship is a critical component when it comes to dealing with indisciplinary problems in the classroom (Tuckman &amp; Monetti, 2012). Nortje (2017) and Walton et al. (2016) assert that positive relationships can create an environment that will enhance educator and learner well-being and promote learner academic progress (Liberante, 2012).</p> <p>As the adults in the relationships, educators must take the lead in establishing positive ones. Learners feel a need to belong and call for school connectedness and a caring, safe environment where educators fulfil their parental role in the learning environment. Especially learners experiencing hardships at home or coming from poverty-stricken single-parent homes require stable educator-</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>learner relationships. Respect is an important component of educator-learner relationships and, if educators treat their learners with respect, the educators will in turn earn the respect of their learners (Johnson, 2016). When learners experience respect from educators they feel valued (De Klerk, 2013).</p> <p>The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention in cooperation with the DBE (2015a) as well as Mardliyah (2019) emphasise that a “mutually respectful relationship with learners” (p. 7) influences learner discipline in the classroom in a positive way.</p> |

### **Subtheme 2 – Educators must be role models at all times**

Educators must be role models, because learners spend numerous hours with them, and they can have an enormous influence on the way learners behave (Sparks, 2019).

**Table 7.9: A literature review of educators as role models.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educators must be role models at all times                    | <p>Educators must be role models at all times, in and out of school. For this reason, an educator is supposed to be upright and honest and must be accountable, understanding, supportive, trustworthy, professional, fair and display logical judgement at all times, and he or she have a good personality. Many negative stories in the mass media are a result of educators displaying unacceptable behaviour outside of the classroom in their communities (Kunac &amp; Batarelo, 2019).</p> |

### **Subtheme 3 – Benefits of positive educator-learner relationships**

The co-researchers agreed that positive educator-learner relationships had many benefits, as reflected in the following table.

**Table 7.10: A literature review of benefits of positive educator-learner relationships.**

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b>             | <b>Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educator-learner relationships create a safe environment                         | Positive educator-learner relationships provide the learners with a feeling of safety and they are more eager to come to class and be engaged in their learning activities (Makhwathana et al., 2017). Unsupportive educator-learner relationships produce the opposite results (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2012). Varga (2017) stresses that educators must ensure a supportive learning environment where learners feel that they belong.                                                                  |
| Educator-learner relationships facilitate respect between educators and learners | Educator-learner relationships are built on respect that facilitates a climate of care, trust and hope (DBE, 2010; Johnson, 2016). To achieve this, educators must be friendly, accommodating, respectful and unthreatening (Barr, 2016; Herald, 2015)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Educator-learner relationships enhance academic progress and well-being          | Tian et al. (2014) highlight that learner who experience positive educator-learner relationships progress significantly better academically. Poor educator-learner relationships lead to slow academic progress and foster health and well-being in both educators and learners (Lang et al., 2013; Greenberg et al., 2016). Evans et al. (2019) propose that positive educator-learner relationships can counteract the negative effects of indiscipline on educators' well-being (Konishi & Wong, 2018). |

#### **Subtheme 4 – Challenges faced by the co-researchers around building positive educator-learner relationships**

As indicated, building positive educator-learner relationships can be very challenging at times. The co-researchers experienced some challenges and shared their encounters with each other.

**Table 7.11: A literature review of challenges faced by the co-researchers to build positive educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Negative attitudes of some learners                           | <p>Singh (2014) finds that learners behave arrogantly and disrespectfully towards their educators while also lacking moral values. Harmse (2013) states that those learners behave in the same way towards other learners.</p> <p>Effective educator-learner relationships can impact positively on learner attitudes towards learning, their engagement in schools and their preparedness to adjust emotionally and socially (Spilt et al., 2011).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Time constraints and work overload and overcrowded classrooms | <p>The second volume of the <i>Teaching and Learning International Survey</i> (Talis) (Nkosi, 2020) reports that many educators want to leave the teaching profession due to stress. As indicated, work overload and too much administrative duties are mentioned as major reasons for educator stress. Overcrowded classrooms contribute to the work overload and stress experienced by educators.</p> <p>A lack of resources and overcrowded classrooms impact severely on the emotional well-being and motivation of educators resulting in educator stress. When educators feel that they are not capable of teaching effectively and not engaging learners in their studies they leave the profession or are absent for long periods (O'Connor &amp; Mooney, 2014; Grobler., 2018). Heffernan, a lecturer in Leadership at the Faculty of Education, said 76% of teachers consider their workload unmanageable (Mogato, 2020).</p> <p>This results in ineffective teaching and learning as well as bored and uninterested learners affecting the discipline in the classroom in a negative way (Reyneke, 2013a).</p> |
| Stress and frustration                                        | <p>Stress leads to burnout in educators (Spurgeon &amp; Thompson, 2018), and burnout eventually decreases educator efficiency in the classroom (Papastyliaou et al., 2009).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| No common approach to discipline                              | <p>No literature could be found to substantiate this comment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b> | <b>Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lack of parental and community support                               | <p>Mokati (2018) postulates that the government, the principal, the whole school community, the educators and the parents must all share the responsibility to make schools safe places for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Manamela (2015) reasons that unless parents involve themselves in the discipline of their children, the school will not be successful in dealing with learner discipline.</p> |
| External bad influences                                              | Tamborini et al. (2018) reasoned that the mass media encourage anti-social behaviour rather than pro-social behaviour. Problematic learner behaviour is also caused by societal influences because children observe what people do and as such reflex the morals of society where they live (Mweli, 2017).                                                                                              |

#### **7.4.2 Discussion of the findings on secondary research question 4**

##### **Subtheme 1 – Case-specific strategies**

The co-researchers proposed that certain problematic behaviours demanded case-specific relationship-building strategies to some extent.

**Table 7.12: A literature review of case-specific strategies.**

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b> | <b>Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learners using drugs                                                 | To deal with learners that are addicted to drugs is a difficult and time-consuming process but, when a learner has a positive relationship with an educator, it is possible that this support could assist the learner in becoming able to stop using drugs and to avoid further vulnerabilities to addiction (Walton et al., 2016). |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>Sedibe and Hendricks (2021) suggest that parents and educators must attend workshops to assist learners around drugs. Learners found in possession of drugs must be referred for counselling and to rehabilitation centres, but their academic work must not be neglected and, lastly, it is advised that a school for drug-addicted learners must be established, and learners must stay there until the age of 18 years.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>Learners from a poverty-stricken environment:</p>          | <p>The co-researchers proposed that educators must refer learners from poverty-stricken areas to specialised people, namely psychologists, social workers, school clinics and a school-based support team, for help.</p> <p>Research done by Kalam et al. (2016) suggests that schools must make use of the clinics in the area to assist the learners, put more emphasis on the gross motor development of learners, reduce the number of learners per class and provide remedial interventions, because good grades in education are very important. Poverty-stricken learners need to be uplifted in this way.</p> <p>Follow-up research done by the Universities of Fort Hare and the Witwatersrand constitutes that, unfortunately, schools make little use of available resources in the communities. Every community, no matter how poor, do have unemployed graduates and other professionals such as musicians, dancers and other skilled people that could supply the schools with a wealth of information and assistance (Gardiner, 2017)</p> <p>However, Skinner et al. (2019) emphasise that educators want to assist learners, whereas these mentioned resources are hugely limited. If these resources are available, they mainly focus on academic support and not on mental health. Due to the lengthy referral process, the learner very often does not receive help because, by the time the process is completed, they are too old for the service. School-based support teams (SBSTs) also focus mainly on academic progress and not emotional help.</p> |
| <p>Learners with severe emotional problems</p>                | <p>Emotional and mental health are important for successful life management (Masare, 2019).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | <p>Becker (2021) reports that youth suicide is on the rise. Educators must know and be on the lookout for early warning signs of learner distress. A sudden change in learner behaviour, activities and moods may be warning signs. If these are observed, educators must refer learners for professional help. Educators can supply learners with websites where they can get help with resilience and other sources to facilitate mental well-being. Counselling sessions with available people can be arranged. Educators can also assist learners to build social peer connections. Peer support very often is a promising way of supporting learners. For the mentioned reasons, it is necessary to train peers to support other learners.</p> <p>To assist learners with emotional problems, educators must endeavour to understand the reasons that affect the learners. Adolescence in itself is a reason for learners to suffer from emotional stress. Other reasons comprise early stoppage of secondary education, anxiety, substance abuse and financial constraints. The Department of Health instituted mental health strategies, but research revealed that these were not implemented by schools (Strydom et al., 2012).</p> |
| Learners without parental support                             | <p>Although parental support is important for the progress of their children, it is hindered by poverty, single-parent households, a lack of supportive family structures and unemployment (Abrahams, 2013; Karibayeva &amp; Bögar, 2014). To support learners without parental support, educators must endeavour to understand the reasons for the lack of support. It is however clear that schools and educators do not take appropriate actions to support learners in this respect. Educators need to be empowered to assist learners in this regard (Epstein, 2018).</p> <p>Amidst all their other teaching duties, educators, in their role of <i>in loco parentis</i>, must ensure the safety, security and well-being of learners to see to the learners' needs (Mampane, 2018b).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Learners with HIV/AIDS:                                       | <p>In the past, schools-based HIV/AIDS interventions focussed mainly on HIV education and prevention while neglecting care and emotional support to learners with HIV/AIDS (Ebersöhn, &amp; Ferreira, 2011).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | UNESCO (2008) defined five areas of support for learners with HIV/AIDS, namely 1) HIV/AIDS-related education, 2) enrolment of HIV/AIDS-affected children, 3) providing these learners with psycho-social support, 4) providing access to medical and nutritional services and 5) building relationships with support agencies. |

The co-researchers agreed that, in all these cases, learners had to be treated equally. Learners should not be judged but loved unconditionally.

### **Subtheme 2 – Case study**

As mentioned, the co-researchers were exposed to a real-life case study to reflect on the positive and negative side of the educator-learner relationship that prevailed at that time. Most co-researchers made insightful remarks that revealed an understanding of the positive and negative side of educator-learner relationships, as indicated. The remarks were recirculated amongst the co-researchers for reflection.

### **Subtheme 3 – Suggested strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships**

The co-researcher agreed that positive educator-learner relationships were very important, and educators had to go out of their way to facilitate relationship-building. These points were only discussed briefly, as many of them had already been discussed, as found in the materials above.

**Table 7.13: A literature review of suggested strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships.**

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers   | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Respect your learners                                           | The importance of respect has been discussed (cf. 3.4, 3.7, 4.6.1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Listen attentively to the learners and communicate respectfully | <p>Learners who experience that their teacher is fair and understanding while listening to them are better motivated to participate and be involved in class (Wentzel &amp; Muenks, 2016). Successful interpersonal communication involves agency and communication. The influence of the educator in the educator-learner relationship and interaction combined form the agency, and the level of friendliness and warmth in the communication process are embodied in teacher communion (Pennings et al., 2018; Wubbels et al. 2016). Relationships do not happen at random, but these two components are combined to facilitated effective educator communication with more effective learner communication as a result (Wubbels et al., 2012).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Be enthusiastic and innovative in your teaching                 | <p>Educator enthusiasm and vigour have far-reaching effects on the learning behaviour of learners and promote better intrinsic motivation and task commitment (Paoloni, 2014; Patrick et al., 2016). Enthusiasm positively affects learners' achievement and motivation (Orosz, 2015) and, therefore, approaching learning with vigour and enthusiasm encourage learners to become actively engaged in their own learning (Maulana et al., 2013). Educator enthusiasm has a major impact on the learning experience and outcomes of learners (Keller et al., 2016). Educators themselves consider enthusiasm as a sign of competence (Kunter et al., 2013) and motivation (Kunter &amp; Holzberger, 2014). Educator enthusiasm conveys the message to the learners that the educator enjoys teaching (Keller et al., 2014; Motz et al., 2017).</p> <p>A study done by Orosz et al. (2015) found that, if students have less enthusiastic educators, they concomitantly show reduced intrinsic motivation and also become quickly demotivated. Educators themselves consider enthusiasm as an important characteristic of effective educators.</p> <p>Sadly, Segalo and Rambuda (2018) state that the escalation of indiscipline quenches the motivation and enthusiasm of educators.</p> |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Be well prepared                                              | Productive learning can be supported by intensive preparation, a purposeful curriculum and relevant resources (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Proper planning of educators to teach their lessons has many benefits. It boosts learner achievement and performance because the educator will present the lesson in such a way that the learners can identify with the content and understand why they must learn it. Proper planning minimises indiscipline, because the learners will be engaged in the lessons and not get bored. If learners are engaged in their studies, time goes by quicker, and this leaves little time for misbehaviour. A well-planned lesson facilitates confidence within the educator and helps to earn the respect of the learners, because it makes for a better educator (Sethi, 2021). |
| Be fair and consistent                                        | Lowe (2016) explain that learners respond better to an educator who is fair and consistent regarding respecting school rules that are applied evenly to all learners over time. A fair and consistent approach to learners also benefits behaviour management in schools. Effective disciplinarians practice fairness and consistency. Not only will the learners respect such educators, but the whole school community will respect you for being fair and consistent. Fairness and consistency strengthen not only the classroom but the whole school climate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Show the learners that you care                               | Egeberg et al. (2020) describe care as one of the cornerstones of classroom and discipline management as well as relationship-building. A safe and caring school environment created by positive educator-learner relationships can be considered a foundation for learning to be effective (Laininen, 2019). Positive educator-learner relationships must be reinforced with love, care, encouragement, appreciation and attention (WCED, 2007).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Motivate and encourage                                        | Not only does positive educator-learner relationships provide learners with motivation and encouragement (Varga, 2017), but it also creates a classroom climate conducive for teaching and learning (Franklin, & Harrington, 2019). A safe and unstressed classroom is a motivation for learners to learn (Hamamrad, 2016).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| <b>Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers</b>               | <b>Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Discuss relevant everyday issues                                                   | Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2014) suggest that educators should have morning meetings with their learners to discuss relevant issues with them, build rapport, create a sense of community and prepare them for the day ahead. Northeast Foundation for Children (2014a) stresses that it is not only the academic curriculum that is important, but also the social curriculum (McCaffery, 2016). In line with this, educators must convey their needs to the learners as well as the reasons for these needs. In turn, the educators must update themselves with the needs of the learners by discussing their needs with them (Curwin et al., 2018; Neto, 2015). Learners like to talk about things that interest them (García-Moya et al., 2019). |
| Use class representatives to build a network among educators, parents and learners | Makhoul et al. (2012) suggest that youth mentors can play an important role to liaise between educators and learners, as discussed in Chapter 3. These go-betweens understand the learners and can put their case forward in an understandable way.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Take an interest in your learners                                                  | Educators must take a genuine interest in the learners (Prather-Jones, 2011). There are many ways in which educators can show learners that they are interested in what they do. Educators must personalise their relationships with learners to a certain extent by taking an interest in their hobbies and the things they do outside of school (García-Moya et al., 2019). Anyon et al. (2018) suggest that educators must be present in the passages when learners go from one class to the other to show interest in them. Educators can also use breaks and lunchtimes to connect with the learners.                                                                                                                                     |
| Create a safe environment                                                          | Learners come to class not only with a learning need but also a need to belong and feel safe and secure (Wubbels et al., 2014). Positive educator-learner relationships foster a nurturing and protective environment where learners can feel safe and free and be willing to cooperate in class (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Go the extra mile                                                                  | Going the extra mile is important: Lobb (2017) avers that learners can distinguish between educators who go the second mile and those who do not. By going the extra mile, good educators can show love and promote hope in the learning experience of the child (Mpande, 2020).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers                 | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reprimand learners in a respectful way                                        | When reprimanding learners, educators must remember that they follow their examples. Educators must reprimand learners in such a way that they keep their dignity and do not feel belittled (Varga, 2017)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Make learners feel welcome                                                    | Scholars agree that learners who experience their educators as supportive, caring and listening are more eager to work in class because they feel safe and welcome (Furrer et al., 2014; Hamre et al. 2013; Wentzel & Brophy 2014).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Educators must reflect on their lives, teaching strategies and their mistakes | Ugbo (2017) advises that even mistakes must be welcomed and used as part of the process to make learners feel welcome and safe. Educators must admit their mistakes (Bailey-Ramos, 2016; Özer et al., 2016).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Be friendly                                                                   | Educators must be friendly, accommodating, respectful and unthreatening (Barr, 2016; Herald, 2015), because these components facilitate a supportive learning environment (Johnson, 2016). Repeated unfriendly interactions are responsible for hostile relations that eventually are very difficult to change into friendly ones (Claessens et al., 2017).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Involve the parent where possible                                             | Manamela (2015) reasons that, unless parents involve themselves in the discipline of their children, the school will not be successful in dealing with learner discipline. The inclusive education policy in South Africa, the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6), (DBE, 2001) also emphasises that parent support and involvement are important to ensure the successful education of children.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Teach and model proper values                                                 | Parents are not the role models they are supposed to be and behave badly in the presence of their children, but expect the children to behave better, as indicated. Yuan and Che (2012) confirm that we cannot isolate problematic learner behaviour from societal influences, because children imitate what they observe other people do. Learner behaviour in schools reflects the morals of the societies in which they live (Mweli, 2017). For this reason, there is a dire need (Nuriman & Fauzan, 2017) for educators to be an example and model proper behaviour (Dengerink et al., 2015), supplying them with a much-needed support system to cope with social ills at home and in society (Ilosvay, 2016). Educators, in their |

| Topics identified from data collected from the co-researchers | Findings from data as stated by the co-researchers during the electronic encounters                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | capacity as <i>in loco parentis</i> , must always fulfil their teaching role by being good role models and displaying acceptable values and norms in their lives (Walton et al., 2016), as mentioned. |
| General ideas                                                 | These are discussed in Chapter 8.                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 7.5 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION OF SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3 AND 4

During Cycle 2, the co-researchers endeavoured to find answers to secondary research questions 3 and 4.

Secondary research question 3 reads: *What were the educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?*

The co-researcher's comments on this demonstrated their clear perception of what positive educator-learner relationships was as well as their importance. Positive educator-learner relationships are fundamental to the success of teaching and learning and the well-being of educators and learners in the teaching and learning environment.

Secondary research question four reads: *What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies could collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

This was the next point of discussion. The co-researchers described many successful strategies that they had tested in the classroom during and before the research project. They did however emphasise that not all strategies would work for all learners and educators, but innovative educators could improvise and find more ways of managing the challenge. The list is by no means exhaustive.

## 7.6 LIMITATIONS OF THIS CHAPTER

As mentioned, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the adjusted school attendance of learners during the research all the proposed strategies could not be tried out in the classroom and the co-researchers had to rely in many cases on past experiences in order to make suggestions.

## 7.7 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS CHAPTER

The all-encompassing nature of the educator's role in building educator-learner relationships gave a new dimension to the educator-learner relationship-centred approach. Relationship-building is not only confined to the classroom but applies to all areas of the life of the educators, be it during school hours or after.

## 7.8 CONCLUSION

All the co-researchers agreed that, after all the efforts made to build positive relationships, if only one child could be helped, they would still hold all their efforts to be worthwhile.

As a conclusion to this interaction, the co-researchers commented on their overall feelings when reaching out to the learners, as follows:

*E1 Positive educator-learner relationships show that you care as a teacher and learners will have a greater long-term respect for you*

*E2 Awesome. I know that it's probably impossible to reach every single learner who walks through my classroom, there are so many and so many have been damaged so much that the only thing you CAN do is pray and hope that God gets through to them. But my career is centred around the joy I feel in making a difference - even if it is only in one kid's life at a time. All the blood, sweat and tears is worth it.*

*I suppose it would make a difference to the majority if they see how much I care.*

*E3 Yes by positive relationships most learners can benefit, and a lot can get help if you cannot change strategies as per individual learner*

*E4a Helping one child will eventually effect the whole class.*

*E4b Feel good because the success of a child is "my reward" so to say*

*E5 I'd feel wonderful, grateful and happy. It could help the rest of the class if they realise that help is also available to them, maybe even if they are part of the help that is offered. However usually it is better to do this carefully so that no accusations of "teachers pet" can be flung at the child.*

The responses given by the co-researchers demonstrated creativity and insight into the importance of educator-learner relationship-building. It was clear from their comments that they saw their own conduct at school and after school as part of building relationships with the learners.



All the co-researchers dreamt of an ideal classroom because it would facilitate effective teaching and learning, putting the joy back into their teaching careers and facilitating job satisfaction. The co-researchers reached out to one another by giving one another advice on how to obtain a better classroom climate.

Research questions 3 and 4 have therefore been answered.

A positive educator-learner relationship was identified as the main component and the starting point of coping with discipline-related issues in the classroom. The co-researchers agreed that everything an educator did, again inside and outside the classroom, directly or indirectly facilitated educator-learner relationship-building in some way or another. They found that educators had to behave in a professional and dignified way at all times to serve as role models at school and in the community. Negative attitudes, laziness, disrespect, unpreparedness, absenteeism, and many other unprofessional ways of behaviour would have a negative influence on educator-learner relationship-building. Educators, as the adults in the relationships, had to initiate the process of building positive educator-learner relationships.

Chapter 8 will address Cycle 3 of the PALAR process along with research question 5.

## **CHAPTER 8: CYCLE 3 OF THE PALAR PROCESS**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3)**

Chapter 6 focussed on the researchers' understanding of learner behaviour and the challenges educators are confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools. Chapter 7 focussed on the co-researchers' views on strategies to improve educator-learner relationships.

The present chapter will focus on answering the final secondary research question:

*How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?*

The first part of Cycle 3 of the participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) process was conducted online for the reasons mentioned. The session was initiated with an open-ended questionnaire. This was sent to the co-researchers for their comments and suggestions. Most of the strategies had already been tried out by the co-researchers before they shared them with the others.

To contextualise the SLP as an objective of the research project, we collaborated with willing educators at respective schools to form a FCW in which we formulated educator-learner relationship-building strategies. Near to the end of Cycle 3, the COVID-19 restrictions were relaxed, and it was possible to have face-to-face interaction with co-researchers. During this time, the FCWs were implemented and voluntary educators of the five participating schools took part in these.

### **8.2 CYCLE 3 (cf. 1.10.2.3.3; 5.4.3.4)**

The co-researchers were asked to try out some of the given strategies in class and report their experiences. Not only did they report on some strategies they tried out, but also strategies they had used previously and that had worked well. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to work on educator-learner relationship-building, as indicated. This complicated matters, but some educators did have successful moments and were pleased to report back about their successes.

The relaxation of lockdown regulations and the reopening of the schools during made it possible for the co-researchers to involve other educators at their respective schools to test their educator-learner relationship-building strategies in their classrooms. As the facilitator of the ALS, I explained the concept of an FCW to the co-researchers (cf. 1.10.2.4). They agreed

to the idea of an FCW as a means for obtaining authentic ideas on educator relationship-building and the professional development of the educators.

### **8.3 FINDINGS ON SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

#### **8.3.1 Future Creating Workshop (cf. 1.6; 1.7; 1.10.2.3.3)**

The FCW proved to be an effective way of bringing the educators together to reflect on their common problems and collaboratively formulate possible solutions.

Unfortunately, due to social distancing (DBE, n.d.) practised at all the schools and time constraints, we could only see the educators in small groups. As facilitator, I was present at the first group at each school to explain what an FCW is. The co-researchers continued with the rest of the educators at a later stage and as such involved all the educators per school.

During the preparation phase, the nature of an FWC was explained to the participating educators along with procedures will be followed. The problem as identified, in this case, learner discipline and positive educator-learner relationship building, was investigated through a brainstorming session in the critique phase of the workshop. During the fantasy or visionary phase, the educators explored future possibilities to solve the problem. The visionary phase created an opportunity for educators to envisage future possibilities to build educator-learner relationships (see Sørensen, 2009).

To save time, educators participating in the FCWs jotted down proposed strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships and were then instructed to try out, if possible, the suggested solutions during the implementation phase. After that, the educators were requested to report back on their successes and failures. They were also asked to relate successful strategies that they had tried out previously. The visionary phase confirmed that the strategies as suggested and implemented during and before the research were successful, and the vision was attained.

Minutes were not kept formally, but each educator attending the FCW were given a list of the topics discussed in the previous interactions and requested to jot down all his or her own inputs and return these to the co-researchers. The educators also added newly discovered strategies and noted these in the document provided.

Before the educators discussed educator-learner relationship-building, they discussed general topics that were of concern to them. The five schools are indicated as S1 to S5 for the following points of discussion.

**What was their perception of the teaching profession before they started teaching?**

**Table 8.1: Educators' views of the teaching profession before they started teaching.**

| <b>School</b> | <b>Summaries of the comments of the participating educators at the five respective schools concerning their views of the teaching profession before they started teaching</b>                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| S1            | <i>The educators of S1 saw the teaching profession as dignified, respectful, noble and decent with educators working together and appreciative learners.</i>                                                                                                                                                       |
| S2            | <i>The educators thought that the teaching profession was noble and honourable and that the learners wanted to at school and be taught. The educators saw the teaching profession as a way of influencing the learners for the better.</i>                                                                         |
| S3            | <i>The educators saw the teaching profession as noble and educators as trusted and respected members of their communities. They perceived the teaching profession as an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the learners.</i>                                                                         |
| S4            | <i>The teaching profession was seen as a way of shaping the learners for the better and that the learners will be eager to learn. But the educators also realised that teaching was a challenging career and that it will be demanding. Educators must be dedicated.</i>                                           |
| S5            | <i>On average, the educators thought teaching was a way of reaching out to the learners and assisting the disadvantaged learners in the community. The educators saw the teaching profession as respectful and educators as people with strong moral values, where educators had to see teaching as a calling.</i> |

**How did the educators see the teaching profession after they started teaching?**

**Table 8.2: Educators' view of the teaching profession after they started teaching.**

| School | Summaries of the comments of the participating educators at the five respective schools concerning their views of the teaching profession after they started teaching                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| S1     | <i>The educators saw the teaching profession as one where learners have all the rights and educators have none. Educators are held responsible for everything from bad results to undisciplined behaviour.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| S2     | <i>Teaching for a few years was an eye-opener. Educators cannot fulfil the seven roles of the educator due to loads of admin and other duties. The DBE was very unsupportive, and the teachers' unions run the show. Educators are not doing their job properly due to laziness. A few educators still see the profession as a positive endeavour.</i>                                           |
| S3     | <i>Many educators today see teaching only as job and therefore do not uplift the profession. The education profession is very stressful and there is too much political interference. A few educators still see the profession as positive and a way where learners can be helped.</i>                                                                                                           |
| S4     | <i>The majority of educators feel that teaching must be a calling, otherwise the profession is experienced as upside-down. Educators were not dedicated anymore, and learners are not interested in being taught.</i>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| S5     | <i>Now more than ever the teaching profession is seen as a way of having an influence on the learners and as such on the future of the country. Learners need help to grow [develop] and educators can assist them. Educators can make a difference in the lives of the learners and there is a great need for such actions. The teaching profession is not a respectful profession anymore.</i> |

**What came to mind when the educators think of learner discipline**

**Table 8.3: Educators' views on learner discipline.**

| <b>School</b> | <b>Summaries of the comments of the participating educators at the five respective schools concerning their views on learner discipline</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| S1            | <i>There is a serious lack of learner discipline and it hampers the teaching and learning environment. Parents do not teach values to their children anymore.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| S2            | <i>Although the school has a strict Code of conduct it is still very difficult to handle learner discipline. Learners take advantage of educators and educators lack skills to deal with discipline related issues in the classroom. Discipline in schools is a losing battle because learners know that nothing or very little can happen to them if they misbehave.</i>                                                                            |
| S3            | <i>Discipline in schools is not anymore a way of maintaining order in class. Children's rights overshadow the educators' rights and undermines effective discipline.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| S4            | <i>Punitive measures do not work because parents take the side of their children, leaving the educators without any way of correcting learner behaviour. Undisciplined behaviour undermines academic progress. Educators must be better role models. Drugs cause a total lack of discipline in the schools. Due to escalating violence in the schools, parents and educators are now afraid of their children and do not reprimand them anymore.</i> |
| S5            | <i>Many schools have a code of conduct put it is not relevant anymore. Learners push the boundaries. Educators must treat the learners with respect if they want the learners to treat them with respect. Discipline must even be practise outside of the classroom if educators want learners to respect them. Good manners must be taught but our country is in a dark pit because of the behaviour of the youth.</i>                              |

**What, according to the perception of the educators, is the importance of a positive educator-learner relationship?**

The educators agreed that educator-learner relationships lay the foundation for effective classroom management which includes the management of indiscipline. Their perception of the importance of educator-learner relationships is summarised in table 8.4

**Table 8.4: Educators' views on the importance of educator-learner relationships.**

| Importance of educator-learner relationships | Facilitate reciprocal respect | Help to improve discipline in class | Facilitate trust | Learners feel safe in class | Academic progress improves | It motivates learners to work harder | Learners cooperate better in class | Learners feel free to voice their opinions | Educators can teach and help learners effectively | Inspire learners to do their best | Learners feel free to approach educators for help | Facilitate better understanding of learners | Facilitate personal and social growth | Educators and learners work together better | The class climate will improve | Facilitate success in everything educators do | Facilitate effective communication | Motivates learners |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| S1                                           | ☑                             | ☑                                   | ☑                | ☑                           | ☑                          | ☑                                    |                                    | ☑                                          |                                                   | ☑                                 |                                                   |                                             |                                       |                                             | ☑                              |                                               |                                    | ☑                  |
| S2                                           | ☑                             | ☑                                   | ☑                | ☑                           | ☑                          | ☑                                    | ☑                                  | ☑                                          | ☑                                                 | ☑                                 | ☑                                                 | ☑                                           |                                       |                                             | ☑                              | ☑                                             | ☑                                  | ☑                  |
| S3                                           | ☑                             | ☑                                   | ☑                |                             | ☑                          |                                      | ☑                                  |                                            | ☑                                                 |                                   | ☑                                                 | ☑                                           | ☑                                     | ☑                                           |                                | ☑                                             |                                    | ☑                  |
| S4                                           | ☑                             | ☑                                   | ☑                |                             | ☑                          | ☑                                    | ☑                                  | ☑                                          |                                                   | ☑                                 | ☑                                                 |                                             |                                       | ☑                                           | ☑                              |                                               | ☑                                  | ☑                  |
| S5                                           | ☑                             | ☑                                   | ☑                | ☑                           | ☑                          |                                      | ☑                                  |                                            |                                                   | ☑                                 |                                                   |                                             |                                       |                                             | ☑                              | ☑                                             | ☑                                  | ☑                  |

**What, according to the perception of educators, is a positive educator?**

The educators emphasised that educators must be positive and endeavoured to define this.

Their perception of a positive educator is summarised in the table below.

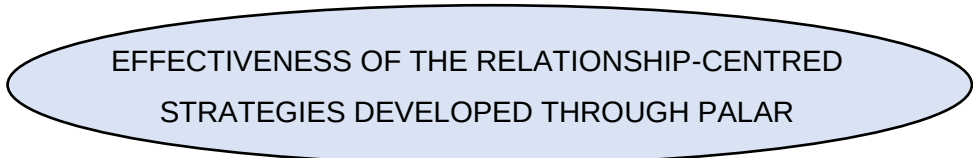
**Table 8.5: Educators' views of a positive educator.**

| What is a positive educator? | Full of energy | Enthusiastic | Positive attitude | Treats learners with respect | Makes lessons fun | Enjoys teaching | Well-prepared | Knowledgeable about their subject | Goes the second mile | Dresses appropriately and professionally | Eager to learn | Punctual | Good role models | Well-organised | Committed to the learners and the school | Quick to listen and slow to speak | Seeks to enhance the performance of the learners | Inspires learners to do better |
|------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| S1                           | ☑              | ☑            | ☑                 | ☑                            | ☑                 | ☑               |               | ☑                                 |                      | ☑                                        | ☑              |          | ☑                |                |                                          |                                   |                                                  |                                |
| S2                           |                | ☑            | ☑                 | ☑                            |                   | ☑               | ☑             | ☑                                 | ☑                    | ☑                                        | ☑              | ☑        | ☑                | ☑              | ☑                                        | ☑                                 | ☑                                                | ☑                              |
| S3                           |                | ☑            | ☑                 | ☑                            | ☑                 |                 | ☑             |                                   | ☑                    |                                          | ☑              | ☑        | ☑                | ☑              |                                          | ☑                                 |                                                  | ☑                              |
| S4                           |                | ☑            | ☑                 | ☑                            | ☑                 | ☑               | ☑             | ☑                                 |                      | ☑                                        | ☑              | ☑        | ☑                | ☑              | ☑                                        |                                   | ☑                                                | ☑                              |
| S5                           |                | ☑            | ☑                 | ☑                            | ☑                 |                 | ☑             |                                   |                      | ☑                                        |                |          | ☑                | ☑              |                                          | ☑                                 | ☑                                                | ☑                              |



The FCWs concluded with tried and tested ideas that build positive educator-learner relationships in the classroom. These ideas were forwarded to the co-researchers as their contribution to the compilation of an SLC to assist educators with relationship-building strategies as a means of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

### **8.3.2 Theme 5: The effectiveness of the relation-centred strategies developed through PALAR**



EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RELATIONSHIP-CENTRED  
STRATEGIES DEVELOPED THROUGH PALAR

#### **8.3.2.1 Report back after reflection on some strategies used by the co-researchers in their personal capacity in the classroom**

One co-researcher commented that not all the strategies that we discussed would work for all the learners.

