USING COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE BOLAND

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A mini thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Educationis in the Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape

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KEYWORDS

Action research

Collaboration

Improvement

Classroom discipline

Classroom behaviour

Intervention strategies

Human rights

A culture of teaching and learning

Classroom management

Teaching strategies

ABSTRACT

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M. Ed mini thesis, Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape.

This study of a collaborative action research project focuses on improving the learners' behaviour through classroom management and the implementation of human rights awareness as an intervention strategy. This study focuses on how action research can enhance the educator's own practice.

The purpose of the research was to prevent learners from misbehaving through the implementation of different teaching strategies. Learners' transgression will not stop completely and a second objective was to use the implementation of human rights awareness as an intervention strategy if the learners' behaviour become unacceptable. The strategies the educators had to instigate were primarily considered to be those associated with classroom management.

The literature review for this study covers two main areas: Action research and classroom management. Although classroom management encompasses all that transpires in a classroom, this study's main focus was on teaching strategies and approaches to behaviour management.

The first step by the educator was to increase the knowledge concerning the rights of learners and educators. The rights and responsibilities of both the educator and the learners were pointed out. The next step taken in the classroom, if behavioural problems did arise, was that the educator should facilitate a discussion surrounding the transgression. The facilitation should result in the learners

identifying the rights of learners that were not respected by the transgressing learner. The educator had to extract from the learners the negative impact that the transgression might have on the misbehaving learner, the rest of the classmates and ultimately possible detrimental consequences for the broader community.

The research project was done within a qualitative methodological framework. The research instruments used to collect data were questionnaires (both structured and open-ended questionnaires), unstructured interviews and observations. At the start of the study the questionnaire was completed (Pre-evaluation) and the same questionnaire was again completed at the end of the study (Post-evaluation).

The data analysis consisted of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. The huge amount of data collected by way of questionnaires was coded and similar data were clustered according to themes. The pre-evaluation and post-evaluation data were compared to ascertain whether the behaviour of the learners had improved over the four weeks that the research study extended.

This study concludes that there was a definite correlation between teaching strategies and learners' behaviour. The direct teaching strategies were more successful in preventing learners from misbehaving in comparison to the indirect teaching strategies. Educators were of the opinion that the learners were not skilled enough to participate in activities of an indirect nature and this inability to participate culminated in unacceptable behaviour. Educators were concerned that over utilization of this direct method will occur and the strengths of the indirect teaching strategies will not be utilized. This again might culminate in satiation and disciplinary problems might arise again.

A second conclusion was that the implementation of human rights as an intervention strategy was successful. The success came about when the educators developed mechanisms to protect the learners' rights.

December 2005

DECLARATION

I declare that **USING COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE BOLAND** is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Edgar Anthony Johannes   December 2005

Signed: ……………………………

ETHICS STATEMENT

1.   I will respect, protect and preserve the confidentiality of responses to the questionnaires and interviews.

2.   I will protect and preserve the anonymity of the persons that participated in the research project.

3.   Educators and learners participated in the research project on a voluntary basis.

4.   I have taken care that no harm was done to the participants during the research project.

5.   I am committed to respect the human rights and values of the participants in the research process.

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1. To my wife, Delian, whom I had often neglected, who believed in me and stood by me and despite everything still supported and encouraged me and in her unique and loving way supported me. I could not have done without you, Delian.

2. I am grateful for Melvin Carolus whose discussions and support was of inestimable value to me.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter provides the background to and the rationale for this research project. It clarifies its main research problem, the aims of the research, the main research question and the subsidiary research questions. It further explains how the field of research is delimited. Importantly, it provides an introduction to the succeeding chapters.

1.1   BACKGROUND

Since 1994, press reports on the deterioration or lack of discipline in schools have frequently appeared. Discipline problems, however, are not new. Since schools came into being, behaviour problems have existed. The question that therefore arises is: Why has maintaining discipline in schools taken on such huge proportions? Since 1994, education, as part of the democratisation process, has been transformed. Two of the major changes were the abolition of corporal punishment and the introduction of a form of Outcomes-based Education (OBE), namely Curriculum 2005 (C2005).

