

**CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN MANAGING
DISCIPLINE AMONG YOUTH AT SELECTED RURAL SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN SHILUVANE CIRCUIT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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DECLARATION

I, **Malope Frank Seoka**, declare that this dissertation, ***“Challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province,”*** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the Master of Education with specialisation in Community and Continuing Education, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and in execution, and that all the material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my:

- late brother, Magedise;
- daughters, Jeridah and Modjadji;
- son, Malope.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province. The researcher employed an interpretative qualitative research approach using case study design. The study focused on two rural secondary schools which were purposefully sampled. The research concentrated only on the views of the principals, educators, learners and parents who are members of School Governing Bodies regarding the challenges facing school governing bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province. The target sample for this study consists of five educators, five learners who are the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, deputy secretary and the treasurer who are members of Representative Council of Learners, one principal and five parents, who are members of School Governing Body at each selected rural secondary school. The total number of participants is thirty-two.

Data were collected through document review, semi-structured interviews and observation. Data were analysed inductively which implied that data were transcribed, coded and categorised into themes. The findings revealed that the target School Governing Bodies still find themselves in a predicament in applying contemporary disciplinary measures after corporal punishment was abolished. Participants identified some of the challenges they face such as bullying and intimidation, sexual harassment, drugs and alcohol abuse and carrying of dangerous weapons to schools. Participants indicated that alternative measures to corporal punishment were not very effective in curbing learner indiscipline in schools and found it difficult to choose and implement the correct alternatives to corporal punishment.

The study recommended that School Governing Bodies should orientate learners about the Code of Conduct and school rules, and the consequences of breaking them could lead to disciplinary action, detention, suspension and expulsion. Parents should be involved in the lives of their children for the management of discipline at school, educators should acquaint themselves and learn to know learner's home backgrounds

in order to understand learners they are dealing with. In-service workshops about alternatives to corporal punishment for all educators in the two target rural secondary schools should be organised by the Department of Basic Education.

KEY CONCEPTS

- School discipline
- Code of conduct
- School
- Rural secondary school
- Educational Management
- School Governing Body
- Youth

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

	Page
INTRODUCTION AND STUDY ORIENTATION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	3
1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	4
1.3.1 Management of disciplinary problems	6
1.3.2 Positive theory approach	6
1.3.3 Adlerian theory approach	6
1.3.4 Learner-centred theory approach	7
1.3.5 Behavioural theory approach	8
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
1.4.1 Main Question	8
1.4.2 Sub-questions	9
1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	9
1.5.1 Aim	9
1.5.2 Objectives of the Study	9
1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS	10
1.6.1 School discipline	10
1.6.2 Code of Conduct	10
1.6.3 School	11
1.6.4 Rural secondary school	12
1.6.5 Educational Management	13
1.6.6 School Governing Body	14
1.6.7 Youth	15
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	15
1.7.1 Research design	16
1.7.2 Population and sampling	16
1.7.3 Data collection	17

1.7.3.1	Phase 1: Document analysis	18
1.7.3.2	Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews	18
1.7.3.3	Phase 3: Observation	18
1.7.4	Data analysis	19
1.8	TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY	19
1.8.1	Credibility	19
1.8.2	Transferability	20
1.8.3	Dependability	20
1.8.4	Confirmability	20
1.9	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	21
1.10	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	21
1.11	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	22
1.11.1	Permission to conduct research	22
1.11.2	Participant consent	22
1.11.3	Protection from harm	23
1.11.4	Confidentiality and anonymity	23
1.12	OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	23

CHAPTER 2

	LITERATURE REVIEW	25
2.1	INTRODUCTION	25
2.2	LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS	25
2.2.1	School discipline as a global concern	26
2.2.1.1	United States of America	26
2.2.1.2	United Kingdom	27
2.2.1.3	Nigeria	27
2.2.1.4	South Africa	28
2.3	SOUTH AFRICAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE	30

2.3.1	The South African Constitution	30
2.3.2	The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996	30
2.3.3	Human Rights and School Discipline	32
2.3.3.1	Right to human dignity (Section 10)	33
2.3.3.2	Freedom and security of the person (Section 12)	33
2.3.3.3	Right to privacy (Section 14)	33
2.3.3.4	Just administrative action (Section 33)	34
2.3.3.5	Right to an environment that is not harmful (Section 24)	34
2.3.3.6	The limitation clause (Section 36)	34
2.3.4	Common Law	34
2.4	CAUSES OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS	35
2.4.1	Individual factors	35
2.4.2	Family factors	36
2.4.3	School factors	40
2.4.4	Societal factors	44
2.4.5	Peer	46
2.5	THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS	47
2.5.1	Legal status of School Governing Bodies	47
2.5.2	General functions of School Governing Bodies	48
2.5.3	Responsibilities of School Governing Bodies regarding discipline	49
2.5.4	Responsibilities of parents with respect to the code of conduct	52
2.6	PREVENTION OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS	54
2.6.1	Specialised programmes	54
2.6.2	Empathy	55
2.6.3	Reducing class size	55
2.6.4	School rescheduling	55
2.6.5	School identity	55

2.6.6	Recognition of learning	56
2.6.7	Reinforcing positive behaviour	56
2.6.8	Use of punishment	56
2.6.9	Tactical ignoring	56
2.6.10	Verbal and non-verbal Interventions	57
2.6.11	Reprimanding	57
2.6.12	Humour	58
2.6.13	Revoking privileges	58
2.6.14	Response cost / demerit system	58
2.6.15	Detention	59
2.6.16	Suspension	60
2.6.17	Exclusion	61
2.6.18	Alternative schools	61
2.6.19	Corporal punishment	62
2.7	EFFECTS OF POOR DISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS	62
2.7.1	Academic implications	63
2.7.2	Developmental and Emotional Implications	64
2.7.3	Social and moral implications	65
2.8	CONCLUSION	66

CHAPTER 3

	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	67
3.1	INTRODUCTION	67
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	67
3.3	POPULATION AND SAMPLING	68
3.4	DATA COLLECTION	69
3.4.1	Phase 1: Document analysis	70

3.4.2	Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews with the principals, educators, parents and learners who are members of the School Governing Body	70
3.4.2.1	Semi-structured interview with the principals	70
3.4.2.2	Semi-structured interview with the educators	71
3.4.2.3	Semi-structured interviews with the parents	71
3.4.2.4	Semi-Structured interview with the learners	72
3.4.3	Phase: 3 Observation	72
3.5	DATA ANALYSIS	73
3.6	CONCLUSION	74

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	75	
4.1	INTRODUCTION	75
4.2	FINDINGS FROM SCHOOL A	75
4.2.1	Findings from Document Analysis	75
4.2.1.1	Code of Conduct	75
4.2.1.2	Punishment/Reward Book	75
4.2.1.3	Classroom policy	78
4.2.1.4	Attendance register	79
4.2.2	Findings from Semi-structured interviews	80
4.2.2.1	Use of corporal punishment	80
4.2.2.2	Alternatives to corporal punishment	82
4.2.2.3	Parental involvement	85
4.2.2.4	Democratic discipline	86
4.2.2.5	Views on discipline in school	87
4.2.3	Findings from Observation	89
4.2.3.1	Late coming	89
4.2.3.2	Absenteeism	89

4.2.3.3	Neglect of academic work	90
4.2.3.4	Possession of cell phones at school	90
4.2.3.5	Illegal substances	90
4.2.3.6	Illegal objects	91
4.2.3.7	Bunking classes	91
4.2.3.8	Not adhering to dress codes	92
4.2.3.9	Teenage pregnancy	92
4.3	FINDINGS FROM SCHOOL B	92
4.3.1	Findings from Document Analysis	92
4.3.1.1	Code of Conduct	92
4.3.1.2	Punishment/Reward book	95
4.3.1.3	Classroom policy	96
4.3.2	Findings from Semi-structured interviews	98
4.3.2.1	Use of corporal punishment	98
4.3.2.2	Alternatives to corporal punishment	100
4.3.2.3	Responses to social challenges	103
4.3.2.4	Parental involvement	105
4.3.2.5	Democratic discipline	106
4.3.2.6	Views on discipline in the school	108
4.3.3	Findings from Observation	109
4.3.3.1	Late coming	109
4.3.3.2	Absenteeism	110
4.3.3.3	Neglect of academic work	110
4.3.3.4	Possession of cell phones at the school	110
4.3.3.5	Illegal substances	111
4.3.3.6	Illegal objects	111
4.3.3.7	Bunking classes	112
4.3.3.8	Not adhering to dress codes	112
4.3.3.9	Teenage pregnancy	112
4.4	CONCLUSION	113

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	114
5.1 INTRODUCTION	114
5.2 DISUSSION OF THE FINDINGS	114
5.2.1 Conclusion related to Research Objective One	115
5.2.2 Conclusion related to Research Objective Two	117
5.2.3 Conclusion related to Research Objective Three	119
5.2.3.1 Positive practices of managing discipline	119
5.2.3.2 Possible strategies for addressing challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit	121
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	123
5.4 CONCLUSION	125
5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	125
REFERENCES	127
APPENDIXES	139
APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT	139
APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS	141
APPENDIX C: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS	142

APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS (MEMBERS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY)	143
APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS (MEMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF LEARNERS)	144
APPENDIX F: OBSERVATION GUIDE	145
APPENDIX G: PERMISSION LETTER TO LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION	146
APPENDIX H: PERMISSION LETTER FROM LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION	148
APPENDIX I: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE FROM UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO	150

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STUDY ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Student indiscipline has been a source of worry for schools, parents and other stakeholders concerned with the education of children (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:97). As Ali, Dada, Isiaka and Salmon (2014:255) posit, indiscipline is a multifaceted phenomenon regarding its displays and causes as well as its meanings and functions in the social, psychosocial and pedagogical fields. School discipline has two main objectives; first to ensure the safety of staff and learners and secondly to create an environment conducive to learning (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:98). As Madziyire (2010:10) argues, effective discipline is needed in school for good academic achievement because when there is effective discipline in a school and in the classroom, effective teaching and learning can take place. The cases of indiscipline in rural secondary schools are very widespread, ranging from minor cases like late coming, bullying and stealing to major cases like rape, murder and drug abuse (Masekoameng, 2015:3). Most schools have well-crafted school rules and yet in spite of these rules the phenomenon of indiscipline persists. However, most School Governing Bodies tend to overlook the enactment and enforcement of a Code of Conduct for learners because they are reportedly not adequately empowered to perform these functions (Xaba, 2011:201).

School Governing Bodies often find themselves in a dilemma of having to find effective ways of dealing with learner indiscipline in rural secondary schools while at the same time protecting learner's rights (Maphosa & Mammen 2011:2013). The South African Schools Act, Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996) prescribes that the School Governing Bodies adopt and assist in the enforcement of learner Code of Conduct in schools in order to effectively maintain discipline. The study conducted by Mestry and Khumalo

(2012:97) in rural secondary schools in the North West Province, South Africa, revealed that School Governing Bodies still lack the relevant knowledge and skills to enforce learner discipline. Furthermore, School Governing Bodies are far removed from the day-to-day operations of the school, and consequently fail to contextualise the seriousness of discipline problems as well as to enforce the learner Code of Conduct.

In the research carried out by Maphosa (2011:76), many educators in rural secondary schools reported that they experience serious discipline problems and disempowered to deal with the disruptive behaviour of learners in class. A lack of discipline may affect the teaching and learning process, and few ideas for education can be realised if disruptive behaviour prevails in the classroom (Marais & Meier, 2010:41). It is an indisputable fact that good and positive discipline in schools is an important factor for effective teaching and learning (Jones, 2010:24). Learners learn best and educators teach best in an orderly and safe environment. Lack of discipline and lack of respect contributes largely to the erosion of a culture of learning and teaching in schools and without this culture effective education becomes a myth (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:105).

Traditional behaviourists used corporal punishment, suspension, and exclusion as consequences to minimise inappropriate behaviour, which in hindsight seem to blame the victim and create negative feelings towards the system (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:4). Reasons that lead to suspensions and expulsions include physical and verbal confrontations, fighting, disrespect towards educators, bullying, stealing, vandalism, theft, substance abuse and watching pornography (Marais & Meier, 2010:50). Cases of learner indiscipline within the confines of the school are on the increase in South African schools (Du Preez & Roux, 2010:20). It is therefore, on account of this situation that this study attempted to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Rural areas are characterised by various factors that negatively influence the delivery of quality education, namely poverty, lack of basic infrastructure and electricity (Surty, 2011:8). Msimang (2011:10) highlighted that the absence of sufficient resources at rural schools contribute to disciplinary problems. Furthermore, Msimang (2011:4) stated that in rural secondary schools there are over-aged learners who often bully their younger classmates, disrupt classes due to late coming, noise making, and end up becoming indisciplined by failing to participate in class.

Deviant and disruptive learner behaviour is anything but a recent issue; the most difficult task an educator has faced was dealing with the disrespect and rowdy behaviour of learners (Dodge, 2011:63). With the constant changes that occur in society it is difficult to find one-size-fits all approach to discipline that stands the test of time. As such, discipline in schools is different today than it was in the 1950s (Marais & Meier, 2010:44).

Learners with behaviour problems are described as those who behave in ways impinging on another's right to learn and violate societal norms and rules (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:3). In this light, discipline in a school is said to be the practice of training people to obey rules and societal norms. Many traditional approaches to discipline are negative, punitive and reactive, which result in bad feeling for learners (Lukman & Hamadi, 2014: 11).

The South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) mandates School Governing Bodies to adopt a Code of Conduct for learners as a way of establishing a disciplined and purposive school environment, dedicating to the improvement of the quality of the teaching and learning process. Mestry and Khumalo (2012:98) indicate that notwithstanding the requirement that every public school should have a disciplinary policy or a learner Code of Conduct to ensure a disciplined teaching and learning environment.

Within the same breath, Serame, Oosthuizen, Wolhuter and Zulu (2013:1) highlighted that at present, learner misconduct appears to be of great concern in the arena of public education. As such, an orderly learning and teaching environment is a prerequisite for optimal teaching and learning in schools because disorder and disruption that often results from learner misconduct is currently having a detrimental effect on effective teaching and learning (Serame *et al.* 2013:1).

Masekoameng (2010:79) confirmed that there is a breakdown in discipline in many schools. She also found that in secondary schools the situation is worse than in primary schools because learners, as adolescents, at this stage become aware of their rights to privacy, freedom of religion, beliefs, opinions and expression. According to Mestry and Khumalo (2012:98) the disruptive behaviour in South African secondary schools includes learners armed with dangerous weapons, learner on learner violence, learner on educator violence, vandalism, theft and learner in possession of prohibited substances such as drugs and alcohol. However, even amongst educational stake-holders, there seems to be disagreement about what discipline entails, what constitutes disruptive behaviour and which strategies School Governing Bodies should apply in dealing with undisciplined learners (Maphosa, 2011:245).

On the basis of this background that the current study sought to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Limpopo Province. The study is located within the research paradigms “Youth at risk” and “Community Adult Education” in the Discipline of Community and Continuing Education at the University of Limpopo.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various strategies have been tried in an attempt to prevent and to help correct learner misbehaviour, no one strategy seems to be effective for all learners or

situations. The literature review considers a few of the most common strategies used by educators. Traditional methods followed a zero tolerance strategy which involved strict consequences regardless of circumstances (Martin & Loomis, 2013:58). This punitive stance, it would seem, increases negative behaviour as the inappropriate behaviour is punished but no new behaviour is learnt to replace it (Martin & Loomis, 2013:58). It seems that the wrong message is learnt by punishment and that instead the learner should be guided to constructive behaviour (Marais & Meier, 2010:42). This is not to say that poor behaviour should not result in some consequence, but rather that there should be a relevant punishment of the behaviour. Misbehaviour should be understood in its context, appropriate behaviour should be taught and goals set to prevent further infractions (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:3).

Rules set limits and regulate relationships and social interactions (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2012:20). Rules can be used as a prevention strategy and usually carry with them some sort of consequence for infringement (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:98). All schools should adopt a Code of Conduct for learners which clearly state the rules of the school. These rules if successfully implemented, contribute to good discipline (Glenn, 2012:46). The Code of Conduct should not only contain rules and explain what inappropriate behaviour entails but also what appropriate and constructive behaviour involves and how it will be rewarded.

The Code of Conduct should also clearly demarcate the consequences of various behaviours which should be an appropriate measure to the offense committed and vary in degree of seriousness (Glenn, 2012:32). Procedures on how to deal with different infractions should also be explained to all parties' concerned (Waterville Central School District, Alachua County Public Schools, 2012:32).

1.3.1 Management of disciplinary problems

School discipline has been approached in various ways, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. As no one approach seems adequate for the discipline of learners in rural secondary schools, it seems that a combination of approaches may be more effective. Below is a brief overview of some approaches that have been implemented.

1.3.2 Positive theory approach

The positive approach instils responsibility through partnership (Samuels, 2010:79). The basic grounding of the positive approach is that of respect: by respecting learners, educators in turn gain respect and in so doing, obedience (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:6). This requires the development of good educator-learner relations, the establishment of clear and concise rules and many opportunities in which the learner can be successful (Bowen, 2010:1).

Such opportunities include involving learners in improving their school, which creates a sense of ownership and a community for improvement (Bear, 2012:10). By having staff and learners working together to create a positive environment learners become motivated to learn, as they have a vested interest in the success of the school and of themselves (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:6; Bowen, 2010:1). It may also spread to include the community by doing community service and being involved in its projects (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6).

1.3.3 Adlerian theory approach

The Adlerian approach uses various methods to understand reasons for a learner's poor behaviour and to rectify it. The principle of this approach is to try to understand the context of the poor behaviour, the background and possible risk factors, in order to be proactive (Marais & Meier, 2010:42). These methods

help to alter the behaviour and to meet the needs of the learner that were fulfilled by the inappropriate behaviour in a more appropriate manner (Dinkmeyer & Carlson, 2013:27).

This approach has positive effects on the learner's self- concept, attitude and locus of control (Dinkmeyer & Carlson, 2013:27). It also creates a positive atmosphere in which academic performance is improved, an attitude for learning is created and personal and professional growth is nurtured. The effects on disciplining poor behaviour using this method are inconclusive but it would seem that the occurrence of poor behaviour is minimised by the positive effects of a positive environment (Nelsen, 2011:11).

1.3.4 Learner-centred theory approach

The learner-centred approach focuses on relationships and attends to the social and emotional needs of the youth through restorative justice (Nelsen, 2011:11). The educator tries to establish an open, warm and trusting relationship. In so doing it promotes mutual respect, reduces behaviour problems and improves attitudes by helping learners to choose more appropriate behaviours instead of blaming them for poor behaviour (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:127).

This approach, as in the reality therapy model, helps learners to take ownership of their environment. They also learn to self-regulate by being aware of boundaries and expectations that have been set in a trusting and caring relationship (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:98). It involves problem-solving, developing relationships, developing resiliency, meeting developmental needs, developing social responsibility and values in a supportive and empowering environment (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:3). This approach allows for a learner to make choices and to be accountable for those choices by giving them freedom with consequences and rewards (Bear, 2012:10).

1.3.5 Behavioural theory approach

As behavioural theory explains, behaviour follows a pattern of antecedent, behaviour and consequence (LeeFon, Jacobs, Le Roux & De Wet, 2013:6). It is thought that if the antecedent can be controlled or manipulated, the behaviour will be prevented. Thus by eliminating boredom and frustration, poor behaviours can be prevented and good relationships promoted (Mcnamara, 2012:53). Behaviours that are not prevented by manipulating the antecedent can become extinct by the manipulation of the consequences, either with reward or punishment (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:96).

As can be seen from the brief description of various approaches above, many of the theories overlap in one regard or another. It seems as if the best approach to dealing with today's learners, is to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach which encompasses the learner as a whole person and not merely a number amongst many.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4.1 Main Question

This study is intended to answer the following question:

“What are the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province?”