*You must take the age, maturity level and social background of the learner in consideration when you choose a strategy. Teaching method for younger learners will differ from that of older learners. Language us will also differ. If you discuss a topic with learners, it must be age-appropriate and according to the interest of the learners. Use examples that they are used to at home and will understand. However, all learners react positively to genuine love, interest and care.*

*Educators also differs from one another. Some educators can use jokes and funny examples [when reprimanding learners] and get away with it while other educators can easily make a fool of themselves if they try it.*

Individual comments made by the co-researchers are as follows.

**Table 8.6: Some personal strategies used by the co-researchers.**

| Co-researcher no | Individual comments of the co-researchers about successful strategies that they have used and other interesting experiences that happened to them                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1               | <p><i>I reprimand learners if they laugh at other learners. This makes the classroom a safe place for insecure learners and they love to come to my class. I share my tips with other educators, and they share with me. They all see results after trying these tips out. I reprimand learners in private so that they don't have the support of other learners in class.</i></p> <p><i>I taught my learners that bullying is not only physical but also be by harsh words, body language and the way you look at someone and the expression on your face. We practise ways of behaving in class and they learn quickly. They each choose a buddy and they help one another if they see a wrong gesture or hear hard words. They learn through that and it creates a safe and welcoming class climate.</i></p> <p>These two examples are typical of a caring educator and collaboration in S1</p>                                                                                                      |
| E2               | <p><i>I reprimand learners if they laugh at other learners. This makes the classroom a safe place for insecure learners and they love to come to my class. I share my tips with other educators, and they share with me. They all see results after trying these tips out. I reprimand learners in private so that they don't have the support of other learners in class.</i></p> <p>This example also indicates a caring educator</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| E3               | <p><i>When children get restless and start with nonsense, I step in immediately to calm them down and introduce a new activity or tell them an interesting bit of news to get them focussed again. This prevents them from getting out of hand and unnecessary disruption and punishment.</i></p> <p><i>I make a point of greeting the learners when they come to my class and I make sure that they know that I have seen them. Throughout the lesson I try to make eye contact, I give them credit for small achievements and encourage them to build on that.</i></p> <p><i>If they make mistakes, I don't laugh at them or allow the other children to laugh at them. I even put them at ease by telling the class that I also once make a mistake like that and what the consequences were. Tell them to learn from their mistakes and it is not a shame. I apologise when I make a mistake and correct it immediately.</i></p> <p>These remarks also point to a watchful and caring educator.</p> |

| Co-researcher no | Individual comments of the co-researchers about successful strategies that they have used and other interesting experiences that happened to them                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E4a              | <p><i>I have picked up tips from my office mate (another HOD) on how to communicate, especially with boys when it comes to disciplining them. Learn from others. Listen to how they communicate and apply it. I'm a pretty good listener. Don't interrupt people when they talk.</i></p> <p><i>Learners like to be noticed. Put stickers on their assessments when they show improvement or if they do well. These are not just for A students. If someone improved from 35 to 40, they get a sticker. This shows them that you are interested in their progress. What their sport matches during the week, when not everyone is obliged to be there and when there are few spectators.</i></p> <p><i>I tried to build the confidence of one by praising him even for minor achievements. He was so thrilled that he really tried to do his other homework better. My colleague told me that even in his class this learner is trying harder.</i></p> <p><i>This educator displays good communication and collaboration with other educators and a caring and sympathetic attitude towards his learners.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| E4b              | <p><i>I always involve my parents if possible. You learn to know the children better if you know their home circumstances and it makes it easier for you to assist them. I visit them at home if they are ill or if the parents are ill. I ask them to inform me of such cases. This shows my interest in the learners and their well-being. They even come and tell me about other people in the community that needs help and I try to assist if possible or just lent a willing ear.</i></p> <p><i>I make it my mission to see that the children have what they need. Especially learner from poverty areas. It gives them confidence to be in class and lack nothing. They have learned to trust me with their need and respect me for helping them without telling other people that they are poor.</i></p> <p><i>I once asked a learner to tell me why he behaved badly. (He shouted at other children and push them out of the way – he even tried to do it with a teacher) He did not realise that his behaviour was wrong. This is how he behaves at home and it was accepted at home. I asked him if he sees other children do the same, but he said that he does not know of other children doing the same. We discussed better ways of behaviour and he realised that what he was doing is not the acceptable way of doing. I helped him to speak in a normal voice and if he wants to pass by somebody standing in his way, to say "please excuse me' I want to pass." It took a while to learn this new way of doing but he is happy now and more acceptable by his peers.</i></p> |

| Co-researcher no | Individual comments of the co-researchers about successful strategies that they have used and other interesting experiences that happened to them                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                  | <p><i>I use cues in class – different cues for certain learners to draw their attention without exposing them to the whole class. It is just between them and myself. It makes them feel the same and they respect me for that. They obey me and willingly calm down. If you help one child the whole class benefits and the learners can eventually see the benefits in their own performance.</i></p> <p>This educator is aware of the needs of his learners and try to help where he can. He tried to deal with learners in dignified way.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| E5               | <p><i>One case as an example: I had a learner in one of my classes, many years ago, who was rude and mocked me (to the other learners, thinking I could not “ice” her). I realised after a while that I was developing an attitude to her and so began praying for her on a daily basis. I made a deliberate effort to be friendly and not to take her attitude personally. It wasn’t long when she approached me for help – she came from a broken home and suffered much as a result. Her mother told me later how much I meant to her daughter.</i></p> <p>This is a good example of introspection by the educator into her own life and preparedness to change her attitude.</p> <p><i>I once took a few troublesome learners camping in the mountains for a few days during a holiday. I taught them about plants and animals and show them many interesting things in nature. They took a sincere interest in all the things I taught them and realise that learning is not boring but can be fun. We played ball games, swim in the river and discuss things of interest to them. They appreciated it very much and learn to know me as a human being and only as a teacher. Their attitude changed and they and they took a new liking in school.</i></p> <p>This educator also reveals insight into the needs of the learners and responded to the needs interestingly and positively while teaching them at the same time.</p> <p>Taking the learners camping involved a change in the environment which sometimes produced good results.</p> |

### 8.3.2.2 Was this research worthwhile for the co-researchers?

In trying out some of the personal strategies mentioned, the co-researchers realised the importance of their personal demeanour when trying to build positive educator-learner relationships. The main concept the co-researchers learned from this was that everything an

educator did contributed to relationship-building in some way or another, again, not only in school but also after. This corresponded well with extant literature as mentioned.

The PALAR process facilitated this personal learning process and assisted the co-researchers in reflecting on their ideas and adapting to the new way of thinking. As E2 commented: *After reading all the comments of the other co-researchers I realised that it is good to see how other people think. It gives new insights to issues.*

The co-researchers related what they experienced from their collaboration in the ALS as follows.

### **Educators must be positive, enthusiastic and passionate**

Discussions during the ALS encounters made it possible for the co-researchers to share ideas about positive educators. They found it worthwhile and accepted the new way of doing as a possibility to try out when possible.

**Table 8.7: Co-researchers views on having a positive disposition.**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1 | <i>In trying out a new way of greeting the learners, I was more positive and enthusiastic. I affected the learners and the climate in class changed. Show enthusiasm in your subject so learners can do the same.</i>                            |
| E2 | <i>I found that positivity and passion rub off on others. That's just how life works, not only in teaching. If they see that I love what I teach, they will be more interested than when I look bored. They must see it in the way you live.</i> |
| E3 | <i>I experienced that enthusiasm and a positive disposition help learners to stay focus. If you walk the second mile and give them your time, it makes them positive.</i>                                                                        |

### **Educators must reflect on their failures and successes**

To be able to acknowledge and admit their mistakes (Shallenberger, 2015) is a sign of personal growth. Through ALS encounters during the PALAR research process growth occurred.

**Table 8.8: Co-researchers views on admitting their mistakes.**

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1  | <i>Once I forgot to greet them properly. When I admitted my mistake and greeted them well in a friendly way, their whole attitude changed.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| E2  | <i>In admitting my mistakes I realised that I set a good example. Everyone must do this, not only teachers. Again, children will lose respect for and trust in you if you don't. You are supposed to set the example. They will not learn to own up for their mistakes if adults don't. And we spend so much more time with them than their parents.</i> |
| E3  | <i>To admit my mistakes I show the learners that I am human. This one is very important but make sure that your mistakes are minimal</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| E4a | <i>Educators are not perfect and I realised that if I make a mistake and apologise, the learners respect me more. If you set this example children learn from you and will respect you.</i>                                                                                                                                                              |
| E4b | <i>Try not to make mistakes but if you do make mistakes admit that but try to make corrections before you distribute an activity or exercise. I have learned that it is more difficult to correct mistakes than not to make them</i>                                                                                                                     |
| E5  | <i>I've learned that if I admit mistake openly and honestly, the learner will also do it and not try to make excuses. That is how children learn to handle mistakes/grow from them.</i>                                                                                                                                                                  |

### **Educators must take care of their stress and frustration**

Reflection on stress made the educators aware of their own stress and the consequences it might have had for the learners and the learning process.

**Table 8.9: Co-researchers view on stress and frustration.**

|     |                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1  | <i>Don't bring your stress to the classroom. The days that I am more relaxed, my classes are more relaxed as well. It has a spiral effect.</i>     |
| E4b | <i>It is important to leave my personal problems behind. The atmosphere is more relaxed and the learners also.</i>                                 |
| E5  | <i>Stress and frustration takes away my joy and impact negatively on my behaviour. The learners experience that and it makes them feel unsafe.</i> |

### **Educators must be fair and consistent**

To win the learners over, it is necessary to create a safe, welcoming and respectful class climate. The co-researchers experienced that fairness and consistency facilitated this process.

**Table 8.10: Co-researchers views on being fair and consistent.**

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1  | <i>Try to prevent favourism [favouritism]. It makes the other learners feel safe and welcome. I find that encouraging the learners helps them a lot to achieve confidence and it is a fair way of doing it.</i>                                |
| E2  | <i>Learners lose all respect with you if you show that you like some more. They must know where they stand with you. I have experienced that. I showed a struggling learner that I believe in him and it gave him confidence to do better.</i> |
| E3  | <i>Try to treat all learners the same. They learn to trust me. I must at all times show them that they are important to me.</i>                                                                                                                |
| E4a | <i>To be fair to all learners mean you don't judge a book by its cover</i>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| E4b | <i>I find that to treat the learners in a fair way is always motivational when talking to students</i>                                                                                                                                         |
| E5  | <i>Learners must see this in the way you live, you should not have to say it – then they will know. I find that my life speak louder than words.</i>                                                                                           |

### **Educators must go the extra mile**

To go the extra mile was found to be another sign of care. The co-researchers were aware of this and tried to comply with it.

**Table 8.11: Co-researchers views on going the extra mile.**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1 | <i>It is not possible due to time to always spend time with all the learners but I experienced that if I do make time for a learner she respects me more. Where possible assist learner where necessary</i>                                                                                                                          |
| E2 | <i>I have seen this over and over again. Going the extra mile works. I don't even know how much time I have spent sitting next to the athletics track or in a quantum driving kids around. And I firmly believe that my top athletes do so well, because they know that no matter what, there is someone there rooting for them.</i> |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E3 | <i>I realised that giving more time for the learners is important. This part of the profession. Even if it means you help one learner, that is important. I've tried it and it worked for that learner.</i> |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### **Educators must be friendly**

The co-researchers experienced that friendliness had a positive influence on the learners. It inspired them to be friendly as well.

**Table 8.12: Co-researchers view on friendliness.**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1 | <i>If I make an effort to be friendly the whole class climate change and the learners responds better to questions and instructions. But be careful as learners may misinterpret your friendliness [friendliness] to disrespect or become over-friendly</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| E2 | <i>I have learned in life that friendliness works everywhere. Applying it in class – I reaped the benefits. They are friendly too. This goes without saying. Being friendly gets so much more out of people in life in general, not only at school. For many kids, school is an escape from their home circumstances. Don't make their lives even more miserable by being grumpy to them. It's so much easier to be friendly than a sour grape.</i> |
| E3 | <i>I have tried to change my facial expression to a more friendly one when I reprimand a learner and not to show my anger. This immediately put the learner at ease and inclined him to cooperate.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| E5 | <i>I have experienced that moodiness is a killer. I really now work on my personal demeanour.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

### **General interesting remarks made by co-researchers**

Through the interactions, the co-researchers remarked on other issues that they became aware of through the PALAR interactions.

**Table 8.13: General views of the co-researchers.**

|    |                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1 | <i>In spending more time preparing made me more confident in class and the learners are kept busy at the time. Behavioural problems were less.</i> |
| E3 | <i>I find it easier to keep the learners busy the whole period if I make sure that they are busy with tasks they can manage.</i>                   |



|     |                                                                                                                     |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E4a | <i>My tone of voice made a big difference in class. I speak more softly the learners speak more softly as well.</i> |
| E4b | <i>Teaching above all odds is essential. It keeps the learners busy.</i>                                            |

### 8.3.2.3 Did the co-researchers learn new strategies that could be useful in the classroom?

Some co-researchers learned strategies that they had never considered to be important previously and were thankful for the advice. Their comments are discussed below.

**Table 8.14: Co-researchers' comments on what they have learned during this research.**

| Co-researcher No | New strategies learned by the co-researchers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E1               | <i>This co-researcher learned that teamwork through the participatory collaboration he experienced is important. People are diverse in their thinking and finding solutions to problems. Consulting with colleagues is always helpful in resolving issues. Different people find unique ways to solve problems that might be sustainable in the long run. I must discuss more in a group.</i>                                                                            |
| E3               | <i>This co-researcher learned that she must discuss my disciplinary problems more with other educators. Other educators will give you reasons why a child behave that way which might change your perspective about the child. Consulting with other educators might help to decrease anger or frustration before you deal with the child. Other educators might come up with better alternatives than what you have in mind.</i>                                        |
| E4b              | <i>This co-researcher learned that he must teach for the full duration of the period and to engage in current issues. I must also be consistent and keep a defaulter's book. Sometimes I wait too long before I react and stress issues. I must pay attention to small disturbances</i>                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| E5               | <i>For this co-researcher the research project was an insightful experience. She explained her perception as follows: I have only ever taught in one rural school (since 1989) and it is an eye-opener for me to see what is going on in the schools around us – in our neighbourhoods. In my experience, we do not have huge challenges, but I have heard from others about challenges experienced in other schools: learners who use schools to hide (i.e. they do</i> |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <i>drug running as learners from schools); absent parents who don't assist the school when learners need help; drug and sexual abuse – learners on learners and educators on learners. Tribal wars.</i> |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### **8.3.2.4 Questions put forward by some co-researchers to one another**

Some of the co-researchers put forward some questions to the other co-researchers, seeking for advice about dealing with discipline in the classroom.

Following are these questions and a summary of the answers received.

Q1. How do we ensure that parents play an active role in their children's education?

*By living with their children and assisting them with their homework, encouraging and supporting their children in their daily lives but parents like any other human beings have their own rights to choose. We cannot ensure that they play an active role in their children's education. The born-again ones know that they are responsible. Others may not play their role due to some family problems we don't know.*

Q2. Why don't social workers visit schools regularly to guide and talk to learners regarding issues of a personal nature?

*Social workers need to be consulted to visit schools to talk to learners. They must be invited by principals and circuit managers etc. and given a platform to address various issues.*

Q3. Learners often fear other racial groups or others associating with the opposite sex. It is a hindrance to teaching and learning, e.g., group work. How do you overcome this?

*Talk to them about social skills and coping strategies. Make them understand about working with others and how important it is to socialise and learn from others. However, this is not a general issue because racial groups in rural areas are not normally mixed.*

Q4. If a learner has been referred to social workers, psychologists and parents have been involved to help a learner, but a learner doesn't change. What must be done?

*They should be referred to special schools or schools for delinquents if such exists. If these schools don't exist these children will eventually impact negatively on other good learners and influence them negatively. Alternatively, remedial teachers should be employed to teach in mainstream schools as remedial teachers having remedial classes. Create stringent measures that are realistic for all learners. Code of Conduct*

*needs to be enforced in a way that is practical in schools and not time-consuming ie. issuing of written warnings etc. are not practical. It takes up too much of teaching and learning time. Suspensions and expulsions need to take place more often to show how serious a misdemeanour is, so learners will know that transgressions will not be tolerated lightly. They must be transferred to another school and placed in isolation where study material will be given to them until their punishment is served. This is an example that can be used.*

*One co-researcher mentioned that the only solution is to ask for God's intervention through prayer.*

Q5. In secondary schools some learners are too old for that grade. How can we solve this issue where a child is continuously failing every grade, and parents are constantly pressurising them to attend school when the child himself is not interested any longer?

*Remedial school or school for delinquents - should be introduced for such learners. They are pushed to the next grade by the government and the educators have no say in it.*

Q6. How does your school deal with repeated disciplinary problems?

*We don't often have repeated disciplinary problems, but we constantly call parents or guardians to discuss their children's' behaviour with the parents and teachers that teach them. Sometimes the parents are given the option of transferring their children to a school where they can monitor their children's' behaviour. It is mainly an issue of the SGB [School Governing Body]. They work with the parents of the children concerned.*

Q7. What strategies have you used that have worked consistently to solve discipline issues?

*Contacting of the parent, calling on our social partners like the SAPS and social workers to talk to learners and inform them if they transgress laws and school rules there are consequences they will face. They also talk to them about social ills at school and how it will affect their lives in the future eg. teenage pregnancy, drug-taking and peddling etc. Apply the code of conduct as it is. Refer serious cases to the SGB. Keep a child very busy with the schoolwork. Give a child a difficult activity to do as part of discipline etc.*

#### **8.3.2.5 Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as put forward by the co-researchers in collaboration with the educators partaking in the FCW**

The co-researchers compiled comprehensive lists containing all the strategies as discussed between them and the strategies as proposed by the educators partaking in FCW.

These lists were returned to me in my capacity as the nodal point of the co-researchers and were again organised into subthemes.

Diagram 8.1 Illustrates the subthemes, where each subtheme comprises various methods to enhance the subtheme, as will be discussed below.

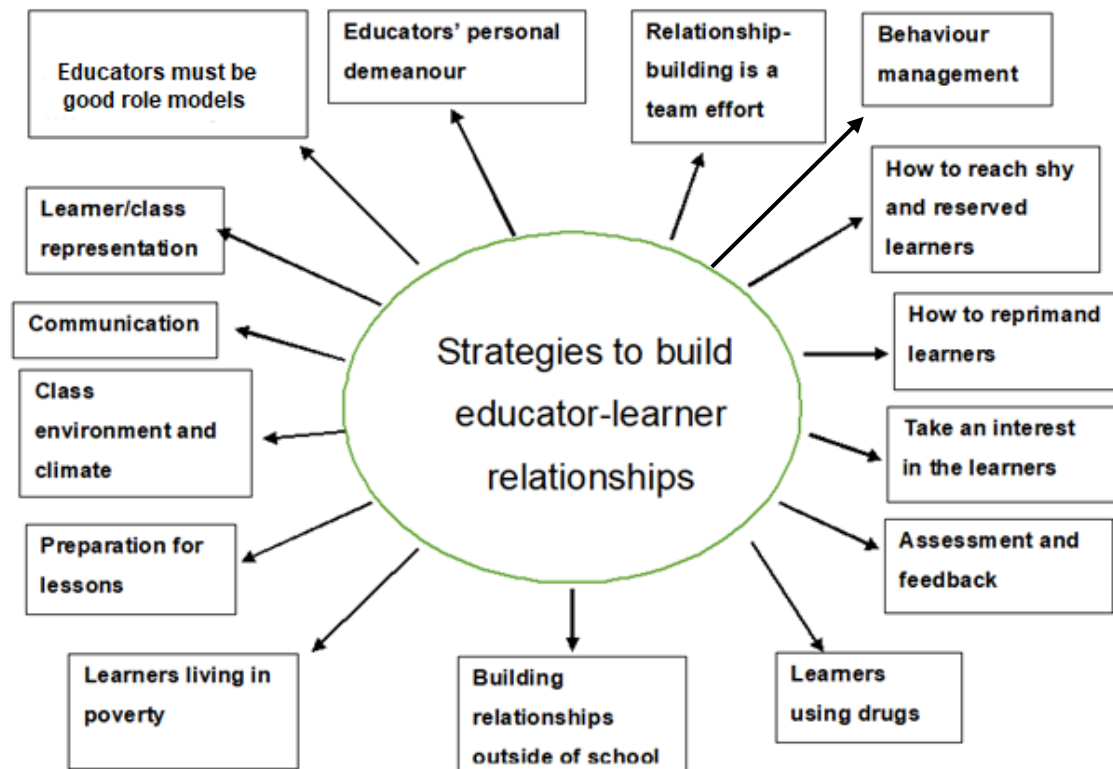


**Diagram 8.1:** *Subthemes to facilitate educator-learner relationship-building.*

Some of the methods mentioned under some subthemes can be applied in more than one subtheme

**Table 8.15: Strategies to build educator-learner relationships.**

| Subtheme                                                | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educators must be good role models in and out of school | <p><i>Everything an educator does could make or break relationships with the learners</i></p> <p><i>Educators are educators, in and out of school</i></p> <p><i>Educators must be good role models, in and out of school</i></p> <p><i>Use breaktimes to communicate and make friends with the learners</i></p> <p><i>Remember that learners observe and remember what educators do, in an out of school</i></p> <p><i>Behaviour speaks louder than words</i></p> <p><i>If educators fail their learners, they fail the community and the country as a whole</i></p> <p><i>Good relationships and behaviour uplift the image of the educators</i></p> |
| Educators' personal demeanour                           | <p><i>Be positive and enthusiastic</i></p> <p><i>Model positive work ethics</i></p> <p><i>Treat learners with respect and dignity</i></p> <p><i>Beware of your hand signs, body language and facial expressions</i></p> <p><i>Do not show favouritism. Treat all learners the same</i></p> <p><i>Do not be moody</i></p> <p><i>Always be friendly</i></p> <p><i>Love your learners unconditionally</i></p> <p><i>Dress appropriately and professionally</i></p> <p><i>Leave your stress at home</i></p> <p><i>Do not be a people pleaser</i></p> <p><i>Be what the learners expect of you to be</i></p>                                               |

| Subtheme                                 | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Relationship-building is a team effort   | <p><i>Involve the parents. Good relations with parents normally facilitate good relationships with learners</i></p> <p><i>Be in regular contact with the parents</i></p> <p><i>Involve other educators. It will improve the whole school climate and the unity in the school</i></p> <p><i>Involve the learners by discussing hinderance to relationship-building with them</i></p> <p><i>The educator as the adult must take the lead in building relationships</i></p> <p><i>Maintain adult boundaries. Do not be “pally-pally”</i></p> <p><i>Set up WhatsApp groups with your parents</i></p>                                                                                                                                           |
| Building relationships outside of school | <p><i>Take them on picnics</i></p> <p><i>Take them on survival camps</i></p> <p><i>Take them to relevant content-related talks</i></p> <p><i>At all times behave in a proper way in the community</i></p> <p><i>Visit them when they are sick if possible</i></p> <p><i>Enquire about sick family members</i></p> <p><i>Assist where possible</i></p> <p><i>Watch their sports games</i></p> <p><i>Give them links to helpful websites</i></p> <p><i>Start clubs to raise money to buy useful resources such as library books</i></p> <p><i>Arrange with the Department of Home affairs to come to the school to assist them with IDs [Identity Documents]</i></p> <p><i>Take learners jogging on the sports field during lockdown</i></p> |

| Subtheme                                      | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| How to reach learners with emotional problems | <p><i>Show them that you have noticed them</i></p> <p><i>Ask them to do something for you</i></p> <p><i>Make an effort to involve them in class activities with embarrassing them</i></p> <p><i>Enhance their strong points</i></p> <p><i>Show them that they each enjoy value as a person</i></p> <p><i>Ask them their opinion and give them credit for it</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Assessment and feedback                       | <p><i>Use assessment as a way of diagnosing learner shortfalls</i></p> <p><i>Give clear instructions</i></p> <p><i>Be fair and consistent in assessment</i></p> <p><i>Explain assessment method clearly</i></p> <p><i>Use feedback as a way of teaching</i></p> <p><i>Do not humiliate them because of their mistakes</i></p> <p><i>Use their mistakes as way to uplift them by telling them that it is a way of learning and that everybody makes mistakes</i></p> <p><i>Give constructive feedback</i></p>                                                                                                     |
| Preparation for lessons                       | <p><i>Be well-prepared</i></p> <p><i>Teach for the full duration of period</i></p> <p><i>Design meaningful and interesting activities to keep the learners busy</i></p> <p><i>Show that you know your subject</i></p> <p><i>Accommodate all learning styles</i></p> <p><i>Use interesting and relevant teaching aids</i></p> <p><i>Use different teaching methods</i></p> <p><i>Choose interesting and meaning topics</i></p> <p><i>Encourage the use of information technology if at all possible</i></p> <p><i>Stay focussed on the lesson</i></p> <p><i>Use teaching aids that are non-discriminating</i></p> |

| <b>Subtheme</b>                  | <b>Strategies to enhance relationship-building</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learners using drugs             | <p><i>Try to get behind the reasons for taking drugs and assist if possible</i></p> <p><i>Arrange professional help for these learners</i></p> <p><i>Teach them the consequences of drug and alcohol addiction</i></p> <p><i>Take extra care not to allow drugs on the school premisses</i></p> <p><i>Audit the environment regularly to make sure that it is safe</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Learners living in poverty       | <p><i>Involve social workers</i></p> <p><i>Involve psychologists, if possible, to assist learner to overcome their feelings</i></p> <p><i>Be a parent to learners without parents</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Behaviour management             | <p><i>Teach learners how to behave. They are often not taught at home</i></p> <p><i>Have cues in class for restless learners</i></p> <p><i>Teach parents how to teach their children</i></p> <p><i>Teach and demonstrate proper norms and values</i></p> <p><i>Use better-behaved learners to influence ill-behaved learners</i></p> <p><i>Teach learners about societal ills and the damages these are causing</i></p> <p><i>Invite interesting and relevant speakers such as motivational speakers to address the learners</i></p> <p><i>Make sure that they understand the schools' code of conduct</i></p> <p><i>Sense and deal with a bad habit before it gets out of hand</i></p> <p><i>Teach them about their rights and their responsibilities</i></p> |
| Take an interest in the learners | <p><i>Try to understand how they feel and why they behave the way they do</i></p> <p><i>Support learners in need of support</i></p> <p><i>Remember their birthdays</i></p> <p><i>Address them by their first name or ask them how they want you to address them</i></p> <p><i>Give them small gifts as a token of appreciation</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



| Subtheme                      | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               | <p><i>Show learners that they are important to you as human being and not only as a learner</i></p> <p><i>Show learners that you care about their future</i></p> <p><i>Find out what bothers them and try to assist</i></p> <p><i>Go the second mile</i></p> <p><i>Learners must find educators approachable</i></p> <p><i>Take an interest in the learners' work</i></p> <p><i>Assist them with bursary applications</i></p>                                                                        |
| Communication                 | <p><i>Be slow to speak</i></p> <p><i>Think before you speak</i></p> <p><i>Speak to learners slowly, clearly and in a normal voice</i></p> <p><i>Listen carefully to what they have to say</i></p> <p><i>Speak in an uplifting manner</i></p> <p><i>Do not scream at them or belittle them</i></p> <p><i>Keep your promises</i></p> <p><i>Be aware of your non-verbal communication</i></p> <p><i>Motivate and encourage learners with your words</i></p> <p><i>Do not interrupt learners</i></p>     |
| Class environment and climate | <p><i>Create a safe space for the learners</i></p> <p><i>Decorate the class with colourful content such as relevant posters and pictures</i></p> <p><i>Desk arrangement must be friendly, efficient and inviting</i></p> <p><i>Classroom must be neat and clean</i></p> <p><i>Repair broken equipment and furniture</i></p> <p><i>Display classroom rules clearly</i></p> <p><i>Greet learner personally at the door if possible</i></p> <p><i>Display learners' work on the classroom walls</i></p> |
| Learner/ class representation | <p><i>Appoint class representatives as go-betweens for educators and learners</i></p> <p><i>Use class representatives to deal with minor conflict situations</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| Subtheme                  | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           | <p><i>Use class representatives to find out what is bothering the learners</i></p> <p><i>Ask class representatives to speak to the learners about possible solutions to problem situations</i></p> <p><i>Communicate classroom rules via the class representative. Let learners determine the rules</i></p> <p><i>Include learners in your lesson</i></p> <p><i>Use learner-centred approaches</i></p>                                                                                                                                             |
| How to reprimand learners | <p><i>Do not label learners</i></p> <p><i>Speak in a normal voice</i></p> <p><i>Reprimand learners in private</i></p> <p><i>Reprimand learners in front of other people only in serious cases to show other learners that something is being done about these</i></p> <p><i>Do not hold grudges</i></p> <p><i>Do not write learners off</i></p> <p><i>Use the mistakes of learners to teach them better behaviour</i></p> <p><i>Ask learners to come up with own solutions for their bad behaviour</i></p> <p><i>Discipline with a purpose</i></p> |

How did the ALS see the way forward?

In my role as the facilitator of the ALS, I was curious about how the co-researchers saw the way forward for the management of indiscipline in the classroom and the prospects for teaching and learning in future. Again, I asked them to take a photo (or photovoice) or to find a picture (or picturevoice) to relate their feelings about the mentioned topics.

**Table 8.16: How did the co-researchers see the way forward.**

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                       |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>E1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parents and SGB must be actively involved in their children's lives.</i></li> <li>• <i>The DBE must instil more discipline measures to make learners more responsible.</i></li> </ul> |  |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>E2</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give us more recognition and stop the stigma of teaching and teachers being dumb.</li> <li>• Give teachers more ammunition against ill-discipline, ill-mannered, disrespectful children. It is a</li> <li>• It is most impossible to expel a child.</li> <li>• I don't know, make it against the law to publish anything negative about the profession. I know there are bad teachers out there, but there are also bad doctors, lawyers and everything else. But those professions don't get stigmatised if one doctor does something wrong. But somehow all teachers are useless when something goes wrong in one school. People love to bad mouth us when the majority of teachers put their learners before their own families.</li> <li>• Why are children allowed to be disrespectful to a teacher, but not to a doctor or a traffic officer?</li> <li>• Why do parents think it's ok to shout at us? Their children will follow their example. If adults don't start having respect for teachers, the children won't either. We take a lot of abuse from parents and children and it's because of the low value this country places on us.</li> </ul> |    |
| <b>E3</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give back power to the educators.</li> <li>• Stop this top-down approach. It is not working.</li> <li>• Educators must be listened to when they speak.</li> <li>• Parents must and should support educators and education.</li> <li>• Employer must look at the PTR (Pupil Teacher Ratio) matter because it contributes to educator frustration.</li> <li>• Learner discipline should be everybody's matter not only the school and the educators'</li> <li>• Parents must take the education of their children seriously and partake in it.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |
| <b>E4b</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBE must consult with educators as surrogate parents to get relevant information.</li> <li>• DBE mustn't come up with laws that we as parents don't know their intention.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                     |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Freedom of expression should return to the classroom – for the teacher. A responsible teacher should be able to guide a learner to a place where they can obtain help (e.g. refer them for Christian counselling).</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers should be able to have more say over the curriculum they have to teach – to decide (in conjunction with parents) what is appropriate for their learners' situation.</i></li> <li>• <i>Every school should be able to practice religion freely, guided by the parent body.</i></li> <li>• <i>A hugely positive change would be less government interference in curriculum and more government help in the practical training of teachers – how to teach subject material, rather than what subject material to teach.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers should focus less on their workplace situation and their own advancement and more on the learners they teach – which is after all the whole reason for the profession.</i></li> <li>• <i>Schools should be trusted to manage their own discipline issues, in conjunction with the parent body where needed. Children do not belong to the state, but to individual parents.</i></li> </ul> |  |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 8.3.2.6 An additional theme that emerged during this research

#### VALUES, MORALS AND RELIGION IN EDUCATION

One topic was mentioned continuously during the research and, after reflection on the comments made during the research process, the co-researchers suggested that we must add another theme, theme 6, to the existing five themes. The influence of values, morals and religion on the behaviour of learners was added as a separate theme, because it was mentioned repeatedly by the co-researchers and the educators partaking in the FCW. The influence of moral and religious values on the behaviour of the learners was constantly touched upon. The fact that this topic was mentioned spontaneously and constantly made it difficult to ignore, given also that these very important, interrelated aspects impacted noticeably in the lives of people and communities.

The co-researchers and the educators partaking in the FCWs (referred to only as educators from this point on) mentioned that this topic was very important in the light of this research,

because educator-learner relationship-building relied heavily on values such as respect, care and dignity (see Cook et al., 2018; Sparks, 2019).

