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**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER DISCIPLINE
POLICIES IN FOUR HIGH DENSITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE GRAAFF
REINET DISTRICT, EASTERN CAPE.**

By

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A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

At the

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

Promoter: Prof S. Rembe

December 2012

DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that “An assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in four High Density Areas Secondary Schools in the Graaff Reinet District” is a product of my research. The dissertation has not been submitted to any other tertiary institution as a diploma or degree before. Where I have used information from the published or unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and in the list of references.

Carlton Nkosana Bilaty

December 2012

Signed.....

Date.....

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the implementation of learner discipline policies in the Graaff Reinet District in four township Secondary schools. The study arose as a result of the decline of learner discipline in secondary schools.

This study is located in the interpretive paradigm and adopted a qualitative research approach in the collection of data. It employed triangulation to collect data and obtained valuable information on the implementation of learner discipline policies. Four township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District were purposively selected for the sample in this study. Semi-structured interviews, focus groups of learners and parents

Data has revealed that schools were using different strategies to implement learner discipline such as Code of Conduct, Disciplinary hearing, Safety and Security Committee, Educators, Corporal Punishment, Alternative methods to Corporal Punishment and the role parents. Data revealed that there has been no success in implementing learner discipline strategies. There were a number of limitations in implementing policies to maintain learner disciplines which were identified in the study. There were inconsistencies like educators not supervising learners in detention classes, some of the educators were sabotaging the system by not putting into practice the measures and strategies which were put in place to maintain discipline and so forth. The School Management Teams did not capacitate the Representative Council of Learners so as to assist in the monitoring of discipline. The Department of Education is not supportive in the maintenance of discipline in the schools under study in Graaff Reinet District.

To address disciplinary problems, the study has the following key recommendations Policies should be crafted by all stakeholders for ownership and there should be collaboration in implementation of those policies.. The Code of Conduct should be issued to all learners at the school at the beginning of the year in the language of preference, with school rules. Learners should know the consequences of transgressing the Code of Conduct. SMTs should adopt different management styles so as to take action against educators who are failing the system of maintaining discipline. Educators should realise that it is their duty to maintain discipline in

schools; therefore they should stop complaining about disciplinary problems. Educators should engage the Department of Education to conduct workshops in building capacity of educators to maintain learner discipline. Schools should establish partnerships with other sister Departments such as SAPS, Social Development, Correctional Services, Health to, maintain learner discipline.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank God the almighty for the opportunity to successfully do this study. I wish to thank all the people who have contributed to the successful completion of this study. A special thanks goes to my promoter Professor Rembe for her professional guidance, her unwavering support from the start until the end, and her words of encouragement during difficult times. The supervisor made it possible for me to have a supervisor linked bursary which enabled me complete the study. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the following persons for their contributions:

- My colleagues in research, in Master's and Doctorate, Shirley Besman, Mrs Obi, Mrs Adewumi, Mrs Chinyama, Mrs Shadaya ,Mrs Khuze, Dr Mathwasa, Dr Tlou, and Dr Mpofu.
- Mrs Cynthia Formson who has edited my work and did a good job within a short space of time.
- My colleagues at work Veronica Ntombekhaya Vumazonke, Florence Nozipho Mangcaka for their support and prayers.
- The Department of Education in Graaff Reinet for granting me permission to conduct the study in some of the schools.
- I would like also to express my profound gratitude to Principals, educators, parents and learners who participated in the study. Their cooperation and assistance in responding to set questions was greatly appreciated.
- To my wife Noluthando and my children, a special thanks for their understanding during my long absence at home.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my mother Misiwe Sophia Bilaty, whose faith in me has been a guiding light and inspiration throughout my studies.

ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
SMT	School Management Team
SGB	School Governing Body
GET	General Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
SASA	South African Schools Act
RSA	Republic of South Africa
MEC	Member of Executive Council
RCL	Representative Council for Learners
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
EDO	Education Development Officer
SAPS	South African Police Service

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1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Learner discipline constitutes a necessary aspect for effective learning in schools worldwide including South Africa. According to Wolhuter and Steyn (2003:521) discipline at schools has two very important goals, namely to ensure the safety of staff and learners, and to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching. Joubert, De Waal and Rossouw (2004:77) argue that “if learners are too scared to attend school because they are constantly threatened or when the behaviour of other learners in a school disrupts the normal teaching and learning process, this has a serious impact on learner’s access to equal educational opportunities”.

The advent of democracy resulted in a new constitutional and legislative framework and policies which had implications for how schools should discipline learners. According to Section 12(1) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 1996a), no person shall be subjected to torture of any kind, nor shall any person be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. In the context of the school this implies that the education environment should be conducive, there should be security to property and equipment, there should be clean toilets, no harassment when learners are attending classes, writing tests and examinations, (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 1998).

Article 2 (b) of the Children’s Act No 38 of South Africa 2005 on the rights of Children’s safety concurs with the Bill of Rights Section 28 of the Constitution (RSA, 1996) that every child has the right to family care, parental care or appropriate alternative care, the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, maltreatment and degradation. The Children’s Act 2005, Chapter 3, section 7(1) (d) further stipulates the responsibilities of a parent or any other person who may have interest in the well being and development of the child. This implies that even educators in learning institutions have the responsibility of ensuring that every child is protected from any kind of abuse whether it is from other learner, or an educator, that children are not neglected

because of their socio-economic background, that they are free from abuse. They must act as parents, as guardians in the absence of biological parents to ensure that all children are safe from harm.

Another milestone in the new legislative framework in South Africa was the promulgation of the South African Schools Act (SASA) in 1996. SASA stipulates that 'discipline must flourish without disruptive behaviour and offences (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 1996:8). Section 7 of SASA outlines measures that should be put in place by schools to maintain discipline and action which should be taken against learners who misbehave. It provides for the formulation of a code of conduct in order to achieve good discipline and instructs every school to have a code of conduct. A code of conduct is a written statement of rules and principles regarding discipline. It outlines the kind of behaviour that educators expect from each learner and the standards of behaviour a school should maintain (RSA, 1996). According to Joubert (2008:238), the purpose of the code of conduct is to: (i) create a well organised and efficient school so that effective learning and teaching can take place; (ii) promote self discipline; (iii) encourage good behaviour; and (iv) regulate conduct. The code of conduct includes school rules which are what learners may or may not do; sanctions which are the types of punishment, learners would receive when they disobey school rules and disciplinary proceedings (RSA, 1996).

SASA stipulates that consensus should be reached by parents, learners, educators and non educators in formulating the code of conduct (RSA, 1996). All learners must comply with the code of conduct, when they enrol at the school. Each learner must be given the code of conduct in the official language of the learner and should be informed about the contents, things learners may do, things they may not do etc. Learners should also be informed what action would be taken against them if they contravene the code of conduct or should not do etc. (Joubert, 2008; Roos, 2003).

Consequently, SASA outlawed corporal punishment. This is in line with Section 10 of the Constitution which states that everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way (RSA, 1996). According to SASA (RSA, 1996):

.....It is illegal for anybody to apply corporal punishment in respect of any learner at a public or independent (private) school. Parents may not give principals or teachers permission to use corporal punishment. In addition to formal corporal punishment, non-formal uses of force such as slapping and rough handling are also prohibited (p.62).

Anyone who contravenes the above regulation and administers corporal punishment commits an offence and can be charged in a court of law and punished(RSA, 1996). Schools are supposed to administer alternative means of punishment in place of corporal punishment. The Department of Education (2000) provide examples of alternative means of corporal punishment which schools could pursue

They suggest the following alternative methods to Corporal Punishment, for example

- (1) Establish a set of rules and expectations. The DoE (2000) contends that if children know beforehand what is expected of them, they will comply with the rules. Porteus, Vally and Ruth further also argue that learners are more likely to abide by the stated rules when they sense that the educators believe in their potential for excellence. This implies that the rules should be clear, make sense and be based on core values such as safety; respect etc. (Porteus, Vally and Ruth, 2001).
- (2) Positive Reinforcement. The (DoE, Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2000) assert that children who behave in positive ways should be given positive responses and should be encouraged to repeat such behaviour. Bad behaviour should be prevented by educators, it should be observed, and strategies should be found to divert the bad behaviour. Positive behaviour T could be reinforced through smile, praise, public acknowledgement etc.
- (3) Consistent consequences. Learners should be well advised and be informed well in advance about the action to be taken for their transgression of rules. Learners should know the consequences of bad behaviour and educators should exercise consistency in the implementation of those consequences, (DoE, 2000). Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) assert that the consequences of the misbehaviour must be such that the learner would realise that what she/he has done was not correct. The (DoE, 2000), Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) suggest a variety of consequences for bad behaviour.

- (a) Withdrawal of privileges: privileges of being involved in activities that learners enjoy regularly taking part.
- (b) Time out: Khoboka (2009) contends that time out is another way of correcting misbehaviour of a learner. It should be used with the purpose of denying the misbehaving learner the opportunity to earn positive reinforcement. There is certain criterion that the learner should fulfil before she/he can communicate with the adult/ educator if she/he wishes to participate in classroom activities.

Daily Reports- This is a system where learners are given the opportunity to reflect on bad behavioural pattern. They are given a chance to improve. There is transparency in the process because both the learner and the educator go through the procedure of filling the report, and discussing it. The report is taken home and signed by the parent. The child starts the process again the next day. The system is stopped when the child has a clear sheet for three days (DoE, 2000). Roos (2003:495) states that the following are alternatives to corporal punishment.

A verbal warning or written warning, additional work, but it has to contribute to learners work, there is supervision, security for the learner, and the tasks are in support of the learner for achieving academic success. If a learner has damaged property, compensation has to be affordable and agreed upon.

The National Policy on the Management of Drug Abuse by Learners in Public and Independent Schools and Further Education and Training Institutions (RSA, 2002a; hereafter, Policy on Drug Abuse), Section 61 of SASA, sub section 4(2) stipulates that no person may bring dangerous objects or illegal drugs onto the school premises or have such object or drugs in his or her possession on school premises or during school activities. Subject to subsection (3), the principal or his or her delegate may, at random search any group of learners, or the property of a group of learners, for dangerous objects or illegal drugs, if a fair and reasonable suspicion has been established. To ensure learner safety, the school management and educators are supposed to ensure that initiation practices such as degradation; bullying, harassment and actions which lead to humiliation are not practised in the hostels and during school activities (Hammert, 2008; Joubert, 2008).

Principals and educators are supposed to know the above policies and how they should be implemented in order to maintain discipline in schools. All members of the school management are required to receive training in these aspects (Joubert, 2008; Roos, 2003). Currently all schools have implemented the new frameworks and policies for maintaining discipline in schools as stipulated in the Constitution and SASA (Masitsa 2008; Naong 2007; Rampoala and Mokhale 2006). However, despite the implementation of the policies, the problems of ill-discipline in schools have been on the increase. Some causes of indiscipline in schools are mentioned by Maree (2000:4) as gang activities, bullying, the lack of transformation, learners carrying guns and smoking dagga, theft, the lack of counseling services, the lack of support from the Education Department.

The Sunday Times, of 8 July 2007 in an article entitled 'Teachers under too much stress', alluded that thousands of teachers were being treated for stress and depression because they could no longer cope in classrooms due to learner ill-discipline. Naong (2007:51) also argues further that the current status of teaching in South Africa is characterized by extremely trying conditions, notably, (i) the prevalence and influence of stress, (ii) declining morale, and (iii) the number of teachers leaving or intending to leave the profession. In the Daily Despatch of Wednesday 19 January 2011, it was reported that Six Darlington College pupils (not real name) were suspended for allegedly bullying other children in 2010. These learners were still awaiting the fate from the Department of Education because only the Department of Education can expel a learner. The school governing body (SGB) of the school had recommended for the expulsion of the six pupils but the court ruled that the six learners should undergo a counselling programme with Social Workers. A similar incident was reported in the Daily Sun on Wednesday, 21 November 2012 that a bully was shot dead by a fellow learner in class. An alleged leader of bullies was shot dead. This incident occurred at Xuza Secondary School (not real name) in Vosloorus, east of Johannesburg. The lack of discipline among learners who do not respect their school mates and bully them raises safety concerns for both educators and learners (Joubert, de Waal, and Rossouw, 2004:79). The problem of maintaining discipline in schools is also evident from the number of learner disciplinary cases. The Daily Sun of Wednesday 21 November 2012 reported that at Western

Side High School (not real name) in Kwa-Zulu Natal, seven Grade 8 pupils were attacked because they were singing gospel songs under a tree.

Another instance of learner indiscipline was reported on the SABC 3 news on 24 October 2012 at Umlilo Secondary School (not real name), in Hopewell in KwaZulu-Natal where one learner murdered a classmate in the school premises. Indiscipline has also manifested itself in the form of drugs at Anderson Park High School in Port Elizabeth (not real name), in the Eastern Cape Province, where it is alleged that learners had put drugs in an educator's handbag to incriminate her because she was a strict disciplinarian (SABC 3 news, Monday, 22 October 2012). At Adendale Secondary School (not real name) in the Eastern Cape on 07 March 2011, a hooligan who was a learner (boy) threatened and terrorised educators with a knife, threatening to kill them and set their cars alight. The Principal at the school asked for immediate intervention from the Department of Education (DoE) but nothing was done to assist the school. The learner solved the dilemma by dropping out of school, (Advertiser 10 March 2011). There have been a number of incidents where teachers have been stabbed by learners; there are also gang activities in some schools and as a result teachers feel they are exposed and unprotected (Hammert, 2008).

Despite the regulation that outlawed Corporal Punishment, there have been a number of incidents reported by newspapers of the use of this form of punishment. For example, The Daily Sun of Tuesday 11 September 2012 confirmed that some educators are still administering Corporal Punishment. The same newspaper reported that the use of Corporal Punishment resulted in the death of Siboniso Ndevu (not real name) who died of internal injuries on 10 June 2012 after he was assaulted with a stick at Sidlokolo Primary School in Mangweni in Mpumalanga province. There have also been incidents of learners sustaining injuries due to corporal punishment in few schools in some provinces. For example, the Daily Sun of Tuesday 27 November 2012 confirmed the use of Corporal Punishment. A 46 year old Ndlamafa Primary School teacher in the Kwa-Zulu Natal province allegedly beat a pupil with a broom stick, and then ordered two other boys to gang up on him on the school playground. In another incident a seven year old learner died from injuries

sustained five days after being beaten by an educator at the Thuthuka Primary school in Kwa- Zulu Natal.

The Herald of Saturday 24 September 2011 - reported in an article entitled: "Beating a child is often a sign of frustration". This follows an incident where a parent took a school teacher to court following a child's beating at school and the Department of Education had to settle a liability claim on the matter. The same newspaper also reported on a pupil in Lusikisiki who was left without sight in her right eye after a wooden chip flew into it when a teacher allegedly caned her brother in class. Consequently, another pupil in Mthatha was allegedly caned by a teacher which resulted in his losing the use of his hand; and in Butterworth a pupil had to have her finger amputated following a beating. Maphosa and Shumba (2010:38) argue that educators generally feel disempowered in their ability to institute discipline in schools in the absence of corporal punishment.

The disempowerment of educators has also led to feelings of the abdication of their critical role of disciplining learners. The seeming abdication of this role could be attributed to the rise in the number of cases of learner indiscipline in schools (Kgosana, 2006; Van Wyk, 2001). Mtsweni (2008) observes that after the banning of corporal punishment in schools, most educators feel incapacitated and helpless in dealing with learner indiscipline in schools. Learners are believed to have now become ill-disciplined to the extent that they even openly challenge the teacher's authority because they know that nothing would be done to them (Masitsa, 2008).

Despite the fact that the policies have been implemented, there is an increase in problems of learner discipline in schools. Hence the study examines the implementation of learner discipline policies in four secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet district. The Graaff Reinet District is one of the 52 districts of the Eastern Cape Province. It is situated on the western side of the province specifically situated in the little Karoo, and is comprised of Cookhouse, Somerset East, Pearston, Graaff Reinet, Klipplaat, Jansenville, Steytlerville, and Willomore which is on the border of the Western Cape Province, (DoE, 1998). The communities in these towns are a mixture of white (Boers), coloureds that originate from the Khoi-khoi and Xhosa

speakers. It is poor area characterised by a high rate of unemployment, HIV/AIDS, and prostitution, and many people depend on social grants, (Census, 2001)

Socio-economic factors force many parents to go to big cities such as Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, George, Plettenberg Bay, and Mossel Bay to look for jobs. There are many farms in the area that specialise in game farming, exportation of wool from ostrich farming and angora goats as well as grain production. The majority of parents are employed on these farms. The district has 845 educators, 26661 learners, 32 Town Primary Schools, 35 Farm Schools and 16 Secondary schools. There are 1174 learners In Grade R, 16480 learners in Primary schools, and 9007 learners in Secondary schools (Department of Education, 2012). Harber (2001) found that violent crimes were widespread in South Africa and schools in disadvantaged areas suffer from serious problems of gang-related crime. It is a cause for concern whether or not educators' implementation of learner discipline policies are done in the correct manner or not.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

After 1994 the democratic government of South Africa abolished inhumane and punitive learner discipline policies which were enforced by the Apartheid Government. New constitutional and legislative framework and policies which had implications on how schools should maintain learner discipline were put in place (RSA, Constitution Act No.84 1996; Prinsloo, 2006; Joubert, de Waal, and Rossouw, 2004; Hammert, 2008). As discussed in the background of the study, the provisions were outlined in the Constitution and other policies among them SASA (RSA, 1996; Hammert, 2008; Joubert, 2008). SASA provided for the establishment of code of conduct in all schools. It outlawed corporal punishment and suggested alternative forms of punishment (RSA, 1996).

All learner discipline policies have currently been implemented in schools (Hammert, 2008; Joubert, 2008). However, despite the implementation of the policies, the incidents of ill-discipline in schools have been on the increase. This is evident from the incidents of violence and other disciplinary problems in schools reported by the media and other stakeholders. (Roos, 2003; Prinsloo, 2006; Joubert, de Waal, and Rossouw, 2004; Hammert, 2008; Joubert, 2008; Squelch, 2000. The Daily Despatch

of Wednesday 10 October 2012 also reported in an article “Teachers bemoan bad behaviour” that teacher’s and learners’ lives were in danger from boys smoking dagga in toilets, abusing drugs and alcohol, and from bullies who bunk classes, roaming around the school grounds. Despite all the regulations and policy documents there seem to be an increase in cases of indiscipline cases in schools. Hence this study examined the implementation of learner discipline policies in four secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet district.

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to assess the implementation of learner discipline policies in four schools in the Graaff Reinet district. Specifically, the study seeks to examine school strategies that are used to implement learner discipline policies; and support and monitoring mechanisms which are in place to ensure that schools in the Graaff Reinet District implement learner discipline policies.

1.4 Research Questions

Main Research Question: How are learner discipline policies implemented in the four secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet district?

Sub questions:

- 1.4.1. What strategies are employed by the school to ensure the effective implementation of learner discipline policies?
- 1.4.2. How are the strategies implemented by schools?
- 1.4.3. How are schools supported (besides policy documents) by the Department of Education in maintaining learner discipline?
- 1.4.4. What monitoring mechanisms are in place in schools to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline policies?

1.5 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1.5.1 Examine strategies that have been put in place by schools to implement learner discipline policies.

1.5.2. Examine support provided to schools to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline policies.

1.5.3. Examine monitoring mechanisms that are in place to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline policies.

1.6 Significance of study

A study of learner discipline is important because it is one of the indicators for effective teaching and learning in schools. It can be argued that where there is lack of discipline, teaching and learning is likely to be adversely affected. The findings of this study are likely to be of benefit to the key stakeholders in education and schools in particular. These include the National Department of Basic Education, The Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Education, District office, and education policy researcher, school managers, SGBs, parents and learners.

Policy makers might find loop-holes in the policy documents and propose revisions and amendments. Bureaucrats and managers might find better strategies, techniques and solutions for effective management of learner discipline in high schools. The findings of the study provides vital reference material for other researchers who may want to carry out similar studies in curbing learner indiscipline in schools and serve as a reliable source of empirical data and as methodological yardstick for future research on the topic.

1.6.1. Assumption of study

The study assumes that:

Parents and learners are not consulted in the crafting of policies that relate to discipline of the school, they are only informed.

The Principal and SMT often take crucial decisions that relate to serious disciplinary cases where the SGB and parents of accused learners are not invited. Also learners are expelled without the knowledge of the Superintendent General

There is minimal parent involvement in monitoring learner discipline at home

The Department of Education in the Graaff Reinet district does not give support to school in implementing learner discipline.

1.7 Delimitation of study

The study focused on the implementation of learner discipline policies in secondary schools. It was confined to four township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District in the Eastern Cape. Participants were principals, Deputy Principals, Heads of Departments, senioreducators, School Governing Body (SGB) members (parent, component)and learners.

1.8 Definition of Concepts

1.8.1 Implementation:

These are actions by the public or private individuals (groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives. Implementation is the process of putting an idea, programmes, or set of activities new to the people attempting or expected to change (Fullan, 1982). For the purpose of this study implementation will mean conducted by School Management Teams (SMTs), SGBs, educators and learners to reach the desired objective of implementing learner discipline in secondary schools.

1.8.2 Policy implementation

Policy implementation as posited by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975:445-487) “encompasses those actions by public or private individuals or groups that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions”.

Brynard (2005:9) equates policy implementation to service delivery and defines it as “accomplishment of policy

1.8.3 Discipline

Charles (2002:7) states that discipline is sometimes inaccurately conceptualized as being what educators do when learners misbehave at school or what educators do to stifle misbehavior when it occurs and that discipline must rely on elements of fear backed by force to be effective. The Master Teacher (2001:4) defines discipline as a process that uses teaching, modeling, and other appropriate strategies to maintain behavior necessary to ensure a safe, orderly and productive learning environment by changing unacceptable behavior to acceptable behavior. According to Rogers (1998: 11), discipline is an educator-directed activity which seeks to lead, guide, direct and manage and confront a student about behavior that disrupts the aim of learning. It is used as a means to direct learners towards self-control and personal accountability. The different definitions of discipline seem to present two perspectives namely: the view that discipline has to do with control, punishment and obedience; and the view that discipline seeks to induce a sense of self-control

It is important for schools to have a common understanding of what discipline really entails. Clearly from the foregoing exposition, discipline at schools needs to be approached holistically, that is, on a whole school basis. This requires an all-out effort that involves all school stakeholders. Wolhuter (1999) states that the socio-political and educational changes of the post 1994 era meant that the traditional methods and strategies used to maintain discipline at schools could no longer be employed in a democratic societal context in which human rights are highly valued. For instance, it should be determined what is best for learners by looking at what disciplinary measures intend to achieve. In this regard, applying disciplinary modes merely to punish, control and solicit obedience by instilling fear would not be enough. As alluded to above, discipline should ensure the safety of staff and learners and, create an environment conducive to learning.

For the purpose of this study, discipline means instructing a person /learner to follow a particular code of conduct and the enforcement of an order is ensuring

that instructions are carried out. In child development, discipline refers to methods of modeling the child's character and of teaching self control and acceptable behavior. To be disciplined is then, subject to content, either a virtue, which may be referred to as a disciplinary procedure or a euphemism for punishment, which may also be referred to as a disciplinary procedure (Reyes, 2006). School discipline refers to regulation of children and the maintenance of order ("rules") in schools. These rules may, for example, define the expected standards of clothing, timekeeping, social behavior and work ethics.

1.8.4 Corporal punishment:

According to Morrel (2001: 292), corporal punishment is "the physical punishment that is inflicted on the body "or the infliction of pain by educator or any other education official on the body of a learner as a penalty for doing something which has been disapproved of". Naong (2007: 283) cited in Morrel argues the Bantu Education was highly authoritarian and that in African schools "corporal punishment was used for boys and girls alike, while English public schools ensured it was used only on boys. This study seeks to find out if secondary schools have strategies in place (besides corporal punishment) and to assess their effectiveness.

1.8.5 High Density Area

The term High Density Area refers to a residential area that is mainly occupied by Africans. High Density Areas were established in accordance with the Urban Areas Act of 1923 in which municipalities set aside segregated areas for the occupation of Africans only (Thompson: 1990, Warden 1994) cited in Motseke (2010: 118). Although the laws which discriminated on the basis of colour have been repealed, the settlement patterns have not changed. For the purpose of this study High Density Area schools are public schools in areas that are in area still predominantly occupied by Africans, Coloured and Indians. These are schools that were investigated. The study was conducted in the High Density Areas of Graaff Reinet which are predominantly occupied by Africans and Coloureds.

1.8.6 Monitoring

According to Brown (2003) monitoring is an intermittent (regular or irregular) series of observations in time, carried out to show the extent of compliance with a standard or the degree of deviation from an expected norm. It therefore implies that monitoring be viewed in terms of processes in achieving the desired objectives or targets which in this context is to instil learner discipline so as to create an environment that issuitable for teaching and learning

This research is based on the assessment of the implementation of the discipline policy that would ensure that township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District are places of safety, and that teaching and that learning takes place in a suitable environment.

1.9 CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

This study covers six chapters, to be demarcated as follows:

CHAPTER 1 :

The chapter discusses the background of the study assessing the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District. This section further discusses the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and also the research questions. The objectives, assumptions, significance and limitations of the study are also discussed in this section.

CHAPTER 2 :

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework used in the study, what are strategies to learner discipline, how are strategies implemented to maintain learner discipline, the support of the Department of Education and other stakeholders in the implementation of learner discipline, the monitoring mechanisms in the implementation of learner discipline, challenges facing schools in implementing learner discipline are also discussed.

CHAPTER 3 :

This chapter presents and justifies the research methodology used in the study. It also discusses the philosophical assumption underlying various methodologies and the Interpretivists paradigm on which the study is based. The research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments used to collect data and ethical considerations are discussed also.

CHAPTER 4 :

In this chapter, the researcher presents and analyses all the data collected through semi-structured interviews, focus groups as well as document analysis.

CHAPTER 5 :

This chapter discusses the findings of the research. The discussion includes the comparison of the findings with data found in the literature. The objective of this chapter is to bring the findings into the fold, the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools.

CHAPTER 6 :

This chapter gives a summary of the findings in relation to the problem, the methods used to reach the findings and how they relate to the research questions. Conclusions and recommendations reached and their implications for the policy makers and further research required in the area conclude the chapter.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review literature that is focusing on the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District. The first part of the chapter focuses on discussion on the theoretical framework which informed the study. The second part examines what people have written regarding the implementation of learner discipline policies. It focuses on: (i) strategies that are employed by the schools to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline; (ii) how are the strategies implemented by schools to ensure effective discipline (iii) the support from the Department of Education to ensure that schools maintain learner discipline; (iv) the monitoring mechanism on the implementation of learner discipline; (v) The challenges that are faced by schools; and (vi) suggestions for curbing indiscipline in schools.

2.2 Policy Implementation

Policies are written statements or sets of statements that describe principles, requirements, and limitations that are characterized by indicating “what” needs to be done rather than how to do it. Such statements have the force of establishing rights, requirements and responsibilities (Bossuyt, Corkery and Land, 1995: 2). In concurring with this notion, Anderson (2006: 6) defines policy as “a relatively stable, purposive course of action or inaction followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern”. In simpler terms, Hill (1993), Hill & Hupe (2006) assert that a policy is a process of decision-making leading to (or appearing to lead to) actions outside the political system. Similarly, Hanekom (1987) believes that policy-making plays a pivotal role in establishing clear objectives as prioritized by the government; establishing the programmes that will contribute towards development

and the co-ordination between government institutions on various levels of government and the activities to be executed by these institutions. From the above definitions one can deduce that policy indicates the desires of those whose actions will be guided by the decisions taken.

Policy implementation usually involves the auctioning of government's plans and programmes. This study adopts the top down and bottom up policy implementation models. Schofield (2004) contends that in policy implementation process there are two perspectives. This statement is also supported by Paudal (2009) who states that there are two perspectives in the implementation process namely the Top-Down approach and the Bottom-Up approach.

2.2.1 Top-Down Perspective/Approach

According to Treib and Pulzl (2007), the Top-Down approach is represented by scholars such as Van Meter and Van Horn (1975); Nakamira and Smallwood (1980); and Sabatier (1983) who contend that implementation in the top-down approach is the hierarchical execution of centrally defined policy intentions. The top-down model is a well known model in the policy analysis arena (Anderson, 1979; Dye, 1978; Henry, 1975), and is based on the assumption that a small, elite group (usually government) is responsible for policy decisions and that this group governs an ill-informed public (the masses) (Dubnick and Bardes, 1983). Policy decisions made by the elite flow downward to the population at large and are executed by the bureaucracy (Anderson, 1994). Decisions are taken at the top and there is no popular participation which, means it is only the expression of values and choices of the privileged who dictate their views to the masses (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). This is an approach where policy-making leaders act in an environment which is characterized by apathy and information distortion and governs a large passive mass

In this kind of model, policy flows from the influential leaders to the people at the bottom to implement the policies. It is where the society is divided into those who have powers and those who do not have powers. Those who have powers or the elites usually take the centre stage in leading the decisions that directly affect the masses or the society at large. This indicates that the majority of prevailing policies

designed reflect the leaders' values which generally preserve the status quo (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). In this environment, the elites have higher income, are more educated and have higher statuses than the poor masses. Public policies are therefore viewed as the values and preferences of the governing elite. The elites control and shape the mass opinions more than the mass. In the government of this type, public officials and administrators carry out policies decided on by the elites and flow them down to the mass without considering their participation or listening to their views (Pulzl and Treib, 2007).

The strength of the top-down theory rests with the assumption that policy implementation starts with a decision made by central government (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). They view policy designers at national level as key and central to successful implementation. It means that bureaucrats are seen as best positioned to manipulate variables, direct and supervise implementation of service delivery. This perspective is stressed by Brynard, (2005:9) who postulate that "high ranking officials execute, formulate policies and execute the decision making for lower level structures to implement". The implementers do not have input in the design and details of the policy, they have their policies cascaded down and are not expected to question but implement (Fraser et al, 2006).

According to Paudal (2009) the Top Down approach assumes that policy goals can be specified by policy makers and that implementation can be carried out successfully by setting certain mechanisms. Implementation is enforced through the set mechanisms that ensure compliance to the policies. This line of thinking is confirmed by Urwin and Jordan (2007:183) who postulate that the "Top-Down approach assumes the legislation and policies set explicit aims and objectives, providing a blueprint that is then directly translated into action". Similar statements come from Pulzl and Treib (2007) who state that the Top-Down approach emphasize that decision makers have the ability to produce unequivocal policy objectives and proceed to control the implementation of the decisions. The Top-Down approach is policy centred and represents the views of the policy makers. Policy makers have the capability to exercise control over the environment and implementers (Paudal, 2009)

While the strength of the Top-Down Perspective is to ensure compliance, there are limitations to this stance. The Top-Down approach takes the statutory language as their starting point. By this action they fail to take into account the significance of actions taken earlier in the policy making (Gumede, 2008). Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) argue that if action depends upon a number of links in an implementation chain, then the degree of co-operation between agencies required to make those links has to be very close to a hundred per cent in order to avoid deficits in the process. They have been accused of seeing implementation as a purely administrative process and ignore the political aspects or try to eliminate them. For example, top down policies neglect consider the attitudes of the implementers and sometimes even fail to clarify certain issues and take it for granted that it will be implemented according to intended plan.

Top-Down approach put exclusive emphasis on the policy makers as key actors and also development of policy at macro level (Gumede, 2008). They overlook the fact that local service deliverers are experts and have the knowledge of the problems that exist on the ground. Therefore they are in a better position to propose purposeful policy (Paudal, 2009.).

According to Paudal (2009), top-down approach neglect reality of policy modification or distortion at the hands of implementers since policy implementers interpret and implement a policy according to their own understanding even considering the available resources. They can divert from the original plan to suit the prevailing situation. There is an objection to implicit assumption that policy makers control the processes that affect implementation (Gumede, 2008). The Top-Down approach is criticised because central decision makers neglect other actors. For example, private sector, local officials who are involved in the implementation process. The Top-Down model sees local actors as implementation agents, whose behaviour need to be controlled (Paudal, 2009; Sabatier, 2007; Gumede, 2008). Jans (2007) observed that although good decisions are made at the top but bad implementation cripples this approach. Multiple intermediary acts like government officials, agencies for policy implementation requires co-operation, monitoring and control (military chain of command) It implies that without co-operation, proper control there can be no successful implementation (Jans, 2007; Sabatier, 2007; Gumede, 2008).

2.2.2 The Bottom-Up approach

The Bottom-Up approach consists of everyday problem solving strategies of “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky 1980; Ingram 1977; Elmore 1978, Herjn and Hull (1982) include also current references if possible). Urwin and Jordan (2007), refer to the Bottom-Up approach as the backward mapping approach which recognizes the importance of additional actors, other than policy makers at the top. The reasons for this they interact with one another in congested spaces eventually implementing policies. According to Pulzl and Treib (2007) the Bottom-Up model criticizes the view that local bureaucrats are the main actors in policy delivery and see implementation as the negotiation processes within networks of implementers. Furthermore Pulzl and Treib (2007) contend that the aim of the Bottom-Up is to give accurate empirical description and explanations of interaction and problem solving strategies of actors involved in delivery and policy implementation. The Bottom-Up approach argues that implementation cannot be separated from policy formulation. They pay attention not only to one stage of the system but to the whole process how policies are defined, shaped, implemented and redefined (Pulzl and Treib, 2007).

The strengths of the Bottom-up approach are anchored in the participation (Pulzl& Treib, 2007). Kumar (2009) is of the opinion that community participation, if it is done properly, almost always brings advantages for the said community. It can therefore, be noted that participation can ensure effective utilization of available resources where people and other agents work towards achieving their objective and local people become responsible for various activities.

The participatory process can have wider ramifications for the ‘policy-owning’ body as it helps create an institutional culture of openness and service. The process also encourages greater public attention to the way in which the policy is implemented, thus promoting accountability (Eden, 1996). They further concede that participation in most cases brings a wider range of information, ideas, perspectives, and experiences to the process of policy formulation.

Hudson (1989) in Pulzl and Treib (2007) argues that the power held by street level bureaucrats stretches beyond the control of citizen’s behaviour. Lipsky (1980) further

explains that the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainty and work pressures, effectively become the public policies they carry out.

This implies school principals, educators, SGBs, community-based organization must work together to implement learner discipline policies. Mentoring with the other schools incurring ill-discipline in schools is of paramount importance. This is what the study will be seeking to find by using this model.

Brynard (2005:10) argues that the bottom-up approach view service delivery implementers as people on the ground, whose decisions on selecting variables matter because they face the challenges of the real situations and make decisions as the situation obtains. Lipsky (1978) who is often referred to as the father of the Bottom-Up approach, cited in Urwin and Jordan (2007:183) posit that the bottom up model "is made as it is administered, decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish and the devices they invent effectively become public policy that they carry out".

Street level bureaucrats are considered to have a better understanding of what clients need because they have direct contact with the public. Lipsky (1980) argues this point by saying that street level bureaucrats enter the service tradition with some pressure and other constraints put them in positions of having to create coping mechanisms. According to Hill and Hupe (2006) street level bureaucrats develop methods, adjust their work habits to reflect lower expectation of themselves and their clients.

Lipsky's (1980) theory of street level bureaucrats focuses on the discretionary decisions each field worker or street-level bureaucrat makes in relation to the delivery of policies to them. The discretion taken by the street level bureaucrats in delivery service or enforcing regulations makes them essential actors in implementing public policies. A few bottom-up approach advocates even suggest that the discretion at lower levels is not only inevitable, but also desirable because it is necessary for policies to be 'reinvented' so that they better fit local needs (Palumbo, 1987). It can be argued that the street level bureaucrats have considerable

autonomy from their employing organization. This literature would assist the researcher to analyse data and find out if such situations prevail in the studied area considering the implementation of learner discipline.

Their main source of their autonomous power thus stems from the considerable amount of discretion at their disposal. Expressing similar sentiments is Schofield (2004) who argues that the Bottom-Up perspective identifies many actors that are affected, map up relations between policy makers and implementers. In the process of networking public and private sectors come together, analyze several policies that affect the same problem. This model then allows for checks and balances on groups to monitor or create healthy competition (Schofield, 2004). In this regard, to influence and develop governmental decision-making, a group must have access and the opportunity to contact and express their views without fear to decision-makers. If the people are sidelined and become unable to communicate with decision-makers, their chances of influence in affecting decision-making become very slim. All decisions should be created from the people at the grassroots level and agreed upon the top of the hierarchy of decision-making (Hull & Herjn, 1982)

The other strength of Bottom-up is that group representation provides the opportunity for those who are likely not to be heard without that representation to express their views and opinions and highlight their needs or interests (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). Anderson (2006) sees the importance of this model as being where groups bring more diverse information and knowledge to bear on the question under consideration. He further argues that varied cultures, age groups and gender all add to the diversity of a group which gives varied perspectives and enhances the kind of ideas the group can come up with. Group differences do not only involve different needs, interests, and goals, but probably more important different social locations and experiences from which social facts and policies are understood. The group becomes the essential bridge between the individual and the government (Anderson, 2006).

There are limitations to the bottom-up approach such as the methodological perspective that overemphasizes the level of local autonomy. Although Lipsky (1980)

emphasizes the importance of street-level bureaucrats while Hull and Herjn (1982) emphasize the local networking of this model in service delivery there can however be variations in implementation by the local people in the implementation phase. The results may not be achieved as citizens may resist implementing centralized policies. Similar sentiments were expressed by Paudal (2009) who contends that the bottom up perspective does not provide satisfactory solutions to the problems of public policy.

The behaviour of street level bureaucrats is also criticized as they usually overestimate the use of their discretion and overemphasize their autonomy versus top officials (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). The actions of the street bureaucrats are likely to disadvantage people with very little education and poor social background are less likely to benefit as they may not fully comprehend the meaning of the policies while the more educated elite are likely to benefit from the social services (Paudal, 2009). Brynard (2009:5) argues that analysis should focus "on those who are charged with carrying out policies rather than those who formulate and convey them" It implies that effective policy formulation cannot be done without involving those that are affected by the problem. In the context of this study the implementers would be the educators facing disciplinary problems with learners.

The above literature would be relevant to the studied area as the researcher would like to find out if the learners, SMTs and parents were consulted in the formulation of discipline programmes and strategies and the role of the implementers. The literature would further assist the researcher to analyse data and discuss some aspects of data from both models as one cannot implement policy without monitoring and providing the support and other aspects which are necessary for implementation. It has to be noted that one need to have people who will be held accountable in terms of implementation of learner discipline. All these are advocated by top down approach. But one also needs people's collaboration and cooperation of actors which is what bottom up advocates for. It also considers actors who will bring in skills, who know the contexts and environment from which the learners come from. It is because of these attributes that the researcher opted study to be guided by the bottom up approach in conjunction with the top-down approach.

2.3 Review of Studies Conducted to Examine the Implementation of Learner Discipline Policies

According to Gaudstad (2008:1), school discipline has two main goals (i) to ensure the safety of staff and learners (ii) to create an environment that is conducive for learning and teaching. Serious acts of misconduct that involves violent or criminal behaviour may prevent the attainment of these goals. Daniel Duke (1989) cited in Gaudstad (2008:2) argues the “the goal of good behaviour is necessary, it affects school discipline, the strategies that educators use seek to encourage responsible behaviour and provide students with satisfying school experience and discourage misconduct”. The views of Gaudstad will be used as lenses in finding out strategies used by principals and educators in maintaining discipline and the monitoring mechanism to maintain learner discipline in the studied area.