The implementation of C2005 gave rise to problems since educators were not equipped to meet the challenges of the transformed education system. In the face of this, some educators simply persisted in using a transmission model of teaching. When corporal punishment was banned, no alternative to corporal punishment was offered to educators by the Department of Education. This is one of the factors responsible for the current lack of discipline in schools. Educators feel that their right to teach is being infringed by undisciplined learners. The right of other learners to receive education is also affected, as is the right to teach in an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Under the new policies, it is difficult for principals or school governing bodies to take steps against transgressors. Since the policies are unlikely to be reversed, educators will have to transform their teaching approaches and create a situation where behavioural problems are minimised.

The above provides the **rationale** for the action research project undertaken by this researcher, and which was launched in an attempt to improve discipline in the classroom. This action research project was grounded in collaboration with learners and colleagues.

The research was situated within a critical research paradigm, and used emancipatory action research. The school involved is situated in the Boland district, which is a rural area of the Western Cape. The school is a previously disadvantaged school and disciplinary problems seem to be the major obstacle to establishing a positive culture of teaching and learning.

The learners involved were spread over four grade 8 natural science classes. The learners were approximately 14 years of age. Four educators participated in the project. The classroom practices of these educators, specifically their classroom management and teaching styles, formed the backbone of this project. The aim was that the educators would experiment with a variety of management and teaching styles, and heighten an awareness of and commitment to, a culture of human rights in the classroom, with a view to improving classroom discipline. My role as researcher consisted in observing the classroom practices of the educators in question, observing the behaviour of the learners in these classes, conducting interviews and distributing questionnaires.

This study is **important** since it tries to find ways of re-establishing an environment conducive to teaching and learning.
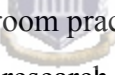
The main research problem

Given the above, the main research problem is formulated thus:

Teachers are concerned about the breakdown of discipline in schools, and feel that their right to teach is infringed upon by undisciplined learners and the right of other learners to receive education is impaired.

1.1.1   Aims of the research

Through the use of a variety of classroom management and teaching styles, and in collaboration with learners and colleagues, an action research project was launched in an attempt to improve the classroom practices of the educators who participated in the research project. The educators implemented an intervention strategy, based on an awareness and observance of human rights. Given this, the aims of the research project were to:

- Determine the current classroom practices of educators;
- Determine, through action research, whether there is a correlation between learners' behaviour and an educator's classroom practice;
- To explore the extent to which an awareness and observance of a culture of human rights can contribute to improved classroom behaviour;
- To analyse whether the data collected support the hypothesis that classroom practices influence learners' behaviour.

1.1.2   The research questions

The **main research question** is formulated thus:

In what ways can an educator's classroom practice improve learners' behaviour, especially with regard to discipline in the classroom?

Classroom management encompasses all that transpires in a classroom and an understanding of the different aspects of classroom management leads to the following **subsidiary research questions**:

- Does literature reveal that the educator's classroom practice, underpinned by the implementation of a human rights culture in the classroom, will lead to better behaviour on the part of learners?
- Is there a correlation between learners' behaviour and the educator's classroom practice?
- How effective are the research instruments for collecting relevant and revealing data?
- Does the analysis of the data support the hypothesis that an educator's classroom practice leads to better behaviour on the part of learners?

1.1.4 Delimitation of the study

Classroom management entails different aspects such as the educator's lesson preparation, seating arrangements, classroom environment, and teaching style. This study focused on the educators' classroom management and teaching styles. This study did not explore the reasons for the learners' misbehaviour but concentrated on preventing misbehaviour through discussion of human rights combined with changes in the educator's practice (classroom management and teaching style).

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section some key concepts are introduced, namely **classroom management**, **teaching** and **classroom discipline**. These concepts will be further clarified in Chapter 2 – Literature Review.