The educators, who comprised mainly Christian and Hindu educators, mentioned during various cycles and comments the positive influence they experienced in class as a result of the religious convictions of some of their learners. E3 and E4b clarified their solution to very problematic discipline issues saying that *in public schools there are learners that cannot be helped due to the bad influence from either family members, friends and peers. The only solution is repentance to the gospel of the Lord Jesus, otherwise no hope*. E5 endorsed this statement by sharing her own solution to disciplinary problems with the co-researchers (cf. 6.3.1, subtheme 3): *I start each of my lessons with a prayer—that immediately settles the children and it sets the tone for the lesson. ... Once I have finished praying all the learners are focussed on me and will listen to my instructions. I pray daily for troublesome learners and it helps*. The co-researchers summarised this comment by referring to a nice response. *We like the praying part*.

Some educators asked why some learners behaved well even though they came from disadvantaged homes. E1, a Hindu educator, emphasised the good influence of religion on behaviour by explaining that *these learners are from strong religious backgrounds and are taught values and morals. A solid religious foundation supplies this background. Religious values play a major role ... teach respect and then all other things improve*. This comment was confirmed by E3, E4a and E4b who stressed that *nothing compares to the love of God and religion and culture. Learners from concerned parents often have the ability to respect. Rules and church (faith) guard us. Learners who are loved unconditionally and even more so when they find that love in a relationship with Christ or the God they worshipped, are confident in themselves and can face authority without feeling intimidated or threatened by it*. This view was confirmed by both Hindu and Christian educators.

Closely connected to value and moral education is the matter of drugs (see explanation at 8.4.2.7). Drug abuse in South African schools is widespread and increasing (Van Rensburg et al., 2018) (cf. 1.3, 3.5.2). Research done by Hlongwane (2013) validates that it is also a problem in the uMzinyathi district where this research was done, and it is an aggravating factor in the deterioration of discipline in schools. The co-researchers and the educators emphasised this fact by confirming that *there is a big prevalence of drug problems in schools [and] learners lack morality – values*.

Drug addiction and abuse are difficult to deal with (Oasis, 2020). E4b related his solution to the drug problem by the following narrative:

*I am reminded of a boy who was in grade 10. He really struggled academically due to problems at home and drug and substance abuse. His uncle introduced him to satanism and smoking dagga. They hijacked vehicles at gunpoint. He used to sleep in the classroom during lessons and was often absent. After talking to him, his mother and the school principal, we all came to agreement that he needed help. I suggested to take him during the school holiday to the nearby mission for help under Concerned Young People of South Africa (CYPISA). He was accepted and received help. When the schools re-opened, he was a changed man, and the principal could also see the difference in his life. The mission has had a very positive impact on the learners in the neighbouring schools. The learners are helped through the positive influence of religion in their lives. We work closely with them and the learners are thankful towards us for this help. Scores of young people come to the mission for help due to drug addiction. They are helped through prayer and sometimes medication if needed.*

This is a positive example of the influence of religion in the lives of people and is worth investigating in more detail.

To complicate behaviour issues further, the co-researchers and the educators themselves explained that *the media are wreaking havoc on the values, ethics and morals of our children. And with it comes the lack of conviction for all kinds of bad conduct. The way they were raised plays a major role. It's a matter of the values they have been taught or not taught. Good values, morals and attitudes will teach them to be responsible citizens which in reality is not happening. Parents are not teaching their children. Educators must teach and model skills, knowledge and above all, solid moral values.* E1 and E5 argued in agreement with the above statement that, *they see the teaching profession as an opportunity to teach norms and values to the learners and so influence their futures. Don't just teach them morals and values but demonstrate them these by being a role model in and out of school.*

One more viewpoint shared by the educators and worth mentioning was summarised by E4b explaining that *to build a positive educator-learner relationship is possible if you ask for God's intervention through prayer.* This statement was endorsed by the other co-researchers and educators claiming that *without God's help, we cannot accomplish that which we are called to do. As educators all our actions are accountable before God and before the learners; how we interact with our learners at all times and behave in front of them as part of building relationships with them.*

Many other comments were made to substantiate and express the dire need for moral and religious education, and the educators concluded this argument as follows: *Educators must be passionate about teaching the learners values and knowledge by choosing appropriate*

*knowledge content because the parents do not. This is an opportunity to teach them values as a religious matter and to have an influence on their future. Raising children with good values, morals and attitudes will teach them to be responsible citizens which in reality is not happening.*

#### **8.4 DISCUSSION OF COMMENTS MADE DURING CYCLE 3 (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3)**

All the strategies received from the co-researchers and the educators participating in the FCW facilitated the composition of an SLP for educators in the uMzinyathi District in KwaZulu-Natal. The SLP comprises strategies and advice for educators to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

##### **8.4.1 Discussion of general topics mentioned during the Future Creating Workshops**

Most educators explained that they were disillusioned. Before they started teaching, they thought the teaching profession was dignified and noble. But the teaching profession was not an honourable and noble profession anymore, and the learners were disrespectful. The workload was heavy and educators could not fulfil their duties effectively. The parents and the DBE were not doing their duty and SADTU made it very difficult for educators to do their work, as indicated.

Managing discipline in schools has become very difficult and educators are fighting a losing battle. Children have all the rights and educators have none. Learners do not respect the educators and parents take the side of their children

##### **8.4.2 The effectiveness of the relation-centred strategies developed through PALAR**

The PALAR research process proved to be successful. The co-researchers and the educators of their respective schools reflected on their own perspectives in a transformative way as a means of creating new knowledge. This reflection impacted their opinions, beliefs, emotions and attitudes (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Through this PALAR process, we were empowered to transform our way of thinking (Neethling, 2015).

###### ***8.4.2.1 Report back after reflection on some strategies used by the co-researchers in their personal capacity in the classroom***

As indicated, the co-researchers explained that not all relationship-building strategies would work for all learners. This is in line with Curwin et al. (2016), who aver that discipline and relationship-building strategies must meet the needs of the learners involving a complexed balance of strategies. Koenen et al. (2019) advocate that learners and educators must become aware of each other's needs in the relationship-based classroom and try to respond to these.

The individual comments made by the co-researcher about strategies that they had used revealed that they have insight into positive strategies for building relationships. The co-researchers used these strategies with positive results. These strategies were incorporated in the complete list and will be aligned with literature in the discussion (cf. 8.4.2.5)

#### ***8.4.2.2 Was this research worthwhile for the co-researchers?***

The ALS encounters were worthwhile experiences for the co-researchers. They learned to reflect on their perceptions and adapted to new ways of thinking. The personal demeanour of the educators as an important component in building educator-learner relationships was emphasised, while this was a new concept for the co-researchers. Not only in class, but also after school, educators must be aware of how they behave (Puckett, 016).

Kunac and Batarelo (2019) indicate that the educator must be a role model at all times in order to uphold a positive image of the teaching profession in their communities (cf. 7.3.1).

Most of the co-researchers realised that they should learn from their mistakes. This is in line with literature: Shallenberger (2015) argues that is generally accepted that people learn from their mistakes.

#### ***8.4.2.3 Did the co-researchers learn new strategies that could be useful in the classroom?***

Most co-researchers learned new strategies for building educator-learner relationships. These strategies were also taken up in the list of relationship-building strategies and will be aligned with literature (cf. 8.4.2.5)

#### ***8.4.2.4 Question put forward by some co-researchers to one another***

The co-researchers used the opportunity to ask discipline-related questions to one another and the feedback they got was encouraging and positive. The PALAR research project was valuable and facilitated this opportunity, and the co-researchers could learn from this as learning flowed forth from collaborative and critical reflection by the co-researchers (Wood, 2020).

#### ***8.4.2.5 Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as put forward by the co-researchers in collaboration with the educators partaking in the FCW***

The strategies proposed by the co-researchers and the educators overlapped to a large extent. However, the list of these below is not exhaustive. Innovative educators can add to the list according to their needs and the needs of the learners (Drinkwater et al., 2018; Koenen et al., 2019).



These suggestions are compiled in an SLP as an aid for educators in the uMzinyathi district to deal with indiscipline in the classroom.

Most of the comments, but not all, tallied with extant research, as discussed below.

**Table 8.17: Literature review on strategies to build educator-learner relationships.**

| Topic                                                   | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Educators must be good role models in and out of school | <p>The majority of learners spend more than a thousand hours with their educators. This gives educators enough time to build positive relationships to benefit learners or enough time to break learners' progress and development (Sparks, 2019). The example of educators and the quality of relationships between educators and learners play a major role in shaping learner character (Narinasamy &amp; Logeiswaran, 2015). Educators' actions are the foundation of positive educator-learner relationships (Murray &amp; Pianta, 2007).</p> <p>Franklin and Harrington (2019) constitute that educators must model appropriate behaviour at all times because it reinforces the behaviour of the learners (Eble &amp; Hu, 2019; Subagia, 2020).</p> <p>For this reason, educators must be good role models (Dengerink et al., 2015) in and out of school. Learners see and remember what educators do and that influences the relationship between them (Puckett, 016).</p> <p>Building positive educator-learner relationships are seen as a way of building social capital. If we fail to build positive social capital, we fail the school community and eventually the country as a whole (Roffey, 2012b, 2015)</p> |
| Educators' personal demeanour                           | <p>Demeanour includes your behaviour towards others; the whole outward manner (Mirriam Webster, n.d.). Demeanour includes all the points mentioned by the co-researchers and the educators in this regard.</p> <p>Claessens et al. (2017) confirm that unfriendly interactions with learners harm relationships which is very difficult to repair again.</p> <p>Colnerude (as cited in Pantic &amp; Wubbels, 2012) emphasises the way educators speak to learners, the way they dress, the language they use among others and even where they stand while addressing learners express their moral values. For this reason, educators must take special care of how and what they</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Topic                                         | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                               | say to learners, in the classroom, on the playing fields as well as outside school hours (Sherab, 2013).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Relationship-building is a team effort        | <p>Although educators as the adult in the relationship must take the lead in building positive educator-learner relationships (Johnson, 2016) and it is a whole-school approach (Minniss &amp; Stewart, 2011).</p> <p>Educators must endeavour to develop supportive relationships with the parents as a way of enhancing educator-learner relationships (DHET, 2015).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Building relationships outside of school      | Many opportunities are available after school to build educator-learner relationships (Jordan, 2014).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| How to reach learners with emotional problems | <p>The social-emotional development of learners can be enhanced by the school through positive relationships (Crnic &amp; Neece, 2015).</p> <p>Learners' social relationships with peers and educators produce better psychosocial adjustment in school and later in life (Hosogi et al., 2012). Knoell (2012) indicate that caring and nurturing relationships create a sense of belonging with the learners and help to uplift learners.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Assessment and feedback                       | <p>Assessment can be an important tool for assisting learners to experience a feeling of belonging and ownership (Bovill, 2014).</p> <p>Learners must be offered opportunities to be part of the decision-making process for example how they want to display their knowledge and be taught self-assessment skills utilising a checklist or rubric. In this way, learners can practice ownership of learning and monitor their own progress, learn to manage time effectively and set achievement goals (Conley &amp; French, 2014).</p> <p>Positive feedback is an essential component for improving the learning progress of learners (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2011)</p> |
| Preparation for lessons                       | Educators must be well-prepared and keep the learners busy for the full duration of the lesson. Use effective teaching aids and keep lessons interesting. Educators must make sure that they know their subject (Wilson, 2019).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Topic                      | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                            | <p>Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) argue that intensive lesson preparation supports productive learning.</p> <p>Proper planning and teaching minimise indiscipline and make better educators (Sethi, 2021). The <i>Handbook for Teachers' Rights, Responsibilities and Safety</i> (SACE, 2020) claims that well-prepared educators win the respect of their learners. Positive educator-learner relationships are built on respect (DBE, 2010; Johnson, 2016).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Learners using drugs       | <p>To deal with learners that are addicted to drugs is a difficult and time-consuming process but, when a learner has a positive relationship with an educator, it is possible that this support could assist the learner in becoming able to stop using drugs and to avoid further vulnerabilities to addiction (Walton et al., 2016).</p> <p>Sedibe and Hendricks (2021) suggest that parents and educators must attend workshops to assist learners on drugs. Learners found in possession of drugs must be referred for counselling and to rehabilitation centres, but their academic work must not be neglected and, lastly, it is advised that a school for drug-addicted learners must be established, and learners must stay there until the age of 18 years.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Learners living in poverty | <p>Harmon (2018) claims that you can help poverty-stricken learners by having high expectations of them, by exposing them to a place where they can gain knowledge, by building positive relationships with them, by teaching them social-emotional skills and by creating a positive classroom culture where learners respect one another.</p> <p>The co-researchers proposed that educators had to refer learners from poverty-stricken areas to specialised people, namely psychologists, social workers, school clinics and the school-based support team for help.</p> <p>Research done by Kalam et al. (2016) suggests that schools must make use of the clinics in the area to assist the learners, put greater emphasis on the gross motor development of learners, reduce the number of learners per class and provide remedial interventions, because good grades in education are very important. Poverty-stricken learners need to be uplifted in this way.</p> |

| Topic                | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | <p>Follow-up research done by the Universities of Fort Hare and the Witwatersrand established that, unfortunately, schools make little use of available resources in the communities. Every community, no matter how poor, do have unemployed graduates and other professionals such as musicians, dancers and other skilled people who could supply the schools with a wealth of information and assistance (Gardiner, 2017).</p> <p>However, Skinner et al. (2019) emphasise that educators want to assist learners, but these mentioned resources are hugely limited. If these resources are available, they mainly focus on academic support and not on mental health. Due to the lengthy referral process, the learner very often does not receive help because by the time the process is completed the learners are too old for the service. School-Based Support Teams (SBST) also focusses mainly on academic progress that emotional help.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Behaviour management | <p>Another important fact that educators must remember is that all the educator's actions have significance for classroom and discipline management, because the two are interconnected. These actions include aspects such as room decorations, classroom settings, chair arrangements, speaking to learners, how learner responses are handled, setting classroom rules and routines and the communication of these rules to learners. (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline, but separately from classroom instruction (Egeberg et al., 2016).</p> <p>Schools must teach learners the difference between behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable and how negative behaviour disrupts educator-learner relationships. Learners must learn that the breaking of school rules is a negative action and a disruption to mutually acceptable relationships. School rules and regulations are important for a positive school climate, but they must be enforced by a positive educator-learner relationship (WCED, 2007).</p> <p>Learners perceive effective classroom managers as those educators who endeavour to build caring, respectful relationships and at the same time cultivate learner responsibility and uplift the responsibility of the learners in their learning and progress (Egeberg, &amp; McConney 2017).</p> |

| Topic                            | Strategies to enhance relationship-building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Take an interest in the learners | <p>When learners experience that their educators are interested in them and care about them, they are more willing to build positive relationships with their educators (Varga 2017).</p> <p>Sherlock (2015) maintains that educators must be approachable, well-organised, knowledgeable and friendly.</p> <p>This view confirms strategies mentioned earlier (cf. 8.3.2.5).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Communication                    | <p>Educators need to communicate with their learners respectfully and politely. Their words and actions must always be positive (Varga, 2017).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Class environment and climate    | <p>School rules and regulations are important for a positive school climate, but they must be enforced by a positive educator-learner relationship (WCED, 2007)</p> <p>Educator-learner relationships are built on respect that facilitates a climate of care, trust and hope (DBE, 2010; Johnson, 2016). To achieve this, educators must be friendly, accommodating, respectful and unthreatening (Barr, 2016; Herald, 2015)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Learner/ class representation    | <p>Class representatives have a very important duty to fulfil. They facilitate better communication between educators and learners, and he or she acts as a link between educators and learners. In doing this, they facilitate better relationships between educators and learners (Rhodes University, 2021).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| How to reprimand learners        | <p>When reprimanding learners, educators must remember that learners follow their examples. Educators must reprimand learners in such a way that they keep their dignity and do not feel belittled (Varga, 2017)</p> <p>Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018) state that educators should avoid labelling learners. They must rather provide positive feedback about personal or group abilities and explain to the learner/ learners that, with special effort, they will make progress. Educators must provide productive academic support in the classroom and practice respectful restorative actions to restore discipline.</p> <p>Greer and Reiner (2014) argue that labelling is the process of normalising a deviant act.</p> |

This literature review of strategies aimed at building positive-educator-learner relationships can be synthesised as follows with a view to the present project.

Many of the strategies proposed by the educators overlapped with the strategies suggested by the ALS. The ALS combined a comprehensive list containing all the strategies as discussed between them and the strategies as proposed by the educators of their schools. Although these strategies were implemented before or during the running of the research project, it must be stressed that not all strategies worked for all learners and all educators. Another important point to remember is that this list is by no means exhaustive or limited to the strategies mentioned by the educators. Innovative educators can develop their own strategies to fit their situation.

Again, the educators agreed that everything he or she did during and after school hours contributed to relationship-building. For this reason, educators had to be role models at all times, because behaviour spoke louder than words. Learners at school today are the leaders of tomorrow and, if educators fail to influence them positively, they fail the country. Positive educator-learner relationships uplift the teaching profession.

Educators must be aware of their personal demeanour and model positive work ethics. Learners must be treated with respect and dignity. Educators must be friendly, aware of their facial expressions, dress appropriately and be what the learners expect them to be. Hand signs and body language are important and must portray the correct message.

Relationship-building is a team effort. Parents, educators and learners are involved to make it a success. As the adult person in the relationships with learners, the educator must take the lead in building positive educator-learner relationships.

There are many opportunities after school hours that educators can use to build positive educator-learner relationships. They can take learners for outings, watch their sports games, visit them when they are sick or initiate fundraising opportunities to buy study necessities for the learners to use at school. One school regularly arranged with the Department of Home affairs to come to school and assist the learners with identify documents.

Shy and reserved learners need special attention and encouragement to uplift their feeling of self-worth.

Assessment and feedback are very important issues when it comes to building relationships. Constructive and fair feedback facilitate trust and respect and uplift learners' self-respect.

A well-prepared educator is in control of the class and can keep the learners busy constructively. He or she will cater for the needs of all learners and make them feel important. This will facilitate respect and a feeling of self-worth with the learners.

Learners using drugs need to be assisted. Educators can assist them effectively to overcome drug addiction if they understood the reason for the addiction. Educators can make them understand the consequences of addiction.

Poverty is a reality and educators must make sure that learners are assisted by involving social workers for their physical needs and psychologists and spiritual leaders for their spiritual needs.

Children need to be taught how to behave. Very often this is not taught at home and the educators have to step into that breach. Well-behaved learners can assist the educators with this. Educators must be role models. Actions speak louder than words.

If educators take an interest in their learners, the learners will feel welcome and a desire to come to class will be enhanced. The class climate will improve, and learners will experience the classroom as a safe place.

Communication is a major factor in building relationships. What is said and how it is said convey a message. Educators must think twice before they speak.

Class representatives can assist the educators to a large extent towards facilitating respect and understanding between educators and learners. Class representatives often understand the learners better and convey messages more accurately. Indiscipline plays a major role in educator-learner relationships. If educators reprimand learners in a respectful and dignified way, it can create respect and facilitate relationship-building to a large extent.

#### ***8.4.2.6 How did the ALS see the way forward?***

Even though they have many challenges and experience a lack of support from the DBE and the parents, the ALS were still positive about the way forward. The photos or pictures accompanying their comments revealed an optimistic perspective on the future.

The final point of discussion centres on the additional topic collaboratively established by the ALS.

#### **8.4.2.7 Additional theme that came to the fore during this research – values, morals and religious education**

Globally, and in South Africa, moral values are declining inside and outside schools (Okoth, 2013), resulting in learner indiscipline (Turker et al., 2016) and low academic performance as well as transgression during examinations (Okoth, 2013). To prevent this decline in moral values amongst the youth, the state must take responsibility for religious education based on moral values instead of ideology (Genç, 2018).

Positive educator-learner relationships lead to human dignity and a feeling of self-worth and is built on moral values such as respect. Not only does it focus on the group and togetherness, but it is the ideal way of enhancing the teaching and learning environment (Cook et al., 2018; Sparks, 2019).

Drug abuse, which is rampant in schools today, goes along with a decline in moral values. The use of drugs is driven mainly by a perceived negative decline in the moral character of drug users. This implies that they have drifted away from their true selves (Earp et al., 2019). The good-true-self theory (Strohmingner et al., 2017) regards the true self to be intrinsically good (De Freitas et al. 2018). When a person experiences a change in character from good to bad, he or she is moving away from his true self (Tobia, 2017). The opposite is also true. If a person moves away from being bad to good, he or she is becoming his true self again (Tobia, 2015). However, if one undergoes a change in the opposite direction, even if it is the same magnitude of change, one is seen as moving farther away from one's true self, and thus as though becoming a different person. A person experiences a greater identity change when undergoing deterioration of values (Tobia 2015).

The United States Attorney General, William Barr, while addressing the University of Notre Dame Law School audience, stated that continuous attacks on religious liberty caused an increase in drug addiction, suicides and mental illness (Shenon, 2019). The moral decline could be seen in activities such as fornication and drug abuse resulting in weak academic progress (Basome, 2018).

The same trend is noticed in South Africa. A report by the South African Government (n. d.) states that the rise in drug trafficking is an indication of the decline of moral values. Mkhathswa, Deputy Minister of Education, proactive measures are necessary to take south Africa out of the moral slum.



The educators' comments were consistent with research by Graafland (2017), which emphasises that anti-social attitudes and behaviour are discouraged by religion. Moral values deriving from religiosity are protective factors against substance abuse (Johnson, & Pagano, 2014).

Although many schools endeavour to teach values such as respect, kindness, honesty, integrity, self-respect, tolerance and good citizenship, such values are not taught as religious components, even though many religions underline these values (Anti-Defamation League, 2020). Research suggests that religiosity and spirituality influence the acceptance of values and norms in a much more effective and permanent way than value and moral education that are not attached to a religion (Bigger, 2013; Weeden & Kurzban, 2013), because religion is a way of life and has a major influence on behaviour (Cawood, 2018; Nuriman, & Fauzan, 2017). Francis et al. (2014) found that learners from independent religious schools have a greater tendency to reject drugs and illegal activities, portray less racism and shy away from other social evils. Advocates for faith-based schools have claimed that these supply learners with an identity that makes them fit into society in a much better way (Short, 2003; Wright, 2003). Research found that learners from religion-based schools perform better academically (Cawood, 2018) and maintain better relationships and more acceptable behaviour (Baloch et al., 2014; Cawood, 2018). Loots (2016) found that educators drew parallels between the decline in learner behaviour and the absence or lack of religious education in schools.

Another reason for promoting all religions in schools is that religious groups know very little about one another's rituals and beliefs. This lack of knowledge causes suspicion and intolerance towards other religions as well as disrespect (Ekanem & Ekefre, 2013; Nthontho, 2017). When people are not knowledgeable about other people's beliefs and customs, they are religiously illiterate (Ekanem & Ekefre, 2013; Sulaiman, 2016).

For these reasons, at least all religions represented in a school must receive equal treatment and be promoted. This will offer avenues towards enhancing learner performance and help build positive educator-learner relationships, so as to improve learner behaviour. The South African Constitution states that religion may be practised freely not *by* schools, but *at* schools (Greyling, 2017). This implies that learners may be taught about other religions but may not indoctrinated in a specific religion. The latter must be done at home by the parents or at religious institutions.

Educators, in their *in loco parentis* capacity, must always fulfil their teaching role by being good role models and displaying acceptable values and norms in their lives (Walton et al., 2016).

Many learners display a lack of love in their lives and educators must often fulfil this function in the lives of the learners. The educators explained this responsibility as *educator-learner relationships are important, and we must take the lead in this. Learners must be able to find us approachable and give them attention. We must give account before God one day for loveless attitudes and actions. Good educator-learner relationships are of a better quality if God is part of the relationship.* E2 expanded on this by saying that *I know that it's probably impossible to reach every single learner who walks through my classroom, but relationship building helps a lot—I pray and hope that God gets through to them.*

## **8.5 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION OF SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION FIVE**

Secondary research question five reads: *How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?* In response to this, the ALS conducted FCWs at their respective schools as means of attaining tried and tested strategies to build effective educator-learner relationships to a greater degree. The positive overall reaction from the educators brought together a comprehensive list of these but not, by any means, an exhaustive one.

Secondary research question five has indeed been answered.

## **8.6 THE SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.8; 9.2; 9.4.3)**

The SLP, (Addenda F, G, H, I) an objective of the research project, was compiled from the data generated through the three cycles to serve as a guideline to educators in secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District when it comes to dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

The COVID-19 challenge during 2020/2021 placed an enormous and unforeseen workload on the co-researchers. Besides trying to cope with the extra demands, they had to catch up on the teaching backlog. In light of these challenges, we as co-researchers negotiated our roles (Dick, 2001) for drafting the SLP. Collaboratively, the co-researchers requested me as the research facilitator and nodal point for data to draft this SLP based on the data collected during the ALS interactions and the FCWs. They argued further that, if there was a draft, it would be easier to work from there and design and tailor it for their schools, because time pressure and a work overload would negatively impact their contribution to the programme. This turn in circumstances was not foreseen, and we collaboratively agreed that this was the best way to pursue. I honoured the request of the co-researchers.

After developing the initial draft of the SLP, it was circulated to the co-researchers for their critique (Dick, 2001) before it was finalised (Addendum I).

This SLP was regarded as a living programme (Dick, 2001) and, after presentations, a feedback sheet could be filled in with suggestions for improvement and alterations if necessary.

The SLP comprises the following:

### **8.6.1 Outcomes**

At the end of this SLP educators should:

- know the theoretical grounding behind discipline;
- know and be able to apply positive discipline in the classroom;
- know what challenges educators face when dealing with learner indiscipline in the classroom and how to deal with the challenges of managing discipline;
- know what positive educator-learner relationships all are about;
- know the challenges educators face when trying to build positive educator-learner relationships; and
- be able to apply strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline.

### **8.6.2 Content**

Module 1 – The management of discipline in the classroom

Module 2 – Positive discipline

Module 3 – What are positive educator-learner relationships all about?

Module 4 – Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships

Module 5 – What is an FCW?

Module 6 – Conclusion of the short learning programme

### **8.6.3 Presentation aids**

- An educators' manual – handout
- A presenter's manual
- An educators' workbook
- Videoclips
- A case study
- Discussions
- Roleplay activities

## **8.7 LIMITATIONS OF THIS CHAPTER**

All the strategies aimed at building positive educator-learner relationships could not be tested in the classroom as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, once more. The adjusted school calendar, social distancing and other lockdown regulations as described made this difficult.

## **8.8 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS CHAPTER**

This chapter included two very important contributions. Firstly, through the FCWs, the educators were empowered with skills to collaboratively solve future problems they might encounter in their schools. Secondly, the SLP provided educators in secondary schools with strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of solving indiscipline.

## **8.9 CONCLUSION**

The findings here demonstrate that the educators experienced the importance of educator-learner relationships and endeavoured to employ positive relationships to enhance teaching and learning.

Positive educator-learner relationships are not a given. Interactions between educators and learners start when they meet the educators for the first time and proceed as long as the educators are involved with them. Educators need to use their authority to do whatever is possible to build these relationships. Everything an educator does is important to facilitate relationship building.

During Cycle 3, the educators critically reflected on what needed to improve, not only in the teaching and learning environment but also around discipline-related issues in the classroom. The educators critically reflected on what needed to change or be improved not only in the development of the educational interventions, but also in our attitudes and visions about discipline. These interventions could assist the building of positive educator-learner relationships in the wider educator community in the uMzinyathi District through workshops and the compilation and distribution of an SLP for educators to deal with indiscipline in the classroom. In this, both iterative and cyclical manners during the three cycles, the educators tested our emerging theories and actions, made adjustments, apply new approaches, and refined their thinking.

The educators further aimed at improving their own thinking and, through transformative learning, adjusted to a new way of thinking (see Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al, 2014).

## **CHAPTER 9: BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**

### **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

This research project aimed to answer the primary research question: *How can a PALAR approach enable educators to develop educator-learner Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?* This chapter provides a synopsis of research findings as well as an answer to the primary research question.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 focussed on the analysis of the research data, while the present chapter will focus on an overview of the research process and discussion of the research data, the limitations and contributions of the research and recommendations for future research.

### **9.2 REASON FOR THIS RESEARCH (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.4.3)**

The overall objective of this Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) research project was to enable the co-researchers to compile a short learning programme (SLP) for educators in the uMzinyathi District so as to equip them with strategies to manage indiscipline in the classroom. Strategies for implementing a relationship-centred approach to improve discipline in secondary schools were researched and taken up in the SLP. The research process simultaneous provided an opportunity for the personal and professional development of the co-researchers around reflecting on their preconceived perceptions about learner behaviour and ways to solve discipline-related issues in the classroom

### **9.3 BRIEF OUTLINE OF THIS RESEARCH**

**Chapter 1** provided the motivation and a contextual orientation to the research project. The research questions were explained, followed by the objectives and a brief discussion of the research design and methodology. Important concepts were clarified, followed by a chapter outline.

**Chapter 2** gave a broad overview of a relationship-centred approach to classroom management, the components of positive educator-learner relationships and the benefits of effective educator-learner relationships in the teaching and learning environment. Next, classroom management and the role of the educator in classroom management is described.

**Chapter 3** offered an overview of learner discipline in South Africa and of the effects of indiscipline on the well-being of educators, learners and the economy of the country.

**Chapter 4** described the value of transformative learning as a tool for the personal development of the co-researchers and the research process. Transformative learning ties in well with action research because in both cases participants must critically reflect on prior knowledge and existing practices and afterwards transform to improve practices where necessary. Transformative learning is a valuable component of citizenship education.

**Chapter 5** described the theoretical justification of the research methodology. The discussion centred on a theoretical justification for PALAR as the research design, the methods of data generation and the analysis of the data. The theoretical elements underpinning the research are methodology, epistemology, ontology and axiology. These elements must be understood to ensure that research will be guided by the beliefs, assumptions, values and norms of the chosen paradigm. The chapter confirmed that the research followed the ethics requirements of validity and trustworthiness.

**Chapter 6** described the findings of cycle 1 of the PALAR research design and discussed the findings. The co-researchers described their views on learner behaviour and the challenges they faced in trying to deal with these challenges. The action learning set (ALS) viewed learner behaviour as normal for their age, but it could also be a cry for help. The parents and community problems, the Department of Basic Education, school factors and factors within the learners themselves pose a challenge for educators in dealing with indiscipline.

**Chapter 7** stated the findings of cycle 2 of the PALAR research design and offered a discussion on the findings. The co-researchers viewed positive educator-learner behaviour as an important component in dealing with discipline-related issues in the classroom. Building positive relationships can also be problematic and these challenges overlap to a large extent with the challenges they face in dealing with discipline in the classroom. The co-researcher provided a list of proven strategies to build relationships in the classroom.

**Chapter 8** explained and discussed the findings of cycle 3 of the PALAR research design. The co-researchers employed a Future Creating Workshop (FCW) at their respective schools as a way of generating more authentic strategies to supplement their ways of dealing with discipline-related strategies.

## **9.4 PALAR AS A RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **9.4.1 Evaluation of PALAR as a research design for this research project**

PALAR as a research design for community-based research was discussed in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.3). It pointed to the appropriateness of this approach here, since it involves collaboration

between the research facilitator and members from the community who are then engaged as co-researchers. As co-researchers in the ALS, we adhered to the 7 C principles (cf. 5.4.3.3) and core values of PALAR rooted in respect for one another, our knowledge and experiences. This resulted in a positive atmosphere, also by following the 3 Rs (relationships, reflection and recognition) (cf. 4.5; 5.4.3) to address the problem at hand.

The research followed a three-cycle process consisting of relationship-building, analysing the need emanating from the cycles and deciding on follow-up actions based on critical reflections. We collaboratively and democratically applied coaching, mentoring and systematic inquiries during our critical reflections in order to identify common problems of indiscipline and around seeking strategies of dealing effectively with learner discipline in secondary schools. Because we took ownership of the research, we made alternative plans to conduct it, especially during challenging COVID-19 restrictions. We kept communication alive through circulating our comments and reflections electronically and felt at ease to enquire about aspects when it was unclear. This points to character building during all steps of the research journey and to the seriousness and commitment of co-researchers around gaining knowledge and skills for dealing with indiscipline in the classroom. We took decisions democratically and analysed data in a participatory way with the full cooperation of all the co-researchers. This was ideal for furthering a positive team spirit during the challenging COVID-19 time. We learned from one another (through coaching or compromise) by asking original and burning questions during open-ended questions and email conversations during Cycle 3. During the research journey, we made use of critical constructive reflections built on respect for our own and others' remarks. This engendered openness and competence to deal with problems and to validate our findings.

This dovetails with Wood (2013), who states that PALAR emphasises learning through research. During this research, the co-researchers undertook to plan actions and establish research processes to facilitate a deeper understanding of the problem at hand. We focussed on changing preconceived ideas and replacing these with new ways of thinking (Mezirow, 1991, 2000, 2003) in order to solve our mutual problem of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

#### **9.4.2 Challenges produced by the PALAR process**

The PALAR process was not free of challenges. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations, the participatory process that includes data generation was done electronically. The latter placed pressure on all the co-researchers due to contextual restraints and, occasionally, lack of skills. Collaboratively we decided that I in my capacity as the research

facilitator of the ALS, should act as the nodal point for all data and correspondence in order to ensure that the research process was successful, and the objectives could be reached.