2.4 Types of Disciplines

Mkhize (2002:122) argues that there are four ways of maintaining discipline in schools, namely, Marva Collis type, back to basic types, the trying hard type and liberal and non-directed type. The knowledge of these types of discipline may equip the educator with skills of handling student with different home background and characters.

2.4.1 Marva Collis type

According to Mkhize (2002), Marva Collis type is a humanistic approach with a strong sense of authority. The teacher is regarded as the highest authority, highly respected and is in total control of the classroom. There are few disciplinary cases that are referred to the Principal. This type of approach of managing discipline is not suitable to the South African schools where discipline is managed by a number of people and committees. It is not operational in South African schools as there is no way where a teacher can handle cases which need canning, or suspension without involving to school. This type of approach since it is authoritarian and considering

democratic principles of South Africa this type would not be operational in South Africa context but it is an aspect one would explore in the study when looking at strategies.

2.4.2 Back to basic type

This is a type of discipline maintenance where educators have a strong sense of authority (Edwards, 2004). Their classrooms are characterized by tranquillity, order and positive learner discipline. The positive learner discipline is achieved by laying a good foundation of instruction; learners know what is expected of them that is, the do's and don'ts. The educator's total control of the classroom results in few cases of ill discipline that are referred (Mkhize, 2002). The views of Mkhize seem to take it for granted that if the educator has a total control of the classroom then discipline will be maintained and neglects the influence of learner background and environment.

Edwards (2004) concede that various home experiences have influence on the child's behaviour. It is argued that for instance that, if parents spend little time at home, children may seek unsuitable social experiences somewhere that have devastating consequences on their lives (Wright and Keetly, 2003). The views of Mkhize and Wright and Keetly will be pursued further in this study.

2.4.3 The Trying hard type

According to Mkhize (2002:23), this type of maintaining discipline is characterized by weak authority. Educator's perception is that learners have come to school to learn not to confront or question educators. These are the educators that lack self confidence to implement discipline to learners. In most cases they refer problematic learners to the Principal. Learners who are disrespectful would display this kind of behaviour and it will impact negatively on the performance. Cooper (2005:10) observes that children subjected to a *laissez faire* discipline are likely to be lawless, undisciplined and behave antisocially. The implication of this type of discipline is that continued misbehaviour of these learners and others will follow suit.

This approach to discipline assisted the researcher to investigate if such characteristics of discipline existed in the studied area and what strategies were used to solve such challenges. It further helped the researcher to assess if the monitoring mechanisms that are put in place at schools were in line with this type of discipline or not.

2.4.4 Liberal and non-directed type

Mkhize (2002:24) maintains that this type of maintaining discipline is humanistic with a weak sense of authority. Educators who believe in this type of authority have a very weak and little control of authority over their classrooms. They avoid confrontation with the learners. This type of discipline is characterized by learners who have little or absolutely no respect of such educators. It is also characterized by more referrals as compared to the “Try hard type” because these educators are less concerned about the implementation of discipline. Such educators like to collaborate with the learners and usually are in conflict with the School Management because they are not making any effort in or are lax implementing learner discipline.

Mkhize (2002:25) further argues that it is even difficult to differentiate between these educators and learners in this type of discipline. These educators like to chat with learners at a time when they are supposed to be teaching. It becomes clear that in this type of discipline the presence of these educators in the school does not benefit the learners. Educators of this nature are more concerned about their salaries at the end of the month; they do not contribute in the moulding of learners to be responsible citizens (Mkhize, 2002).

However, research has demonstrated that undisciplined behaviour from learners may be a result of normal reactions when defying educators and administrators at the school (Boakye, 2006 & Wright & Keetly, 2003). Adentwi (1998) concurs with Mkhize (2002) when reporting on discipline issues in Ghana schools. He perceives school disciplinary problems caused by teachers themselves. He mentions shabby dressing and indecent attires by female teachers denoting nudity as a cause of indiscipline.

Therefore, learners who are products of these educators generally are unruly and indisciplined. Their indiscipline is noticeable at a later stage. The School Management has to do “damage control” over these learners. This becomes noticeable when the learner performance drops dramatically.

The types of maintaining of learner discipline that have been discussed above will be explored further in this study. It will attempt to find out whether schools that have been included in the area have adopted any of the above types of maintaining discipline as part of their programmes and the effects.

2.5 Strategies to Deal with learner Discipline

It is within the school context, and a strong preference that any external support for good behaviour be directed to assist in this objective. Schools which are successful in maintaining discipline, the strategy for promoting and sustaining good behaviour should be characterized by a discipline policy which is based on a whole-school approach, and is widely disseminated to and readily understood by staff, pupils and parents (Lewis, 2006). It must therefore, have clear stepped procedures for dealing with breaches of discipline, and is consistently and fairly applied.

Without effective behaviour management, a positive and productive classroom environment is impossible to achieve (Lewis, 2006). Therefore it is important for educators to find the most effective techniques of the classroom situation. Canter and Canter (2002) argue that learner discipline can be achieved by less emphasis on student obedience and teacher coercion and more regulation (self respect).

The studies in Northern Ireland indicate that the majority of schools are managing pupil behaviour successfully within their own resources, and have developed a range of approaches through their discipline and pastoral care policies which meet their pupils' needs. The approaches include parental involvement, training of inexperienced teachers on learner discipline by management (Clement & Sova, 2000).

However, it has to be noted that despite the implementation of such strategies learner indiscipline may not be totally eradicated. The evidence from the consultation with schools supports inspection findings over the past 5 years in Northern Ireland are that, there are a small number of schools where a relatively small number of pupils' behaviour gives cause for concern. The findings from the inspection visits to schools where behaviour was noted as a particular problem indicate that, in these schools, around 2% of pupils are seriously disruptive, with a further 10% to 15% who present less serious problems. It should be noted that, even in these schools, the behaviour of at least 85% of pupils is not considered a cause for concern (Clement and Sova, 2000).

The researcher sought to find out if such state of affairs were not prevailing in the area of study.

Nonetheless, for strategic management of discipline various scholars suggest a number of strategies. These were some of the strategies recommended to schools to maintain school discipline (Sugai and Horner, 2002:26).

- (i) The development of whole school discipline policies, based on current best practice;
- (ii) The development of coherent school policies encompassing discipline, pastoral care and special needs to assist in the early identification of pupils with behavioral difficulties and in meeting their needs in the most effective way; and
- (iii) Support in the classroom for teachers in the development of classroom management expertise.

Clements and Sova (2000) believe that schools need a team approach in dealing with indiscipline, adding that every school needs a nucleus of staff trained in non-violent physical crisis interventions that can respond by restraining and removing violent and non-complaint students. The school-wide discipline model is viewed as a suitable strategy for combating learner discipline.

There are also numerous models which could be used for curbing learner indiscipline in schools; these include Authoritarian Model, Permissive Model, Constructivists model (CM) Zero Tolerance approach, School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) and social Emotional Learning approach. These approaches and other strategies for maintaining disciplines are discussed and their relevance to the study.

2.5.1 Positive Discipline

Frederick H. Jones is a psychologist director of the Classroom Management Training Programme, a founder of this model, which develops and promotes procedures for improving teacher effectiveness (Allen and Tomlinson, 2000). Vitto (2003) define positive discipline as the application of sound motivation in which thanks and praise are expressed for good performance, a programme designed to teach young people to become responsible, be respectful and resourceful members of their communities.

The emphasis is on learner motivation and classroom behaviour for both the teacher and the students. According to Van Wyk (2000: 12) to build positive behaviour, teachers should model an appropriate classroom management. Teachers should not only tell learners how to act but they should demonstrate positive behaviour in all their daily routines and interactions. Van Wyk (2000) believes that discipline problems occur because of mismanagement and procedures in the classroom. As well as rules may be misunderstood by learners (Vitto, 2003),

Curwin (2003) argues that if the full discipline is to work the following systems must run parallel. (i) Limit setting (actions taken by teachers to control reflexes and motivation of students to do their work) e.g. eye contact, body carriage and facial expression. (ii) Responsibility training (teachers need to be trained how to control learners to behave, control can be achieved through movements in between the students) (iii) Omission training (Building patterns of cooperation by engaging the learners into variety of activities but it should be activities that learners enjoy), (iv) a back-up system, (teachers can use a number of mechanisms e.g. pull a card, write a letter to a parent, involve the principal).

According to Boston (2006; 3), educators should encourage learners to have good character; this should be done without praising their work or character. Positive

discipline teaches parents also the skill to be both kind and to be firm at the same time. He further contends that students who are taught social skills are more likely to succeed in schools and less likely to engage in problem behaviours (Boston, 2006). These students are a low risk for smoking, use of marijuana, use of alcohol, or being violent and be sexually active. In order to increase positive discipline, educators need to be proactive, be vigilant in combating disruptive behaviour in schools so as to create an environment that is conducive for learning. Cotton (2006:2) suggests that rules and the consequences of breaking them should be clearly specified and communicated to parents, learners, and teachers. Once rules have been communicated and all processes have been exhausted, rules can be enforced in a fair and consistent manner.

These claims may be valid although sometimes they depend on an individual's home backgrounds and environment. The researcher would like to find out whether students' behaviour in the studied area is influenced by such issues. This would also assist the researcher to find if educators were trained to handle discipline issues and had other ways of solving discipline problems beside the set rules and regulations.

2.6 Models to Enhance Learner Discipline

2.6.1 Authoritarian Model

Discipline strategies vary along a continuum—from the extremely authoritarian in which the adults make all the rules and punish any deviation, to the very permissive in which the child makes all decisions (Fields and Boesser, 2002). The authoritarian methods can be aligned with the behaviorist philosophy which emphasizes shaping behavior through the use of rewards and punishment. One can say that this strategy relies mainly on rules and regulations.

According to Roos (2003:486), rules are “standards of behaviour that stipulate what we may do or not”. The Code of Conduct has a list of rules that are necessary to make the school a safe environment. Roos (2003:486) argues that discipline places the role and function of the school rules into perspective because rules do not just

promote order in schools but assist learners in true discipline, establish moral values and a constructive learning environment.

The administering of rules and regulations in a school is the most used traditional discipline strategy. Clements and Sova (2000) argue that rules are the foundation for school conduct or behaviour. There is a need that learners understand exactly what behaviours are acceptable in school and which are also communicated through clear guidelines. Evertson, Emmer and Worsham (2000) explain that a rule identifies general expectations or standard for behaviour and adds that giving the learners a clear set of expectations for what is appropriate will be a major start towards establishing a positive classroom management.

On the other hand, there are authorities like Mtsweni (2008) who view use of rules as being authoritarian. He links the authoritarian style of leadership to autocratic communication, the excessive control of learner, and the domination, as well as compulsive exercising of power that undermines learner's feeling of freedom and security. Authoritarianism causes learners not to cooperate because the educator rarely praise them, rather he/she criticizes a lot, leading to learners loss of confidence in him/her and become less committed to their work (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee 2002:77). Mtsweni (2008) suggests that instead of setting rules which are rigid, set guidelines which are flexible and take circumstances into consideration, adding that children will be more likely to follow guidelines they themselves have helped to determine. This study will explore whether this strategy is used by SMTs and teachers in the schools that are included in the study.

2.6.2 Permissive model

Fields and Boesser (2002:375) further claims that at the other end of the authoritarian continuum there is permissive model with maturationist philosophy of education which is grounded on the notion that time is the best teacher. In this model there is the absence of any type of discipline. Children are left to learn on their own from their own mistakes. One can observe that in this model there is over emphasis on the learner freedom. Fields and Boesser (2002) claim that this results in low self-

esteem and difficulty in getting along with others. All other models fit along this line somewhere between these two extremes.

2.6.3 Constructivist Model

Fields and Boesser (2002) proposed a model which provides the ideal balance between these two extremes called the constructivist model. In this approach students can learn from their own experiences and make informed logical choices. This model to discipline strives to equip students with the necessary skills to think for themselves and differentiate between desirable and undesirable behavior. Learners also develop caring and respectful relationships with each other and with the adults in their lives. The model involves guidance by adults and the exploration of consequences of negative actions. While learners are able to become involved in decision-making, they are also guided and taught to make intelligent and informed decision. This model is relevant to the study as it demands participation of learners and other stakeholders in the maintenance of school discipline. In this instance students are made responsible for their actions while educators play the major role of guidance. This study would like to find out such conditions prevailed in the formulation and implementation of discipline in schools.

Fields and Fields (2002) stress that having mutual respect between adult and child is crucial to the success of the constructivist approach to discipline

2.6.4 Zero Tolerance approach

The Zero Tolerance approach spells out clearly the offences and actions labeled as disruptive, violent and unacceptable and the punishment that goes with them. This approach has fidelity, integrity and encouraged behaviors are outlined clearly for students (Skiba and Rausch, 2006). It consistently applies discipline for all offences spelt out and ensures the learning environment is threat free and safe. The swift and certain punishment of zero tolerance has a deterrent effect upon student, thus improving overall student behavior and discipline. This is a central philosophical feature because the approach aims to impact future student behavior to make it positive. It can be observed that this approach could work in schools if it is well

applied by all the relevant authorities in the school. The study adopted this approach as its lenses in an endeavor to find out strategies used in the area of study. This strategy will be explored further in this study to find out whether schools sampled are using it to maintain discipline in schools.

The idea of zero tolerance to chaotic behaviour was created to meet the dangers of drug use. As an enforcement strategy, to keep citizens safe, American law enforcement agencies adopted the concept of zero tolerance, implying no matter the nature, severity and consequences of drug related crime, no crime was acceptable (Skiba and Rausch, 2006)

The philosophy behind zero tolerance is that teachers cannot conduct lessons and students cannot learn in a threatening, disruptive environment (Skiba and Rausch., 2006). This approach mandates the application of predetermined consequences to particular offences first as deterrent measures as well as mitigatory punitive actions to offending individuals (Skiba and Rausch, 2006). This approach could help the researcher in assessing the implementation of learner discipline in the studied schools. If this approach is not used the researcher could recommend it as good strategy for curbing indiscipline.

However, Sugai and Horner (2006) concede that this approach has its own limitations. Some parents feel that the approach is too strong and heavy handed and it violates student's rights. Some critics feel that schools where suspensions and dismissals are frequently used have more disruptive and violent behavior displays. Sugai and Horner, (2006) further acknowledges that it has been proven that get-tough military like punishment such as corporal punishment does not improve difficult learner's behavior but makes it worse.

Learning can only go on if the environment is free from disturbance, disruption and problematic behaviour. A learning environment that has a peaceful and academic atmosphere has to be consistently maintained if educators and learners are to feel safe to carry on with their business of teaching and learning. Common problem behaviours that cause disruption and disturbance range from harassment, aggression, social withdrawal, insubordinations and verbal attacks (Walker, Ramsey and Gresham, 2005, Dwyer, Osher and Hoffman, 2000, Safran and Oswald, 2003).

What becomes crucial is that action has to be taken to eliminate or neutralize risk factors so that safe environments are maintained. This is not possible to achieve with get-tough disciplinary measures (Skiba and Peterson, 2000).

Get-tough approaches like the zero tolerance approach assume that a learner who is badly behaved notices that repeated problem behaviour is met with increasing severe measures and then gets the message that his or her unruly behaviour will not be tolerated.

2.6.5 School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Approach

SWPBS is a systems approach for establishing the social, cultural and individualized behavioural supports needed for schools to become effective learning environments for all students (Sugai, Horner and Gresham, 2002). SWPBS is a comprehensive and preventive approach to discipline (Horner and Sugai, 2000). The primary aim of SWPBS is to decrease problem behaviour in a schools and classrooms and to develop integrated systems at support for students and adults at the school-wide, classroom, and individual student (including family) levels(Sugai, Horner and Gresham, 2002 (SWPBS is based on the hypothesis that when the faculty and staff members actively teach, using modelling and role playing and reward positive behaviours related to compliance with adult requests, academic effort and safe behaviour, the proportion of students with mild and serious behaviour problems will be reduced and the school's overall climate will improve (Sugai, Horner & Gresham, 2002).

This is an approach whose philosophy is underpinned by the use of practical, overt and evidence based behaviour support systems. It encourages prevention of behavioural problems rather the punishment (Sugai and Horner, 2006).It is bed rocked in use of measurable outcomes and interventions as well as supportable action practices (Safran &Oswald, 2003, Sugai & Horner, 2006). Its objective is to maintain an efficiently sustained and implemented safety programme.

This approach according to Sugai et al (2002) the philosophy behind it is that academic gains can be increased by eliminating risk and problem behavior factors, enhancing protective factors that endanger security in schools. This approach clearly

isolates the challenges of discipline as uncivil behaviour that threatens sound learning and appears on the increase in schools. Skiba and Peterson (2000) concede that it has established a connectedness between general disruptive actions and extreme violence. Horner and Sugai (2006) criticizes the punishment get-tough discipline that has no proactive support as it engenders increase in aggression, truancy, vandalism and dropping out (Horner and Sugai, 2006). This study is to explore whether any of the schools in the sample use this strategy to maintain discipline and how they implement it.

2.6.6 Assertive Discipline

Assertive Discipline is a structured, systematic approach that is designed to assist educators in running an organized classroom discipline (Canter & Canter, 2001). Canter (1992) further contends that many teachers were unable to control the undesirable behaviour in the classroom situation because they lack training in behaviour management. They further argue that the key technique is catching students being "good", recognizing and supporting them when they behave properly, let them know as a teacher you like what they are consistently doing. According to Canter, students obey the rules because they get something out of doing so.

According to (Gootman, 2001), assertive Discipline has evolved from authoritarian approach to a more democratic and cooperative approach.) Canter and Canter (2001) believe that assertive teachers are firm, and act on the best interest of students, they build positive, trusting relationships with their students and teach appropriate classroom behaviour through direct instructions, describing, modelling, practicing, reviewing, encouraging and rewarding. It therefore means if a teacher catches a learner being good by recognizing them when they behave, they will work hard at behaving. Canter and Canter (2001) contend that the teacher should come with a list of rules for the classroom. Each time the rule is broken a consequence is given. If the misbehaviour continues, the consequence gets more severe. The learners should be rewarded for behaving properly.

The Assertive discipline model is relevant for the study as most schools are guided by rules and regulations. The model will assist the researcher in this study to find out

educators and principals use the strategy to implement discipline in schools and how punishment is administered among the learners as well finding if there is any reward given to students for any good behaviour. This study is to explore whether any of the schools in the sample use this strategy to maintain discipline and how they implement it.

2.7 How Schools Implement Strategies to Enhance Learner Discipline?

One of the strategies of implementing learner discipline is by using the Code of Conduct. Potgieter et al (1997) assert that the code of conduct deals with the kind of behaviour that educators seek to maintain.

2.7.1 Code of Conduct

As indicated in the South African Act (1996) section 8 (1) a Code of Conduct is a written statement of rules and principles concerning discipline in schools. It explains the kind of behaviour educators expect from learners, and the standard of behaviour a school has to maintain. The Department of Education (2000:20) stresses that the Code of Conduct as drawn up by the individual schools may not contradict the Provincial or National Code of Conduct, which covers the values enshrined in the Constitution of the Country and the Schools 'Act. This therefore, implies that the Code of Conduct should not be in conflict with laws and legislations of the country, Department of Education policies and other statutes.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (No 84), Section 8 (1) of 1996 stipulates that the School Governing Body (SGB) to draft a Code of Conduct to deal with disciplinary issues in the school. This is aimed at equipping the learners with the knowledge as to what is expected of them and the consequences of transgressing the Code of Conduct. SASA further stipulates that the aim of the Code of Conduct is to maintain a disciplined and a purposeful school environment. It implies that in a school, the disciplinary code must provide for rules and a due process to be followed in the case of disciplinary proceedings. It means that an allegation of

misconduct must be inquired into and dealt with in a fair and reasonable manner, respecting the rights of all those involved in the process. (Prinsloo, 2006:355).

Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) in support this statement argue that the Code of Conduct must inform the learners of the way in which they should conduct themselves at the school in preparation for their conduct and safety in civil society. Section 8(3) of the South African Schools Act of 1996 stipulates that the Minister may after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers determine guidelines for the consideration of governing body for learners. Squelch (2000:18).

Section 8 (1) of SASA further stipulates that the Code of Conduct can be adopted after consultation with parents, educators and learners of the school (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001). This statement is supported by Squelch (2000:19) that involving all stakeholders recognizes the importance of involving the entire school community to develop the Code of Conduct. In a school context it implies that drafting the Code of Conduct involving all stakeholders there must be transparency, open discussions that are free from any discrimination, intimidation.

Squelch (2000) contends that when crafting the Code of Conduct special discipline working groups should be established to organize, coordinate the process. It implies that people with expertise can be co-opted, for example, lawyers, Social Workers, Policemen, magistrates etc, to look on specific issues, lead, guide the discussions so as to arrive on agreed policies that deal with learner discipline. Section 8(4) –of South African Schools Act of 1996 stipulates that nothing exempts a learner from obligation to comply with the Code of Conduct. SASA requires the Code of Conduct to include a disciplinary procedure with steps to follow which are detailed, to ensure that there is fair, treatment of learners, learners are not punished unfairly and unjustly (Squelch 2000:23). A hearing takes place at school when very serious misconduct occurs. The SGB should make arrangements for a disciplinary hearing. The principal should refer the problem to the School Governing Body, without disclosing the name of the learner. The SGB has to guarantee the learner a fair hearing, because its decisions might be challenged. It may not contravene the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) and the provincial education department's regulations.

Before the hearing, the School Governing Body must appoint one or two people to ascertain whether the case is serious enough to warrant the hearing. If the School Governing Body decides to go ahead, it must appoint in writing a tribunal of three people to the hearing. According to the Department of Education (2000: 27) these three people do not have to be members of the School Governing Body. They may be outsiders such as a retired magistrate, school principal or attorney but they should be neutral. The tribunal or disciplinary committee should follow due process in conducting the hearing.

Subsection 9(1) stipulates that subject to the Act, the governing body of a public school may, after a fair hearing suspend a learner from attending the school, but the rules of natural justice which include appropriateness, should be taken into account. (Squelch, 2000:36(b) If found guilty of a serious misconduct after the hearing, expulsion from school is subject to the decision only by the Head of Department. If the Head of Department recommends expulsion, sub section 4 gives the parent of the learner who has been expelled the right to appeal the decision of the Head of Department to the Member of the Executive Council, RSA, and 1996a). The appeal procedure must be included in the Code of Conduct (Squelch (2000:25). (5) If a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of Section (3) (1) is expelled from the public school, the Head of Department must make an alternative arrangement for his/her placement at a public school. The following are offences that may lead to suspension (i) Conduct which endangers the safety and violates the right of others, possession, threat or use of a dangerous weapon (ii) Possession, use, transmission or visible evidence of narcotic or unauthorized drug, alcohol or intoxicants of any kind (iii) Fighting, assault or battery(iv) Harmful graffiti, hate speech, sexism or racism (v) Theft or possession of stolen property including test or examination papers prior to the writing of tests or examinations. (vi) Unlawful action, vandalism or destroying school property (vii) Repeated violations of school rules or Code of Conduct. (viii)Criminal and oppressive behaviour such as rape, The Education Law Policy Handbook for Educators (1996: 39).

Stevens, Wyngaard and Van Niekerk (2001) are of the view that a code of conduct should serve as an important stepping stone towards implementing culture of

teaching and learning, mutual respect, accountability, tolerance, co-operation and personal development within the schools premises. It is further argued that the Code of Conduct would not reduce the incidence of violence and injury, but together with other environmental, educative and structural strategies they may create a context in which behavioural expectations are consistently and fairly applied (Stevens *et.al* 2001).

As prescribed by DoE (2000) all members of the school community must acknowledge ownership of the Code of Conduct of the school by playing a role in developing it together. A disciplinary policy should be developed in the school community through consensus as such a policy is more likely to work effectively than one that is imposed from above by the principal or the school Governing Body (Lekalakala, 2007). The Code of Conduct should be displayed on a notice board at the school and thus be easily seen by all learners. This may help the learners to comply with the stipulations of the Code of Conduct of the school which the learners are attending.

Bray (2005) is of the opinion that learner representation at secondary school level should be consulted when developing a Code of Conduct as it inculcates the values of democratic school practices although at this level is not competent enough to enter independently into legal contracts, he/she is educationally mature enough to represent the learner corps of the school and act in its best interest.

Learners should be consulted in their own affairs, because research has shown that they may be willing to conform to decisions that are made in that regard. Studies by Charles (2008) revealed that learners are certainly interested persons in participating in decisions that affect them. Tungata (2006:16) states that “in all aspects of lives, discipline in schools depends on rules. Rules set the limits on what learners can do or not. It means for the learners to obey rules, rules should be clear, achievable and be subject to the school policy and to be set within the parameters of the South African School Act. The SGB has to think about the most common forms of misconduct that usually occur. For the purpose of this study it means for learners to be able to master all the rules, rules must not be too many; too many rules can confuse learners. Rules should focus on the most common behaviours, they should

be specific. Educators are expected to teach rules using positive and negative examples. The best way is for learners to understand rules is for an educator to demonstrate specific examples of behaviour then the learner may choose.

2.7.2 The role that is played by educators to implement learner discipline

2.7.2.1 Educators and the understanding of unwanted behaviour

Building relationship between educators and learners is another strategy to maintain discipline in schools. Matseke (2008), Edward and Watts (2004), Erasmus (2009) and Nkabinde (2006) show that educators can foster positive discipline to learners using a variety of strategies.

Matseke (2008:27) contends that “a caring relationship between the teacher and the learner must prepare him/her to plan and commit himself to action or plan of change.” Wolfgang (1999:85-88) cited in Tungata (2006:26) contend the learner can only be helped or be given reality model if the child acknowledge his wrong doing.

Erasmus (2009) and Matseke (2008) concur that it is important for educators to establish positive relationships with the learners. Educators must redirect the child to achieve recognition. These relationships contribute to academic achievement of learners. This can be achieved by (i) Identifying the mistaken goal (ii) when a learner demands attention, the educator should acknowledge them or respond in a non-verbal manner or private verbal communication. Such a move will assist the learners to improve in terms of disciplinary problems. This aspect will be explored further in the study to find out whether educators in the sampled schools take similar measures.

2.7.2.2 Educator stimulates hope to learners

Edwards and Watt (2004:107) declare that “offering encouragement on a regular basis is a worth effort”. Encouragement is a useful technique for preventing discipline problems because it corresponds so well with learner’s’ goals. They contend that encouragement focuses on feedback. Encouragement stimulates them to continue

going. When encouragement is properly given, learners gain status and satisfaction in learning than from relative achievement. Learners would feel confident about their abilities and they would likely cause discipline problems (Edwards 2004:107). This aspect will be explored further in the study to find out whether educators in the sampled schools take similar measures.

2.7.2.3 Cooperative learning

Matseke (2008:31) argues that classroom discussions are helpful in preventing discipline problems. Cooperative learning can be achieved through group discussions, which are democratic and imperative, by providing an excellent atmosphere in which learners can better learn interpersonal skills and effective communication, each class member must be encouraged to know his/her role, how to perform it and strive for common goals. In cooperative learning learners learn to accept responsibility and understand the consequences.(Edwards and Watts, 2004). Therefore educators must facilitate classroom discussions, encourage learners to express themselves, be involved in decision making. This study will explore whether this strategy is used by educators in the sampled schools as a way of maintaining discipline and the outcome

2.7.2.4 Punishment

According to Nkabinde (2006), punishment of learners for appropriate behavior could be in the form of repetitions work, written paragraphs. The author believes that such work can be detrimental to a learner who has an attitude problem towards his work. Erasmus, (2009:38) believes that “punitive disciplinary measures can be used by the educator in the classroom to curb misconduct of a learner”.

Erasmus (2009) argues that if a learner is punished for committing a certain offence he/she may change that undesirable behaviour because of the administered punishment. Therefore educators should praise the learners for good behavior, put gold stickers in learner’s books, and give learner incentives.

In the study on discipline in Singapore conducted by Tan and Yuanshan (1999) it revealed that despite the fact that corporal punishment is banned an overwhelming majority (86.5%) approved use of the cane and gave the following reasons as:(i)to deter others (ii) to remind the pupil of the experience of pain and discomfort (iii) to curb undesirable behaviour (iv) to make the pupil a better person. (v) To make the pupil aware of the consequences of the offence and the authority in charge. Although the use of cane by educators has long been outlawed one may observe that it is still preferred by educators as evidenced by the above comments. Hence, this is an issue which will be explored further in this study.

2.8 Alternatives to corporal punishment

The Department of Education, (2000:12) are of the opinion that schools should consider what could be done at school level to help support a shift away from corporal punishment and to create a more safe and secure environment for learning. They further refer to a range of ideas on how to change schools to become a better environment for alternatives to corporal punishment. They suggest the following alternative methods to Corporal Punishment, for example

- (c) Establish a set of rules and expectations: (The Department of Education, 2000:12) contend that if children know beforehand what is expected of them, they will comply with the rules. Porteus, Vally & Ruth (2001) further argue that learners are more likely by the stated rules when they sense that the educators believe in their potential for excellence. This implies that the rules should be clear, make sense, rules should be based on core values such as safety; respect etc. (Porteus, Vally& Ruth, 2001).
- (d) Positive Reinforcement. The (Department of Education, 2000:17) assert that children who behave in positive ways should be given positive responses and should be encouraged to repeat such behaviour. Bad behaviour should be prevented by educators, it should be observed, and strategies should be found to divert the bad behaviour. This could be achieved through smile, praise, public acknowledgement etc
- (e) Consistent consequences: Learners should be well advised and be informed well in advance about the action to be taken for their

transgression of rules. Learners should know the consequences of bad behaviour and educators should exercise consistency in the implementation of those consequences (Department of Education, 2000). Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) assert that the consequences of the misbehaviour must be such that the learner would realise that what she/he has done was not correct. The (Department of Education, 2000:17) suggest the following as alternatives to Corporal Punishment.

- (i) Withdrawal of privileges. School/ educators are advised to take away privileges of being involved in activities that learners enjoy regularly take part.
- (ii) Time out: Sprick (2006:138) cited in Khoboka (2009) contends that time out is another way of correcting misbehaviour of a learner. It should be used with the purpose of denying the misbehaving learner the opportunity to earn positive reinforcement. There is certain criterion that the learner should fulfil before she/he can communicate with the adult/ educator if she/he wishes to participate in classroom activities.
- (iii) Daily reports- This is a system where learners are given the opportunity to reflect bad behavioural patterns, they are given a chance to improve. There is transparency in the process because both the learner and the educator go through the procedure of filling the report, discuss it. The report is taken home and signed by the parent. The child starts the process again the next day. The system is stopped when the child has a clear sheet for three days (Department of Education, 2000). Roos (2003:495) states that the following are alternatives to corporal punishment

(4) Model good behaviour- The educator has the responsibility of being a living example of the kind of behaviour that is expected, children learn from role models, this is supported by (Department of Education, 2000:18). Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) further contend that if the adults are displaying violence, frustration, intolerance, learners are more likely to copy such behaviour. In an educational context this implies that the educators should have compassion, patience and understanding.

(5) Learning material and methodology- When teaching and learning is taking place, the learning material in the classroom should be managed, structured in such a way that learners are equipped with skills such as conflict resolution, problem solving, tolerance, anti-racism, gender sensitivity. The methodology should make provision for the skills to be practiced in particular areas in which learners understand the importance of working together, they should be willing to compromise in group situation, (Department of Education, 2000). Gootman (2001) further supports the statement by urging educators to encourage children to solve their own problems, as they often can provide answers that will result in an acceptable compromise.

(6) Promoting positive discipline-

Schools should not always have counter ill-disciplinary strategies but rather they should promote positive behaviour Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001). They argue that the following are key issues to promote positive discipline

- (i) Children's motivation- Educators are advised to adopt an encouraging, positive approach that will arouse the learner's ability praising children to obey instructions, positive reinforcement when children do well encourages them to learn self-discipline (Gootman ,2001)
- (ii) Rewards instead of punishment- (Department of Education, 2000) suggest that good behaviour should be rewarded as opposed to focusing on what learners do wrong and applying punishment. Morrel (2001:4) suggest that educators should deviate from using punishment for issues like failure to answer questions or not to have done homework, late coming, bullying, and theft but rather should view these in the light of problems that are related to human relationships, abuse and neglect.

However, on the same issue of discipline versus punishment Tan and Yuanshan (1999) concede that of late some schools have adopted the Moral Education and Pastoral Programme to inculcate value and conducting parental workshops. Teachers realize that inculcating a sense of loyalty to school and raising the self-esteem of the pupils are more constructive approaches to maintaining discipline problems (Tan and Yuanshan, 1999:10) This can be viewed as good strategy as it may try to find the root cause of undisciplined behaviour and it also involved the home and school partnership.

The researcher will find out if such strategies were used in the implementation of discipline in the area of study and other alternatives as stipulated by the Department of Education.

2.9 The Support Schools Receive From the Department of Education to Maintain Learner Discipline

According to the Department of Education and Children's service on School Discipline (2007), the District management's core functions with regards to discipline in schools. (i) support principals in ensuring that school planning addresses the implementation of the School Discipline Policy, this implies ensuring that schools establish Disciplinary Committee, there are safety regulations to control the use of drugs and illegal weapons(ii)support principals in ensuring that each school's behaviour code and other behaviour management procedures address needs specific to its community, this implies that school policies that deal with discipline should be crafted in such a way that it nurtures children to be responsible members of the community. (iii)ensure district support services and local interagency services provide appropriate services to school communities, this is the provision of capacity building workshops to maintain discipline in schools (iv)work with principals and state to ensure that mechanisms are developed at a local level to provide appropriate placements for students requiring temporary alternative placement, this implies referrals by school 's disciplinary committees for learners who are in need of counselling de counselling service w (v)support principals and other school personnel to manage critical incidents relating to student behaviour or the aggressive behaviour of community members, and facilitate mediation with community members when necessary, this implies equipping educators to deal with issues of gangsterism, drug trafficking in schools. (vi)Address grievances of community members who believe a school's managementof student behaviour has been unjust.

Other support the schools get is through the involvement of the Minister Of education, MEC and Head of Department on discipline related matters.

2.9.1 Minister of Education

Erasmus (2009:44) asserts that by virtue of his/her office the Minister of Education carries the overall responsibility in instilling discipline in South African schools. Another responsibility of the Minister includes providing guidelines to the School Governing Body (SGB) in formulating the Code of Conduct for the nine provinces. The Minister provides a broad outline and principles to the Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and School Governing Bodies about the proper procedure to implement discipline. Implication of this is schools have to ensure that when they craft policies, the policies have to be within the framework of the law.

2.9.2 MEC (Member of Executive Council)

Section 9(3)(4) of the South African School Act (RSA,1996b) stipulates that the MEC by means of a notice in the Provincial Gazette determines the following guidelines to ensure discipline in schools. The MECs are responsible for coordinating, supervising the Education Departments in the nine provinces. (i) Determine the type of behaviour of a learner that can be regarded as misconduct. (ii) Determine the disciplinary procedures that must be followed to discipline a learner who has transgressed. (iii) Outline the legal steps that should be followed to discipline a learner and any party that was involved during the disciplinary process. (iv) The right to appeal to the MEC by any learner against any decision taken by the Head of Department. (v) The MEC has the responsibility to determine what constitutes learner misconduct. (vi) MEC's responsibility to draft guidelines for the SGBs, what disciplinary procedures to be followed. (vii) The MEC has the final say if the parent of the learner who has been expelled is not satisfied. The implication of this is that schools have to follow proper disciplinary procedure when they are dealing with serious disciplinary cases to ensure that decision that are taken do not boomerang on their faces.

2.9.3 Head of Department(HOD)

According Section 9(2) (5) of the South African Schools Act(RSA, 1996b), Heads of Department have the following responsibilities regarding discipline in public schools: Section 9(2) Subject to any applicable provincial law, a learner at a public school

may be expelled only by the Head of Department; if the learner is found guilty of serious misconduct after a fair hearing. Section 9(5) states that if a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of Section 9)3(1) is expelled from a public school, the Head of Department must make an alternative arrangement for his or her placement at a public school. The Head of Department is responsible for the expulsion of learners who are found guilty of serious misconduct. The School Governing Body must make such a recommendation to the Head of Department after a fair and reasonable trial. If the learner is still subject to compulsory school attendance, it means that he or she has to improve his or her conduct at another school. A learner who is not subject to compulsory school attendance may no longer attend a public school if expelled by the Head of Department. This implies that Disciplinary Committees have to be aware that they only have the right to suspend a learner for a week; they can only recommend, a learner can be expelled pending the decision from the Head of Department.

2.10 Monitoring Mechanisms That Have Been Put In Place in Schools to Ensure Proper Implementation of Learner Discipline

Fullan (2001) argues that the monitoring theme is not evaluation in the narrow sense of the term. It involves information systems, resources and acting on the results through problem-copying and solving. Bryant and White (1982) view monitoring as the continuous process of ensuring that the implementation of the plan is proceeding smoothly. Monitoring involves the collection of information about the project in progress.

It can therefore be observed that monitoring is the process of implementing discipline among learners in schools and it is as important as measuring the outcomes of the implementation process. The emphasis is on continual feedback about the manner in which implementation is being conducted. In this study the monitoring mechanism of discipline was considered as one of the main research questions. The success of any learning process in school depends upon a well monitored, well-managed organisation which will guarantee sound discipline, coordination and a positive school climate (Fullan, 2001).

According to Barclay and Boone (1997), there should be partnership between parents and the school in terms of monitoring learner discipline. The literature on antisocial behaviour indeed reflects the critical importance of parental monitoring on learner discipline (Moloi, 2002). Too often, however, information about inadequate family resources or family instability is used to affix blame, creating an adversarial climate between home and school (Skiba and Peterson, 2000).

Discipline at school should aim at mental and moral training and should strive towards structuring the actions of teachers and learners according to established rules, regulations and norms applicable to various activities in the school (Kruger, 1996). According to Gaudstad (2008), Principals should monitor learner discipline through “management by walking around”. Such a move could assist to curb discipline as learners would be afraid to be caught on the wrong side of the law.

Although a variety of programs are designed to address discipline problems in schools exist, little emphasis is placed on assisting schools in sustaining systems change; SWPBS (or any prevention program) is unlikely to have a significant impact if it is not monitored (Sugai *et. al*, 2000). Teams that implement SWPBS develop a system to ensure that school data are frequently monitored and evaluated (for example, bi-weekly) and are used to guide decision making in terms of implementing school discipline (Sugai and Horner, 2002).

Teachers also must maximise their use of fundamental behaviour management practices in terms of monitoring discipline. It is recommended that teachers must engage in active supervision (for example, move, scan, interact) so that students learn that teachers are monitoring and evaluating their social behaviour. Latham (1992) recommends that teachers maintain a ratio of six to eight positive social engagements for every negative interaction to promote a positive social engagement for every negative interaction to promote a positive social classroom climate and to support instructional success.

Sugai and Horner (2002) argue that school settings like play grounds and hallways present challenges for monitoring school discipline because of large number of

learners, strong social or learner- to –learner interactions where there is little interpersonal relationships between adults and learners. Behaviour management in these areas must emphasise monitoring that is overt, active and efficient (Colvin and Lazar, 1997). On the other hand Sugai and Horner (2002) advocate that all staff members must engage in active supervision when assigned to a non-classroom setting or when moving through playgrounds and hallways or other environments where there are large numbers of learners.

Active supervision can be operational as: (a)scanning-keeping head up and looking for rule following and violating behaviours (b) moving-routinely move through locations where expected behaviours are more difficult for learners to demonstrate or where large numbers of learners congregate or are transition, (c) interact-make pro-social (positive and preventive) contacts with as many different learners as possible (Latham, 1992) generally most schools use SWPBS and PBS as mechanism for maintaining learner discipline.