1.4.2 Sub-questions

Subsumed under the above-stated question are the following sub-questions:

- What are the views of the parents, educators, principals, and learners who are members of School Governing Bodies regarding the forms of indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools?
- What are the causes of indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools?
- What are the possible strategies for addressing indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools?

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Aim

The aim of the study is to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.

1.5.2 Objectives of the Study

In the light of the aim of the study, the objectives of the research are to:

- Understand the views of the parents, educators, principals, and learners who are members of School Governing Bodies regarding the forms of indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.
- Identify the causes of poor indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.
- Develop possible strategies for addressing indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.6.1 School discipline

School discipline refers to *“the practice of training people to obey rules and orders, and punishing them if they refuse to obey the rules. The term discipline is closely identified with schooling and often carries a negative connotation equated with punishment administered by educators in response to misbehaviour. Discipline involves the development of self-control, the development of character, and the development of orderly and productive ways of living. These positive outcomes result in a satisfying and productive life, not fear and blind conformity to arbitrary rules”* (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:270).

School discipline refers to *“the standard of behaviour expected of the teachers and the learners. Disciplined must be maintained in the school and classroom to ensure that the education of learners can proceed without disruption. Its goal is to lead learners to self-discipline”* (Ehiane, 2014:184).

For the purpose of this study, school discipline refers to the regulation of children and the maintenance of order (rules) in schools. These rules may, for example the expected standards of clothing, timekeeping, social behaviour, Code of Conduct, ethics and instructing learners to adhere to school rules and regulations in secondary schools of the Shiluvane Circuit in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

1.6.2 Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct refers to *“a form of subordinate legislation that reflects the democratic principles in South African education (Constitution of the Republic South Africa, 1996). The Code of Conduct is formulated by each individual school but, may not contradict the principles laid down in documents such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act of 1996, the National*

Education Policy Act No 27 of 1996, the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996, the African Charter on the welfare of the child” (Department of Education, 2012:5).

A Code of Conduct is a “collection of a number of binding rules and principles which reflects moral standards, ethics, principles, values, and standards of conduct of school. It is also a guideline put in place to control behaviour of learners in order to achieve the goals of the school” (Wolpe, 2012:20).

For the purpose of this study, a Code of Conduct refers to a standard of behaviour. It is important that all the role players in a school community must identify with the standard of behaviour and conduct set out in the Code of Conduct. The School Governing Body should adopt a Code of Conduct which must aim at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process. A Code of Conduct lays down clear guidelines about what is acceptable behaviour in the school. It is about the principles and values of the school.

1.6.3 School

Temitayo, Nayaya and Lukman (2013:7) refer the school as “a type of service organisation vested with primary function of educating the learners from grade Zero to grade twelve”.

A school refers to “an educational institution or such an institution at which education and training, including pre-primary education, is provided and which

is maintained, managed and controlled or subsidised by a provincial department” (Mandina, 2012:768).

For the purpose of this study, a school refers to an institution where learners are taught and educators teach. The basic sense of a school today means an establishment where learners receive instruction from educators. Schooling in this study means instruction or training given to learners in rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province.

1.6.4 Rural secondary school

Rural secondary school refers to *“a school found in rural areas that do not have sufficient teaching and learning aids to enhance the teaching and learning process” (Surty (2011:8).*

According to Semali and Vumilia (2016:51) a rural secondary school refers to *“a school that is managed with funds from the public. The school is characterized by various challenges that negatively influence the delivery of quality education such as poor socio economic background, lack of basic infrastructure for teaching and learning, the problem of attracting and keeping qualified educators in rural schools, poor funding and limited resources”.*

For the purpose of this study, rural secondary schools refer to schools which are attended by learners from poorer families who are generally deprived of essential services, living below the poverty line where drop-out rates and grade repetition are higher with only a small part of the population completing secondary education. Usually offering education to learners from Grade 8 up to Grade 12. Learners enter Grade 8 at the age of 14 years, and leave after

completing Grade 12, at the age of 18 years. Rural areas are located outside the townships and are facing the challenging task of improving the quality of education. This challenging task is characterised by the following features:

- the difficulties in physically accessing the schools;
- schools often distant from many learners' homes;
- access to adequate drinking water is a problem;
- rarely connected to power supply;
- poor sanitation;
- poor facilities and inadequate learning material.

1.6.5 Educational Management

According to Mestry (2017:1) educational management refers to *“the application of general management theory, principles and skills in the education environment. For example management of learning and teaching consists of management tasks or activities known as planning, problem solving, decision making, policy making, organising, coordinating, delegating, leading and control of school/education events. A knowledgeable or experienced (person) principal or body (School Governing Body) perform these management tasks and/or activities. The areas include learners, staff administration, physical facilities, finances and the school community”*.

In this regard Van Deventer (2013:66) states that educational management refers to *“a specific type of work in education which comprises those regulative tasks or actions executed by a person or body in a position of authority in a specific field or area of regulation, so as to allow formative education to take place”*.

For the purpose of this study educational management refers to the process of leading and directing all or part of an organisation like school. The management team, principal, deputy principal, heads of department, Learner Representative Council as well as School Governing Body must help in managing the school in order to curb indiscipline in schools. The educator as well has to manage a classroom so that there can be discipline in the school.

1.6.6 School Governing Body

A School Governing Body refers to *“a structure that governs a public school. It stands in a position of trust towards the school. It is made up of the principal, elected representatives of educators, non-educator staff members, parents, and learners in the case of secondary schools”* (South African Council of Educators, 2013:12).

A School Governing Body refers to *“the government of the school entrusted with the responsibility and authority to formulate and adopt policy for each public school in terms of the national policy and provincial education regulations. The function of a School Governing Body is to create a healthy school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process”* (South African Schools Act No 84, 1996).

For the purpose of this study School Governing Bodies refers to a group of parents, educators, learners, and school manager who are elected to see to it that there is smooth running of the school. A School Governing Body must ensure that the school is governed in the best interests of all the stakeholders. All School Governing Body members must always put the best interests of the school before any personal interests. This body plays a significant role in

helping the school to maintain discipline without the use of corporal punishment. The members of this body attend to matters related to school discipline.

1.6.7 Youth

Youth refers to *“the period between childhood and adulthood or a person who has not yet reached adulthood who receives education in Secondary school”* (Waite & Hawker, 2011:1073).

Youth refers to *“the quality or state of being young, who receives education, must receive education or to gain knowledge or understanding of or skill in by study, instruction, or experience”* (Merriam-Webster, 2012: 45).

For the purpose of this study, youth refers to the learners at a rural secondary school who is being taught by educators. Learners have the right to a clean and safe environment that is conducive to education. However, a learner is currently undertaking to learn in a formal educational setting from reception year (Grade R) to matric (Grade 12).

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section endeavours to discuss the research design, population and sampling data collection techniques as well as data analysis methods used in the study.

1.7.1 Research design

Qualitative research attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied (Maree, 2012:50). The choice of this approach was based on researcher's desire to produce a rich data on the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Limpopo Province.

The researcher used case study design because it offered a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considered not just the voice and perspective of one or two participants, but the views of all participants (Maree, 2012:75). Case studies provide a real example of real people in real situations. They investigate and report on the complex and unfolding interactions of human relations in a unique instance (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013:182). The case study design enabled the researcher to collect rich data on the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:435).

The qualitative research case study for this dissertation is grounded in the interpretive theoretical perspective, which guided and anchored the data collection and analysis. The researcher working in this paradigm assumes that participant's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously (*ontology*); that we understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (*epistemology*) (Maree, 2011:59).

1.7.2 Population and sampling

The study was conducted in two rural secondary schools, in the East of Tzaneen in Shiluvane Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province. Shiluvane Circuit has nine secondary schools. School A consists of a principal, deputy

principal, four Heads of Departments, twenty-five educators and nine-hundred and seven learners. School B consists of a principal, deputy principal, three Heads of Department, twenty educators and seven-hundred and twenty learners. The two rural secondary schools caters learners from the following villages Makhwibidung, Mogapeng, Masoma, Serare and Pharare. The language spoken is Sepedi and the medium of instruction is English at the two selected rural secondary schools.

Purposive sampling was used to sample participants among all the stakeholders (educators, learners, parents and principals) (Maree, 2012:79). That allowed the researcher to identify information-rich participants who were knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349). The implications were that participants were selected on the basis that they could supply information relevant to the problem in question. The target sample for this study consisted of a principal, five educators, five learners who are the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, deputy secretary and the treasurer who are members of Representative Council of Learners , and five parents, who were members of School Governing Bodies at each selected rural secondary school. The total sample was comprised of thirty-two participants.

1.7.3 Data collection

Collected data from document analysis, semi-structured interviews and observation was then transcribed and read carefully (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:520). The researcher used a variety of techniques of data collection in order to triangulate and provide multiple sources of evidence. Multiple sources of evidence provided multiple-converging support for a single point, and also provided a fuller-diverging picture of what the researcher studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:7). In this study data collection process unfolded as follows:

1.7.3.1 Phase 1: Document analysis

Documents such as the learner's Code of Conduct, Punishment or Reward book, Classroom policy and Attendance register were discussed and analysed.

1.7.3.2 Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews

Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted in July 2017 with the principals, educators, learners who are members of Representative Council of Learners and parents at the target rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province (Mertens, 2010:370). Semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic (Mertens, 2010:370). They also allowed the researcher to probe initial responses. The interviews were conducted in Sepedi and translated into English. The researcher used interview protocol and the participants were voice-recorded. There was an assistant researcher who was responsible for note-taking and operating of the voice-recorder during the interviews.

1.7.3.3 Phase 3: Observation

Observation was done in order to obtain data that could not be gained through interview (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:240). Cohen *et al.* (2011:456) state that the researcher who is a participant observer, watches and records behaviour in its natural state.

In this study the researcher used observation guide to collect data. Comprehensive field notes were taken throughout the period. The observation guide was as follows:

- Late coming;
- Absenteeism;

- Neglect of academic work;
- Possession of cell phones at school;
- Illegal substances;
- Illegal objects;
- Bunking classes;
- Not adhering to dress codes;
- Teenage pregnancy.

1.7.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is an on-going process which literally means to take apart words, sentences and paragraphs, which is an important act in the research project in order to make sense of, interpret and theorise data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). Data was analysed inductively. Inductive data analysis means that collected data was summarised and categorised into themes, and further categorised into minor themes (Maree, 2012:101). Different themes were identified and those which were determined by means of a line-by-line analysis of each interview transcription were coded (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). Furthermore, reporting of data took the form of a thick description and verbatim quotations (Mertens, 2010:261).

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Throughout the process of data collection the researcher needed to ensure that the findings and interpretations were accurate. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of this study four criteria were followed: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

1.8.1 Credibility

The researcher produced the findings that are believable and convincing. Credibility or truth value had been established by the alignment of the research

design, selected participants, and context of the study (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker, 2014:674). The researcher established credibility by applying triangulation to the method of data collection and data analysis in order to determine any discrepancies in the findings (Maree, 2012:305).

1.8.2 Transferability

The findings of this study cannot be transferred and generalised to other similar context hence this research utilises case study design. The investigation was specific to two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.

1.8.3 Dependability

The researcher ensured consistency or stability of the results by discussing the identified themes with the participants (Ary *et al.* 2014:536). In addition, this research ensured consistency by using rich, detailed descriptions of the research methodology as well as the availability of audio-recordings. The researcher used triangulation in all data collected during the research process, including the results of the document analysis, semi-structured interviews and observations in order to search for common themes to provide reliable findings (Maree, 2012:305).

1.8.4 Confirmability

The use of multiple techniques for gathering data enhanced confirmability of the findings (Ary *et al.* 2014:53). This study made allowances for confirmability by keeping records of the raw data collected through documents analysis, semi-structured interviews and observations as well as records of data analysis. Every effort was made to have planning and debriefing sessions with my supervisor who, with a vast experience in conducting research, assisted in this research.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study may provide a framework for the management of discipline in the two rural secondary schools. The School Governing Bodies may hopefully generate strategies that may enhance implementation of the school disciplinary policies that reflect the needs of learners, educators, parents and community.

The results of this study may also be used by the researchers in education as a baseline study for future studies in the area. The research may serve as a reservoir of knowledge at large since it will be made available in the university library. The community will be educated and encouraged to prevent more incidences of misbehaviour by youth.

The study may assist the Department of Basic Education, school administrators, School Governing Bodies, educators and learners at rural secondary schools, only where research was conducted, hence case study. Since the researcher does not know of any similar study, this study sought to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research study is limited to two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, Mopani District, in Limpopo Province. Therefore, the results may not be applied to similar contexts. The results may have been very different if more than two rural secondary schools had been studied. The participants were also assured that the data collected will be kept confidential and that no names were used to protect the identity of the participants.

An additional limitation to the study proved to be the data collection process. Since information obtained from the semi-structured interviews was largely

dependent on the participants and what they were willing to share, the nature of their information was limited to their own perspectives and lived experiences. However, this study's triangulation of data helped to verify results, and helped to support the accuracy of the themes mined out of the interview transcripts (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:264).

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher is responsible for ensuring the ethical quality of the inquiry and thus has an obligation to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of the research (Cohen *et al.* 2013:512). The following ethical considerations were taken into account for this research study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:334):

1.11.1 Permission to conduct research

Permission to conduct the research was requested from the Limpopo Department of Basic Education. Letters to request permission to conduct the study was given to the principals of selected two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province well in advance, and necessary appointment was made in such a way that research activities were not interfering with teaching and learning (Maree, 2012:300). The researcher had continuously conducted the research according to Turfloop Research Ethics Committee.

1.11.2 Participant consent

The rights of the participants were protected. During the semi-structured interviews the researcher presented the participants with a letter of consent, in which the research process was described. The researcher requested the participants to read the letter, ask questions to gain clarity and sign the consent form. Participants had the right to withdraw participation at any time of the study (Maree, 2012:300). Furthermore, the researcher obtained informed consent

from the guardians of learners and assent from participants as they were minors.

1.11.3 Protection from harm

The researcher provided help (debriefing) for any participants who could have, as a result of participation, been harmed, as well as the opportunity to receive help from persons not involved in the study (school counsellor). Detailed feedback for all parties involved in the research study was provided (Maree, 2012:306). The researcher was transparent with regard to the purpose, procedure, possible advantages and risks involved in the study as well as the ethical considerations and permission granted to conduct the study (Maree, 2012:306).

1.11.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

Anonymity entails making use of pseudonyms instead of the participants' real names, ensuring that the participants are not identifiable in print (Leedy & Omrod, 2011:101). Participants' information shared during the study was privately kept and the results presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants (Maree, 2012:307). Participants had the right not to be involved at any time of the study.

1.12 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The study covers five chapters to be demarcated as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and study orientation.

This chapter entails the rationale and background of the study, statement of the problem, the legal framework for discipline in schools, purpose of the study,

research questions, objectives of the study, definition of key concepts, theoretical framework, significance of the study, and limitation of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter is a review of literature for the study. It provides in-depth explanation about the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline nationally and globally.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter includes a more thorough explanation of the chosen research design and methodology. The research objectives are stated, with a discussion about the chosen sample group, data collection and data analysis.

Chapter 4: Findings of the study

The research findings are presented in this chapter. It consists of an interpretation of the themes found.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions for further research

This chapter summarises the study and draws conclusions pertaining to the research question, based on the data collected. It further lists the recommendations based on the findings of the study, which can potentially be used to help solve certain related challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, Limpopo Province.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, international and local literature that supports the study is reviewed. Analysis of different contexts was made to inform challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province. The chapter also concentrated on the problems that School Governing Bodies face; causes of learner indiscipline in rural secondary schools; the role of School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth in rural secondary schools and the prevention of learner discipline problems. The discussions below provides the literature underpinning this study:

2.2 LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

According to Johnson and Christensen (2014:81), literature review serves several important functions. First, it informs the reader that you are knowledgeable about your research problem and that you have a good grasp of the major theoretical and empirical research related to your research problem. Second, it is a summary of a body of work that is related to your problem. Moreover, it is a critical evaluation of what you see as the relevant issues and questions that need to be addressed in other research. It also shows the audience that you can integrate and synthesise a range of different but interrelated studies that deal with your research issues.

2.2.1 School discipline as a global concern

Countries around the world are grappling with discipline among youth at secondary schools. The issue of learner indiscipline has taken centre stage for a long time internationally (Lukman & Hamadi, 2014:11).

2.2.1.1 United States of America

In United States of America schools face a number of challenges related to disruptive and antisocial youth behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning (Osher, Bear, Srague & Doyle, 2010:48). The youth resort to all forms of indiscipline that include rule violation, swearing, drinking/drug abuse, theft, rough play, aggression, sexual harassment, refusal, defiance, fighting, and vandalism. In this regard (Osher *et al.* 2010:53) believe that the American School Boards need to focus on creating a disciplined school environment, collaborated with families, improve safety, support, academic challenges and socio-emotional learning and also to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and improve discipline. Russo, Oosthuizen and Wolhuter (2013:4) also reported that United States of America has established suitable foundation for human rights serving as a model for schools in the civilised world.

In addition, Onderi and Makori (2013:71) reports on the 1999 Columbine high school massacre of nineteen people and twenty-three others injured. The two senior high school assailant also committed suicide shortly afterwards. The reasons given for the massacre are that the two felt isolated and teased by their fellow learners. Furthermore, also reports about the Arkansas (in the United States of America) incident where the eleven and thirteen years old fired at their classmates at the playground and killed four girls as a result of rejection from female classmates

2.2.1.2 United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, there are reports of many cases of classroom disorder (Maphosa & Mammen, 2011:213). Learners are generally noisy, rowdy and disrespectful to educators and there has been forms of indiscipline that include the use of drugs, gangsters and shootings (Maphosa & Mammen 2011:13). These problems affect the fundamental rights of the learner to feel safe and to be treated with respect (Marais & Meier, 2010:52). Lochan (2010:4) states that administrators, teachers and parents have been struggling to find solutions to the problem. Government School Inspectors judged pupil behaviour in secondary schools as inadequate (Kirera, 2015:552). The government minister responsible for schools said that he was concerned that almost one in five secondary schools were rated no better than satisfactory in respect of behaviour (Department of Education, United Kingdom, 2012:6). However the role of School Governing Bodies is to ensure every school must have behaviour policy (Department of Education, United Kingdom, 2012:2).

2.2.1.3 Nigeria

In Nigeria indiscipline problem in schools is ranked as a major problem among youth at secondary schools. Truancy, absenteeism, fighting, stealing, and drug addiction among others are typical examples of disciplinary problems experienced in rural secondary schools (Temitayo *et al.* 2014:7).

The study titled “Management of Disciplinary Problems in Secondary Schools with Reference to Jalingo Metropolis” emphasise School Governing Bodies should effect disciplinary measures and emphasise the need for school rules and regulations (Temitayo *et al.* 2014:12). On the other hand, Ali *et al.* (2014:254) revealed that various acts of indiscipline were prevalent among rural secondary school learners. It was also gathered that several factors like the school, learners and the society at large contributed greatly to the acts of indiscipline among the students (Ali *et al.* 2014:254). As a results, the study

recommended among other things that a whole approach to manage learners discipline should be adopted by the School Governing Bodies (Ali *et al.* 2014:254). Okiemute (2011:45) asserts that Nigerian educators insinuate that the reason for the exponential growth of cases of learner's misconduct is that school regulations are not founded in the cultural strategies for disciplining children. Furthermore, according to Okiemute (2011:46) learner discipline is an integral part of child socialisation, hence, is not a lonesome work involving the entire society and not just the schools.

However, educators in Nigeria regularly lament that they are not adequately protected and authorised to be involved in the disciplinary process in that they are relatively helpless especially when they encounter discipline challenges in school where the school head is not always nearby (Okiemute, 2011:50). Although only the school head is allowed to administer corporal punishment, most teachers ignore this regulation (Okiemute, 2011:50). However, educators believe that the manner in which parents and the general public treat them is influenced by school regulations (Nakpodia, 2010:146). Teachers complain that they are rarely respected by parents and if it happens that they punish learners, their parents would come to reprimand them even in the presence of the learners (Okiemute, 2011:49). In addition the situation has been a major concern to School Governing Bodies who suggest that disciplinary strategies be applied by educators as a way to solving the problems (Nakpodia, 2010:144).