I also came to realise that, although PALAR was an ideal vehicle for community-based research, caution had to be taken that the 7 Cs and the theoretical principles of PALAR should not become platitudes. When we built relationships among co-researchers in the ALS, it needed to be on authentic democratic principles. In a country such as South Africa, with its different languages, most people do not *converse* in their mother tongue but in English, while language tends to be connected to power, so that the person who articulates their ideas best will often be the one who dominates the conversation. As for *compromise*, co-researchers must be willing to listen to other points of view to collaboratively reach a mutual agreement. Therefore, a translator can be to the benefit of the group, since the person not only interprets words but also facial expressions and body language. The latter can be mentioned as limitations caused by the COVID-19 restrictions, where informative discussions happened electronically instead of on a face-to-face basis. On the other side of the coin, not being exposed to face-to-face interaction can be to the benefit of a person who struggles to express him or herself in a group as a consequence of language limitations or personality traits. Having time to contemplate questions and reflections might give the person a better chance to collect their thoughts and afterwards express these. This can further prevent group consensus since, although the interactions are participatory, we still need to follow our feelings and justify our thoughts through reasoning skills. For these reasons, statements from the co-researchers that differ much from the rest can be circulated in the ALS for further comments: in the case of the present project, this was achieved with the use of emails and WhatsApps, which again opened the floor for constructive reflections without intimidation or fear of humiliation. Another “C” to watch out for is *competence*. How competent are we to conduct participatory research effectively? We are not trained in self-reflection, keeping reflective journals and group facilitation. For this reason, I cannot stress the value of adhering to democratic principles enough, where co-researchers need to trust and support one another for guidance and support.

#### **9.4.3 Was PALAR successful around facilitating answers to the primary research question? (cf. 1.5; 1.6; 5.2; 5.7.3; 8.1; 8.4; 8.6; 8.8; 9.2)**

To answer the primary research question, the five secondary research questions were answered successfully, and the objectives were achieved.

Once more, the co-researchers revealed comprehensive understanding of learner behaviour and challenges faced by educators in the classroom when it came to dealing with indiscipline.



These endeavours gave educators a better understanding of the learners and their needs. On strength of this knowledge, the co-researchers were able to choose tried and tested educator-learner relationship-building strategies to address indiscipline in the classroom, as a way of furthering the academic progress of the learners.

The answers to the five secondary research questions facilitated the primary research question.

The findings of the five secondary questions pointed to PALAR as a suitable research design for supporting educators at school level in order to develop relationship strategies that would improve indiscipline in rural secondary schools. To further achieve the wider objectives of this research and to contextualise the strategies for improving indiscipline in schools, the co-researchers collaborated with willing educators at respective schools to form an FCW, once more, in which strategies were tested and reflected on and subsequently compiled in the contextualised SLP as a resource for the wider school community in the uMzinyathi District. For that reason, PALAR again proved to be an applicable research design and methodology towards bringing the educator community together when identifying and discussing a common problem and finding solutions for it.

#### **9.4.4 Applications and the benefits of PALAR**

My experiences in this research journey demonstrated to me that PALAR can be used as a research design for postgraduate research training, leadership- and community development training (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018). Adults come to the learning encounter with much knowledge gained through prior experience that could be utilised in this research to make sure that learning is meaningful (Knowles, 1988; Vinjamuri et al., 2017). Through action and reflection, co-researchers were enabled to take ownership of their learning resulting in a deeper scholarly understanding. Through the PALAR research process transformation was brought about to the benefit of the whole of the education community (Zuber-Skerritt, 2018). I would state that this would not have been possible through the didactic teaching model alone (Vinjamuri et al., 2017).

### **9.5 DRAWING OF INFERENCES AND META-INFERENCES: SYNOPSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **9.5.1 Inferences**

The research findings engendered by the three cycles were discussed in detail in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. These boil down to the fact that the face-to-face pre-meeting during Cycle 1 laid the

foundation for the electronic encounters that were to follow. A discussion of learner behaviour and the challenges educators faced revealed that the educators had insight into the problem.

Cycle 2 centred on the educators' understanding of educator-learner relationship-building and strategies to improve this.

During Cycle 3, the ALS employed FCWs as means of obtaining more authentic, tried-and-tested strategies to build relationships.

A comprehensive, but not an exhaustive, list was compiled and used to form an SLP as a reference and guideline for educators to use in order to build educator-learner relationships as ways of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

It should be noted that, throughout this research, moral values and religious education emerged spontaneously as prominent themes confirmed by all the co-researchers as well as many of the educators during the FCWs held at the five individual participating schools. The importance of religion and norms and values was emphasised.

### 9.5.2 Meta-inferences

The data collected and analysed suggest current trends that were visible throughout the research, as presented in Table 9.1 below.

|   | STATEMENT                                                                                                                        | E1 |   | E2 |   | E3 |   | E4a |   | E4b |   | E5 |   |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|---|----|---|-----|---|-----|---|----|---|
|   |                                                                                                                                  | Y  | N | Y  | N | Y  | N | Y   | N | Y   | N | Y  | N |
| 1 | All five schools experienced disciplinary problems to a larger or lesser extent although it differs in seriousness and intensity | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 2 | All five schools dealt with discipline-related problems in the classroom in different ways                                       | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 3 | All five schools had similar methods that they employed to deal with discipline in the classroom                                 | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 4 | Every school's situation and physical conditions differed                                                                        | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |

|    | STATEMENT                                                                                                        | E1 |   | E2 |   | E3 |   | E4a |   | E4b |   | E5 |   |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|---|----|---|-----|---|-----|---|----|---|
|    |                                                                                                                  | Y  | N | Y  | N | Y  | N | Y   | N | Y   | N | Y  | N |
| 5  | I have learned something from the data generated between the co-researchers                                      | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 6  | Are you proud of the final document, the SLP that we collaboratively compiled?                                   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 7  | Do you think you can benefit from our SLP?                                                                       | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 7  | Educator-learner relationship-building must be the first priority when it comes to indiscipline in the classroom | ✓  |   |    | ✓ | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 8  | Do you agree that religion has a positive influence on the behaviour of learners at the school?                  | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 9  | Despite challenges and frustrations, are you positive about the future of the teaching profession?               |    | ✓ | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |
| 10 | The size and circumstance of the school play a major role in learner behaviour and discipline management         | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓  |   | ✓   |   | ✓   |   | ✓  |   |

All five schools therefore experienced problems with discipline to a lesser or greater extent. Although each of the five schools dealt with discipline in their own way, there similar strategies were also used by the educators. Each school's circumstances differed from the others. The size and physical conditions of the schools played a role in learner behaviour. One of the smaller schools managed discipline with greater ease. The smaller schools experienced overcrowded classrooms with devastating results for classroom discipline.

All co-researchers indicated that they learned from the experience and believed that they would also learn from the final document, the SLP.

It was confirmed that educator-learner relationship-building had to lay the foundation when it came to dealing with discipline in the classroom, although one co-researcher did not agree with this.

The co-researchers and the educators (FCW) agreed that religion could have a positive influence on learner behaviour.

Despite the challenges educators experienced, they remained positive about the future of the profession. One co-researcher did not agree with this.

Although the research was done in only five schools in the rural uMzinyathi District, literature indicated that these educators experienced the same problems and needs as educators in other areas of the country, so that the findings could apply to other schools in South Africa.

## **9.6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION (DBE)**

Based on the need for this research, it is recommended that institutions for higher education (HEIs) include training on discipline and ways of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

The DBE must work with educators to find effective alternatives in the absence of corporal punishment to deal with discipline-related matters in the classroom.

Educators must be invited to give input in curriculum development. They are the people on the frontline facing the challenges of teaching in a diverse environment.

## **9.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The educator-learner relationship is just one component used in schools to assist educators around dealing with behaviour issues in the classroom. As described in the literature overview, dealing with discipline-related issues requires a team effort by all the role players in the school environment. Uncooperative and illiterate parents pose a challenge at schools due to indifferent and uninvolved attitudes. For this reason, further research is recommended centred on ways of building educator-parent relationships and must be included in educators training at HEIs.

The relevance of religion for solving behavioural problems in schools emerged as an important topic in this study. Further research must be conducted to examine this. Religion has a positive influence on learner behaviour. As explained by the co-researchers, drug addiction seems to impact directly on the behaviour of learners. Some of the major religions have rehabilitation and restoration centres that deal with drugs and substance abuse. They could be involved in such research.

The co-researchers suggested that a comparative study can be done between religion-based schools and non-religion-based schools to determine the effect of religion on the behaviour of learners.

Evaluation and implementation of drug awareness campaigns in schools and in rural schools in particular can also be investigated in South Africa.

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

The most far-reaching problem in this research was the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the PALAR research design, as has been indicated extensively. Due to lockdown regulations, regular face-to-face interactions could not be held. We experienced travel bans and enforced social distancing removed the possibility of using our well-planned structure of data generation into an unknown state of affairs. As co-researchers, we were caught off guard, but also came to realise that the pandemic was a reality and would last for a while. Within the bounds of the PALAR principles of trust and close collaboration, we began to redesign the planned data generation and analysis structure. We decided to continue with the research project and generate data electronically, as indicated, not least because of the mutual eagerness for finding strategies to address indiscipline in secondary schools. Some of those partaking schools and one co-researcher did not have electronic access to email or other facilities. With the consent of the co-researchers, we decided that I had to print and deliver the open-ended questionnaires to the specific co-researcher, to use an example to illustrate the strategy adopted. I again had to collect the complete questionnaire. After our first encounter, it was clear that this co-researcher wanted to discuss some of the information. I again asked consent from the rest of the co-researchers, and all agreed that the conversation had to be shared through WhatsApp with all.

In retrospect, I would say that the limitations were adapted in such a way as to make a contribution to the PALAR research methodology. Collaboratively, we came to the fore with creative and alternative ways to conduct community-based participatory research.

## **9.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS RESEARCH**

This research was undertaken due to a need amongst educators in the uMzinyathi District to address indiscipline in secondary schools. The compilation of a contextualised SLP based on contributions from educators as co-researchers as well as voluntary educators at respective schools who formed the FCW stand out as the primary contributions of the project. Educators from a rural district were offered an opportunity to voice and address an authentic challenge they were exposed to daily.

A further contribution was to adapt a planned and structured face-to-face participatory research approach into a context of remote, virtual data generating and analysis. The ALS was benefited in that our first encounter where we got to know one another to build relationships did occur on a face-to-face basis, as mentioned. From there onwards all actions happened remotely.

To work around the COVID-19 restrictions in order to generate and analyse data and conduct creativity and independence between co-researchers also demand a new creative approach. I would say that, in some cases, also our thinking and reflections were enhanced and challenged, since we had the opportunity to take time and really think before we reflect on each other's comments.

### **9.9.1 Contribution to knowledge**

The questions that this research was based on were intended to fill a gap experienced by the educators and, for that reason, the findings inferred from it contribute to the larger body of knowledge in the form of an SLP. The co-researchers and educators involved in the FCW gained knowledge and skills to address indiscipline in their schools and they had the opportunity to reflect, share and exchange knowledge.

### **9.9.2 Contribution to PALAR as a research methodology**

The methodology used in this research due to the COVID-19 pandemic enhances the development of new and creative data-generating ideas and methods around the traditional way of conducting PALAR research.

With the PALAR principles of action and reflection, interpersonal relationships, interactions and trust between co-researchers in mind, we had to think of practical and creative methods and activities to work around contextual electronic limitations. To build from prior to unknown knowledge, we collaboratively decided to use the open-ended questionnaires for our first electronic encounter. After collaboratively compiling the questionnaires, I emailed these to all, except for one co-researcher mentioned under limitations (cf. 9.8). The co-researchers completed the questionnaire electronically and emailed it back. One co-researcher printed it out, completed it in handwriting, took a photo and Whatsapped it to me. As mentioned, I was collaboratively appointed as the nodal point to whom all data were sent. I compiled it all in one document to circulate to all co-researchers for reflection. We decided to make use of photo/ picturevoice as a data generation artefact to express feelings. We included pictures, since some co-researchers lacked skills and/ or facilities, to take photos. The photo/ picturevoice reflected discipline-related issues and job satisfaction, motivation to teach and feelings about the teaching profession as a whole. Written narratives explained why they decided on a specific

photo or picture. Informative discussions were sent via email, WhatsApps and cell phone conversations. To ensure the participatory nature of the research, namely to exchange knowledge and equal power relationships, we encouraged one another to ask and answer questions in the ways mentioned and, if a question or an answer was not clear, we could probe these to ask for clarity.

### **9.9.3 Contribution to academic literature**

The results obtained through research done by using a PALAR research design were used to compile an SLP to assist educators to build positive educator-learner relationships as a point of departure in order to apply successful disciplinary measures in the classroom.

### **9.9.4 Contribution to educators and education**

The educators at the participating schools were also introduced to an FCW as a means of discussing and solving problems. These workshops laid the foundation for educators to approach future problems in the same way and collaboratively solve problems experienced at their respective schools.

Not only were educators compelled to rethink their views of educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with discipline in the classroom but the usefulness of the educator community to be involved in finding solutions to problems was also emphasised.

A further contribution to education was that one co-researcher enrolled for his or her Master's degree after exposure to the research journey.

## **9.10 REFLECTION ON MY LEARNING**

PALAR as a research design was unknown to me and I feared the consequences of messing up the whole research process due to my ignorance. However, the positive attitude of the co-researchers and the spontaneous way in which the research was done changed my fears into enthusiasm. I was able to see the benefits of PALAR as a research design. The PALAR journey provided the co-researchers with a safe space in which to air their views and discuss problems and frustrations. For our well-being during the COVID-19 lockdown, this research project provided a positive distraction in terms of mental and physical adversities of social isolation. Although we could not have face-to-face interactions, we could mitigate some of the effects via emails, Whatsapps, cell phone conversations and photo/ picturevoice.

I further experienced the importance and the benefits of educator-learner relationship-building anew. The extent to which educators impact relationship-building in the classroom was an eye-opener and a worthwhile learning journey.

This research project was useful and in line with similar community development projects in the uMzinyathi District.

### **9.11 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

One such project was initiated by the World Changers Academy (WCA). Cox and John (2016) claim the communities are characterised by repeated disruptions such as violence, crime, poverty, inequality and other difficulties and can be transformed by emancipatory initiatives in education. Against this background, of continuously disrupted lives and living conditions, the WCA, through transformative learning and individual empowerment, introduced a program to teach communities to critically question and engage in dialogue to revise their way of thinking and to improve their living conditions. Lamber (2020) documented that Pastor Sizwe Mthembu, a former teacher, and Joe White, an American living in KwaNyuswa, a semi-rural isiZulu community near Durban, founded the WCA in August 2002. Thousands of lives have already been changed through transformative learning by the WCA. This WCA project caught my attention, because it is located in KwaZulu-Natal, and therefore involves understanding of the isiZulu culture. This supplemented my own research which, as said, was also done in KwaZulu-Natal.

This particular WCA study, which was conducted among young people, helped these young people to make sense of life and move into a more hopeful future. Perceptions held by community participants are not free of values or neutral and this fact actively shapes culture and sometimes needs to be transformed by liberating education initiatives such as transformative learning to give a new direction to life (Cox & John, 2016; Clifford, 2013). This new community-orientated focus in life could assist other people in the community (Cox & John, 2016).

### **9.12 CONCLUSION**

Educators in the uMzinyathi District are at a loss with learner indiscipline. There is a dire need for educators to be equipped with skills and strategies to address discipline-related issues in the classroom.

Much was said during this research. Educators could speak freely, and they used this opportunity to air their views and frustrations. During the research journey, they advised one another, reviewed their perceptions and learned new skills.

This research project was a transformative journey for all the co-researchers.



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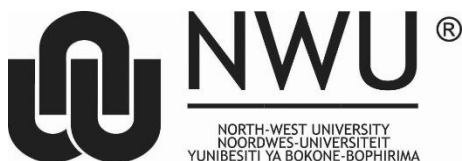
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## ADDENDA

### ADDENDUM A: INDEMNITY FORM (EDUREC)



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

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

**Ethics Committee of the Faculty of  
Education (EduREC)**

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

#### INDEMNITY FORM (EduREC)

I, the undersigned

*(Full name) (Each participant must fill and sign this)*

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

*(Project/study title): Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach*

*(Ethics number) NWU-01206-20-A2*

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date

## ADDENDUM B: EDUREC – COVID19 – GUIDELINES



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION (EDUREC)

### GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH AND RESEARCH ETHICS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

#### 1. Introduction

Research practices within the Faculty of Education should be aligned with the North-West University's Research Ethics Policy and as such "the North-West University (NWU) wishes to ensure that all research conducted under its auspices is conducted in accordance with national and international ethics standards and statutory requirements and in line with its Vision and Mission" (NWU, 2018). This is done in acknowledging the three main general principles of *beneficence and non-maleficence*, *distributive justice* and *respect*. In terms of *beneficence and non-maleficence* the risk of harm by research must be addressed and with regard to *respect* the well-being and safety interests of participants are also acknowledged.

To adhere to these principles and the requirements set out by the South African government guidelines are set for research within the Faculty of Education. Take note that these guidelines may change according to changes in national and institutional directions.

#### 2. Guidelines for research and research ethics during the COVID-19 pandemic

2.1 The primary guiding principle is that researchers (in this document this term includes principal investigators, co-researchers, promoters, supervisors and postgraduate students) and participants should adhere to governmental (<https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>) and institutional guidelines (<http://www.nwu.ac.za/coronavirus>).

2.2 Ethical clearance procedures and processes are handled through the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as published online for EduREC (<http://education.nwu.ac.za/research-and-innovation/research-ethics-committee-education>) for low risk studies and NWU-EMELTEN-REC (<http://education.nwu.ac.za/nwu-emelten-rec/about-us>) for medium, high risk and/or studies with vulnerable populations.

2.3 The relevant ethics committee must be informed about any adverse events (which may imply negative or harmful effect physically or mentally on the researchers or participants) or unforeseen incidents related to the research and relevant research ethics.

2.4 Any major changes made to research methodology (such as changing the research design or removing whole interventions) due to the COVID-19 context should be communicated to the relevant scientific committee and a revised ethics application form be submitted to the research ethics committee. Researchers should also take note that extension of ethical clearance (provided for a period of one year) will not be automatically extended and this must be requested from the relevant research ethics committee.

2.5 Face-to-face research is discouraged during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and will only be allowed after written permission from the relevant research entity (or ROE committee) and ethics committee. Such a request must include a motivation for face-to-face interaction explaining why online research would not be feasible for the study, how governmental access and travel restrictions will be adhered to, how safe working conditions in terms of governmental and institutional guidelines will be ensured and what information will be provided to research participants in this regard. Revised informed consent forms and information letters – indicating the risks and measures put in place by the researcher – should be submitted to the research ethics committee.

2.6 Research by means of online contact is recommended. Researchers are reminded to still adhere to approved recruitment and informed consent practices. Changing your research from face-to-face data collection to online data collection will also involve a formal request to the relevant scientific committee and research ethics committee. It is requested that researchers submit revised informed consent forms to the research ethics committee.

2.7 Researchers and research participants in face-to-face contexts should adhere to safe social distancing principles by wearing masks and keeping a distance of more than 1,5m between individuals. In addition, any equipment used in the research process should be thoroughly cleaned and hand sanitizer (with at least 70% alcohol content) should be available during the data collection period. The number of individuals involved in the data collection process should be kept as low as possible.

2.8 Face-to-face research should be avoided with research participants or researchers who are currently positive for COVID-19.

2.9 Researchers who have already obtained permission to access schools and other research sites must reconfirm the status of such permission and also adhere to additional provincial and site-specific regulations that might be in place.

2.10 Any issues or questions must be raised with the relevant chairperson of the ethics committees: EduREC at [jako.olivier@nwu.ac.za](mailto:jako.olivier@nwu.ac.za) and for NWU-EMELTEN-REC at [lukas.meyer@nwu.ac.za](mailto:lukas.meyer@nwu.ac.za).

*EduREC (15/06/2020)*



## ADDENDUM C(1): BLANK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS CYCLE 1

### Open-ended questionnaire

Dear Colleagues

After a long period of silence, it is a privilege for me to contact you again. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations, the research, as explained to you during the start-up meeting, could not proceed as planned. As collaboratively decided, employing an email, we will have to do it online using open-ended questionnaires, WhatsApp, emails, and telephonic conversations.

You are requested to answer the questions in this questionnaire and return them to me within two to three weeks. Your comments will then be merged into one document and returned to you to check the correctness of your statements and reflect on your own and the statements of the other educators, should you want to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 071 892 5574 or by email: [elsa.bosman@gmail.com](mailto:elsa.bosman@gmail.com)

Thank you again for your willingness to be part of this research. I trust that it will benefit all of us eventually.

Elsa Bosman

### 1. General view on learner behaviour

What is your view on learner behaviour in general?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 2. Is learner behaviour in your school at present:

Problematic/ normal? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A cry for help from the learners? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A “grow-up” phase? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A product of society? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

a product of poverty? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A product of what parents do or don't do? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of socio-economic problems? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of family-related problems? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Drugs and alcohol-related problems? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of unhealthy girls – boys relationships problem? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of unhealthy/ harmful educator-learner relationships problem? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of disrespect for self and other people? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

A result of peer pressure? (Please motivate your answer)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

**3. These topics were added by the educators as problematic issues and was included during the reflection:**

A result of too much emphasis on human rights?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Arrogance as a reason for misbehaviour

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Not coping with the curriculum of the grade

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Lack of collaboration between role players

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Parents don't assist

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Societal ills

Reflection

*To be completed later*

#### **4. Challenges educators are faced with concerning learner behaviour**

Please, again, leave a comment to express your point of view.

What are the **challenges** educators are confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?



Reflection

*To be completed later*

What **strategies** can educators use to improve discipline in the classroom?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 5. Personal experience

What measures do you use to determine which learners are the “naughty” ones in class?  
(General characteristics)

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Is it correct to label “naughty” learners to make it easier to deal with them?

Motivate your answer.

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What is your main/ biggest hindrance in school to reprimand learners effectively?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Do you sometimes consult with other educators to find solutions to discipline problems in the classroom, and in what way do you find it helpful?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Motivate your answer to question 3e

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What solutions do you see as effective to deal with discipline-related problems in the classroom?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

**6. What are your dreams about the ideal classroom?**

Explain the ideal classroom situation as you see it.

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 7. Your feelings

Would you please answer the following questions in the comment column? If that is not possible, attach a photo (or, if that is not possible) a picture that corresponds with your feelings to explain your comment clearly.

| Question |                                                                    | Photo<br>or<br>picture | Comment |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| 1        | How do you feel about the discipline in your school at the moment? |                        |         |

Reflection

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| <i>To be completed later</i> |
|------------------------------|

|   |                                                                      |  |  |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 2 | What effect does indiscipline have on your <u>job satisfaction</u> ? |  |  |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

Reflection

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| <i>To be completed later</i> |
|------------------------------|

|   |                                                                         |  |  |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 3 | What effect does indiscipline have on your <u>motivation to teach</u> ? |  |  |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

Reflection

*To be completed later*

|   |                                                              |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 4 | How do you feel about the teaching profession at the moment? |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

Reflection

*To be completed later*

|   |                                                                                                        |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 5 | How do you want the teaching profession to change to benefit the teachers and the learners positively? |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

Reflection

*To be completed later*

**Thank you**

## **ADDENDUM C(2): EXAMPLE OF FILLED IN OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS CYCLE 1**

### **Cycle 1**

#### **Open-ended questionnaire**

Dear Colleagues

After a long period of silence, it is a privilege for me to contact you again. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations, the research, as explained to you during the start-up meeting, could not proceed as planned. As collaboratively decided, employing an email, we will have to do it online using open-ended questionnaires, WhatsApp, emails, and telephonic conversations.

You are requested to answer the questions in this questionnaire and return them to me within two to three weeks. Your comments will then be merged into one document and returned to you to check the correctness of your statements and reflect on your own and the statements of the other educators, should you want to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 071 892 5574 or by email: [elsa.bosman@gmail.com](mailto:elsa.bosman@gmail.com)

Thank you again for your willingness to be part of this research. I trust that it will benefit all of us eventually.

Elsa Bosman

#### **1. General view on learner behaviour**

What is your view on learner behaviour in general?

E(1) -As long as there are societal issues, discipline at school will always exist. If children are taught proper values, morals and respect at home and live as a proper family structure they will feel loved and cared for and discipline problems will be minimal  
E(2) N/A  
E(3) Drugs and violence are taking over. While it is important to understand learner behaviour problems, do not compromise the mission and vision of the school. Be firm on academic performance and acceptable learner behaviour. As an educator we must strive to manage our

classes as positive as possible but firm when it comes to schoolwork. Educators should deliver what learners expect from them.

E(4a) Learner need to take education seriously. They must use the library and read newspapers. Love one another and encourage one another.

E(4b) Not easy to have one discipline procedure because what works in our school might not work for school B. It depends on the context and relationship of teachers with other relevant stakeholders.

*E(5) Adults who don't model positive and respectful behaviour cannot discipline effectively*

## Reflection

*E(1) We also experience some bad problems*

*E(2) N/A*

**E(3) E5 is on the spot**

E(4) Behaviour is difficult to sum up because it has many facets and reasons and solutions.

*E(5) I agree with statements*

## 2. Is learner behaviour in your school at present:

Problematic/ normal? (Please motivate your answer)

*E(1) Normal to problematic. In some cases, learners generally come to school with bad attitudes, bad manners, disrespect, etc.*

*E(2) We are fortunate at my school that we have fewer problems than many other schools. However, it can be problematic, especially when it takes away from academic time.*

**E(3) Normal:** The level of bad behaviour from our learners is not as high as one might expect. However, we do experience certain individuals that have questionable behaviour.

E(4) It is normal because parents are available to help us.

*E(5) Each learner is an individual with a unique story and background, created as a very special person in God's image. To say that their behaviour is "problematic" or "normal" could mean that one dismisses a person into one of two categories and disregards individual needs. A child exhibiting so-called "normal" behaviour could actually fall in an at-risk category, and a child exhibiting so-called "problematic" behaviour may actually just need a bit of training or the adult doing the labelling might need a bit of help*

## Reflection

E(1) N/A

E(2) N/A

E(3) N/A

E(4) The issue of behaviour is very difficult to deal with since individuals have unique traits. I may linked it with stress. Some people are more prone to stress than others.

E(5) *I agree with statements*

A cry for help from the learners? (Please motivate your answer)

E(1) There are learners that run away from home due to strict parents, poverty or to live with friends/boyfriends and have become disowned by parents.

E(2) For some, maybe. But in general, no. I do not believe that there is an excuse for constant poor behaviour. We have children that come from dire backgrounds who are very well behaved.

E(3) I would attest to that. Some learners show signs of growing up in a broken family. Their behaviour shows that they do not have a proper upbringing. Some show that they were left in the care of too old grandparents who have lost control of disciplining them completely.

E(4) Help is always welcome if it will bring better results

E(5) Yes, that is quite possible. Some children will act in ways that are actually crying for help because they cannot articulate their own needs.

Reflection

E(1) N/A

E(2) N/A

E(3) N/A

E(4) Yes, in public schools there are learners that cannot be helped due to the bad influence from either family members, friends and peers. The only solution is the repentance to the gospel of the Lord Jesus others no hope.

E(5) N/A

A “grow-up” phase? (Please motivate your answer)



E(1) Between the ages of 13 – 15 learners are still in the grow-up phase ie – grade 8 – 9. When they come to gr 10 there is a change in their behaviour for the better.

E(2) No. All children go through “grow-up” phases, but most are very pleasant children.

E(3) Such “grow-up phase” case of behaviour is manageable. You find that a learner might be rude at home and to his/her peers but fear school management and educators such that when you discipline him/her, you can notice that as an educator you still hold authority over that child.

E(4) No

E(5) It is possible that some behaviour can be as a result of young children finding it difficult to deal with new and different experiences, or maybe because they enjoy the freedom that increased responsibility and societal expectations place on them but they must still learn how to manage that freedom. However, other behaviours (such as experimenting with drugs, sexting, group trends on social media, etc.) could actually lead to lifelong harm, and to dismiss these as “just a growing-up phase” would be irresponsible.

This is just a few examples

**Thank you**

## **ADDENDUM D: BLANK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS CYCLE 2**

### **Cycle 2**

#### **Open-ended questionnaire**

Dear Colleagues

Thank you very much for your insight- and helpful comments made in the first electronic interaction.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued lockdown regulations, the research will have to be initiated again by email using an open-ended questionnaire. Some educators preferred a printout instead of an email. I can arrange that. Please let me know.

You are requested to answer the questions on this follow-up questionnaire and return it to me (hard copy or email) within three to four weeks. Your comments will then be merged into one document and returned to you to check the correctness of your statements and reflect on your and the comments of the other educators, should you want to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 071 892 5574 or by email: [elsa.bosman@gmail.com](mailto:elsa.bosman@gmail.com)

Thank you again for your willingness to be part of this research. I trust that it will benefit all of us eventually.

Elsa Bosman

### **1. General view on educator-learner behaviour**

What are your views on positive educator-learner relationships?

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Reflection

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| <i>To be completed later</i> |
|------------------------------|

## 2. The role and place of educator-learner relationships

Do you think educator-learner relationships are essential?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Describe the importance of educators as role models in the educator-learner relationship-building process?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What do you perceive as the benefits of educator-learner relationships?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Name and explain briefly as many **general** strategies as you can think of that you can use to build positive educator-learner relationships or to improve your relationship with your learners.

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What possible hindrances do you foresee in your efforts to build positive educator-learner relationships?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## Case Study

Please read the following true story and then in a short paragraph, point out all the positive and negative elements of Educator-learner relationship-building noticed in this story

### A Real teacher

He was in the first third grade class I taught at Saint Mary's School in Morris, Minnesota. All 34 of my students were dear to me, but Mark Eklund was one in a million. Very neat in appearance but had that happy-to-be-alive attitude that made even his occasional mischievousness delightful.

Mark talked incessantly. I had to remind him again and again that talking without permission was not acceptable. What impressed me so much, though, was his sincere response every time I had to correct him for misbehaving - "Thank you for correcting me, Sister!" I didn't know what to make of it at first, but before long I became accustomed to hearing it many times a day.

One morning my patience was growing thin when Mark talked once too often, and then I made a novice-teacher's mistake. I looked at Mark and said, "If you say one more word, I am going to tape your mouth shut!"

It wasn't ten seconds later when Chuck blurted out, "Mark is talking again." I hadn't asked any of the students to help me watch Mark, but since I had stated the punishment in front of the class, I had to act on it.

I remember the scene as if it had occurred this morning. I walked to my desk, very deliberately opened my drawer and took out a roll of masking tape. Without saying a word, I proceeded to Mark's desk, tore

off two pieces of tape and made a big X with them over his mouth. I then returned to the front of the room.

As I glanced at Mark to see how he was doing, he winked at me. That did it!! I started laughing. The class cheered as I walked back to Mark's desk, removed the tape, and shrugged my shoulders. His first words were, "Thank you for correcting me, Sister."

At the end of the year, I was asked to teach junior-high math. The years flew by, and before I knew it Mark was in my class again. Since he had to listen carefully to my instruction in the "new math," he did not talk as much in ninth grade as he had in third. One Friday, things just didn't feel right. We had worked hard on a new concept all week, and I sensed that the students were frowning, frustrated with themselves - and edgy with one another. I had to stop this crankiness before it got out of hand. So I asked them to list the names of the other students in the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a space between each name. Then I told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed me the papers. Charlie smiled. Mark said, "Thank you for teaching me, Sister. Have a good weekend."

That Saturday, I wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and I listed what everyone else had said about each individual. On Monday I gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. "Really?" I heard whispered. "I never knew that meant anything to anyone!" "I didn't know others liked me so much." No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. I never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another again.

That group of students moved on. Several years later, after I returned from vacation, my parents met me at the airport. As we were driving home, Mother asked me the usual questions about the trip - the weather, my experiences in general. There was a lull in the conversation.

Mother gave Dad a side-ways glance and simply says, "Dad?" My father cleared his throat as he usually did before something important. "The Eklunds called last night," he began. "Really?" I said. "I haven't heard from them in years. I wonder how Mark is." Dad responded quietly. "Mark was killed in Vietnam," he said. "The funeral is tomorrow, and his parents would like it if you could attend."

I had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. Mark looked so handsome, so mature. All I could think at that moment was, Mark I would give all the masking tape in the world if only you would talk to me.

The church was packed with Mark's friends. Chuck's sister sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Why did it have to rain on the day of the funeral? It was difficult enough at the graveside. One by one those who loved Mark took a last walk by the coffin to pay tribute. I was the last one to walk past coffin. As I stood there, one of the soldiers who acted as pallbearer came up to me. "Were you Mark's math teacher?" he asked. I nodded as I continued to stare at the coffin. "Mark talked about you a lot," he said.

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates headed to Chuck's farmhouse for lunch. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting for me. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been folded and refolded many times. I knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which I had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him. "Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it."

Mark's classmates started to gather around us. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home." Chuck's wife said, "Chuck asked me to put his in our wedding album." "I have mine too," Marilyn said. "It's in my diary." Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," Vicki said without batting an eyelash. "I think we all saved our lists."