Individual staff members cannot affect change that substantially improves the manner in which discipline is implemented. Studies by Sugai and Horner reveal that most schools in America use School-wide leadership teams to implement discipline in schools.School-wide leadership teams are needed to guide the implementation of school-wide PBS. This team should be comprised of individuals who are respected by their colleagues, are representatives of the school (for example, by grade level or department),collectively have behavioural competence, have a regular and efficient means of communicating with the school staff as a whole, and are endorsed by the school principal. Principals must be members of this team because of their status and abilities. Parents are also recommended to save as a team because they can provide a voice and link to the school for families and community members. This team should meet regularly (at least monthly) and its meetings should be guided by data and a proactive problem solving approach (Latham, 1992). Such teams avoid suspicions and accusations from the school and parents.

Du Plessis and Loock (2007:23) contend that the SMT with regards to discipline should monitor and develop, implement regularly as well review a school behavioural code to ensure that the learner behaviour is managed through procedures.

The SMT has to see that the school is effective (Department of Education 2007:1-32) Members of the SMT should take a leading role in committees, such as monitoring discipline, financial and academic committees that implement and evaluate policies. Olsen and Cooper (2004:89) cited in Oosthuizen (2009) concede that the SMT must take responsibility for discipline issues referred by the staff members in the event of assault, fighting, possession of alcohol, abusive language. In a way it can be observed that the SMTs have to put design some mechanism to monitor the implementation of discipline in schools as guided by the policy documents. This study will explore and find out if schools in the studied area had some mechanism in place for monitoring discipline.

2.11 Challenges in the Implementation of Learner Discipline Policies

In any educational institution internationally, for effective learning to take place, discipline should prevail. Thus, learners' discipline is a prerequisite to almost everything a school has to offer learners (Roos, 2003). Mwamwenda (1996: 31) adds that "In such a setting discipline is important since without it the purpose of the school cannot be achieved effectively." To achieve maximum discipline in the school all stakeholders involved, that is, school principals, Heads of Departments (HODs), educators and learners should see to it that discipline is maintained. Dladla (2006) points out that principals and educators have a duty to maintain proper order and discipline in schools. Hence, it is absolutely necessary to direct learners to exhibit acceptable attitude and behaviour within and outside the school (Nakpodia, 2010).

Recent studies conducted worldwide have indicated that schools face a number of challenges related to disruptive behaviour of students. According to Yahaya, Ramli, Hashim, Ibrahim, Rahman and Yahaya (2009:660) "Students' misbehaviour is a prevailing problem affecting schools not only in Malaysia but also across the many nations around the world." The challenges facing discipline are also revealed in a study by Nakpodia (2010) study in Nigerian secondary schools. It observed that learners' indiscipline seems to be ubiquitous in the 21st century in Nigerian secondary schools. He further states that learners' indiscipline has plagued schools

leading to series of unrest. This is a clear indication that lack of learner discipline in schools throughout the world has been a matter of great concern for school management and educators and to a lesser extent for learners themselves, parents and the general public (Squelch, 2000). It can be observed that schools globally are facing disciplinary challenges and this include our own South African institutions.

According to Sugai, *et al.* (2000), school administrators face significant challenges in their effort to establish and maintain safe positive environments that allow all teachers to teach and all learners to learn. Clearly, prevention-based approaches to school- wide discipline and the management of learners with severe cases of problem behaviour are preferred because of their potential to reduce the development of the new cases of problem and the prevalence

Second, the proactive efforts are difficulty to establish and maintain because learners with significant learning and behavioural difficulties are so unresponsive to universal interventions and daily functioning of classrooms and schools, respond so slowly to even targeted interventions and demand such intensive and ongoing behavioural support (Sugai, *et al.*, 2000).

Third, schools should not assume that a single system will meet the needs/challenges associated with school-wide discipline practices and policies. At least, disciplinary practices can be divided into four sub-systems; school-wide, class management, non-classroom setting, (that is, hall ways and playgrounds) supervision and management as well as individual student programming (Sugai & Horner, 1999).

However, with the escalating level of indiscipline, teachers are finding it more challenging to create orderly environment for learning. Oosthuizen (2009:1) asserts that nowadays, principals, educators and SMTs have to deal with a wide variety of disciplinary problems, which are compounded by various social factors such as violence, dysfunctional families, drug- and other substance abuse, poverty and unemployment All these factors play an important role in determining and influencing the behaviour and attitudes of learners.

2.11.1 Home background and family restructuring

Studies conducted have revealed that schools all over the world are experiencing disciplinary challenges. In their study conducted among secondary school students in Malaysia, Fan and Chen (2001) found some of the prevalent disciplinary problems as truancy, absenteeism, stealing and fighting. A study also carried out in Harare in Zimbabwe revealed that secondary school encountered challenges of learners who engaged in vandalism, theft, substance abuse and even prostitution (Manguvo, Whitney & Chareka, 2011).

On the other hand Chauke (2009), Tungata (2006), Matseke (2008) contend that various home experiences influence the child's behaviour. Literature has shown that there are numerous factors which influence learner behaviour and discipline. According to Matseke (2008) schools find it difficult to contend with learner discipline especially from learners whose parents spend little time with them and those with parents who are divorced.

This view is shared by (Wright & Keetly, 2003) who both agree that if parents spend little time at home it can affect the discipline of children. Matseke (2008) takes it to another level as they explained that even if parents are at home, parent-child interactions may be laced with conflicts, for instance, divorce and poverty as well as physical and mental abuse can adversely affect children's ability to function properly. Children from severely dysfunctional families in particular, face enormous adjustment problems at school because they may deprive children of attention, love and exercise excessive control (Edwards, 2004). Therefore, it can be observed that a family is important as it plays a great role in the socialization of its members with thought a strong family society may have people with undesired behaviours..

Chauke (2009) concede that schools today face challenges to deal with learners who come from different backgrounds whose values, beliefs; lifestyle differs totally from the school culture. The children learn these behavioural patterns at home; they tend to repeat them at school so teachers find it difficult to eradicate such behaviours. One may argue and say if such situations prevail in schools educators and principals have a mammoth task to manage discipline as they have to show love and affection to such learners. Such a move could minimize cases of indiscipline. This study will

explore some of these challenges and find out if they exist in the studied area. Furthermore, this literature will be used to analyse information in implementation of learner discipline.

2.11.2 Substance abuse

Edwards and Watts (2004) assert that inappropriate behaviour is often associated with substance abuse, either by the learners or by a person residing in the same home. They further argue that the use of drugs or selling illegal drugs not only influences learners' behaviour directly but also alters the general atmosphere of the school. There have been media reports where violence in schools has been associated with the use of drugs.

Alcohol abuse is on the increase among adolescents. Schools are declared drug free zones by the Department of Education because alcohol and illegal drugs for example dagga render learners unsafe.

Boakye's (2006) study of discipline in Ghana school found that indiscipline leads many students to drugs, which significantly increased restlessness, excitability and hyperactivity. Chronic undisciplined learners tend to take alcohol, take cocaine and antidepressants leading to lethargic, apathetic behaving thus causing sporadic outburst of violence. The study will explore whether such challenges exist in the study area and they impact on the implementation of learner discipline.

2.11.3 Socio-Economic factors

Marais and Meier (2010:43) cite peer pressure, unemployment and poverty, substance abuse and technology as disciplinary challenges. Peer pressure is contributory factor especially at the adolescent stage. The youth want to attain new identities, values and behaviours among peers because identity is important to them.

Matseke (2008) cites child related factors that can be associated with misbehaviour as the child's upbringing, for example, if the child has been raised in a way that does not suit the expected behaviour in the school. The child may behave in order to conform to peer expectation and avoid rejection. The approval and recognition the

learner receives from his peers for challenging the teacher's authority. Another factor that is considered important by the author is the child's immaturity; she/he does not know development problems.

Children in schools nowadays know their rights, they know that it is their right to be taught and to be in class at all times, an educator cannot chase them away, but they are unaware that rights go with responsibilities. This implies that learners must be committed to their learning, do school work as required, and attend school regularly. Educators, parents should teach learners to balance between rights and responsibilities, motivate them, and must be role models. Nonetheless, one has to see whether learners in the studied area face such challenges and that their behaviours are influenced by such factors.

Schools seem to be faced with the problem of violence.(De Wet, 2003:90) defines violence as,

"...the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death and psychological harm"

Many learners acquire this behaviour through home circumstances which is an extrinsic causative factor, Weeks (2008). Marais and Meier (2010:42) describe violence as "any behaviour of a learner, educators and administrators who attempt to inflict physical injury on another person or to damage school property"

Despite the fact that a number of policies are put in place, it seems indiscipline such as violence still exist in our schools. Some authorities attribute violence in South African schools to pre-independence era. This view is shared by Harber (2001). Schools are faced with high levels of violence which originate from the apartheid era (De Klerk and Rens, 2003)

Current research shows that South African schools face challenges of learner indiscipline and gangsterism as alleged that one learner was murdered in the school premises (Maphosa and Shumba, 2010).

The adolescent stage is characterized by the sense of desire to belong to a particular group. Youth identify themselves with gangs which sometimes results to misbehaviour within the school, Marais and Meier (2010). Gangsterism sometimes is the main cause of violence that is experienced at schools. Edwards and Watts (2004:9) argue that the “rejection at home of some children may encourage learners to search for acceptance elsewhere”. The rejected young lads are attracted to gangs. It is where learners participate in gang related activities like armed robbery, car hijacking, smuggling; they may be required to repeat the acts to show their commitment to the gang’s value system. If gangs exist within the parameters of the school “it gives the school administrators difficulties to contain them. Learners want to be associated with a certain group for their personal safety. The result is carrying of dangerous weapons e.g. knives, guns and pangas sometimes are meant for self defence against bullies.

Numerous negative social, psychological and physical outcomes associated with bullying behaviour have been documented for both victims of bullying and bullies (Rossouw and Stewart ,2008:245) For example, bullying behaviour is related to the development of more serious problems with aggression (Rossouw and Stewart, 2008). It may be observed those students who are aggressive that carry dangerous weapons at the end of the day they may end stabbing someone. It is assumed that more often these violent crimes that are experienced at schools are carried out when learners are under the influence of drugs like cocaine, tick, dagga and other substances.

Makinana (2002) and Weeks (2008) argue that handling of learner discipline remains a challenge for most schools as many educators have not been trained in dealing with it. The lack of training in the handle of serious cases of indiscipline may impact negatively on the learning environment in schools. This literature will assist the researcher to analyse data on challenges facing schools in terms of the implementation of learner discipline.

2.11.4 Technology

Another leading cause of indiscipline is the effects of media. Content analysis of the television shows indicated at least thirty-two (32) acts of violence per hour in children's show alone (Edward and Watts:2004). Reporting on a review of decades of research concerning television and youth Curwin and Medler (2000) concluded that children will have viewed approximately 18,000 acts of television by the time they enter adolescence.

Chauke (2009:28) argue that there are different types of technological devices that are used by young people for example computer with internet access, stereo equipment, cell phones, television and audio-cassettes, compact discs, play station. They argue further by saying the "accessibility of these devices to young people increases the "generation gap" which makes communication difficult between parents that are illiterate and their children. It is further argued that technology makes school work, homework unattractive and learners eventually adopt an attitude. Parental values and beliefs are countered because these devices expose learners to sexual acts, drugs at an early age (Chauke, 2009). These devices has posed a great challenge to school discipline as some students will try to emulate what they watch from movies and internet. The parents and school authorities cannot control their use. This literature will assist the researcher to explore in the studied area if the schools are faced with such challenges.

2.11.5 School environment

Joubert et al, (2004) blame the prevalence of indiscipline in schools to a large school size. She argues that it is very difficult to control a school that is overpopulated and this leads to student misbehaviours. Mtsweni (2008) concurs with Mkhize (2002) that overcrowded classrooms or the density remains a challenge on the implementation of learner discipline. It means educators will find it difficult to teach and manage an overcrowded classroom, give individual attention to each child.

Themabela (1984:19) cited in Mkhize (2002) concede that teacher- pupil ratio has been a matter of concern and it results in the problem of teacher individualization. In township secondary schools the teacher has to teach a class of 60 learners which is

in contrast with the regulation from the Department of Education of 1:35 ratio. Educators have been sometimes found to be the causers of discipline in schools. Adentwi (1998) confirms this assertion when he cited teacher behaviour, lesson preparation and punishment as causes of indiscipline. Knott-Craig (2007) shares the same view when he postulated that unsuitable lesson delivery, unfairness and inconsistency with rewards and punishments were found to promote discipline problems.

According to Oshsako(1997), cited in Tungata (2006) claim that schools which use under qualified educators who lack of experience may face challenges to deal with overcrowded classrooms and this may lead to violence in schools. The teacher's use of predetermined curricula methods and styles can cause classroom violence. It means educators have to prepare for the lesson, make lessons interesting, encourage debates among learners, and allow them to do lesson presentation at times.

Singh (2008) asserts if lessons are boring irrelevant, they may lead to disruptions in the classroom situation. Matseke (2008) concede that educators who doall the talking and reduce learners to passive participants may face a challenge of learner discipline in their classes.

For the purpose of this study it therefore means educators should come in classrooms prepared, motivate learners to behave appropriately, learn, and give direction to the preferred and specific behaviour. The behaviourist model should be adopted where the emphasis is on reinforcement of behaviour. Undesired behaviour must be disregarded. Reinforcement of positive behaviour should be in the form of merit awards, stickers, approval of behaviour. Negative behaviour of some learners can lead to either lack of interest, laziness. The educator should motivate these learners if they display positive behaviour. Tungata (2006) is of the opinion thatschools without planning or getting ready for the classroom management that has to do with controlling student's behaviour may give learners the chance to misbehave. School should have a plan for discipline which is revisited every year.

2.12 Suggestions for Curbing Indiscipline in Schools

2.12.1 Working with parents

Parental involvement in a school is a phenomenon that is supported globally. It is one of the strategies that are working in schools (Khoboka, 2006). Schools face challenges of parents who do not want to involve themselves in the affairs of the school but there are those parents who visit the school consistently. Moloi (2002) contends that it is important that parents share ideas with educators about matters of the school, for example discipline development and fundraising at the school. It is important for parent to visit the school any time to enquire about the academic progress of their children, participate in school activities that are developmental, assist educators in social matters.

Khoboka (2006) argues that if the educators have parents on their side learners will also be on the educators' side. It therefore, means that parents support an educator that value them in education related matters. Communication between the educator and the parent should be extended and talk to parents on personal level. The emphasis should be to correct misbehaviour. The parents have a role to monitor the behaviour of their children and this includes the monitoring of homework as well as the school attendance. This study will explore some of this issue and find out if such challenges exist in the studied schools.

2.13 Summary

This chapter discussed the strategies that are put in place to manage and maintain learner discipline; how are the strategies implemented by schools to maintain learner discipline, the support from the Department of Education to manage and maintain learner discipline; the monitoring mechanism on the implementation of learner discipline; and finally the challenges that are faced by schools.

3 CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the methodology that is followed in this study is presented. It discusses the Interpretive Paradigm, Research design, population and sampling procedure, and data collection instruments. For the purpose of this study the researcher utilizes the qualitative research approach to obtain data from respondents about their assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Mertens (2005:7) defines a paradigm as “a way of looking at the world that is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action”. It is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action as researchers perceive reality, hence they represent what they think about the world (Guba & Lincoln in Maree, 2007; Mertens, 2010). It implies that a paradigm is a comprehensive belief system, a world view, or a framework or theoretical perspectives that are congruent with the researcher’s epistemology and it demonstrates the kind of methodologies that emerge from it, then guides research and practice in a field (Gray, 2004).

There are a number of paradigms discussed in the literature such as: positivist (and post positivist), constructivist, Interpretivists, transformative, emancipator, critical, pragmatism and deconstructivist (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It is essential that the researchers are guided by the philosophical frameworks called paradigms that suit the knowledge interests or purposes of the research and can be used to organize the researcher’s observations and reasoning (De Vos, 2002; Maree, 2007; Van Rensburg, 2001). A paradigm can be seen as a mental map that details a pattern of thinking that allows the researcher to decide how the research phenomenon will be studied.

According to Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006) paradigms are all encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for investigators the nature of their inquiry along three dimensions of ontology, which is a fundamental assumption such as beliefs about the nature of reality; epistemology, which raises a question of what knowledge is, how is it created and how it gets to be known and understood; and methodology, which concerns the theory of how things are done. The researcher has to make a choice that guides subsequent choices with regard to the methodology, the strategies, literature and the research design. This is why Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) insist that without nominating a paradigm as a first step, there is no basis for subsequent choices regarding methods, literature, or research design. Epistemological assumptions concern the bases of knowledge, their nature and forms, how they can be acquired and how they are communicated to other human beings (Cohen & Manion, 1995; Burrell & Morgan in Cohen et al., 2006). In this sense a paradigm is a set of practices which define what a given scientific discipline actually does. The importance of the paradigm cannot be overemphasized as the methods used, questions asked, phenomena examined and observed, and the interpretation of results, are all part of the overall paradigm of a discipline. It then becomes important that the researcher chooses a paradigm that will help him/her see through the research problem.

3.2.1 The interpretive Paradigm

The study adopted the interpretive paradigm. This is where the methodological approach brings out the views and experiences of educators, learners and parents about learner discipline. In this perspective the researcher solicited the responses of the respondents within the context of their environment. The researcher also took cognizance of the fact that those involved i.e. the research participants are in the best position to describe their own situation. The researcher's stance in choosing this paradigm follows the assertion that Interpretivists believe that human life can only be understood from within and cannot be observed externally (Livesey, 2006).

Bassey (1999:43) argues that "data collected by interpretive researchers are usually richer, in a language sense than the positivist data and because of quality; the methodology of interpretive researchers is described as qualitative". There are

different people in a social setting hence the Interpretivists consider all their views as they differ in the manner in which they perceive the social world and things around them. Therefore it means there can be different understandings of what is reality.

Maree (2007) asserts that the advantage of placing people in their social context is that there is greater opportunity to understand the perceptions they have in their own experience. Concurring with Maree is Schwandt (1994) who affirms that proponents of these persuasions share the goal of understanding the complex world of experience from a point of view of those who live in it. There is always uniqueness because in every context and situation people perceive and interpret. The paradigm focuses on the importance of participant's views and how they construct meanings as well as contextualizing the collection of data (Bergman, 2008).

The researcher employed the interpretive paradigm because it enables him find out people's interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings. The Interpretivists reject the notions of theory in neutral observations and the understanding of neutral laws, such as those that exist in Miles and Huberman (1994) who postulate that Interpretivists insist that researchers are no more disconnected from their objects of study. Researchers have their own convictions, their own conceptual orientations as they belong to a particular culture at a specific moment. Therefore getting inside the groups of parents, school principals, educators, and learners will help the researcher to get a better picture of what is really happening inside school concerning the implementation of learner discipline. Many scholars, among them Babbie (2010), Cohen and Manion (1995) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) have highlighted the appropriateness of adopting an interpretive paradigm research that reflect on description and explanation of people's problems and situations. Adopting the interpretive paradigm will assist the researcher to gain the insight into the manner in which learner discipline has declined in schools in this new democratic era.

Another factor is when one is permitted to interview certain groups. As an outsider/researcher, it is important not to take issues for granted. It is for this reason that the researcher ensured that the study fit well within this paradigm which by its very nature sets out to describe, interpret and explain the manner in which participants make sense of situations and the way in which meanings are reflected in

the actions. Expressing the same sentiments is Schostak (2002:5) who posits that “no matter how intensively one observes from a distance or close up, to understand the lives of people who dwell in the houses and walk into the streets contact has to be made”.

While interpretive research is recognized for its value in providing contextual depth, its results are often criticized in terms of validity, reliability and the ability to generalize, referred to collectively as research legitimization (Morse, 1994). The other critique leveled against the Interpretivists research paradigm is directed towards the subjectivity and the failure of the approach to generalize its findings beyond the situation studied (Niewenhuis, 2007). This implies that the results from the assessment of the implementation of learner discipline in the selected schools may not be assumed to portray the same situation in schools outside the sampled sites. Human bias can never be underestimated nor can the notion of objectivity/subjectivity. Cohen et al. (2006:120) concede that “qualitative research methodologies are criticized for being impressionistic (based on reaction or opinions, rather than on specific facts or details), biased, insignificant, ungeneralisable and idiosyncratic, subjective and short sighted. The subjective involvement of the researcher makes him/her to share the experiences with his/her research participants”.

3.3 Research Approach: Qualitative

The researcher adopted the qualitative research approach since it is based on the interpretive paradigm in social science. Gay and Airasian (2003) assert that the qualitative research approach is useful for studying the perspectives of research participants. Furthermore they claim that the qualitative research approach is well situated for exploring complex research areas and for capturing the human meanings of social life as it is lived, experienced and understood by research participants. It is descriptive as it focuses on the process means and understanding.

According to Conrad and Serlin (2006:407), the qualitative research approach “is further detailed through multiple interactive methods, identifying and systematically reflecting on their role in the inquiry and acknowledging and accommodating

personal biases, values and interests". Similarly Flick et al (2004) argue that the qualitative approach requires that the researcher understands the real world from the perspective of the participants in his/her investigation. The author further contends that the qualitative research approach is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood or produced. It can also be argued that qualitative research is more concerned with the understanding of the social phenomenon of the participants (White, 2005). Through this approach the researcher will be able to find out about what does and does not work, and how things work so that lessons can be learnt and taken forward in future attempts to improve the social world in which we live.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), the issue of context is at the core of qualitative research approach. It employs inductive research strategy where the researcher collects data within the natural setting of the informants. She/he is concerned with the understanding of people's experiences in context. The natural is where the researcher is likely to reveal what is known about the phenomenon of interest from the perception of those studied and an understanding from patterns in data rather than collecting data to assess preconceived models, hypotheses or theories (Merriman, 1998; McMillan & Schumacher, 1993; Strauss & Myburgh, 2000). In this study the context was the township secondary schools and informants were the school principals, educators, parents and learners.

It also employs diverse research methods and data collection techniques such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups interviews and document analysis to collect data from the participants. The data is preserved in descriptive narratives like field notes, recording or other transcriptions like audio and video-tapes, other written records, pictures and films. These give the researcher the opportunity to probe the respondents into giving more clarity and inputs about the phenomenon. It allows the researcher to understand the participant's thoughts, feelings, and viewpoints on certain issues (Struwig and Stead, 2001). In qualitative research approach a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

The goal of qualitative research approach thus is to explore and understand a central phenomenon in its real-situation. The research questions are usually broad and general and seek to understand participants' experiences with the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Maree, 2007). Qualitative data are empirical and involve documenting real events, recording what people say, observing behaviour of participants who are immersed in the natural setting of everyday life in which the study is framed (Maree, 2007; Neuman, 1997). The researcher aims at understanding the experiences and views that are as near as possible to how the participants live then and express them.

The most important factor is that qualitative research is an approach that relies on verbal, visual, and auditory data (Thompson, 1994). It is a humanistic method in which the researcher gets to know the respondents personally and their daily experiences in dealing with discipline. It can also be argued that it is a craft method which allows the researchers to be flexible in how they conduct their studies. It can also be affirmed the qualitative research approach uses the collection of a variety of empirical materials, case study, personal experiences, introspection, life story, interviews, artefacts and production, visual text that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individual lives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Nevertheless, all qualitative studies share the common goal of presenting findings in the form of written, verbal descriptions rather than in terms of statistical analysis which is the characteristic of quantitative studies (Crowl, 1993). Through this approach the researcher is able to solicit information from the respondents with ease by gaining their trust so that they express themselves freely. It implies that the researcher is an architect and should be a master of his/her research.

The advantage of qualitative research is that it produces more in-depth, comprehensive information. The study used the case study method to assess the implementation of learner discipline in secondary schools. It also used subjective information and participant observation to describe the context or natural setting, of the variables under consideration as well as the interaction of the different variables in the context (Key, 1997). The researcher is in a better position to probe respondents with questions that clarified views and opinions given during the interviews and was allowed to view the behaviour of respondents in a natural setting

without the artificiality that sometimes surrounds experimental research (Schulze, 2003). Furthermore it can be argued that there is flexibility in the qualitative research approach which allows the researcher to pursue new means of interest by exercising good judgement although that requires considerable preparation and planning (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Schulze, 2003). It implies that the researcher must plan carefully when he/ she has to use the research instruments such as interviews, document analysis and focus groups.

Good as it may be the qualitative research approach has a major disadvantage of being very subjective in its inquiry leading to difficulties in establishing the reliability and validity of the approaches and information. Cohen et. al (2006) concede that qualitative researchers are criticised for being impressionist, biased on reactions or opinions rather than being specific on facts or details. In addition, Cohen et. al (2006) contend that the subjective involvement of the researcher would make him/her manipulate/share the experiences of the participants. The qualitative research approach is criticized for being contemplated at early or exploratory stages of a study (Silverman, 2000). The researcher will use document analysis as means of trying to estimate the extent of the problem in the implementation of learner discipline. In order to ensure validity the researcher will remain non-judgmental throughout the study process and report what was found in a balanced way. Similar sentiments are also expressed by Walker (1985) who states that qualitative methods are subjective, unreliable, and unsystematic, lack adequate checks on their validity and are generally speaking, unscientific.

Qualitative research has also been criticised for usually having sample sizes that are too small that allow the researcher to generalise the data beyond the sample selected for the particular study and that it is too easy to select and report only examples that fit the researcher's preconceived ideas (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). Other scholars such as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) bring out the fact that the researchers come so close to the respondents that they are likely to lose objectivity when collecting data. The qualitative research approach should be done artfully, but it also demands a great amount of methodological knowledge and intellectual competence. This means that, researchers are cautioned not to allow mindless invention.

Despite the mentioned weaknesses the researcher intends adopted and avoided the biases by carrying out the research outside his usual place of work and residence. The other important decision the researcher made was to choose a research design which is compatible with the chosen approach and is discussed here below. In this study the researcher investigated what actions/strategies/plans and mechanisms are used by people in their natural setting in implementing learner discipline. The researcher's interest was to reveal what respondents thought felt and knew about learner discipline. It was also essential to identify the significant signs and symbols of indiscipline in this setting (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004)

The researcher used the qualitative research approach because it places much emphasis on the created or intentional reality and focuses on the discovering the multiple perspectives of all participants in a natural setting. It well suited to assess the implementation of learner discipline policies in secondary schools in an area with high density in the Graaff Reinet District. Furthermore, the qualitative research method was suitable for this study to gain the understanding of the values and actions and concerns of those in the natural setting about the implementation of learner discipline policies in secondary schools with areas with high density.

3.4 Research Design

It was necessary to formulate a research design according to which the study would proceed. Mouton (2001) defines a research design as a blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. It can also be seen as the roadmap by which the researcher will conduct the research and achieve the research goals and objectives. In a qualitative context, the research design is the entire process of research from conceptualising to writing the narrative. The main function of the research design is to enable the study to anticipate what appropriate research decisions should be made so as to maximise the validity and reliability of the eventual outcome.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993) the purpose research is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to the research. It can also be viewed as common sense and clear thinking that is necessary for the management of the entire research, the complete strategy of attack on the central research problem (Leedy

and Ormrod, 2005). Sharing the same view are Denzin and Lincoln (2011:298) who assert that “the research design is a flexible set of guidelines that connect theoretical paradigms first to strategies of inquiry and methods for collecting empirical material”. In Yin’s (2009) view, the design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and ultimately, to its conclusion. This means that this logical plan allows researchers to navigate their way from the first point of their study to the end of the road when they present their findings and make recommendations. The research design in this study was grounded on the importance of engaging the research subjects involved in this investigation as they could reveal in an in-depth manner their experiences in the implementation of learner discipline policies in schools.

3.5 Case Study

In this study a case study design which was located in the interpretive paradigm was adopted. According to Rule and John (2011:3) the word “case” is derived from a Latin word “casus” which means “fall, occasion”. A case may be a person, a classroom, a programme, an institution or a country. A case study tends to be concerned with investigating many, if not all variables in a single unit and seeks to understand individuals’ perceptions of events (Cohen, et al., 2006; Merriam, 1984; Yin, 2003).

According to Zainal (2007) a case study is defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. It enables the researcher to have a close examination of data within a specific context. In a case study design the researcher selects a small group of individuals in geographical context. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) concur with Rule and John (2011) who argue that a case study has the following characteristics. It can be conducted for various purposes to generate understanding, it allows the researcher to examine a particular instance in a great deal of depth, it is flexible in its approach by using a variety of methods both data collection and analysis.

A case study may be described as an intensive description and analysis of a single individual or (sometimes) group. This statement is supported by Davies (2007) who asserts that it is a detailed analysis of a person or group, especially as a model of

medical, psychiatric, psychological, or social phenomena in order to make generalizations about a larger group or society as a whole. It is also considered to be detailed intensive study of a unit, such as a corporation or a corporate division that stresses factors contributing to its success or failure.

The case being studied can refer to a process, activity, event, programme, individual or numerous individuals. The description of the cases occurs through in-depth data collection methods that involve various sources of information that are rich in context. These can comprise face to face interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, observations or archival records. Researchers in the social sciences employ a variety of scientific methods to study the real world where they learn about a complex instance based on the comprehensive understanding of that instance obtained by extensive description and analysis of that instance that is taken as a whole and in its context (Garger, 2010; Mertens, 2005).

It is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context. It is an established research design that is used extensively in a wide variety of disciplines, particularly in the social sciences, the central tenet being the need to explore an event or phenomenon in depth and in its natural context. It is for this reason sometimes referred to as a “naturalistic” design on a particular instance or case and reaching an understanding within a complex context.

There are three kinds of case studies that Denzin and Lincoln (2005) mention and these are intrinsic case study, where the researcher needs to deeply learn about the phenomenon; the instrumental case study where a case is usually examined so as to provide insight into a phenomenon or to draw a generalization (Mertens, 2005); and the third type of a case study in which a number of cases are studied at the same time in order to investigate a phenomenon, population or a general condition so as to co-ordinate data from multiple sources (Chin-en-Hsieh, 2009).

Yin (1984) discusses three types of arguments against case study research. First, case studies are often accused of lack of rigor if the investigator has been sloppy, and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions”. Secondly, case studies may provide very little basis for scientific generalization since they use a small number of subjects, some conducted

with only one subject. Thirdly, case studies are often labelled as too long, difficult to conduct and producing a massive amount of documentation (Yin, 1984).

The essence of a case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result (Yin, 2009) The purpose of the case study, according to Cohen & Manion (1995) is to probe deeply and to analyze intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitutes the life cycle of the unit with a view of establishing generalization about the wider population to which that unit belongs. A case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand how ideas and abstract principles can fit together (Nesbet & Watt cited in Cohen et al, 2006).

The other advantage of case studies is that they are able to generate a lot of information as researchers examine a particular instance comprehensively using simple language which is easy for non academic and academic respondents (Cohen et al 2006; Rule and John 2011).It is an intensive description and analysis of a single individual or (sometimes) group.The case study afforded the researcher an opportunity to investigate and understand perceptions and events that were happening in implementing learner discipline in the four schools.

Although there are advantages to using case studies, there are a number of disadvantages in using case study research. Cohen et al (2006) also debate that case studies have limitations e.g. the weakness of personal subjectivity. This claim is supported by Niewenhuis (2007:58) who criticises the Case study research by basing his argument on subjectivity and the approach's failure to generalise its findings beyond the real situation. Cohen et al (2006) further criticise Case studies for being impressionist and they base their information on the reaction and opinions rather than specific facts and details. Cohen et al (2006) considers this bias, insignificance, and ungeneralisable, idiosyncratic and short sighted. A common criticism of the case study method is its dependence on a single case exploration making it difficult to reach a generalizing conclusion.

Despite these criticisms the researcher chose the case study method particularly to study the real-life situation of the Graaff Reinet township Secondary schools. It is suitable to study situations governing social issues and problems. In this case, the study was undertaken because the researcher was intrinsically interested in the case

though not for generalization or theory formation. For the purpose of this study it meant to understand the particulars of the case. The selection of the case was on the understanding that it would lead to a better understanding and maybe theorizing about a larger collection of cases. There was also no doubt that employing case studies would be extremely useful in terms of enhancing the comparative and analytic potential of research (Barbour 2008).

The case study design enabled the researcher to get an in-depth and detailed understanding of trends emerging from the different respondents and afforded the researcher an appropriate opportunity to better understand the dynamics of implementing learner discipline in Graaff Reinet secondary schools. The four schools with similar characteristics were purposively selected for the investigation. They are situated in areas with high density, and lacked resources for learning and teaching. The learners come from low socio-economic backgrounds and disadvantaged communities.

3.6 Population and Sampling Procedures

3.6.1 Population

Briggs and Coleman (2007:130) explain that the population can be considered as “the entire group in which we are interested in and which we wish to describe or draw conclusions about.” On the same subject Yount (2006) defines “population” as the one that consists of all the subjects you want to study. A population comprises all the possible cases (persons, objects, events) that constitute a known whole.

According to Bless and Higson (1995) a population is the set of elements that the research focuses upon and for which the results are obtained by testing and sampling. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) define population as the group of interest to the researcher, which is the group in which the researcher would like to generalize the results of the investigation. Mouton (1996:134) further supports the above statement by saying the target population is the population to which one wishes to generalize. De Vos (2002) assert that the population is a set of entities in which all the measurements of interest to the researcher are represented. It is a total set of

elements from which the individuals of the study are chosen. From the above definition one can say a population is comprised of people with common characteristics which the researcher wants to study and come up with results.

The target population in which the researcher has access was the senior secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District in the Eastern Cape Province, where the research was conducted. The target population was made up of educators, school principals, parents, learners in the 16 secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District.

3.6.2 Sampling and Sample

Sampling is the process of finding people or places to study; to gain access to study; and to establish a rapport so that participants provide relevant data (Creswell 1998). According to Yount (2006:7-1) sampling is the process of selecting a group of subjects for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. During the process of sampling, the aim is to get a sample that is as representative as possible of the target population (Mouton, 1996). From the above definitions we can say sampling refers to strategies that enable us pick a subgroup from a larger group and then use this subgroup as a basis for making inferences about the larger group. The aim of sampling is to save time and effort but also obtain consistent and unbiased estimates of the population status on what is being researched.

This representative portion of a population is called a sample. A sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons that together comprise the subject of the study. It can be viewed as a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which the study is located (Denscombe, 2007; Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). A sample is studied in order to understand the population from which it is drawn. Since this study is qualitative, it worked with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in depth to determine truths about that population (Field & Boesser, 2002). In qualitative research approach, participants are carefully selected for inclusion on the basis of the possibility that each participant expanded the variability of the sample (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The qualitative samples are purposive rather than random. This is because the initial definition of the population

is more limited, and partly because social processes have logic and coherence that random sampling may reduce to incomprehensive sawdust.

It is important that a sample accurately reflect the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. Another important factor brought suggested by Flick (2002) is that the issue of sampling is when the researcher decides on which persons to target so as to obtain relevant data. This calls for the researcher to understand the population well so that drawing a sample is an easy task. The major reason for sampling is feasibility as it may not be possible to collect data from the population. In this study the researcher adopted the purposive sampling.

3.6.3 Purposive sampling

In this study, purposive sampling was utilised where the researcher handpicked respondents on the basis of his judgement of their typicality (Cohen et al., 2006). The purposive sampling technique involves selecting certain units or cases “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a:713). Sharing the same opinion are Bernard and Ryan, (2010:365) who assert that “purposive sampling is quota sampling without a grid” where one simply decides on the purpose the informants will serve, then take what they get. The researcher makes judgment about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research (White, 2005).

This study adopted the purposive sampling method since it was centred wholly on the judgement of the investigator and the sample was made up of elements that include the most characteristics, representative or typical attributes of the population (Neuman, 2006). Neuman further asserts that the judgement of the individual examiner is evidently too outstanding an issue in this kind of sampling. Purposive sampling is most useful when a researcher desires to discover specific types of cases for in-depth examination and wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalize to all such cases (Cohen et al, 2006)

3.6.3.1 Advantages of Purposive Sampling

According to Babbie (2011), purposive sampling is particularly relevant when you are concerned with exploring the universe and understanding the audience. It means the researcher has to use common sense and the best judgment in choosing the right participants and meeting the right number of people for the purpose of study. Purposive sampling therefore enables the researcher to search for information from rich key informants who are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon under investigation. Purposeful sampling is generally small as compared to probability samples such as random sampling. The reason is that random sampling's findings are generalized to a larger population which is not normally done during purposive sampling, Strauss and Myburgh (2002:71)

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose a case because it illustrates some features in which the researcher is interested (Silverman 2000). Another advantage of purposive sampling is that few cases studied intensively may result in an in-depth insight about the topic. This is supported by Sally (1993) who postulates that sampling requires information about variations and that the researcher should research for samples that are likely to be knowledgeable and informative concerning the phenomenon under discussion

Bernard and Ryan (2010) maintain that purposive samples are drawn from an available population without stratifying first. The key concern is to acquire meaningful understanding of the role in terms of the precise context of the purposefully chosen cases rather than attempting to generalise from the broad population, hence the outcome of this study was interpreted in terms of the specific context under study.

In this study, the investigation was driven by the desire to assess the implementation of learner discipline policies and the impact they have in schools. The researcher purposively sampled the learners, educators, SMTs and SGBs for their relevance to the issue being studied. In all there were 32 learners who were selected as respondents as well as 4 Principals, 2 Deputy Principals, 4 HODs, 5 senior educators. They were chosen because of their experiences. The 5 SGB members, they were chosen because of the knowledge of school affairs. Diverse learners from Grade 10-12 were purposively chosen because of the time they had spent at the

school from Grade 8 –Grade 10, 11 or 12. They were chosen because of the knowledge of school affairs. They were well aware of the types of problems children face in their school life.

3.6.4 Negotiating entry into the research site

Hoepfl (1997:25) suggests that the “participants are the ones to grant someone access to their lives, their minds, and their emotions, therefore permission has to be sought”. In line with the above assertion, permission was sought from three sources, namely the Department of Education, Schools and participants. Armed with an introductory letter from Education Director of the University of Fort Hare, the researcher sought permission from the Department of Education in the Graaff Reinet District. The researcher produced the letter authorizing him to carry out the research in all the sampled schools and to every participant sampled. All the participants who agreed to take part in the research signed consent forms.

Senior Secondary Schools begin from Grade 8-12. This forms part of the General Education and Training, the GET Band (Grade 8-9), the Further Education and Training, FET Band (Grade 10-12). A letter was sent to the Department of Education in Graaff Reinet District and to the four proposed schools to seek permission to carry out the study. The researcher sought permission from school principals where the study was to be conducted. For the interviews appointments were made with the relevant authorities and participants.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Basically there are six major methods of collecting data namely questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, tests and document analysis. In choosing the appropriate instruments the researcher is guided by the nature of the research problem and the type of questions to be addressed (Cohen & Manion, 1995). In addition, the choice of the paradigm and the research design also guide the researcher in adopting the instruments that are considered relevant to collect data that would address the key issues of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In this study the researcher will solicit data through the use of interviews, focus groups and

analysis of documents to assess the implementation of learner discipline policy. Data collection needs to be continued until data are saturated. In-depth interviews are conducted until the saturation point is reached and that is after all the informants have been interviewed and the researcher does not get any new information.