2.2.1.4 South Africa

Learner indiscipline appears to be of great concern in the arena of public education in South Africa (Serame *et al.*, 2013:1). In a study conducted by Maphosa (2011:245), in one educational district in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, learners carry knives, verbally abuse and threaten their teachers.

Deterioration of discipline is evident at many schools (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010:387). Masekoameng (2010:2) refers to incidents involving learners calling educators foul names and making obscene gestures when educators give them instructions or try to restore order in classroom. Mestry and Khumalo (2010:102) highlight the lack of necessary knowledge, skills and experience of relevant legislation underpinning the learner Code of Conduct by. Furthermore, School Governing Bodies are lowly qualified, not given adequate training and not sufficient capacitated to enable to perform their duties effectively (Mestry & Khumalo, 2010:102).

Maphosa and Shumba (2010:397) point out that educators felt disempowered and become increasingly difficult to ensure discipline in schools as a result of the banning of corporal punishment. Additionally, educators are struggling to find alternatives that will enable them to feel in control of the learners they teach, as a result, they are suffering from stress and some consider leaving teaching because of difficulties in dealing with learner misbehaviour (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010 396).

A study by Serame *et al*, (2013:1) at Joubertton Secondary Schools in Klerksdorp, South Africa found indiscipline of learners affect large part of the teachers' family life, personal health, job satisfaction and morale. In many schools, including the relevant secondary school in Gauteng Province, much training has been implemented on effective teaching methods and the presentation of the much revised curriculum (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:2). Many educators find though that their curriculum knowledge and effective teaching becomes ineffective due to poor discipline practices (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:970). New educators entering the profession want a recipe for effective discipline, but such a recipe does not exist. Effective discipline is rather a personalised combination of discipline techniques that suit the situation (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:14). Experienced educators are able to read the situation and adapt a suitable strategy with which to deal with it. This however takes practice and requires knowledge and previous experience.

2.3 SOUTH AFRICAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

2.3.1 The South African Constitution

The Constitution is the supreme law upon which all other pieces of legislation are built. The South African Constitution of 1996 (Edutel, 2013:1245) therefore explicitly enshrines, guarantees and protects human rights in general and children's rights in particular. The second chapter of the Constitution focuses on the Bill of Rights, which declares that schools have to proactively strive towards the fulfilment of fundamental rights, including those of learners (Mestry & Khumalo 2012:99). Each learner is the bearer of rights, but is also required to respect the rights of others. The Bill of Rights states in unequivocal terms the need to protect such rights.

This section has direct relevance to what happens in schools and classrooms. Learner misbehaviour can be gross, and at times affect the smooth running of schools and the safety of educators and learners. But disciplinary strategies that the school authorities and educators use to punish learners must not demean the humanity of a child. In line with the constitutional requirement, corporal punishment is banned in South African schools.

2.3.2 The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996

The main purpose of the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996) is to transform education by creating and managing a national school system that will give everyone an equal opportunity to develop his or her talents (Joubert &, Prinsloo, 2013:25). The Act states that discipline must be maintained in the school and classroom situation so that the education of learners flourishes without disruptive behaviour and offences (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:8). The Act places the responsibility for maintaining discipline on School Governing Bodies and educators. Under the South African Schools Act of 1996, the use of corporal punishment in schools is banned. Educators need to

devise strategies that take cognisance of learners' rights and protection. The South African Schools Act of 1996 also stipulates regulations for safety measures at schools and categorically states that dangerous objects and drugs are not allowed on school premises.

Both the South African Constitution of 1996 and the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa of 1996) play a major role in matters relating to discipline in public schools. Education has a legal foundation and this implies that educational processes and activities are governed by a complex system of legal norms, values and principles. The principal, School Governing Body, educators, learners and other stakeholders in education must be familiar with the legal provisions that mandate discipline in schools (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:16).

The school exercises public power and performs public functions in terms of legislation. Schools are obliged to act in a lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair manner. Section 15 of the South African Schools Act determines that every public school is a 'juristic person' with the legal capacity to perform its functions in terms of the Act. The School Governing Body is the functionary of the public school which is the juristic person and 'organ of state.' In its capacity as functionary, the School Governing Body is bound by administrative law and the constitutional principle (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:13).

The professional management of a school is the responsibility of the principal under the authority of the Provincial Department Head of Education. Governance of a school is the responsibility of the School Governing Body whose functions and duties are provided in the Schools Act (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:16). The relationship between the school and the School Governing Body is one of 'trust' (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:15).

The duties of a School Governing Body include the promotion of the best interest of the school, the provision of quality education for learners, the support of the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions, and administration and control of the school's property (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:20). The governing body is empowered to maintain and enforce school discipline. According to Section 8 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the School Governing Body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct for learners after consultation with learners, parents and educators. All learners are compelled to adhere to the provisions of the code (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:8).

Only the School Governing Body may suspend a learner found guilty of serious misconduct after a fair hearing. A learner may be suspended for a maximum of one week (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:9). Section 8 (5) of the South African Schools Act of 1996 grants learners the right to due process (procedural fairness), when they are suspended or expelled from a school for misconduct. In South Africa rules of natural justice are used and they are aimed at ensuring that administrative action is fair and just.

Section 33 of the constitution provides that everyone has a right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. Section 9 of the South African Schools Act provides learners with the right to appeal, and therefore should be provided for in a school's Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures. According to Section 10 (1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner and any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault.

2.3.3 Human Rights and School Discipline

Chapter 2 of the South African Constitution contains the Bill of Rights. The emphasis is on the protection of basic human rights and on the need to protect

children against harsh and cruel treatment. The following are some of the provisions in the Bill of Rights that have a direct bearing on school discipline and punishment:

2.3.3.1 Right to human dignity (Section 10)

An important aim of the Code of Conduct of the school should be to ensure the rights of everyone in the school to their dignity and to promote respect for oneself and others. When administering punishment, care should be taken not to infringe this right. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2013:108), belittling, name-calling, using derogatory language and humiliating learners in front of their peers are examples of how a learner's right to dignity may be infringed, and such infringements should be avoided.

2.3.3.2 Freedom and security of the person (Section 12)

This section provides that everyone has the right to freedom and security and the right to bodily and psychological integrity. This includes the right not to be tortured in any way and not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. Therefore, in the school context, punishment may not be unreasonable, cruel or degrading.

2.3.3.3 Right to privacy (Section 14)

The right to privacy, which includes the right not to have one's person and property searched, is a fundamental principle that should be upheld by the school's Code of Conduct. In certain circumstances, it might be necessary to conduct searches; therefore, particular care must be taken to ensure that the search is reasonable, justifiable and conducted by appropriate persons in an appropriate way. Parents and learners should be informed of the school's procedures for conducting searches.

2.3.3.4 Just administrative action (Section 33)

Everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. In the school context, administrative action includes daily functions performed by school officials during the course of managing the school (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:108). For example, suspending a student for misconduct is an administrative act that may be performed by a governing body.

2.3.3.5 Right to an environment that is not harmful (Section 24)

Learners have the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being. This places an obligation on educators to ensure the safety and wellbeing of learners.

2.3.3.6 The limitation clause (Section 36)

Human rights and freedoms are not absolute and may therefore be limited because educators' and learners' rights to safety and security of the person must be respected and protected. For example, if there is reasonable suspicion that a learner is carrying a gun, he or she may be searched.

2.3.4 Common Law

An important common law principle that regulates an educator's actions is the rules of natural justice, which are now embodied in Section 33 of the Constitution. The rules of natural justice are usually applied in investigations where the rights, privileges and freedom of individuals could be affected. For example, when a learner is suspended or expelled from school. Anyone whose rights, freedom and privileges are affected by the action of an administrator must be given an opportunity to be heard on the matter. This is the *audi alterem partem* rule.

Any considerations that may be counted against a party affected by a decision must be communicated to him or her to enable that person to put forward his or her case. The administrative organ must give reasons for its actions. The administrative organ must be impartial and free from bias. This is the *nemo index in sua causa* rule, which means that nobody can be a judge in his or her own case.

2.4 CAUSES OF LEARNER INDISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In order to deal with a problem of learner indiscipline effectively it is essential to have a clear understanding of the underlying reason behind the problem (Lochan, 2010:22). No amount of teaching or respect will make discipline effective unless reasons why the behaviour occurred are understood. This section will discuss individual factors, family factors, school factors, societal factors and the peer group.

2.4.1 Individual factors

When learners have emotional problems, this may cause them to misbehave. They may behave badly in class because they need special attention, want to be leaders, want to be left alone, or want to hurt others as they have been hurt (Simuforosa & Rosemary, 2014:79). Temitayo *et al*, (2014:12) attested to the fact that severe disciplinary problems have been experienced in rural secondary schools. Some schools have developed into battlefields, since learners carry weapons such as guns to school. Learners themselves are a source of indiscipline in schools. According to Maphosa and Mammen (2011:185) drugs taken by learners are a contributing factor to discipline. Some learners attend schools while drunk. Maphosa and Mammen (2011:191) says these learners are prone to commit other forms of indiscipline. They are arrogant, and lack respect of both elders and property in the school.

2.4.2 Family factors

The family is the most influential system for an individual as it is the primary socialising domain in which learners develop skills of communication, learn cultural and social norms and have their basic needs provided for (Fleming, Catalano, Haggerty & Abbott, 2010: 670). The family should provide basic needs, a safe environment, love, care and acceptance in which individuals have room to develop their full potential. This environment can, however, have a negative influence on individuals and their behaviour if these needs are not met (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:11). Many factors contribute to the success or failure of the home environment.

Family demographics refer to the composition of the family itself and encompass various characteristics of the family (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:107). Many studies have been conducted to determine if certain characteristics of a family increase the likelihood of children developing problems behaviour, amongst other things (Johnson, 2010:313).

According to Lanza, Rhoades and Greenberg (2010:315) family structure can influence one's schooling and behaviour. In South Africa the concept of family varies and may not necessarily be limited to biological or even legal family. Many African cultures regard the community as family, some cultures include the entire extended family, and some grandparents may adopt their children's and raise them as their own. Many parents remarry becoming stepparents. Some heterosexual and homosexual couples adopt children and some parents do not marry at all (Johnson, 2010:313). In Lanza et al. (2010:329) study there seems to be evidence that single parent families are at a greater disadvantage than the traditional two parent families. The reasons given for this include fewer resources in terms of income, greater parental stress and less involvement and supervision due to work hours (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:107). Single parent families may be families affected by divorce, families who have lost parent or single parents who never married. This is not to say single parent families

cannot be successful; two parent families can pose just as much of a risk if there is conflict as discussed below.

Economic difficulties also affect the family environment (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:67). In South Africa many citizens are unemployed and or living below the breadline. These financial difficulties put strain on parents to provide the best for their children. In many families both parents work to bring in an income, some have more than one job. Lowered income means fewer educational opportunities; it also means that children are left unsupervised for most of the day while parents are at work. For a troubled adolescent learner this presents a perfect opportunity for mischief (De witt & Lessing, 2013:11).

It may also mean that children need to work in order to help the family get by, leaving little time to focus on learning. For those living in poverty, malnutrition is also a great concern (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:67). Not only will malnutrition affect the learning and school behaviour of a child, but overall development as well (Marais & Meier, 210:52). For this reason, some schools including the rural secondary schools in Limpopo under study have become involved in feeding schemes.

Discipline styles can be seen on a continuum, on the one extreme is dictatorship and the other extreme is pushover (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:104). Parents should strive to reach a happy medium. This, however, is often not the case, the parents' style of discipline and amount of involvement will influence the way in which a learner behaves at home and at school (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273).

The concept of discipline is difficult to instil in certain learners who are not disciplined at home as they do not understand that there are consequences for poor behaviour, until they are introduced to discipline at school (Marais & Meier, 2010:48). It may take such learners time to adjust and accept that in a classroom there are rules and procedures to benefit all parties concerned. It

may take such learners time to adjust and accept that in a classroom there are rules and procedures to benefit all parties concerned. During this adjustment period learners act out and display poor behaviour. They will test the system in an attempt to maintain their status quo of indiscipline (Wolpe, 2012:36). Often these learners do not see the relevance of rules, which makes it hard for them to comprehend why they should be followed (Marais & Meier, 2010:55). The opposite is also true of learners who have been raised in authoritarian homes, which are characterised by harsh punishment, lack of warmth and understanding and often may resort to an element of corporal punishment (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:59). These learners have not experienced freedom and have not had the opportunity to think for themselves. They are governed by rules and procedures and their behaviour is often driven by fear rather than choice (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6). Trying to discipline learners with such varying backgrounds can become quite a challenging task.

Poor parenting and lack of parental guidance encourages poor behaviour, as inappropriate reactions are not corrected from a young age (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:272). Children learn behaviour from observing how authority figures behave (primarily parental figures), and by having negative behaviour corrected, either through corrections and/or through punitive measures (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:272). Traditions and value systems are instilled in the home by modelling good behaviour and setting firm boundaries. In this way all concerned are well aware of the expectations of others (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273).

A parent's inconsistency, poor behaviour, aggression or violence, lack of respect and bad attitude often result in poor behaviour of the learner (Marais & Meier, 2010:48). Good parenting and a healthy parent-child relationship helps to curb poor learner behaviour as children monitor their own behaviour based on their perception of how their parents will react (Keijsers, Loeber, Branje & Meeus, 2011:5).

A dysfunctional family environment will impact negatively on a learner's behaviour (Sprick, 2013:19). The incongruent messages between family members may leave the learner feeling tense, frustrated and confused which may lead to aggressive outbursts (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:107). Disharmony may stem from many sources within the family structure, amongst which marital conflict is a common source of disunity (Lanza, *et al.* 2010:328). Fighting between siblings or between a parent and a sibling, poor communication, poor physical or psychological health of a family member, substance abuse of a family member, long absences of one or more family members, divorce, continuous environmental change such as moving, are more examples of sources of problems which may cause a family system to crumble (Lyamba, 2013:50). Very often such a family unit will become closed off and refuse to notice the dysfunction; such families will continue to function dysfunctional so as to not lose the status quo (Manning & Bucher, 2012:236).

The parent-child relationship is very important in a child's development and as such should be handled with care (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:3). This relationship requires a delicate balance of empathy and understanding as well as discipline and punishment and implies that the parent should be an active participant in the learner's life (Keijsers, *et al.* 2011:4). Parents have a greater influence when children are younger and so the establishment and maintenance of a strong relationship and a healthy perception of the family concept early in the learner's life is vital (Fleming, *et al.* 2010:674).

A healthy parent and child bond and the establishment of involvement earlier in life may help to curb delinquent behaviour during adolescence and may also help to assist a learner during hard times, by providing a strong grounding and a place of safety, inclusivity and acceptance (Keijsers, *et al.* 2011:4). The parent-child relationship seems to be a good predictor of adolescent learner adjustment and coping with changes within and outside of the family environment (Johnson, 2010:317). Thus it can be said that a balanced family encourages the development of a balanced individual (Johnson, 2010:317).

Unfortunately not all learners are exposed to such homes, for many a home is not a pleasant or a safe place. Some learners will experience neglect often resulting in these learners becoming attention seekers at school (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:44). Others will receive inadequate care from caregivers often because of lower income and limited resources. This may result in malnourishment and the deprivation of learners' most basic needs, which may manifest in various behaviours that may be seen as unacceptable in a school context but understandable in the home context, for example stealing food (Marais & Meier, 2010:50).

Some learners come from homes where they are exposed to violence or are themselves abused and mistreated (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273). Many learners are exposed to poor coping mechanisms and inappropriate behaviours such as alcohol and drug abuse, prostitution, aggression and violence, acts of theft carried out by their caregivers (primary models) (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:2). Even worse, some learners are made to partake in such activities or are used as cheap labour or as barter. This has serious implications on the development and value system of the learner (Lanza et al. 2010:316).

As can be seen from the discussion above, the family environment plays an important role in the development and the establishment of an adolescent learner's identity (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:2). Factors such as the structure and functioning of the family, family history and demographics, the parent-child relationship, the discipline practices and the behaviours that are modelled and accepted in the home environment, greatly influence the self-discipline of a learner (Fleming et al. 2010:670; Keijsers et al. 2011:4).

2.4.3 School factors

Within a school there are various factors that play a contributing role towards the school environment. Such factors can be grouped into two major categories namely educator and classroom factors and school and system factors which

are both interrelated (Hargreaves, Hester & Mellor, 2012:164). The educator determines what learner behaviour is acceptable (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:11). Lacks of discipline by learners affect the teaching and learning and the educator's attitude. In this way a dynamic relationship is created in which the class and all its members create a certain type of learning environment. The methods educators use will influence and be influenced by learner behaviour.

The educator-learner relationship can influence a learner's school experience and affect a learner's perception of himself and the world around him (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013:3). Often educators are the only adults that learners can talk to and may serve as a lifeline to escape from the problems experienced at home and elsewhere (Kimani, 2013:17). Positive educator learner relationship can be inspiring and motivating and may be the relationship that later on made all the difference in a learner's life (Bowen, 2010:2). Educators who do not care enough to develop a relationship with their learners and who ignore problems because it means more work for them, send out the message that the learner is not worth the effort. This kind of unhelpfulness can negatively affect a learner's self-esteem and can make the schooling experience one of isolation and despair.

Some educator aspects may be the cause of behaviour problems or a negative classroom climate (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273). For instance, an educator who is not well versed in the subject content and is not properly prepared for a lesson will have a poor command of her learners (Sackey, 2013:7). Lessons should be of a high quality and should be delivered by educators who are committed to teaching (Marais & Meier, 2010:51). It is imperative that educator training is of a high standard that only competent educators, who are qualified and serve as good role models, actually stand in front of a classroom (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273). Learners need good role models whose behaviour they can copy; an educator who behaves inappropriately or has poor work ethic is not going to produce well-adjusted youth for the work force (LeeFon *et al*, 2013:5).

Educator disunity, absenteeism and lack of dedication and commitment not only interrupt the learning programme but also send out a negative message regarding the value of education (Hargreaves *et al*, 2012:164). Educators need to work together to ensure the value of education. If the value of education is not conveyed to learners, they will not see the relevance and importance of a good education and behaviour problems will continue to disrupt teaching programmes (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273). Some classrooms experience a lack of leadership or misplaced leadership, where the educator is not in charge. Thus it is important that the educator develops leadership and organisation skills as a strong leader, who will motivate and challenge learners (Bear, 2012:4).

Educator behaviour should be professional at all times. An educator who compares learners to other learners, labels learners or makes inappropriate or demeaning comments about and or in front of learners will lose the respect of learners and will struggle to discipline them in a meaningful manner (LeeFon *et al*, 2013:5). Educators who are interested in the lives of their learners and who provide meaningful and continuous feedback are more likely to gain the respect of learners and in so doing their obedience (Marais & Meier, 2010:51). One should never enter into a power struggle with a learner, particularly if there is an audience, as one may get what one wants but will also lose credibility (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:104). Forcing learners destroys a positive learning environment.

The curriculum which is taught in schools should be meaningful to the life world of the learners, thus it should reflect the culture, language and social background of learners and at the same time be fair and unbiased (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6). The South Africa school curriculum has undergone many changes in recent years affecting both educators and learners. This may be the reason for inadequately trained educators, which is yet another source of frustration and violence amongst learners (LeeFon *et al*. 2013:5).

Rules are an important aspect of schooling; unfortunately they can also be a source of confusion (Bear, 2012:4). Some classes have so many rules that they do not have a number system long enough for all of them, other classrooms have none and very often learners forget to which classroom rules belong. There does not seem to be a standard set of classroom rules which pertain to every classroom situation but current literature does suggest that learners should be involved in deciding on the rules. This makes it easier to remember and is more likely to be followed as their input was considered in forming those rules. (Martin & Loomis, 2013:213).