That's when I finally sat down and cried. I cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again. ([https://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson012.shtml](https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson012.shtml))

Please complete the next block by reflecting on positive and negative educator-learner relationship elements in the above story

Positive elements:

Negative elements:

Reflection

*To be completed later*

### **3. Challenges experienced by educators when trying to build positive educator-learner relationships**

**Mention and briefly explain as many challenges as possible that you have encountered in your efforts to build positive educator-learner relationships.**

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Add more if need be.

**4. Describe the strategies that you were able to implement successfully in your classrooms since our previous encounter or strategies that you can recommend that you have implemented previously.**

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Add more if need be.



## 5. Case-specific strategies

Think of learners with specific socio-economic problems leading to unacceptable behaviour. Do you anticipate **specific** strategies that you can recommend as a way of building positive educator-learner relationships with these learners? Respond to one or as many of the following examples you want to, concerning the following. You may even add other problems learners may have if you want to.

Learners using drugs –

Learners from a poverty environment –

Learners suffering from emotional problems –

Learners without parental support –

Learners with chronic disease –

Any other problems that you have encountered –

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 6. Positive Educator-learner Relationships

How important are positive educator-learner relationships in the teaching and learning environment

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 7. General questions

Do you have any questions regarding learner behaviour that you want to put to the other educators in the ALS (action learning set) group? You are 5 members from five different secondary schools in the district. I will circulate your questions and supply you with the comments/ answers from the other educators to assist you.

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Do you have any questions related to discipline that you want to put to the other educators in the ALS?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Any other comment from your side concerning discipline in schools in general

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What do you think motivates some learners to behave well and in a respectful manner?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

How do you see the way forward to attain this ideal classroom situation?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

After combining and evaluating all your comments from the previous questionnaires, I came to the following conclusions: Do you agree with the statements?

| Nr | Statement                                                                                                               | Yes                      | No                       |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1  | All five schools have discipline problems to a larger or lesser extent although it differs in seriousness and intensity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|    |                                                                                                                              |                              |                             |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2  | All five schools deal with discipline-related problems in the classroom in different ways                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3  | All five schools also have similar methods that they employ to deal with discipline in the classroom                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4  | Every school's situation and conditions are different from the other schools                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5  | I have learned something from the information I have received                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6  | Do you think you can also learn something from the final document after all the information is compiled into one document?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7  | Educator-learner relationship building must be the first priority when it comes to discipline in the classroom               | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8  | The educators commented on the positive influence religion has on the behaviour of learners at school                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9  | Despite the challenges and frustrations, the educators are still mostly positive about the future of the teaching profession | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10 | The size and circumstance of the school play a major role in learner behaviour and discipline management                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

#### Reflection

*To be completed later*

**Thank you**

## **ADDENDUM E: BLANK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS CYCLE 3**

### **Cycle 3**

#### **Open-ended questionnaire**

Dear Colleagues

Thank you very much for your valuable inputs thus far. I don't have words to express my appreciation, especially when you are under so much pressure at your schools due to the return of students to school under lockdown regulations.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations, the research will be done again by email. This is the last open-ended questionnaire but as crucial as the previous ones. Take your time to answer this one as well (say about four to five weeks). Again, some educators preferred a printout instead of an email. I can arrange that. Please let me know.

Your comments will then be merged into one document and returned to you to check the correctness of your statements and reflect on your and the comments of the other educators, should you want to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 071 892 5574 or by email: [elsa.bosman@gmail.com](mailto:elsa.bosman@gmail.com)

Thank you again for your willingness to be part of this research. I trust that it will benefit all of us eventually.

Elsa Bosman

#### **1. Positive Educator-learner Relationships**

Do you agree that a positive educator-learner relationship is a departing point of managing discipline in the classroom?

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## Reflection

*To be completed later*

Compile a list with comments on all the strategies as suggested by the educators of the FCW and the strategies as suggested by you as the co-researchers during the ALS encounters. Use as much space as needed or add additional folios.

## Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 2. Was this research worth the effort?

Was this research worthwhile for you

Yes / No

Motivate your answer

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Did you learn something from this experience?

Yes / No

Motivate your answer

Reflection

*To be completed later*

## 2. General issues to think about

Do you have any questions regarding learner behaviour that you want to ask the other educators in the ALS (action learning set) group? You are five members from five different secondary schools in the district. I will circulate your questions and supply you with the comments/ answers from the other educators to assist you.

Reflection

*To be completed later*

Do you have any questions related to discipline that you want to put to the other educators in the ALS?

Reflection

*To be completed later*



Any other comment from your side concerning discipline in schools in general

Reflection

*To be completed later*

What do you think motivates some learners to behave well and in a respectful manner?

Reflection

*To be completed later*

How do you see the way forward to attain this ideal classroom situation?

## Reflection

*To be completed later*

### 3. Future Creating Workshop

After you conducted the Future Creating Workshop as agreed upon, please update your list of educator-learner relationships building strategies and forward it to me to update my list.

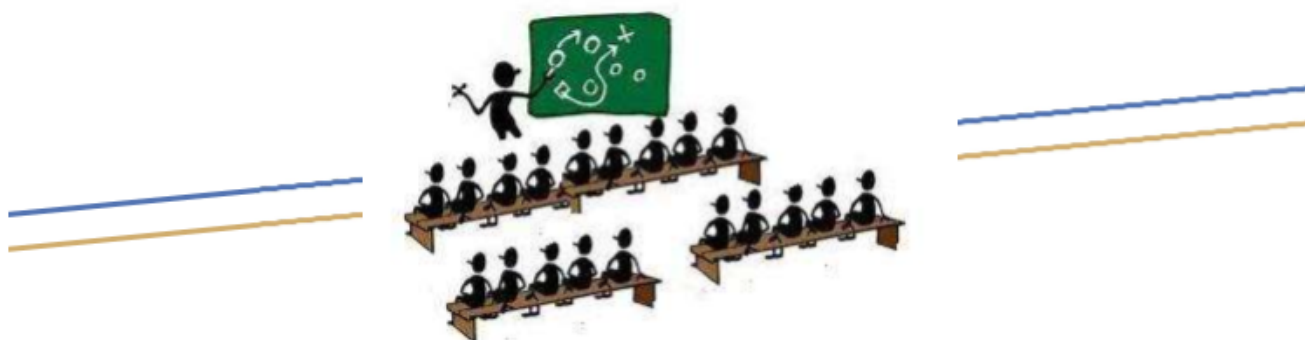
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Add more if needed.

**Thank you**



**EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP  
BUILDING AS THE CORNERSTONE TO ASSIST  
EDUCATORS TO DEAL WITH DISCIPLINE  
RELATED ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.**

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## **EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

Compiled by

E.A. Bosman



***Important Note***

**Acknowledgments**

- This manual is the result of research done in secondary schools in the uMzinyathi District in KwaZulu-Natal. The Action Learning Set (ALS) researched relationship-building strategies to deal with indiscipline in the classroom. The ideas put forward in this manual derived from the collaborative inputs of the co-researchers in the ALS.
- All the graphics used in this manual were retrieved with thanks and appreciation from [https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEB\\_enZA904ZA904&sxsrf=ALeKk023wxbFg4UIRydmW9uj7jBl\\_P5DcQ:1629093983145&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=screen+beans+clipart+google&safe=active&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjlyq6B8LTyAhVGhv0HHatgCnEQjKkEegQIBxAC&biw=1707&bih=781](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEB_enZA904ZA904&sxsrf=ALeKk023wxbFg4UIRydmW9uj7jBl_P5DcQ:1629093983145&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=screen+beans+clipart+google&safe=active&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjlyq6B8LTyAhVGhv0HHatgCnEQjKkEegQIBxAC&biw=1707&bih=781)

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## Target Group

Educators in secondary schools

## Contact Person

Contact details of the person in charge of this module

| Facilitator's Name | Email Address         | Cell Number  |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Elsa Bosman        | Elsa.bosman@gmail.com | 071 892 5574 |

## Program Description

Educator-learner relationship building is the cornerstone to assist educators in dealing with discipline-related issues in the classroom.

## Program Overview

This short learning program was compiled after research was done in the uMzinyathi district in KwaZulu-Natal. Indiscipline in secondary schools worsened remarkably, and educators are at a loss to deal with indiscipline in secondary schools.

## Program Outcomes

At the end of this short learning program, educators should:

- know the theoretical grounding behind discipline;
- understand and be able to apply positive discipline in the classroom;
- know what challenges educators face when dealing with learner indiscipline in the classroom and how to deal with the challenges of managing discipline;
- know what positive educator-learner relationships all are about;
- understand the challenges educators face when trying to build positive educator-learner relationships; and
- be able to apply strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline.

## Presentation aids

- An educators' guide
- A facilitator's manual
- A participant's manual
- Videoclips

## Module 1

- Brainstorm activities
- Discussions
- Roleplay activities
- Group work

### **Required Study Material**

There is no prescribed study material. Content will be compiled through group work and discussions

### **How to use this manual**

This manual must be read in conjunction with the presenter manual and the educator's manual.

# 1

## Study Unit1

### The management of discipline in the classroom

#### *Outcomes for this study unit*

---

*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- define indiscipline;
  - apply effective and practical classroom management skills as a way of dealing with indiscipline; and
  - define learner-centred and teacher-centred learning.
- 



*Time*

*This module takes approximately 2 hours to complete successfully*

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1.1 Ice breaker

See activity 1.1.1 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Previously you used a 60-inch-long wooden stick to assist you with discipline in the classroom. As you know, this is not allowed anymore. You do not like to throw things away. What else can you use for now? (See manual for details).



### 1.1.2 Video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_ee7-XrH6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_ee7-XrH6E)

The ultimate goal of teaching is learning, and therefore educators must bear this in mind when disciplining learners and managing their classrooms (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017). Still, classroom discipline is deteriorating rapidly, and educators are losing hope (Olivier, 2013). Worldwide Learner behaviour in general and secondary schools has worsened notably (Beebeejaun-Muslum, 2014; Power, 2016) and poses a significant problem to effective teaching and learning (Mohapi, 2013; Reyneke, 2013b).



### 1.1.3 Discussion

See activity 1.1.3 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Naicker (2014) divides indiscipline into three groups, namely "disruption to teaching, defiance, and disrespect towards teaching, and educator targeted bullying" (p. 6).

These behaviours include extreme "noise, tardiness, showing-off, teasing, irritating or disturbing peers, walking around without permission, incomplete homework, playing with cellular phones, making improper noises, inattentiveness, physical violence, and verbal abuse" (p. 6).

### 1.1.4 Fishbone technique to discuss discipline in your school

See activity 1.1.4 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Every school has negative and positive elements regarding discipline-related issues in your school.

### 1.1.5 Reasons why discipline must be managed at school

See activity 1.1.5 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

The management of learner behaviour is essential because indiscipline harms the well-being of educators and learners and the learners' academic progress. If proper discipline is not executed, learners become the victims, and teaching and learning deteriorate (Olivier, 2013).

### 1.1.6 How to lessen indiscipline in the classroom

See activity 1.1.6 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Educators with fewer discipline problems are usually those educators who can establish effective classroom procedures and utilise available instruction time effectively (Lopes, & Oliveira, 2017).

### 1.1.7 Effective classroom management

See activity 1.1.7 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Teaching and learning rest on two intertwined components:

- how the educator's professional way of behaving promotes learning,
- how the classroom is managed (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017).

Franklin and Harrington (2019) state that educators' professional behaviour comprises:

- the way they think
- the way they act or react
- the way they communicate

Unprofessional behaviour comprises:

- being ill-prepared
- late coming
- being disorganised

The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline but separate from classroom instruction (Egeberg et al., 2016).

### 1.1.8 Videos

Watch the following videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz-jCBx5iD0>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6_8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC3D7O-ByLE>

### 1.1.9 The educator's role in classroom management

See activity 1.1.9 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline but separate from classroom instruction (Egeberg et al., 2016). The educator's role in classroom management is emphasised by Sullivan et al. (2014), stating that learners' different behaviour "has more to do with factors within a teacher's control than with those located within the student" (p. 53).

Skilful educators experience fewer disciplinary problems because they are good at instituting procedures in the classroom that maximize the time available for instruction and minimise discipline problems. These educators, for example, make sure that the lesson is not too fast or too slow, and they ensure learner task-on behaviours. (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017). Management issues can be far less problematic when educators employ a stimulating curriculum integrated with engaging and supportive guidance (Košir et al., 2015).

### 1.1.10 The learner-centred classroom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKCh8N2kkcY>

### 1.1.11 The learner-centred classroom

See activity 1.1.9 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Closely related to classroom management is the concept of learner-centred classrooms as part of classroom management.

In contrast with the traditional teacher-centred classroom, the learner-centred classroom is gaining popularity. Holtman et al. (2018) argue that South Africa encourages learner-centred teaching techniques where recognized learners' interests, prior knowledge, interests, strengths, and linguistic abilities. Keiler (2018) describes the learner-centred classroom as one where the learners are actively engaged in the learning process, and their own learning and educators are mostly facilitators. Group work is a learner-centred approach often practiced in schools and can pose a discipline problem if not managed well. Learners must often move around in class to discuss topics, which can be pretty challenging to the educators (Du Plessis et al., 2012).



### A Look at the Differences between Teacher-Centred and Learner-Centred Learning

| Teacher-Centred                                                                                  | Learner-centred                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The focus is on the instructor                                                                   | The focus is on both students and instructor                                                                                  |
| The focus is on the topic, processes, and structures (what the teacher knows about the language) | The focus is on the topic in typical and everyday situations (how students perceive it)                                       |
| The Instructor talks; the students listen                                                        | Instructor or teacher models; students interact with the instructor or teacher and one another                                |
| Students work alone                                                                              | Students work in pairs, in groups, or by themselves depending on the purpose of the activity                                  |
| The instructor monitors and corrects every student utterance                                     | Students talk without constant instructor monitoring; instructor or teacher provides feedback/correction when questions arise |
| Instructor answers students' questions about language                                            | Students answer each other's questions, using an instructor or teacher as an information resource                             |
| Instructor chooses topics                                                                        | Students have some choice of topics                                                                                           |
| The instructor evaluates student learning                                                        | Students evaluate their own learning, but the instructor or teacher also evaluates                                            |
| Classroom is quiet                                                                               | The classroom is often noisy and busy                                                                                         |

*Adapted from The National Capital Language Resource Centre (a project of the George Washington University) Katie Varatta*

## 1.2 CONCLUSION

Educators must endeavour to manage learner behaviour in the classroom. Learners must be taught the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is also vital that they understand the consequences of indiscipline in their academic progress and their futures.



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# 2

## Study Unit 2

### Positive discipline

#### *Outcomes for this study unit*

---

*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- define positive discipline;
  - apply positive discipline in the classroom; and
  - be able to create a classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning.
- 



*Time*

*This Study Unit takes approximately 1 hour to complete successfully*

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1.1 Ice breaker

See activity 2.1.1 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

You are a language educator. The principal informed you that he would be coming to your class to observe your lesson. You forgot all your teaching aids at home. All you have in class is a paper clip, a memory stick, and a box of tissues. You want to teach sentence structure to the learners. Combine all three of these items into one sentence to use as an example sentence.

### 2.1.2 Discipline must be managed

See activity 2.1.2 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

The growing incidence of disruptive behaviour in schools is posing a challenge to everybody and needs to be tackled by every means at our disposal. To manage discipline requires a complete paradigm shift. The emphasis must move from controlling learner behaviour to a more developmental approach that equips children with the knowledge and skills to moderate their own behaviour better. Discipline management must aim at creating a classroom climate that is conducive to satisfactory academic achievement.

**Points to ponder:**

- Do you have a Code of Conduct at your school?
- Who drafted the Code of Conduct at your school?
- Are the learners familiar with the Code of Conduct at your school?
- Is the Code of Conduct implemented successfully at your school?
- Do you experience problems when implementing the Code of Conduct?

### 2.1.3 What is positive discipline?

See activity 2.1.3 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

The [Department of Basic Education \(2012\)](#) states that positive discipline rests on several principles and describes it as follows:

| Principle of positive discipline |                                            | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                | Positive discipline must be holistic       | All aspects of children's development and learning must be understood because it is all connected. If educators understand the development of the child, they will understand the reasons for their behaviour.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2                                | Positive discipline must be strength-based | All learners have strengths, and discipline must concentrate on building on these strengths. Mistakes must be seen as learning opportunities and not as failures.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3                                | Positive discipline must be constructive   | Through positive discipline, educators must endeavour to build the learners' self-esteem and confidence. Educators must foster learner independence and build a sense of self-efficacy instead of punishing mistakes. Educators must guide learner behaviour in a positive direction by teaching and modelling acceptable behaviour.                                     |
| 4                                | Positive discipline is inclusive           | Positive discipline respect equal rights and individual differences. Educators must teach according to the needs of each child, and all learners have the right to the same educational standard within an inclusive classroom. To achieve this, the classroom environment must be adapted to accommodate teaching aids and strategies conducive to inclusive education. |

|   |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | Positive discipline is proactive     | Discipline measures must aim at assisting learners in succeeding in the long term. Burden (2020) describes the essence of positive discipline as the educators showing concern for the learners by involving them to see the consequences of their actions. In doing so, the educators must guide the learners to develop their own solutions to the problems. Educators must teach learners to behave better. |
| 6 | Positive discipline is participatory | When learners feel part of the class and the learning process, they are motivated and eager to participate. Educators must make the learners feel welcome by asking their opinion and include them in decisions. When learners feel out-of-control, they behave in an out-of-control manner                                                                                                                    |

### 2.1.4 Ways of implementing positive discipline

See activity 2.1.4 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

There are many ways to implement positive discipline. The [Department of Basic Education \(2012\)](#) suggests the following strategies:

| Methods of implementing positive discipline | Description                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus on the positive                       | Educators must support positive behaviour because this encourages the possibility of learners wanting to repeat that behaviour                                                       |
| Educators must set a good example           | Learners observe what people do around them, and if the educators model acceptable behaviour, learners have good role models to follow                                               |
| Listen before judging                       | Educators must first endeavour to find out why the learners misbehave before making an issue out of it. Maybe they have a good reason and can explain that                           |
| Educators must be fair and consistent       | Avoid showing favouritism. Be fair and consistent by applying the same rules to everyone                                                                                             |
| Separate the child from the behaviour       | If a learner makes a mistake, it does not make him a bad person. Focus on the behaviour and what needs to be done to change the behaviour and the learner to learn from his mistakes |
| Cultivate mutual respect                    | If educators respect learners and treat them with dignity, it is more likely that learners will return that respect                                                                  |

### 2.1.5 The classroom environment must be conducive to implement positive discipline

See activity 2.1.5 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

The [Department of Basic Education \(2012\)](#) advocates that to implement positive discipline, the classroom environment must be conducive and suggests the following strategies:

| The classroom environment must be | Description |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
|-----------------------------------|-------------|

| <b>conducive to implement positive discipline</b> |                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                                 | Ground rules must be established                 | Involve learners in setting class rules and re-evaluate them regularly if necessary. Make sure that the learners understand these rules and the logic behind the rules. The rules must be visible, or each learner can get a copy.                                                                                                |
| 2                                                 | Implement these rules seriously and consistently | To be fair and consistent, classroom rules should apply to all learners firmly. Fairness and consistency assist with relationship-building, which is an essential component when implementing discipline procedures.                                                                                                              |
| 3                                                 | Focus on building relationships                  | To build relationships, educators must listen to the learners and talk to them. Lay a foundation for free and open communication. Respect the learners for whom they are.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 4                                                 | Behave in a professional way                     | Educators must prepare thoroughly, be on time, have activities ready for fast learners prepared to keep them busy while others are still working on their assignments. Be prepared to evaluate your own behaviour and try to improve.                                                                                             |
| 5                                                 | Learning material                                | Make sure that learning and teaching material is relevant to the topic and facilitate opportunities for learners to practice their skills. Employ a cooperative learning environment where learners learn to work together. Use learning and teaching materials relevant to the needs of all the learners to further inclusivity. |
| 6                                                 | Give learners opportunities to succeed           | If learners feel successful, they tend to behave better. Educators must not always acknowledge the learners who do well, but the efforts of slow learners must also be praised and rewarded                                                                                                                                       |
| 7                                                 | Involve the learners                             | Learners must be involved in making rules. If they feel part of the process, they will be more willing to follow the rules. Make learners responsible for specific duties in the class and stress their responsibility and successful execution of their tasks                                                                    |
| 8                                                 | Make use of professional assistance              | Educators must identify and use resources from the community like psychologists, counsellors, other professionals, and social workers as a support structure. Websites are essential sources of information for educators and learners                                                                                            |

Oosthuizen (2009) as well as Darjan and Tomita (2014) distinguish between two approaches to the management of discipline, namely 1) the reactive approach and 2) the proactive approach. The reactive approach includes punishment after learners behave in an undisciplined manner.

Proactive activities are restorative disciplinary methods that are supportive and aim to create conditions that prevent or deter indiscipline. Educators have the skills necessary to deal with them and restore the situation (Guyana, 2018). Proactive instead of reactive measures facilitate positive relationship building. Educators must focus on what goes right and not on what goes wrong (Prins et al., 2019)



To strengthen the idea of practical classroom management skills, UNESCO (2006, pp. 26-27) proposed the following strategies to deal with discipline in the classroom as opposed to punishment:

| <b>Positive Discipline (Proactive approach)</b>                                     | <b>Punishment (Reactive approach)</b>                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Giving children positive alternatives                                               | Being told only what not to do                                                                                                                           |
| Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour                                            | Reacting harshly to misbehaviour                                                                                                                         |
| Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon                       | When children follow the rules because they are threatened or bribed                                                                                     |
| Consistency and firm guidance                                                       | Controlling, shaming, and ridiculing                                                                                                                     |
| Positive, respectful of the child                                                   | Negative and disrespectful of the child                                                                                                                  |
| Physically and verbally non-violent                                                 | Physically and verbally violent and aggressive                                                                                                           |
| Logical consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour                  | Consequences that are unrelated and illogical to the misbehaviour                                                                                        |
| When children must make amends when their behaviour negatively affects someone else | When children are punished for hurting others, rather than shown how to make amends                                                                      |
| Understanding individual abilities, needs, circumstances, and developmental stages  | Inappropriate to the child's developmental stage of life                                                                                                 |
| Teaching children to internalize self-discipline                                    | Teaching children to behave well only when they risk getting caught doing otherwise                                                                      |
| Listening and modelling                                                             | Constantly reprimanding children for minor infractions causing them to tune us out (ignore us; not listen to us)                                         |
| Using mistakes as learning opportunities                                            | Forcing children to comply with illogical rules "just because you said so" Directed at the child's behaviour, never the child – your behaviour was wrong |

Educator intervention in the discipline process must be based on changing behaviour (Erchul, 2013) and the child's development as a whole (Western Cape Department of Education, 2007). Schools must teach learners the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior and how negative behaviour disrupts educator-learner relationships. Learners must learn that breaking school rules is an adverse action and a disruption to mutually acceptable relationships. School rules and regulations are essential for a positive school climate, but they must be enforced by a positive educator-learner relationship (Western Cape Department of Education, 2007).

## 2.2 CONCLUSION

Positive discipline can be used as a successful vehicle to enhance effective educator-learner relationships. There are many strategies, and innovative educators can devise their own strategies to suit the learners' situation and background.

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# 3

## Study Unit 3

### What is positive educator-learner relationships?

#### *Outcomes for this study unit*

---

*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- define the concept of educator-learner relationship;
  - explain the benefits of positive educator-learner relationships; and
  - identify the challenges educators experience when trying to build positive educator-learner relationships.
- 



*Time*

*This Study Unit takes approximately 1 hour to complete successfully*

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research done by Egeberg (2020) points out that effective classroom management constitutes *warm-hearted relationships, instructional and behaviour* management. Research shows that learners perceive effective classroom managers as those educators who endeavour to build caring, respectful relationships and at the same time cultivate learner responsibility and uplift the responsibility of the learners in their learning and progress (Egeberg & McConney 2017). Educator-learner relationships impact learner engagement positively in schools, learner attitudes towards education, and their preparedness to adjust emotionally and socially (Spilt et al., 2011). Since positive educator-learner relationships lead to human dignity and self-worth, are built on moral values like respect, and focus on the group and togetherness, it is ideal for enhancing the teaching and learning environment (Cook et al., 2018; Sparks, 2019).

### 3.1.1 The concept of educator-learner relationships

See activity 3.1.1 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Wubbels et al. (2014) define educator-learner relationships as "the generalised interpersonal meaning" (p. 364) that learners and educators ascribe to their day-to-day and moment-to-moment interactions as building blocks to their reciprocal relationship with one another.

Hart and Hodson (2004) hold that "relationships in a classroom are essentially the interplay of needs—needs of the learners and needs of the educator" (p. 25). Learners come to class with the need to learn and belong, the need for freedom, competence, fun, and autonomy. Educators in the relationship-based classroom must acknowledge and meet these needs if they want the learners to feel safe and respond to classroom activities (Brown et al., 2015). Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) believe that learners in rural schools (where this research was done) are subjected to challenging situations like lack of parental support and an unsupportive school environment due to a lack of funds overcrowded classrooms. When learners realise that the educator is interested in their academic performance and them as a person, their level of trust expands.

Educator-learner relationships received a new interest after corporal punishment was outlawed. New innovative approaches were sought to deal with behaviour problems. These approaches include restorative elements that aim to make learners progress academically, experience a sense of well-being, and build positive relationships with peers and educators (Western Cape Department of Education, 2007).

Educator-learner relationships can be seen as the foundation to assist learners in becoming engaged in their schoolwork and motivation to study (Varga, 2017).

### 3.1.2 The effect of positive educator-learner relationships

See activity 2.1.2 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Positive educator-learner relationships decrease the indiscipline of learners in the classroom (Obadire, & Sinthumule, 2021). Positive educator-learner relationships are a core principle of the teaching and learning environment and present the profession and its people with such a wide range of possible teaching and learning benefits (Brinkworth et al., 2018) and learner performance (Claessens et al., 2017). For learners to have a positive relationship with supportive educators combined with early specialist intervention can prevent a spiral of behaviour problems like rejection by peers and educators, social and academic failure, and school dropout (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013; Kourkoutas, 2012).

### 3.1.2.1 The effect of educator-learner relationships on the academic progress of learners

Learners who experience positive educator-learner relationships:

- achieve higher grades (Konishi & Wong, 2018).
- make learners and educators feel better about themselves and (Mardiyah, 2019).
- fewer behaviour problems are experienced (Mahvar et al., 2018)
- positive educator-learner relationships not only improve academic progress but are a means of rectifying the damage done to relationship-building by digital and electronic media.

Learners spending lots of time watching television or doing schoolwork through other digital media lose the ability to build positive relationships with people. It is not required of them to develop personal relationships with television characters or other digital media like computers. This influences their academic progress (Rowan et al., 2010; Rowan, 2017).

### 3.1.2.2 The effect of educator-learner relationships on educator and learner well-being

Zolkoski (2019) highlights that positive educator-learner relationships assist the emotional, academic, and social-emotional growth of learners and the well-being of educators.

Spilt et al., (2011) hold that educators who experience positive educator-learner relationships are more fulfilled and satisfied in their profession, resulting in added motivation to contribute to their career.

A study done by Johnson (2016) revealed that learners feel a need to belong and call for school connectedness and a caring, safe environment where educators fulfil their parental role in the learning environment. Especially learners experiencing hardships at home or coming from poverty-stricken single-parent homes require stable adult educators to guide them in decision-making skills.

Ebersöhn (2015) argues that schools and educators should fulfil that role.

### 3.1.2.3 Educator-learner relationships as a proactive approach to restoring discipline in the classroom

Liebenberg (2013) and Turnaround for Children (2016) plead for a proactive or preventative approach that focuses on proper behaviour and emphasizes the learners' strong points. This approach promotes values, responsibility, insight and understanding of behaviour, and undisciplined behaviour consequences like the proactive approach. Broken educator-learner relationships can be healed through this approach, and indiscipline can be restored.

Sparks (2019) advocate strong educator-learner relationships as a proactive approach to deal with discipline in the classroom because it is associated with long- and short-term benefits on just about every aspect of school life, namely 1) curbing indiscipline, 2) better academic engagement, 3) better

academic performance, 4) fewer school dropouts, as well as 5) benefits for the educator for positive relationships predict work satisfaction. Zolkoski (2019) emphasizes that positive educator-learner relationships strongly impact behavioural, academic, and social-emotional development and willingness to engage in acceptable behaviour.

### 3.1.3 The demeanour of the educators

See activity 2.1.2 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

Another essential fact that educators must remember is that everything an educator does has significance for classroom management and discipline management because the two are interconnected. These actions include aspects like room decorations, classroom settings, chair arrangements, speaking to learners, handling learner responses, setting classroom rules and routines, and communicating these rules to learners. (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016).

The personal demeanour of the educators as an essential component in building educator-learner relationships was emphasised. In class and after school, educators must be aware of how they behave (Puckett, 016).

Kunac and Batarelo (2019) made it clear that that educator must be role models at all times to uphold a positive image of the teaching profession in their communities

### 3.1.4 Challenges faced by educators in the uMzinyathi district to build positive educator-learner relationships.



See activity 3.1.4 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

| Research themes                                             | What research data collected in the uMzinyathi District reveals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Negative attitudes of some learners                         | Research data suggest that negative learner attitudes and negative views about teachers in society make it very difficult for teachers to build relationships. Learners are uncooperative and more concerned with their own relationships than building one with the educator                                                                                                                                                         |  <p>Rejection of educators by learners</p>                                                                                                                                  |
| Time constraints, work overload, and overcrowded classrooms | <p>A major constraint in building educator-learner relationships was time factors. Educators are often overloaded with admin tasks and unnecessary paperwork and battle to get through their work. These extra duties take the educators away from their classes</p> <p>Overcrowded classes make it difficult to build relationships with specific learners.</p> <p>Time constraints<br/>Overcrowded classrooms<br/>Work overload</p> |    |
| Stress and frustration                                      | Stress poses a significant problem to educators to fulfil their professional role as an educator. Stress and frustration take away your joy and impact negatively on behaviour. The learners experience that, and it makes them feel unsafe.                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| No standard approach to discipline                          | Building positive educator-learner relationships is complicated because there is no standard approach to discipline among educators.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Lack of parental and community support                      | A breakdown in relationships between educators, parents, and community involvement is not at a satisfactory level. This complicates the building of relationships to a large extent.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  <p>Cooperation is the key to success</p>                                                                                                                                 |

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| External bad influences | The bad external influence was pinpointed as destructive for the school and often hindered all educators' building relationships. Societal ill influence learners negatively towards the school and the educators. |  |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 3.2 CONCLUSION

Positive educator-learner relationships have many benefits. It is beneficial for educator and learner health, but it also enhances the academic progress of learners.



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Module 3

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## 4

## Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline

### Study Unit 4

#### Outcomes for this study unit

*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- define positive and negative educator-learner relationship-building strategies; and
- apply positive educator-learner relationship-building strategies.



*Time*

*This Study Unit takes approximately 1 hour to complete successfully*

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

### 4.1.1 Positive strategies

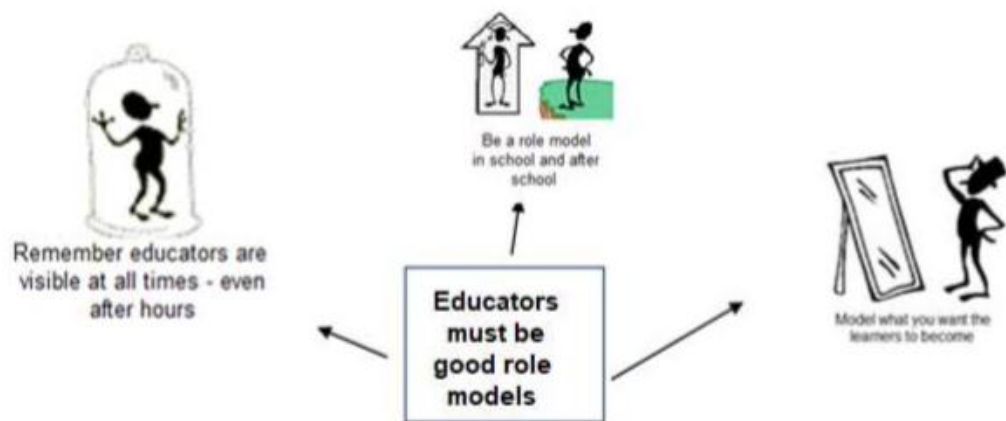
See activity 4.1.1 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.

As an alternative to corporal punishment, [Mardliyah \(2019\)](#) suggests that building "mutually respectful relationships with learners" (p. 7) may have a positive effect on discipline management in the classroom.