3.7.1 Interview

Kvale (1996) regarded interviews as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situations of research data. Interviews are a systematic way of talking and listening to people as a way to collect data from individuals through conversations. In an interview the researcher often uses open questions leaving room for the interviewee to give extensive information on the subject. The researcher takes into consideration that the interviewee or participant is the primary data for the study and the interviewer's views about the topic are not of importance (Kajornboon, 2005). In an interview the interviewees are able to discuss their perception and interpretation with regard to a given situation. It is their expression from their point of view. Cohen et al (2006) explain the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself. Its human embeddedness is inescapable.

Interviews can have one of three basic structures, structured (closed interview style), unstructured (open interview style) or semi-structured. The open-ended or unstructured interview is defined by Nichols (1991) as an informal interview, not structured by a standard list of questions. Fieldworkers are free to deal with the topics of interest in any order to phrase their questions as they think best. This type of structure uses a broad range of questions asking them in any order according to how the interview develops (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Schwa, 1995). In this study the researcher adopted the semi-structured interview to solicit data from the participants as it allowed respondents to express themselves at some length, and offered enough shape to prevent aimless movement (Yin, 2003). It is the role of the researcher to ask questions that elicit a valid response from participants. The interviewer does not do the research to test a specific hypothesis (David, & Sutton, 2004). The researcher has a list of key themes, issues, and questions to be covered.

In this type of interview the order of the questions can be changed depending on the direction of the interview. An interview guide is also used, but additional questions can be asked.

Kajornboon (2005) argues that questions have dual goals of motivating the participants to give full and precise replies while avoiding biases stemming from social desirability, conformity, or other constructs of disinterest. This is supported by (Tuckman cited in Cohen et al., 2006: 268) who concede that “by providing access to what is inside a person’s head, it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and, perceptions), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)”. Although the interview affords the researcher personal contact, the technique has a small coverage because of financial and time constraints, especially in a district such as the Graaff Reinet District where schools are sparsely located.

3.7.1.1 Strengths and Weaknesses of Interviews

The strength of the interview approach is in its richness and depth of information and how high it is on validity, where the outcome is not predetermined by the researcher, and where the interviewee can provide a narrative on the process of interaction (William, 2005). The researcher is able to solicit relevant information, the response rate is high, the respondents are able to understand what is being asked, and are more relaxed as the interviews takes place in their territory. Additional questions can be asked and some may be questions that were not anticipated at the beginning of the interview. The researcher has to know the level of understanding of the respondents about a particular topic so as to be able to probe for their views and opinions of the interviewee. It means the researcher can explore the participant’s feeling about the topic. Probing is a way for the interview to explore new paths which were not initially considered Gray, (2004). To have key themes and sub-questions in advance gives the researcher a sense of order from which to raw questions from unplanned encounters, David, & Sutton (2004). The interviews may last for thirty to forty minutes depending on the interviewee as some may be more articulate than others.

The limitations of interviews are that they are costly in terms of transport as they compel the researcher to travel; and costly in terms of time. The process can be longer than expected (Kajornboon,2005). In addition, in a face-to-face interview, respondents are likely to modify their behaviour so that they give responses they believe the interviewer wants to know and they may tend to over report socially desirable behaviour. However the researcher was able to overcome this limitation by assuring the respondent that this interview was purely for research purposes, no victimisation would follow and pleaded with the respondents to be as forthright as possible. The issue of travelling costs and time factor were addressed by choosing sampling sites that did not require travelling costs and choosing willing respondents. Interviewer bias tends to be very high in face to face interviews (Cohen et al, 2006). The interviewer can reduce the biases by adhering to the research ethics and data that was collected from the respondents.

Despite the flaws identified in the interviews, the researcher chose to use the interviews which are a verbal conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant data focused on content specified by the research objectives because the respondents possess first hand information on what is happening in school in matters that are related to discipline. After the interviews the conversations on the voice recorder were read to the respondents to confirm that it was accurate (Payne & Payne, 2004, Robson, 2002). The researcher used a semi-structured interview to solicit data from the respondents as it allowed respondents to express themselves at some length, but offered enough shape to prevent aimless movement (Yin, 2003:88). The semi-structured interviews were based on an interview guide- a list of questions and topics that had to be covered (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Bernard & Ryan (2010) further postulate that the interviewer could cover each topic by asking one or more questions and using a variety of probes (like "Tell me more about that") and decide when the conversation on the topic has satisfied and the research objectives (Cannell and Kahn, 1968:527 cited in Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The strength of the semi-interviews lies in their flexibility because they allow the interviewer to modify the order and details of how the topics should be covered (Bernard & Ryan, 2010;

Maree, 2007). In order to obtain verbatim accounts of the interview, the researcher tape-recorded the interviews. This also assisted in eliminating omissions in the interview. Face to face interviews were ideal for this study in that they unravelled deep rooted concerns of educators, principals, and parents about the implementation of learner discipline in schools.

Patton (2002: 343) recommends that the researcher “explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject, to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined.” The other strength of semi-structured interviews is that the researcher can prompt and probe deeper into the given situation asking more detailed questions on respondents’ situations and not adhere only to the interview guide. The researcher is able to ask for elaboration or redefinition if a response on the implementation of learner discipline is not clear. In addition, the researcher can explain or rephrase the questions if respondents are unclear about the questions (Corbetta, 2003). More information can be solicited through the personal contact between the researcher and the respondents as that minimizes the vulnerability of questionnaire that arises from its impersonal nature.

The limitations of a semi-structured interview are that it can be time consuming if the sample is very large. The quality and usefulness of the information highly depends upon the quality of questions asked, as the interviewer cannot add or subtract questions. A substantial amount of preplanning is needed. There may be a limited scope for respondent to answer questions in detail or in depth (Kajornboon, 2005)

Other weaknesses of semi structured interviews are that inexperienced interviewers may not be able to ask prompt questions which may result in some relevant data not being captured. In addition, inexperienced interviewers may not adequately probe into a situation e.g. if the respondents do not know that they have in-depth knowledge of the subject under discussion, the interviewer needs to probe and find out the reasons and ask for explanations (Corbetta, 2003).

Denscombe (2007) states that the investigation is supposed to be able to justify the choice to go for depth rather than breadth in material as being appropriate to the specific needs of the study. In this study the researcher desired to pursue in-depth

rather than breadth information on the on the implementation of learner discipline for two main reasons. First, is the aim of the study to get hold of information in its entire contextual relevance that is inclusive of the emotions, experiences and feelings that go together with it; rather than access to plain straight forward distant factors? The second reason is to pursue what Denscombe refers to as “privileged information”. This is the usefulness of getting in touch with major players in the field who can provide privileged information. The depth of information offered by interviews in this regard can produce top value if the informants are prepared to and are capable of providing information that others could not, or the investigator could not know or retrieve without getting connected with them.

This research was more interested in the depth of the data rather than breadth and required the researcher to play an active role in the data collection (Wimmer and Dominick, 1997). Furthermore, Wimmer and Dominick, (1997) suggest that qualitative research is a useful mass media tool only when its limitations are recognized. The researcher carried out the interviews using a voice recorder and playing it back to the respondents to confirm that accurate information had been captured. Frey and Oishi, (1995:01) define it as “a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent)”. This is done to gain information on a particular topic or a particular area to be researched. Interviews are a useful tool which can lead to further research using other methodologies such as observation and experiments (Jensen & Jankowski, 1991).

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were administered to 4 Principals, 2 Deputy Principals, 4 HODs, 5 senior educators and 5 SGB members. It was ideal for this study as it sought to go deeper and find out from principals, educators and SGB members on their attitudes and perceptions of the implementation of discipline in secondary schools. Although the interview afforded the researcher personal contact, the technique had a small coverage because of financial and time limitations, especially in a district like Graaff Reinet District where schools are distantly located from each other. This study will also used focus group interviews to solicit information from learners about the implementation of learner discipline discussion of which follows.

3.7.2 Focus group interviews

Morgan (2002) in Briggs and Coleman (2007) defines focus groups as a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. It is a carefully focused discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest, in a permissive, non threatening environment, from a predetermined and limited number of people (Krueger & Casey, 2009). They further posit that focus group interviewing is about paying attention, being open to what people have to say and being non-judgmental. Focus groups offer unique insights into the possibilities of or for critical inquiry as a deliberative, dialogic, and democratic practice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Schurink & Schurink and Poggenpoel (1998:2) also define focus groups as a “purposive discussion of a topic or related topics taking place between nine to twelve people with similar background and common interests”. It is also a method that encompasses verbal and non verbal means of communication and the interplay of perceptions and opinions of the participants. The semi structured group session which is held in an informal setting is conducted for the purpose of collecting information on a designated strategy of eliciting information from a smaller group of 6-8 people. This is done through discussion on specific themes so as to obtain a better understanding of a problem, concerns or idea by interviewing a sampled group (De Vos et al, 2004).

The purpose of conducting a focus group in this study was to listen and gather information that was related to the phenomenon under study. Briggs & Coleman (2007) assert that focus groups can be used to gain information relating to how people think and to explain perceptions of an event, idea or experience. Through the focus groups the researcher was able to understand the views, the feelings perceptions and opinions of participants about the programme under study. Lively conversation among focus groups participants can elicit information that paints a portrait of combined local perspectives helping the researcher to see how it “all fits together” (De Vos et al, 2004)). Participants in focus group sessions are generally allowed to say anything and are considered naturalistic (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

A focus group interview is an inexpensive, rapid appraisal technique that can provide managers with a wealth of qualitative information on performance of development

activities, services, and products, or other issues (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The process is facilitated by the researcher, who is able to probe deeply and obtain information about different perspectives, experiences, feelings, and preferences of the phenomenon under study (Morgan, 2002). The advantages of this method include the creation of an open forum for discussion and brainstorming that provides insights into public discourses and the researcher can obtain input from the stakeholders who are usually not consulted in a more reactive manner (Morgan,2002).

In the first encounter with the focus groups, the researcher assured them that the discussion was purely for research purposes and reminded them that they were free to withdraw from the group should they feel uncomfortable. In this study focus groups consisting of students were engaged in discussions on the implementation of learner discipline in their schools. The researcher and participants engaged in friendly chats to establish a rapport within the group. This approach assisted the researcher to improve the interaction within the group. In this case, the researcher needed to create an environment that was relaxed for the participants after which, they were asked to share ideas, experiences and perceptions about the implementation of learner discipline. Krueger & Casey (2009) alluded to this idea when they wrote,

Paying attention to what people have to say and being non-judgmental. It is about creating a comfortable environment for people to share. It is about being careful and systematic with the things people tell you. And people go away feeling good about having been heard (pp.xiii).

It is through this discussion that the researcher gained insight and knowledge into the performance appraisal system itself. Issues and question raised during the discussions addressed all the research questions and objectives.

One of the main advantages of this technique is that participants' interaction assists in weeding out false or extreme views, thus providing a quality control mechanism. It allows respondents to give their opinions and feelings in a stress free atmosphere, provides diversity of information yet allows respondents the opportunity to participate and brings rigor to a study through triangulation (King and Horrocks, 2010; Kruger & Casey, 2009; Patton, 2002). This statement is supported by Denzin& Lincoln (2005)

when they say the advantage of focus group interviews is good community participation. They help in developing ideas and sharing talent or hidden knowledge. The researcher is able to get information from a number of individuals simultaneously. This, however, requires a skilful facilitator to ensure an even participation from all members. Interviews with focus groups were conducted in this study to elicit information from all respondents in the investigation of their views, perceptions, feelings, opinions and thoughts on the implementation of learner discipline.

These discussions were carried out in a style that accommodated all levels of literacy, with the isiXhosa and Afrikaans language being the dominant ones utilised throughout the discussions. In a qualitative study, the investigator ought to impartially adjust to fit properly into the condition of the respondents so as to communicate with them in their most relaxed and normal setting. This incorporates the utilisation of the language of choice of the respondents. The researcher conducted one focus group interview per school comprising 8 learners. The focus group was adopted in this study because it is inexpensive, flexible, stimulates cumulative elaboration among the respondents on issues which concern implementation of learner discipline in secondary schools. During the research it was found from the learners that, in 2 of the four focus groups, learners were not involved in crafting of policies to maintain learner discipline, rules were reviewed when there was a burning issue,. In three of the four focus groups learners disclosed that Corporal Punishment was administered by some educators and the managements of these schools are aware of it. The researcher found that there was no capacity building for the RCLs, some schools do not have the liaison officers between the RCL and the educators, some RCL learners were not disciplined, but were elected because of their popularity. In some schools learners were expelled even without the knowledge of the Department of Education.

3.7.3 Documentary Analysis

Documentary analysis is a form of qualitative analysis that requires readers to locate, interpret, analyze and draw conclusions about evidence presented (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). As is the case for all data collection techniques the choice depends on suitable technology the respective situations and various other

conditions. With the document analysis, written sources of information are consulted for the procurement of information. According to Smith (2002) documents are mainly written texts that relate to some aspect of the social world. These range from official documents to private and personal records. Most studies find some need to examine documents as potential data sources. Traditional historical research is of course almost totally dependent on historical documents.

Smith is of the opinion that in the same way that the historical researcher has a central concern with the external and internal integrity of documents, for example their origin, authenticity and accuracy, so the non-historical researcher also is concerned with these issues. Document analysis focuses on all types of written communication that may shed light on the phenomenon under investigation (Maree 2007).

The primary documents to be analysed by the researcher included the parent minute book from 2010 up to 2012 and policies formulated during the period regarding learner disciplinary problems and strategies that the schools have used to discipline learners. The main aim for collecting these documents was to find out whether the schools had put in place any policies regarding learner disciplinary action. The researcher analysed the policy statements formulated by the government in connection with learner disciplinary problems and the suggested strategies put in place to curb indiscipline in schools. Documents relating to learner discipline that were collected included published and unpublished documents, log books, cases of ill-discipline at schools, books on the crafting learner discipline rules and so forth. Smith (2002) also alludes to the fact that as a socially constructed text one can only do justice to a document by interpreting it in the light of its broad social context.

These documents should then be critically assessed and analyzed as they are often a valuable starting point for collecting new data or they may help direct researchers to the kind of things they would want to know about their interviews or observation. On the other hand interviews or observations may prompt researchers to seek out certain documents. The documents that were used as secondary sources in this research were parent minute books and copies of the disciplinary policy and disciplinary measures taken. The researcher made notes by summarizing these documents. The summary of these documents helped the researcher to interpret

them. In interpreting these documents the researcher was able to identify related themes from different minutes. These themes were connected to the themes that had already been identified in the other research methods. By analyzing the documents the researcher was able to get the detailed information related to the implementation of learner discipline in schools. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) noted that data analysis, in the case study, involves the organization of the details about the case, the categorization of data, the interpretation of single instances, and the identification of patterns

The advantage of documentary analysis is that it forms a valuable supplement to interviews and observation when information is needed from those who were there (eyewitness accounts) but who are no longer accessible; or when access to private or confidential exchanges – such as those found in letters is required. The data, thus acquired, can be more credible than data collected in interviews or through observation because of the absence of a researcher effect on the data source. Documents are non reactive convenience, especially those that are available electronically and can save time and money as there is little or no financial cost.

There are disadvantages in document analysis such as that documents can be misleading as some may be written to provide a rosy picture or to enhance the writer's or someone else's reputation. Others may even be deliberately intended to deceive or often a document depends on one person's memory or point of view. Some documents may contain so much data that it becomes difficult to extract important and relevant information while at times they are incomplete, may not represent the full picture or may contain typographical errors (Smith 2002:2-3). Documents are however essential in that they authenticate the positive and negative information gathered through other sources.

3.8 Credibility and Trustworthiness

3.8.1 Credibility

In qualitative research the idea of “validity” refers to the accuracy of data obtained. It is used to indicate correctness or credibility of information, explanation, interpretation, or other sorts of account of data as disclosed by participants (De Vos et al, 1998). This may be achieved via consultation of appropriate documents and preliminary visits to the organisations themselves. Lincoln and Guba (1989) are among the many who recommend “prolonged engagement” between the investigator and the participants in order both for the former to gain an adequate understanding of an organisation and to establish a relationship of trust between the parties. The credibility of the researcher is especially important in qualitative research as it is the person who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis.

3.8.2 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a means to support the arguments that the inquiry’s findings are “worth paying attention to” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). Flick (2002) argues that qualitative researchers need to be as vigilant as positivist researchers about ensuring the validity and reliability of their studies, even if they choose to use other terms such as credibility and authenticity, to describe the qualities that establish the trustworthiness of their studies.

Trustworthiness consists of four criteria namely credibility, meaning the relationship between the findings and collected data; transferability, whether findings can justifiably be transferred to other contexts; dependability, is the assurance to the people about the findings from the raw social context; and conformability, ensuring the public that actions were appropriate and without bias (Lee & Lings, 2008). Trustworthiness in this study was ensured through member checking.

3.8.3 Member Checking

According to Guba and Lincoln (1999), checks relating to the accuracy of data may take place “on the spot” in the course, and at the end of the data collection dialogues. Member checking is basically affording the respondents the chance to check (to approve or disapprove) particular aspects of the responses they provided (Doylet, 2007; Merriam, 1988). It is a way of finding out whether the data analysis is harmonious with the respondent’s experiences (Curtin & Fossey, 2007:92). Member checking entails paying the participants a second visit to find out if the information recorded from what they provided is accurate as far as they are concerned. The respondents need to verify whether or not the interpretation makes sense to them and reflects their intended meanings (Creswell, 2003). The researcher takes time to return to some respondents who participated in the research to confirm the accuracy of the recorded data (Curtin & Fossey, 2007).

3.8.4 Triangulation

Triangulation is a way of cross examining procedures and instruments of data collection. This enables other researchers to check and gain confidence in the findings of an investigation (O’Donoghue & Punch, 2003). In addition they explain that cross checking of multiple resources is done to search for regularities in research that facilitate verification of data. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005)

Triangulation involves the conscious combination of qualitative methodologies as a powerful solution to strengthen a research design where the logic is based on the fact that a single method can never adequately solve the problem of rival causal factors (p 45.).

Triangulation is a way of making sure that combining information from different instruments produces clear facts that solidify the research results. Miles and Huberman (1994:267) suggest that triangulation “is a way to get to the finding in the first place-by seeing and hearing multiple instances of it from different sources by using different methods and squaring the finding with others it needs to be squared with” The main advantages of triangulation as explained by Thurmond (2001) are increasing confidence in research, creating innovative ways of understanding a

phenomenon, integrating theories, revealing unique findings and providing a clearer understanding of the problem.

3.8.5 Pilot-testing

A pilot study is the pre-testing or trying out of a particular research instrument (Barbour,2008)) Pilot testing is necessary to determine if the ways in which respondents understand questions are relatively similar across the group and whether the information is easily accessible to respondents. It is necessary to ensure that the items are such that responses correlate to what the study intends to measure (Collins, 2006). Since a researcher may not get all the questions to be clear the first time he or she tries, it is necessary to pilot test them to find out if they have faulty wording or ambiguity. This means the researcher must choose a small sample similar to the actual sample to be used to try out the questions.

Walliman (2001:162) advises that it “is best to do the pilot pre-test on people of a type similar to that of the intended sample.” After the pilot testing the researcher can remove questions that were too difficult or confusing and make any other adjustments necessary for the final live field research (Perry, 2001). A pilot study was conducted to check the clarity of the questions in the in-depth interviews and focus groups to establish whether the questions asked really intended to address the phenomenon under study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The consideration of ethics in research is important especially in education because the participants in any study should be protected from harm. Harm can be, “embarrassments, anger, irritation, physical and emotional stress, loss of self-esteem, exacerbation of stress, loss of respect from others, negative labelling, invasion of privacy and damage to personal dignity (Maree, 2007). Ethical issues were important since the study involved human subjects. The sensitivity of issues that deal with learner discipline requires the researcher to ensure that anonymity and confidentiality of all participants are kept at all times. This is based on the fact that although the researcher has the right to collect data by means of interviews,

document analysis, this should not be done at the expense of the respondent's' right of confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were assured that in addition to leaving out real names their details also remain anonymous to encourage open and honest responses. In carrying out this study the researcher promised to observe all their rights including the right to withdraw from participating in the study at any stage and observed the ethical considerations as stated by Rule E5 in the University Of Fort Hare Faculty Of Education Handbook, (2010). The observed ethics are discussed in the next section.

3.9.1 Protection from Harm

The foremost rule of ethics is that participants should not be harmed in any way, physically or psychologically. People, who are observed, interviewed or who are involved in any way in the research process, or analysis of personal documents should not be subject to disadvantages or damage as a result of the research (Ethik-Kodex, 1992:1B 5. cited in Flick et al., 2004). In conducting this study the researcher avoided revealing information about individuals, sites or groups. After obtaining permission to carry out the study the researcher established rapport with participants and addressed any reservations they had in giving earnest views, opinions and responses. Respondents and sites were coded to conceal identity of actual individuals who responded to the questions.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Qualitative data was analysed by arranging it in a logical and chronological order using themes on the implementation of learner discipline in secondary schools. Categories were identified that helped cluster the data into meaningful groups. Interviews focus groups and documents and artefacts were examined for specific meanings they might have in relation to the implementation of learner discipline in secondary schools. According to Creswell, (1998) and Stake cited in Leedy & Ormrod (2005:138) data analysis in case studies typically involves the following steps (a) organisational details about the case (b) categorization of data (c)

interpretation of single instances, (d) identification of patterns, (e) synthesis and generalization.

Maree (2007: 99) says that qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and interactive (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analysing and reporting are intertwined, not merely a number of successive steps.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology adopted by the study. The chapter discussed the research paradigms, research approach and design, population and sampling procedures. The study adopted the case study design in the qualitative research approach that enabled the use of various data collection instruments. Data were collected through face to face interviews using semi-structured interview guides, focus groups interviews and document analysis to solicit information on the implementation of learner discipline in schools. A data analysis procedure including themes and use of triangulation was discussed. Purposive sampling procedures for sites and respondents were adopted in this study. A detailed account of how the researcher adhered to the ethical considerations was given. The focal point of the next chapter is the actual data presentation, analysis and discussion.

4 CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 presented the research design and the methodology followed in the study. This chapter focuses on the analysis and presentation of the data collected from the four schools on how learner discipline policies are implemented in secondary schools in areas of high density in the Graaff Reinet District.

A sample made up of four schools, four principals, two Deputy Principals, four Heads of Department, five Senior Educators, five parents and four focus groups with 8 learners in each group were participants in the study. The participants in the study were males and females who had lived and worked in the Graaff Reinet District. Participants were identified as follows:

Principal 1-4: P1- P4;

Deputy Principal 1- 2: Dep P1-Dep P2

HOD 1-4: HOD1-HOD4

Senior educator 1-5: Sen. Educ1-Sen. Educ 4

Parent1-5: Parent 1-Parent 5. There were five parents because in School A, the Chairperson and 1 parent participated in the study.

Focus group 1-4: FG1-FG4

Each participant took part in the research voluntarily. In order to optimize the results on how learner discipline policies are implemented participants with expertise in discipline were used (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

The data that was collected from principals, Deputy Principals, HODs, Senior Educators, parents and learners was analyzed using the approach suggested by White (2005) in the following steps: first the researcher made use of the voice recorder to collect the data after obtaining permission from the participants. He also took field notes which were elaborated and written properly after each interview. The

recorded data were transcribed. Gaps in the data were identified and filled by going back to the participants to collect additional data and also seek clarification on issues that were not clear. The data collected was organized in files and reflections were made and written to show what the researcher had learnt from the data. The last step was the classifying and interpretation of the information collected into themes and sub-themes to uncover the main issues regarding the implementation of the learner discipline policy in the four secondary schools.

Data analysis and presentation were done taking into consideration the research questions of the study. The main research question was: How is learner discipline policy implemented in four secondary schools in Graaff Reinet district? The sub-questions were:

- (1) What are the strategies that are employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline?
- (2) How are strategies implemented by schools?
- (3) How are schools supported (besides policy documents) in implementing learner discipline?
- (4) What are monitoring mechanisms that have been put in place in schools to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline?

Discipline plays an essential role in the creation of a society that has morals and it helps in the proper upbringing of children. Joubert et al (2004) assert that the different role players should be involved in maintaining discipline and this measure has been proved to be effective. From the above statement one can say that it is important for all stakeholders that are involved in the schools to ensure that learners behave, as education happens in a safe and secure environment. Each stakeholder has an important role to play and there are duties that have been assigned for each to perform, in as far as maintaining discipline is concerned for example, the Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Department, Senior educators, and members of SGB all have their roles to play.

4.2 Responsibilities of Principals, Deputy Principals, HODs, Senior Educators and Parents to maintain discipline

4.2.1 Principals

The Principal is the head of the school. He/she is responsible for appropriate disciplinary action at the school. Discipline at the school is the function of the administration, therefore it is important for the principal to take a leadership and supervisory role because he/she is in charge of the school (DoE, Job Description: Principals/Deputy Principals: 2011:1). He/she is the champion of the Code of Conduct and must ensure its implementation. The principal must be clear about what he wants for the school in terms of discipline. It is important for the principal to be proactive about discipline. He/she should come up with programmes that show how discipline should be implemented at the school and keep records of indiscipline cases, (Policy Handbook for Educators,1998: C 64) This can be achieved by delegating duties to other stakeholders at the school.

4.2.2 Deputy Principals

The Deputy Principal's duty is to ensure that he/she supports the principal in implementing and maintaining sound discipline at the school. He/she must support the educators in implementing the Code of Conduct, give instructions concerning punishment for offending learners in the absence of the principal (Policy Handbook for Educators, 1996: C-65). He/she must interact with the Disciplinary Committee on issues related to discipline, act as an overseer and give general support to novice educators. He/she must assist in ensuring that the school Log book or Incident book is maintained, and contains a record of every major learner indiscipline, (DoE, Job Description: Principals/Deputy Principals 2011:2)

4.2.3 Heads of Department

The Heads of Departments/Grade Heads are often given the responsibility of heading the Disciplinary Committee/to be in charge of discipline at the school, (Policy Handbook for Educators Employment Act, 1998:66). Their main duties are to

assist the principal in making decisions related to learner discipline, assist in developing a school discipline policy, handle administrative matters that are related to discipline, develop a plan for the year with specific objectives, (DoE, Job Description: Principals/Deputy Principals 2011:66) They must also liaise with outside organizations and agencies, coordinate programmes to strengthen school discipline. Furthermore they must assist educators to manage learners with serious behavioural problems by referring them to guidance teams, social workers, and lead in reviewing the school discipline policy (DoE, Job Description: Principals/Deputy Principals 2011:66)

4.2.4 Senior Educators

Senior educators are also responsible for contributing to positive discipline among learners (DoE, Job Description: Principals/Deputy Principals 2011:66).

They must assist in the running of programmes that are related to discipline and advise learners on discipline matters. They must provide an inspiring and motivating learning experience for each learner. Knott-Craig (2007) argues that educators need to build relationships with each learner and show respect for each learner and his/her family. Regular communication with parents about a child's progress is one of the duties of the senior educators. They monitor discipline during school events and provide written proof after the learner has disrupted a class. They should assist the SMT in the implementation of rules, assist in the monitoring of learner behaviour, and correct the behaviour of learners as quick as possible. They must implement innovative classroom practices (Policy Handbook for Educators, 1998: C-67)

4.2.5 Parents

Parents (SGB) In order to foster discipline, the school should work with parents because the parents are a link between the school and the learners. To ensure that there is a constant link between the school and learners' homes, parents need to act responsibly, help /support the principal resolve conflicts amicably, act as responsible parents who show respect In this regard, Sheri (1998:42) cited in Nthebe (2006:46) makes the point that parents who are involved in their children's daily school life

have a better understanding of what is acceptable and expected in the school climate. Therefore the first step is to involve parents in cooperative school programs where parents assist the school to impart good discipline to children. Parents have to realise that it is not only the responsibility of the schools to teach their children but that they have a huge impact, and teaching children good manners starts at home” (Botha, 2006a:410).

Section 11 of SASA of 1996 provides that every public school enrolling learners in grade 8 and higher must establish a Representative Council of Learners (RCL). For effective discipline principals and staff are required also to assign duties to the RCL. Some learners do not show respect to their leaders and view them as tools and puppets of the School Management Team. This occurs despite the fact that the RCLs are democratically elected by the learners and are stipulated by Section 1, sub section (1) of SASA, 1996. The RCLs need to give peer guidance and counselling to fellow learners instead of policing them. The RCL should respect fellow learners. They play a meaningful role in playgrounds, in toilets and in monitoring late coming to ensure that there is maximum discipline in classrooms. (DoE, Manual for School Management and Governance, 2001).

The first section of this chapter presents the biographic data of participants. This is important as it has a bearing on their understanding and their knowledge of discipline. Hence, one has to understand this background. The second section presents common forms of indiscipline in schools and causes of indiscipline. The third part presents information collected on strategies that are employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. The fourth section outlines information gathered on the support provided to schools to enable them implement learner discipline policies; and the last section presents data on monitoring mechanisms put in place in schools to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline.

4.3 Biographic Information of Respondents

The section presents the biographic information of the participants who took part in the study on how learner discipline policies are implemented in secondary schools in

areas with high density in the Graaff Reinet District. The data collected on the gender of participants indicate that there were four male principals, two male deputy principals, one female and three male HODs. There were two female educators and five male educators. Consequently, there were two female and four male parents who were interviewed. The table shows that the sample was biased towards male respondents. This could have been caused by the nature of enrolment in the study area. There were sixteen female learners and sixteen male learners who participated in the four focus group discussions.

The data collected showed that the age range of participants varied, with most of them in the age range of 41-50 years. Table 4.1.1 below shows age range of Principals, Deputy Principals, HODs, and Educators in the studied area.

4.1.1. Age Ranges of Principals, Deputy Principals, HODs and Educators

Participants	31 – 40 Years	41- 50 Years	51- 60 Years
Principals	0	2	2
Deputy Principals	0	1	1
HODs	1	3	0
Educators	2	5	0
Total	3	11	3

Table 4.1.1 shows that two principals were aged between 41 and 50 while the other two were in the age range between 51 and 60. The table indicates that one deputy principal was between 41 and 50 years while the other one was between 51 and 60 years of age. The table indicates that one HOD was between 31 and 40 years while three were between the ages of 41 and 50 years. Two educators were between 31 and 40 years of age and five were between 41 and 50.

Generally the educators, HODs and Deputy Principals are in the middle age range which may make them energetic and only the Principals and one deputy principal

were in their twilight years. These could have the relevant experiences considering their years of handling discipline.

Information was also solicited on the age range of learners and parents participants. One parent was between 21 and 30 years while two were between 31 and 40 years. Another two were between 41 and 50 years. Learners were between 15 and 20 years. Generally, the learners were within the normal school age although some may have been above the normal age range for Grade 12 learners. The parents were in the middle age range.

4.3.1 Academic Qualifications

The researcher elicited information on the academic qualification of respondents as it had a bearing on the way they read, interpreted and understood the discipline procedures as well as drafting discipline policies. The table below shows the academic qualifications of Principals, Deputy Principals, HODs, Educators and parents.

4.1.2 Table showing academic qualifications of the participants

Qualification	Principals	Deputy Principals	HODs	Educators
Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD)	1		2	
Primary Teachers' Diploma (PTD)	1			
Further Diploma in Education	1			1

(FDE)				
Higher Diploma in Education (HDE)	2	2		2
BA degree (BA)	3	2	2	1
BEd degree (BEd)	1	2	1	
MEd				1

It was important to establish the academic qualifications of the participants. This was to seek the expertise that people who may deal with discipline may provide the secondary school learners with life skills. A diploma in education is a basic requirement for teaching the learners and the ability to deal with discipline. It is expected that the more professional qualifications the participants possess, the more knowledgeable they would become to teach the learners about values.

From the table it is evident that the majority of participants had the basic requirement to be educators. One principal and two HODs had the STD; one principal had a PTD; and another one an FDE. One educator had an FDE. Two principals, two deputy principals and two educators had HDEs, while three principals, two deputy principals, two HODs and one educator BA degrees. Furthermore, one principal, two deputy principals and one HOD had Bed degrees. Only one educator had a Med degree which was the highest qualification among the participants. One parent had an STD and one had a PTD, while two had junior secondary leaving certificates, and one had an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE).

The collected data shows that the participants were in the position of dealing with and implementing learner discipline in secondary schools. The majority of the respondents were educators and even some parents were ex educators. This clearly indicated that they were able to suggest alternative measures in cases of misconduct

and could adopt different strategies in implementing discipline policies in secondary schools.

4.3.2 Teaching Experience of Principals, Deputy Principals, HODs and Educators

The researcher also wanted to establish how long the respondents have been in their positions as it has a direct impact on the manner in which the respondents can deal with educational problems. Experience plays a vital role in dealing with the dynamics of learner misconduct. Limited experience might result in educators not being able to handle indiscipline. Experience is an important factor for educators in dealing with minor and serious misconduct. It gives an educator the expertise in the guidance of learners. The table below shows experience of respondents on their current positions.

4.1.3 Experience of principals, deputy principals, HODs and educators

Experience	Principals		Deputy Principals	HODs	Educators			
1-5 years	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
6-10 years	1			2		2		
11-15 years	-	1	1	1		1		
16-20 years	1						4	
21-30 years	1							
Total	4	2				4	4	1

The table above shows that the principals had varying lengths of experience as managers. There was one principal in each of the categories 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 16-21 years and 21-30 years respectively and the DPs had either 1-5 years or 11-15 years experience in their positions while two HODs had 6-10 years experience in

their positions while the other two had 1-5 years and 11-15 years experience respectively. The table further indicates that the Senior Educators had 16-21 years experience while the Junior Educators had 1-5 years of experience.

Generally, the schools were run by experienced SMT members. Their experience could play a great role in the implementation of discipline.

The researcher sought the views of participants on common forms of indiscipline in schools and their causes before examining how policies which had been put in place to maintain discipline were implemented in the four schools.

4.4 Common Forms of Indiscipline in Schools

Information on the common types of indiscipline in schools was solicited from school principals, deputy principals, HODs, educators, parents and learners themselves. They all concurred that there was lack of discipline among learners and the most common forms of indiscipline were: coming late to school; rudeness, not wearing school attire, bunking of classes and deliberately not doing school work and disrespect of educators. Drug abuse, carrying of dangerous weapons by learners was also cited as a cause of concern by learners themselves. Indiscipline was cited as coming from over-age learners. The following are comments from some of the participants regarding common forms of indiscipline in the four schools:

P1 had this to say on forms of indiscipline in the school:

I am not sure what is happening with learners of today. In the school there is a problem of indiscipline because learners do not wear school uniform although they have it. Some learners display a negative attitude to some educators by the way they speak to these educators and to their peers as well.

Dep P2 commented:

There is a problem of ill discipline which involves late coming, punctuality in attending classes, disrespect of educators by learners. Learners are disobedient to both educators and their parents. There is also a lack of respect for their peers.

Snr Educ2 stated:

There is a problem of late coming, bunking of classes and some learners deliberately do not do school work. These problems occur although there is a code of conduct which learners must adhere to.

Participant learners from FG3 stated that learners used drugs at school, carried knives, bunked classes and there are gang activities. HOD 2 expressed concern that some over age learners had major discipline problems.

Some participants felt that some teachers did not set a good example as they also lack discipline at work. For example HOD 1 had this to say:

The biggest problems with discipline at the school are the educators who do not attend their classes. They are not willing to assist the management in addressing the disciplinary problems that arise in the classroom but what they do is to shift responsibility. Educators feel it is the duty of the School Management Team to implement discipline

From the above evidence we can conclude that common forms of discipline are the same in all the four schools. We can also observe that some teachers exacerbate the problems of discipline in the four schools.

4.5 Causes of Indiscipline in Schools

Participants were requested to outline causes of indiscipline in their schools. They attributed indiscipline to various causes and below are some reasons provided:

Parents were not playing their role they were supposed to play. They did not come to the school to supervise and find out what can be done to improve the school. Parents were shifting the responsibility to educators. Dodd and Konzal (2002:258) highlight the fact that parents should never think that when their children get to high school they do not need the kind of parental involvement as in primary school. In reality, these are the years where parents need to be more visible than before.

- (i) Lack of interest in education among the community as most parents were working in cities like Port Elizabeth and Cape Town and left children under

the care of grandparents and other relatives. The grandparents and guardian cited matters like age, health problems; those who were working as domestic workers knocked off at work very late. Therefore it was difficult to go and attend the disciplinary problems that might have arisen from their children's behaviour.

(ii) Laxity in classroom by educators in implementing school discipline policies-. According to Van Wyk (2001:198), cases of educator misconduct such as being unprepared or ill-prepared for lessons, neglecting teaching learners while furthering their own studies, being absent without reason, alcohol abuse and engaging in sexual intimacy with learners, are all factors which contribute to disciplinary problems at school are factors that force educators not to be able to implement discipline. Rather Rossouw (2003) suggests that educators need to adopt a more positive approach to learner discipline build stronger relations with learners, come school better prepared for classes and the enhancement of values rather than creating more rules.

(iii) Principal is too lax and is adopting a laissez-faire style of management. Bess (1988:86) cited in Kader, (2007) state that this style is characterized by abstention from directing or planning. She/he exerts little or no influence and individual members must incorporate leadership functions in their activities. In the school context it implies the Principal, who does not want to take the responsibility of leadership, does not plan, and shy away from issues of discipline. He/she rather assigns certain members of staff to deal with it. According to Badenhorst (1996:45), this type of management can create disciplinary problems for the school because there is lack of direction and leadership from the educator, which may hinder effective teaching and learning.

(iv) Inter-personal conflicts among learners. Learners originate from certain families; belong to certain religious groups and sometimes different political affiliations. These differences would manifest in the form of conflicts at school. Educators must be aware of these and be pro-active and should not wait until a problem occurs.

(v) Substance abuse of dagga and other drugs like cocaine, make learners to lose respect and focus. Durrant (2003) contends that some learners come to school from

environments that are full of psychological problems. These learners cannot cope with the domestic violence; they are low achievers at school. Therefore to relieve the emotional pain and feel better, they turn to drugs (dagga, cocaine etc). The use of drugs at school renders the lives of other learners and educators unsafe from bullying, stabbing, educators can be robbed.

(vi) The lack of parental guidance due to loss of father or mother through HIV/AIDS pandemic and other causes which leave children orphaned. As alluded earlier in the study that the area is marked by high rate of HIV/AIDS, this manifests in child headed families. The elderly child who is perhaps less than or is 18 years is left with no option but to take the responsibility that was supposed to be carried by parents (Children's Rights Centre, 2002). These children are ostracized, discriminated by certain members of the community because of the stigma of HIV/AIDS. They are harassed, sexually abused and are often involved in incidents of violence for their survival. They grow without proper guidance from parents; they do not receive any love.

The following are comments from some of the participants on causes of indiscipline among learners in the four schools:

P2 said:

*The major causes of learner **indiscipline** are: **conflicts** among the learners and their peers; family background, where learners disrespect their parents and do the same at school. The abuse of dagga and other drugs such as cocaine, make learners lose respect. Disrespect is always prevalent in the morning. Parents in this community are not interested in the education of their children. Most parents work in big cities such as Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, and therefore the learners are left with guardians and grandparents.*

P3 commented thus:

Because learners have many rights; they do not want to be disciplined. They end up rejecting the Code of Conduct and the rules of the school. Family background plays a big role in discipline. Most of the learners at this school come from families where there is absolutely no discipline. Most learners

associate with drop-outs who are not keen to study. The result is they end up using drugs, become part of gangs

P4 stated:

Parents do not speak the same language as the school. Disciplinary actions that are taken at school are not practically implemented at home, and there is a 'you' and 'him' language that is used by the parents.