1.2.1 Classroom management

►Definitions and approaches

According to Johns *et al.* (1989:4) classroom management refers to all the actions and routines undertaken by a teacher to secure an environment in which instruction and learning can take place. Cooper (1977:285) reflects a more complex view. He lists five definitions based on different approaches to classroom management, which he categorises according to the particular underlying philosophical approach. One of these definitions of classroom management states that classroom management is a set of activities, which the educator uses to establish and maintain order in the classroom. This view of classroom management is based on an authoritarian approach.

Another approach to classroom management is the permissive approach. The permissive approach defines classroom management as a set of activities, which the educator uses to maximise student freedom. The third approach views classroom management as a process of modifying student behaviour. Within this approach, the educator sets activities that promote appropriate behaviour. The fourth approach is one where the educator creates a positive socio-emotional climate in the classroom. The educator develops good interpersonal relationships with the learner. The last approach reflects a situation in which the educator develops an effective classroom system.

►Classroom management models

According to Johns *et al.* (1989:7), theoretical models of classroom management are transferable and structured and educators can learn to use these models. They list the following models:

- The **behavioural management model**, a model that aims at strengthening desirable behaviour and eliminating undesirable behaviour with positive reinforcement, punishment, etc.

- The **socio-emotional model** that emphasises the importance of establishing a positive learning environment and good interpersonal relationships between the educator and the learners.
- The **group process model** of which the guiding principle is that the task of the educator is to establish and maintain an effective, productive classroom.

1.2.2 Teaching

This section briefly discusses teaching strategies, theoretical models for teaching and teaching as a co-operative activity.

►Teaching strategies

A teaching strategy (later in this mini thesis also referred to as an instructional strategy) is a broad plan of action for teaching learning activities with a view to achieve one or more specific outcomes (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:210). A strategy provides the outline of the approach an educator will use when facilitating teaching and learning activities. Two such are inductive and deductive strategies (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:210). Within a specific strategy, there are teaching methods. A teaching method is a particular technique an educator uses to help learners gain the knowledge that they need to achieve the desired outcome (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:210). Participative methods are those in which the learner plays a central role in teaching/learning activities (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:211). Learners are assisted by the educator to seek solutions and to solve problems. Participative methods lead to productive interaction between not only the educator and the learner, but also amongst learners themselves. There are several participative methods e.g. discussion, question-and-answer, the project method, role-play, problem solving and the experimental method. The educator has the task of facilitating the learning process and the learners are required to be actively involved in learning activities. The educator uses different strategies to ensure that the learning environment is conducive for learning.

►Theoretical models for teaching

It is important, when thinking about effective teaching, to take into account the particular characteristics of the context of the learning activity (e.g. type of school, subject matter, etc.). Three models of thinking about effective teaching have emerged (Kyriachou, 1997:18):

- A surface level of analysis maximises active learning and the quality of instruction.
- A psychological level of analysis involves psychological concepts, principles and process e.g. attention, memory etc.
- A pedagogical level of analysis sees teaching as a managerial activity.

Other models of teaching are:

- The exposition model;
- The behavioural model;
- The cognitive developmental model;
- The interaction model and
- The transactional model

►Teaching as a co-operative activity

If teaching is seen to be a co-operative activity, then teachers and learners are not in competition with one another and therefore they need to co-operate for teaching to be possible. For teaching to be successful, learners need to engage actively in trying to learn. The responsibility of an educator is to act in such a way as to encourage learners to learn. The activity of teaching is referred to as a practice. Bak *et al.* (2002:33) identify five characteristics of teaching as a practice:

- Practices are social.
- Practices have histories and traditions.
- Practices are flexible in relation to changing conditions.
- Practices can change.

- Practices have their own internal standards of success and excellence.

School teaching is the practice of organising systematic learning (Bak *et al.* 2002:36). To organise learning systematically means to arrange sequences of learning tasks that gradually enable the learner to grasp complex concepts. This definition shows that the practice of school teaching is an activity where educators and learners are co-operatively involved and have shared ownership.