Fuzzy rules, illogical and unclear rules also lead to much confusion which is why rules should be clearly stated and consequences for infractions of the rules should be clearly set out and known to all parties concerned (Ahmad, 2011:4). Often the rules are inconsistently enforced which also sends out mixed messages to learners (Martin & Loomis 2013:213). All educators and the enforcers of the rules at a school should use the same standards and the same punishments for breaking rules. Some educators have in certain instances failed to enforce the rules from fear of legal ramifications, from frustration with the unclear and often fruitless discipline procedures and even from lack of caring about the individuals themselves (Bowen, 2010:2). Educators often complain about the ineffectiveness of the discipline procedures, the amount of administration required, inadequate resources or staff to deal with the amount of serious behaviour infringements and the poor chance of there being any change in the learner's behaviour (Ahmad, 2011:4).

Since the abolishment of corporal punishment other consequences of misbehaviour have been scrutinised. Unfortunately again, there does not seem to be one method that fits all (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:13). Time out or exclusion and detention are the most commonly used punishments, but it seems that for some this is no punishment at all (Sprick, 2013:124). Detention seems to be preferred to some home situations and has even become an opportunity to socialise (Sprick, 2013:124). It seems that the current trend is to

focus on corrective rather than punitive measures in an attempt to teach self-control (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:6).

Some schools just do not have the facilities or the staff to effectively provide for their learners' needs (Hargreaves *et al.* 2012:164). Many schools are rundown. This poor physical appearance, deficient organisation of resources and lack of basic facilities do not lead to a positive school environment or a proud school ethos (Marais & Meier, 2010:52). Overcrowding is also a serious concern. No educator can effectively teach overcrowded classrooms. It just is not possible to give each learner the help and attention they deserve, nor is it possible to teach on a level that is appropriate for every child in such a big class (Kimani, 2013:16). Overcrowded classes are also difficult to manage and discipline as the educator's attention is spread too thin. This is a condition which often results in violence (Kimani, 2013:16). Unfortunately there are not enough educators for the amount of school-going learners, which has resulted in schools being pushed beyond their maximum carrying capacity.

The planning of school activities may also be a source of misbehaviour. Poorly planned events and disorganised procedures leave everyone concerned confused and frustrated and encourage poor behaviour (Sackey, 2013:7). School activities should be planned in detail and contingency plans developed in order to ensure smooth operating. Well-organised and interesting school activities which involve not only the staff and learners, but parents and the surrounding community put the school in a positive light and create a positive atmosphere in which everyone has a vested interest (Hargreaves *et al.* 2012:164).

2.4.4 Societal factors

The community in which they live can also impact the development of adolescent learners and their behaviour. Society determines acceptable behaviour, so if individuals live in a community where domestic violence is the

norm it will not be surprising that they use violence to resolve their problems (Ahmad, 2011:3).

In a struggling economy, poverty-stricken communities might not place education above all other activities. This may result in “delinquent behaviour” such as stealing in order to survive, which, although understandable, cannot be allowed in a school setting (Lanza *et al.* 2010:330). Often poverty-stricken communities experience moral degeneration, as there are no role models to illustrate acceptable behaviour or to monitor and supervise learners’ behaviour and the media seem to condone unsavoury behaviour (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273).

This is an environment which is unsafe, where parental supervision and law enforcement is poor and the community answers only to themselves, sending the message of a gang culture (many such learners may even join gangs) (Bergin & Bergin, 2014). Learners are not yet emotionally mature enough to deal with their emotions in a constructive way (Marais & Meier, 2010:52). These learners are often angry and experience much aggression and resentment towards a society which has done nothing to help them.

It would seem that since the abolishment of corporal punishment, educators have been left with an array of punitive strategies, but none which seems as effective in instilling discipline as the cane (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:104). Some parents feel that the discipline methods used presently are ineffective (Bear, 2012:4). This may be because strategies that are typically used, such as removing privileges, reprimanding, detentions and other traditional discipline practices, rely exclusively on punishing the learner for poor behaviour (Sprick, 2013:124).

Recent literature seems to take a more holistic approach to disciplining learners which includes prevention and correction (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6). These prevention strategies seem to be more effective than zero

tolerance has been in managing school conduct and provide cooperative productive opportunities to learn appropriate behaviour (Martin & Loomis, 2013:333).

Race, religion, ethnicity, culture, location or context, background and upbringing all contribute to a multi classroom in which all participants have the right to be individuals, but also the responsibility to respect and cooperate with those who are different (Lanza *et al.* 2010:331). These differences can be a source of many problems, but they can also add to a diverse environment where individuals feel safe, accepted and like important contributors. This kind of learning atmosphere makes schooling a life lesson.

2.4.5 Peer

As children get older, the family begins to fulfil a less significant role and the influence of peers becomes more prominent (Keijsers, *et al.* 2011:4). Socialisation, selection and situational factors play a big role in determining the type of individual adolescents will associate themselves with (Estrada & Estrada, 2013:4). As adolescent learner's age, parental supervision declines and independence increases. This results in the learner placing more value on the opinion of peers than on those of an older generation (Rowe, Woulbroun & Gulley, 2013:164). Socialisation is a reciprocal interactive process which unfolds gradually in well-established friendships (Laursen, Hafen, Kerr & Stattin, 2012:89; Keijsers *et al.* 2011:4). This period is one of status and prestige and results in the formation and joining of clicks (Fleming *et al.* 2010:680). Friends seem to grow in similar domains as can be seen when delinquents as well as regular teenagers pair off with each other (Laursen *et al.* 2012:89).

Laursen *et al.* (2012:89) use reason action theory to explain the influence that friends have over each other. It is said that influence varies as a function of acceptance amongst peers. This means that peers who are more accepted have a greater influence on the behaviour of the rest of the group. Thus leaders

or high status peers establish, model and enforce the social norms of the group and in this way maintain their perceived popularity.

The opposite is also true: those who are least accepted will be more easily influenced (Pfeifer, Masten, Moore, Oswald, Mazziotta, Lacoboni & Dapretto, 2011:838). It seems the individual with greater social skills and rewarding demeanour will have less incentive to comply to norms that she does not agree with and as such those with less investment seem to have heightened influence (Laursen *et al.* 2012:89).

Adolescence is a period of curiosity and exploration which occurs amongst groups of peers (Vilone, Ramasco, Sánchez & San Miguel, 2012:6). This urge to experiment is normal and can be healthy if it encourages the learner to explore new horizons and interests. It can, however, become a problem if negative peer influence leads to problem behaviour such as drugs and violence (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:80). Adolescent learners have a strong need to be accepted by peers. Friends' opinions are very important especially for an individual who is not sure of themselves and/or is not popular. Although peer influence is an important part of developing an identity and value system, it can also result in negative actions in order to gain status (De Witt & Lessing, 2013:11; Fleming *et al.* 2010:680).

2.5 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2.5.1 Legal status of School Governing Bodies

Members of School Governing Bodies deal with governance and matters of discipline. In terms of Section 16 of the South African Schools Act, the management of the public school is the responsibility of the principal under the authority of the executive director of the provincial education, whereas its governance vests with the governing body of the school (Joubert & Prinsloo,

2013:73). Sections 23, 29 and 32 state that the School Governing Body of the ordinary public school consists of elected members, the school principal and co-opted members (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:76). The members elected to the School Governing Bodies comprise persons from the parents of learners of the specific school, representatives of the educators of the school, representatives of the school who are not educators at the school and learner representation elected by the representative of learners (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:76).

A School Governing Body is required to carry out the functions and duties assigned to it in the South African Schools Act and any other relevant legislation or policy. Section 16 of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) states that the governance of every public school is vested in its School Governing Body, while the professional management lies with the principal under the authority of the head of department. The School Governing Body has a legal obligation to manage discipline in schools so that teaching and learning can take place in a safe environment.

2.5.2 General functions of School Governing Bodies

Section 16 of South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) provides that the School Governing Body of a public school is required to promote the best interest of the school and performs its functions in a responsible and accountable manner. The following are the general functions that a governing body of a public school should perform in terms of Section 20 of the South African Schools Act:

- promote the best interest of the school and ensure its development;
- adopt a constitution;
- adopt the mission statement of the school, which is a brief document that sets out the school, which are based on shared values and beliefs;
- adopt a Code of Conduct for learners at the school;

- help the principal, educators and other staff to perform their professional functions;
- decide on school times, which must be consistent with the conditions of employment of staff;
- administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds, including school hostels;
- make recommendations to the head of department on the appointment of educators;
- make recommendations to the head of department on the appointment of non-educators;
- at the request of the head of department and under fair conditions, allow the school facilities to be used for educational programmes not offered by the school;
- carry out all other functions given to School Governing Body by the South African Schools Act; and
- carry out functions that are set out by the Member of Executive Council in a Provincial Gazette.

In addition to Section 20, the School Governing Body may apply for the following functions:

- to maintain and improve the school's property, building and grounds;
- to determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options according to provincial curriculum policy;
- to buy textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school; and to pay for services to the school.

2.5.3 Responsibilities of School Governing Bodies regarding discipline

Each and every school must draw up a Code of Conduct (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:110). Parents, learners and teachers must be involved in the development of the Code of Conduct. Sections 8 and 20 of the South African Schools Act

(Act 84 of 1996) provide for a Code of Conduct for learners based on applicable provincial law, which must be drawn up by the School Governing Body after adequate consultation with the parents and learners (where applicable). The law requires that the Code of Conduct be designed to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:112). The South African Schools Act sets out guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a Code of Conduct for learners:

- Section 8 of the South African Schools Act provides that a governing body of a public school must adopt a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct must aim at establishing a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective education and learning in schools;
- The document sets out guidelines for consideration by governing bodies of public schools in adopting a Code of Conduct for learners to ensure that there is order and discipline in schools;
- The Code of Conduct must be subject to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the South African Schools Act, 1996, and provincial legislation. It must reflect the constitutional democracy, human rights and transparent communication which underpin South African society;
- The Code of Conduct must inform the learners of the way in which they should conduct themselves at school in preparation for their conduct and safety in civil society. It must set a standard of moral behaviour for learners and equip them with the expertise, knowledge and skills they would be expected to evince as worthy and responsible citizens. It must promote the civic responsibilities of the school and it must develop leadership. The main focus of the Code of Conduct must be positive discipline; it must not be punitive and punishment- oriented but facilitate constructive learning;
- Each school must develop its own Code of Conduct. In formulating a Code of Conduct as a consensus document and before adopting it, the governing body must involve the parents, learners, educators, and non-educators at that school. After the adoption of the Code of Conduct, each stakeholder

must receive a copy thereof. The above stakeholders must also be consulted when the Code of Conduct is reviewed annually or when any amendments are made;

- The purpose of a Code of Conduct is to promote positive discipline, self-discipline and exemplary conduct, as learners learn by observation and experience;
- All key stakeholders should be committed to the Code of Conduct despite its being directed specifically at learners;
- The Code of Conduct must suit the development of the learners and be appropriate to the different school levels. The language used must be easily understandable to make the content accessible. The format should be user-friendly;
- The Code of Conduct must contain a set of moral values, norms and principles which the school community should uphold. However, the Code of Conduct is only enforceable against learners-no other person. The Code of Conduct should clarify and promote the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the creation of a proper learning environment in schools.

It is important for schools to have rules to regulate the behaviour of the learners (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:110). Joubert and Prinsloo (2013:110) further indicate that having set rules in schools is one way of solving the discipline problems that are experienced. Appropriate boundaries can be set for the behaviour of the learners by using school rules. Learners feel secure and in control when clear boundaries show them what they should and should not do.

Cases of learner indiscipline within the confines of the school are on the increase in South African schools (Du Preez & Roux, 2010:20). In terms of section 8 (1) of the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996, School Governing Bodies are empowered to maintain discipline by adopting a Code of Conduct which prescribes behaviour that will respect both learners' and educators' rights. This indicates that corporal punishment cannot be considered in this regard. Learners are to be informed of the contents of such a Code of Conduct, which

also has to include aspects such as channels of communication. These learners are to understand that in the case of their contravening the stipulations of the Code of Conduct, action may be taken against them. It also lies within the learners' responsibility to come to terms with the fact that nothing exempts them from complying with the Code of Conduct of the schools.

The South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 (Section 8) highlights, that the management of discipline calls on educators to make children feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they (learners) can develop self-discipline and accountability in their actions. Every educator has to create an environment in which each learner is guided towards an attitude of caring and respect for other learners.

Furthermore, according to the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 (Section 8), the responsibility of maintaining discipline in the school lies with all the educators. The educator who is first informed or sees the problem must take responsibility and report the situation or deal with it if possible. If necessary, the educator may refer discipline matters to a senior member and then to the principal. If the misconduct is very serious the principal may refer the matter to tribunal, a school discipline committee, the School Governing Body, the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education and ultimately the Member of Executive Council of Education. Any disciplinary action should suit the level of misconduct. Schools should determine the levels of misconduct (South African Schools Act of 1996, Section 8).

2.5.4 Responsibilities of parents with respect to the Code of Conduct

South African Schools Act provides that the parents are expected to support the school by monitoring the behaviour of their children. It states that parents should require the learners to observe all school rules and regulations and accept responsibilities for any misbehaviour on their part. Parents are expected to take an active interest in their children's schoolwork and should attend the

meetings that the governing body convenes for them (Xaba, 2011:201). Parents have the right to take any legal action against anybody, including learners, who unlawfully violates the constitutional rights of their children (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:44).

Discipline must be maintained in the school and in the classroom to ensure that the education of learners proceeds without disruptive behaviour and offences (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:106). It is expected that the disciplinary process be expeditious, fair, correct, consistent and educative and it is advisable to inform and involve parents in the correction of a learner's misbehaviour (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:276). However, Onderi and Makori (2013:71) said that adults or other learners should protect learners from abuse. The South African Schools Act empowers school authority to discipline the learners but it is unlawful to delegate this authority to fellow learners since learners are not in charge of the schools, but partners with other learners. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the School Governing Bodies to see to it that discipline is maintained appropriately by the right people.

The South African Schools Act further provides that educators are responsible for maintaining discipline at all times at school and they possess the authority of correcting the misbehaviour of learners whenever necessary. Serious misconduct must be referred to the principal. It is also stated that any corrective measures must be commensurate with the infraction. Learners with objectionable behaviour will be referred to the principal, and through consultation with the relevant parties, effort should be made to assist those learners to adjust. This will include referral to the education support services for treatment, and if all these efforts fail, the principal will refer the matter to the governing body, which may make a decision in the best interest of the learners at school. Furthermore, the School Governing Bodies must follow the correct disciplinary procedures when dealing with objectionable behaviour by learners (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:135).

2.6. PREVENTION OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Various strategies have been tried in an attempt to prevent and to help correct learner misbehaviour. No one strategy seems to be effective for all learners or situations. The literature review considers a few of the most common strategies used by educators.

2.6.1 Specialised programmes

Behaviour management programmes help learners to identify, understand and rectify their own patterns of behaviour. In this way learners learn to control their patterns of behaviour and replace poor behaviour coping strategies with more effective one's, that will fulfil their developmental needs and need for attention and recognition (Samuels, 2010:45).

Pastoral support programmes can be individually or family orientated and involves help and advice on personal rather than educational matters. By helping learners to deal effectively with personal issues, behavioural problems can be prevented. This kind of programme may include counselling and other professional assistance and usually follows a home-school approach (Crone, Hawken & Horner, 2010:17-21).

Effective instruction and management programmes improve learner behaviour through therapeutic counselling or remedial education. Team building and teamwork activities can be used to instil discipline (Crone & Horner, 2012:55). Curriculum adaptation and augmentation procedures create interest and motivation to learn instead of inspiring havoc in a classroom (Ortlieb, 2012:387).

2.6.2 Empathy

Empathy improves behaviours that are incompatible with aggression and thus acts as an inhibitor to violence. Empathy also creates a sense of caring and community and so promotes cooperative learning and positive relationships (Martin & Loomis, 2013:213). Empathy cannot be used as a discipline strategy on its own in every situation.

2.6.3 Reducing class size

By reducing class sizes educators are able to give each individual more attention which promotes cognitive and social skills and has a general positive effect. Smaller classes are also more manageable and teaching strategies for smaller classes are easily adjustable so that every learner is taught at their level (Kimani, 2013:16). Unfortunately this is not always possible due to limited resources.

2.6.4 School rescheduling

In schools where fighting, violence and bullying have become a regular occurrence, rescheduling of breaks may help to solve the problem. By spreading out lunches, overcrowding of resources is overcome which decreases frustration and helps to curb tempers (Kimani, 2013:16).

2.6.5 School identity

Insisting that every learner has a school identification document eliminates unauthorised people entering school grounds and causing problems. It also instils a sense of community and a means by which people can learn names, making school a more personal environment (Martin & Loomis, 2013:213).

2.6.6 Recognition of learning

If schools are seen as a place of learning rather than a place of socialising, discipline problems will decrease. A learning atmosphere will encourage learning and success by placing academic activity and good performance as a desired status instead of being the class clown (Martin & Loomis, 2013:213). This can be reinforced by rewarding achievements, setting high but attainable standards and goals towards which learners can work. It is imperative that the importance of education be instilled in learners (Marais & Meier, 2010:43).

2.6.7 Reinforcing positive behaviour

Reinforcing positive behaviour by using praise and other rewards, helps to maintain the appropriate behaviour and is more motivating than criticising and blaming learners for their poor behaviour (Sprick, 2013:261).

2.6.8 Use of punishment

Using punishment to rectify inappropriate behaviour should be done with caution as the form of punishment, such as writing out lines, may create an even more negative attitude towards educational tasks, such as writing. Punishment should fit the offense, be constructively punitive, be reasonable and accompanied by corrective measures as well in order to instil appropriate behaviour. Punishment can be quick and easy to administer but it is often overused resulting in negative results and no permanent positive effects (Sprick, 2013:101).

2.6.9 Tactical ignoring

The tactical ignoring of unwanted behaviour is based on the premise that if certain behaviours are not given any reactions or attention, they will not be repeated as they did not invoke the desired response. Some learners will,

however, continue the misbehaviour as others in the class enjoy the entertainment. For this reason, tactical ignoring of certain behaviours must be done strategically or other learners will view it as the culprit getting away with bad behaviour. They may then copy the same behaviour as there does not seem to be any consequence (O'Neill & Stephenson, 2014:7).

2.6.10 Verbal and non-verbal Interventions

For minor misbehaviours, giving commands, calling a learner, making eye contact or giving signals help to keep the learner on task and focused. These types of verbal and non-verbal interventions are usually used in a classroom situation, where learners' attention is starting to dissipate and they need to be made aware that they are no longer paying attention (Bowen, 2010:3). The educator tries to regroup with minimal distraction to the other learners in the class. This type of intervention is good for minor misbehaviours but cannot be used for serious infractions (Bowen, 2010:3).

2.6.11 Reprimanding

Reprimanding a learner for inappropriate behaviour lets the culprit and his audience know that such behaviour will not be tolerated. It is also an immediate way to end distractions and get the focus back on task (Mugabe & Maphosa, 2013:115). It may, however, also raise the wrongdoer's status, as he has now challenged authority, in which case it will have a short term effect and will require an alternative strategy to prevent.

It is important to note here that reprimanding in anger often worsens the situation and may diminish control to a screaming match. It also stands to reason that reprimanding the same learner again and again for misbehaviour becomes ineffective and that this approach needs to be followed up by some action to deter others from the same misbehaviour (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:104).

2.6.12 Humour

Light humour can also be used in a classroom situation to redirect focus and to take the attention away from the disturbance. It can be used to defuse tension and to encourage self-control and, if used effectively, creates an environment of openness and fun balanced with the expectation of no nonsense (Marais & Meier, 2010:44). Cynicism should be avoided.

2.6.13 Revoking privileges

Taking away privileges until behaviour is corrected is a good bargaining tool, on condition the privilege is really regarded by the learner as such and the learner will suffer somewhat without it. If it is not seen as a privilege valued by the learner, this withdrawal is hardly punitive and thus serves as no motivation to change behaviour (Gilham, 2012:3).