To confirm the above assertions Dep P1 commented:

The lack of disciplinary background at home affects learner discipline at school. The death of parents due to HIV/AIDS has an effect, as the learner has to reside with the grandparents and this is another contributing factor to learner ill discipline. The fact that learners cannot choose role models in our communities results in their not having a vision in life.

HOD1 had a different view from the rest when he claimed:

Educators are unprofessional and they are not taking responsibility of ensuring that learners behave in a proper manner. Learners are different from adults; they look up to adults to show them the way

HOD2 said:

Parents have no control of their kids; learners frequent taverns and shebeens which are places they are not supposed to go to. There are no recreational facilities in our community.

Snr Educ.2 claimed:

This area is poor and characterized by unemployment, a high rate of HIV/AIDS, orphans. There are no role models and learners do not see the necessity for attaining higher education from colleges and universities.

4.6 Summary

Participants' shared common sentiments that drug abuse, family background, the fact that there were no role models in these communities are the main cause of ill discipline. The absence of father figure/mother figure who could exercise strict measures of discipline, lack of recreational facilities to keep learners busy was another factor that causes high rate of the use of alcohol.

4.6.1 Responses from parents and learners participants on causes of indiscipline

Parents and learner participants also gave their comments on causes of indiscipline in their schools. Their views confirmed the views of participant principals, HODs, and educators. The following are some of their comments:

Parent2 said:

"Iggabi aliwi kude emthini" which literary means (a leaf does not fall far away from the tree) this means a parent's unruly and rude behaviour does not go unnoticed by their children. Children's behaviour is like that of their parents.

FG1 commented:

Media have a big influence on some of our behaviour, the exposure to pornography from videos and internet makes us to copy and want to practice such behaviour.

FG2 member commented:

Die ouers baklei voor ons, hulle vloek baie lelik

(Our parents fight in front of us, and use vulgar language).

FG4 commented:

Poverty and unemployment influence learner behaviour at school. We struggle to get school uniforms, stationery, and sometimes we are not well fed at home. Some children are physically, sexually and emotionally abused at home and as such become too sensitive and rebellious and defensive

whenever someone touches them. Sir, there are the learners who carry knives at school.

4.7 Summary

There were mixed reactions from Principals, Deputy, and HODs on main causes of discipline. From the reflection on this question it was clear that socio-economic factors in the area like unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS which had left orphans in the community had a big influence in the behaviour of the learners. Children were raised by guardians or older people and end up resorting to drugs and alcohol because of the difficult conditions they experienced back home. Poor parenting also had contributed to lack of discipline. The media also had played a big role to indiscipline.

4.8 Strategies to Ensure Effective Implementation of Policies that Enhance Learner Discipline

The Information gathered showed that schools used different strategies to ensure effective implementation of policies that enhance discipline. This section presents data collected on the strategies and how they were implemented in schools.

4.8.1 The Code of Conduct

All participants were asked to explain whether their schools had Codes of Conduct and how they were developed. All the participants consented that their schools had Codes of Conduct. They also stated that they were developed in a participatory manner as all members of the school community were involved in their formulation. They included SMTs, SGBs, Educators, learners, parents, HODs and Principals. This was confirmed by the following respondents:

P1. Disclosed:

The school does have the Code of Conduct. Stakeholders that participated in crafting are; the SGB, SMT and the RCL. Each stakeholder would discuss the rules and present them in a plenary session. During the formulation the

buying in of stakeholders is of importance because we have to own it. Teachers monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct by enforcing the rules through detention, extra work, cleaning of the school yard. These punishments are only administered in cases of minor misconducts.

This was also confirmed by HOD1 from the same school that:

The Code of Conduct is in place, it was developed years ago but it has not been revised. The SMT and some Post Level educators developed the Code of Conduct. Not all stakeholders participated in the formulation of the Code of Conduct. To implement the Code of Conduct stakeholders, RCL, SMT and SGB members at the school do the monitoring of detention classes, when children are given extra work after school.

P2 stated as follows in connection with the above issue:

We do have the Code of Conduct as a school which was crafted by parents, teachers and learners. Every stakeholder was involved in the development of the Code of Conduct. Parents met aside, teachers and learners also. To implement the Code of Conduct all learners were informed about the dos and don'ts of the school, and what is expected from them in the classroom.

P3 disclosed:

We do have the Code of Conduct which was developed by Mr. Coetzee an ex-teacher at the school. No role was played by the stakeholders. We implement it by talking to the learners to obey the rules, observe of punctuality at school, do their work, wear school uniform and be always being obedient to teachers.

When P3 was asked to explain why the school did not involve all stakeholders in the school discipline policy formulation rather than allowing an individual to formulate the Code of Conduct he remarked:

Crafting of school plans and policies takes almost half of the school day. It is better for the Code of Conduct to be crafted by an experienced person.

However, the HOD3 from the same school had different views. In connection with the above issue the respondent stated that the Code of Conduct was developed by Parents, educators and learners and all stakeholders were present in the meeting. Their active participation was evident through giving inputs, remarked the participant. He explained further that the Code of Conduct was handed to each class teacher to explain in simple terms. They have endeavoured to issue it to every parent who has a registered learner at the school but because of budget constraints they could not do it every year. The statement is in conflict with the statement of P3 who disclosed honestly that Mr. Berends (not real name) an ex educator at the school developed the Code of Conduct and that no stakeholder was involved.

P4 also pointed out:

Each stakeholder had discussions guided by the South African Schools Administration and Management System (SASAMS) to come up with a comprehensive Code of Conduct. To implement the Code of Conduct is difficult because some learners ignore it Financial constraints do not allow certain things to happen at the school e.g. issuing the Code of Conduct in the language of preference to every learner; discuss it with the parent of every learner who is admitted each academic year.

Dep P2 pointed:

We agreed as educators and parents that learners who use drugs and bring dangerous weapons to the school should be suspended. In the case of learners who do not do school work their parents must be involved. There are problems in the implementation Of the Code of Conduct at the school. The biggest challenge is inconsistency and no sustainability in the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

Snr Educ 1's remarks were similar to the other participant's in that the school does have the Code of Conduct. Parents, educators and learners co-operated in the formulation by giving suggestions and inputs. The educator further remarked that there were facilitators among each group of stakeholder to ensure that the Code of Conduct was crafted. When the stakeholders were through with the discussions they

present a draft to a forum of all the stakeholders. The SGB compiled the final draft. Educators would ensure the implementation of the Code of Conduct takes place by monitoring punctuality in class, homework, during the change of periods etc.

Snr Educ 2. In connection with the above matter stated that the Code of Conduct was in place. The staff, SGB and parents formulated it. She further remarked each type of misconduct has to go with punishment. To implement the Code of Conduct parents had to ensure that learners do homework, they were punctual at school, in the absence of an educator; parents who are not working would come and supervise the classes. The statement by the participant clearly indicates that the learners were not included in crafting of plans, although the Code of Conduct was meant for them. The statement was in conflict with the statements of P2, Dep P2, and Snr Educ 2 that learners also were part of crafting the Code of Conduct. The statement further indicates that learners at S2 are not considered as a stakeholder. The participant reiterated what she said earlier that learners did not take part in the formulation of policies.

Snr Educ 3 disclosed:

There is a Code of Conduct. All stakeholders, parents, educators and learners came together and crafted it. Each group gave inputs; they discussed and came with a draft Code of Conduct. After discussions the draft was given to the SGB to combine them and come with a final draft. It is difficult to implement at the moment, most of the teachers do not have a copy, learners do not have copies either although it was agreed at registration that each learner should get the copy of the Code of Conduct. Financial constraints make it difficult to duplicate the document.

The statement was in concurrence with P3, HOD3, and Snr Educ 3 that budgetary constraints make it difficult to issue a copy to each learner.

Snr Educ 4. Also pointed out:

Yes there is the Code of Conduct. It was formulated by educators, learners parents (SGB). Educators played a role to see to it that what was done is in line with what the Department of Education wants. We ensured that there is

harmony during the process by explaining to learners particularly what is expected of them, we explained the dos and don'ts. To implement the Code of Conduct classroom educators talk to the learners, educators invigilate the detention classes, we also call parent if there is a need.

The statement concurred with P4, HOD4, Senr Educ 4 but contrasted with the implementation of Code of Conduct because Senr Educ 5 has said that there was no system of implementation. Whereas P4, HOD4, and Snr Educ 4 had indicated that detention, the cleaning of the school yard and classrooms and watering of trees are the strategies to implement discipline.

On the same issue all parents except one, concurred with their colleagues' principals and educators. They indicated that all schools possessed a Code of Conduct which was crafted by SGB, SMT and the RCL. It was implemented by all stakeholders who own the partnership. P5 indicated that he had never seen a Code of Conduct. This was confirmed by the following parents.

Parent 2 stated:

Lack of interest in education among the community as most parents are working in cities like Port Elizabeth and Cape Town and leave children under the care of grandparents and other relatives. The grandparents and guardian cite matters like age, health problems; those who are working as domestic workers knock off at work very late. Therefore it is difficult to go and attend the disciplinary problems that might have arisen from their children's behaviour.

The school does have the Code of Conduct which was formulated by the educators SMT, SGB and learners. The implementation is by suspending learners who commit misconduct, sending the learner home to fetch the parent.

Parent 3's statement was different from the other parents in that only educators and parents were responsible for formulation of the Code of Conduct but it was similar to Snr Educ 2 who has claimed that learners were not involved in the crafting of the Code of Conduct but P2, Dep P2, HOD 2 have stated that all stakeholders were present when the Code of Conduct was crafted.

Parent 4 disclosed:

Yes, the school does have a Code of Conduct. It was formulated by parents, educators and learners. Each group gave their inputs; they came with a draft Code of Conduct. The final draft was compiled after the consensus was reached. The SGB made a final draft. At the moment it is difficult to implement the Code of Conduct and not everybody does have a copy. Financial difficulties do not allow us to duplicate it for everybody.

Parent 5 disclosed:

I have never seen the Code of Conduct in this school, maybe it's there, but I never saw it. As far as I know there is no Code of Conduct in the school.

The statement indicated that the school was functioning without a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct cannot be implemented because it does not exist, or it exists but was kept in the Principal's office. There were no attempts of involving stakeholders in the crafting of the Code of Conduct although P4, HOD4, Snr 4 have emphasized the role that was played by all stakeholders.

4.8.1.1 Views of Learners on Code of Conduct

When learners were asked on the same issue, they confirmed what was said by the majority of participants that schools are in possession of the Codes of Conduct, however, disputed the issue of involving all stakeholders when the Code of Conduct was crafted.

FG1 agreed that the Code of Conduct was in existence in the school, they were told by Mr. Baatjies (not real name).

The learners further remarked that they are not aware of any meeting of stakeholders to craft the Code of Conduct. The statement contrasted with the statements of P1, Dep P1, HoD1, Snr Educ 1, Parent1, 2 of the involvement of all stakeholders. The statement concurred with the statement of parent5 who did not know about the existence of the Code of Conduct.

FG2 stated:

Yes, there is a Code of Conduct. The Principal and Educators and learners did play a role; parents were part of the formulation process.

FG3's remarks were similar to P3's that Mr. Berends was responsible for crafting the Code of Conduct. As learners they did not play any role.

FG4 disclosed:

Some classes have the code of conduct but the majority of learners do not have the Code of Conduct. Miss Velile (not real name) developed the Code of Conduct. There were no other stakeholders when it was formulated.

4.9 Summary

Generally schools possess Code of Conducts although the involvement of all stakeholders is questionable from learners' points of view.

4.9.1 Alternative strategies used by school instead of corporal punishment

The SMTs were asked about the alternative methods that were used to corporal punishment to maintain discipline in the schools and the problems encountered in their use. On the issue of alternative methods used to maintain discipline instead of corporal punishment, principals, HODs, Educators, Parents and learners cited detention, consultation with parents and cleaning of toilets, classrooms and school premises as well as verbal warnings as the most common alternatives. This was confirmed by various participants as shown below.

P1stated:

The alternatives to corporal punishment were detention which was administered after school on the same day as the offence was. It was found out that schools employ different strategies, which among many, involve counselling and advice from different stakeholders

It also surfaced from learners that corporal punishment was administered by educators although it is illegal.

There were mixed feelings on the effectiveness of strategies from learners as some of them said the strategies put in place were not effective even the use of corporal punishment while others found that detention and corporal punishment were the most effective strategies. The RCL members who misbehaved were stripped the portfolio immediately

The participant further remarked that, one of the barriers to implement alternatives to corporal punishment was:

At the end of the school day, names of learners who had transgressed are announced through the intercom to remind them about the detention classes but surprisingly, some learners would not turn up. Even if they all come, there is no change; learners do not change their attitude. Therefore detention, as far as I am concerned, does not work as a deterrent.

P2: pointed:

The best alternative method to corporal punishment is to send the learner home to fetch the parent. Detention was another alternative that is used in place of corporal punishment. The two methods so far have worked for the school because the level of minor misconducts has dropped drastically.

P4: The Principal of S4 disclosed confidently that the school did administer corporal punishment. He stated that:

At the school we deal with learners who still need to be shown the way. We have an understanding with the parents that it should be administered. Learners are also aware that it is illegal but at least two lashes are administered. Besides that, learners' clean toilets and It was found out that schools employ different strategies, which among many, involve counselling and advice from different stakeholders.

These strategies were similar to the statements of P1, Dep P1 with a slight difference with the Dep P1 who mentioned that verbal warnings were being given to learners, sometimes as an alternative method to corporal punishment

HOD2: echoed the same sentiments as P1, P2, P3 and HOD 1 that the school did not administer corporal punishment. The participant disclosed that there were alternatives methods to corporal punishment which included detention, a strategy that seemed to be popular in most schools in the Graaff Reinet District. It gave learners extra work after school and compelled them to clean the classrooms, toilets and remove graffiti.

HOD3 said:

We talk to the learners. There is no detention as an alternative method to corporal punishment because detention drains the energy of educators.

HOD 4 stated:

We administer Corporal Punishment but not much. We have an agreement with the RCL that if a learner transgresses. He/she should be given 2 lashes

It was found out that schools employed different strategies, which among many, involve counselling and advice from different stakeholders. It also surfaced from learners that corporal punishment is administered by educators although it is illegal. There were mixed feelings on the effectiveness of strategies from learners as some of them said the strategies put in place were not effective even the use of corporal punishment while others found that detention and corporal punishment were the most effective strategies.

Educators were asked to explain whether some educators were still administering corporal punishment and why do they do so. They were also asked what alternative methods to corporal punishment were used.

Snr Educator 1 disclosed his point of view as:

No Corporal punishment is administered in the school, we always adhere to SASA principles that learner's rights must be observed. The alternative methods include detention if the learners commit an act of minor misconduct; they are given a verbal warning. If he or she does the same misconduct He /she are referred to the Grade Head. The third and fourth time, the parent is

called then the Disciplinary Committee, but the Disciplinary Committees the last resort.

The parents were asked whether some of the educators were still administering Corporal Punishment and what alternative methods to Corporal Punishment were used by the school.

Parents indicated that Corporal Punishment was not administered at school. Alternative methods to Corporal Punishment mentioned were detention, verbal warning, and calling the parent of the learner to school. This was confirmed by the following parents.

Parent 2 disclosed:

As far as I know, no teacher administers Corporal Punishment. The alternative methods are detention and suspension of the learner for a week.

Parent 3 disclosed:

No, Corporal Punishment is administered at the school; the two HODs try to sort the problem out. Learners are sent for detention, clean classrooms and remove graffiti from the walls.

Parent 4 remarked that they administer Corporal Punishment.

We use sticks and lashes are inflicted to the back when it is a boy. Pinching is also used because the learners do not behave well. The Principal sends the learner home with a letter inviting his/her parent to the school.

When asked about the same issue of alternative for Corporal Punishment, Snr Educators cited reasons given by the principals, HODs, and parents.

4.9.1.1 Views of learners with regards to Corporal Punishment

Learners were asked to state their views on the administering of Corporal Punishment and to state their views on the alternative methods to Corporal Punishment.

FG1: The learners disclosed collectively that it is right to administer corporal punishment in the school because there are situations where some learners come to the school drunk. However, some educators misused it. They went on to state that administering Corporal Punishment didn't help because learners misbehaved more. Some learners just walked out of classes when there was an argument with a teacher.

FG2 remarked that Corporal Punishment was still administered at the school. They felt that the alternatives to Corporal Punishment were not effective because learners kept on transgressing the rules. These were the learners that must accept Corporal Punishment. They strongly felt that teachers must be serious in implementing detention because it works. Children were scared to be sent on detention.

FG3 in concurrence with FG2 indicated that some educators still administered Corporal Punishment at the school to enforce discipline especially in Grade 8, to deal with those learners that did not want to listen. The learners stated that alternative methods to Corporal Punishment, such as, sending of learners out of classrooms did not help because the learner did not learn anything. They just get time for a smoke break.

FG4 disclosed:

Some educators are still administering Corporal Punishment. However, the alternative methods of cleaning toilets are harmful to the health of the learners because they can contract diseases from the toilets. It is not the learners' duty to clean the toilets. We do not have problems with the cleaning of classrooms and the administration block. The alternative methods do not work because learners come late to school and they do not do their homework.

4.10 Summary

There were mixed reaction as to the administering of Corporal Punishment because some educators and parents admitted that it was still administered. Generally it was evident that some schools (educators) were still administering Corporal Punishment although it had been banned, the majority of learners

indicated that Corporal Punishment was administered by teachers in school and they had nothing against it and felt that the alternatives to Corporal Punishment were not effective and some were a health hazard. The Disciplinary hearing was one strategy that was common in the four schools in an effort of ensuring effective discipline.

4.10.1 Disciplinary Hearings

Section 8(1) of South African Schools Act, 1996 empowers the School Governing Bodies to adopt the Code of Conduct for learners to safeguard the interests of learners and other parties that are involved in the disciplinary proceedings in consultation with parents, educators, non educator staff and learners at the school. After developing the Code of Conduct, guidelines and regulations to enforce the Code of Conduct ensure that there is effective discipline in the school (South African Schools Act No.84, of 1996). Therefore it is the Disciplinary Committee that has to ensure that rules in the Code of Conduct are obeyed by learners. This implies that the four components have to be involved in decision making, also take part in issues that pertain to learner discipline. To deal with disciplinary problems in schools, Potgieter et al, 1997:60-61) contend that some issues of discipline warrant investigation and specific procedure should be followed before any action can be taken if a learner has committed a serious act of misconduct. This is statement supported by the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, (2003) that apart from hearings of cases of misconduct serious cases are referred to the Schools Disciplinary Committee for possible suspension and recommendation for expulsion. According to Flood, Gibson &Gibson (2002:25) the function of the Disciplinary Committee should be to implement the disciplinary actions that are stipulated in the Code of Code of Conduct. They further state that the disciplinary action should be progressive. It should first start with a reprimand (verbal warning), which is followed by tougher disciplinary actions. Van de Waldt et al (2007:67) further argue that another function of the Disciplinary Committee is to prevent punishment and ensure that there is no unwanted behaviour in the school.

SMTs, senior educators and parents were asked to explain what happens during the disciplinary hearings. The information from interviews revealed that procedures

stated in the policy documents were followed with the parent of the offender, the Disciplinary Committee and the Principal who acts as an overseer and evidence is produced to the board and the offender is given the chance to defend himself/herself.

4.10.1.1 Views of Principals, Deputy Principals and senior educators

The views of Principals and senior educators were sought on disciplinary procedures as they were involved in the day to day running of school and they were always in contact with the learners. They all concurred with the procedures followed as witnessed by some responses and showed knowledge of statutory instruments.

P1. In connection with the above question said:

The Disciplinary Committee is the last resort at the school but firstly we invite the parent of the learner who has misbehaved. The Disciplinary Committee is called; the chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee is a parent who leads the meeting. The Principal and the educator give evidence. The Principal acts as an overseer of the whole process and acts as a neutral person. The process is given a chance to unfold and the learner is excused when the final decision is to be taken by the Disciplinary Committee. The Education Development Officer (EDO) is informed about the process and the outcome if a learner has been suspended for a week. Records are kept in the Principal's office

The statement indicated the fair process that is followed by the school to discipline a learner who had transgressed. The aim was not to punish or embarrass the learner but the learner must be able to take punishment for his/her actions. The EDO also was informed about the process and upon the suspension of a learner.

P2. Disclosed:

We firstly identify the problem, we set the date and time for the hearing. All stakeholders, Disciplinary Committee, parent of the learner must be informed in writing and the learner should be present. The subject educator explains what has happened giving a clear direction how the learner has transgressed

the Code of Conduct. In the presence of the parent, the action is taken but there are two options.

P2 outlined the options as:

Option (1):

An action of suspending the learner and giving the parent the responsibility of monitoring the child to change the behaviour or the responsibility of ensuring that he/she catches up with the work that has been done Option (2)

Suspend the learner from the school with no role played by the parent and to help the learner catch up when he is finished with the sentence. The Principal has the final say in the Disciplinary hearing. Upon the finalization of the case the Disciplinary Committee keeps the records, the EDO is furnished with the minutes but so far in 2012 there has been no hearing.

P4. Also pointed out:

The educator deals with the problem. He/she reports to the class teacher and the HOD deals with the problem. The HOD investigates, calls the Principal and the SMT. The SMT refers the case to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee calls the SGB, The parent of the learner is also called in writing. The case is discussed and the Disciplinary Committee makes recommendation to the SGB. The SGB takes the final decision. Records are kept by each teacher with the signature of the parent and the learner. The records are kept for the purpose of reference. The Disciplinary Committee keeps records also.

The statement was similar to the others but with P1, P3 the Grade Head /subject educator plays a role as the investigation officers whereas in S4 the HOD deals with the problem. It was not clear whether at the school the system of Grade Heads and Phase heads was followed. The statement is similar to P2 where the final decision is taken by the SGB but P1 and P3 have stated that the Disciplinary Committee takes the final decision

Dep P2. Asserted:

Outlined the options as:

Option (1):

An action of suspending the learner and giving the parent responsibility of monitoring the child to change the behavior or the responsibility of ensuring that he/she catches with the work that has been done or

Option (2) outlined: to suspend the learner outside the school with no role played by the parent, to catch up when he is finished with the sentence. The Principal has the final say in the Disciplinary hearing. Upon the finalization of the case the Disciplinary Committee keeps the records, the EDO is furnished with the minutes but so far in 2012 there has been no hearing.

The statement indicated the fairness in the whole process of the Disciplinary hearing. The learner was also catered for in the process. The aim of the Disciplinary Committee was for the learners to learn a lesson. The statement concurred with that of Dep1, P3 where the Disciplinary Committee made the final decision.

HOD4 Asserted:

The educator deals with the problem. The educator reports to the class teacher who reports to the HOD, the HOD deals with the problem, investigates it and then calls the Principal and the SMT. the SMT refers the case to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee calls the SGB. It is the SGB that will invite the parent in writing .Discussions will continue and the final verdict is taken. The Disciplinary Committee makes recommendations to the SGB to take a final decision. Records are kept by the teacher. After the final verdict has been taken both the parent and the learner should sign admission of guilt of the learner. Record keeping is useful for the purpose of references. The Disciplinary Committee keeps the records of serious cases.

The statement indicated how serious educators were in maintaining learner discipline. Every educator who teaches the child had a role to play. It indicated that educators were a united front in curbing learner indiscipline. The parents were not

left behind but were also informed of the role they should play in the education of the learner. The statement is similar to the statement of P4, the Disciplinary Committee had all the powers but the SGB took the final decision.

Senior Educ 4 also said:

Step (1) the hearing at the school is held after the educators have tried to talk to the learner. Serious cases are reported to the Principal by the educator. A letter is written to the parent informing him/her about the date of the disciplinary hearing

Step (2) on the date of the hearing discussions take place but if the matter is too serious e.g. stabbing another learner, the police are called.

Step (3) The SGB and the Disciplinary Committee take the final decision in matters that include continuous bunking of classes, continued truancy, not doing homework, disrespecting educators. Throughout the process records are kept in the Principal's office in the strong room.

The statement indicated that educators at the school had a dual role to play. A learner's case was referred to the Disciplinary Committee only to show how serious the educators were to change the attitude of the learner. The statement agreed with the statements of P1, P3 and HOD 3 that the Disciplinary Committee was the last resort to try and find a corrective measure. The statement also concurred with P3 and HOD 3 who are the only participants who had indicated that police were involved when a learner was stabbed to death in the school premises. It indicated how determined the school authorities were in instilling learner discipline.

Data had revealed that Principals, Deputy Principals and educators were well versed in disciplinary procedures as stipulated in policy documents and all stakeholders were involved in disciplinary cases.

4.10.1.2 Views of Parents and Learners on Disciplinary procedures.

The views of parents were sought on disciplinary procedures to find out whether cases concerning discipline were correctly handled and also whether learners' views were sought on the issues since they are the offenders.

Parent 1 disclosed:

As the new SGB, we have not experienced cases of a serious nature that warrant a sitting of the Disciplinary Committee, but if there are cases of this nature, parents will be informed. The SGB has the power to take serious decisions in handling disciplinary cases.

The statement indicated that the new SGB have not dealt with serious cases yet but other cases were resolved internally by the educators and the SMT, the cases that have happened so far did not need the involvement of the SGB.

Parent 2 also disclosed and added

There have been no disciplinary cases that have been reported to us by the management of the school

The statement was similar to the one of Parent 1 because the SGB is only 4 months old.

Parent 3 remarked:

If the learner is accused of serious misconduct the matter is referred to the Disciplinary Committee. The parent is called. On the arrival of the parent the next day they discuss the issue with the parent and the learner. The SMT, SGB and the Disciplinary Committee make the final decision. Parents of the learner would agree to the decision. Records are kept in the Principal's office.

Parent 4 asserted and echoed same sentiments as P4

The educator dealt with the problem. He/she reported to the class teacher. The HOD investigated, called the Principal and the SMT. The SMT referred the case to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee called the SGB, the parent of

the learner was also called in writing. The case was discussed and the Disciplinary Committee made recommendations to the SGB. The SGB took the final decision. Records were kept by each educator with the signature of the parent and the learner. The records were kept for the purpose of reference. The Disciplinary Committee kept records also.

The statement was indicative of the parental role the Disciplinary Committee of the school plays, how lenient and transparent they were in the process. The aim of the Disciplinary Committee was to correct the misconduct of the learner, rather than to punish the learner. The statement was similar to the statement of P3, HOD3, Senior Educator 3 who had outlined the same processes that were followed by the school when serious disciplinary cases were handled.

Parent 5 remarked:

The child is sent to the Principal after the class educator has discovered that the child has committed a serious act of misconduct. He /She is sent home and the parent is called in writing setting a date for the disciplinary hearing. An incident happened at the school where the cottage was vandalized during holidays. The parent was called but the parent sided with the children. The matter was referred to the police. Two boys quarrelled in class in March 2012. One went home to fetch a knife. It was difficult to stop him so the police were called. The Disciplinary Committee recommends to the SGB to take a final decision.

The statement indicated the dangerous conditions under which educators and parents worked. Parents were similar to educators because educators had to play the role of parents but conditions where they had to dispose learners who were carrying dangerous weapons put their lives at a risk. The statement concurred with the statement of Senior Educ 4 that stated that the police were called if it came to a push.

It had come to light that in some schools there were no serious disciplinary cases as indicated by parents. Generally, parents seemed to be aware of disciplinary

procedures and this indicates that correct measures are adhered to in dealing with disciplinary cases.

Learners were asked to give their views on what happens at disciplinary hearings and what role, if any, do they play , what changes they would like to see in the process and how does the Disciplinary Committee arrive at the final verdict.

FG1 disclosed:

A letter is sent to parents. We have never been involved in any hearing only the SMT and the Principal know what happens. We would like to see the RCL being part of the hearings for learners to receive a fair hearing.

The statement contrasted the statement of P1, Dep P1, and HOD1 Senior Educ 1 that learners were part of the hearing.

FG2 collectively agreed:

At the school, there was an incident where a boy threatened to stab the Principal. and the police were called. Parents of the learner were also called to attend the disciplinary hearing. The RCL did not play any role because they were not invited. We would like to see the RCL representing the learners, parents should be allowed to hire a lawyer to defend the child not to victimized

The statement indicated that the RCL did not play any role at the school in the disciplinary hearing which was stipulated in SASA regulations

FG3 remarked by stating:

In the case of misconduct the case is sent to the Principal to decide whether it is a case of Disciplinary Committee or it should be handled internally. If it is a serious case a date is set for the child to appear before the Disciplinary Committee. A letter is sent to the parent to accompany the learner. A letter is sent to the SGB members. The RCL have to be present to ensure that the child is given a fair hearing. When the hearing is over, the parent and the learner are sent outside for the Disciplinary Committee and the SGB to come to a final decision. We would like to see changes such as, if the child is accused of serious misconduct, there should be a representative from the

RCL. The parent of the child should be part of the decision making, but should not be asked to step outside when the final decision is taken.

The statement indicated that the learner's rights and the parent's rights were not mentioned in the process of dealing with the cases of serious acts of misconduct. It appeared that the Principal had a big influence when the final decision had to be taken although the Disciplinary Committee handled the serious cases of learner discipline. The final decisions that were taken were pre determined decisions. The RCL's powers during the Disciplinary hearing were limited; they were not allowed to cross examine either the victim or the defendant.

FG4 stated:

If learners fight, they are sent to the Principal. The Principal calls the parents of the two learners in writing informing them about the date of the disciplinary hearing.

At the hearing the learner who started the fight will be asked to plead guilty or not guilty by the Disciplinary Committee. If he/she pleads guilty a decision is made by the Principal. If the learner has pleaded not guilty, the class teacher gives evidence, questions are asked of the learner.

Learners do not play any role. We would like the Disciplinary Committee to play a role so that there is reconciliation between the two learners rather to find one guilty. The learner who is found guilty should be made to apologize in-front of other learners. To extend the Disciplinary Committee, we would like the class representatives to be part of the hearing because they are usually eye-witnesses. The RCL does not play a role in the Disciplinary Committee.

4.11 Summary

Concerning the issues of the disciplinary hearing it was evident that the learner's rights and the parent's rights were not mentioned in the process of dealing with the cases of serious acts of misconduct. Again it appears even in S4 that the Principal is having a big influence when the final decision is to be taken; the Disciplinary Committee is just echoing what the Principal and the SMT have already decided.

The final decisions that are taken are pre determined decisions. The RCL does not have any power as the learner representative during the Disciplinary hearing.

The responses from learners showed some maturity and understanding of disciplinary procedures to be followed. However, there are mixed reactions on involvement of RCL as some respondents indicated that RCL are not invited in some schools.

4.11.1 Safety and Security Committee

The researcher sought the views of the SMTs on whether the schools had Safety and Security Committees and how the committee applied the principles of safety to ensure the safety of learners and educators. It was revealed that most schools had no Safety and Security Committees.

South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996(as amended by Act 31 of 2007) and the Department of Education, and the Schools Safety Policy empowers School Governing Bodies the legal power to Schools safety and security Committee. The Safety and Security Committee had to report to the SGB about safety issues around the school. The Act further stipulates that the committee must be representative of the school community and should be results orientated, have efficient group that has a clear action plan (Eastern Cape Department of Education, 2003). The composition of the Safety is determined by the SGB of that school but should comprise the following members, The School Safety Officer and or Teacher, a SGB member, a minimum of 2 learners, a member of SAPS, Social partners as determined by the school, any other person who could possibly add value to such committee.

Its functions comprise the following (i) To develop and maintain a safe, welcoming, violence free learning and teaching environment where learners and educators can teach. (ii) To enable learners develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to prevent and deal with violence, danger appropriately. (iii) To ensure that victims, witnesses and perpetrators know that the school will act to stop or prevent violence accordingly (iv) To develop interventions to minimize and eradicate gender based violence. (v) To develop interventions to minimize and eradicate violence in general. (vi) To help learners to understand acceptable behaviour in the school and society,

and be aware of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. (vii) To educate and encourage learners to actively participate in their school and community. (viii) To encourage communities, nongovernmental organizations and business to support School Safety initiatives and promote a safe learning environment. (Eastern Cape DoE, Schools Safety, 2006)

P1. Disclosed his point of view:

To be honest we do not have Safety and Security Committees. The Committee was supposed to have been established a long time ago after so many incidents happened at the school. The most recent incident was on 06 May 2012 when two boys who were both carrying knives fought, and stabbed each other. No educator wanted to intervene because we were scared. There has been no random searching at the school so far. It is high time that the Safety and Security Committee was established.

P2 asserted:

We have a school grounds plan to ensure the safety of our learners. The problem is that we do not have proper fences. There is an invigilation time table to manage the learners the whole year because we are not sure when something unexpected will happen at the school. To ensure safety, the school gates are closed. There are groups of educators Teams A, B and C. Teachers are deployed to watch what is happening at the learner's toilets and playgrounds. We do random searching for drugs dangerous weapons and the police help us

The statement indicated how conscious the educators are about the safety of the learners because at the back of their mind they were aware that parents put their trust in them for their children's safety.

P3 disclosed:

At the moment it is not in place, it will be put in place by the new SGB. It is difficult to enforce something that was working for the school to new People;

they have to be orientated first. We do random searching with the help of the SAPS; there have been two random searches in 2012

The statement indicated that although the Safety and Security Committee has not been established, it is in the pipeline because they know that children's safety is a concern in the school after the incident in 2010. The statement concurred with the statements of P1, P2 that security in schools must be beefed up.

P4.also said:

It is there but it is dysfunctional. We apply the principles of safety by doing random searches there have been two random searches in 2012 by the SAPS upon suspicion of smoking of dagga. After 08h10 the gates at the school are locked for security reasons.

The statement concurred with the statement of P3 that random searches have to be done at school. There have been two random searches at the school but with S4, it only happens when they are suspicious of something but in S3 it is carried out anytime.

Dep P2 Disclosed:

Yes, there is a Safety and Security Committee which is entrusted arches with ground duties upon the start of the school, to manage late coming, monitor learners during breaks in the playground, during change of periods and in class generally. There are groups A, B and C. during the change of period the class representatives, one leads and the other at the back of the class. Random searching is done in every term.

The statement concurred with the statement of P2 that there was a ground plan to ensure the safety of the learners, educators were alternating the duties. It is indicative of the knowledge of administration and the SMTsupheld the principles of the SASA document.

HOD2 in connection with the above question remarked:

No there is no Safety and Security Committee at the school but we have a safety policy which is related to the policy of the police forum. We randomly search for weapons and drugs like dagga with the help of the police.

The statement differed to the statement by P2, Dep P2 that a safety committee is in existence in the school. These were members of the SMT who were supposed to be complementing one another and be knowledgeable about what is happening in and around the school. They agreed that random searching was done but the participant has not allocated time specifics as to when it was done.

HOD 3 asserted:

There is a Safety and Security Committee that looks on safety issues by ensuring that visitors who enter the school report at the secretary's office. Random searching is done where there are emergency cases at the school.

HOD 4 agreed with the statement of P4 that there was a Safety and Security committee but it was dysfunctional. Parents were not visible. They further concurred that random searching sometimes happened with the help of the police in search of dangerous weapons and drugs.

4.12 Summary

There were mixed reactions from participants on the availability of Safety and Security Committee in schools as some schools had none and some were dysfunctional. In other schools they were non-existent.

4.13 How are policies implemented by schools?

Views were sought from Principals, Deputy Principals, Senior educators, parents and learners concerning the process followed in implementing learner discipline, as it was an important aspect of the study. Most participants revealed that there was zero tolerance of indiscipline as those learners who did not adhere to school rules and regulations were noted for disciplinary action to be taken. All participants agreed that class teachers had the responsibility to look after their classrooms and in each class

there are two class representatives who helped the subject educator to monitor the behaviour of learners who disturbed lessons. However, they found that it was a challenge to maintain discipline. Below are some views of participants.

P1 stated:

SMT is vigilant they do take rounds in-between the lessons to ensure that there is order in the school.

P2 pointed:

It is difficult sometimes to implement discipline but there are classroom rules, there is a Zero tolerance policy on the bunking of classes, no learner is allowed to be outside the classroom during classes.

P3 pointed:

The school does not have a written document of strategies for implementing learner discipline but there are classroom rules. There is a roaster for supervision of learners during breaks. The groups are categorized as Group 1, 2 and 3. The group leader would deploy his/her people. This is a strategy that we have adopted as a school after a child was stabbed to death in 28 October 2010 while playing in the playground with another boy, the principal further added. .

Dep P2 remarked:

We give the class teachers the responsibility to look after their classrooms and in each class there are two class representatives who help the subject educator and monitor the behavior of learners who disturb the class. The problematic learners are taken to the Grade Head instead of reporting them to Dep P1. There is a Disciplinary Committee if the Grade Head cannot solve the problem. The Disciplinary Committee. is comprised of educators, and 1 parent from the SGB.

The views of HODs and educators on the same issue were sought and below are some of the responses.

HOD4 stated:

The educator reports the learner to the HOD in the form of a report. If the learner continues, the parent is called. Serious cases such as fighting are dealt with by the SGB and the Disciplinary Committee but such cases are rare in our school

Snr Educ2:

There are different strategies that the school has employed to deal with cases of indiscipline, remarked the educator.

There are pass-outs that are issued by subject educators for learners who want to relieve themselves or are sent by the educator. In the event of an absent educator, there is an invigilation time-table.

This statement was supported by the statements by P4, HOD 2 which stressed the use of a roaster to invigilate learners in the case of an absent educator. The educator further remarked that there are period registers that were kept by class representatives to monitor the bunking of classes. The above statement indicated the importance of good working relations in the school because educators as parents also have commitments outside the school which must be attended to during school hours, therefore educators must help one another.

Snr Educ 3:

The principal has regular talks with the learners, telling learners and reminding them of what is expected of them. In staff meetings the Principal always emphasizes unity among staff members. The use of Love Life ground breakers, SASSA Social Workers, SAPS, and Nurses from the clinic, the students from USA who visit our school is having fruitful results. These people have regular talks with the learners.

Parent 1 remarked:

Teachers are made to understand their responsibilities at the school, they are paid for that.

Parent 2:

Our strategy for implementing learner discipline is that teachers must teach and learners must learn in class. Minor cases are handled by the classroom teachers and serious cases are dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee and the SGB.

Parent4 responded:

Step (1) there are regular talks between the Principal and the learners that are held in the Assembly. Learners are reminded about good and responsible behavior in the school and the classroom.

Step (2) The Principal as the head of the school does have talks with the teachers and stresses the importance of working together. Late coming is dealt with by the subject teacher in class. Community based organizations like SAPS, Social Development visit the school and have good talks with the learners not to use drugs.

FGs were asked to give their own views on the strategies that were employed by the schools to ensure the implementation of learner discipline policies.

FG1:'s response to the question was that the strategies were not effective because there are continued late coming, bunking of classes, learners were back chatting to some of the educators. The learners agreed collectively that the only strategy that was working was detention. When they were asked why detention seemed to be working according to them, they stated that "no learner wanted to be left behind when his/her fellow class mates were catching buses and other modes of transport to go home. One learner further remarked, "*Hier die skool is vir meneer van die lokasie, ons will nie sekkel nie*(The school is allocated far away from the location sir, we don't want to struggle)

FG2 pointed:

The strategies are not effective; children do not want to obey the rules, they want to follow their own rules. Even detention does not work because children keep on doing the same acts of misconduct

FG3 stated:

The strategies at the school were effective because the management was doing everything in their power to instil discipline both in the classroom and the school. The SMTs of the school led by example. They helped the educators who were afraid of the learners. They talked to the learners also.