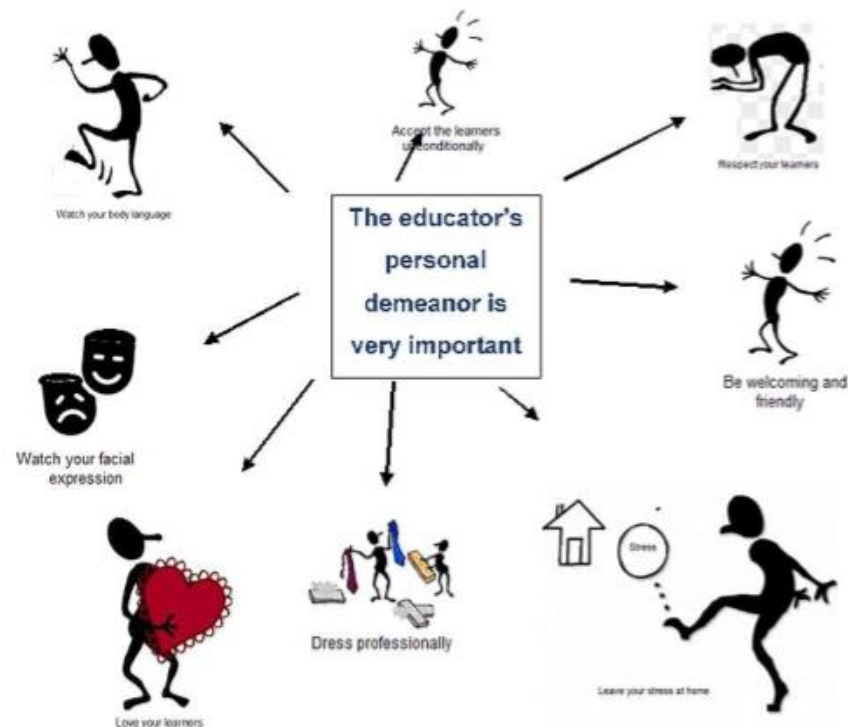
The educators in the uMzinyathi district compiled a list of strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships. This list is by no means exhaustive. Innovative educators can add many more strategies to this list depending on the level of the learners and the circumstances.



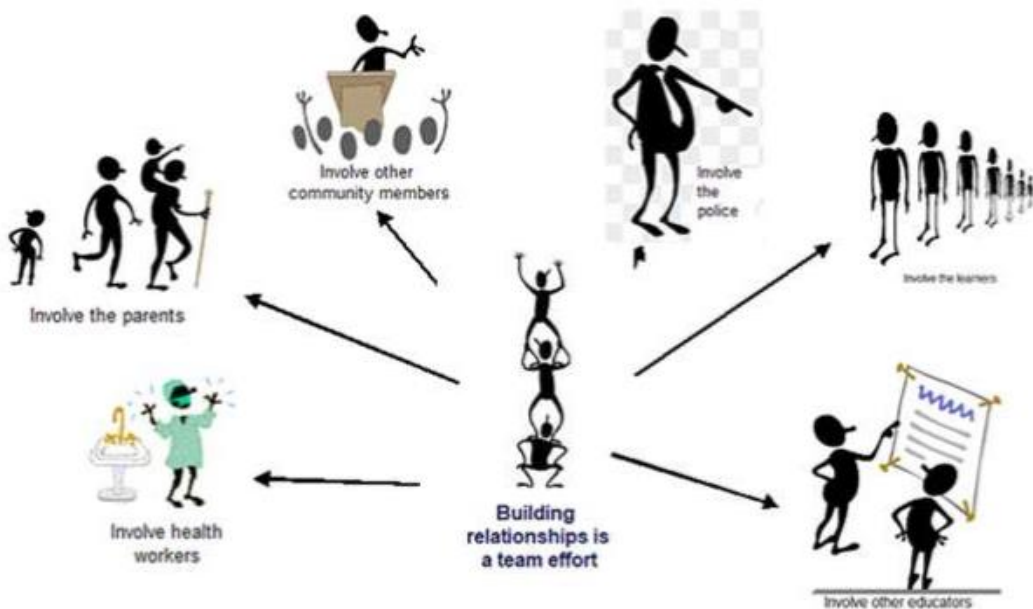
To successfully build positive educator-learner relationships, educators must be good role models.



As part of relationship-building, educators must be aware of the fact that their whole demeanour



Educator-learner relationship building is a team effort of all the stakeholders in the school.

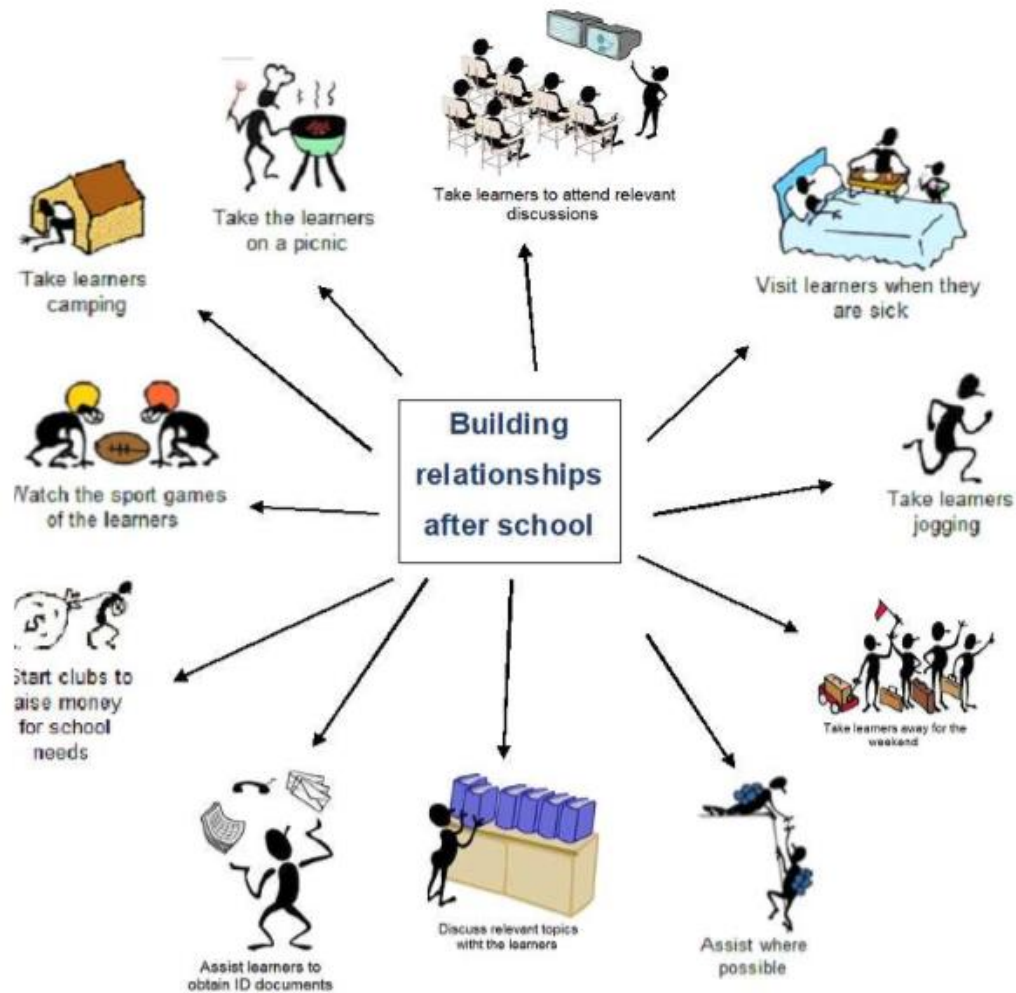


The educators identified drugs as a significant problem in their schools, and educators must update themselves with ways to deal with such learners.

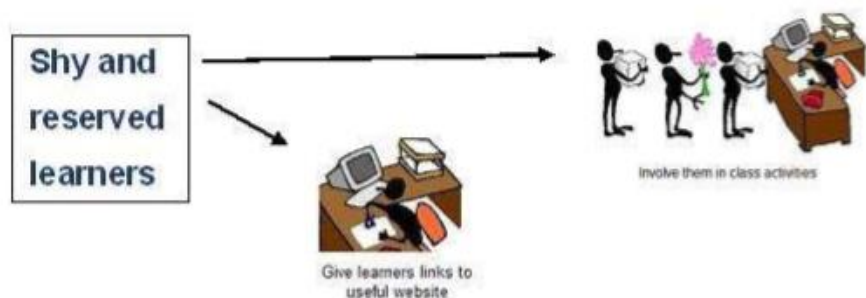




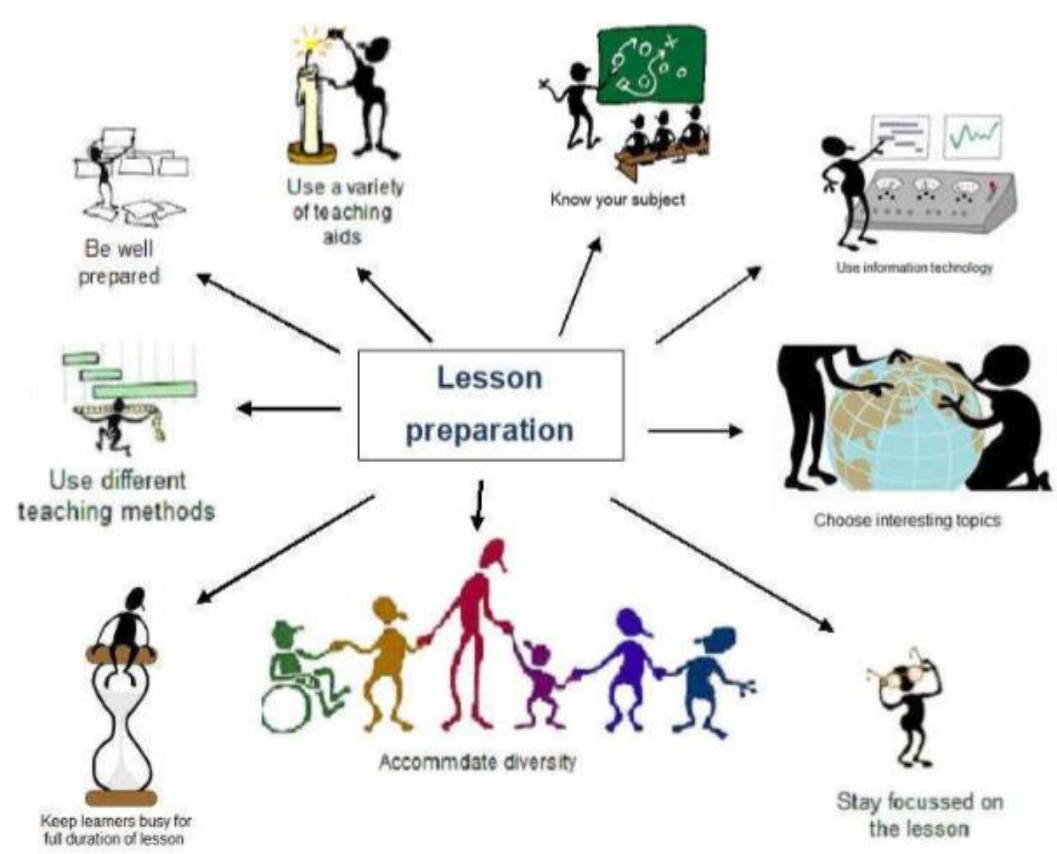
Educators must endeavour to build positive educator-learner relationships after school hours.



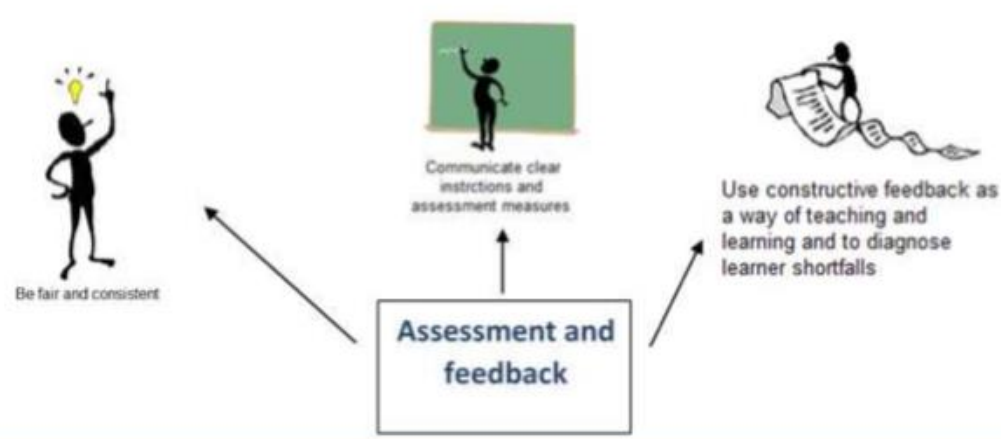
Shy and reserved learners need special attention from their educators.



Lesson preparation and the way educators teach learners can be used as an effective way to ensure that learners want to come to class and respect the educator.

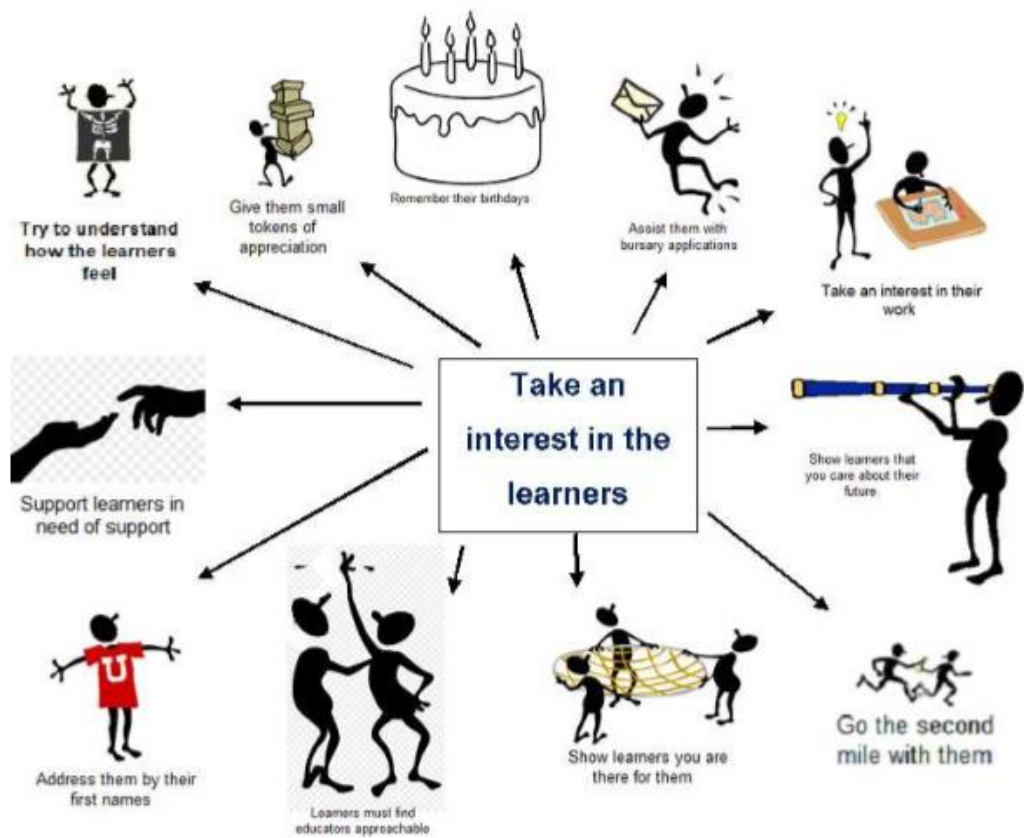


Assessment and feedback have unique traits to enhance teaching and learning and to make the learners feel respected. In turn, learners will respect their educators more.

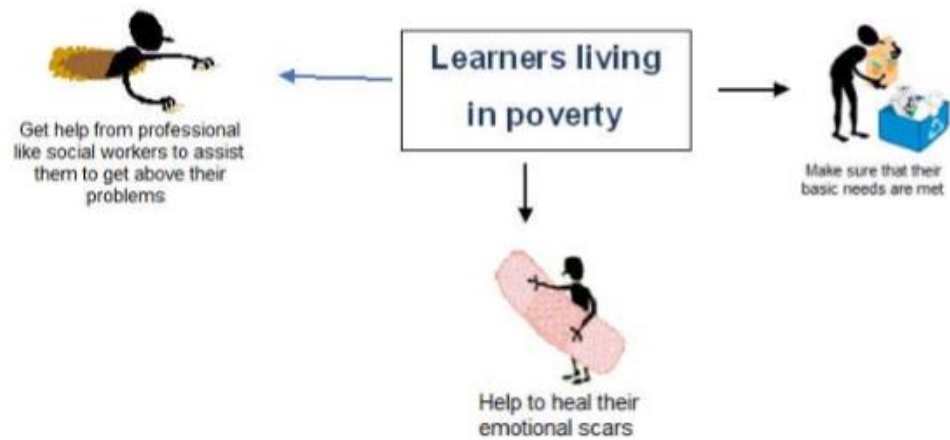




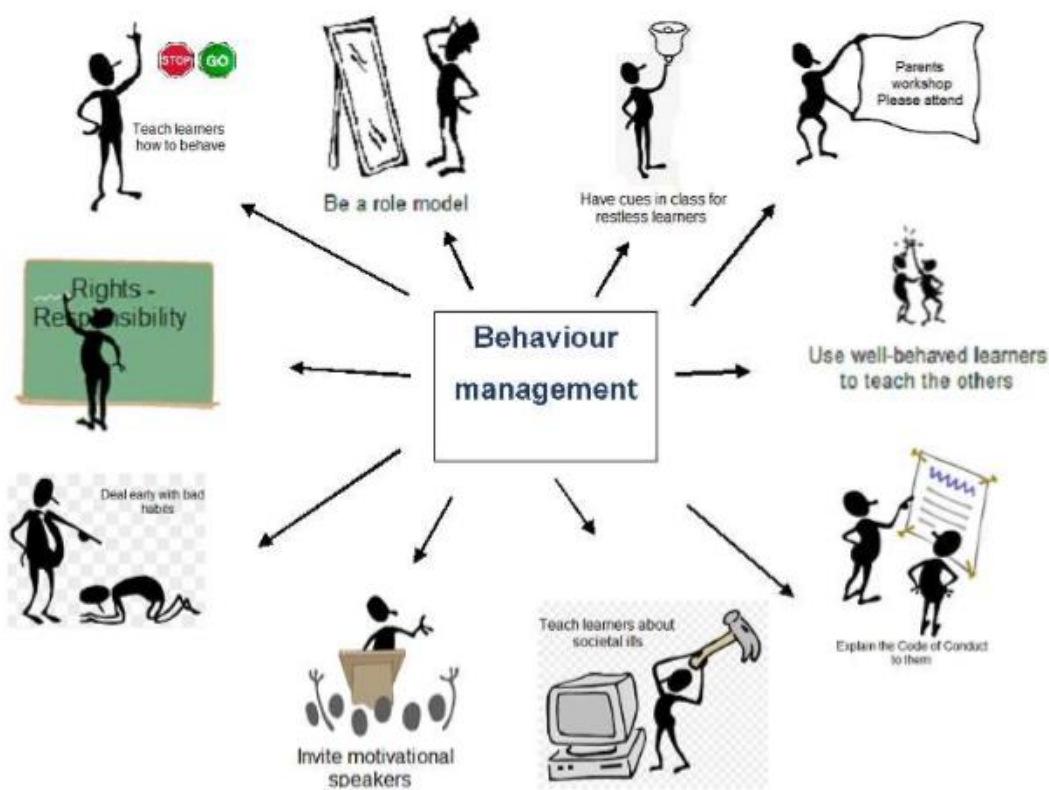
To create a welcoming class climate, educators must take an interest in their learners



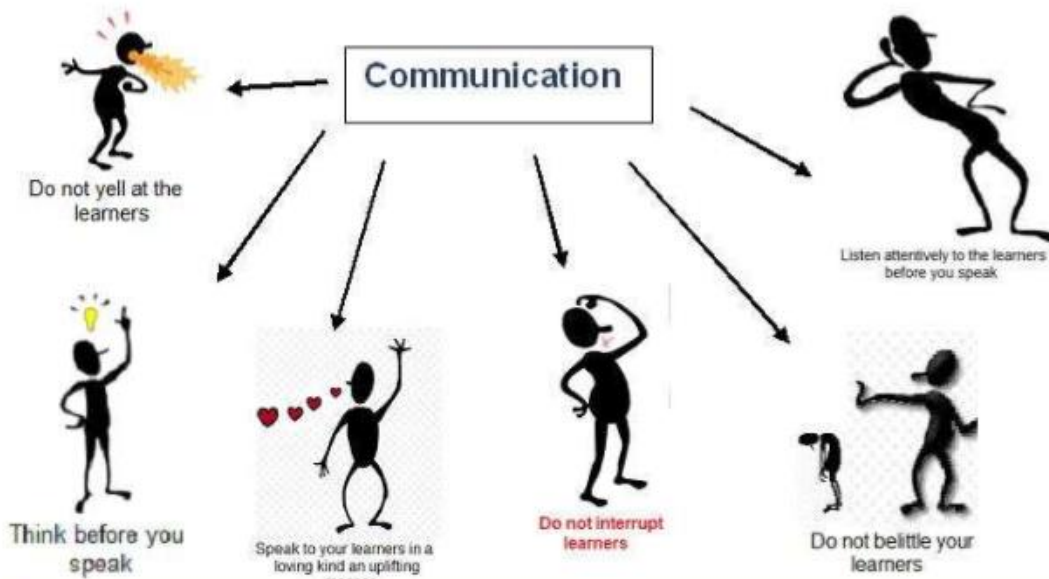
Learners living in poverty need special care and attention from their educators.



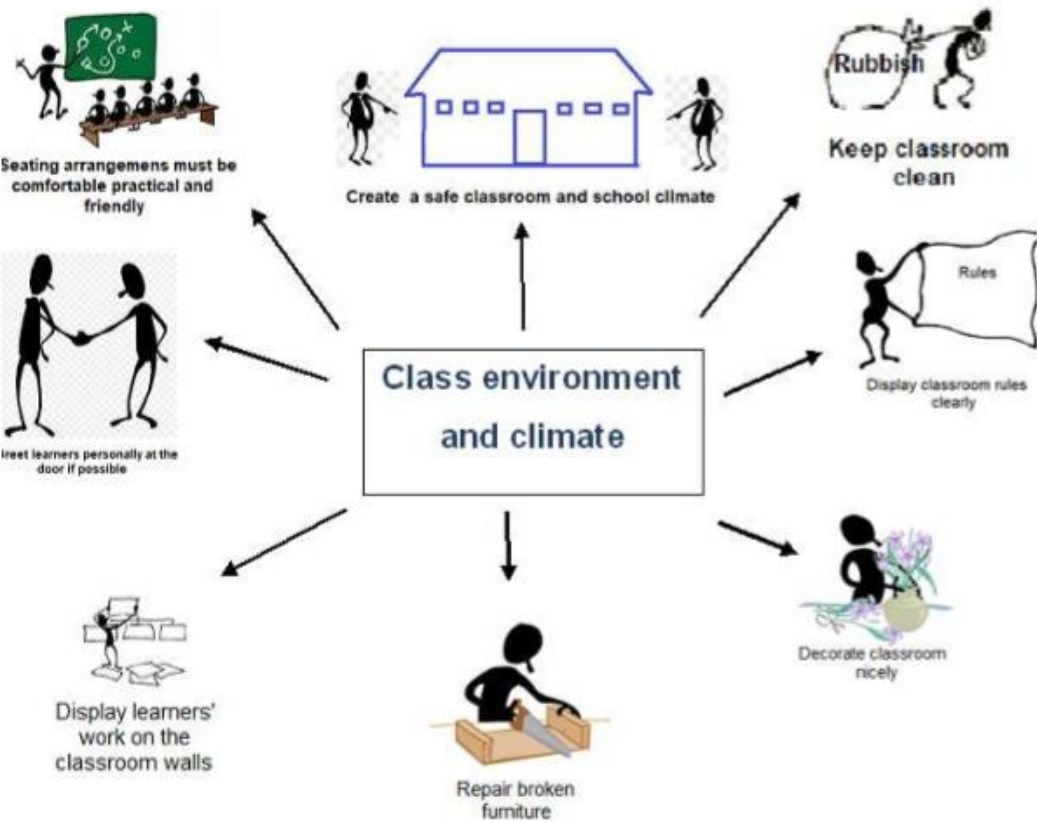
Behaviour management is an excellent way of helping learners to feel secure in the classroom. If they know their boundaries, it allows them to feel safe.



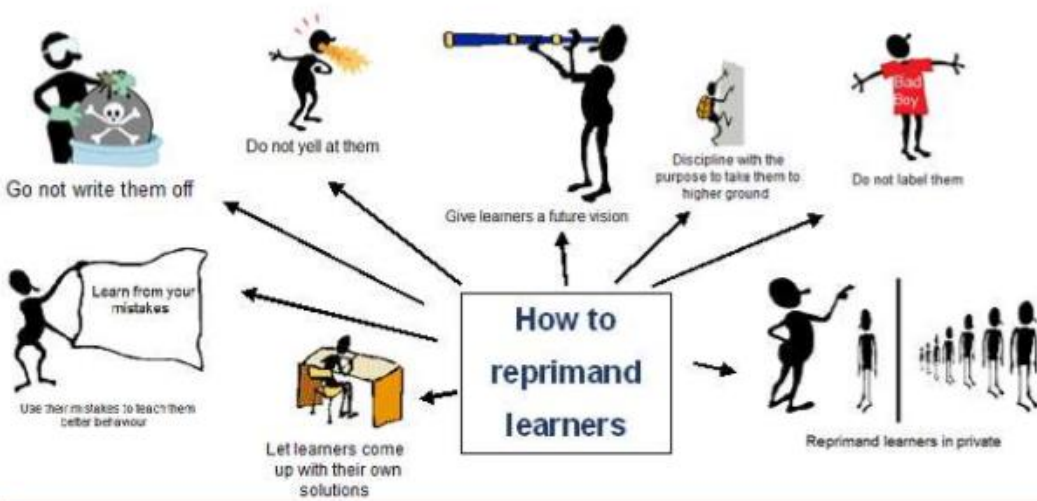
Proper communication enhances educator-learner relationship building.



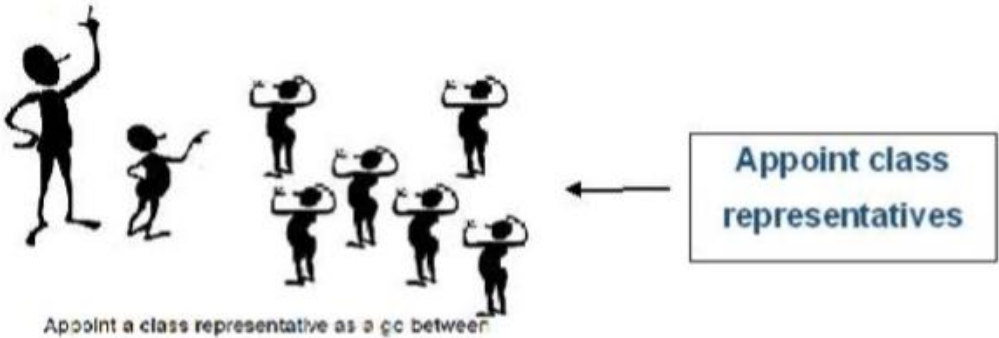
The class environment and climate play an essential role in educator-learner relationship building. Learners must feel welcome and safe in class.



The way educators reprimand learners can make or break a relationship

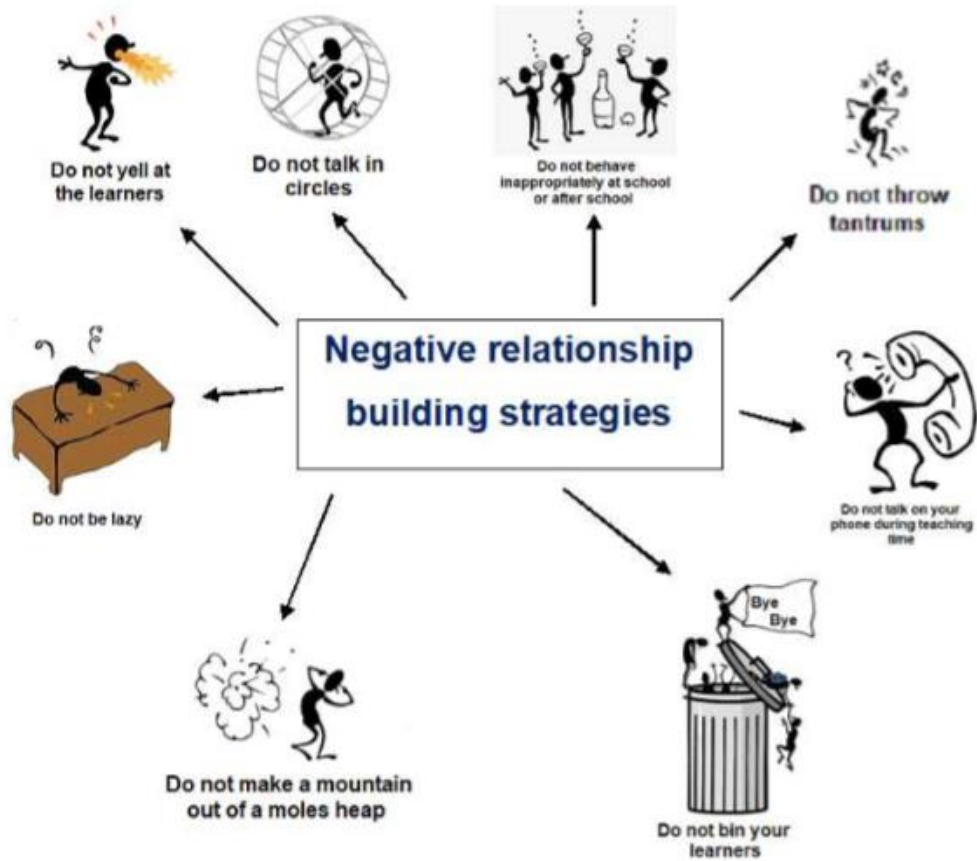


The class representative can assist the educator in creating a climate of trust in the classroom to facilitate positive educator-learner relationships.



4.1.2 Negative strategies

See activity 4.1.2 in your participant's manual for more details on the activity.



## 4.2 CONCLUSION

Building positive educator relationships is of the utmost importance. Educators must be innovative and creative in devising strategies to win the hearts of their learners.

## List of References

Mardliyah, I. (2019). *Teacher strategies in handling students' misbehaviour in English class of Junior High School 22 Surabaya*. Thesis Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd) in Teaching English.  
[http://digilib.uinsby.ac.id/30270/1/Istianatul%20Mardliyah\\_D75214037.pdf](http://digilib.uinsby.ac.id/30270/1/Istianatul%20Mardliyah_D75214037.pdf)

# 5

## Study Unit 5

### What is a Future Creating Workshop?

#### *Outcomes for this study unit*

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*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- know what a future creating workshop is; and
  - apply a Future Creating Workshop at your school to collaboratively find solutions to problems at your school,
- 



*Time*

*This Study Unit takes approximately 1½ hours to complete successfully*

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In a fast-changing world, businesses and other professionals must continuously adapt to challenges and changes (Strohmann et al., 2018). Dedicated people can enhance creative thinking through Future Creating Workshops (FCWs). An FCW is an increasingly popular, dynamic, flexible workshop that involves people directly in decision-making processes with future benefits. It is presented in four phases:

Preparation Phase: the method and rules to be followed during the workshop are negotiated during this phase. No criticism is allowed, and members may speak freely. The problem under scrutiny was determined.

Critique phase: The problem is investigated critically and thoroughly. First, a brainstorming session is performed, and a general and critical question concerning the issue is framed. Any common problem educators experience at school can be discussed.



## Module 5

Fantasy or visionary phase: All participants work out a vision for the future and possible solutions.

Implementation phase: The possible solutions are checked and evaluated regarding their practicability. Discussions are related to the first step to achieve the vision.

A Future Creating Workshop seeks answers to practical questions or problems by bringing together people from different backgrounds who share a common problem or task. Discussing the problem with the people concerned increases people's participation in solving problems collaboratively. FCWs are aimed at bringing about change and solving problems. FCWs can be a once-off event or a series of events, depending on the complicity of the problem under investigation.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

*With permission from management, any educator at the school can conduct a FCW with other educators concerning a common problem.*



## List of References

Strohmann, T., Fischer, S., Siemon, D., Brachten, F., Lattemann, C., Robra-Bissantz, S., & Stieglitz, S. (2018). *Virtual Moderation Assistance: Creating Design Guidelines for Virtual Assistants Supporting Creative Workshops*. PACIS. Proceedings. 80.  
<https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2018/80>

# 6

## Study Unit 6

### Conclusion to the short learning program

#### *Outcomes for this study unit*

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*After completing this study unit, you should be able to:*

- know what a future creating workshop is; and
  - apply a future creating workshop at your school to collaboratively find solutions to problems at your school,
- 



*Time*

*This Study Unit takes approximately ½ an hour to complete successfully*

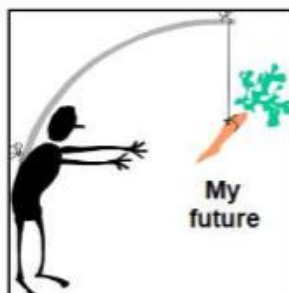
#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Building positive educator-learner relationships is time-consuming and demands perseverance from the side of the educators. But in the end, it will be beneficial for both educators and learners.