2.6.14 Response cost / demerit system

By using the demerit system every learner starts off with a perfect record or score. Points or merits are taken away for every infraction and rewarded for good behaviour (Sprick, 2013:124). This system seems to work particularly well for the average learner; unfortunately the learner with behavioural problems will test the system and will challenge others to get more demerits particularly if there is no consequence to having few or no merits (Lake, Bowen, Demeritt, McCullough, Haimson & Gill, 2012:92).

In order to stop this competition, consequences of accumulating many demerits need to be harsh and consistently enforced. It should involve the disciplinary committee, learner's parents, principal and governing body in deciding the fate of such a learner so that one realizes the seriousness of one's misbehaviour (Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014:3).

It is also difficult for an educator to monitor every child's good and bad behaviour continuously and so one might find that demerits are given more often than merits. It could also be that one educator may be more subjective than another in the awarding of merits or the distribution of demerits (Lake *et al.* 2012:92).

2.6.15 Detention

Detention is a punishment which refers to the detaining in school of an individual for a specified amount of time. This may involve remaining behind after school or during breaks or even coming into school on non-school days. It is usually in response to a learner's poor behaviour in class and should be given with 24 hour notice (Waterville Central School District, Alachua County Public Schools, 2012:36).

Detention seems to be a preferred form of punishment as it does not disrupt class lessons and gives the educator more time to deal with the detainees in a more personal capacity. It also seems to be disliked by learners and thus helps to discourage potential wrongdoers (Crone & Horner, 2012:47). Since detention occurs outside of teaching time, the attention seeking scene fails to materialise and so more time is spent on rectifying the problem behaviour than on controlling the class response to the behaviour. The problem with detention, however, is that it requires a lot of extra time on the part of the supervising educator and it is becoming more and more difficult to enforce the attendance of detentions (Mugabe & Maposa, 2013:115).

Over the years, parents' involvement in their children's schooling has dwindled. Parent- child relationships have deteriorated and communication is poor. Parents and schools need to work together in order to create a united front of role models.

Role models should model the same appropriate behaviour, as it is a lack of good role models and an abundance of bad ones that has negatively influenced our youth (Manning & Bucher, 2012:241). Children will imitate those whom they admire. Unfortunately adolescent learners admire celebrity icons more than parents and these celebrity icons reinforce a particular behaviour by setting an example in the way they behave. Thus it is imperative that parents and educators set a good example for learners to compare and hopefully follow (Pfeifer *et al.* 2011: 838).

Involving parents in the discipline of their children creates an awareness of parent responsibility in the development of their children and involvement with the school (Manning & Bucher, 2012:246). If possible parents should at all times be informed of their child's problem behaviour and what disciplinary action has been taken against their child, either telephonically, in writing or by personal meeting. If possible parents should be involved in the decision-making and strategies which will be used to curb child's behaviour problems (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6)

Some schools have developed a system whereby repeat offender's parents are called into school and made to "babysit" their child while they recite the school rules or to accompany their child throughout the school day. In this way the discipline of the learner becomes the parents' responsibility and the educator can continue to focus energy on teaching. Other schools have adopted a policy of improving family and community relations through parent-teen conferences, family contracts and open collaboration (Bowen, 2010:1).

2.6.16 Suspension

Suspension is the temporary exclusion of a learner from regular classroom activity. This mandatory leave of absence may be in school, where the learner is taken out of the classroom situation and is put under strict supervision where he is expected to complete his work in isolation, or out of school suspension,

where the learner is not allowed onto the school property and is remanded to their parent's supervision. Usually work during this period must be completed but no credit will be given (Waterville Central School District, Alachua County Public Schools, 2012:36).

After a learner is involved in a fight at school, a cooling off period (in the form of suspension) is usually enforced before any mediation occurs. This isolation period allows both parties to consider their role and seems to make communication and mediation less emotion driven and more effective (Western Cape Government, 2014:26). The advantage of time-out or suspension is that it removes the disruptive child from the classroom setting and from their audience which enables the educator to continue with the lesson.

The disadvantage is that some learners prefer the suspension to regular classroom activities and will deliberately behave in such a way as to provoke a suspension (Hemphill, Plenty, Herrenkohl, Toumbourou & Catalano, 2014:187). In this sense the suspension is rewarding poor behaviour and so the behaviour is reinforced and the cycle continues. Thus it is important that suspension is used selectively and monitored continuously.

2.6.17 Exclusion

Exclusion or expulsion is the permanent removal of a learner from the school and is seen as a last resort in disciplinary action (Hemphill *et al.* 2014:187).

2.6.18 Alternative schools

In some cases a specialised behavioural programme may be helpful (Crone *et al.* 2010:17- 21). Such a programme involves learning opportunities that aim to improve attitude and behaviour and are not solely academic in nature. They also allow for the learner to experience success and so reinforce adjusted behaviours (Kim, 2011:91). In some cases a child with behavioural problems

has needs which cannot be met in a mainstream school. In such an instance, an alternative school, such as “Boys Town”, may be considered (Kim, 2011:91).

2.6.19 Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment, although abolished in South Africa, is the chastising of learners with a cane, birch, paddle or strap (South African Council of Educators, 2013:2). This form of physical punishment seemed effective in curbing behaviour problems but this was out of fear (Western Cape Government, 2014:23). This fear, although effective in deterring behaviour problems, is not conducive to a safe learning environment, or to the development of a well-rounded individual. It was also a method abused and misused by those in authority and an offence against the child’s basic human right to a safe environment (South African Council of Educators, 2013:6). Parents may not give the principal or educator or anyone else permission to use corporal punishment on their children, nor may parents themselves administer corporal punishment to their own children on school property instead of a principal or educator ((Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:124).

There are various approaches to disciplining learners and numerous strategies and methods which can be used, each with their advantages and disadvantages. No individual discipline technique is 100% effective and so it is a combination of the above that is most likely to result in success.

2.7 EFFECTS OF POOR DISCIPLINE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

School indiscipline not only affects effective instruction and running of the school, but can also has far reaching effects on the development of the adolescent learner. Indiscipline affects not only the ill-behaved learner but also those around them.

2.7.1 Academic implications

Adolescence is a time of cognitive shift. During this stage learners develop reasoning skills, abstract thinking and metacognition. Adolescent learners develop complex thought, learn to express feelings and have a stronger sense of right and wrong. This is not to say that learners will behave in an appropriate manner, but that they are more aware of social norms (Manning & Bucher, 2012:22). Well-behaved learners usually perform well at school and success reaps success (Nakpodia, 2010:4). It thus stands to reason that learners who misbehave at school are less likely to succeed academically and are likely to make it difficult for others to succeed. Constant distractions and negative peer influence make it difficult for learners to stay on the right path (Lochan, 2010:25).

Some schools, in an attempt to illuminate poor discipline, have identified and separated learners who are seen as behaviour problems into special classes (Crone & Horner, 2012:47). These alternative classes in theory benefit all learners in that discipline problems are confined to one or two classes which are generally smaller. This enables educators to continue with regular classes and to adapt lessons for special classes so that learning can occur on all levels (Samuels, 2010:56).

The negative side to this system is that very often resources are limited resulting in these “special classes” being taught by less qualified or inexperienced educators who often are not equipped to deal with such learners. This resulted in them receiving substandard education (Schwarz, 2011:2). It also results in the burnout of educators, who are now overwhelmed by the indiscipline and administration involved in these classes (Gregory, Skiba & Noguera, 2010:62).

In other schools suspension from class is used so that other learners do not have their lessons interrupted (Hemphill *et al.* 2014:187). This may help the

average learner who remains in class, but it puts the misbehaving learner at a serious disadvantage, as this learner is then expected to complete the work on his own.

It can be seen that an increase in indiscipline in schools often corresponds with poor academic competence and performance resulting in these learners repeating the school year (Herrenkohl, Kosterman, Mason, Hawkins, McCarty & McCauley, 2010:656). It is unclear if it is the indiscipline that results in poor academic performance or if it is poor academic performance that results in indiscipline (Lanza *et al.* 2010:327). There is also evidence that suggests that children who experience behaviour problems at school are at a greater risk of not completing basic education. They are less likely to continue with tertiary education and are more likely to settle with lower income jobs (Algozzine, Wang, & Violette, 2011:9). Unruliness in school affects the academic performance of the problem child and those around them. It also impacts heavily on the future success of such a child (Serame, *et al.* 2013:1).

2.7.2 Developmental and Emotional Implications

Adolescent learners are at a developmental stage where they start to understand abstract ideas, develop moral philosophies and a mature sense of self (Earl, Hargreaves & Ryan, 2013:68). They struggle for independence and the establishment of their own identity which often results in fighting and conflict (Mannheim, 2011:2).

Teenagers in general are self-conscious, sensitive to body changes, egocentric and curious. They experiment with different roles, different groups and push different boundaries (Kiprop & Chepkilot, 2011:273). Adolescent learners experience intense emotions and relationships and status becomes very important to them. There is increased interest and experimentation within intimate relationships and sexual identity, which can be a very confusing, frustrating and hurtful time (Lochan, 2010:25).

All these factors are a part of normal development, but for a child who has been identified as having a behaviour problem, there is even a greater risk of experiencing social and emotional problems. It has been seen that many children who have been labelled as having discipline problems, internalise problems and that it is more likely that such learners will later suffer from depression and other mood disorders (Mavroveli & Sánchez-Ruiz, 2011:117).

2.7.3 Social and moral implications

Adolescence is a time of socialisation and experimentation (Manning & Bucher, 2012:22) and it is during this time that one discovers who one is. This, however, is not always a smooth journey and often extrinsic factors will have a great influence on one's development (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:104).

Experimentation in the form of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs may stop after one bad experience or it may lead to substance abuse and other social problems, such as stealing to support the addiction. Such addictions cause problems in relationships, health problems and intensify and increase the risk of developing other behavioural and/or psychological disorders (Pfeifer *et al.* 2011: 838).

An adolescent learner who displays behaviour problems at school is at an increased risk of developing relationship problems, not only with those in positions of authority but also with peers and in intimate relationships, which may continue into adulthood (Herrenkohl *et al.* 2010:657). Individuals who display behaviour problems at school are at greater risk of developing antisocial delinquent behaviour which is a problem not only for the individual but for the community as well.

Research shows that an increase in discipline problems in schools correlates with an increase in adolescents moving through the juvenile justice system and later as adults an increased risk of criminal activity (Schwarz, 2011:3). This

costs society not only in terms of monetary value but in terms of safety, health and time.

2.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, international and local literature on school discipline was reviewed. This included the legal framework governing discipline in South Africa. This further included the causes of learner discipline problems; the role of educators in the management of learner discipline problems and the prevention of learner discipline problems.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief explanation of the interpretive paradigm in which the research is based, as well as the approach followed in the study. The chapter also outlines the research design, data collection techniques and a discussion on how data was analysed.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The paradigm in which this research is conducted is interpretive. The researcher assumed that participant's subjective experiences were real and should be taken seriously (*Ontology*); that we understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (*Epistemology*) (Creswell, 2012:24).

A qualitative approach was a preferred choice in conducting this study. Qualitative research attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what was being observed or studied (Maree, 2012:50). The choice of this approach was based on the researcher's desire to produce a rich data on the challenges of School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.

The researcher used case study design because it offered multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considered not just the voices and perspectives of one or two participants, but the views of other participants (Maree, 2012:75). The use of case study design enabled the researcher to

collect rich data on the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:100). The researcher used purposive sampling to collect rich data on the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools (Mertens, 2010:320).

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The study was conducted at two rural secondary schools in rural villages in Shiluvane Circuit in the east of Tzaneen, Mopani District in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. Shiluvane circuit consists of nine secondary schools. School A consists of a principal, one deputy principal, four heads of department, twenty-five educators and nine-hundred and seven learners. School B consists of a principal, one deputy principal, three heads of departments, twenty educators and seven-hundred and twenty learners. The two rural secondary schools caters learners from the following villages Makhwibidung, Mogapeng, Masoma, Serare and Pharare. The language spoken is Sepedi and the medium of instruction is English at the two selected rural secondary schools.

Purposive sampling was used to sample participants (educators, learners, parents and principals) (Maree, 2012:79). This allowed the researcher to identify information-rich participants who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349). Participants were selected on the basis that they could supply information relevant to the problem in question as they have experience, knowledge, skills and values in relation to the target rural secondary schools (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349). The target sample for this study consists of five educators, five learners who are the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, deputy secretary and the treasurer who are members of Representative Council of Learners, one principal and five parents, who are members of School

Governing Body at each selected rural secondary school. The total number of participants is thirty-two.

The school principals were chosen for the reason that they are in the School Management Team, and that they are possibly knowledgeable about the cases of learner indiscipline brought to them by educators. They deal on a daily basis with discipline problems and have a good knowledge of the current situation regarding discipline and violence in schools. Furthermore, it was expected that they were familiar with all the policies concerning discipline, the Code of Conduct and school rules, and were able to inform the researcher on this. Principals and educators have a duty to maintain proper order and discipline in schools.

Learners who are members of Representative Council of Learners were chosen as participants as they have been at the rural secondary school long enough to have experienced the effects of the current disciplinary system and still have a vested interest in implementing possible changes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:350). A letter was sent out to all the learners and their parents explaining the purpose of the research and the procedure to be followed.

Educators were chosen for the reason that they experience more challenges of learner indiscipline at school (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:350). Parents who are members of School Governing Bodies were chosen because of their own perceptions and experiences of the design and enforcement of managing learner discipline through learner Code of Conduct in their schools (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:350).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected in July 2017. The researcher used a variety of techniques of data collection in order to triangulate and provide multiple sources of evidence. Multiple sources of evidence provided multiple-converging support for a single

point, and also provided a fuller-diverging picture of what the researcher studied (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:196). In this study data collection process unfolded as follows:

3.4.1 Phase 1: Document analysis

Documents such as the learner's Code of Conduct, Punishment or Reward book, Classroom policy and Attendance register were discussed and analysed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:387). The documents were read through on request to gather as much data as possible. The researcher turned to these documents and recorded the background of the situation and insights (Mertens, 2010:373).

3.4.2 Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews with the principals, educators, parents and learners who are members of the School Governing Body

3.4.2.1 Semi-structured interview with the principals

The interview method chosen based on experiences in the field and the quality of the information that could be provided. The principals were identified as a rich source of information as had been in the role of educators, management and parents (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349). The principals were informed of the purpose of the research, procedures, and were asked to participate. Before the interviews could be conducted, consent in writing was required and an interview date was set. That had given the researcher and the principal's time to prepare for the interviews.

On the day of the interview the participants were once again reminded of the nature of the research, voluntary nature of the interview, confidentiality and recording. The researcher used interview protocol to conduct the interviews.

There was an assistant researcher who was responsible for note-taking, and operating of the tape-recorder during the interviews.

3.4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews with the educators

Individual interviews were conducted with educators who are members of the School Governing Bodies in order to establish how learner discipline is maintained in schools. The interviews were chosen based on educators' experience within the learner discipline system. The experience qualified the educators as an information-rich source because they were the ones who experienced problems of discipline of learners at schools (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349).

3.4.2.3 Semi-structured interviews with the parents

An in-depth interview was conducted with the parents who are members of School Governing Bodies as these people were continuously involved in the discipline of learners and in implementing the current discipline system (Cohen, *et al.* 2011:412). Furthermore, the South African Schools Act of 1996 provides that School Governing Bodies should adopt and assist in the enforcement of a learner Code of Conduct to maintain discipline effectively. The participants were chosen based on the knowledge and experiences with the discipline system as it affected the learners (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:349).

Participants honoured their appointments and were willing to share how they maintained discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. They enjoyed the fact that the interviews were voice-recorded. They also required the researcher to play the voice-recorder for them to ensure that their responses were captured accurately. The transcription of the interviews was easy because the recordings were very clear as a result of the high quality voice-recorder that was used and the fact that all interviews were conducted indoors.

3.4.2.4 Semi-Structured interviews with the learners

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the learners who were members of the Representative Council of Learners from each target rural secondary school. Learners were ideal participants to respond to the interviews as they had a deal of exposure to the system and still had an interest in implementing possible future changes. That made learners a rich data source (Ary, *et al*, 2014:407). Consent forms were handed out to learners. Learners were informed of the purpose, procedures and voluntary nature of the study. They were informed about confidentiality and no names were used in the research. After the interviews learners were thanked again for their participation.

3.4.3 Phase: 3 Observation

The researcher used non-participant observation to observe disciplinary measures adopted by School Governing Bodies in response to supposed misbehaviour on the part of the learners as well as the spontaneous response of the learners to the measure used. The researcher observed to see and hear what was occurring naturally in the research site in order to develop a deeper and fuller understanding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:350). The researcher collected the data by observing the situation as it occurred: for example, participants' body language, facial expressions, and tone of voices were observed and recorded. In this study the researcher used observation guide to collect data. Comprehensive field notes were taken throughout the period. The following items of focus are used to organise the analysis into sub-sections:

- Late coming;
- Absenteeism;
- Neglect of academic work;
- Possession of cell phones at school;
- Illegal substances;

- Illegal objects;
- bunking classes;
- Not adhering to dress codes;
- Teenage pregnancy.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is an ongoing process which literally means to take apart words, sentences and paragraphs, which is an important act in the research project in order to make sense of, interpret and theorise data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). Data collected from documents was analysed inductively. Inductive data analysis means that collected data was summarised and categorised into themes, and further categorised into minor themes (Maree, 2012:101). Different themes were identified and those which were determined by means of a line-by-line analysis of each interview transcription were coded (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395).

The researcher typed transcriptions of interviews. Not only did the researcher read and re-read the verbatim transcriptions again, but also played and replayed the voice-recorder interviews in order to establish themes (Ary *et al.* 2014:513). The voice-recorder from the interviews were transcribed and translated from Sepedi into English. That involved identifying from the transcripts the extracts of data that were informative (Silverman, 2010:439). Major themes and sub-themes that emerged from transcripts were coded and classified into findings from school A, the findings from school B and conclusions. The findings from school A and the findings from school B were categorised into three themes. The categories included the findings from document analysis, findings from semi-structured interviews and findings from observations.

3.6 CONCLUSION

A brief explanation of the paradigm in which the research is based as well as the approach followed was also given. The suitability of the main qualitative method in the research design was emphasised and the choice of the participants in the interviews was discussed. The researcher also described the logical procedure employed in analysing the data to arrive at answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the findings of this study, which were gathered from the document review, semi structured interviews and observation. The findings were presented according to the procedures that were followed for data collection.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM SCHOOL A

4.2.1 Findings from Document Analysis

4.2.1.1 Code of Conduct

Generally the principal and educators, the parents through the elected School Governing Body and Learner Representative Council of the learners develop the Code of Conduct which is then approved by the School Governing Body.

Point system

It became clear that the point system is the start of the whole disciplinary system in this school. The system forms the basis of the Code of Conduct. In other words, the Code of Conduct stipulates various offences that are dealt with through the point system. Thus the point system leads to detention, disciplinary hearing and suspension. The point system, is also called the merits-demerits system, is based on negative and positive points. It is operated through the issuing of slips. The following slips are used:

- Green slip issued for positive behaviour, achievement and contributions. For example, when a learner picks up another learner's cell phone and hands it to an educator, the learner gets the green slip. When issued with this slip, the learner gets ten points to fifty points depending on the kind of positive behaviour. The positive behaviours are categorised into academic achievement, service contribution, participation in sports, loyalty, correct appearance over a period of time, team spirit, handing in lost goods or money, and portfolios handed on time;
- Yellow slip issued for less serious misbehaviour like books, equipment or diary left at home, copying homework or lending out work to be copied, being late for school or class, not working in class, eating, chewing, drinking in class, littering, absence from activities without reason, repeatedly asking to go to toilets and incorrect appearance or not wearing school uniform. The learner gets ten negative points;
- Red slip issued for more serious misbehaviour like lying, assignment not handed in, fraud, cheeky with educators, class disruption, defiance of school authority, leaving school without permission, and use of cell phone in class. The learner gets thirty negative points;
- Orange slip issued for real serious misbehaviour like cursing, absent from school without permission, making rude remarks to the educators and not attending detention. The learner gets hundred and fifty negative points;
- Blue slip: Only the principal issues the blue slip, expulsion for vandalism, damaging school property, smoking in the toilets, drugs, weapons, criminal offence, theft, dishonesty in exam, assault, sexual molestation, fighting, sexual harassment of girls.