FG4: The learners agreed collectively and echoed the same sentiments as FG 1, FG2, that the strategies for implementing learner discipline at the school were not effective because:

The use of corporal punishment by some educators does not solve the problem but one learner remarked:

4.14 Summary

It was found out that schools employed different strategies, which among many, involve counselling and advice from different stakeholders. It also surfaced from learners that corporal punishment was administered by educators although it was illegal. There were mixed feelings on the effectiveness of strategies from learners as some of them said the strategies put in place were not effective even the use of corporal punishment while others found that detention and corporal punishment were the most effective strategies.

• CHALLENGES THAT ARE FACED BY SCHOOLS IN IMPLEMENTING LEARNERDISCIPLINE STRATEGIES

P1. Remarkd:

The RCL in classes are not carrying their duties in classrooms, during playground, during break times. The RCL were assigned to also assist in the monitoring of gates in the morning to identify the late comers, to identify all those that are problematic in class, bunking classes, and all these cases are to be referred to the Grade Head.

The statement indicated that the Principal has lost faith in the RCL. It appeared that the RCL members were not carrying out their functions because they were not aware of what they were supposed to be doing. It appeared also that they were afraid of some learners, conniving with some problematic learners. The management of the school should come up with a strategy of electing the RCL; there must be a liaising officer between the RCL and the educators.

P2 disclosed:

At the school the strategies are not implementable because teachers want to overload the RCL with many duties, there are no good working relations between the RCL and the class reps. invigilating the learners in the case of an absent educator poses a serious problem because educators do not honour those classes. There is a problem late coming in classrooms and in the morning because we do not have a proper fencing. Learners choose not to wear school uniform although they have it. Sustainability in keeping the strategies is a big problem. The SMT should keep on reminding the educators about their duties. The fact that not all of us are pulling together e.g. some of the educators would not buy into a strategy for discipline for unknown reasons. There is a division among the staff members at the school. Differences in ideas make things even worse.

The statement indicated that the Principal was frustrated because nothing seems to be going his way. The division within the staff was cited by Senior Educ 2 and FG2 that racial tendencies were beginning to surface when the cases of learner misconduct have to be dealt with citing the issue of biasness towards white learners. The SMT seemed to be disjointed also with the Dep Principal not supporting the Principal in some issues. This has been revealed in their arguments, the Principal was talking another language and the deputy Principal was stating this was happening when handling discipline at the school. It was not clear whether the fact that at the school the educators belong to different labour unions had a bearing in the manner decisions were taken, but unions had nothing to do with the maintaining of discipline of the same learners. It appeared that the participant was afraid of being attacked by stroke because of this stressful situation.

P3. Also added:

Educators have different mindsets; there is no consensus in a number of issues. Money constraints are another factor. The infrastructure, the way the school is built makes it difficult to manage discipline e.g. learners that are bunking classes. We need to close up some of the passages in the school. Putting a new fencing in the school so as to control learners, there are so many loopholes.

From the statement it seemed that P3 was concurring with P2 about the frustrations they encountered because educators were difficult, were idealistic when it came to learner discipline, the school was having a big financial constraint which was sabotaging the strategies of the school e.g. the erection of fencing around the school, the closing of passages for the school to be manageable.

P4 In connection with the above matter pointed that:

As a school we are understaffed, we have been asking from the DoE for more teachers but they say we must wait for redeployment. Some of the educators like cheap popularity from the learners; they have an understanding attitude when implementing learner discipline. Educators do not relay the information down to the learners that relates to discipline, some learners would say "I do not know about that". Educators want to shift responsibility to the SMT and the Principal to manage discipline because they refer simple cases they can manage to the SMT and the Principal.

The statement indicated also the frustration that P4 was suffering from. Educators were non co-operative in S4 expect for a handful. Decisions at the staff meeting or at the briefings as the Principal had stated earlier were done but due to some personal differences with the management they were not disseminated to the learners. Some educators want to appear as good educators at the expense of the others forgetting that children are children; they will turn against them one day.

Dep P1 stated:

At the school have a problem of fencing, the outlay of the school is so open, the community uses the fence to go over the school. There is a shortage of manpower, not all of us are pulling together.

The statement is in concurrence with the statement of P4 that the shortage of manpower made matters difficult and the fact that not all educators were co-operative was aggravating the situation. The statement of the infrastructure concurred with that of P3 that the infrastructure of the school needed to be revisited to beef up security.

Dep P2 is in concurrence with P2 that inconsistency and lack of sustainability were one of the challenges that were faced by the school in ensuring effective implementation of learner discipline but with an addition that the learners were changing everyday when they were giving problems, to test the character of educators, they could see division among educators. Detention of learners was one of the challenges because educators did not honour their duties; the educators cited prior commitments somewhere on the day when they were supposed to perform duties. The statement indicated the difficulties of having to lead people, people who can talk, who can think differently, not say it but show by means of action that one is against the idea.

HOD1 stated:

Educators are the weakest link between the Grade Heads, SMT SGB and the Principal because we are not dedicated in our job.

The statement concurred with the statements of P1, P2, P3, P4, Dep P1, and Dep P2 that educators were sometimes to blame for the ineffective implementation of learner discipline. It indicated that most educators did not have interest in instilling learner discipline, but have the misconception that those who are paid should do the work that they are paid for.

HOD2 expressed his point of view on the matter:

There is no-co-operation from educators, the parents are not co-operating either, and The Department of Education is not co-operative either. In 2011 a

certain boy threatened to stab me and my child at home. We wrote a letter to the Department of Education asking their intervention, there was no reply but the parent of the boy came to have the boy disciplined by the school.

The statement indicated that educators had lost confidence in the education Department in trying to resolve issues of discipline. Parents in the community did not care about the teacher's safety because the majority of the educators were not from the area. Educators were left alone in maintaining learner discipline.

HOD3 also pointed out

There is no liaison officer between the educators and the learners. There is a struggle in managing learner discipline because the RCL have disciplinary problems too, they were elected democratically because of their popularity with the school children but some of them do not have leadership qualities. One of the problems we have experienced in 2012, there hasn't been enough time to deal with cases, they are postponed over and over again. We are understaffed; we need 3 extra educators at the school.

The statement indicated that the RCL was incapacitated, and educators were not aware of the role of the RCL because there was no linking or guiding officer who could tell them what to do. It also indicated that the learners were not properly inducted and informed about their responsibilities. It implies that educators have to be visible when the RCL is elected or else all the problematic learners will be elected. Doing that is not interfering with the democratic process because learners must be cautioned not to elect people that are ill-disciplined. The statement concurred with P4 who stated that the school is understaffed. This problem of the DOE, however the latter seems not to care about it.

HOD 4 disclosed:

Learners would say too much work is given to them, so they cannot cope, this is one of the reason for late coming. Parents do not come when they are called. Educators are not consistent, they are not firm in implementing learner discipline policies, we are not pulling together.

The statement is consistent with P2, P4, Dep P1, Dep P2, and HOD 2. It reiterated the fact that educators were not pulling together which made it difficult for policies to be implemented. The statement also indicates the difficulty of dealing with different people who have different mindsets.

Senior Educ 1 intimated that:

The teacher component do not co-operate as a collective, parents also do not assist, do not attend meetings so as to take decisions that relate to learner discipline. Only few parents will attend.

The above statement concurred with P2, Dep P2, Dep P2, , HOD 2 and HOD 4 that educators were not pulling their weight together in as far as discipline in concerned. Parents were not supportive either in the implementation of learner discipline policies. SMTs and SGBs had a big role to play in sensitizing educators and actively participating in the implementation of learner discipline policies.

Senior Educ 2 in concurrence with P2, Dep P2, HOD 4, cited that parents did not turn up when they are called for meetings. When learners were asked to bring parents to school to discuss issues of ill discipline; learners just took any adult from the streets who will act as a guardian. In return, the adult will be compensated with a strong drink. It made things difficult for the educators because they were not sure who the legal guardians of the learners were. At the beginning of the year, the school should call a meeting of all parents or guardians to declare that they will be responsible for their children that year, contact numbers of those parents should be taken. The class teacher should be able to identify the parent and ask the parent to sign.

Senior Educ 3 stated that:

Because there were three components in the school that should play a role in discipline, problems from the three groups were that it was difficult to convene a meeting of all three stakeholders to come into one venue, there were conflicting ideas of the three groups, parents were conservative and did not want to change in their stance, learners were so adamant about the freedom

of carrying or use of cell phone at the school because they see on television children from other countries carrying their cell phone at school.

The statement showed that there was still a lot that should be done by school authorities to educate stakeholders about what should be done at school to implement learner discipline. It also indicated the influence of media on the behaviour of children. Learners should be taught to link their rights with responsibilities.

In concurrence with P2, P4, Dep P2, HOD2, HOD 4, and Senior Educator 1, Senior Educ4 expressed similar sentiments that parents do not attend meetings when they were called. Educators are overloaded with work because there was a shortage of educators at the school. She further added and agreed with P2, Dep P1, P4, and HOD 4 that educators were not co-operating in implementing learner discipline policies. This problem was cited and emphasized by P4 who mentioned that some educators were not firm on enforcing discipline.

Senior Educ 5 also added:

We do not have enough manpower in implementing learner discipline strategies; Rules of the Department of Education are not clear as to what Corporal Punishment is and what it is not? Parents of the learners are out of town, kids stay with grandparents who refuse to come and argue that the child is giving problems even at home, the school must see what to do to discipline the learner.

The statement concurred with most participants who cited the lack of co-operation from parents. It highlighted the dangers of leaving learners with grandparents who did not have the energy to instil discipline to the grandchildren. The statement also echoed the views of P2, P4, Dep P1, Dep P2, Senior1, Senior Educ2, and Educ 4 who pointed that there was a shortage of manpower at the school and the few available educators were not supportive.

Parent 1 shared the view that:

Many things are happening at the school without any steps taken, there are no structures to handle them, these things continue happening e.g. educators are not teaching, they chat in the corridors, they visit one another in class, the SMT is aware but are not doing anything. The protocol at the school is not observed e.g. the SGB is not aware of certain things; the school just takes a decision and implement.

The statement suggested that there was a lack of decisive leadership at the school. It is appeared as if SMTs did not want direct confrontation with educators who were not doing what they are supposed to do. Seemingly, SMTs avoided robust debates when dealing with issues that relate to discipline. The educators again were to blame which concurred with P1, P2, P3, P4, Dep P1, Dep P2 and other participants. The statement indicated that there was no communication between the SMT that manages the school and the SGB that govern the school.

Parent 2 also added:

There have not been too many meetings between the SMT and the SGB therefore we are not aware of the problems at this stage at the school other problems that have been reported at the hostel. At the next SGB meeting we are going to ask the Principal and the SMT to outline the problems they experience with discipline, learners and educators because we cannot allow people to do whatever they want to do at the school. The school belongs to the community.

The statement showed the limited insight that the participant (who is an SGB Chairperson) has about the problems that were happening at the school. It appeared as if she does not want to come clear, waiting for an opportunity to present itself so that she could deal with it.

Parent 3 concurred with P2, P4, Dep P2, HOD2, HOD 4, and Senior Educator1 who disclosed that parents did not attend meetings and also did not come when they are called to resolve problems that affect learners. Many parents in the community worked in Port Elizabeth but the majority worked in the Western Cape.

Parent 4 in connection with the above matter said:

Teachers do not want the Disciplinary Committee to have a stricter policy when dealing with discipline, they are having different ideas. Teachers like to shift responsibility; they want the SMT to punish the kids severely. Some of the parents are not informed about the legal processes of the country; they do not know their rights and their responsibilities. The majority of parents are illiterate, when they come to school they do not come to resolve the disciplinary problem of the child but only come to fight because they live with they reside with the children, they will side with the kids or the kid at home will turn against him. The time difference between the occurrence of the event and the date of the hearing contributes negatively in the implementation of strategies at the school.

The statement implied that educators were too idealistic when handling issues of discipline. Educators liked to shift responsibility and were reluctant to pull together with the management. The statement was similar to that of Senior Educator 4 who cited that parents did not come to school to resolve problems but to show off and fight. It further concurred with HO3 on the issue of time when dealing with cases of ill discipline.

Parent 5 also mentioned that:

Parents, educators are not co-operative. Educators will just sit down when there is an issue of discipline; they show no interest and pulling together. Educators at the school disrespect authority, leaders quarrel in front of other educators because of personal matters; the Principal will leave us not saying a word.

The statement was indicative of the kind of educators we have in the education system, educators who will always disagree with authority. The statement concurs with the statement of P3, P4, Senior Educ1, Senior Educ 4, Parent1, and Jnr Educ1 that educators were not pulling together. The fact that leaders quarrel in front of educators was sign of lack of leadership skills.

FG1 disclosed:

In implementing the discipline strategies we encounter challenges e.g. learners do not respect the RCL. There are learners who insult the RCL members because they are questioned for their wrongdoing. Some of the teachers shift the responsibility when learners misbehave in class to the RCL. Some teachers do not take part in the detention classes. Some learners respect some educators but disrespect some of the educators.

The statement indicated that some learners were ignorant of administrative structures of the school because the RCL were elected democratically by them. They cannot disrespect leaders they put in power. There is more that should be done through workshops where learners should be told what is expected of them. It is clear that there was no RCL induction at S1 because educators cannot shift the responsibility of implementing learner discipline to RCL members and class representatives. .

FG 2 remarked and concurred with FG1 that teachers did not attend the detention classes, a practice which learners identify as a loophole, hence they also did not come to the detention classes. The group further noted that teachers did not execute their playground duties professionally as they spend most of the time chatting. Some educators sent learners to the location to buy goods or borrow money from loan sharks. The statement implies that in S2 the educators were the main stumbling block to the effective implementation of learner discipline policies. FG2 concurs with most participants from educators to parents, P2, HOD, and Senior Educ 2.

FG3 agreed unanimously:

The teachers are not strict enough to implement the strategies that relate to discipline. Teachers like to tell the RCL what to do to deal with learners who misbehave in class. We want to be part of the DC to ensure that learners are represented.

The statement reiterated the incapacity of the RCL. The fact that some educators tell the RCL members what to do indicates that some educators like to shift responsibility; this is a statement that was cited by P4. FG1.

FG4 concurred with HOD 4, Senior Educ 4 that learners did not do home work, and misbehaviour persists in some of the learners. Some of the learners were a problem even at their homes.

4.15 Summary

The data stated that a variety of challenges in implementing the strategies range from inconsistency and the sustainability of keeping the plan by educators, The incapacity of the RCL to carry on with their duties. In some schools educators were overloaded due to the shortage of educators, the vacancies can only be filled through the redeployment process. The lack of parental involvement, lack of support from the Department of Education was cited as contributory factors

4.16 Application of Principles of SASA Concerning Discipline

Information was solicited from SMTs on the manner they apply the principles that is stipulated by SASA concerning discipline in school and if they consulted any documents when dealing with learner discipline. Seemingly the majority of participants indicated that they consulted the documents as witnessed by following responses.

P2 also pointed out:

We consult the SASA, Education law and policy, manual on Management by Allen Clarke.(School Principal's Management). We do this to ensure what we are doing is right and is legal so as to cover our backs; the learner's constitutional rights are not violated and are upheld. The initiation practices are not allowed here, smoking as well.

The statement indicated the awareness of the SMTs of the implications of not using the policies of the DoE. It also indicated that learners were always protected at the school because the Principal was always sticking to law.

P3. Stated:

We consult documents such as the SASA, which stipulates how the Code of Conduct should be followed, the Educator's Policy Handbook which stipulates how the educators should conduct themselves in the profession to other educators, parents and learners. We want to ensure everyone's rights that are in the Bill of Rights are protected. We do not use Corporal Punishment, any form of abuse to the kids. We also use Case law based on these, the Principal acts as an adviser.

The statement indicated that educators, the SMT are reading/consulting also cases laws when they are dealing with discipline. They were aware that Corporal Punishment should not be administered; inflicting pain of whatever kind is not allowed. The establishments of structures like the SGB, RCL occur according to the correct procedure.

P4 also pointed out:

The SASA, RSA Constitution are the books that we use to implement discipline. We don't allow drunken learners or those that are under the influence of drugs to come to the school. Learners are not allowed to the school with dangerous weapons like guns, knives etc. We also do not allow educators to use abusive language to the learners and to their colleagues also. We call police to do random searching when we suspect a fight.

The statement concurred with the statements of other Principals .It showed that the educators were keeping themselves abreast with the legal processes of the DoE so as not be found on the opposite side of the law. School safety was one of the priorities in schools.

Dep P1 disclosed:

SASA is used as document to compile for the Code of Conduct we use SASA to adhere to what should be done or not to be done. Learners are protected at the school by searching learners individually. We do not use Corporal Punishment as this stipulated by SASA, learners belong to different religions, therefore we allow initiates from Xhosa speaker to wear their clothing. The initiation practices are not allowed at the hostel

The statement indicated that the school was consulting SASA as a document which stipulates clearly what should be done in schools.

HOD3

in concurrence with P2, P3, and Dep P2 the participant stated that SASA, the Education Law and Policy handbook and the RSA constitution are the documents that were consulted by the school when dealing with learner discipline to ensure that the safety of every learner, all learners were treated equally, all learners were treated with dignity. The Principal acted as an adviser by bringing case laws that were used as references. The statement indicated that the SMT in the school was in constant consultation with the legal documents, they brainstorm ideas on the issues that related to discipline after consulting the documents, and they were keeping abreast with disciplinary issues that are introduced by the Department of Education.

HOD4 concurred with P2, P3, and P3, Dep P1 and Dep P2 that the school was keeping the principles of SASA in mind when they were dealing with learner discipline. They ensured that the dignity of the learner is not undermined; the rights of the learners are not violated. The statement was indicative how serious the school upholds the rights of learners that are enshrined in both SASA and chapter 2, Bill of Rights of the Constitution of RSA.

4.17 School Support Learner Discipline Besides Policy Documents

SMTs were asked to explain how the Department of Education assisted in maintaining learner discipline as this was an important aspect of the study.

P1 disclosed:

*The Department of Education helps the school in form of material resources.
If we are not sure of the Act, they supply us with the Act*

P2 remarked:

They assist schools by conducting workshops for SGBs on matters of discipline and give advice on how to maintain school discipline and get involved when there is problem of a learner that has seriously transgressed

P4 asserted:

It is difficult to say; only when we are called to workshops that deal with finances, the issues of discipline would just be discussed. The DoE was part of the crafting of the vision of the school in 2003.

Dep P2 further stated that:

The Code of Conduct of the school was taken from the Department of Education to review it. There is a person at the Departmental offices that has been assigned to each school i.e. the EDO, to keep on coming to the school

HOD1 disclosed that support is given by the Department of Education in the form of the SASA document, advice and guidelines on how to craft the policies around the document. When the school cannot resolve a problem, they refer it to the DoE; The DoE officials come. The data stated that a variety of challenges in implementing the strategies range from inconsistency and the sustainability of keeping the plan by educators, The incapacity of the RCL to carry on with their duties. In some schools educators were overloaded due to the shortage of educators, the vacancies can only be filled through the redeployment process. The lack of parental involvement, lack of support from the Department of Education was cited as contributory factors.

HOD 2 disclosed that the DoE talks to the learners about programmes such as the winter programme so as to improve attendance.

HOD3 intimated that :

The Department of Education only assisted the school in 2010 during the murder of one learner by another learner. They came to counsel the educators and learners; this is the only thing I can remember.

HOD4 in connection with the above issue said:

It sends the Education Policies, if there is a certain serious case of ill discipline by a learner; the DoE comes to the school.

The statement indicated that the DoE was just bringing documents for schools to see what to do with them, their active involvement when crafting the policies was not visible. It also indicated that the DoE was prepared only to do damage control. The data stated that a variety of challenges in implementing the strategies range from inconsistency and the sustainability of keeping the plan by educators, The incapacity of the RCL to carry on with their duties. In some schools educators are overloaded due to the shortage of educators, the vacancies can only be filled through the redeployment process. The lack of parental involvement, lack of support from the Department of Education was cited as contributory factors.

The data stated that a variety of challenges in implementing the strategies range from inconsistency and the sustainability of keeping the plan by educators. The RCLs do not know what is expected of them. Educator workload versus the number of learners compels educators always to be in class, finishing the prescribed syllabus is the major priority. Although there are vacant posts at some schools, those vacancies can only be filled through the redeployment process. The lack of parental involvement, lack of support from the Department of Education was cited as contributory factors.

Senior Educ1 remarked:

There is support but not 100%, they come to the school when they are invited by the Principal and give advice. There are Psychologists at the DoE to deal with children with abnormal behaviour.

Senior Educ 2 disclosed:

They sometimes give support.

Senior Educ 4 in connection with the issue above remarked that the DoE is giving support to the school in the form of workshops to the learners.

Parent 1 disclosed:

Yes, the Department of Education gives support in terms of workshops and advice through its departments but it is not enough.

The statement indicated that the DoE gave little support in assisting the schools. Just delivering the documents to the schools does not guarantee that correct procedures will be followed in crafting learner discipline policies.

Parent 2 said

At this stage, I am not aware of any support that is given by the Department of Education.

Parent 5 stated:

Yes, the Department of Education gives the support in terms of visits to the school. They talk to the learners, encourage them to be disciplined. When they come to the school, they ask one person (Principal) who would tell them that the learners are behaving very well but the behaviour of the learners at the school is revealed in winter, spring schools where our learners display the unruly behaviour they are used to.

4.10. Building of Capacity Building of Educators and Other Stakeholders to Maintaining Learner Discipline

Information was sought from SMTs to establish if the Department of Education trained educators and other stakeholders responsible for maintaining of discipline at the schools. The study revealed that most stakeholders were not trained in issues of discipline except learners who were trained by members from the DoE. This view was shared by Principals and their Deputies.

P1 disclosed:

Only learners were work shopped for 2 days, no teachers. The circulars that are sent by the Department of Education reminded educators to take care of discipline. They were trained by the officials of the DoE in 2010 but there were no educators, only 10 learners were involved.

P2 aired the view that:

The Department of Education is not doing anything to build capacity of stakeholders with regards to discipline, the capacity they are building is only related with finances, and they shy away from discipline.

Again the statement indicated the laxity of the DoE. It seemed that the Department does not know how to capacitate the stakeholders.

P4 remarked:

The training that they offer is only career and academic orientated; there is no training that is related to discipline.

The laxity of the DoE was again exposed by this participant who concurred that there were no capacity building workshops for stakeholders that were held in relation to learner discipline.

Dep P1 also said:

There has been no training of stakeholders by the Department of Education in the period I was the acting Principal of the school and up to now.

The statement indicated the non-interference of DoE on capacitating stakeholders especially educators who deal with discipline day in day out.

Dep P2 in connection with the above matter concurred with P1, P2, P3, P4 and Dep P1 that the DoE only induct newly appointed members at the school e.g. Principals and Deputy Principals that were appointed in the new positions.

HOD1 cited that:

There have been no workshops or trainings that are directly focusing on discipline but 2 years back SMTs were called by the DoE and work shopped on how to manage the schools but not specifically with discipline. The training was effective because it provided knowledge with the interaction with SMT how to deal with problems. The training was effective in that we came back with new ideas but the new ideas are not welcomed by the educators.

The statement was not different from the other participants but it is only that the participant cannot differentiate between an induction workshop and training. The non- interference approach by the DoE was again revealed.

HOD2 also echoed the same feelings with the P1, P2, P3, P4, DepP1, Dep P2 and HOD 1 that there were no workshops, and no training for maintaining learner discipline.

The statement was similar to the statements of other participants that signify that the DoE does not have a plan to train SGBs and SMTs in maintaining learner discipline in schools.

4.10.1 Views of senior educators

Senior and educators were asked about the training of stakeholders by the Department of Education in the maintaining of learner discipline. This was an important aspect of the study as lack of relevant skills in maintaining learner discipline can impact on school discipline negatively. Seemingly there were no training sessions specifically for maintaining learner discipline as witnessed by responses from participants.

Senior Educ1 pointed:

There was no training to empower educators in dealing with discipline.

The statement was similar to the one of Principals, Deputy Principals and HODs that there are no workshops to train stakeholders to maintain learner discipline. There were no workshops to train stakeholders to maintain learner discipline. The statements of other participants that signify that the DoE was not hands on with the issue of discipline which seems to be a concern all over the country.

Senior Educ 2 also concurred with the other educators who cited that there are no trainings offered by the DoE to deal to empower educators and the other stakeholders who deal with discipline.

Senior Educ 3 also echoed the same feelings concurring with the other educators who cited that there are no trainings offered by the DoE to deal with discipline

Senior Educ 4 differed with the other participants and stated that Life Orientation educators attended workshops to capacitate on how to deal with peer pressure and the use of drugs. The last training they attended was in 2011. The statement was in conflict with all the participants who cited that the DoE was not training the stakeholders in maintaining discipline at schools. It is not known whether the training was only meant for Life orientation educators to equip learners with life skills. It appeared that that training of stakeholders, SGBs, SMTs and RCL was never done.

4.10.2. Views of Parents on Training of Stakeholders in the maintaining of Discipline in School

When interviewed on the issue of training, the majority of the parents indicated that they were not trained to maintaining learner discipline. They attended workshops on other issues such as finance and none of these workshops focused on discipline. This was evidenced by comments from some participants.

Parent1 stated that:

There have been no workshops or trainings that are directly focusing on discipline only financial workshops have been organized.

The statement was not different from the other participants who stated that no training or workshops for the parents were offered.

Parent 2 also added that so far there was no training they attended to empower them with the skill of assisting educators to maintain learner discipline.

Parent 3 in connection with the above matter stated that the Department of education provided training to parents every year. The training was held at Aberdeen and the previous year it was held in Graaff Reinet. The training was conducted by officials from the Department of Education e.g. Mr. Cloete (not real name). The parent further remarked that the training helped because parents were empowered with the skill of interacting with learners at home. There were no workshops to train stakeholders to maintain learner discipline. The statement was different from the statements of Parent 1, Parent 2 and participants like P2 and Dep P2 who are the

participants at the same school. It appeared that the participant attended an induction of SGBs and not a training of how to maintain learner discipline.

4.10.3 Views of Learners on Training/Workshops on maintaining discipline in schools.

Learners were also asked what training the Department of Education and the SMT provided to them, how many times were they trained, when they were trained, how long the training was, and to explain whether they benefited from the training to manage and maintain learner discipline. The majority of learners concurred that they were not trained by SMT and DoE in the management of discipline.

FG 1 collectively agreed that there has been no training of learners to maintain learner discipline. This indicated that both the SMTs and the DoE are not empowering the learners to assist in maintaining of learner discipline.

FG4 also echoed the same feelings concurring with the other focus groups that cited that there are no trainings that were offered by the DoE and the SMTs to maintain learner discipline. The non- interference approach of the DoE was again revealed but the SMT at the school was also to blame for not empowering the learners if they want them to be assisted with learner discipline.

4.18 Summary

Data revealed that DoE assisted to a lesser extent in terms assisting school to maintain discipline. The only support was through the provision of material resources, provision of advice to schools through EDO and conducting disciplinary hearings where learners had committed serious acts of misconduct. They also assisted with psychologists to counsel learners. There were no workshops to train stakeholders to maintain learner discipline

Views of SMTs and educators on what other support they get to maintain discipline in schools.

SMTs and senior educators were interviewed on what other support they got to assist the school in maintaining learner discipline and who provided the support besides the DoE. Data revealed that there were various stake holders who supported schools to maintain learner discipline. The community, SAPS and Department of Social Development conducts workshops on crime prevention and sometimes DoE advises through its arms like EDO. This is evidenced by responses from various participants.

P2 remarked:

We get support from EDO in form of advice. They once advised us to follow SASA's laid down procedures when one boy wanted to stab and threatened to kill the teachers.

P3 pointed out:

The South African Police Service (SAPS) come to the school and do presentations on crime and its consequences. The Social Workers have a programme of coming to the school every day at 15h00 to advise the learners on how to deal with conflict, abuse of drugs. There are no workshops to train stakeholders to manage and maintain learner discipline and physical abuse. The Department of Social Development is also given a slot in the Assembly. There are Love Life ground breakers who always visit the school; there is also peer education from Love Life.

P4, in concurrence with P3, P4 also stated that the Department of Social Development has a programme that is called Teenagers against Drug Abuse (TADA). On the programme, learners were trained to be peer educators, shared information, and visited other schools. He remarked further that the SAPS came when they were called.

Dep P1 remarked:

The community comes to the school to talk about discipline to the learners. The SAPS bring bunkers back to school. There is a programme by Community Police Forum called adopting a policeman (COP) but the programme is not functional. The SAPS visit the school and talk about the

dangers of drugs and why kids should not involve themselves with gangsters. The Department of Social Development, nurses visit the school to talk about HIV/AIDS.

The statement concurred with the statements of P1, P3 P4 and indicated the importance of having good working relations between the school and the community organizations.

Dep P2 disclosed:

Other than visits from the DoE by the EDO we are on our own.

When educators were asked on the same issue they echoed the same sentiments as their professional colleagues.

Senior Educ1 concurred with P1, P3, P4, HOD1, Dep P1 that indeed the Department of Social Development and SAPS provided support to the school in the form of presentations that cautioned learners about the dangers of using drugs and involvement in crime. The statement indicated how supportive these organizations were in the effort of raising up learners to have good manners.

Senior Educ 2 cited:

We only get support from the EDO who visit the school, talk to the learners only, and the police who respond when they are called in cases of emergency.

Senior Educ 3 further reinforced the view that:

The SAPS come to the school and do presentations on crime and its dangers. The Social Workers have a programme called TADA which is Teenagers against Drug Abuse. They come to the school and encourage learners on peer education, how to solve conflict, abuse of drugs and physical abuse. The Department of Social Development is also given time to engage the learners. There are Love Life grounds breakers who always visit the school to encourage learners to abstain from sex, drugs etc.

Senior Educ 5 added:

The Department of Correctional Services visited the school in 2011, they addressed the learners about the importance of discipline, encouraged the learners to abstain from using drugs and alcohol. The SAPS formed part of the visit by the Department of Correctional Services. Social Development does not only come for those who need grants but they support the school by talking about the dangers of drugs through a programme called TADA.

Summary

Generally all participants interviewed agreed that the Departments of Correctional Services and Social Development, Love life come to talk to the school about drugs and teenage pregnancy respectively. The SAPS also are involved by having presentations on the dangers of drugs, and the use of dangerous weapons, they come with sniffer dogs in search of drugs.

4.18.1 Challenges encountered by schools in terms of the minimal support from DoE

The SMTs and PL1 educators were asked to explain what challenges were encountered by the school with regard to the implementation of learner discipline policies

Generally, schools were faced with the challenge that they did not get much assistance from DoE as they expected. They only got advice from DoE through its district offices. Some schools went for a long time without educators and this could have contributed to learner indiscipline. In some schools, learners were overcrowded because of shortage of space and there was no assistance from DOE. These views were echoed by various participants.

P1. Remarkd:

We face challenges of shortage of educators and sometimes we use temporary teachers and there is no support from DOE would be expected to relay the messages to the learners.

P2 disclosed:

Discipline is a key element to education in a school. The school ends up being an underperforming school because learners go and have lunch away from the school and this causes learners to misbehave, it only in term 3 that the feeding scheme has been introduced by the Department. There is no adequate space and learners are crowded and struggle in their study groups.

The statement is an indication that the Principal was concerned about the decline of discipline in the school because that was affecting the results. The issue of fencing created a problem at the school because they could not control late coming and bunking of lessons.

DepP2 in concurrence with P4 stated:

Lack of discipline increases, learners do not want to link their rights with responsibilities, learners with their parents write letters to the EDO and the EDO will rule in their favour. For example, a self expelled learner threatened to kill the educator and his child, he threw stones at the teacher, instead of coming to the school they asked the school to submit a letter with all the details.

The statement indicated that the participant was also concerned about the decline of discipline in high density secondary schools.

HOD1:

Parents are not supportive; instead they side with their kids. It also indicates the ignorance of the parents in the community because problems that are happening in the school will not be solved by phoning Bisho or Graaff Reinet, they will be resolved by attending meetings where they can be discussed.

HOD 2 also mentioned that:

Lack of discipline increases, learners do not want to link their rights with responsibilities, learners with their parents do not know the channels of resolving disciplinary problems if they are not satisfied with the Disciplinary Committee of the school. They phone Provincial Office and the District Office in Graaff Reinet would come smoking at us because they are being

pressurized by Bisho, especially during the term of the former Superintendent General.

The statement indicated that the decline of discipline in our schools was something that needs urgent attention by all those that are affected. The statement also indicated that work-shopping parents about the channels of raising dissatisfactions should be dealt with as soon as possible because issues like these create division between the communities SGBs, and SMTs. The District Office should investigate matters before jumping into conclusions..

HOD3 disclosed:

One case that the school reported to the Department of Education was of a learner who was problematic carried knives, back chatted to educators but there was no response from the Education Department.

Generally, while there is lack of cooperation from DoE, most responses also indicated that lack of understanding of statutory policies by the principal, educators, SMTs and SGBs. Rules are clearly stipulated on what action to be taken on such matters. They could simply apply the law. Learners seem to understand laws and their rights better than educators and educators seem to rely on corporal punishment.

HOD4 stated that challenges that the school encountered were the dwindling enrolment of learners at the schools in high density areas. Parents were taking their children to other schools even outside the District due to the lack of discipline. The educator further remarked that the process of redeployment was posing a problem because educators were left with heavy workloads. The statement concurred with that of P3, P4 that the overloading of educators added to the burden of having to deal with ill disciplined learners. The DoE was not employing adequate educators..

Senior Educ 3's statement was not different from that of other participants as he cited the lack of interest from parents, and that the Department of Education was not doing enough to assist teachers in maintaining learner discipline. Learners were aware of their rights; they wanted their rights to be observed by the school also.

Senior Educ 5 also added:

Ill-discipline persists at school because learners know their rights, they make remarks to irritate educators, but we do not react, they have the knowledge that Corporal Punishment has been abolished and that it is unlawful for them to clean toilets, and the school yard.

Parents' views were also sought on challenges faced by the school in implementing learner discipline policies and support received from DoE.

Parent 1 stated that:

The shortage of teachers has a negative impact in managing learners discipline; in the hostel it is difficult to manage learners that are more than 400 per hostel staff as compare to that is less than 8 members. Failure by the Department of Education to train parents in managing learner discipline makes matters difficult because learners are creative; they try all sorts of tactics to disorganize our plans and strategies. There are few parents who assist us from the community around by volunteering to take hostel duties.

The statements concurred with the statements of P3, P4 about the shortage of educators (understaffed) that was indicated earlier on. The persistence in misbehaviour that was cited by most participants also surfaced in hostels where learner misbehaviour cannot be handled by few parents. The lack of involvement by parents also indicated that parents in these communities were not passionate about education and the raising of kids.

Parent 3 remarked:

Learners do not want to listen; they do not want to be advised. When parents are called they do not come to meetings to take important decision about the school discipline. Some educators use vulgar language when they are talking to learners

The statement indicated that the parent was also concerned about lack of discipline among learners and parents as well as the unprofessional behaviour of educators

Parent 4's statement was not different from the other participants as he cited the lack of interest from parents, and that the Department of Education was not doing enough to assist teachers in maintaining learner discipline. The participant also pointed out that learners are aware of their rights and want to enforce them e.g. use of cell phones.

Parent 5 stated:

The challenge that we face is that learners cannot balance between their rights and responsibilities. Workshops to educate learners about their rights and responsibilities need to be organized by the Department of Education. Parents are not actively involved in helping educators to manage learner discipline. The gap between the educators and the Department of Education is widened because the officials are siding with parents and learners. It becomes an "us and them situation". There should be quarterly visits by the education Department so monitor learner discipline

The statement emphasises the fact that that the decline of discipline in our schools is something that needs urgent attention by all stakeholders.

Learners were asked to give their view on the challenges faced by the school in implementing learner discipline and support given by DoE. All learners concurred that there was a challenge in the maintaining of discipline and that DoE did not give much support except when asked to do so. However, some disciplinary challenges are through maladministration and lack of consultation.

FG1 agreed collectively:

The RCL and the educators do not educate the learners every year about what is expected from learners? The RCL is not having skills, so the RCL must be capacitated with skills of showing the direction to learners. To contact parents of learners that are giving problems at the school is a big problem that the SMT is facing, contact numbers of parents should be given on the day of registration by parents for them to be easily contacted. Also there is no assistance from DoE except when asked to solve an existing problem.

FG2 unanimously remarked and suggested:

The Principal must listen to all learners, and avoid favoring some learners by doing so he is dividing us. Classrooms must be multi racial classrooms, black learners are given subjects they do not want but other races like coloureds and whites are given a chance to choose.

FG3 stated:

Teachers should first start discussing strategies with learners before implementing them. Teachers should stop the long process of disciplinary hearing. If a learner is accused of a serious misconduct the matter must be taken to the SGB. Detention should be seriously implemented at the school.

4.19 Summary

Concerning the issue all participants shared the same sentiments that due to the shortage of educators in some schools, messages that are related to discipline do not filter down quickly to learners. Indiscipline escalates; learners do not want to strike a balance between their rights and responsibilities. A mutual feeling about the biasness of the DoE in solving disciplinary cases, they overturn the decisions of the SGB/ Disciplinary Committee in favour of learners.

4.20 Monitoring Mechanism Put In Place in Schools to Ensure Proper Implementation of Learner Discipline Policies

SMTS, Educators and parents were asked to explain the monitoring mechanisms that are put in place by schools to ensure proper implementation of learner discipline. They stated that educators divide learners into groups to alternate in monitoring playgrounds and late coming at the gates. During breaks, educators

occupy strategic points by sitting under trees so as to monitor learners when they are playing.

P1 noted that:

School Playgrounds- There are teachers that have been assigned to monitor certain sports.

P2 stated:

Staff members discuss the monitoring mechanisms but the SMT drives the programme for the monitoring of toilets, playgrounds, in most cases teachers are assisted by the SMT. In the morning the RCL is involved in the monitoring of late coming, collect learners to the Assembly point and monitor the movement of learners after break but we do not want to overload them.

The statement indicated the dedication of the school in monitoring learner discipline. Monitoring does not target only few sports at the school but it was also meant for the whole school. The RCL was also visible and are assigned duties.

P3 asserted:

Each educator is required to be visible in the corridors; the educators are expected to accompany their register classes at the assembly. Coaches are supposed to manage discipline among the players in the playing field.

Dep P2 concurred with P2 and P3 that at the school educators have been categorized into groups of three A, B and C to alternate in monitoring playgrounds and late coming at the gates. During breaks, educators occupy strategic points monitoring learners when they are playing.

The data indicated that there were different mechanisms used to monitor discipline both in class and out of class by the principal, educators and learners. The maintaining of discipline was also enforced at the field of play where captains of teams and coaches are supposed to play a vital role as educators and learners are assigned different duties.

HOD 1, responding to the matter above stated:

To monitor toilets, educators whose classes are close to the toilets are assigned with the duties of opening them before and after break. To monitor the playgrounds, educators patrol during break, chatting to the learners. During extra mural activities coaches and captains are suppose to manage and maintain discipline in their teams.

The statements tallied with P1 who cited the role teachers play in monitoring toilets and ensuring that learners do not smoke, write graffiti on the wall or damage property. It further concurred with the statements of P2, Dep P2 about the monitoring of the playground thus ensuring learner's safety.

HOD2 remarked:

To ensure proper implementation of learner discipline we implement detention for learners who did not do their homework during the week. To control the bunking of classes, the period registers are issued to every Class representative, the educators check the learners by calling their names in each period to identify those that have bunked certain periods. The RCL takes control of the assembly by ensuring that learners are standing in straight lines, they do not pass remarks when announcements are made.