1.2.3 Classroom discipline
►Definitions of discipline
Psychologists have dominated debates on school discipline and classroom management (Slee, 1995:18). Examples are B.F. Skinner (science of behaviour), W. Glassers (reality and control therapies) and C. Rogers (humanist psychology). An educational theory of discipline ought to be able to demonstrate consistency between educational goals and the processes of school governance (Slee, 1995:18). If the school disciplinary processes are simply a euphemism for conditioning the behaviour of learners, then the educational value of discipline is compromised (Slee, 1995:18). With some educators, discipline is synonymous with control, punishment, or regulation. Literature in this regard categorises discipline as a variety of classroom management strategies, and as behaviour modification programmes aimed at student compliance and the restoration of the educator's authority (Slee, 1995:20).

To move away from this mode of thinking (that discipline is about controlling learners), we should theorise about discipline as part of the curriculum – what we teach, how we teach, where it leads the learners. In theorising in this way, discipline should be more than a list of do's and don'ts. A philosophical approach to classroom discipline cannot be interested only in the effect that the approach produces, but should also focus on the values that the particular style reflects (Slee, 1995:23). A line of exploration might be: To what extent is the discipline policy of the school or of the educator in line with the constitution of the country?

Discipline is normally associated with control, and a move away from this approach will lead to the definition of discipline as "the need to develop a caring community, in which all are contributing, valued members" (Weinstein and Mignano, 1993:22). Where adults exercise a form of control over learners this is called external discipline (Sonn, 2002:24). With this definition, discipline is seen as a way of life in accordance with certain rules. Three pillars form the basis for this type of discipline: Respect for authority figures, a system of rewards and punishment, and a set of consequences (Sonn, 2002:24).

Another form of external discipline is positive discipline (Sonn, 2002:25). According to this view, the educator should focus on positive aspects of behaviour in the class, reinforcing good behaviour through rewards and involve learners in decision-making about rewards and punishment (Sonn, 2002:25).

Where learners partake actively in the decision making process, self discipline is emphasized (Sonn, 2002:26). Self-disciplined learners are empowered with responsibility and thus take charge of their own actions (Sonn, 2002:26). They have acquired problem solving and conflict-resolution skills, which enable them to deal with problems, which may arise out of their interaction with one another (Sonn, 2002:26).

►**Punishment**

Instances do occur where learners may challenge the authority of the educator or misbehave in some way even though preventive classroom management techniques are in place. Punishment should be the last resort when all measures to change the unacceptable behaviour of the learner have been made (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:348). The main function of punishment is to discourage misbehaviour. A sort of truce exists between learners and educator for most of the time (Descombe, 1985:24). Learners refrain from transgressing in order not to receive punishment. Descombe (1985:25) feels that the participative approach, as a way of maintaining this truce, stands a

better chance of success through negotiation with the learners. When learners are involved in negotiations, they are involved in the setting of class rules and in deciding upon the consequences if the rules are broken. In this manner the learners take ownership of the rules.

►Correcting mistakes

How should an educator respond to misbehaviour, minimising the chance of the misbehaviour being prolonged, escalated, or repeated? There are two reasons for intervening when a learner is misbehaving: firstly, to guide a learner to return as quickly as possible to behaving appropriately, and secondly, to teach the learner that there are unpleasant consequences for bad behaviour.

Educators should be aware of undue reliance on punishment. Punitive intervention has the effect of stopping misbehaviour quickly; it is therefore tempting to overuse punishment as a response to bad behaviour. Punishment has a number of limitations when used to correct behaviour. It does not tell learners what they need to do to correct their behaviour. Punishment does not generally motivate learners to improve their behaviour; it simply teaches them to avoid the punishment (Galvin *et al*. 1999:85). If misbehaviour is the learner's way of making mistakes, then the mistakes need correction, but do they need punishment? The problem with punishment is that it transforms the offender into a victim (Galvin *et al*. 1999:86). As a result, the offenders do not take ownership; instead they look for retribution. One should not ask who did it and how much punishment can we give them, but who has been hurt and how can we help them. A better response to bad behaviour is therefore to help learners to think about the logical consequences thereof. For example: *If I disrupt the class, I am putting the rights of other learners to learn at risk and I might receive some form of punishment*.