##### **6.1.1 To influence your learners for the better is a balancing act.**



**6.1.2 You as the educator must hold their future and well-being as a carrot before them to motivate them to do their best.**



**6.1.3 Positive educator-learner relationships are the foundation to assist your learners in climbing the mountain**



Watch this video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tznztJVsW9E>

### **6.1.4 Useful websites**

Positive discipline

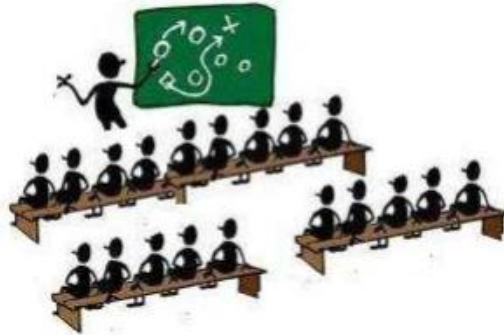
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### **6.1.5 More links to interesting videos**

## 6.2 CONCLUSION

This short learning program is by no means an exhaustive reference guide. This is only a guideline.

Educators can improvise many more strategies to use in the classroom to solve indiscipline in the school.



**EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP  
BUILDING AS THE CORNERSTONE TO ASSIST  
EDUCATORS TO DEAL WITH DISCIPLINE  
RELATED ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.**

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**FACILITATOR'S MANUAL**

# Facilitator's manual

## Study unit 1

### The theoretical grounding behind discipline in the classroom and school community?

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1.1 Ice breaker

**See point 1.1.1 in your participant's manual for details.**

Previously you used a 60-inch-long wooden stick to assist you with discipline in the classroom. As you know this is not allowed anymore. You do not like to throw things away. What else can you use the rod for now?



Ask the educators to write down their suggestions in the participant's manual and the group leaders report back to the rest of the attendees.

##### 1.1.2 Video

**See point 1.1.2 in your participant's manual for details.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_ee7-XrH6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_ee7-XrH6E)

### 1.1.3 Discussion

See point 1.1.3 in your participant's manual for details.

Indiscipline can be divided into three groups, namely "disruption to teaching, defiance and disrespect towards teaching, and educator targeted bullying" (p. 6).

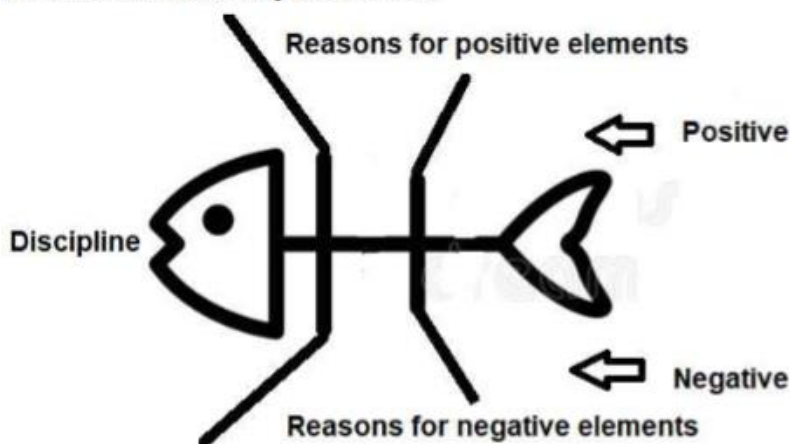
How do you experience this problem in your school?

### 1.1.4 Fishbone activity

See point 1.1.4 in your participant's manual for details

In your groups discuss the negative and the positive elements of discipline in your school.

**Positive elements in your school**



**Negative elements in your school**

Brainstorm session. Draw the fishbone diagram on the blackboard and ask one of the educators to come and complete the diagram on the blackboard using the feedback from the groups.

### 1.1.5 Reasons why discipline must be managed at school

See point 1.1.5 in your participant's manual for details.

To lessen the consequences of indiscipline in the schools, learner behaviour must be managed. The management of learner behaviour is important because indiscipline not only harms the well-being of educators and learners but also the academic progress of the learners.

In your groups, discuss the reasons why discipline must be managed.

#### **1.1.6 How to lessen indiscipline in the classroom**

**See point 1.1.6 in your participant's manual for details.**

Educators with fewer discipline problems are usually those educators who can establish effective classroom procedures and utilise available instruction time effectively.

In your groups discuss this statement. The group leader must report back to the rest of the attendees.

#### **1.1.7 Effective classroom management**

**See point 1.1.7a in your participant's manual for details.**

After the educators did activity 1.1.7a in the participant's manual read the following to them:

Teaching and learning rest on two intertwined components:

- how the educator's professional way of behaving promotes learning,
- how the classroom is managed.

The educators' professional behaviour comprises:

- the way they think
- the way they act or react
- the way they communicate

Unprofessional behaviour comprises:

- being ill-prepared
- late coming
- being disorganised

The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline but separate from classroom instruction.

#### **1.1.7b What else can you think of as professional educator behaviour?**

**See point 1.1.7b in your participant's manual for details.**

Group discussion. The group leader must report back to the other attendees.

#### **1.1.7c What else can you think of as unprofessional educator behaviour?**

**See point 1.1.7c in your participant's manual for details**



Group discussion. The group leader must report back to the other attendees.

#### **1.1.8 Watch the videos**

**See point 1.1.8 in your participant's manual for details.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz-jCBx5iD0>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6_8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC3D7O-ByLE>

#### **1.1.9 The educator's role in classroom management**

**See point 1.1.9 in your participant's manual for details.**

The concept of classroom management is often used interchangeably with discipline but separate from classroom instruction. The educator's role in classroom management has more to do with factors within a teacher's control than with those located within the student.

Educators have different roles to play at school. As manager of the classroom certain duties come to the fore.

What are these duties?

On a clean sheet of paper draw a stick figure performing one duty an educator is responsible for in classroom management. Come and stick your drawing on the blackboard and in one sentence explain your drawing.

Your 'duty' may not overlap with one that is on the board already.

Skilful educators experience fewer disciplinary problems because they are good at instituting procedures in the classroom that maximize the time available for instruction and as such minimise discipline problems. These educators for example make sure that the lesson is not too fast or too slow and they ensure learner task-on behaviours. Management issues can be far less problematic when educators employ a stimulating curriculum integrated with engaging and supportive guidance.

After reading – watch the video.

#### 1.1.10 Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKCh8N2kkcY>

#### 1.1.11 The learner-centred classroom

**See point 1.1.11 in your participant's manual for details.**

Closely related to classroom management is the concept of learner-centred classrooms as part of classroom management. In contrast with the traditional teacher-centred classroom, the learner-centred classroom is gaining popularity.

Complete the quiz in the participants manual.

Say if the following statements are true or false:

#### Memorandum

| Statement |                                                                                                               | True | False |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|
| 1         | Learner-centred activities focus on the typical everyday topics where possible                                | x    |       |
| 2         | In the learner-centred classroom, the focus is on the activity                                                | x    |       |
| 3         | In the teacher-centred classroom, the focus is on the learner                                                 |      | x     |
| 4         | In learner-centred classrooms, the learners are quiet and work hard because they are interested in the topic. |      | x     |
| 5         | In the teacher-centred classroom, the learners teach one another                                              |      | x     |
| 6         | In the teacher-centred classroom, the students work in groups                                                 |      | x     |
| 7         | In the learner-centred classroom, the educator is the facilitator                                             | x    |       |
| 8         | In the teacher-centred classroom, the purpose of the activity determines the group work topics                |      | x     |
| 9         | In the learner-centred classroom, the focus is on the instructor                                              | x    |       |
| 10        | In the learner-centred classroom, the learners wait for feedback from the educator                            |      | x     |
| 11        | In the teacher-centred classroom, the educator answers the learners' questions.                               | x    |       |
| 12        | In the teacher-centred classroom, the learners choose the topics                                              |      | x     |

|    |                                                                                             |   |   |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| 13 | In the learner-centred classroom, the students evaluate their own learning                  | x |   |
| 14 | The learner-centred classroom is always noisy and disorganised                              |   | x |
| 15 | The learner-centred classroom is often noisy                                                | x |   |
| 16 | The educator in the learner-centred classroom needs specific skills to manage the classroom | x |   |

Ask some of the educators to share what their experiences are in the learner-centred classroom.

## 1.2 CONCLUSION

The management of discipline in the classroom is important.

# Study unit 2

## Positive discipline

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

#### 2.1.1 Ice breaker

**See point 2.1.2 in your participant's manual for details**

You are a language educator. The principal informed you that he will be coming to your class to observe your lesson. You forgot all your teaching aids at home. All you have in class is a paper clip, a memory stick, and a box of tissues. You want to teach sentence structure to the learners. Combine all three of these items into one sentence to use as an example sentence.

#### 2.1.2 Discipline must be managed

##### 2.1.2a Whole group discussion

**See point 2.1.2a in your participant's manual for details.**

The growing incidence of disruptive behaviour in schools is posing a challenge to everybody and needs to be tackled by every means at our disposal. To manage discipline requires a

complete paradigm shift. The emphasis must comprise a move from controlling learner behaviour to a more developmental approach that equips children with the knowledge and skills to better moderate their own behaviour.

Discipline management must aim at creating a classroom climate that is conducive to satisfactory academic achievement.

Points of discussion - whole group:

- Do you have a Code of Conduct at your school?
- Who drafted the Code of Conduct at your school?
- Are the learners familiar with the Code of Conduct at your school?
- Is the Code of Conduct implemented successfully at your school?
- Do you experience problems when implementing the Code of Conduct?

#### **2.1.2b Debate**

**See point 2.1.2b in your participant's manual for details.**

Divide the group into two groups of three and the rest of the attendees must be the audience.

The two topics to be debated is:

**The SGB and the educators must draft the school's code of conduct without learner input.**

**Or**

**The learners must be involved in drafting the school's code of conduct.**

After each group presented their case to the audience the audience takes to a vote.

#### **2.1.3 What is positive discipline?**

**See point 2.1.3 in your participant's manual for details**

Positive discipline rests on several principles:

Match the description in the second column with the statement in the first column:

**Memorandum:**

| <b>Principle of positive discipline</b> | <b>Description</b> |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|

|   |                                            |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---|--------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Positive discipline must be holistic       | A | All learners have strengths and discipline must concentrate on building on these strengths. Mistakes must be seen as learning opportunities and not as failures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2 | Positive discipline must be strength-based | B | Positive discipline respect equal rights and individual differences. Educators must teach according to the needs of each child and all learners have the right to the same educational standard within an inclusive classroom. To achieve this the classroom environment must be adapted to accommodate teaching aids and strategies conducive to inclusive education.                                                  |
| 3 | Positive discipline must be constructive   | C | Through positive discipline, educators must endeavour to build the learners' self-esteem and confidence. Educators must foster learner independence and build a sense of self-efficacy instead of punishing mistakes. Educators must guide learner behaviour in a positive direction by teaching and modelling acceptable behaviour.                                                                                    |
| 4 | Positive discipline is inclusive           | D | When learners feel part of the class and the learning process, they are motivated and more eager to participate. Educators must make the learners feel welcome by asking their opinion and include them in decisions. When learners feel out-of-control they behave in an out-of-control manner                                                                                                                         |
| 5 | Positive discipline is proactive           | E | All aspects of children's development and learning must be understood because it is all connected. If educators understand the development of the child, they will understand the reasons for their behaviour.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 6 | Positive discipline is participatory       | F | Discipline measures must aim at assisting learners to succeed in the long term. Burden (2020) describes the essence of positive discipline as the educators showing concern for the learners by involving the learners to see the consequences of their actions. In doing so the educators must guide the learners to come up with their own solutions to the problems. Educators must teach learners to behave better. |

1. F
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. F
6. D

#### 2.1.4 Ways of implementing positive discipline

See point 2.1.4 in your participant's manual for details.

Put the following topics in a container and each group must draw a topic. Give them 3 minutes to prepare and then come and explain their topic to the audience.

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| Focus on the positive |
|-----------------------|

Educators must set a good example

Listen before judging

Educators must be fair and consistent

Separate the child from the behaviour

Cultivate mutual respect

After their presentations read the following:

| Ways of implementing positive discipline |                                       | Description                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                        | Focus on the positive                 | Educators must support positive behaviour because this encourages the possibility of learners wanting to repeat that behaviour.                                                      |
| 2                                        | Educators must set a good example     | Learners observe what people do around them and if the educators model acceptable behaviour learners have good role models to follow.                                                |
| 3                                        | Listen before judging                 | Educators must first endeavour to find out why the learners misbehave before making an issue out of it. Maybe they have a good reason and can explain that.                          |
| 4                                        | Educators must be fair and consistent | Avoid showing favouritism. Be fair and consistent by applying the same rules to everyone.                                                                                            |
| 5                                        | Separate the child from the behaviour | If a learner made a mistake, it does not make him a bad person. Focus on the behaviour and what needs to be done to change the behaviour and the learner to learn from his mistakes. |
| 6                                        | Cultivate mutual respect              | If educators respect learners and treat them with dignity it is more likely that learners will return that respect                                                                   |

### **2.1.5 The classroom environment must be conducive to implement positive discipline**

#### **2.1.5a Positive versus punitive discipline**



**See point 2.1.5a in your participant's manual for details.**

Study the following ways of discipline. Decide if the statement belongs to positive discipline or punishment/punitive measures.

**Memorandum:**

| Statement                                                                                                                                                | Positive discipline | Punitive discipline |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon                                                                                            | x                   |                     |
| Being told only what not to do                                                                                                                           |                     | x                   |
| Teaching children to internalize self-discipline                                                                                                         | x                   |                     |
| When children must make amends when their behaviour negatively affects someone else                                                                      | x                   |                     |
| Consistency and firm guidance                                                                                                                            | x                   |                     |
| Reacting harshly to misbehaviour                                                                                                                         |                     | x                   |
| When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed                                                                                         |                     | x                   |
| Controlling, shaming and ridiculing                                                                                                                      |                     | x                   |
| Negative and disrespectful of the child                                                                                                                  |                     | x                   |
| Logical consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour                                                                                       | x                   |                     |
| Understanding individual abilities, needs, circumstances, and developmental stages                                                                       | x                   |                     |
| Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour                                                                                                                 | x                   |                     |
| Listening and modelling                                                                                                                                  | x                   |                     |
| Physically and verbally violent and aggressive                                                                                                           |                     | x                   |
| Consequences that are unrelated and illogical to the misbehaviour                                                                                        |                     | x                   |
| Giving children positive alternatives                                                                                                                    | x                   |                     |
| When children are punished for hurting others, rather than shown how to make amends                                                                      |                     | x                   |
| Inappropriate to the child's developmental stage of life                                                                                                 |                     | x                   |
| Physically and verbally non-violent                                                                                                                      | x                   |                     |
| Teaching children to behave well only when they risk getting caught doing otherwise                                                                      |                     | x                   |
| Constantly reprimanding children for minor infractions causing them to tune us out (ignore us; not listen to us)                                         |                     | x                   |
| Using mistakes as learning opportunities                                                                                                                 | x                   |                     |
| Forcing children to comply with illogical rules "just because you said so" Directed at the child's behaviour, never the child – your behaviour was wrong |                     | x                   |
| Positive, respectful of the child                                                                                                                        | x                   |                     |

**2.1.5b Classroom climate**

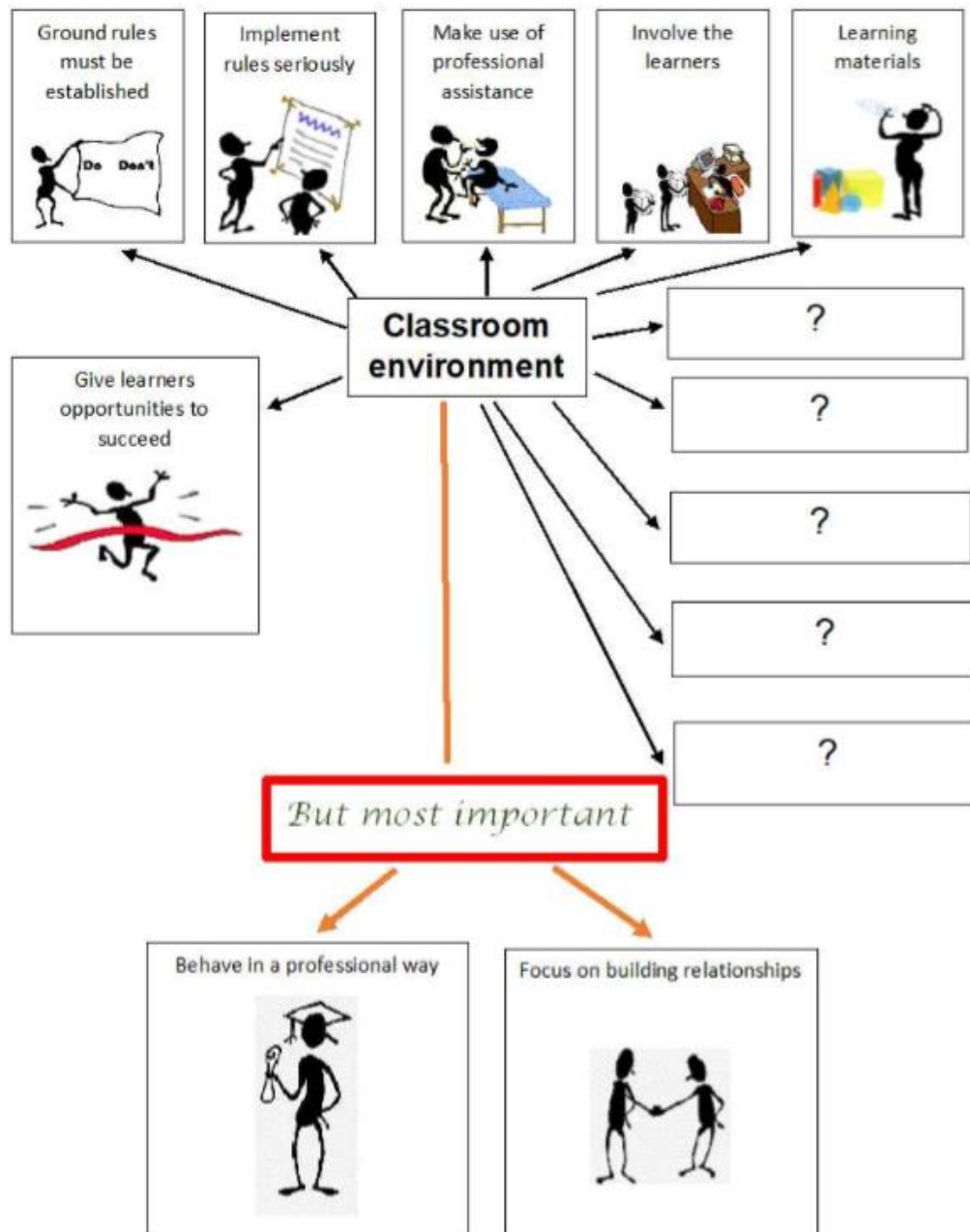
**See point 2.1.5b in your participant's manual for details.**

The topics mentioned in the diagram must be discussed one by one by the group as a whole. The two most important topics must be emphasised and discussed.

Explain that the next study unit (unit 3) will focus on educator-learner relationship building.







## 2.2 CONCLUSION

Positive Discipline is a way of enhancing educator-learner relationship building

## Study unit 3

### What positive educator-learner relationships are all about

An effective learning environment depends on high-quality instruction and respectful educator-learner relationships. If these two components are combined with interesting lessons it is more difficult for them to misbehave because they know that the educators care for them.

During our research, the educators agreed that everything an educator does at school or after hours can make or break the relationship. Positive educator-learner relationships uplift the image of the educators.

#### 3.1.1 The concept of educator-learner relationships

See point 3.1.1 in your participant's manual for details.

##### 3.1.1a Educator characteristics

See point 3.1.1 in your participant's manual for details.

Educator-learner relationships received a new interest after corporal punishment was outlawed.

What characteristics do an educator need to be able to build positive educator-learner relationships:

Write the letters on the board and add the educators' suggestions.

#### Memorandum (It is not an exhaustive list)

- E Empathetic, eager,
- D Dearness, dependable,
- U Unbiased, upright,
- C Caring, concerned, communicator, committed,
- A Approachable
- T Tactful, tolerant
- O Organised
- R Respect,

- 
- L Leader
- E Enthusiastic
- A Attentive, ambitious
- R Reasonable
- N Neat, noticer,
- E Energetic
- R Role model
  
- R Reliable
- E Effective educator
- L Loving, listener
- A Appreciative
- T Trustworthy, tactful,
- I Interested in the learners, innovative,
- O Objective, open-minded,
- N Noble
- S Soft-hearted
- H Helpful, honourable,
- I Inviting classroom climate
- P Passionate, polite
- S Sincere

### **3.1.1b Other important characteristics**

**See point 3.1.1b in your participant's manual for details.**

Are there any other characteristics you can think of that must be part of an educator's personality that can facilitate positive educator-learner relationship building?

Friendliness, .....

.....

.....

### **3.1.2 The effect of positive educator-learner relationships**

**See point 3.1.2 in your participant's manual for details.**

In your groups discuss the effects or benefits of positive educator-learner relationships.

The group leader must report back to the attendees.

### **3.1.3 The demeanour of the educators**

#### **3.1.3a Discussion**

**See point 3.1.3a in your participant's manual for details.**

Ask the groups to read the following paragraph and discuss the content in the groups.

The group leader must report back to the attendees.

*The personal demeanour and work ethics of the educators as an important component in building educator-learner relationships was emphasised. Educators must be friendly, be aware of their facial expressions, dress appropriately and be what the learners expect them to be. Hand signs and body language is important and must portray the correct message.*

*Not only in class but also after school educators must be aware of how they behave. Kunac and Batarelo (2019) made it clear that that educator must be role models at all times to uphold a positive image of the teaching profession in their communities. Puckett (2016) allege that teachers should model exemplary behaviour, both in the class and outside the class. Once you are a teacher people are watching you all the time. Educators might not even be aware of that. Parents and learners do not expect to see a teacher acting in an unacceptable way like extreme drinking out of school. To uphold the honour of the teaching profession educators must act outside of school*

*in an accountable, supportive, trustworthy, professional, attentive, understanding and fair way revealing logical judgement at all times.*

**3.1.3b What kind of demeanour will have a negative influence on educator-learner relationship building?**

**See point 3.1.3b in your participant's manual for details.**

Group discussion. The group leader must report back.

**3.1.4 Challenges faced by educators in the uMzinyathi district to build positive educator-learner relationships**

**See point 3.1.4 in your participant's manual for details.**

Ask some of the educators to prepare a mime on certain challenges faced by educators in their endeavour to build positive educator-learner relationships. The rest of the attendees must guess what is being acted out.

Use the following topics:

- *Negative attitudes of some learners*
- *Time constraints*
- *Work overload*
- *Overcrowded classrooms*
- *Stress and frustration*
- *Lack of parental and community support*
- *External bad influences*

**3.2 CONCLUSION**

Do you agree that all schools face many challenges when it comes to discipline-related issues in the classroom?

## **Study unit 4**

### **Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline.**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Educators must endeavour to build positive educator-learner relationships to enhance the teaching and learning environment.

##### **4.1.1 Positive strategies**

**See point 4.1.1 in your participant's manual for details.**

Brainstorm session. One volunteer educator captures the positive strategies on the blackboard.

##### **4.1.2 Negative strategies**

**See point 4.1.2 in your participant's manual for details.**

Brainstorm session. One volunteer educator captures the negative strategies on the blackboard.

After the brainstorming sessions hand out the educator's manual and let them look at the list of strategies in the handout. They may comment on the strategies should they wish to.

#### **4.2 CONCLUSION**

Educators can improvise many more strategies to facilitate building positive educator-learner relationships

## **Study unit 5**

### **What is a Future Creating Workshop?**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Creative thinking can be enhanced by dedicated people through Future Creating workshops (FCWs).

Lecture about what an FCW is.

Discuss with the attendees the possibilities and the need for such workshops.

#### **5.2 CONCLUSION**

Any educator at the school can with permission from management conduct an FCW with other educators concerning a common problem.

## **Study unit 6**

### **Conclusion to the short learning program**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Building positive educator-learner relationships is time-consuming and demands perseverance from the side of the educators. But in the end, it will be beneficial for both educators and learners.

#### **6.2 CONCLUSION**

Watch this video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tznztJVsW9E>

This short learning program is by no means an exhaustive reference guide. This is only a guideline. Educators can improvise many more strategies to use in the classroom as a way of solving indiscipline in the classroom.



## Survey

**Ask the attendees to complete the survey.**

**Rate this workshop on a scale from 1 – 7 as explained below.**

Rate the items below using this scale: 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Unsure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree.

| Statement                                                                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Workshop broadened my understanding of discipline-related issues in the classroom |   |   |   |   |   |
| The Workshop taught me techniques directly applicable to my job/career                |   |   |   |   |   |
| The Workshop improved my relationship-building skills.                                |   |   |   |   |   |
| The range of lectures captured the overall essentials of the topic                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| The relevance of the lectures was applicable.                                         |   |   |   |   |   |
| The presentation was well presented.                                                  |   |   |   |   |   |

**Did you enjoy this workshop?**

**Yes    No**

**Motivate your answer**

.....

.....

.....

**How can this short learning program be improved?**

.....

.....

.....

**What other needs do you experience at your school?**

.....

.....

.....



**EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP  
BUILDING AS THE CORNERSTONE TO ASSIST  
EDUCATORS TO DEAL WITH DISCIPLINE  
RELATED ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.**

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# **PARTICIPANT'S MANUAL**

# Participant's manual

## Study Unit 1

### The theoretical grounding behind discipline in the classroom and school community?

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1.1 Ice breaker (Activity – 1)

Previously you used a 60-inch-long wooden stick to assist you with discipline in the classroom. As you know, this is not allowed anymore. You do not like to throw things away. What else can you use the rod for now?



Write down your suggestions. The group leaders report back to the rest of the attendees.

.....

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##### 1.1.2 Video (Activity – 2)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_ee7-XrH6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_ee7-XrH6E)

### 1.1.3 Discussion (Activity – 3)

Indiscipline can be divided into three groups, namely disruption to teaching, defiance, and disrespect towards teaching, and educator targeted bullying.

How do you experience this problem in your school? In your groups, discuss the negative and the positive elements of discipline. The group leaders must report back to the rest of the attendees.

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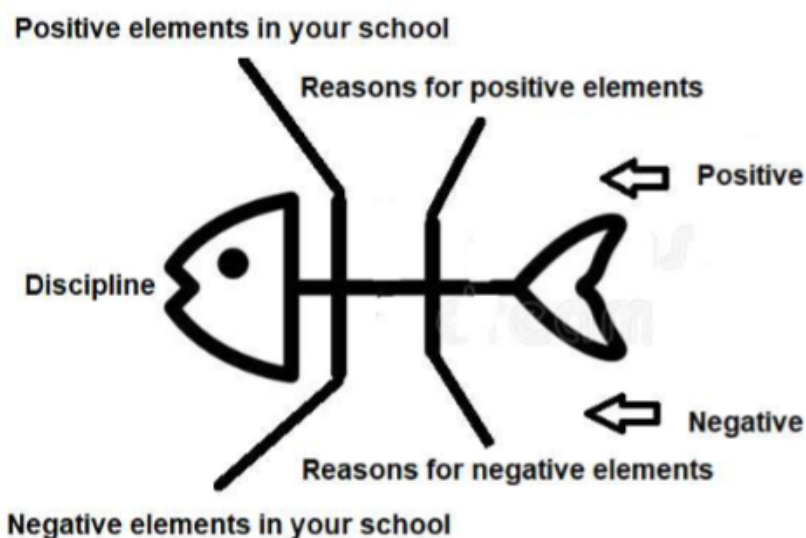
.....

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### 1.1.4 Fishbone diagram to discuss discipline in your school (Activity – 4)



Brainstorm the following topics:

Positive discipline elements in your school

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Reasons for positive discipline elements in your school

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Negative and harmful discipline elements in your school

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Reasons for negative discipline elements in your school

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One educator completes the fishbone diagram on the blackboard using the feedback from the groups.

#### **1.1.5 Reasons why discipline must be managed at school (Activity – 5)**

To lessen the consequences of indiscipline in school, learner behaviour must be addressed. The management of learner behaviour is essential because indiscipline harms the well-being of educators and learners and the learners' academic progress.

Why do you think learner discipline must be managed? (How does indiscipline affect you?)

.....

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Group leaders must report back.

#### **1.1.6 How to lessen indiscipline in the classroom (Activity – 6)**

Why do you think some educators have fewer discipline-related problems than others?

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In your groups, discuss this statement. The group leader must report back to the rest of the attendees.

#### **1.1.7 Effective classroom management (Activity – 7)**

##### **1.1.7a What is classroom management? (Activity – 7a)**

Each educator must explain the concept of *classroom management* in not more than two sentences.

.....

.....

.....  
.....  
Each educator must explain in 1 minute how he/she manages his/her classroom.

.....  
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.....

Based on the different management suggestions that were discussed, what do you think will work effectively in your school.

.....  
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Group leaders must report back to the other attendees.

**1.1.7b What else can you describe as professional educator behaviour? (Activity – 7b)**

Group discussion:

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.....

The group leader must report back to the other attendees.

**1.1.7c What else can you describe as unprofessional educator behaviour? (Activity – 7c)**

Group discussion:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

The group leaders must report back to the other attendees.

#### **1.1.8 Videos (Activity 8)**

Watch videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz-jCBx5iD0>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2gFqdRc6_8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC3D7O-ByLE>

#### **1.1.9 The educator's role in classroom management (Activity – 9)**

Educators have different roles to play at school. As manager of the classroom, specific duties come to the fore.

On a clean sheet of paper, draw a stick figure performing one duty an educator is responsible for in classroom management. Come and stick your drawing on the blackboard, and in one sentence, explain your drawing.

Your 'duty' may not overlap with one that is already on the board.

#### **1.1.10 Video (Activity 10)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKCh8N2kkcY>

#### **1.1.11 The learner-centred classroom (Activity – 11)**



1.1.11.1 Indicate if the following statements are true or false:

| Statement |                                                                                                               | True | False |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|
| 1         | Learner-centred activities focus on the typical everyday topics where possible                                |      |       |
| 2         | In a learner-centred classroom, the focus is on the activity                                                  |      |       |
| 3         | In the educator-centred classroom, the focus is on the learner                                                |      |       |
| 4         | In learner-centred classrooms, the learners are quiet and work hard because they are interested in the topic. |      |       |
| 5         | In the educator-centred classroom, the learners teach one another                                             |      |       |
| 6         | In the educator-centred classroom, the students work in groups                                                |      |       |
| 7         | In the learner-centred classroom, the focus is on the facilitator                                             |      |       |
| 8         | In the educator-centred classroom, the purpose of the activity determines the group work topics               |      |       |
| 9         | In the learner-centred classroom, the focus is on the instructor                                              |      |       |
| 10        | In the learner-centred classroom, the learners wait for feedback from the educator                            |      |       |
| 11        | In the educator-centred classroom, the educator answers the learners' questions.                              |      |       |
| 12        | In the educator-centred classroom, the learners choose the topics                                             |      |       |
| 13        | In the learner-centred classroom, the students evaluate their own learning                                    |      |       |
| 14        | The learner-centred classroom is always noisy and disorganised                                                |      |       |
| 15        | The learner-centred classroom is often noisy                                                                  |      |       |
| 16        | The educator in the learner-centred classroom needs specific skills to manage the classroom                   |      |       |

1.1.11.2 What is your experience of a learner-centred classroom?

.....

.....

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.....

**Come and share with the rest of the attendees**

## **Study Unit 2**

### **Positive discipline**

#### **2.1.1 Ice breaker (Activity – 12)**

You are a language educator. The principal informed you that he would be coming to your class to observe your lesson. You forgot all your teaching aids at home. All you have in class is a paper clip, a memory stick, and a box of tissues. You want to teach sentence structure to the learners. Combine all three of these items into one sentence to use as an example sentence.

#### **2.1.2 What is positive discipline? (Activity – 11)**

##### **2.1.2a Points to discuss: (Activity – 12)**

Do you have a Code of Conduct at your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

Who drafted the Code of Conduct at your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

Are the learners familiar with the Code of Conduct at your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

Is the Code of Conduct implemented successfully at your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

Do you experience problems when implementing the Code of Conduct?

### 2.1.2b Debate (Activity – 13)

The two topics to be debated is:

**Or**

**The learners must be involved in drafting the school's code of conduct.**

After each group presented their case to the audience, the audience must vote.