The statement indicated that school discipline was taken very seriously at the school. There are stages and categories of monitoring discipline. Educators and the Principal were kept abreast with serious cases that have been handled by the Disciplinary Committee

HOD4 also disclosed:

Late coming is dealt with by the Principal to allow educators to attend their classes. The playground is monitored by the Safety Committee. At the Assembly, educators are expected to be in front of each class to monitor the learners to be in straight queues. During the change of periods, educators are expected to step outside to monitor the movement of learners. At this point there are no duties for the RCL.

The statement concurred with P4 who stated that late coming was monitored by the principal. Educators' were supposed to be in front of their classes. However the participant also stated that sport was not active at the school due to lack of interest by learners. Furthermore, the RCL was dysfunctional and there were no duties assigned to them.

Senior Educ2 concurred with P1, and Dep P2 that the RCL monitors toilets to ensure that there was no smoking, damage of school property and that playgrounds were supervised by educators during breaks. The Assembly was monitored by all educators who check the wearing of school uniform asking them to stand in rows and keep quiet.

Senior Educ 4 also noted:

For late coming educators and the Principal control it, late comers are forced to pay 50c for being late, for learners who fight in class, is reported to parents by the subject teacher. Playgrounds are monitored by educators by sitting outside classes and observe them. The RCL is given duties, to look for those that are disrupting classes and write down their names. During fundraising efforts the RCL must show their visibility, look for those who come at the functions drunk.

The statement indicated the commitment of the SMT to monitor learner discipline. The RCL was also visible and were also assigned duties to perform. With regards to late coming at the school the statements differed with those of P4, HOD 4 who stated that the Principal deals with late comers by writing down their names. However the participant concurred with P1, P2, P4, HOD2, HOD4 who indicated that there is a serious concern with discipline in schools, hence schools were forced to do something about it.

The views of parents were sought on the mechanisms put in place by schools to monitor discipline. The majority of parents concurred with educators and administration that there were some mechanisms put in place. However, one parent participant indicated that educators are too lenient in applying monitoring mechanisms which are in place.

Parent 1 remarked:

The SMT has a monitoring plan when teachers are given the responsibilities to oversee the problems e.g. the playground, educators should patrol and look for possible tensions that trigger fights, injuries etc. At the Assembly, teachers are supposed to be there to ensure that the learners are in school uniform and they are quite. The RCL is also assisting the educators at playgrounds

The statement is indicative of the commitment of the SMT and the educators to monitor learner discipline. The statement concurred with that of P 1, Dep 1, Dep p2, HOD 1, P4, and HOD4. It showed that educators were a united force in monitoring discipline to ensure their safety and the safety of learners.

Parent 2 added:

To monitor toilets, educators whose classes that are close to the toilets are assigned with the duties of opening them before and after break. The General assistant with the help of RCL members also help with the process. To monitor the playgrounds, educators patrol, during extra mural activities and fundraising we ask parents to sit in-between learners, coaches and captains manage and maintain discipline in their teams by talking to the players.

The statement indicated that educators are assisted by the parents in the fight against ill-discipline. It appeared that there was a good understanding between the educators and parents who were actively involved in matters of the school. The statement concurred with P1, Dep, P2, HOD1 P4, and HOD4, and Senior Educ4.

Parent 4 motioned that:

According to the monitoring plan of the school, teachers are expected to be visible at assembly point and monitor discipline but teachers are not helping. They must attend school functions. The playgrounds, gates, and patrolling around the school is done by the SMT and other educators who do not have classes.

Parent 5 noted that on certain days there were two educators at the gate to monitor late coming but sometimes it is the Principal who handled them. This statement was

similar to what P4, HOD4, and Snr Educ4 cited but differed in that Snr Educ mentioned that late comers pay 50c for their late coming. To ensure that there was discipline at the Assembly, educators went to fetch learners and stand in front of their classes but in most cases educators stay away from the Assembly. This created a problem because there was reluctance from the learners to sing. This statement was similar to Senior Educator 5 that girls who led the singing did not want to sing. The parent further stated that in playgrounds, educators stood up only when there is a fight. The statement contrasted those of P4, HOD 4, and Senior Educ 4 who cited that educators patrol playgrounds during breaks. This was testimony to what HOD 4 cited that reviewing of plans was done when an incident happens. This meant in simple terms that there was no strategy of monitoring playgrounds at the school.

4.20.1 Views of Learners on mechanisms put in place to monitor discipline

Learners were asked to give their views regarding mechanisms that have been put in place by the school to monitor and implement learner discipline plans/policies. All learners concurred that there were monitoring mechanisms put in place by schools to monitor discipline although these mechanisms were not all that effective. Just like some parents, they also cited laxity in the implementation of monitoring mechanism which was in place.

FG1 agreed collectively that the monitoring mechanisms were not effective because learners continued smoking in the toilets. There were also sex videos that were played in toilets. There was no sustainability in monitoring mechanisms. Learners continued bunking classes although the RCL had been assigned with duties of looking for bunkers. Educators became too occupied with teaching in classrooms that became difficult for the SMT to walk around the school. The statement tallied with that of P2 and Dep P2 who cited inconsistency and lack of sustainability in implementing the monitoring mechanisms.

FG2 also concurred with FG1 that the monitoring mechanisms were not effective because educators were neglecting their duties e.g. the detention classes citing appointments, the RCL learners became dysfunctional after a certain period. The

statement concurred with that of P4 who cited the same challenge because the RCL was elected on the basis of popularity and not possession of leadership skills.

FG4 echoed the same sentiments that the monitoring mechanisms were not working. Other learners always came to school late. Punishing learners by asking them to clean toilets and classroom became ineffective because learners do not honour such duties. They have a fear of catching infectious diseases.

4.20.2 Views of Principals, Deputy Principals, Educators and parents on Stakeholders involved in monitoring school discipline

All participants were asked to explain which other stakeholders besides those in the school were involved in monitoring the implementation of learner discipline plans/policies. They were also asked to explain the role of each stakeholder.

P1 disclosed that:

The SAPS are doing a big job in catching bunkers and bringing them to school. Social Workers come and do presentations, talk to the learners especially to those that are playing truant, bunking classes. The Ministers' Fraternal also visits the school, have in-depth talks about the linkage between discipline and studies.

The statement concurred with P1, P3 P4 and indicated the importance of having good working relations between the school and the community organizations. There were people that were still worried about the present generation which was sometimes referred to as a lost generation because they liked to associate themselves with western cultures.

P2 Also pointed out that:

The Minister's fraternal visit the school to motivate the learner's to becommitted to their studies, to be involved in sport, church and youthstructures, to live with peace, to do away with negative behavior, they sometimes pray for the learners before they write examinations. The Local

councillors also come and encourage the children to be involved In sport, be involved in youth activities like dancing, debates, developmentstructures.

P3 concurred with P1, P2 that indeed the Social Workers visited the school for presentation on drugs. He added that there was a campaign called TADA which aimed to encourage learners not to use drugs. He further remarked that the SAPS also came with their presentations and talked about the disadvantages of being involved in gangsterism, and carrying of dangerous weapons. They also came for random searching. The Department of Correctional Services once visited the school in 2011. There were inmates who warned learners about the danger of drugs, and thug life. The Love life ground breakers also talked about unwanted teenage pregnancy, and encouraged children to abstain from sex. The statement indicated the seriousness of other Departments in moulding learners that were going to be responsible parents of tomorrow.

P4 echoed the same sentiments that Departments of Police play a safety and security role by doing random searching for dangerous weapons. Fire fighters came and gave lessons about how to fight fire in cases of emergency, and also encouraged learners not to be controlled by emotions to the extent of setting buildings alight. The Social Development Department also played a role, remarked the Principal, as they offer presentations on the dangers of drugs etc.

HOD1also mentioned:

The Department of Health visits the school to talk about HIV/AIDS awareness, encourage the Youth to abstain from sex, how to respond to T.B. which is sometimes caused by the excessive use of drugs.

HOD3 in concurrence with HOD1 and HOD2 and other participants cited the active involvement of the police in search of drugs and other illegal substances. This helped them to monitor learner discipline because learners are aware that at any time there can be a random search, so they acted responsibly, and avoided bringing drugs and dangerous weapons. The Department of Health helps the school in teaching the learners the dangers of early involvement in sex. The participant further concurred with other participants on the issue of the involvement of the Department

of Social Development in an effort to develop the child in totality. They came and encouraged learners to participate in behaviour programmes, and not do to crime. The statement further indicated commitment in establishing societies that are crime free, drug free and HIV free.

HOD4 echoed the same sentiments that Departments of Police play a role for safety and security by doing random searching for dangerous weapons. They came even if they are not called. The police presence in school was an indication that what we see and experience in other provinces where educators were threatened, and robbed in the school premises does not happen in our Graaff Reinet area. Social Development Department also played a role by making presentations that are aimed at warning children about the dangers of drugs to ensure that school are free from drugs etc.

Senior Educ 3 in concurrence with P1, P4, HOD4 and Senior Educ 2 and other respondents, cited the active involvement of the police in search of drugs and other illegal substances. The Department of Health helped the school in teaching the learners the dangers of early involvement in sex, and to abstain.,

Parent 2 concurred with Parent1, P1,P4 HOD1 and other respondents that the Department of Health visits the school to talk about HIV/AIDS awareness, and encourage the Youth to abstain. This can be seen as the monitoring mechanism because parents will take young girls for planning, and abstaining from sex. They also taught them how to respond to T.B. which is sometimes caused by the excessive use of drugs e.g. dagga

The statement indicated that schools were being assisted by other sister departments. Nothing was initiated by the DoE to help them fight against learner ill discipline because there are departments such police, health and other departments that are there to advise and encourage children .Sometimes these Departments used young people to talk to the learners which was an indication that they wanted to show the seriousness of their campaigns.

Parent 4 concurred with Parent 1, and parent 2 that Social Workers visited the school to do presentations on drugs. This was spearheaded by the campaign called

TADA. He further remarked that the SAPS also came and talked about the disadvantages of being involved in gangsterism and carrying of dangerous weapons. He added that in 2011, the Department of Correctional Services also visited the school with inmates who shared their life experiences, and how they got into prison. The prisoners also warned learners about the danger of drugs and thug life. The Love life ground breakers also talked about unwanted teenage pregnancy, and encourage the children to abstain from sex.

Parent 5 responded by stating that stakeholders come when they are called. When a child has done misconduct, most of the time they come only to shout. The statement differs with the statements of the majority who see the involvement of stakeholders in monitoring learner discipline as beneficial.

4.20.3 Responses of learners on stakeholders who participates in monitoring discipline in schools

FG1 concurred with P1, DepP1 and HOD 1 that the police came to search for dagga and they did that randomly. Ministers came to talk to them about discipline and prayed for them. They added that the Department of Social Development and Love Life talk about drugs and teenage pregnancy.

FG2 echoed the same sentiments that the SAPS came and did random searching. Department of Social Development had a campaign called TADA which encouraged learners not to use drugs, Nurses warned learners about unwanted pregnancy which was a result of unprotected sex and encouraged the youth to abstain.

FG3 also stated that the Ministers fraternal visited to the school encouraged them to be disciplined, in the school and the community, to have respect, and to stay away from taverns. Motivational speakers also visited the school to motivate the learners to study hard if they want something in life. SAPS used random searching for weapons and drugs. The Social workers came and talke about the dangers of drugs; nurses always came and talked about family planning, and abstinence. The statement concurs with the statements of other groups.

FG4 also echoed what other FGs cited about Social Workers, who normally talked warning them about the use of drugs.

It was revealed that SAPs, Minister of Education, Department of Social Development and health workers participated in the campaign for discipline in schools.

4.21 Summary

The schools in the study area were still faced with challenges of learner discipline despite the fact that they have strategies and plans to combat indiscipline and adhere to policy documents in the implementation of learner discipline. These included bunking classes, drug abuse, absenteeism, not wearing school uniforms and rowdy behaviour. Learner indiscipline was attributed to factors such as poor upbringing by parents who acted as bad role models, socio-economic challenges and HIV and AIDS which had left some learners as orphans who lived with grandparents and some parents spent most of their time in cities where they worked. The lack of discipline in schools has been worsened by the lack of maximum support from authorities such as DoE.

However, schools have put in place measures to monitor school discipline and these include, having SMTs on duty during breaks, having Safety and Security personnel to monitor learners at various levels and times.

5 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analyzed and presented data that was collected from 4 schools that were visited for the study. The aim discussed findings with regards to the main research question, how learner discipline policies are implemented in township secondary school in the Graaff Reinet District. The views of SMTs, educators, parents and focus groups who had participated in the research reflected their different experiences in dealing with learner discipline in their schools. The findings of this study are discussed under the following sub-headings: views on state of discipline, causes of learner discipline, formulation of policies/plans that deal with learner discipline, strategies employed by schools to ensure the effective implementation of learner discipline, issues with regards to support, training and workshops as well as the monitoring of the implementation process of learner discipline.

5.2 State of Discipline

The study solicited information on the views of people on the state of discipline in schools under study as discipline underpins every aspect of school life as cited by Blandford (1998). The study revealed that there are serious disciplinary problems in the studied area. The schools are faced with major problems such as: vandalism, back chatting, smoking dagga, drinking alcohol and use of other forms of drugs. Learners come late to school, bunk classes, carry dangerous weapons and belong to different groups of gangsters and some even come to school without wearing the recommended school attire. Such state of affairs is not healthy for learners.

The findings of the study confirm the views of Edwards that ill-discipline or bad behaviour can manifest itself in many ways, such as insubordination, back chatting, making noise and abusing drugs (Edwards, 2004). Short and Noblet (1985) in support of this statement argue that discipline continues to be the most consistently discussed problem in public schools and a problem that most plagues educators. The findings also confirm observations made by Blandford (1998) that discipline continues to be a problem in many schools all over the world. Lack of discipline may

affect the school management effectiveness and the learning process a view which is substantiated by Mwamwenda (1996).

The school is regarded as a social institution and it has basic regulations governing, controlling and directing the behaviour of its members, who are mainly the learners. In such a setting discipline is of paramount importance, since without it the purpose of effective learning cannot be achieved (Mwamwenda, 1996).

5.3 Causes of Learner Indiscipline

Mabeba and Prinsloo (2000) hold the view that discipline in education is a complex phenomenon that may evade the accuracy of a single definition when perceived by the different participants in the educational process. The study revealed that learner ill discipline is caused by many factors such as home and family background which included among other things, lack of parental guidance, lack of good role models among family members and loss of parents due to HIV/AIDS and children were left in the care of grandparents.

This is confirmed by Kasarimba (1997), Kyriacou (1998) and Mwamwenda, (1996) who proclaim that the students' misbehaviour can be caused by a number of factors, ranging from the pupils' environment, child's home upbringing, classroom environment, the curriculum, and teacher's personality.

Rossouw (2003) states that principals in lower socio-economic areas feel that unstable or dysfunctional homes caused by amongst others, poverty, disinterested or illiterate parents, have a negative influence on school discipline. Likewise, Van der Walt and Oosthuizen (2007) argue that the socio-economic conditions in which learners find themselves can lead to discipline problems. Landsberg *et al.* (2005) argue that education in poverty-stricken communities of South Africa is hampered by a lack of order in the communal structures, a non-stimulating milieu, poor orientation towards school, and clashes between the value orientation of the family and the school. This is true as the study revealed that students bunked classes and were back chatting during lessons a sign of disinterestedness towards learning.

Ill discipline in the area of study was also attributed to peer pressure. These findings are in line with Matseke (2008) findings in his study that cites child related factors that can be associated with misbehaviour as the child's upbringing. He concedes that if the child has been raised in a way that does not suit the expected behaviour in the school. The child may behave in order to conform to peer expectation and avoid rejection. The approval and recognition the learner receives from his peers for challenging the teacher's authority. Such situations sometimes may be attributed to the fact that children always seek acceptance from peer groups.

The study found that some learners spent little time with parents as some of them worked in big cities like Johannesburg and Cape Town; such a situation could have contributed to the problem of learner discipline as children lacked necessary guidance and counselling from parents. Learners from such families may even lack the important parental love. This means that such learners were often exposed to the evils of drugs, drunkenness, and the influence of technology/media because there is a lack of control at home.

Furthermore this may have resulted in these learners watching TV programmes which send a message of violent behaviour since it was also pointed as factor which influenced learner violence. Edwards (2004) concedes that various home experiences have influences on children's behaviour. If parents spend little time at home, children may seek unsuitable social experience elsewhere, experiences that sometimes have devastating consequences. Even when parents are not at home, parent-child interaction may be faced with conflicts. Factors such as divorce, neglect, single parenting as well as physical and mental abuse; can adversely affect children's ability to function properly.

The study further revealed that some learners from violent and poor families were also in the habit of being ill disciplined. Children from severely dysfunctional families in particular, face enormous adjustment problems at school (Edwards, 2004).

In a school context according to Gaudstad (2008) school discipline has two main goals (i) to ensure the safety of staff and students (ii) to create an environment that is conducive for learning and teaching. Therefore, it could be said that serious

misconduct that involves violent or criminal behaviour may prevent the attainment of these goals as less dramatic problems negatively affect the learning environment.

5.4 Strategies to maintain learner discipline

The study revealed that strategies to maintain learner discipline in schools are in place. Late coming is managed by educators working according to the duty rooster, they write names of all late comers in the note book. These learners will then be called at the end of the school day to report to specific educators that have assigned the duty of monitoring the detention classes. Bunking of classes is mostly handled by the subject educator; who reports the learners who committed certain offences to the Grade Head. Each Grade Head handles disciplinary cases in his/her grade. The handling of learner discipline is in accordance to SASA (1996) statutes on learner discipline.

5.4.1 Involvement of parents

The research findings of the study revealed that the schools in the area of study involved parents in the quest to maintain school discipline and SMTs as a strategy to maintain learner discipline. The study revealed that school administration tried to involve parents in the affairs of their children; nonetheless parents seemed not to be keen to partake in schools affairs as witnessed by low attendance in meetings to discuss disciplinary issues. The involvement of parents by schools was in line with Mugabe and Maphosa (2007) who maintain that a suitable environment for managing learner discipline required parental involvement. Parents could visit schools during parent consultations and sports days as well as meetings to create forums for shared-vision on school discipline with educators. Wolhuter and Steyn (2003) show that the most effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents.

The study considered parental management of discipline important factor in learner discipline. It was found that some parents failed to supervisor their children's home work and their wayward behaviour. It was further revealed by the study that some learners were from dysfunctional family structures. The lack of parental supervision

correlated with misbehaviour. Poor parental supervision and/or lack of family structure will affect adolescents' behaviour, as youth chooses to associate with peers who may similarly display diverse problematic behaviour (Anderson & Stavrou, (2001).

The study revealed that parents were always informed and were involved in the procedures when their children committed a serious act of misconduct this was in line with the Department of Education guidelines and policy procedures.. According to De Klerk and Rens (2003), there is general agreement that parents are primary educators and, as a result, are the first source of values for children.

According to Nelson (2002), parents are the first link in effective learner discipline practices. She points out that parents who are involved in their children's daily school lives have a better understanding of what is acceptable and what is not.(Barclay and Boone, 1997) further suggest that parents should be asked to re-evaluate their role as the people with a responsibility of moulding the character of their children and never abdicate the responsibility to teachers.

This study established that school encounter minor disciplinary problems as parents fail to come to school when called for. However, it has to be noted that according to the findings some did not come because they did not want to but because they are working far from the area of their children's residence. Masitsa (2006) concedes that recent years have evidenced major changes in the composition and profile of families, with an explosion in the number of single-parent families and households in which both parents work. He adds that large numbers of the recent generation of learners have not spent their formative years in the kind of 'traditional' families that many teachers experienced in their own childhood.

As a result of economic realities, many children have essentially been raised in an environment totally inadequate for meeting their physical and emotional needs The grandparents do not come to school when they are called due to age and health reasons (Masitsa, 2006) . In such instances parents have failed to play their important role of assisting learners to be well behaved individuals.

The study also revealed that most parents lacked knowledge that they are solely responsible for their children's behaviour. Such parents need to be schooled on the issue. Parents should be informed that they are better placed to handle social and psychological development of their children than teachers whose role is supplementary (Nasibi, 2003). It can be observed therefore that parents need to be more proactive in trying to improve learner disciplinary problems by inculcating good values to their children.

5.4.2 The Code of Conduct

One of the strategies that schools use to maintain learner discipline is the use of the Code of Conduct. Bray (2005) assert that Section 8 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 determines that the governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners of the school. The code of conduct contains the disciplinary rules for learners and is therefore crucial to school discipline. The emphasis is on the school governing body's function to adopt and implement a code of conduct and its obligation to enforce the disciplinary rules in the case of learner misconduct. In some schools there are religious groups that are allowed to talk to the learners about the importance of good behaviour.

This code of conduct must aim at establishing a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective education and learning at that school (Boshoff and Morkel, 2003). The code of conduct must be subject to the Constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) and provincial legislation. The Department of Education (2000) states that the code of conduct must embrace the school's values, ethos and mission and not merely comprise rules and regulations. It should therefore be a positive and inspirational document. When a school governing body draws up a code of conduct for learners, it is essential that learners, parents and educators at the school be involved.

It was found that the drawing of strategies and Code of Conduct in the area of study adhered to DoE (2000) procedures as it was democratic and all role-players were involved and agree to it. The code of conduct thus drawn up play a central role in the

school community, and all role players must undertake to contribute to its success (Republic of South Africa, 1998). This was also in line with the Bottom Up approach which has its strength in the participation (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). Kumar (2009) is of the opinion that community participation, if it is done properly, almost always brings advantages for the said community

However, it has to be noted that despite the fact that schools tried to implement relevant disciplinary strategies, schools are still faced with ill discipline. Information from study therefore, reveals that discipline in the studied area could be located under negative discipline approach.

5.4.2.1 Development of the Code of Conduct

The findings from the area suggests that schools were aware that they should be in possession of the Code of Conduct and it was discussed, ratified by all stakeholders including the learners who were represented by the RCL, SMTs, SGB, Principals, HODs and educators; this was in accordance to Section 8 (1) of SASA (1996) which stipulates that the Code of Conduct can be adopted after consultation with parents, educators and learners of the school (Squelch, 2000) Involving all stakeholders recognizes the importance the entire school community and leads to transparency and ownership by the concerned parties (Joubert and Prinsloo, 2001).

The Code of Conduct also stipulated the rules and regulations on how learners should behave. The findings of this study were in line with Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) in supporting this statement as they argued that the Code of Conduct must inform the learners of the way in which they should conduct themselves at the school in preparation for their conduct and safety in civil society.

Bray (2005) is of the opinion that learner representation at secondary school level should be consulted when developing a Code of Conduct as it inculcates the values of democratic school practices although at this level is not competent enough to enter independently into legal contracts, he/she is educationally mature enough to represent the learner corps of the school and act in its best interest. The development of Code of Conduct in the studied area confirms the views of Bray

(2005) as learners and their representatives were consulted and their views showed maturity.

The consultation of learners in the area of study would make learner willing participants in implementing the Code of Conduct seen they were involved in its development. This is in line with studies by Charles (2008) which revealed that learners are certainly interested persons in participating in decisions that affect them.

Despite of the existence of the school code of conduct, most schools in the studied area continued to experience student discipline problems but nonetheless schools continue to use it. The results from the study are in line with the findings of Stevens et al,(2001) that the Code of Conduct would not reduce the incidence of violence and injury, but together with other environmental, educative and structural strategies they may create a context in which behavioural expectations are consistently and fairly applied (Stevens *et.al* 2001). Sushila (2004) concedes that, punishment is often repeated without ever producing the desired result; that of correction and a change of heart in the students.

The study revealed that the drafting of Code of Conduct was affected by illiteracy of some parents as they failed to understand certain issues. This in line with the weaknesses that are outlined in the Bottom Up approach. The behaviour of street level bureaucrats is also criticized as they usually overestimate the use of their discretion and overemphasize their autonomy versus top officials (Pulzl and Treib, 2007). The actions of the street bureaucrats are likely to disadvantage people with very little education and poor social background are less likely to benefit as they may not fully comprehend the meaning of the policies while the more educated elite are likely to benefit from the social services (Paudal, 2009).

5.4.3 Role of Educators

It was further revealed that emphasis of classroom rules by every educator was one of the most common strategies used by schools in the area of study. The use of rules can be referred to as Back to Basic model of maintaining school discipline. However, this is contrary to what Edwards (2004) observed. In this type of strategy classrooms are characterized by tranquillity, order and positive learner discipline but

in the area of study learners were found to be back chatting breaking rules despite the fact that they knew the dos and don'ts of the class. Subbiah (2004) maintains that classroom management is an aspect of teaching that focuses on creating an environment and establishing conditions that facilitate learner success in achieving both academic and social goals.

In the area of study it was found that Marva Collis type of discipline was applied as the educator was considered as the highest authority although he/she sometimes reported some of disciplinary cases either to Grade leader or HOD. According to Mkhize (2002) Marva Collis type the educator is regarded as the highest authority, highly respected and is in total control of the classroom. There are few disciplinary cases that are referred to the Principal.

Schools should involve those who implement discipline in the development of coherent school policies encompassing discipline, pastoral care and special needs to assist in the early identification of pupils with behavioral difficulties and in meeting their needs in the most effective way and support in the classroom for teachers in the development of classroom management expertise (Sugai and Horner, 2002). The study revealed that schools in the studied area were not in line with the views of Sugai and Horner (2002) as educators and SMTs were not trained in identifying and maintaining learner discipline and on the development of whole school discipline policies, based on current best practices.

Clement and Sova(2000) observed that effective approaches in implementing learner discipline include parental involvement, training of inexperienced teachers on learner discipline by the School Management Teams. However, the findings of the study were contrary to this observation while parents, SMTs and SGBs and educators were involved in the maintaining of school discipline but educators were not trained in maintaining learner discipline. This lack of training could render the strategies employed by various stakeholders invalid even the educators themselves could have been found wanting due to lack of relevant knowledge and skills. Hence, some of the educators were found to be sending learners to collect money from the loan-shacks as revealed by the study.

In the area of study there was little application of Positive Discipline approach as educators tried to encourage learners to be respectful and motivated them in class. Positive discipline is the application of sound motivation in which thanks and praise are expressed for good performance, a programme designed to teach young people to become responsible, be respectful and resourceful members of their communities (Vitto, 2003). Erasmus (2009) and Matseke (2008) concur that it is important for educators to establish positive relationships with the learners. Educators must redirect the child to achieve recognition. These relationships contribute to academic achievement of learners.

5.4.4 The use of Corporal Punishment

It was also found in the study that the four schools used coercive strategies such as corporal punishment which are contrary to the principles of SASA, Du Preez (2003). It must be borne in mind that educators and school managers carry a great responsibility in dealing with misconduct and are called upon to solve disciplinary and behaviour problems on a regular basis in their classrooms, and yet they are not allowed to use corporal punishment Du Preez (2003).

The schools in the area of study used Corporal Punishment despite the fact it was outlawed under Section 10 (1) of SASA (2000) which condemns the administering of corporal punishment to a learner on the grounds that it is degrading schools continue administering. These educators are administering Corporal Punishment fully aware that learners know their rights and this may be because the majority of educators come from the “old school of thought which says spare the rod and spoil the child” and their training institutions did not make them aware of alternatives to corporal punishment. However, surprisingly enough some learners advocated that the act should be revisited as they considered the use of Corporal Punishment as an effective strategy to maintain learner discipline because the offender will always associate the pain with the offence, and most parents supported this view.

The findings of the study were similar to the study on discipline by Soneson (2005) which revealed that despite the fact that corporal punishment is banned an

overwhelming majority (86.5%) approved use of the cane and gave the following reasons as:(i)to deter others (ii) to remind the pupil of the experience of pain and discomfort It can be observed that the issue of administering Corporal Punishment is a controversial issue since learners who are the recipients of the punishment also advocate for the revisiting of the ruling.

This study further revealed that schools in the studied area had alternative strategies to Corporal Punishment as learners were made aware of rules and regulations before hand and they were displayed on notice boards where they could be seen by everybody. The findings of the study are in tandem with the views of Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) and (DoE, 2000) that establish a set of rules and expectations.

If children know beforehand what is expected of them, they will comply with the rules. Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001) further argue that learners are more likely to obey the stated rules when they sense that the educators believe in their potential for excellence. This implies that the rules should be clear, make sense, rules should be based on core values such as safety and respect (Porteus, Vally and Ruth, 2001).

However, the study revealed that learners did not take alternatives to Corporal Punishment such as detention and cleaning of school premises, for example, toilets and classrooms seriously. Generally, it seemed learners enjoyed manual work and to them it seemed not to be like punishment as revealed by the study.

The study revealed challenges that were encountered in implementing alternative methods to corporal punishment such as, some parents who challenged school authorities as to why the children were cleaning toilets, this could have emanated from lack of knowledge and communication on the concerned parent. Cotton, (2006) suggests that rules and the consequences of breaking them should be clearly specified and communicated to parents, learners, and teachers. Once rules have been communicated and all processes has have been exhausted, rules can be enforced in a fair and consistent manner.

If the disciplinary hearing is equivalent to the calling of witnesses, some learners were shy and afraid to testify. Disciplinary hearing sometimes became a long process and took time to reach a decision. In such instances the researcher recommends solving acts of misconducts within reasonable time.

5.4.5 Disciplinary hearings

The research revealed that corrective measures were taken first and it was after the failure of such measures to correct a learner and the unwillingness of the child to change that such a learner was suspended from school in order to discourage learners from committing serious misconducts. The research findings were that serious cases that involved stabbing, assault, stealing of school property, damage of property, persistence of misbehaviour, found in possession of drugs or dangerous weapon, found under the influence of alcohol and drugs e.g. marijuana, these cases were referred to the Disciplinary Committee. This was in accordance with DoE (2000) statutes.

The study revealed that the systems of resolving the learner misconduct were strictly adhered to and in accordance with SASA (1996) and DOE (2000) statutes as the subject educator reported the act of misconduct to the Grade Head. The Grade Head investigated the matter prior the Disciplinary hearing and checked in the school's Code of Conduct which rule was contravened by the learner. Parents of learners were informed in writing and were invited when a learner was called for a disciplinary hearing.

The research study revealed that learners in some schools were suspended; some were expelled without the knowledge of the HOD this was contrary to the procedures that are stipulated by DoE (2000) and SASA (1996) which states that the HOD is in charge and of suspensions and expulsions. This was an indication that policy decisions made by the elite flowed downward to the population at large and were executed by the bureaucracy (Anderson, 1994) Decisions were taken at the top and there was no popular participation which, means it is only the expression of values and choices of the privileged who dictated their views to the masses (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). This is an approach where policy-making leaders act in an environment which is characterized by apathy and information distortion and governs a large passive mass.

5.4.6 Safety and Security Committee

Safety was considered as an important strategy for ease of administering learner discipline. The study revealed that in some schools the Safety and Security Committee did not exist, it was never established, it was imaginary, it was thought of when incidents that sparked violence between learners had occurred; it was then that educators thought about establishing such a committee.

It was further established that in schools where the committee was established, it was dysfunctional; it did not know or perform its duties. The findings of the study reflect negligence and poor planning in the part of administration and negation of following standing procedures. Chapter 2, Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996) states that every person has the right to an environment that was not detrimental to his/her health or well being. This was also an indication that there was a difference between policy implementation and formulation. There may be some good policies but the implementers neglect them as they implement the programme according to their own understanding (Anderson, 1994).

The findings of the study contradicted Netshitaname and Van Vollenhoven (2002) and Prinsloo (2004) who are of the opinion that it is the duty of the educator to teach, to provide an educational, physical and mental safety. It is their duty as well to provide “duty of care” for learners. To look for the well being means in the school, in the classroom the educator should create a conducive atmosphere for learners by preventing any threats and nasty incidence to occur in the school premises.

These findings were similar to those of De Wet (2003) in the Eastern Cape where educators failed to put in place safety and security measures to protect learners from presence of gangs in schools and victimization of non-gang members. The results of this study showed that learners and educators were fearful, not only at school, but also on their way to school and back home. It can therefore, be observed that such situations can also lead to some acts of ill discipline as some learners may end up bunking classes in fear of their safety.

5.5 Implementation of strategies to maintain learner discipline

The lack of discipline in secondary schools throughout the country has long been a matter of great concern for educators. Numerous attempts have been made to solve the problem and to re-establish the culture of effective learning and teaching in the schools. The study revealed that some schools have strategies to maintain discipline these include locking gates for late comers, supervision of learners at playgrounds detaining offenders, parents monitoring learners during absence of educators and advice from Department of Social Development and SAPS. However, these plans seemed not to be effective may be because they were not given enough time to develop or lack of support from educators. Nonetheless, this could be attributed to the fact that there was a difference between formulation and implementation of plans. Some plans did not work because of lack of support or lack of supervision by implementers (Anderson, 1994) which is reminiscent of the Top Down approach to policy implementation.

The implementation of learner discipline seemed to follow the Top Down approach of policy implementation. This line of thinking was confirmed by Urwin and Jordan (2007) who postulate that the Top-Down approach assumes the legislation and policies set explicit aims and objectives, providing a blueprint that was then directly translated into action.

Sugai and Horner (2002) assert that to control student behaviour in hallways, playgrounds, cafeterias and other no-classroom settings needs systematic, active supervision and positive feedback. This is in line with other scholars studying learner discipline that concluded with the same results (Warren *et. al*, 2006). When developing a school plan sufficient time should be given for the implementation to meet different environments as the challenges that are faced by each school are unique, because new disciplinary practices fail due to unrealistic time allocation (Gaudstad, 2008)

The study revealed that schools applied Top down model of policy implementation and as such it encountered problems which are associated with it. Fraser *et al* (2006), Brynard (2005) concurred that the policy implementation, face challenges in

the implementation stages because of lack of understanding of environmental factors and lack of consultation. This was also true as it emerged that some schools did not consult the learners in the formulation of plans. Therefore, it meant that planning required inputs from everyone in the school, educators, parents, learners and community representatives.

It has been argued that school authorities have a legal duty to care for learners and that this included providing them with a hostile-free learning environment. The School Management Teams are required to implement and enforce systems entailing policies and practices which will lead to the provision of a reasonable standard of care for learners' welfare.

5.5.1 Development of strategies by stakeholders

The research findings were that stakeholders that played a significant role in the formulation of policies were the SMTs, SGBs, educators and learners and community members who were not parents but have interest in the schools e.g. police, lawyers, the Department of Correctional Services. However, it has to be noted that some members of SGBs are parents and they are selected on their expertise and that their children are in that particular school also represent the interest of parents. The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) encourages active involvement of all stakeholders in all aspects that are related to the school, especially when important decisions have to be taken. Hence, the findings of the study are in line with SASA (1996) recommendations.

The formulation and implementation of these policies and plans showed a measure of consultation which is reminiscent of the Bottom Up approach of policy formulation and implementation where street bureaucrats are involved as stakeholders participated in well organised groups as revealed by the study. Pulzl and Treib (2007) contend that the aim of the Bottom-Up approach was to give accurate empirical description and explanations of interaction and problem solving strategies of actors involved in delivery and policy implementation.

The study also revealed that although SMTs and educators argued that learners were part of the formulation of policies, learners in most schools had a different view that they were never involved in the process of crafting of discipline policies and plans of the school. This argument could have emanated from that learners did not understand the procedures. In their view they thought that all learners should have been involved yet the process involved their representatives. The section on SASA (1996) which stipulates that, a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school is not clear whether they are involved individually or through learner representatives. However, in any case views of representatives represent learners' views as they consult them.

This study further sought information on reviewing of the discipline policy document and on involvement of stakeholders on the process. It was found that schools had varying periods for reviewing the document as some reviewed it once after three years, annually and some never did that, may be because they did not see it fit. Nonetheless in area of study where reviews were conducted stakeholders were involved.

However, according to Classroom Discipline plan (2005) rules must be reviewed periodically and revised as needed to suit present discipline problems. Failure by schools to review the discipline policy documents may impact negatively on its implementation as it may not be in line with new challenges on discipline. Hence, schools should always be encouraged to review the discipline document regularly to face new challenges.

Finally it was observed in the area of study that the formulation and reviewing of discipline documents was in line with the Bottom-Up approach and it gave also ownership of the document to stakeholders as they participated in its formation. Kumar (2006) is of the opinion that community participation, if it is done properly, almost always brings advantages for the said community. It can therefore, be noted that participation can ensure effective utilization of available resources where people

and other agents work towards achieving their objective and local people become responsible for various activities.

The participatory process can have wider ramifications for the 'policy-owning' body as it helped create an institutional culture of openness and service. The process also encouraged greater public attention to the way in which the policy is implemented, thus promoting accountability. Participation in most cases brought a wider range of information, ideas, perspectives, and experiences to the process of policy formulation (Vitto, 2003).

The research findings were that disciplinary strategies and review faced challenges such as: time consumption (the process of crafting of school strategies took half of the school day); illiteracy of parents (most of the time was spent translating the inputs from speakers to some parents who could not understand English), low attendance (some parents decided to stay away from meetings); wrong misconception by parents (they regard the school as having the first hand knowledge of dealing with discipline), shifting of responsibility by learners to RCL and finally cultural background (RCL representatives sometimes ignored the meetings as they found it strange to discuss issues of discipline in the presence of their parents).

5.6 Consultation of documents when dealing with learner discipline

The study revealed that schools adhered to the following procedures when dealing with learner discipline: warning the learner, referral to the Grade Head, calling of the parent and the Disciplinary Committee. Document consultation when applying learner discipline was in line with the SASA (1996) principles to ensure that learner's rights are upheld by schools in disciplinary procedures. However, the study further revealed that documents like the South African Schools Act of 1996, RSA constitution of 1996, and DoE (2000) were breached as some schools applied corporal punishment unlawfully.

The study revealed that to ensure that schools were free from dangerous weapons and drugs, random searching by the South African Police Service is done. This was in line with the schools Code of Conduct and DoE (2000) statutes. The Education Law Policy Handbook for Educators (1996) which stipulates that learning should be conducted in a safe and free environment.

Contradictions or segregation in terms of exercising laws and regulations pertaining Religious beliefs and worship were reported from the area of study as the Xhosa initiates were allowed not to wear school uniform for three months when they were from the initiation school. This was in line with their beliefs, however the Rastafarians were not allowed to have dread-locks despite the fact that it is their religion, this was considered as an act of ill discipline. This was a breach of the SASA (1996) which stipulates that learners have a right to worship and there will be no discrimination by colour and any creed.

5.7 Challenges faced by the schools in implementing learner discipline

The research findings were that schools in the area of study experienced various challenges in the implementation of learner discipline. In some schools educators were not fully cooperative as they watered down some efforts of the SMTs by not fully supervising the detention classes and this resulted in learners identifying this loophole and as result some of them ended not fulfilling the punishment. This is against the views of Sugai and Horner (2002) that for successful implementation of discipline cooperation and team work is essential in implementing school-wide discipline approaches.

Challenges in administering the detention are experienced because educators were too much idealistic when they have to perform their duties; there was inconsistency in monitoring the detention classes because some educators would only monitor the learners for few minutes and they called the detention off whereas others would stay the entire duration of the detention class. Some educators had an understanding attitude, they like cheap popularity at the expense of others, they will not punish learners although a decision was taken to do so. This type of behaviour exhibited the

Trying Hard Type of discipline implementation which is characterized by weak authority. These are the educators that lacked self confidence to implement discipline to learners (Mkhize, 2002).