Detention

Detention is used as a follow-up disciplinary measure. On a weekly basis every learner gets a report with regard to their behaviour. All the slips are handed to the principal's office by various head of department on a daily basis to be

captured. Detention is given when a learner has more than eighty negative points and takes place on Fridays.

Suspension

Suspension is only used as disciplinary measure if detention does not help. Suspension is done according to the law and procedures. The learner is suspended for a week only and then comes back to school. Sometimes learners have to complete work during their suspensions for which they receive no credit. They serve punishment like cutting grass or digging holes or uprooting a plant or work in school farm. They are suspended until the School Governing Body makes the decision.

Positive behaviour

The school acknowledges good behaviour through a merit awards system. The top ten academic achievers are awarded merit certificates on a yearly basis. The top ten academic achievers from each grade go on an excursion each year. Parents are informed about the behaviour of the learners at school.

Basically this school utilises the Code of Conduct system, through the point system, detention warning system, as well as informing parents about the behaviour of the learner. The consequence of misbehaviour is detention. This applies to most types of misbehaviours in the school, except for serious cases which would require suspension of the learner. Thus consequences are applied according to the Code of Conduct.

4.2.1.2 Punishment/Reward book

School A keeps track record of minor, major and gross misconducts of learners and the punishments or rewards given to them. Some minor misconduct that was recorded in the punishment/reward book includes lateness to school, wearing non-school items, noise making, and sluggishness. The major misconducts found in the book include disobedient, insolence, abusive behaviour and absenteeism, absconding from class and cheating in any test or examination. Gross misconducts include possession of dangerous weapons and drugs, vandalism, theft, fraudulent acts, assault and plagiarism.

4.2.1.3 Classroom policy

Learners were involved in developing classroom policies in School A. The classroom policies are displayed in the classroom wall. Learners were asked to identify what behaviours are acceptable and what behaviours are not acceptable because they violate the rights of others. The classroom policies had some rules to fulfil these rights and penalties for violating the rules. The penalties should help the learners to learn and they should be consistent with the nature of the misbehaviour; that is, they are in the best interest of both the learner and the class. Learners had signed the classroom policy so that they agree to adhere to the rules and, if they break them, they will abide by the consequences. Misbehaviour is less likely to occur if learners made a commitment to avoid breaking the rules and to engage in other, more desirable behaviours. Classroom rules were revisited regularly to see if some were no longer necessary. If there are, praise learners, and then ask them if other rules are needed. Some of the classroom rules in School A are mentioned as follows:

- Behave at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching and learning processes;
- Learners may not eat or drink in class;

- The use of correction fluid or correcting markers is forbidden;
- During intercom announcements learners must be seated and silent;
- Learners may not be out of class without a “Green Card”. The “Green Card” entitles a learner to be out of class for a valid reason.

Examples of disciplinary actions for misconduct inside the classroom carried out by class educator:

- Verbal warnings;
- Community service;
- Demerits - losing credits which have already been gained;
- Additional work which is constructive and which possibly relates to the misconduct;
- Small menial tasks like tidying up the classroom;
- Detention in which learners use their time constructively but within the confines of the classroom and they cannot participate in extra-mural activities for a specific period.

4.2.1.4 Attendance register

The researcher discovered that the school uses attendance register. Absent learners are marked in the attendance register, and once a learner has appeared in it a number of times, he or she is given a warning. If the problem continues the parent or guardian is called.

In the case of absenteeism from school, a letter signed by a parent must be handed to the class teacher on the day the learner returns to school. A medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner is required if a formal assessment is missed as a result of absenteeism. Learners may not leave the school grounds during school hours without the permission of the principal.

Learners may not phone their parents for permission to leave school without the principal authority.

4.2.2 Findings from Semi-structured interviews

Each theme was discussed with reference to the interview responses. Where possible, the researcher draw on the literature reviewed.

4.2.2.1 Use of corporal punishment

In accordance with the education policy, School A was found not to use corporal punishment (in the form of caning). However, it was admitted that educators at School A use verbal punishment (sometimes on a daily basis) to control the learners. One participant was very critical of the use of verbal punishment, stating that it caused learners to feel ashamed and, as a result, they were scared to attend school. Such use was regarded as making the learners feel inferior, and the feeling was expressed that it affected them negatively.

The responses to this question varied. Most of the participants were of the opinion that corporal punishment should be reinstated in South African schools. According to participants, abolition of corporal punishment has left them powerless and in frustration. They lack alternatives to corporal punishment. Learners are no longer afraid to come to school without having completed their homework, wearing school uniform or even drunk.

Parent participant No 1 said:

“Since the abolition of corporal punishment, learners have displayed unwanted behaviour at school, bring back corporal punishment but with some guidelines. It was a good way of punishing learners. Learners knew what to do and what

not to do. It is a mistake which was done by the Department of Basic Education because the learners are no longer respecting the teachers.”

Parent participant No 3 supported the abolition of corporal punishment and said:

“It is the best thing that has ever happened to our children. Learners should want to learn-learning, should not be forced on them, overdoing may lead to stubborn learners.”

From the parent participant No 3 interview on corporal punishment it was revealed that it should be banned the reason being it:

- stands in the way of proper communication between the educator and learner and therefore hides the real problems behind misconduct which need to be tackled, such as trauma, poverty-related problems and conflict at home;
- is an excuse for educators not to find more constructive approaches to discipline in the classroom, and therefore reinforces bad or lazy teaching practices;
- has shown to contribute to truancy and high drop-out rates in the school;
- is usually used by educators in a prejudiced way. Those learners who are usually beaten most tend to be older than their peers, from poor homes, boys rather than girls;
- helps accelerate difficult or rebellious learners down a path of violence and gangsterisms.

4.2.2.2 Alternatives to corporal punishment

At School A, detention classes are held on Fridays after school, and learners are assigned such tasks as having to pick up litter and clean toilets and changing rooms, among others. However, the learners were not keen to stay longer at school than usual. A disadvantage of detention is that, if a learner is repeatedly assigned such punishment, it tends to lose its effectiveness. Positive pressure can be enforced by boosting the image of learners who behave well and by emphasising that such is being done, which has led to an improvement in the school's results overall.

According to the data collected, educators displayed diverse understanding of alternative methods to corporal punishment. Some educators were not aware that there are alternatives to corporal punishment provided for them to employ. This is supported by Matoti (2010:577), who indicates that educators continually lament the fact that no alternatives to corporal punishment were put in place by the Department of Basic Education. They indicate that this is due to minimal and sporadic training on alternatives to corporal punishment (Matoti, 2010:577).

Educator participant No 10 indicates that:

“Alternatives to corporal punishment are not well defined to say if the learner has done this you need this type of punishment. Some educators maintain that these alternatives might work or they might not work, depending on the environment learners find themselves in. Some educators believe that the issue of discipline by the government to the educators is a witch-hunt.”

Educator participant No 12 indicates that:

“Although there were several suggested alternative disciplinary measures, these were not as effective as corporal punishment. Corporal punishment was effective as a deterrent measure because learners were afraid of suffering the pain. I asked the learners who were negligent of their work to kneel on the floor or to do some menial tasks like picking up papers but these never seemed deterrents enough. For the misbehaving learners, I invited their parents into the school. However, some parents did not come and some of those who came were not supportive and always sided with their children. Some of the alternatives are time consuming, time wasting and ineffective.”

It was clear from the interview with educator participants No 10 and 12 that they were frustrated and disenchanted by learner indiscipline and the banning of corporal punishment in schools. It follows that educators need to be thoroughly trained on alternative methods to corporal punishment. Educators also need to acquaint themselves with governmental documents and policies on discipline. They would then be conversant with alternative methods to corporal punishment to be employed when dealing with misconduct.

Educator participant No 15 indicated that she was aware of the existence of alternative disciplinary measures. When asked about how she dealt with learners who did not do homework, class work assignments or tests, she said that at times she asked them to leave the classroom but this would not solve anything. She also tried calling in their parents to come to the school for discussion but some parents did not come and in some cases parents were not supportive. She added:

“Most of these alternative methods are actually time wasting. An educator would spend weeks just trying to deal with the case of a learner who is not doing his or her work at school. This takes a lot of the educator’s time and also disturbs serious learners as the educator may not attend classes while attending to disciplinary hearings or talking to parents summoned to the school.”

It was clear from educator No 15 that alternative disciplinary measures had proved ineffective and time consuming for her. The principal also demonstrated diverse knowledge and understanding on alternative methods to corporal punishment. Unlike the educators, he was more conversant with these alternative methods. According to the principal some of the alternative methods to corporal punishment are effective while some are not.

This was explained by Principal participant No 6 who commented that:

“Methods like suspension and detention do not work. Alternatives to corporal punishment are working if closely monitored. Learners who engage in gross violation of the school Code of Conduct may be suspended for a short period of time and they come back to join others and they continue misbehaving.”

A major challenge at School A relates to the implementation of discipline policy. It is suggested that the system employed at the school could be made more effective if more emphasis is to be placed on the reinforcement of the positive behaviour of the learners. Also, there must be greater cooperation in respect of the disciplinary system by all stakeholders concerned, ranging from the class educator to the School Governing Body. The reprimanding of errant learners by the principal tended to be neglected to a certain extent, due to the fact that the latter did not always have enough time to address all the learners concerned. In order to remedy the shortcomings that were perceived in the situation, it was

recommended that a certain time slot should be allocated on the school timetable, at which time the principal could meet with the class and subject educators, in order to discuss learners with disciplinary problems and devise an action plan for the grade concerned. Another challenge lay in trying to attain greater cooperation in terms of the implementation of the system by all role-players involved. Achieving improved liaison between the subject educator, the head of department, the disciplinary committee, the office of the School Management Team, and the School Governing Body, in cases where learners transgress, was shown to be desirable.

4.2.2.3 Parental involvement

The school is located in formerly disadvantaged areas. What stands out is the poor level of parental involvement. At School A, the Representative Council of Learners were actively involved in the application of discipline, and the parents were only asked to come to the school for an interview with the educators concerned when their children are implicated in wrongdoing.

A very frustrated Principal No 6 summed up the situation as follows:

“Parents are not playing a role as far as discipline and involvement is concerned. Their response is limited to the occasions that their children transgress the school rules and the school expect them to see the principal before the child is allowed to attend classes, or they are expected to appear with their child in front of the School Governing Body. Some parents simply refuse to take up their responsibility in this regard, resulting in a diminishing of parental involvement.”

Educator participant No 22 remarked:

“There are not many cases where parents do not come to school when we ask them to come, but we do have them. This really makes it difficult for us to deal with discipline the way we would like to deal with it. In such cases parents end up wasting their own children’s time, because we will not allow them back in class if they are not accompanied by their parents.”

Educator participant No 20 remarked:

“Sometimes some of the parents have to be invited for the third or fourth time before they can come to school and in these cases when parents do not turn up, we temporarily suspend the learner until the parents come to school.”

4.2.2.4 Democratic discipline

The democratic discipline that is applied at School A varies from educator to educator. At the school, learners are allowed to voice their opinions and obtain a hearing, within certain limits, in class, as long as doing so occurs in an orderly fashion. However, proper planning is essential to enable the educators to avoid chaos in the classroom.

Educator participant No 22 explained:

“I maintain a reasonably easy relationship in the classroom. There are times that you can laugh, and there are times that you cannot. There are times that we work, but there are, unfortunately, never times that do we not work. There

are also times when learners can ask questions without the fear of a negative response from me.”

At the school, educators have an action plan geared towards maintaining discipline in the classroom. If the educators were to enforce the action plan, the children would be kept busy, and the amount of discipline practised in the class would improve. In this regard, a participant cautioned that the degree of discipline would deteriorate if an educator were to ignore the committing of an offence by a learner. In contrast, discipline would improve at the school if all educators are to act as a team in enforcing the action plan and everyone were to do their best to maintain discipline.

4.2.2.5 Views on discipline in school

In my interaction with the participants, the researcher encountered the perception that learners tend to be given too much freedom, which results in a lack of discipline.

A learner participant No 32 said:

“Learners have too much freedom and cannot cope with the responsibilities associated with it. Discipline in schools will succeed if learners exercise self-discipline. Parents should become more involved in the discipline of their children.”

Participants were of the opinion that discipline has gone from bad to worse in the school. They said that the deteriorating levels of discipline are the results of democracy which did away with corporal punishment. Yet the government has

failed to provide educators with practical alternatives to corporal punishment. They further alluded to the issue of parents who do not show any interest in their children's education, especially when they (learners) go to secondary schools. The researcher could notice the frustration of the participants as they were elaborating on this question. It was very clear that discipline in the school leaves much to be desired.

The South African Constitution was blamed for introducing laws that cannot remedy at the current stage of discipline. Giving freedom to learners who lack the ability to handle it, due to their low level of experience and due to the deterioration of parental and school authority has proved to be an unwise move that is likely to impact on communities for a long time yet. The problem involved can only escalate if the freedom given to children cannot keep track with their ability to handle it. A participant remarked that the levels of discipline declined with the abolishment of corporal punishment, forcing educators to find alternatives, since, without the threat of such punishment hanging over them, certain learners simply refused to listen to the educators concerned. Lack of parental involvement was also cited as worsening the problem, and lack of respect in the home was seen to result, at least in part, from the poor behaviour of some parents, as well as their alcohol abuse, poor social conditions and illiteracy. Such a lack of respect manifests itself also at school.

Those learners who tend to give disciplinary problems might just need to be heard, as their misbehaviour might be a cry for help. Many boys seek attention, especially from female teachers, since motherly love is absent in their own homes, as a result of their parents not regularly communicating with them, due to work demands. Finally, the participants at School A concluded that the school is in a fortunate position, as it does not experience serious disciplinary problems.

4.2.3 Findings from Observation

The findings are explained and analysed as observed in the school.

4.2.3.1 Late coming

Another challenge in School A was late coming, particularly by learners whose homes are child-headed. If learners do not do their work properly, it becomes difficult for educators to discipline them and this affects their learning. Learners who are commuting also tend to come late to school. Daily supervision of learners in the morning and during lessons was of vital importance as late coming of learners destabilises the school and brings about poor learner performance. Educators wasted a lot teaching time reprimanding learners and controlling late coming.

4.2.3.2 Absenteeism

The absenteeism was a common occurrence in school A. Most learners from Grade 10–12 are absent on Fridays especially boys, the reason being that because when someone is dead within the community they have to prepare the grave of the deceased. It is perceived that girls are also mostly absent on Fridays to prepare food for the boys so that when they come back from the graveyard they can have something to eat. Sometimes they do not come to school or they come late for they were supposed to collect social grant. The researcher observed the seriousness of the problem of absenteeism especially on Fridays and on social grant days. These disciplinary problems have a negative effect on learner performance, as learners miss some of the crucial lessons at school.

4.2.3.3 Neglect of academic work

Some learners at School A neglect their school work. Learners do not submit the work given on time. Learner's lack of commitment to their work led to the poor academic results. Educators make learners submit all their homework before school starts. The researcher observed that few learners submit their work on time. Educators also try to get hold of parents or guardians, but that does not work. Other educators motivate the learners by making them come to school in the evening to attend supervised study but this also does not work.

4.2.3.4 Possession of cell phones at school

The researcher observed that learners had a tendency of bringing cell phones to school. The educators complained about learners who deliberately carry cell phones to school. Learner's interest had shifted from schoolwork to social media. Learners seem to be focusing on video games, cell phones and Facebook. Learners played music and games with the phones during school hours with their earphones. It was evident that more effort was put into their cell phones rather than on learning. That distracted their concentration. As such, that hampered with the smooth running of the school and effective teaching and learning.

4.2.3.5 Illegal substances

One of the major challenges at School A was that learners brought drugs and alcohol to school. Drugs and alcohol in the school was one of the factors that caused misconduct and unruliness. The researcher observed that learners under the influence of drugs and alcohol misbehaved by causing incidents like:

- Educator's cars being scratched and vandalised;
- Rubbish and other objects were being deliberately thrown into the classrooms.
- Classrooms walls and desks were being written on;
- Shelves and posters were vandalised and nothing of value had been left in the classrooms because it will either be stolen or destroyed.

Substance abuse by learners during school hours is another contributing factor to the general lack of learner discipline at the school. So, there is a need to curb the problem of substance abuse at the school as it contributes significantly to the lack of discipline.

4.2.3.6 Illegal objects

Some learners brought illegal objects to school such as knives. Learners who bring dangerous weapons to school endanger everybody's lives. In such a situation it is unlikely for effective teaching and learning to take place. One of the goals of discipline at school is to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching; and to ensure the safety of staff and learners. The safety of learners and staff must come first. Learners take drugs and carry dangerous weapons in their bags. Educators sometimes confiscate them and keep them in their office. The school keeps the gates locked throughout, and the School Governing Body employed security guards to deal with the flow of illegal objects in the school premises.

4.2.3.7 Bunking classes

Bunking classes is one of the problems that affects the school. The researcher observed that educators will just bypass learners sitting outside. This shows a lack of teamwork in the management of discipline in the school. Learners who

engage in bunking of classes use illegal substances. Mostly boys bunk classes because they are associated with the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana, inhalants and illegal hard drugs.

4.2.3.8 Not adhering to dress codes

Learners were not abiding to dress codes. They might be in uniform but not dressed in an acceptable way. If learners were not wearing their uniform, they do not have the assets to go to class. Learners who wore school uniform at all times were rewarded by giving them some points and the certificate for wearing school uniform through-out the year.

4.2.3.9 Teenage pregnancy

The researcher observed high rate of teenage pregnancy at the school. Some girls fall pregnant, bringing to educators who have to keep an eye on them, whilst they have the business to teach them. It is apparent that most learners do not protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases.

4.3 FINDINGS FROM SCHOOL B

4.3.1 Findings from Document Analysis

4.3.1.1 Code of Conduct

School B had adopted a system similar to that which was used by School A, in terms of which it used a Code of Conduct as a starting point.

Point system

The point system forms the basis of the Code of Conduct. In other words the whole Code of Conduct is based on the point system, which is also called the merits-demerits system. Demerits are awarded under the following categories:

- Hazardous behaviour;
- Inappropriate behaviour;
- Disruptive behaviour;
- Incorrect uniform;
- Possession or use of prohibited items.

Different points are given for misbehaviours falling under each category. Learners may accumulate merit points to offset demerit points on a one-for-one basis. The point system is regarded as the most effective discipline strategy by most educators. However, the fact that the consequence will only be applied after the learner who misbehaved has attained a number of negative points indicates some flaws in the system. The school does not use slips with different colours, but only one slip, the incident report form. Educators complete it and submit it to the office of the principal.

Detention

Head of department write out detention slips when the learner has attained hundred demerit points. The learner gets seventy five positive points for attending detention. In School B, educators keep learners occupied during the detention period. For example, instructing the learner to study the Code of Conduct and rewrite it. During detention, learners can do homework. Detention requires the educator to be present during such detention. The reason is that

other learners use common transport and as a result time for detention is limited, as a result this alternative is regarded as not effective in this school.

Suspension

For serious misbehaviour, learners appear for disciplinary hearing in front of the School Governing Body. Only School Governing Body can impose suspension which is normally three days. The school principal can implement suspension when the learner is a danger.

Daily reports

Daily reports are also being used. These daily reports contain the name of the learner and the grade. They are signed by the class educator and sent to the parent or guardian who also signs it to acknowledge receipt of the report. Every educator comments for every period from Monday to Friday on the attitude, behaviour and quality of work of the learner under supervision.

Positive behaviour

A voucher system is utilised to reward learners for positive behaviour. The Code of Conduct in School B stipulates that, cases of misbehaviour such as carrying a dangerous weapon are reported to the police. The strategy of 'adopt a cop' is in use in the school. In this way the school adopts a cop, who will be called when there are extreme cases of misbehaviour. However, such measures have been taken because learners come to school with dangerous weapons and there is a practice of dagga-smoking on the school premises.