Making notes:

PARTICIPANT'S MANUAL – SHORT LEARNING PROGRAM

### 2.1.3 What is positive discipline? (Activity – 14)

Match the description within the second column with the statement in the first column:

| Principle of positive discipline |                                            | Description |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                | Positive discipline must be holistic       | A           | All learners have strengths, and discipline must concentrate on building on these strengths. Mistakes must be seen as learning opportunities and not as failures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 2                                | Positive discipline must be strength-based | B           | Positive discipline respect equal rights and individual differences. Educators must teach according to the needs of each child, and all learners have the right to the same educational standard within an inclusive classroom. The classroom environment must be adapted to accommodate teaching aids and strategies conducive to inclusive education to achieve this.                                        |
| 3                                | Positive discipline must be constructive   | C           | Through positive discipline, educators must endeavour to build the learners' self-esteem and confidence. Educators must foster learner independence and build a sense of self-efficacy instead of punishing mistakes. Educators must guide learner behaviour in a positive direction by teaching and modelling acceptable behaviour.                                                                           |
| 4                                | Positive discipline is inclusive           | D           | When learners feel part of the class and the learning process, they are motivated and eager to participate. Educators must make the learners feel welcome by asking their opinion and include them in decisions. When learners feel out-of-control, they behave in an out-of-control manner                                                                                                                    |
| 5                                | Positive discipline is proactive           | E           | All aspects of children's development and learning must be understood because it is all connected. If educators understand the development of the child, they will understand the reasons for their behaviour.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 6                                | Positive discipline is participatory       | F           | Discipline measures must aim at assisting learners in succeeding in the long term. Burden (2020) describes the essence of positive discipline as the educators showing concern for the learners by involving them to see the consequences of their actions. In doing so, the educators must guide the learners to develop their own solutions to the problems. Educators must teach learners to behave better. |

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....

### 2.1.4 Ways of implementing positive discipline (Activity – 15)

Each group must draw a topic from the container. You get 3 minutes to prepare and then come and explain your topic to the attendees.

Focus on the positive

Educators must set a good example

Listen before judging

Educators must be fair and consistent

Separate the child from the behaviour

Cultivate mutual respect

After their representations, read the following to them:

| Ways of implementing positive discipline |                                       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                        | Focus on the positive                 | Educators must support positive behaviour because this encourages the possibility of learners wanting to repeat that behaviour.                                                              |
| 2                                        | Educators must set a good example     | Learners observe what people do around them, and if educators model acceptable behaviour, learners have good role models to follow.                                                          |
| 3                                        | Listen before judging                 | Educators must first endeavour to find out why the learners misbehave before making an issue out of it. Maybe they have a good reason and can explain that.                                  |
| 4                                        | Educators must be fair and consistent | Avoid showing favouritism. Be fair and consistent by applying the same rules to everyone.                                                                                                    |
| 5                                        | Separate the child from the behaviour | If a learner makes a mistake, it does not make him a bad person. Please focus on the behaviour and what needs to be done to change the behaviour and the learner to learn from his mistakes. |
| 6                                        | Cultivate mutual respect              | If educators respect learners and treat them with dignity, it is more likely that learners will return that respect                                                                          |

### 2.1.5 The classroom environment must be conducive to implement positive discipline (Activity – 16)

#### 2.1.5a Positive versus punitive discipline (Activity – 16a)

Study the following ways of discipline. Decide if the statement belongs to positive discipline or punishment/punishment measures.

| Statement                                                                                                                                                | Positive discipline | Punitive discipline |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Rules are followed because they are discussed and agreed upon                                                                                            |                     |                     |
| Being told only what not to do                                                                                                                           |                     |                     |
| Teaching children to internalize self-discipline                                                                                                         |                     |                     |
| When children must make amends when their behaviour negatively affects someone else                                                                      |                     |                     |
| Consistency and firm guidance                                                                                                                            |                     |                     |
| Reacting harshly to misbehaviour                                                                                                                         |                     |                     |
| When children follow the rules because they are threatened or bribed                                                                                     |                     |                     |
| Controlling, shaming, and ridiculing                                                                                                                     |                     |                     |
| Negative and disrespectful of the child                                                                                                                  |                     |                     |
| Logical consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour                                                                                       |                     |                     |
| Understanding individual abilities, needs, circumstances, and developmental stages                                                                       |                     |                     |
| Acknowledging efforts and good behaviour                                                                                                                 |                     |                     |
| Listening and modelling                                                                                                                                  |                     |                     |
| Physically and verbally violent and aggressive                                                                                                           |                     |                     |
| Consequences that are unrelated and illogical to the misbehaviour                                                                                        |                     |                     |
| Giving children positive alternatives                                                                                                                    |                     |                     |
| When children are punished for hurting others, rather than shown how to make amends                                                                      |                     |                     |
| Inappropriate to the child's developmental stage of life                                                                                                 |                     |                     |
| Physically and verbally non-violent                                                                                                                      |                     |                     |
| Teaching children to behave well only when they risk getting caught doing otherwise                                                                      |                     |                     |
| Constantly reprimanding children for minor infractions causing them to tune us out (ignore us; not listen to us)                                         |                     |                     |
| Using mistakes as learning opportunities                                                                                                                 |                     |                     |
| Forcing children to comply with illogical rules "just because you said so" directed at the child's behaviour, never the child – your behaviour was wrong |                     |                     |
| Positive, respectful of the child                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |

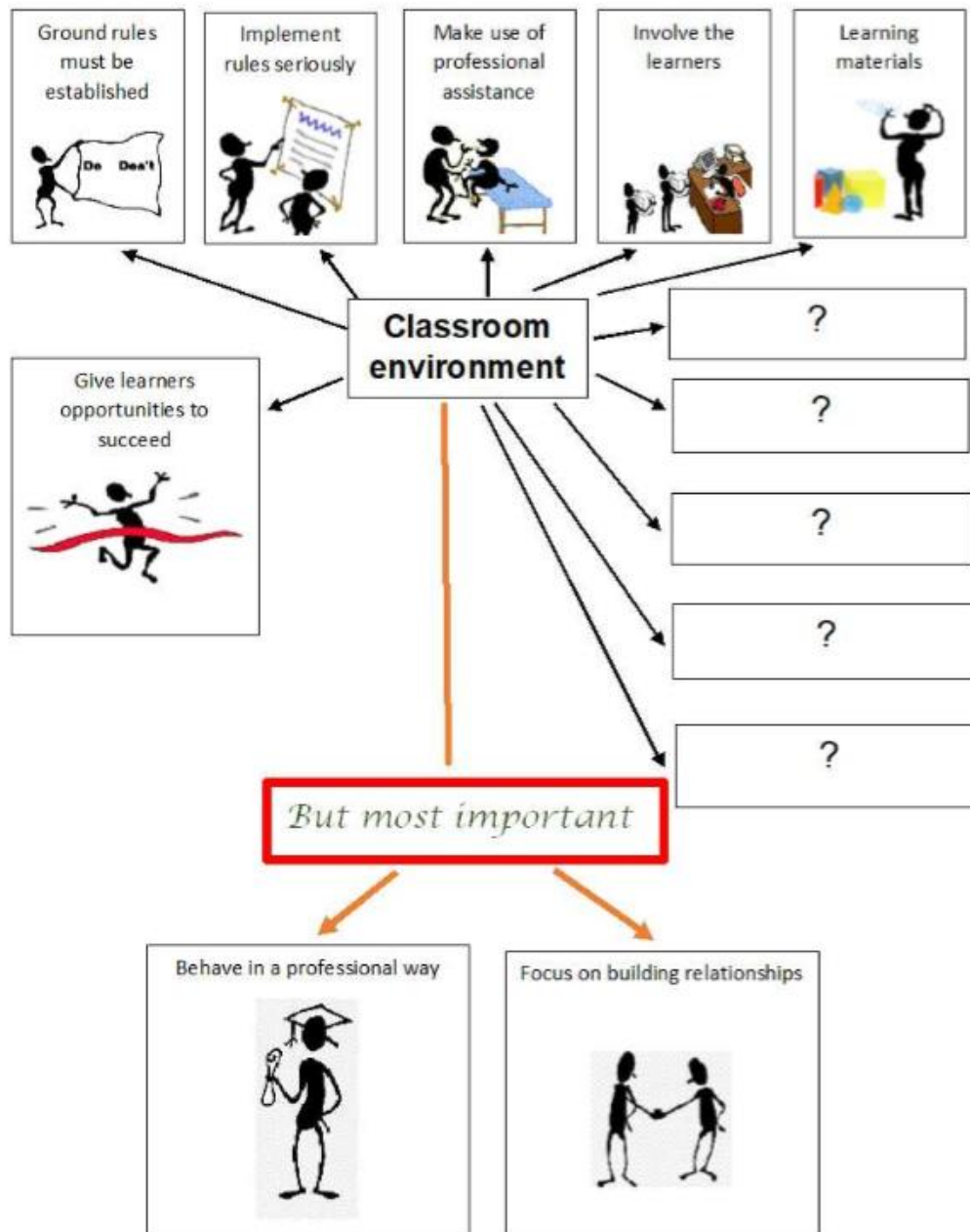
#### 2.1.5b Classroom climate (Activity – 16b)

Discuss the topic in the diagram and add new topics as you consider relevant.'

The two most important topics must be emphasised and discussed.

Explain that the next study unit (unit 3) will focus on educator-learner relationship building.





## Study Unit 3

### What positive educator-learner relationships are all about

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION



An effective learning environment depends on high-quality instruction and respectful educator-learner relationships. If these two components are combined with exciting lessons, it is more difficult for them to misbehave because they know that the educators care for them.

During our research, the educators agreed that everything an educator does at school or after hours could make or break the relationship. Positive educator-learner relationships uplift the image of the educators.

### 3.1.1 The concept of educator-learner relationships

Educator-learner relationships received a new interest after corporal punishment was outlawed. Building educator-learner relationships is a balancing act. Educators, as the leading role players in this endeavour, must equip themselves to do this.

#### 3.1.1 The concept of educator-learner relationships (Activity – 17)

##### 3.1.1a Educator characteristics (Activity – 17a)

Educator-learner relationships received a new interest after corporal punishment was outlawed.

What characteristics do an educator need to be able to build positive educator-learner relationships:

E .....

D .....

U .....

C .....

A .....

T .....

O .....

R .....

- .....

L .....

E .....

A .....  
 R .....  
 N .....  
 E .....  
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 P .....  
 S .....

### 3.1.1b Other important characteristics (Activity – 15b)

Are there any other characteristics you can think of that must be part of an educator's personality to facilitate positive educator-learner relationship building?

Friendliness, .....  
 .....  
 .....

### 3.1.2 The effect of positive educator-learner relationships (Activity – 16)

In your groups, discuss the effects or benefits of positive educator-learner relationships

.....

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.....

The group leader must report back to the attendees

### 3.1.3a The demeanour of the educators (Activity 17)

As the groups to read the following paragraph and discuss the content in the groups.

The group leader must report back to the group.

*The educators' personal demeanour and work ethics as an essential component in building educator-learner relationships were emphasised. Educators must be friendly, be aware of their facial expressions, dress appropriately and be what the learners expect them to be. Hand signs and body language is important and must portray the correct message.*

*Not only in class but also after school, educators must be aware of how they behave. It clear that that educators must be role models at all times to uphold a positive image of the teaching profession in their communities. Educators should model exemplary behaviour, both in and outside the class. Once you are a educator, people are watching you all the time. Educators might not even be aware of that. Parents and learners do not expect to see a educator acting in an unacceptable way like extreme drinking out of school. To uphold the honour of the teaching profession, educators must act outside of school in an accountable, supportive, trustworthy, professional, attentive, understanding, and fair way revealing logical judgement at all times.*

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The group leader must report back to the attendees.

**3.1.3b What kind of demeanour will have a negative influence on educator-learner relationship building? (Activity – 18)**

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The group leader must report back to the attendees.

**3.1.4 Challenges faced by educators in the uMzinyathi district to build positive educator-learner relationships (Activity – 19)**

Ask seven educators to prepare a mime on specific challenges they face in their endeavor to build positive educator-learner relationships. The rest of the attendees must guess what is being acted out.

Use the following topics:

- Negative attitudes of some learners
- Time constraints
- Work overload
- Overcrowded classrooms
- Stress and frustration
- Lack of parental and community support
- External bad influences

## Study Unit 4

### Strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as a way of dealing with indiscipline.

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The educators in the uMzinyathi district compiled a list of strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships. This list is by no means exhaustive. Innovative educators can add many more strategies to this list depending on the level of the learners and the circumstances.

##### 4.1.1 Positive strategies (Activity – 120)

Brainstorm session. One volunteer educator captures the positive strategies on the blackboard.

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#### **4.1.2 Negative strategies (Activity – 21)**

Brainstorm session. One volunteer educator captures the negative strategies on the blackboard.

After the brainstorming sessions, hand out the educator's manual and look at the list of strategies in the handout. They may comment on the strategies should they wish to.

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## **Study Unit 5**

### **What is a Future Creating Workshop?**

Lecture about what an FCW is.

Discuss:

Do you think there is a need for such workshops in the schools?

.....

.....

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.....

## **Study Unit 6**

### **Conclusion to the short learning program**

Please complete the workshop survey.

## Survey

**Rate this Workshop on a scale from 1 – 7, as explained below.**

Rate the items below using this scale: 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Unsure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree.

| Statement                                                                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Workshop broadened my understanding of discipline-related issues in the classroom |   |   |   |   |   |
| The Workshop taught me techniques directly applicable to my job/career                |   |   |   |   |   |
| The Workshop improved my relationship-building skills.                                |   |   |   |   |   |
| The range of lectures captured the overall essentials of the topic                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| The relevance of the lectures was applicable.                                         |   |   |   |   |   |
| The presentation was well presented.                                                  |   |   |   |   |   |

**Did you enjoy this Workshop?**

**Yes    No**

**Motivate your answer**

.....

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.....

.....

**How can this short learning program be improved?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**What other needs do you experience at your school?**

.....

.....

.....



## ADDENDUM I: APPROVAL OF SHORT LEARNING PROGRAM

The originally signed document is filed for safekeeping.



Dear colleagues

Thank you for your cooperation throughout my research for my PhD studies. I need one last signature from you. Could you please read and sign the following document?

### Declaration

I have been a participant in this research project that was done in three iterative cycles consisting out of data collection and reflection. The research aimed at compiling a short learning program to assist educators in the uMzinyathi district with strategies to build positive educator-learner relationships as the foundation of dealing with indiscipline in the classroom.

The facilitator (E. Bosman) as the nodal point drafted the short learning program which I have seen.

| Participant | Approval |            | Signature                                                                            | Date       |
|-------------|----------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|             | Approve  | Disapprove |                                                                                      |            |
| E1          | Yes      |            |  | 23/09/21   |
| E2          | Yes      |            |  | 23/09/2021 |
| E3          | Yes      |            |   | 01/10/2021 |
| E4a         | Yes      |            |  | 30/09/2021 |
| E4b         | Yes      |            |   | 30/09/2021 |
| E5          | Yes      |            |  | 11/10/2021 |

Thank you for your cooperation



E. Bosman

## ADDENDUM J: ETHICS APPROVAL



21 May 2020

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby confirm that the ethics application, as stated below, is approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the meeting on 30 April 2020.

**Ethics number: NWU-01206-20-A2**

**Project head: Dr MM Neethling**

**Project team: EA Bosman (PhD student – 24444359); Dr I Kok**

**Title: Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach**

**Extended period: 30 April 2020 – 30 April 2021**

**Risk level: Low**

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

Yours sincerely

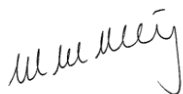
Prof J Olivier  
Chair Edu-REC

## ADDENDUM K: PERMISSION FROM PARTICIPANTS

### Declarations

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for approval of the research as described in the preceding application and declare that:

- 3.1. The information in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that no ethical codes will be violated with the study;
- 3.2. In the case of human participants;
  - 3.2.1. I will put it clearly to all participants that participation (including assent) in any research study is absolutely voluntary and that no pressure, of whatever nature, will be placed on any potential participant to take part;
  - 3.2.2. I will put it clearly to all participants that any participant may withdraw from the study at any time and may ask that his or her data no longer be used in the study, without stating reasons and without fear of any form of prejudice;
  - 3.2.3. every participant who takes part in the study will receive the indicated form for informed consent and it will be ensured that every participant understands the information (including the process and risks) fully;
  - 3.2.4. every participant will provide informed consent before the study commences, or a witness will stand in on behalf of the participant when the participant cannot provide permission, but agrees to it;
  - 3.2.5. any foreseeable risk is restricted to the minimum, any permanent damage is avoided as far as possible and appropriate precautions and safety measures are in place;
  - 3.2.6. confidentiality of all the information of all participants will be respected and ensured;
- 3.3. I and all co-workers/assistants/fieldworkers are appropriately qualified, capable and legally competent to implement the proposed studies/procedures/interventions;
- 3.4. I will not deviate from the approved proposal and I understand approval for the study will be cancelled if I deviate from the proposal without the approval of the Ethics in Commerce Research Committee;
- 3.5. the study is scientifically justifiable;
- 3.6. where necessary, all contracts, permits and the applicable documents of relevance will be obtained before the research commences;
- 3.7. I will ensure that all data are stored safely and remain in the possession of the North-West University;
- 3.8. I will report in writing any incidents or adverse events that occur during the study without delay to the Ethics in Commerce Research Committee;
- 3.9. I undertake to respect the intellectual property rights of the North-West University throughout and undertake to avoid any form of plagiarism and academic dishonesty;
- 3.10. I will notify the Ethics in Commerce Research Committee should the study be terminated.



Signature of Principal Investigator/Supervisor/Promoter

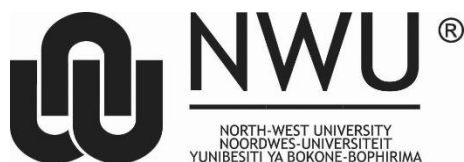
4/3/2020

Date

**Dr Marinda Neethling**

Names and surname of Principal Investigator/Supervisor/Promoter

## **ADDENDUM L: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES**



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

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

**Faculty of Education  
(Research entity details)**

Tel: 018 111 1111  
Email: [Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za)

Date

**(RECIPIENT NAME)**

**(RECIPIENT ADDRESS)**

**(RECIPIENT ADDRESS)**

**(RECIPIENT ADDRESS)**

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

I herewith wish to request your permission for [details of participants] to participate in this research, which involves [enter details]. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

#### **TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:**

**Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach**

#### **ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER**

**NWU-01206-20-A2**

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr M.M. Neethling

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr I. Kok

ADDRESS: North West University

CONTACT NUMBER: 018 285 2874

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM MEd-Student: Elizabeth Bosman

ADDRESS: Private Bag 252, Kranskop, 3268, KZN

CONTACT NUMBER: 071 892 5574

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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

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

**What is this research about?**

The aims of this research are:

Undisciplined and disruptive behaviour have been pinpointed as major problems in secondary classrooms in South Africa. Caring and supportive educator-learner relationships have been described as a way of assisting educators to deal with undisciplined and disruptive behaviour. Educators need skills to build caring and supportive educator-learner relationships.

### **Primary research question**

How can relationship-centred strategies support educators to deal with undisciplined and disruptive behaviour in rural secondary schools?

### **Secondary research question**

How do educators understand learner behaviour?

What are the challenges educators are confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools? What strategies can educators use to improve educator-learner relationships?

How effective were the strategies for improving learner behaviour in the classroom?

What relationship-centred strategies can be developed to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?

The purpose of this research is to engage local secondary school educators in the Umzinyathi District to collaboratively find ways of improving their educator-learner relationship to assist the wider teacher community to create and maintain a positive classroom climate.

Action research as a systematical research design can bring about change and deepen understanding in a community. Therefore, PALAR as a research design was chosen as an appropriate approach for this research because it opens the way for the relevant teacher community to participate in finding ways to improve educator-learner relationships to improve classroom discipline according to their specific needs.

- aims and objectives of the study, and

The aim of this research is then to enable the wider teacher community working in semirural secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal by means of workshops to collaboratively develop strategies to implement a relationship-centred approach to improve school discipline in these rural secondary schools.

- study design and method.

I will endeavour to achieve the aims of this study through a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach.

### **Participants**

Five voluntary teachers from each of the five participatory schools

### **What is expected of the participants?**

To attend action learning set meetings to discuss disciplinary issues, to try and come up with possible solutions to disciplinary problems in the classroom, to test possible solutions in the classroom and to reflect on their experiences.

### **Benefits to the participants**

Participants might be assisted with positive educator-learners relationship-building skills to assist with discipline-related issues in the classroom.

### **Risks involved for participants**

Mild discomfort could be experienced because of a language barrier between the researcher and participants.

To combat this, a relationship of trust will be built by implementing democratic and equal principles where all participants have the opportunity to stimulate intellectual curiosity and become scholars of their own teaching and learning.

Confidentiality will be honoured.

A language interpreter will be recruited from the Collage to ensure that the participants will feel safe and protected during discussions.

#### **Confidentiality and protection of identity**

Regular meetings chaired by me will be held, progress will be monitored, and detailed minutes will be kept of all the action learning set meetings

Ethics clearance will be obtained from the Education, Management and Economic Sciences, Law, Theology, Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NWU-EMELTEN-REC) of the North-West University and guideline like confidentiality will be kept strictly.

Incidents and adverse events will immediately be reported to the project supervisor and chair of the Ethics Committee telephonically and in writing.

#### **Dissemination of findings**

The research is about guidelines to build good educator-learner relationships to address undisciplined and disruptive behaviour in the classroom. By means of a Short Learning Programme (SLP) manual containing the guidelines on educator-learner relationship-building skills. Results will be made know to the participating schools within four months after the research is done and been approved by supervisor. The participants and the rest of the participating schools as well as other schools in the Umzinyathi district might benefit from this research.

**If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.**



Yours sincerely  
Mrs E.A. Bosman

---

#### **DECLARATION BY SGB CHAIRPERSON/RELEVANT RESPONSIBLE PERSON:**

By signing below, I ..... agree to give permission for the research to take place with the identified participants in the study entitled:

**[Enter title here]**

**I declare that:**

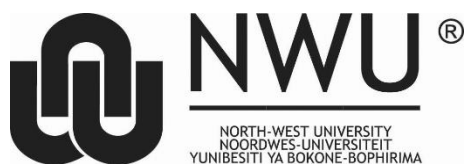
- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of the participants in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and participants will not be pressurised to take part.
- Participants may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- Participants may be asked to leave the research process before it is completed, if the researcher feels it is in their best interests, or if they do not follow the research procedures, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) \_\_\_\_\_ on (date) \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

---

**Signature of SGB Chairperson/Relevant responsible person**

## ADDENDUM M: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

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

**Faculty of Education**  
**(Research entity details)**

Tel: 018 111 1111  
Email: Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za

(Recipient name)  
(Recipient address)  
(Recipient address)  
(Recipient address)

Date

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

I herewith wish to request your permission for [details of participants] to participate in this research, which involves [enter details]. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

#### TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

**Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach**

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**NWU-01206-20-A2**

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr M.M. Neethling

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ADDRESS: North West University

CONTACT NUMBER: 018 285 2874

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM MEd-Student: Elizabeth Bosman

ADDRESS: Private Bag 252, Kranskop, 3268, KZN

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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

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#### **Primary research question**



*How can a Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) approach enable educators to collaboratively develop educator-learner relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools?*

## **Secondary research questions**

*How did educators understand learner behaviour and discipline in schools?*

*What were the day-to-day challenges educators were confronted with regarding discipline in rural secondary schools?*

*What were the educators' views on positive educator-learner relationships?*

*What educator-learner relationship-centred strategies could collaboratively be developed in the ALS to support educators to deal with school discipline in rural secondary schools?*

*How effective were the relationship-centred strategies developed through PALAR for improving educator-learner relationships in the classroom?*

The purpose of this research is to engage local secondary school educators in the Umzinyathi District to collaboratively find ways of improving their educator-learner relationship to assist the wider teacher community to create and maintain a positive classroom climate

Action research as a systematical research design can bring about change and deepen understanding in a community. Therefore, PALAR as a research design was chosen as an appropriate approach for this research because it opens the way for the relevant teacher community to participate in finding ways to improve educator-learner relationships to improve classroom discipline according to their specific needs

- aims and objectives of the study, and

The aim of this research is then to enable the wider teacher community working in semirural secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal by means of workshops to collaboratively develop strategies to implement a relationship-centred approach to improve school discipline in these rural secondary schools.

- study design and method.

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### **Benefits to the participants**

Participants might be assisted with positive educator-learners relationship-building skills to assist with discipline-related issues in the classroom.

### **Risks involved for participants**

Mild discomfort could be experienced because of a language barrier between the researcher and participants

To combat this, a relationship of trust will be built by implementing democratic and equal principles where all participants have the opportunity to stimulate intellectual curiosity and become scholars of their own teaching and learning.

Confidentiality will be honoured.

A language interpreter will be recruited from the Collage to ensure that the participants will feel safe and protected during discussions.

#### **Confidentiality and protection of identity**

Regular meetings chaired by me will be held, progress will be monitored, and detailed minutes will be kept of all the action learning set meetings

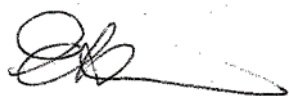
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**If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.**



Yours sincerely  
Mrs E.A. Bosman

---

#### **DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL/OTHER RELEVANT PERSON:**

By signing below, I ..... agree to give permission for the research to take place with the identified participants in the study entitled:

**[Enter title here]**

**I declare that:**

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of the participants in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and participants will not be pressurised to take part.
- Participants may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- Participants may be asked to leave the research process before it is completed, if the researcher feels it is in their best interests, or if they do not follow the research procedures, as agreed to.

Signed at (place)\_\_\_\_\_ on (date) \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of School Principal/Relevant person**

## **ADDENDUM N: CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING E BOSMAN**



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

### **CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING**

entered into between:

I, the undersigned

Prof / Dr / Mr / Ms / Mrs: E. A. Bosman

Identity Number: 4411290004089

Address: Private Bag 242, Kranskop, 3268, KZN

hereby undertake in favour of the **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**, a public higher education institution established in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997

Address: Office of the Institutional Registrar, Building C1, 53 Borchard Street, Potchefstroom, 2520

(hereinafter the "NWU")

**Title of study/project: Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach**

---

**Ethics number: NWU-01206-20-A2**

---

#### **1 Interpretation and definitions**

1.1 In this undertaking, unless inconsistent with, or otherwise indicated by the context:

1.1.1 "Confidential Information" shall include all information that is confidential in its nature or marked as confidential and shall include any existing and new information obtained by me after the Commencement Date, including but not be limited in its interpretation to, research data, information concerning research participants, all secret knowledge, technical information and specifications, manufacturing techniques, designs, diagrams, instruction manuals, blueprints, electronic artwork, samples, devices, demonstrations, formulae, know-how, intellectual property, information concerning materials, marketing and business information generally, financial information that may include remuneration detail, pay slips, information relating to human capital and employment contract, employment conditions, ledgers, income and expenditures and other materials of whatever description in which the NWU has an interest in being kept confidential; and

1.1.2 "Commencement Date" means the date of signature of this undertaking by myself.

1.2 The headings of clauses are intended for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of this undertaking.

## **2 Preamble**

2.1 In performing certain duties requested by the NWU, I will have access to certain Confidential Information provided by the NWU in order to perform the said duties and I agree that it must be kept confidential.

2.2 The NWU has agreed to disclose certain of this Confidential Information and other information to me subject to me agreeing to the terms of confidentiality set out herein.

## **3 Title to the Confidential Information**

I hereby acknowledge that all right, title and interest in and to the Confidential Information vests in the NWU and that I will have no claim of any nature in and to the Confidential Information.

## **4 Period of confidentiality**

The provisions of this undertaking shall begin on the Commencement Date and remain in force indefinitely.

## **5 Non-disclosure and undertakings**

I undertake:

5.1 to maintain the confidentiality of any Confidential Information to which I shall be allowed access by the NWU, whether before or after the Commencement Date of this undertaking. I will not divulge or permit to be divulged to any person any aspect of such Confidential Information otherwise than may be allowed in terms of this undertaking;

5.2 to take all such steps as may be necessary to prevent the Confidential Information falling into the hands of an unauthorised third party;

5.3 not to make use of any of the Confidential Information in the development, manufacture, marketing and/or sale of any goods;

5.4 not to use any research data for publication purposes;

5.5 not to use or disclose or attempt to use or disclose the Confidential Information for any purpose other than performing research purposes only and includes questionnaires, interviews with participants, data gathering, data analysis and personal information of participants/research subjects;

5.6 not to use or attempt to use the Confidential Information in any manner which will cause or be likely to cause injury or loss to a research participant or the NWU; and

5.7 that all documentation furnished to me by the NWU pursuant to this undertaking will remain the property of the NWU and upon the request of the NWU will be returned to the NWU. I shall not make copies of any such documentation without the prior written consent of the NWU.

## **6 Exception**

The above undertakings by myself shall not apply to Confidential Information which I am compelled to disclose in terms of a court order.

## 7 Jurisdiction

This undertaking shall be governed by South African law be subject to the jurisdiction of South African courts in respect of any dispute flowing from this undertaking.

## 8 Whole agreement

8.1 This document constitutes the whole of this undertaking to the exclusion of all else.

8.2 No amendment, alteration, addition, variation or consensual cancellation of this undertaking will be valid unless in writing and signed by me and the NWU.

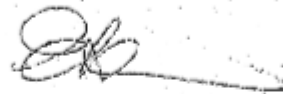
Dated at \_\_\_\_\_ Kranskop \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ 03/06 \_\_\_\_\_  
2020 \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

(Signatures of witnesses)



\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

E. A. Bosman

## ADDENDUM O: CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING TRANSLATOR



### CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING

entered into between:

I, the undersigned

Prof / Dr / Mr / Ms \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Translator \_\_\_\_\_

Identity Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

hereby undertake in favour of the **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**, a public higher education institution established in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997

Address: Office of the Institutional Registrar, Building C1, 53 Borchard Street,  
Potchefstroom, 2520

(hereinafter the "NWU")

**Title of study/project:**

**Relationship-centered strategies for improving discipline in rural secondary schools; A PALAR approach**

**Ethics number:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1 Interpretation and definitions

**1.1** In this undertaking, unless inconsistent with, or otherwise indicated by the context:

**1.1.1** "Confidential Information" shall include all information that is confidential in its nature or marked as confidential and shall include any existing and new information obtained by me after the Commencement Date, including but not be limited in its interpretation to, research data, information concerning research participants, all secret knowledge, technical information and specifications, manufacturing techniques, designs, diagrams, instruction manuals, blueprints, electronic artwork, samples, devices, demonstrations, formulae, know-how, intellectual property, information concerning materials, marketing and business information generally, financial information that may include remuneration detail, pay slips, information relating to human capital

and employment contract, employment conditions, ledgers, income and expenditures and other materials of whatever description in which the NWU has an interest in being kept confidential; and

**1.1.2** "Commencement Date" means the date of signature of this undertaking by myself.

**1.2** The headings of clauses are intended for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of this undertaking.

## **2 Preamble**

**2.1** In performing certain duties requested by the NWU, I will have access to certain Confidential Information provided by the NWU in order to perform the said duties and I agree that it must be kept confidential.

**2.2** The NWU has agreed to disclose certain of this Confidential Information and other information to me subject to me agreeing to the terms of confidentiality set out herein.

## **3 Title to the Confidential Information**

I hereby acknowledge that all right, title and interest in and to the Confidential Information vests in the NWU and that I will have no claim of any nature in and to the Confidential Information.

## **4 Period of confidentiality**

The provisions of this undertaking shall begin on the Commencement Date and remain in force indefinitely.

## **5 Non-disclosure and undertakings**

I undertake:

**5.1** to maintain the confidentiality of any Confidential Information to which I shall be allowed access by the NWU, whether before or after the Commencement Date of this undertaking. I will not divulge or permit to be divulged to any person any aspect of such Confidential Information otherwise than may be allowed in terms of this undertaking;

**5.2** to take all such steps as may be necessary to prevent the Confidential Information falling into the hands of an unauthorised third party;

**5.3** not to make use of any of the Confidential Information in the development, manufacture, marketing and/or sale of any goods;

**5.4** not to use any research data for publication purposes;

**5.5** not to use or disclose or attempt to use or disclose the Confidential Information for any purpose other than performing research purposes only and includes questionnaires, interviews with participants, data gathering, data analysis and personal information of participants/research subjects;

**5.6** not to use or attempt to use the Confidential Information in any manner which will cause or be likely to cause injury or loss to a research participant or the NWU; and

**5.7** that all documentation furnished to me by the NWU pursuant to this undertaking will remain the property of the NWU and upon the request of the NWU will be returned to the NWU. I shall not make copies of any such documentation without the prior written consent of the NWU.



## 6 Exception

The above undertakings by myself shall not apply to Confidential Information which I am compelled to disclose in terms of a court order.

## 7 Jurisdiction

This undertaking shall be governed by South African law be subject to the jurisdiction of South African courts in respect of any dispute flowing from this undertaking.

## 8 Whole agreement

**8.1** This document constitutes the whole of this undertaking to the exclusion of all else.

**8.2** No amendment, alteration, addition, variation or consensual cancellation of this undertaking will be valid unless in writing and signed by me and the NWU.

Dated at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

Witnesses:

1 .....

2 .....

(Signatures of witnesses)

.....

(Signature)

## ADDENDUM P: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING



Director: CME Terblanche - BA (Pol Sc), BA Hons (Eng), MA (Eng), TEFL  
22 Strydom Street  
Baillie Park, 2531  
Tel 082 821 3083  
cumlaudelanguage@gmail.com

### DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

I, Etienne Terblanche, hereby declare that I edited the thesis titled:

Relationship-centred strategies for improving discipline in rural  
secondary schools: A PALAR approach

for Elsa Bosman for the purpose of submission as a text for publication.

Suggestions were indicated in track changes and application was left to the  
author.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JE Terblanche', is written in a cursive style.

JE Terblanche

Cum Laude Language Practitioners (CC)