It can be observed therefore that such behaviour was detrimental to the implementation of learner discipline as it may lead to learners having respect for some educators but disrespect for others and it defeats the whole purpose of instilling discipline. Cotton (2006) also point out that when teachers are inconsistent in the enforcement of rules, or when they react in inappropriate ways, discipline is generally poor. This implies that there is lack of commitment from educators to endure that there is effective implementation of learner discipline.

The study revealed that schools faced challenges from learners from working parents who do not stay with their children. However Edwards (2004) pointed out as he took it to another level by explaining that even if parents are at home, parent-child interactions may be characterised by conflicts, for instance, divorce and poverty as well as physical and mental abuse can adversely affect children's ability to function properly, which is also substantiated in this study as it was revealed that learners from such environments had disciplinary challenges.

The study further revealed that the illiteracy of parents was challenges in the implementation of learner discipline the schools in the area of study as it became difficult to take quick and effective decision because most of the parents took time to understand disciplinary issues. Poor attendance in meetings was noted as a challenge in the implementation of school discipline. Meetings that were called to discuss disciplinary issues were postponed over and over due as a result that decisions that relate to learner discipline have to be taken by a quorum. The postponement of the Disciplinary hearing for long periods was unveiled as one of the challenges in the implementation of learner discipline as it has a negative bearing to learner discipline. Such issues reflect on the calibre of people who are chosen to run schools.

The study also revealed that inconsistency and sustainability in implementing learner discipline policies contributes to the decline of discipline. The study revealed that schools encountered administrative challenges of implementing school discipline as

they lacked support from the Department of Education as they preferred not to intervene in cases of serious misconducts. Learners committed serious acts of misconduct because they are aware that they cannot be expelled from school, the only punishment a learner will get is suspension.

The study also revealed that the unwillingness of educators to take the responsibility of instilling discipline to learners because some are afraid of the learners. Some do not want to be caught on the wrong side of the law poses another challenge to SMTs who have to ensure that there is order and stability at the school. This is reminiscent of the Trying Hard Type of maintaining learner discipline which is characterized by weak authority and educators lack self confidence to implement discipline to learners (Mkhize, 2002).

These findings showed lack of knowledge and understanding of statutory instruments from participants as Section 9(2) (5) of the South African Schools Act(RSA, 1996b) clearly states that Heads of Department have the following responsibilities regarding discipline in public schools: Section 9(2) Subject to any applicable provincial law, a learner at a public school may be expelled only by the Head of Department; if the learner is found guilty of serious misconduct after a fair hearing. Therefore in it is the schools' responsibility to take appropriate measures and avoid shifting the blame to DoE.

Learner discipline is a big challenge in Graaff Reinet Secondary schools in areas with high density. Principals, educators and parents did not know the kind of strategy that effectively works for them to maintain learner discipline. Educators felt disempowered by the introduction of the Bill of Rights and the abolishment of Corporal Punishment by South African Schools Act which seemed to protect learner's rights at the expense of educator's rights.

5.8 The support that is given by the Department of Education to assist schools to manage and maintain learner discipline

The cooperation and support of DoE is of fundamental importance in the implementation of school discipline. This study revealed that SMTs, SGBs, SAPS, Department of Social Development (DSD), Department of Correctional Services, the

Department of Health and Love life were involved in the implementation of learner discipline in their different capacities. They conducted various educative sessions in encouraging learners to be responsible individuals.

The SAPS and the Department of Social Development were invited in schools to make presentation about the dangers of drugs abuse and gangsterism in various school forums. In the community there was co-operation between the police and other local based organizations, during patrols the police were assigned with the task of looking for bunkers and learners who played truant that belonged to the local schools, they brought them back to the schools This was in line with the Department of Education and Children's service on School Discipline (2007) to ensure district support services and local interagency services provided appropriate services to school communities, this was the provision of capacity building workshops to maintain discipline in schools.

In fundraising efforts, the study has revealed that parents played a meaningful role in maintaining of learner discipline; they sat in -between the learners, looked for learners who were under the influence of liquor, those that had disruptive behaviour. This was in accordance with the Department of Education and Children's service on School Discipline (2007), the District management's core functions with regards to discipline in schools. Supporting principals in ensuring that each school's behaviour code and other behaviour management procedures address needs specific to its community. This implies that school policies that deal with discipline should be crafted in such a way that it nurtures children to be responsible members of the community

The study established that the Department of Education in the Graaff Reinet District did not support schools in the crafting of policies to maintain learner discipline. The Department of education only supplied material resources like guidelines to the Code of Conduct, the South African Schools Act if they are asked by certain schools. However, this was in accordance with the Department of Education and Children's service on School Discipline (2007), the District management's core functions with regards to discipline in schools is to support principals in ensuring that school planning addresses the implementation of the School Discipline Policy, this implies

ensuring that schools establish Disciplinary Committee, there are safety regulations to control the use of drugs and illegal weapons nothing else.

The study revealed that schools felt that they were left alone when it comes to the disciplining of learners. Such a feeling among schools in the studied area may have emanated from lack of understanding of operational school policies as it should be noted that since schools were located in different environments and the DoE should not use “one size fits all” on disciplinary issues; it is within the schools’ mandate as schools to choose what its best for them. Schools have to see what is relevant to their situations and use their own ingenuity in looking for solutions to learner discipline problems.

5.9 Capacity building of stakeholders in managing and maintaining of learner discipline

The study revealed that there were no capacity buildings trainings for the stakeholders to maintain learner discipline at the schools which were organized by the Department of Education. The trainings that were organized by the Department of Education were more career and academic orientated; they were not related to the mantaining of learner discipline in schools. In induction workshops of newly appointed Principals, Deputy Principals, and emphasis is on the finances of the school.

Curwin (2003) argue that if the full discipline is to work educators have to be trained in handling disciplinary issues and how to motivate learners so as to limit learner indiscipline and educators need responsibility training (educators need to be trained how to control learners to behave, control can be achieved through movements in between the students) and in Omission training (Building patterns of cooperation by engaging the learners into variety of activities but it should be activities that learners enjoy, (iv) a back-up system, (teachers can use a number of mechanisms e.g. pull a card, write a letter to a parent, involve the principal (Curwin, 2003).

The Department of Education in the Graaff Reinet District is more concerned about academic results at the end of the year and just implementing the existing policies without any clarifications following the Top Down approach to policy implementation which sometimes leads to use of wrong strategies. They craft some of the policies and cascade them to schools for implementation with educators as the implementers.

It was found in the area of study only that the Love Life ground breakers and the Department of Health particularly the nurses from local clinics were involved in capacity building in terms of learner discipline as they liaised with schools and held workshops. They also conveyed that ill discipline does not pay through plays and drama. This move was in line with DoE (2000) and SASA (1996) statutes which encourage cooperation and involvement with various stakeholders in implementing learner discipline.

5.10 Monitoring mechanisms that are put in place to ensure the implementation of and managing of learner discipline

The study revealed that there were different mechanisms adopted by schools in the monitoring school discipline. It was found that schools monitored school discipline through the use of staff members during break in play grounds and hallways. This was in accordance to views of Sugai and Horner (2002) who advocate that all staff members must engage in active supervision when assigned to a non-classroom setting or when moving through playgrounds and hallways or other environments where there are large numbers of learners.

In the area of study the monitoring of learner discipline was a joint responsibility of parents and staff members. Parents and educators formed teams to monitor learner using corridor walks, thorough check of toilets, also checking those who used wrong entrance points. The Disciplinary Committees of most school were headed by parents who were able to handle disciplinary cases at home. These efforts were in line with the suggestions of Barclay and Boone (1997) who advocated that they should be partnership between parents and the school in terms of monitoring learner discipline if implementation of school discipline was to be effective.

The involvement of parents in the studied area was also found to be in line with the findings of Berger (1991) and those of Cheng, (2002) that countries like Canada and USA have a long tradition of parental involvement in their schools. Parental involvement in schools is also evident in Asia: in countries like Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia and Japan where it was a rare thing in the past. Schools in these countries have now recognized the importance of involving parents and local communities in the school affairs of their children and in maintaining learner discipline (Wang, 2000 cited in Cheng, 2002).

There was also involvement of RCL, in the monitoring of discipline in the area of study as they wrote down the names of all late comers, and moved around during functions to check if learners did not break school regulations within school premises for example checked whether learners did not smoke dagga in the toilets. This was conducted with the assistance of staff members and SMTs. The educators occupied certain spots around the school, patrolled, and chatted to learners, easing tensions that may have resulted in outbreak of fights. These gestures were in line with what Latham (1992) advocates for in terms of monitoring discipline.

Active supervision can be operationalised as: scanning-keeping head up and looking for rule following and violating behaviours, moving-routinely through locations where expected behaviours are more difficult for learners to demonstrate or where large numbers of learners congregate or are transition and interact-make pro-social (positive and preventive) contacts with as many different learners as possible (Latham, 1992). Generally most schools used SWPBS and PBS as mechanism for maintaining learner discipline.

The mechanism to control the bunking of classes was found to be common in all schools, the system of period registers which were kept by class representatives, subject educators controlled the registers in each period to check as to who was absent and present during that specific period which is in line with The Education Law Policy Handbook for Educators (1996) which stipulates that the register should be marked at least 30 minutes at the beginning of school lessons.

The study revealed that the SAPS played a crucial role in some communities where the schools participate in Community Policing Forum (CPF) meetings. During weekends, they raided taverns and shebeens in search of children that were under age who were found in these places, they chased them away, or took them to the nearby police stations.

However, the study also revealed that RCLs did not only monitor discipline from the side of learners but they checked for educators who were bunking classes too. This could be noted as noble ideas as learner are the consumers of curriculum and if an educator did not attend classes learners are going to lose. Such a move can even curb absenteeism among educators. The success of any learning process in school depends upon a well monitored, well-managed organisation which will guarantee sound discipline, coordination and a positive school climate (Fullan, 1992).

In some schools SMT members are overloaded because there was a shortage of educators. They spent more time in teaching not doing administrative work or monitoring learner discipline. These conditions prevailed in schools despite the stipulation from the Educators Employment of 1998 which states that Principals cannot exceed the maximum of 16 periods per cycle, Deputy Principals have a maximum of 24 periods per cycle and Heads of Departments can teach up to 32 periods per cycle. Such situation could contribute to lack of effective monitoring of learner discipline. (Doe, Policy Handbook of Educators, 1998)

5.11 Summary

In this chapter the major findings showed that schools' implementation of learner discipline in the studied area were based on the combination of Top Down and Bottom Up approaches of policy implementation. The Street Level Bureaucrats were also involved in the formulation of learner discipline policies and yet the guidelines were from the elite. Research found that socio-economic factors contributed to learner ill-discipline e.g. home and family environment, peer pressure, lack of parent involvement, technology and family structure. It was found that schools had challenges on learners who bunked classes, abused drugs, came late to school, did not wear school uniform and fought at school as well as belonging to gangs.

Implementation of learner discipline encompassed the basic type, positive type approaches to discipline. The study revealed that despite using various strategies in implementing learner discipline schools still encountered numerous challenges.

The study involved parents, educators, Principals, SMTs, SGBs and LR's in the monitoring learner discipline in the area of study. To monitor discipline educators occupied strategic points, play grounds, and moved around as teams in areas where ill discipline was most likely to take place. In some of the studied area SAPS were actively involved in the monitoring of school discipline. However, monitoring of school discipline faced challenges as some educators were reluctant to effectively conduct certain duties. In extra-mural activities like sport, only few educators gave support to the activity in the monitoring of discipline.

The next chapter provides a summary of the study, the major conclusions that were drawn from the study as well as some recommendations that could be adopted by policy makers in an effort to address the problems facing implementation of learner discipline in secondary schools.

6 CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The major purpose of the study was to assess the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District. This chapter provides the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. It outlines the summary of the findings followed by conclusions made from the findings regarding the implementation of learner discipline policies in the four schools. It outlines the recommendations made on the basis of the findings of the study. This is followed by a justification of the research methodology that underpinned the study.

6.2 Summary of research findings

6.2.1 Strategies that have been put in place to maintain learner discipline in the schools under study

It was disclosed from this study that socio-economic factors poverty, unemployment, peer pressure, gangsterism, lack of role models; child-headed families contributed to the lack of discipline. It further emerged that some learners from violent families were also in the habit of being undisciplined. These factors made it difficult for educators to deal with discipline in secondary schools.

Collected data showed that all schools had School Management Teams that were functional. They patrolled around the school to ensure that there was teaching and learning and that there are no bunkers among either educators or learners. It was found that some of the commonly used strategies in the area of study were the Back to Basic approach and the Marva Collis type. The use of rules can be referred to as the Back to Basics model of maintaining school discipline. It further emerged that schools enforced the Code of Conduct through extra work, detention, cleaning of classrooms, school yard, and toilets and picking up papers. In the area of study it was found that the Marva Collis type of discipline was applied as the educators considered it as effective although they sometimes reported disciplinary cases to either the Grade Head or Head of Department.

In the area of study there was application of Positive approach was used as educators tried to encourage learners to be respectful.

The data also revealed that verbal warnings, calling of parents and detention were used as alternatives to Corporal Punishment. It also emerged that although schools used the alternative methods of punishment they also used Corporal Punishment. From the data collected it was found that the Disciplinary Committee was the last resort in deterring the learners from committing acts of misconduct.

6.2.2 Code of Conduct

The findings from the area of study suggest that schools were aware of the need for a Code of Conduct which was discussed and ratified by all stakeholders including learners who were represented by the RCL as well as the SMT and SGB. Nonetheless the drafting of the Code of Conduct was affected by the illiteracy of some parents as they did not understand certain issues which reflected the weakness of using a Bottom-Up approach. However, despite the existence of the Code of Conduct, most schools in the studied area continued to experience learner disciplinary problems which were an indication that school code of conduct could not solve disciplinary problems and could only serve as a guide.

6.2.3 Disciplinary Committee

The data revealed that the Disciplinary hearings at all the four schools were used as the last resort in the effort to try to persuade the learners to change their misbehaviour for the better. Parents of learners who had transgressed the rules were invited in writing for a hearing. This implies that the Disciplinary Committee wanted learners to receive fair hearing. The Disciplinary hearing's verdicts were aimed at correcting the misbehaviour of the learner not punishment. It was found that the SGBs and the Principals had the final say. Records were kept at the Principal's office for reference purposes by the subject educator and the secretary of the Disciplinary Committee. This implies that the schools were aware of the possible dangers of not following the correct procedure when a verdict had to be given in cases of serious misconduct because some parents had knowledge of the law.

6.2.4 Corporal Punishment

The study found that despite the fact that corporal punishment was abolished in schools; schools were still administering it unlawfully. The study further revealed that learners, parents and educators advocated for the reinstatement of corporal punishment as a strategy to implement learner discipline because it seemed to work better than other strategies.

6.2.5 Alternatives to corporal punishment

It emerged from the study that detention was one of the popularly used strategies as an alternative to corporal punishment. The data revealed that verbal warnings, calling of parents and detentions were used as alternatives to Corporal Punishment.

Alternatives methods to Corporal Punishments that were used by schools to maintain discipline included the locking of gates to keep out late comers, supervision of learners by educators, giving of extra work to learners, time out, and withdrawal of privileges from learners.

6.2.6 Safety Committees

The findings of the study reflected that there is negligence in following safety measures, poor planning on the side of the administration to establish the Safety and Security Committee. The data revealed that the Safety and Security Committee were never established in some schools. When they existed they were dysfunctional. The Safety and Security Committee was only considered when there was a crisis situation. It emerged from the study that the committee in one school had drafted a safety policy.

6.3 Support provided to schools by the Department of Education to ensure implementation of learner discipline

The data disclosed that there was no support from the Department of Education to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. The data also found that the only support was in the form of material resources. It emerged that only workshops that were aimed at building the capacity of the SGB members to handle finances were organised by the Department of Education. The study also found that schools received other support to maintain learner discipline from concerned parents, Community Based organizations such as the SAPS, the Department of Social Development, Love Life, Ministers Fraternal and the Department of Health. It emerged that due to the minimal support from the Department of Education, there was persistence of learner ill discipline.

6.4 Monitoring mechanisms to ensure the implementation of learner discipline policies

The study found that same strategies were adopted by the four schools to monitor learner discipline. Detention, period registers, extra work, pass outs, SMT patrols, RCLs and class representatives played a crucial role in monitoring learner discipline. The research findings disclosed that other stakeholders who monitored learner discipline were the SAPS, Ministers Fraternal and local councillors who collaborated with the schools. Parents also played a meaningful role in monitoring learner discipline especially during extra mural activities. They acted as members of the Disciplinary Committee. It emerged that the lack of educator co-operation was a stumbling block in monitoring learner discipline. Inconsistency and sustainability in monitoring strategies were revealed by the study as challenges. Poor infrastructure in most schools is another challenge in the monitoring learner discipline.

6.5 Challenges regarding the implementation of strategies of effective learner discipline

Research findings disclosed that the implementation of learner discipline in schools was hampered by challenges such as the lack of educator co-operation. The study

also found that parent illiteracy was a big challenge in all schools, the language barrier forced some parents to stay away from meetings or the handful of parents who attended the meetings did not participate in the discussions. It emerged that some of the RCL representatives who were supposed to attend the meetings sometimes missed them. Learners did not obey strict policies that took away their freedom. It also emerged that the crafting of strategies for discipline was time consuming because the entire tuition time was wasted on crafting the strategies. Illiteracy was found to be another challenge in designing and viewing of policy documents.

The research findings were that some educators were afraid of learners and they liked to buy cheap popularity at the expense of the SMTs. The study revealed that there was inconsistency and the lack of sustainability in implementing the strategies. The research findings indicated that the SGBs, SMTs, RCLs and parents needed capacity building to enable them implement learner discipline effectively.

The data also revealed that financial constraints were another challenge in maintaining learner discipline because schools could not fix the problem of infrastructure and fencing. It emerged that schools did not receive assistance from the Department of Education and disciplinary cases were postponed because the Disciplinary Committee was still consulting with the Department of Education. Schools were understaffed; the filling of posts had to be done through the redeployment process.

6.6 Implications of the theory

Policy implementation as posited by Van Meter and Von Horn (1975:447-8) policy implementation encompasses those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions. This revealed that the implementation of learner discipline in the study area was embedded in both the Top Down and Bottom Up approaches of policy implementation. It is hard to locate theory within a single approach as some policies were brought from DoE without the consultation of street level bureaucrats. On the other hand parents and other stakeholders were consulted and participated in the

designing of the Code of Conduct and strategies for maintaining learner discipline. Fraser *et. al* (2006) and Brynard (2005) concur that there are two models of policy implementation, the Top-down and Bottom –up models as approaches that are adopted in implementing the learner discipline policies in township secondary school in implementing learner discipline.

This implies that school principals, educators SGBs, community based organization must work together to implement learner discipline policies. Mentoring of schools in curbing indiscipline is of paramount importance. The active involvement and participation of all stakeholders in the process of crafting and reviewing of policies should be done in a transparent manner. Eden (1996) argues that the success of the environmental policy depends on the public participation and discussions should not be dominated by experts.

6.7 Justification of the research methodology used

The study adopted the interpretive qualitative approach in investigating how learner discipline policies were implemented in township secondary school in the Graaff Reinet District. The qualitative methodology sought to unearth insights that revealed why things were the way they were and why people acted the way they do (Niewenhuis, 2007). The qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to have face to face interview with the participants studying them in their natural surroundings. The methodology helped the researcher to establish close relations with the participants to investigate how the learner discipline policies were implemented in secondary schools in the area with high density, the role of stakeholders in the process.

The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to find out how effective learner discipline policies in maintaining discipline after the abolishment of Corporal Punishment was. The study also sought to establish and assess the implementation of learner discipline policies, the causes of learner indiscipline in secondary schools in the area with high density, the strategies that schools employed to enhance effective learner discipline, how schools implemented the strategies, the support that schools received from the Department of Education, and monitoring mechanisms to

ensure that there was proper discipline in schools. Qualitative data was used to allow the participants to express themselves freely. It also enabled learners to express their views on learner discipline. In this fashion the researcher was trying to balance the equation to what SMTs, Senior Educators, parents have said.

In qualitative studies trustworthiness conformability and dependability were crucial because they ensured accuracy. This was accounted for in the study first by use of verbatim statements which gave no room for error as these were the actual words of participants (Creswell, 2007). Semi-structured interviews, Focus Groups and Document Analysis were used to collect authentic information from the participants.

6.8 Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from this study suggest that implementation of learner discipline is inundated with numerous problems such as violation of the code of conduct by some administrators as suspensions and expulsion were affected without the knowledge of the Head of Department. Some educators were not keen to implement the suggested punitive measures to offending learners for fear of losing their favour because they are afraid of them. The implementation of learner discipline was also affected by a poor safety policy implementation as some schools did not have safety plans. The conclusions that can be drawn from this study is that the schools still feel that corporal punishment is the most effective strategy for maintaining learner discipline as it is still used by schools. It was abolished without consulting with parents and learners a typical example of Top-Down approach of policy formulation.

The implementations of alternatives to corporal punishment seemed not to yield good results in terms of improving learner discipline in schools. It faced problems such as lack of co-operation from educators, parents and learners themselves. The implementers of learner discipline who can be called street level bureaucrats also lacked skills for handling these alternatives to corporal punishment. Finally the lack of support from the Department of Education seems to have a negative impact on the implementation of learner discipline of learner discipline.

6.9 Recommendations

The findings indicated that for schools to implement learner discipline policies effectively, all stakeholders in education must be actively involved. The SMTs must encourage cooperation in attaining the goals of sound discipline. In light of the above the researcher recommends the following.

- The DoE should build the capacity of SMTs, SGBs, RCL and educators on strategies to handle learner discipline.
- Educators should work as a team when they are dealing with learner discipline and constantly meet to review their strategies for implementing learner discipline.
- Educators should be role models; they should behave in a professional manner which earns them respect among learners.
- The researcher recommends that in the crafting of the Code of Conduct, the SGBs and SMTs should involve those parents who are literate who understand the procedures, and are able to interpret policies. The language used in the Code of Conduct should be that of school community for ease of administration.
- The researcher further recommends that policies and the Code of Conduct should be reviewed biannually and encourages all stakeholders that have crafted the policies/Code of Conduct to attend the reviews.
- The study recommends that the schools should strictly adhere to the school Code of Conduct and other relevant statutes when dealing with serious acts of misconduct which deserve suspension or expulsion.
- Collaboration and communication among parents, local based organisations and schools should be encouraged for effective monitoring and fostering of learner discipline.
- The Safety and Security committee should be established in all schools because it is the responsibility of the educators to ensure learner safety.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to request for permission to conduct reserach

 The image cannot be displayed. Your computer may not have enough memory to open the image, or the image may have been corrupted. Restart your computer, and then open the file again. If the red x still appears, you may have to delete the image and then insert it again.

Appendix B: Letter of approval to conduct research

 The image cannot be displayed. Your computer may not have enough memory to open the image, or the image may have been corrupted. Restart your computer, and then open the file again. If the red x still appears, you may have to delete the image and then insert it again.

Appendix C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS AND SMT MEMBERS

I am Nkosana Carlon Bilatyia Masters candidate at the University Of Fort Hare Faculty Of Education. As a requirement of the programme I am conducting a study on "An assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District". I am currently collecting information and your school has been included in the study. I shall be grateful if you could spare some few minutes to participate in the interview. I wish to guarantee you that any information you will provide will be confidential and will not be disclosed to anybody. At no time your identity will be divulged or made available to any body other than myself.

You are kindly requested to answer the questions as honestly as you can as your responses would assist in providing information on how learner discipline policies are being implemented in schools.

Biographic information of (SMT members)

Section A: General Background information

1. Date of Interview.....
2. Type of School: Church Public Private
 Location of School: Urban Rural Township
 Gender: Male Female
3. Marital status.....
4. Age Range: Below 20 years 20-29 years 30-39 years 40-49 years
 50-59 years 60-69 years 70+
5. Experience as a classroom educator.....years
6. Experience as a School Principal/Deputy Principal/HOD.....years
7. Please state whether you are a permanent post or acting post.....
8. If Acting as head of the school, how long have you been in that capacity?.....years
9. What is your academic qualification?.....
10. What is your highest professional qualification?.....
 Certificate in Education Diploma in Education

Bachelor of Education []

Honours Degree []

Masters in Education []

any other specify.....

School plans that are in place for governing and managing learner discipline

1. What is your view about the state of learner discipline in your school?
2. How do you deal with each disciplinary problem?
3. What are the main causes of indiscipline in your school?
4. Please discuss what plans or policies that are in place to manage and maintain discipline in the school?
5. Please explain who participated in the formulation of plans or policies?
6. Please explain how each of the above stakeholders was involved in formulating plans/policies for maintaining and managing discipline?(role)
7. What process was followed by the school to formulate the plans /policies for maintaining and managing learner discipline?
8. Please explain how often are the plans/policies reviewed by the school
Who reviews them?
9. What processes are followed in reviewing the plans/policies?
10. What challenges are encountered in formulating plans/policies for maintaining and managing learner discipline?

Strategies employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline

1. Please explain the processes followed by the SMT in implementing learner discipline both at school and in the classroom?
2. What alternative methods to corporal punishment do you use to maintain discipline in your school?
3. What mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that the plans/policies are implemented?
4. Does the school have the Code of Conduct?
Who developed the Code of Conduct?
Were all stakeholders at the school involved in formulating the Code of Conduct?
What role did each stakeholder play in crafting the Code of Conduct?
5. How do you implement the Code of Conduct to ensure that there is discipline at the school?
6. How do you implement other plans/policies that have been put in place to manage and maintain discipline to ensure there is discipline at the school?

7. What role do parents play in ensuring the managing and maintaining of discipline?
8. What happens during the disciplinary hearings?
Are parents of learners who are accused of misconduct involved in the disciplinary proceedings?
Who has final say in the process?
9. How does record keeping useful in managing discipline at your school? Who keeps the records and where are they kept?
10. How do you apply the principles that are stipulated by SASA concerning discipline in your school?
11. Do you consult any documents when dealing with learner discipline? If yes which documents and why?
12. Does the school have the committee on Safety and security? How does the committee apply the principles with regards to discipline in your school?
13. Please explain duties allocated to RCL to implement learner discipline.
14. What problems do you encounter with implementing alternatives to corporal punishment in your school?
15. Please explain the challenges faced by the school in implementing strategies to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. (Please discuss challenges in each individual strategy).

How schools are supported (besides policy documents) in managing learner discipline

1. How does the Department of Education assist the school in formulation of plans/policies to manage discipline and maintenance of discipline?
2. How often does the Department of Education train or build capacity of educators and other stakeholders in management and maintenance of discipline at the school?
3. Who trained them, when were they trained, how many educators and other stakeholders were trained?
4. To what extent does the training assist educators and other stakeholders to manage and maintain discipline?
5. What other support do you get to assist school in management and maintenance of discipline? Who provides the support besides the Department of Education?
6. Please explain what challenges are encountered by school with regard to support provided by the Department and other stakeholders in management of learner discipline.

Monitoring mechanisms that are put in place by schools to ensure proper implementation and management of learner discipline

1. Please discuss the mechanisms that have been put in place by the school and the Department of Education to ensure proper implementation of the plans/policies on learner discipline?
2. What other stakeholders besides those in the school that are involved in monitoring implementation and management of learner discipline policy/plans? Please explain the role each stakeholder play.
3. Please explain the challenges that the school encounter in monitoring the implementation and management of learner discipline

Appendix D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SENIOR EDUCATORS

School plans that are in place for governing and managing learner discipline

1. What is your view about the state of discipline in your school?
2. How do you deal with each disciplinary problem?
3. What are the main causes of indiscipline in your school?
4. Please discuss the plans/policies that are in place to manage and maintain learner discipline?
5. Who participated in the formulation of these policies/plans?
6. What role did you as an educator play in the formulation of the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline?
What processes were followed when these plans were crafted?
Please explain how often does the school review the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline? Who reviews the policies/plans?
7. Please explain whether educators involved when the plans /policies are reviewed?
8. What challenges are encountered in formulating the plans/policies for maintaining and managing learner discipline?

Strategies that are employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline

1. Please explain the strategies that are employed by the school to ensure the implementation of learner discipline policies both in the school and in the classroom?
2. How were these strategies crafted and who participated in the process?
3. What role did you play as an educator in crafting the strategies?
4. Please explain whether some educators are still using corporal punishment and why they do so?
5. What alternative methods to corporal punishment do you use to maintain discipline in your school?
6. What mechanisms has the school put in place to ensure that plans /policies are properly implemented?
7. Does the school have the Code of Conduct?
Who developed the Code of Conduct? How was the process of developing it?
What role did you play in crafting it?
8. How does the school implement the Code of Conduct to ensure that there is discipline at the school?
9. How does the school implement other plans/policies that have been put in place to enhance management and maintenance of discipline to ensure there is discipline at the school?

10. What role do parents play in ensuring the managing and maintaining of discipline?
11. What happens during the disciplinary hearings?
Are parents of learners who are accused of misconduct involved in the disciplinary proceedings?
Who has final say in the process?
12. How useful is record keeping in an effort to manage discipline at your school?
Who keeps the records and where are they kept?
Are parents of learners who are accused of misconduct involved during the process?
Who has the final say during the process?
Are records of learner misconduct kept in the school? How are they kept and where are they kept?
13. Please explain the challenges faced by the school in implementing strategies to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. (Please discuss challenges in each individual strategy).

How schools are supported (besides policy documents) in managing learner discipline

1. What is your view (if any) about the support that the Department of Education is giving to the schools to manage and maintain learner discipline?
2. How often does the Department of Education train educators and other stakeholders to manage and maintain learner discipline?
When last were the educators trained, who trained them? How long was the training?
3. In your view was the training effective or did it empower educators with the expertise of managing and maintaining learner discipline? How?
4. What other support besides training do you get to assist in management and maintenance of discipline? Who provides the support besides the Department of Education?
5. Please explain what challenges are encountered by school with regard to provision of support by the Department and other stakeholders in management of learner discipline.

Monitoring mechanisms that are put in place by schools to ensure proper implementation and management of learner discipline

1. Please discuss the mechanisms that have been put in place by the school and the Department of Education to ensure proper implementation of the plans/policies on learner discipline?

2. What other stakeholders besides those in the school that are involved in monitoring implementation and management of learner discipline policy/plans? Please explain the role each stakeholder play.
3. Please explain the challenges that the school encounter in monitoring the implementation and management of learner discipline.

Appendix E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

I am Nkosana Carlon Bilatyia Masters candidate at the University of Fort Hare Faculty of Education. As a requirement of the programme I am conducting a study on "An assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District". I am currently collecting information and your school has been included in the study. I shall be grateful if you could spare some few minutes to participate in the interview. I wish to guarantee you that any information you will provide will be confidential and will not be disclosed to anybody. At no time your identity will be divulged or made available to any body other than myself.

You are kindly requested to answer the questions as honestly as you can as your responses would assist in providing information on how learner discipline policies are being implemented in schools.

Biographic Information for Parents

Section A

1. Date of interview.....
2. Gender Male Female
- 3.1. Marital status.....
- 3.2. AgeRange: Below 20 years
- 20- 29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60 -69 years
- 70+
4. Experience as an SGB member.....years
5. Responsibility in the SGB if any.....
6. Number of years doing this job.....
7. What is your academic qualification.....
- Sub A Technical Certificate
- Sub B Diploma
- STD 1 Bachelor of Arts
- STD 2 Honours
- STD 3 Masters
- STD 4 any other specify.....

STD 5 []

STD 6 []

STD 7 []

STD 8 []

STD 9 []

STD 10 []

School plans that are in place for governing and managing learner discipline

1. What is your view about the state of discipline in the school?
2. How do you deal with each disciplinary problem?
3. What are the main causes of indiscipline in your school?
4. Please discuss the plans/policies that are in place to manage and maintain learner discipline?
5. Who participated in the formulation of these policies/plans?
6. What role did you play in the formulation of the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline?
What processes were followed when these plans were crafted?
7. Please explain how often does the school review the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline? Who reviews the policies/plans?
8. Please explain whether parents were involved when the plans /policies are reviewed?
9. What challenges are encountered in formulating the plans/policies for maintaining and managing learner discipline?

Strategies that are employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline

1. Please explain the strategies that are employed by the school to ensure the implementation of learner discipline policies both in the school and in the classroom?
2. How were these strategies crafted and who participated in the process?
3. What role did parents play in crafting the strategies?
4. Please explain whether some educators are still using corporal punishment and why they do so?
5. What alternative methods to corporal punishment does the school use to maintain discipline?
6. Does the school have the Code of Conduct?
Who developed the Code of Conduct? How was the process of developing it?
What role did you play in crafting it?
7. How does the school implement the Code of Conduct to ensure that there is discipline at the school?

8. Please give your views on how the school implements other plans/policies that have been put in place to enhance management and maintenance of discipline to ensure there is discipline at the school? What role do parents play?
9. Who are other stakeholders that are involved in the implementation of learner discipline?
10. What role do parents play in ensuring the management and maintenance of discipline at school?
11. What happens during the disciplinary hearings?
Are parents of learners who are accused of misconduct involved in the disciplinary proceedings?
Who has final say in the process?
12. Please explain the challenges faced by the school in implementing strategies to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. (Please discuss challenges in each individual strategy).

How schools are supported (besides policy documents) in managing learner discipline

1. To what extent does the Department of Education give support to the school to ensure that there is effective management and maintenance of learner discipline?
2. What support do you get as a school?
3. Were parents trained in building your capacity in management and maintenance of discipline? What type of training did you receive?
4. How many times were parents trained?
When were they trained?
How long were they trained?
5. Did the training help parents to assist educators in managing and maintaining learner discipline?
6. What challenges does that school face in implementing learner discipline?
7. What can be done to address these challenges?

Monitoring mechanisms that are put in place by schools to ensure proper implementation and management of learner discipline

1. What are the mechanisms have been put in place by the school to monitor management and implementation learner discipline policies/plans?
2. How do you involve learners in monitoring learner discipline policies/plans?

3. How are parents involved in monitoring management and maintenance of learner discipline policies/plans?
4. What other stakeholders besides those in the school that are involved in monitoring implementation and management of learner discipline policy/plans?
Please explain the role each stakeholder play.

I am Nkosana Carlon Bilatya Masters candidate at the University Of Fort Hare Faculty Of Education. As a requirement of the programme I am conducting a study on "An assessment of the implementation of learner discipline policies in township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District". I am currently collecting information and your school has been included in the study. I shall be grateful if you could spare some few minutes to participate in the interview. I wish to guarantee you that any information you will provide will be confidential and will not be disclosed to anybody. At no time your identity will be divulged or made available to any body other than myself.

You are kindly requested to answer the questions as honestly as you can as your responses would assist in providing information on how learner discipline policies are being implemented in schools.

School plans that are in place for governing and managing learner discipline

1. How long have you been members of the RCL or been learners at the school?
2. In your opinion what is the current state of discipline at the school?
3. What are the causes of indiscipline at the school?
4. What plans/policies that are put in place by the school to manage and maintain discipline?
5. Who participated in the formulation of these policies/plans?
6. What role did you play in the formulation of the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline?
What processes were followed when these plans were crafted?
7. Please explain how often does the school review the plans/policies for managing and maintaining discipline? Who reviews the policies/plans?
8. Please explain whether learners were involved when the plans /policies are reviewed? What role did they play?
9. What do you feel are the challenges encountered in formulating the plans/policies for maintaining and managing learner discipline?

Strategies that are employed by the school to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline

1. Please give your views on the strategies that are employed by the school to ensure the implementation and management of learner discipline policies/plans both in the school and in the classroom?
2. How were these strategies crafted and who participated in the process?

3. What role did learners play in crafting the strategies?
4. Please explain whether some educators are still using corporal punishment? What are your views regarding why they administer corporal punishment?
5. What are your views regarding alternative methods to corporal punishment used by the school to maintain and manage discipline?
6. In your opinion, are these alternative measures effective to maintain and manage learner discipline? Please explain.
7. What are other stakeholders that assist the school to manage and maintain learner discipline?
What is the role of each stakeholder?
8. Does the school have the Code of Conduct?
Who developed the Code of Conduct? How was the process of developing it?
What role did you play in crafting it?
9. Please give your views regarding how the school implements the Code of Conduct to ensure that there is discipline at the school? What role do learners play in the implementation of the code of conduct?
10. Please give your views on how the school implements other plans/policies that have been put in place to enhance management and maintenance of discipline to ensure there is discipline at the school? What role do learners play?
11. Who are other stakeholders that are involved in the implementation of learner discipline?
12. What role do learners play in ensuring the management and maintenance of discipline at school?
13. Please give your views regarding what happens in learner disciplinary hearings? What part do learners play? What changes would you like to see in the process and how?
14. What role (if any) does the RCL play in the disciplinary hearing? Please explain.
15. Please explain the challenges faced by the school in implementing strategies to ensure effective implementation of learner discipline. (Please discuss challenges in each individual strategy).

How schools are supported (besides policy documents) in managing learner discipline

8. What training has the Department of Education and the SMT provided to learners to ensure that there is effective managing and maintain of discipline policies/plans?
9. How many times were learners trained?
When were they trained?

How long was the training?

10. Please explain whether you feel the training benefited the school in equipping learners on how to manage discipline?
11. What role do you think parents can play in managing and maintaining learner discipline?
12. Please give your views regarding challenges that the school face in implementing learner discipline?
13. What can be done to address these challenges?

Monitoring mechanisms that are put in place by schools to ensure proper implementation and management of learner discipline

1. Please give your views regarding mechanisms that have been put in place by the school to monitor management and implementation learner discipline policies/plans?
2. How are learners involved in monitoring the implementation and management of learner discipline policies/plans?
3. How are parents involved in monitoring management and implementation of learner discipline policies/plans?
4. What other stakeholders besides those in the school are involved in monitoring implementation and management of learner discipline policy/plans? Please explain the role each stakeholder play.

Appendix G: Letter of request to School Principals to conduct interviews

Cell No: 072 770 1228

3 Scallan Street

Fax No: 042-243 0498

Somerset East

E-mail:nkosanabilaty@yahoo.com

5850

16 July 2012

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEW- RESEARCH

Dear Sir

I am an educator who is permanently employed by the Department of Education, a part time student, second year Master in Education at the University of Fort Hare, who is doing full research under the supervision of Professor S.Rembe. My study is centered on the “Assessment of the Implementation of learner discipline policies with specific reference to township secondary schools in the Graaff Reinet District “The study will include interviews with the SMT (Principal, Deputy Principal, and HOD) Post Level 1 educators, SGB members as well as learners from the RCL. The aim of the study is to solicit ideas on the implementation of learner discipline policies.

I hereby seek permission to engage both the SMT, some of the Post Level 1 educators, SGB members (Chairperson and another member), and RCL learners. The investigation will be guided by strict code of ethics as prescribed by the ethics committee of the University of Fort Hare. All data collected during the investigation will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Your participation in this study will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation for your response.

Yours in education

C.N.Bilatyi (Mr.).....

R.S.V.P.

Appendix H: Letter of request to parents to interview learners

Cell No: 072 770 1228

3 Scallan Street

Fax No: 042-243 0498

Somerset East

E-mail:nkosanabilatyj@yahoo.com

5850

16 July 2012

P. O Box 185
Somerset East
5850
16 July 2012

Dear Parent,

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves to request for a permission to interview your child as a research exercise. The information gathered from the particular children will be kept confidentially and will not be divulged to any one at any time under any circumstances.

We would like to further assure the safety of the child during and after the interview.

Your corporation would be appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

C. N. Bilatyj