Cleaning up after school

The learners are made to clean up the yard after school for late-coming and for class disruptions such as making funny comments or throwing papers while the educator is teaching. The consequences for misbehaviour depend on the case and the individual educator. What is implied is that cleaning up after school is not utilised by all educators in the school. A learner could also be punished by being instructed to go and clean the toilet.

Time-out

Time-out is also used in this school. It takes place in the isolation centre in the hall. The learners are required to read the Code of Conduct and re-write it. Generally removing learners from the class is not allowed because learners miss out. Using time-out delays class progress. An educator continues teaching other learners, and when the other learner comes back to class, the lesson is supposed to be repeated.

4.3.1.2 Punishment/Reward book

The researcher perused through the available learners disciplinary records like the punishment/reward book in order to shed more light on the nature of disciplinary problems faced and methods used by the educators to handle them. The deputy principal kept those disciplinary records in the punishment/reward book. The educator on duty also kept some records of disciplinary management on a weekly basis. The records provided any punishment incident were recorded in a punishment book, clearly indicating the type of offence, type of punishment, authorisation and the particulars of the offence.

Learners signed in the punishment book for record purposes, for the offence committed in class. Learners receive a comment from each educator every day concerning their behaviour in class and had to report to the head of department at the end of each day. The Punishment/Reward was a monitoring tool for the whole class.

Merit points can be earned during the year which cancels out the demerits. Merit points were awarded for commendable behaviour, participation in school activities, sports and cultural events and community service. The last Friday of every month is a jeans-and-t-shirt day whereby learners with fewer infringements are rewarded and are allowed to wear casual clothes. Those who have too many demerits at that stage of the year were excluded and need to wear full school uniform. Demerits were also taken into account when selecting learners for school outings, camps and other such privileges.

More serious offences such as violence, or the use or sale of illegal substances do not follow this route. These offenses are reported straight to the Head of Department and go on record immediately. Parents are called in for a meeting whereby their child may be suspended pending a school investigation and possible criminal charges (depending on the offense). At this point the police may also be called in to assist.

4.3.1.3 Classroom policy

In School B every classroom has a classroom policy wherein a set of expected behaviours are listed. Together with a list of expected behaviour is also a list of actions to be taken in case a learner contravenes any expected behaviour.

Without the classroom policies it could be difficult for educators to maintain discipline in the classrooms as learners would not be aware of what they are expected to do and what not to do. Learners would also not be aware of how they are expected to behave if rules were not in place.

Every classroom has a set of rules that will help in governing the work habits of learners and their personal behaviour. Classroom management is of great importance if good classroom control is to be maintained. Classroom rules help learners to get a clear understanding of what is expected of them as well as to allow them to understand clearly the consequences of their behaviour that could be desirable or undesirable.

Learners were involved in the development of the classroom policies so as to ensure that they understand the responsibility for their conduct. Also, learners could learn to be accountable for the behaviours they exhibit while knowing the repercussions of infringing the rules and procedures for the classroom. They actively took part in the sense that class educators discuss the expected behaviours with learners as well as the consequences that follow the violation of the expected behaviours. Educators did this in order to encourage learners to adhere to the rules that they had developed themselves. At the end of the day they are going to be bound by whatever is suggested upon. Educators asked anything from the learners that they may want to go in towards the formulation of the policy of the classroom. Like in School A, misbehaviour was less likely to occur if a learner made a commitment to avoid breaking the rules and to engage in other, more desirable behaviours. Examples of classroom rules that educators had developed with learners in order to safeguard the culture of learning and teaching in their classrooms are:

- Talk quietly when working in small groups;
- Listen when others are speaking, do not interrupt co-operate;

- Share thoughts with one another;
- Respect other people and their space;
- Think before you act;
- Share;
- Be on time for class;
- Complete all unfinished classwork for homework.

4.3.2 Findings from Semi-structured interviews

The following themes (corresponding to the interview questions) were identified:

4.3.2.1 Use of corporal punishment

The participants were emphatic that no corporal punishment was administered at School B. Instead, the learners were verbally reprimanded, with the educators sometimes swearing at the learners. The verbal abuse of learners by educators often occurred out of frustration.

Educators have a great concern about the abolition of corporal punishment in schools. They maintain that the abolition of corporal punishment has resulted into many problems, which were not there before corporal punishment was abolished. Among the problems they mentioned, high rate of failure in schools as well as poor academic performance are of great concern. Abolition of corporal punishment has also resulted in lack of discipline in schools as most respondents maintain it. The researcher could sense that educators are going through a tough time when it comes to corporal punishment. They really need help and serious intervention.

Educator participant No 21 said:

“There is no way that I can maintain effective discipline in my class by just talking to learners. I believe that corporal punishment must be brought back and it should be seen in a positive light. The government has taken away our power to use corporal punishment. Ill-discipline is the main source of our trouble and unless that is corrected there will be little improvement. I am what I am today because of corporal punishment. Whenever I thought of not completing my homework or bunking classes, I would think twice.”

However, few participants claim that they had never used the stick and yet they had good academic track and attendance records, even during the struggle of the early 1990s. These educators maintain that the administering of discipline at school level lacks fairness and consistency. According to them, corporal punishment does not have great impact in the enforcement of effective discipline strategies. The participants also allude to the fact that lack of norms, school development plans, parental involvement and educator’s commitment, are the causes of disciplinary problems in schools, not the abolition of corporal punishment.

Parent participant No 13 said:

“Corporal punishment has caused many learners to leave school before they could complete matric. I am happy without corporal punishment because learners no longer run away from schools. Schools need to come up with effective disciplinary strategies and forget about the effects of abolition of corporal punishment. Respectful relations between educators and learners were not possible in a context where corporal punishment was used.”

From the parent participant No 13 interviewed on corporal punishment it was revealed that it:

- does not build a culture of human rights, tolerance and respect;
- does not stop bad behaviour of difficult learners. Instead, these learners are punished over and over again for the same offenses;
- does not nurture self-discipline in learners. Instead, it provokes aggression and feelings of revenge and leads to anti-social behaviour;
- does not make learners feel responsible for their own actions. They worry about being caught, not about their personal responsibilities. This undermines the growth of self- discipline in learners;
- takes learners focus away from the wrongdoing committed to the act of beating itself. Some learners brag about being beaten as something to be proud of, as a badge of bravery or success;
- undermines a caring relationship between learner and educator, which is critical for the development of all learners, particularly those with behavioural difficulties;
- undermines the self-esteem and confidence of learners who have learning or behavioural problems and/or difficult home circumstances and contributes to negative feelings about school.

4.3.2.2 Alternatives to corporal punishment

Detention on Friday afternoons seems to be the most popular alternative at School B. In severe cases, learners may be suspended for an entire week. Interestingly, parents have granted permission for learners to perform small tasks, like cleaning. However, being required to do chores is not very effective as a punishment, because learners like to be outside the confines of the classroom.

Educator participant No 28 said:

“There are still a few parents who think that their children are angels and do not misbehave. Detention does not work. The issue of learners who use common transport is cited as a challenge to using detention as a discipline strategy. Learners do not honour the arrangement. Detention is a punishment to educators.”

Educator participant No 2 also said:

“Sometimes the alternatives do work and sometimes do not work; it depends on the type of learners and kinds of friends. We’ve got three types of learners. We’ve got learners who are willing to be corrected; learners who are habitual and very unruly learners. So, they work sometimes in other cases but in some other cases they don’t work.”

At School B, the School Governing Body handles serious cases, with the emphasis being on trying to correct behaviour. The police and social services, among others, have been consulted on several occasions. Educators fail to make full use of the set procedures, due to the large amount of red tape associated with following them. Educator participants No 28 and No 2 indicated the following challenges:

- The school is located in low-economic areas, face challenges such as lack of resources, learners are withdrawn and the educator-learner relationship is poorer than in schools located in affluent areas;
- Most of the educators are struggling to find alternatives that will enable them to feel in control of the learners they teach. As a result they suffer from

stress and some leave the teaching profession because of difficulties in dealing with learner misconduct;

- Educators fail to make full use of the set procedures, due to the large amount of red tape associated with following them.

Educator participant No 16 commented:

"I find that educators are unable to manage learner discipline in schools even if there are all disciplinary rules and procedures. They are unable to manage discipline."

Summary of educator's challenges in using alternative approach to discipline learners are as follows:

- Learners repeat mistakes and are not ready to listen;
- Non-corporation and lack of support from parents;
- Alternative approach to discipline is time consuming, demanding and tiring;
- Slow in effectiveness;
- Sick and physically challenged learners take advantage of their situation and misbehave;
- Learners from well off families are boastful, put educators down, threatens them and are rebellious;
- Administrative control/management policy limit educators from disciplining learners;
- Too much Child Right and protection;
- Lack of outlines by Department of Basic Education on alternative discipline.
- Diverse nature of learner's background and upbringing;
- Learners from problem homes pose a lot of challenge;
- Limited choices in alternative approach;

- Educators lack of skills in guidance and counselling;
- Educators face court charges;
- Tension being created among stakeholders because of different understanding on how to discipline learners;
- Lack of support from stakeholders;
- Lack of trust in alternative method by educators;
- Creates soar relationship between learners and educators;
- Learners abscond from school when they are sent home to bring their parent;
- Overloading of guidance and counselling office;
- Lack of support from colleagues;
- Lack of support from school prefects;
- Ambiguity in the role educators in the area of discipline;
- Upsurge of technology.

4.3.2.3 Responses to social challenges

School B is situated in an area where most of the local residents are dependent on social grants, and most learners do not grow up within the normal nuclear family setting. As has already been stated, many of them live with a grandparent or with relatives other than their own parents. Partially as a result of the above, dagga and alcohol abuse is common amongst the learners. Incidents of teenage pregnancy and domestic violence have also been found to occur. The school collaborates with the church, the local Community Police Forum and the Learner Representative Council, in an effort to make a difference in the community.

Educator participant No 24 commented:

"We are aware that some learners are left alone at home while their parents are working far. So these learners do as they wish, knowing that their parents will only come at the end of the month. They are at times left with more money than they need and they start getting tempted to try alcoholic drinks and dagga as these substances are easily accessible. Others are left with little or no money at all. This can also contribute to the cause of discipline problems at school as they are hungry and trying to express their anger. We are appealing to parents to look for guardians when they are not around. The guardians must feel free to visit these learners at school."

Major social challenges that the school experience are as follows:

- The increase in the amount of violence spilling over into the school;
- Conflict situations amongst learners are on the increase;
- Verbal violence (name-calling, creating disorder, bullying);
- More serious behaviour, including vandalism, theft, blackmail;
- Extortions, or using a weapon on the school premises;
- Planned violence, which includes physical violence with weapons in or outside the school;
- The sexual harassment of girls.

From the interview educators have reported that they are uncertain, confused and afraid of infringing upon learner's rights, and of being accused of misconduct. Saying that the over-emphasis placed on learner's rights may cause a lack of regard for the educator's role in the classroom. This may cause some learners not to strive to excel. Instead, they try to influence their classmates negatively to exhibit the same lack of discipline

4.3.2.4 Parental involvement

At School B, the parents tend to support the school in improving levels of discipline. The cooperation that parents offer educators enables them to accomplish their plans. Parents together with educators talk to the learners about their misbehaviour. The educators also said that such actions bear fruits. Parents are viewed as playing a major role in maintaining discipline in the school without the use of corporal punishment.

The principal participant No 18 said:

“To be honest, the involvement of parents in the affairs of learners has a positive impact. The learner feels that he or she may embarrass his or her parents if he or she behaves unacceptably and fears that the personal relationship with the parents at home may deteriorate. As a result, learners are somehow forced to behave well at school to avoid their parents coming to school.”

A learner participant No 26 remarked:

“Some parents of learners in this school are literate. They understand what the education of their children means and therefore involve themselves in the education of their children.”

Educator participant No 16 said:

“Parents are so involved that they even submit letters to school if their children were not at school for some reason or if their children have been to the doctor they provide us with medical certificates to prove that the learner was absent for medical reasons.”

Principal participant No 18 said:

“It becomes difficult when parents do not cooperate. We cannot accomplish our objectives if we do not work with parents. Parents play a very prominent role in maintaining discipline in this school. When learners are talked to in the presence of their parents they tend to change their behaviour. If parents don't come then we have a problem.”

Educators credit this involvement to the high level of literacy of the majority of parents in the school. Educators also regard themselves as fortunate to work under such conditions. They contend that the parents understand what the education of their children means and thus involve themselves in the education of their children. To the educators, this is why they are able to maintain discipline in the school without using corporal punishment. They also observed the importance of involving parents in the affairs of their children at school.

4.3.2.5 Democratic discipline

Parent participant No 7 at School B stressed that one needs to listen to the problems that learners report experiencing, and that they should be encouraged

to play an active role in class. It was also stated that the rights of learners should not be undermined.

Educators play a vital role in maintaining discipline in the absence of corporal punishment. They have responsibilities that they as educators have to fulfil in order to maintain discipline at the school.

Parent participant No 7 remarked:

“Educators have got a responsibility as well in maintaining discipline. They are assigned to look into the smooth running of the school. The educators contend that it is their responsibility to build a close relationship with learners and to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. They are of the opinion that learners learn and behave well where the school and classroom atmosphere is free from fear.”

Parent participant No 31 said:

“We have devised strategies to deal with problematic learners. We need to build a close relationship with learners. One needs to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.”

Educator participant No 21 stated:

“If you don't show love to learners they behave in an unacceptable manner. This may be a sign that he or she needs your attention as an educator. So you see, it is important that children be shown love.”

Educator participant No 21 maintained that love and recognition play a role in obtaining the learner's cooperation. He said that they show love to learners and recognise their presence by calling them by their names even outside the classroom situation. Furthermore, said that the school has a coaching programme in place which is conducted by educators, and at times they also invite expert guides to guide and encourage learners at school.

Parent participant No 19 remarked:

“Workshops are usually conducted with the Learner Representative Council members every year in January. This is as a means of involving learners in the process of maintaining discipline.”

Parent participant No 23 remarked:

“At the beginning of the year we do what we call coaching. We also invite outsiders to come and talk to our learners and encourage them in their education. It is also the responsibility of educators to conduct workshops with learner representative members. They are taken to an entertainment or picnic venue where discussions are held. It is in these workshops where disciplinary measures are discussed. Educators pointed out that this process helps them in acquainting these young leaders with school rules. Leadership courses are also presented at these workshops.”

4.3.2.6 Views on discipline in the school

In contrast, the participants at School B felt that the Department of Basic Education should develop and implement a uniform policy regarding what

discipline and punishment measures could be taken at school. Learner discipline required more emphasis than the transgressions of educators. It was strongly felt that, if the school did not become involved in restoring discipline in the home, through involving the parents and the church in re- establishing order, the school would have ongoing serious disciplinary problems.

The picture, however, need not be daunting. If each structure, including the church, brigades, male choirs and women's associations, for example, could make a difference in its own way, each could boost the amount of discipline practised by the parents, so that they could discipline their children more effectively. Much progress would then be made regarding discipline in our schools and community.

4.3.3 Findings from Observation

The following findings are explained and analysed as observed in School B.

4.3.3.1 Late coming

The researcher had observed that late coming was a major problem for learners at School B. The problem of late coming is caused by learners staying far away from school, and may be their parents are not always with them all the time because always find themselves in their work place, some are working in Gauteng Province. So they do not have time to look after their children. Many learners use buses to come to school, sometimes buses are late. The transport problem even involves the learners who walk to school, because they come late deliberately, knowing that they cannot be treated differently from those made late by their buses. Although the policy clearly states that learners who are late must be sent back home, that rule is very difficult to implement. Sending learners back home creates lots of problems for the school because they do not

go home, but move up and down the road, and come back to school under the influence of liquor and drugs to disturb those that are at school.

4.3.3.2 Absenteeism

Absenteeism was another problem encountered by School B, which affects school discipline. Many of the learners were not staying with their parents. Learners live with their grandmothers, or come from child-headed families, or stay in rented places. During weekends and holidays absenteeism is high because some learners commit crime and are taken to jail and others are hospitalised. Absent learners disrupt schooling by bringing liquor and drugs to their friends through the fence.

4.3.3.3 Neglect of academic work

School B was faced with learners who were not willing to do their work. There are learners who fail to do their homework, do not submit it on the due date, or copy it from others in the morning.

4.3.3.4 Possession of cell phones at school

Cell-phones were observed as time-wasters. Learners are not allowed to use cell-phones during school, but they do. When the school confiscates a cell-phone, parents come and plead that the child be given it back. The researcher observed that cell-phones distracts learners from their schoolwork. They steal, cheat, lie, and vandalise, use cell phones in class and keep iPod earphones dangling from their ears. A majority of the learners carry their cell phones to school. Cell phones are the source of great misconduct in school, among them,

viewing pornography and cheating in exams. This malpractice is a big headache in the school.

4.3.3.5 Illegal substances

Drugs and alcohol abuse were the problematic in School B. The researcher observed the dagga that had been confiscated from learners and kept in the principal's office. Learners also bring alcohol to school, and as a result become rude and violent and a threat to other learners. The principal showed the researcher dagga and alcohol that had been confiscated from learners. There are taverns that are close to the school, and sell liquor to learners. These learners disrupt classes, and educators are scared of the learners, and cannot enforce discipline.

4.3.3.6 Illegal objects

Learners also bring dangerous weapons to School B. The researcher observed that a male learner wanted to stab a female learner because she did not want to fall in love with him. Both learners and educators are exposed to danger due to the lack of safety and security in the school. Educators fear for their lives, and fail to deal with rude and disruptive learners who carry dangerous weapons. Educators experience discipline problems in class. Some learners threaten educators, and tell them not to leave the school premises because they will get them outside.

4.3.3.7 Bunking classes

Bunking classes is one of the major discipline problems especially among learners who use drugs. The researcher observed that there are many factors within or outside the school building, peer group influence, educator methods of teaching or discipline are some school factors that lead to irregular attendance in school. Factors outside the school include poverty where the child might need to fend for him/herself, engage in labour to raise money, parenting/guarding methods of discipline and security among others. Also in School B, learners who engage in bunking of classes also use illegal substances and bunking of classes has been associated with the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana, inhalants and illegal hard drugs.

4.3.3.8 Not adhering to dress code

The researcher observed that some learners wear dirty and wrong clothing contrary to the official school uniform. The school has a team that deals with uniform wearing. If a learner has no uniform, he or she explains to the team. If the team is satisfied the learner is given a letter which is shown to every educator who enters the classroom.

4.3.3.9 Teenage pregnancy

The school has high rate of pregnancy. It is very difficult for educators to deal with learners who are expected to parent their children at home. Instead of studying, they attend to their children because they are playing the roles of being both learners and parents. Learners have love affairs, and some of them stay with their boyfriends. This has become the norm, and is very problematic because it affects the learner's performance, and increases absenteeism. Learners have a right to education, so they cannot be sent home because of

pregnancy. The School Governing Body communicates with the parents, invite the social workers if necessary, and call an ambulance or take the learner to the clinic if there are complications.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the findings of the empirical investigation are presented. Furthermore, data on the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province has been presented in alignment to link the main research questions of this research project.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province in order to achieve the following objectives:

- to understand the views of the parents, educators, principals, and learners who are members of School Governing Bodies regarding the forms of indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.
- to identify the causes of poor indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.
- to develop possible strategies for addressing indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The discussion below provides a summary of the major conclusions drawn from this study. Recommendations are presented and suggestions for further research are proposed:

5.2.1 Conclusions related to Research Objective One

The first research objective was to understand the views of the parents, educators, principals, and learners who are members of School Governing Bodies regarding the forms of indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.

The study revealed that the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province do have policy documents that were supplied by the Department of Basic Education. This recognition is based on Section 8 and 20 of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), which states that a Code of Conduct should be designed by every school to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process. Mestry and Khumalo (2012:97) also emphasise that every school should have a disciplinary policy or learners Code of Conduct, and a school disciplinary committee that must ensure that the Code of Conduct is consistently and fairly enforced.

Participants highlighted that schools policies are there as documents, but the implementation is very poor. This situation is evident in the responses to the interviews. Most participants indicated that it is difficult to implement policies owing to some circumstantial problems in their areas.

The study also revealed that the School Governing Bodies of the two rural secondary schools lack knowledge of school administration documents and Departmental policy documents such as the South African Schools Act, the Code of Conduct and others, which makes it difficult for them to participate constructively in administrative and school governance matters.

The School Governing Body has a supportive function in the management of discipline. Its responsibility is to ensure that the educators get the support they need in their efforts to help the learners and they to acquire the skills and knowledge required to manage discipline. It has been pointed out that the educators cannot cope on their own to apply effective discipline strategies without the assistance of the School Governing Body. Educators also need to be equipped with skills to manage learner discipline within the context of problem solving and to reach consensus.

The findings indicate that the School Governing Body is directly involved in the management of discipline in schools by formulating the school's Code of Conduct, which the School Management Team must implement. There must be collaboration between and amongst educators, learners, parents and the School Governing Body in discipline management. This means that the principal cannot work in isolation, no matter how experienced he/she is in discipline management, as compared to the sometimes more limited knowledge and skills of School Governing Body members.

Findings also revealed that the banning of corporal punishment is another area of concern. Participants view corporal punishment as a best disciplinary option. They believe that the abolition of corporal punishment has led to the collapse of discipline in schools. The findings also revealed that participants regard alternative modes of punishment as not working, and just a waste of time. These alternatives were seen as futile because educators do not know how to use them, having never been trained to do so. These responses showed that participants are frustrated and resentful about the introduction of alternative methods of discipline.

In conclusion, it is imperative for the Department of Basic Education to organise training workshops that will train members of the School Governing Bodies in school administration policies and documents.

5.2.2 Conclusions related to Research Objective two

The second research objective was to identify the causes of poor indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools.

The following findings were identified as the causes of poor indiscipline among youth at the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit. Numerous discipline problems are identified and this goes with causes and how these are handled:

- **Parental involvement** - there is generally a lack of parental involvement in the disciplinary problems displayed by learners at schools. Educators and schools would want parental involvement and see it as one amongst the possible solutions to this problem;
- **Fighting and bullying** - these seem to be the major common problems at the target schools. This is in tandem with reported discipline problems at schools.
- **School work dereliction and noisemaking in class** - these are manifestations of indiscipline and confirm literature assertions on what really goes on in secondary schools regarding discipline;
- **Peer group pressure** - this creates a situation where learners want to copy the (mis)behaviour of others so as to feel that they belong and are not different;
- **Need for a whole school approach to discipline** -this seems like the most viable approach to dealing with discipline problems at the target secondary schools;
- **Late-coming** – the research revealed that late coming affects discipline in the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province. It emerged clearly that it is difficult to control late-coming without the cooperation of parents. The schools need buses that will take the

children to school because public transport does not take school times into consideration;

- **Absenteeism** - the research has discovered that it is very difficult to control absenteeism when learners do not have parents at home. The school finds itself unable to discuss with anyone in order to correct the misbehaving learner. Interviews revealed that lack of parental guidance is the cause of absenteeism. The schools need to work closely with social welfare to cater for learners who are orphans. Psychologists are also needed in the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit, so that learners with social problems can receive expert attention;
- **High pregnancy rate** - the research revealed that the pregnancy rate is escalating in the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit. According to the participants, pregnancy affects the learner's performance, and increases absenteeism. The schools need to engage with learners, teach them about life skills, and invite relevant people to come and address them on sex;
- **Substance abuse and the carrying of dangerous weapons** - the research revealed that the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit have the problem of learners who are rude and violent, and who become a threat to other learners. Drugs and alcohol have become the game of the day, which makes learners become out of control. Some of the learners carry dangerous weapons. According to "*The Guidelines for Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners*" (Republic of South Africa, 1998), such behaviour is categorised as serious misconduct that can result in expulsion.

According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2013:110), a Code of Conduct must be developed for every school to enable all members of the school community to behave appropriately towards each other, and to cooperate in teaching and learning. The South African Schools Act, Section 18, states that the School Governing Body should establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of

the learning processes. According to Mestry and Khumalo (2012:97) disciplinary structures and procedures are in place in schools, but they are not being used to their full potential in the school environment. The conclusion is that every school must implement a Code of Conduct. Schools must keep reminding learners of the Code of Conduct and its content (the rules of conduct and punishment), and put it into practice.

5.2.3 Conclusions related to Research Objective three

The third research objective was what are the possible strategies for addressing indiscipline among youth at the target rural secondary schools?

The researcher identified possible strategies for addressing indiscipline among youth at the two rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit and the ways of managing discipline.

5.2.3.1 Positive practices of managing discipline

Various alternatives were mentioned when dealing with misconduct, some of which the participants found to be ineffective:

- Verbal warnings;
- Community service;
- Demerits – losing credits which have already been gained;
- Additional work which is constructive and which possibly relates to the misconduct;
- Small menial tasks like tidying up the classroom;

- Detention in which learners use their time constructively, but within the confines of the classroom, i.e. they cannot participate in extra-mural activities or go home;
- Disciplinary talk with the learner;
- Talks with learner's parents or guardians;
- Written warnings;
- Signing contract with the learner who agrees to improve;
- Daily report taken by the learner and signed by all educators;
- Performing duties that improve the school environment such as cleaning, gardening or administrative tasks;
- Written warning of the possibility of suspension from the school;
- Referral to a counsellor or social worker;
- Community service, once permission is granted by the provincial education department;
- Referral of the learner to an outside agency for counselling;
- Application to the provincial education department for limited suspension from all school activities;
- Application to the provincial education department for expulsion or transfer of the learner from the school;
- Allow for criminal or civil prosecutions which may follow, given that the misconduct is of a criminal nature.

Alternative methods of discipline were also identified by the participants. These methods are:

- Inviting parents to school;
- Giving learners lighter work, for example, sweeping, picking up papers;
- Extra work given;
- Mentorship;
- Sworn statement;

- Involving disciplinary committee;
- Exclusion from other activities;
- Public confession;
- Suspension;
- Inviting stakeholders to give motivational talks.

Although these methods were mentioned, some are regarded as ineffective. This implies that some methods of discipline are valued more than others. South African Schools Act, Section 4.6.1 states that the Code of Conduct is the legal instrument regulating the maintenance of discipline in the school. Therefore, it is important for schools to have rules to regulate the behaviour of the learners. This will assist in solving the disciplinary problems that are experienced by the target schools.

5.2.3.2 Possible strategies for addressing challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit

- **Awarding certificates and trophies for work well done and good behaviour.** This will undoubtedly assist learners to improve and sustain their good behaviour. Learners tend to become motivated when they are recognised;
- **Involving learners in making the school rules, for example, developing the Code of Conduct and establishing the classroom rules.** By involving learners in rule-making, learners will realise that their contributions are valued. So, this will automatically appeal for their cooperation and voluntary participation in rule-making;
- **Motivation, for example, praising and encouraging them.** Learners become more determined if they are praised, encouraged and motivated for work well done. Other learners will also strive to achieve that;

- **Adults (educators, parents, principal) modelling and explaining positive behaviour.** Children learn by imitating people, especially adults. So, it is most crucial that all adults model good behaviour. Therefore, learners will more easily be able to acquire good behaviour;
- **Introduction of various sporting activities.** Since children like exploring, each should be encouraged to take part in two or more activities. If various sporting activities can be introduced, learners will be maximally and fully engaged every day. This will then assist in minimising disciplinary problems in schools;
- **Encouraging learners to join religious organisations within the school, for instance the School Christian Organisation.** By joining these religious organisations, learners will be spiritually empowered. Some learners will certainly be well behaved;
- **A variety of rewards for positive behaviour, including lunch with a friend, homework passes, free time in the gym, or a chance to read outside.** These practises will assist to improve learner behaviour in schools. Every learner will be encouraged to be well behaved so that he/she can qualify for such a reward (Rogers, 2014:6);
- **Respecting rights as a reciprocal process for learners to understand the importance of respecting other people's rights.** Learners should be taught to respect other peoples' rights and educators should also respect the learners' rights. This will make learners understand the importance of respecting other people's rights.

Should these crucial strategies be applied at the target schools, learners are likely to redirect their behaviour for good cause. Ultimately learners' behaviour will improve significantly because the main focus will be on positive mechanisms. Since effective discipline management is central to effective teaching and learning, improvement in learner performance could be anticipated.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations to mitigate the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools:

- The governance of every public school is vested in its School Governing body, including the development of discipline policies to deal with learners' misbehaviour (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:92). However, the School Governing Bodies need to know and understand their roles including the management of discipline in a positive way (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:92). It is recommended that the target School Governing Bodies should know that it is their responsibility to see to it that schools are properly governed, and that they should develop policies to deal with learners' misbehaviour in a positive way. Furthermore, the School Governing Bodies should know that it is required by the South African Schools Act to adopt a Code of Conduct for learners (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2013:92).
- For School Governing Bodies to function effectively, they should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education organise workshops for School Governing Body members. School Governing Body members should be informed on what a Code of Conduct entails, how to develop it, who should be consulted, which languages should be used when drafting the code and the rest. School Governing Bodies also need a workshop on the relevant documents which need to be consulted when developing a Code of Conduct for the school. The documents include the South African Schools Act, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and Guidelines for a Code of Conduct. Members of School Governing Bodies should also be trained on the following:
 - (i) how to conduct disciplinary hearings following due process;
 - (ii) communicating with parents;

- (iii) involving parents and educators.
- School Governing Body members should have an interest in the well-being of the school. It is therefore recommended that when they are elected, members of the School Governing Bodies should be people who are dedicated to working for the school, willing to sacrifice their time and so voluntarily.
 - School's administration should encourage parents to play their proper roles in parenting by ensuring that their children are disciplined.
 - There is a need to impress on leadership in the schools to appreciate the importance of dialogue and democratic approaches in solving student's indiscipline.
 - To effectively manage indiscipline and unrests in the target rural secondary schools, there is a need to strengthen counselling because it can help to increase learner's self-awareness, foster emotional growth and maturity.
 - Schools should therefore establish structures, specifically for dealing with reconciliation, trauma and healing for peace building.
 - The target rural secondary schools should endeavour to develop moral values among the learners. Moral values refer to the building of a consistent set of values and ideas which can become a basis for making personal decisions about how to behave in relation to other people and the society.
 - Schools should ensure that best behaviours and conditions are inculcated, established and maintained for effective learning to take place in our secondary schools. The school environment should be busy, and an active place in which the learners and educators know that they are on the same side, working together to achieve something worthwhile.
 - A study could be carried out to investigate measures that can be put in place to ensure that secondary schools are effectively managed.
 - Collaboration among all stakeholders in education on student discipline should be determined.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The study argues that the school should promote positive discipline in schools to ensure that teaching and learning take place in a safe and orderly environment. The smooth running of the school depends on the maintenance of discipline in an acceptable manner where everyone feels safe and protected. The primary task of School Governing Bodies in managing discipline is to draft a Code of Conduct for learners.

Principals of schools should implement the policies they have put in place. The Department of Basic Education should empower newly appointed principals by giving them an induction course in management in order to ensure that they have the required skills. A situation must be avoided where principals learn only through job experience. Principals should receive training in changes that are taking place in education, for instance, the introduction of alternatives to corporal punishment.

Principals must work collaboratively with School Governing Bodies, educators, learners and parents to achieve a unifying mission, vision, and set of goals, and develop school rules that will take care of discipline.

Principals should receive training in changes that are taking place in education, for instance, the introduction of alternatives to corporal punishment.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is suggested that further research be done on the following topics:

- Factors that influence learners discipline in rural secondary schools.
- Strategies that School Governing Bodies can use to manage discipline in rural secondary schools.

- Similar studies could be carried out in other districts in South Africa to investigate challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools to see whether findings from the study will tally with the ones from this research.
- The study could be replicated using other respondents such as education officials.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

Title: ***Challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province.***

I Seoka Malope Frank (072 431 2250), a Masters student under the supervision of Dr M.M Maphutha at University of Limpopo, is engaged in a research project on discipline in secondary schools. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools in Limpopo Province. The sample of the study will include a principal, five educators, five learners and five parents, who are members of School Governing Bodies at each selected rural secondary schools

I confirm that I have explained the subsequent elements of informed consent to the participant:

- The participant knows that their participation is voluntary, and that they do not need to answer all questions;
- The purpose of the research as well as the risks and benefits have been explained;
- The procedures as well as the time commitment have been outlined.
- The participant understands issues of confidentiality;
- The participant understands that there is no compensation involved.

I, the participant in this study, have been informed on the following crucial matters:

- I shall be given a copy of this informed consent form to keep. Participation in this research study is voluntary;
- I am free to decline to participate in this research study, or I may withdraw my participation at any point without penalty;
- I may choose not to answer specific questions;
- The information gathered from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. My real name will not be used in the report and all files, transcripts and data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home, and no one except the researcher will have access to them. My name will not be used and any identifying personal information will be avoided;
- My signature below means that I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPAL

1. What are the causes of learner indiscipline in this school?
2. What are your experiences of indiscipline in your school?
3. How can the School Governing Bodies manage and maintain discipline in this school?
4. What are disciplinary problems that the School Governing Bodies face in this school?
5. What methods and strategies do the School Governing Bodies implement in maintaining discipline in this school?
6. How successful are these methods and strategies in reducing indiscipline in this school?

SEPEDI VERSION: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

1. Ke eng tšeo di hloago mathata a kgalemo mo sekolong?
2. Maitemogelo a gago ke a fe go kgalemo ya bana sekolong sa geno?
3. Naa lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le ka laola bjang le go dira bjang gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a obamelwa mo sekolong?
4. Ke mathata afe a kgalemo ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le hlakanago le ona mo sekolong se?
5. Ke mekgwana le matsapa afe ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le a netefatšago gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a le seemong sa maleba mo sekolong?
6. Naa ke mekgwa le matsapa afe ao a ka šomišwago go kgalema bana dikolong?

APPENDIX C: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

1. What are the causes of learner indiscipline in this school?
2. What are your experiences of indiscipline in your school?
3. How can the School Governing Bodies manage and maintain discipline in this school?
4. What are disciplinary problems that the School Governing Bodies face in this school?
5. What methods and strategies do School Governing Bodies implement in maintaining discipline in this school?
6. How successful are these methods and strategies in reducing indiscipline in this school?

SEPEDI VERSION: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATOR

1. Ke eng tšeo di hloago mathata a kgalemo mo sekolong?
2. Maitemogelo a gago ke a fe go kgalemo ya bana sekolong sa geno?
3. Naa lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le ka laola bjang le go dira bjang gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a obamelwa mo sekolong?
4. Ke mathata afe a kgalemo ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le hlakanago le ona mo sekolong se?
5. Ke mekgwana le matsapa afe ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le a netefatšago gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a le seemong sa maleba mo sekolong?

6. Naa ke mekgwa le matsapa afe ao a ka šomišwago go kgalema bana dikolong?

**APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR PARENTS
(MEMBERS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY)**

1. What are the causes of learner indiscipline in this school?
2. What are your experiences of indiscipline in your school?
3. How can the School Governing Bodies manage and maintain discipline in this school?
4. What are disciplinary problems that the School Governing Bodies face in this school?
5. What methods and strategies do the School Governing Bodies implement in maintaining discipline in this school?
6. How successful are these methods and strategies in reducing indiscipline in this school?

**SEPEDI VERSION: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR
PARENTS (MEMBERS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY)**

1. Ke eng tšeo di hlolago mathata a kgalemo mo sekolong?
2. Maitemogelo a gago ke a fe go kgalemo ya bana sekolong sa geno?
3. Naa lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le ka laola bjang le go dira bjang gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a obamelwa mo sekolong?
4. Ke mathata afe a kgalemo ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le hlakanago le ona mo sekolong se?
5. Ke mekgwana le matsapa afe ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le a netefatšago gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a le seemong sa maleba mo sekolong?
6. Naa ke mekgwa le matsapa afe ao a ka šomišwago go kgalema bana dikolong?

**APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS
(MEMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF LEARNERS)**

1. What are the causes of learner indiscipline in this school?
2. What are your experiences of indiscipline in your school?
3. How can the School Governing Bodies manage and maintain discipline in school?
4. What are the disciplinary problems that the School Governing Bodies face in this school?
5. What methods and strategies do the School Governing Bodies implement in maintain discipline in this school?
6. How successful are these methods and strategies in reducing indiscipline in this school?

**SEPEDI VERSION: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR
LEARNERS (MEMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF LEARNERS)**

1. Ke eng tšeo di hlolago mathata a kgalemo mo sekolong?
2. Maitemogelo a gago ke a fe go kgalemo ya bana sekolong sa geno?
3. Naa lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le ka laola bjang le go dira bjang gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a obamelwa mo sekolong?
4. Ke mathata afe a kgalemo ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le hlakanago le ona mo sekolong se?
5. Ke mekgwana le matsapa afe ao lekgotla-taolo la sekolo le a netefatšago gore maemo a kgalemo a dule a le seemong sa maleba mo sekolong?
6. Naa ke mekgwa le matsapa afe ao a ka šomišwago go kgalema bana dikolong?

APPENDIX F: OBSERVATION GUIDE

The researcher used the following guide to collect data:

1. Late coming
2. Absenteeism
3. Neglect of academic work
4. Possession of cell phones at school
5. Illegal substances
6. Illegal objects
7. bunking classes
8. Not adhering to dress codes
9. Teenage pregnancy

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION LETTER TO LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Enquiries: Seoka MF

P O BOX 352

Cell number: 072 431 2250

Shiluvane

E-mail: frankseoka@gmail.com

0873

09 June 2017

The Head of Department

Department of Education

Private Bag X 9489

Polokwane

0700

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a registered student for the degree, Master of Education in Community and Continuing Education in the School of Education at the University of Limpopo. I kindly seek permission to conduct research in the secondary schools which are under your jurisdiction: Shiluvane Circuit. The title of my study is: **Challenges facing School Governing Bodies in managing discipline among youth at selected rural secondary schools In Limpopo Province.**

The sample of this study will include a principal, five educators, five learners and five parents, who are members of School Governing Bodies at each selected rural secondary schools. Data will be gathered through document analysis, semi-structured and observation. This research is conducted under the supervision of Dr MM Maphutha from the University of Limpopo. If you have questions you can contact him at the following e-mail address: mokwi.maphutha@ul.ac.za.

The copy of the research document and information will remain confidential to me and the University.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

.....

Seoka M.F (MED student)

(201531519)



**DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq: MC Makola PhD

Tel No: 015 290 9448

E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Seoka MF

P O Box 352

Shiluvane

0872

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.

The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE AMONG YOUTH AT SELECTED RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE ."**

2. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

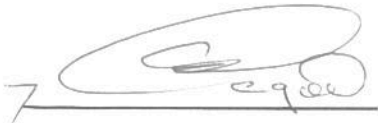
3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: SEOKA MF

CONFIDENTIAL

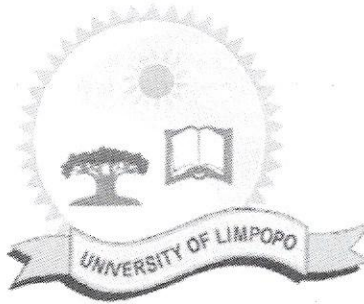
- 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
- 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
- 4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
- 5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Ms NB Mutheiwana
Head of Department

07/04/2017
Date



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:noko.monene@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

MEETING: 25 January 2017

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/06/2017: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Challenges facing school governing bodies in managing discipline Among youth at selected rural Secondary Schools in Shiluvane Circuit in Limpopo Province

Researchers: Mr MF Seoka

Supervisor: Dr MM Maphutha

Co-Supervisor: N/A

School: Education

Degree: Masters in Education Studies


PROF TAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
- ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.