1.2.4   Classroom practice, learning, rights and responsibilities

This section briefly discusses the relationship between classroom practice and learning, and between these two on the one hand and rights and responsibilities on the other hand.

►**Classroom practice and learning**

Whatever constitutes good practice in the area of the curriculum must also be good practice in managing learner behaviour (Galvin *et al*. 1999:1). Educators deliver parallel curricula to learners: academic and social (Galvin *et al*. 1999:24). This notion of a parallel curriculum forces educators to have the same expectation of learners' behaviour as they have of the academic curriculum. Educators cannot have the notion that they are there only to teach a learning area or a subject, and not to maintain discipline.

The success of the teaching-learning activity stands or falls by the educator's ability to create a classroom climate that is conducive to active participative learning by the learner (Jacobs *et al*. 2001:2). The democratically elected government of South Africa has worked towards the transformation of the education system. One of these changes is a new curriculum based on the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) model of teaching and learning. The major focus of this system is that at the micro-level, the emphasis is on what the learners can do, or the competencies they demonstrate as a result of the learning they have undertaken (Jacobs *et al*. 2001:3). To assist learners towards achieving these outcomes, educators need to train them to participate actively in their own learning, both individually and co-operatively as members of a larger group, or of a smaller group, depending on the methods of teaching adopted by the educator.

In classrooms where educators employ a participative approach to teaching, the teaching-learning relationships between educators and learners are dynamic. Every teaching-learning relationship is both teaching and learning for all participants, i.e.

educators and learners (Jacobs *et al.* 2001:3). Jacobs *et al.* (2001:4) name the following conditions for participative learning:

- Each learner should express him/ or herself freely.

- Expression of one's view should not be met with destructive criticism.

- The idea that for every question there exists one answer should be discarded.

- Learning by inquiry balances reception learning.

This research project was based on the following assumptions:

- Schools must have the expectation that learners can learn.

- There is no teaching style that always works best. Educators should adopt a style that suits their learners.

- Educators should start with an examination of themselves before they develop a teaching style.

- The most effective intervention occurs within a context that supports the intervention.

►Rights and responsibilities

Learners' rights are entrenched within the Bill of Rights, The White Paper on Education, the Children's Bill of Rights (Sonn:2002). With these rights go responsibilities. At the start of this research project each participating educator asked the learners what their rights were. After a discussion of these rights, the learners listed the responsibilities that go with each right. For instance, if learners have the right to education, they also have the responsibility to ensure that other learners receive education. The educator emphasised the fact that the educator also has rights and responsibilities and the learners should include them in their discussion.

The issue of rights and responsibilities provide a helpful focus because:

- It allows expectations of behaviour to be linked to the values of the school, which in turn define the ethos of the school.

- It allows the behaviour policy and the curriculum to become interlinked at the classroom level.
- It provides a basis for learner involvement.
- It allows for a system of rules or expectations that has logical coherence.

Educators should understand that complete freedom of choice is not helpful to learners (Galvin, 1999:35). Total freedom is not desirable for developing young people, and the educator should strike a balance between allowing total freedom and offering a guiding hand to the learners

1.3   RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

1.3.1   Methodological paradigm

The research was undertaken using a qualitative methodology. Qualitative data provide a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts (Matthew *et al*. 1994). With qualitative data, one can see which events led to which consequences and which explanations are arrived at. While investigating the discipline of learners in the classroom, one can see what practices by the educator may lead to an increase or decrease in disciplinary problems. This information, the rich description, may lead to the formation of new concepts and generate new frameworks.

Mouton *et al.* (20001:270) describe qualitative research as the approach in social research in which the researcher takes the perspective of an insider. In this research, I as a researcher-educator, found myself in this position, as an insider. Although, due to administrative responsibilities, my own classroom practices were not under scrutiny, I regard myself as an insider in this research since I am a staff member of the school and in a senior position where I have a responsibility to provide leadership.

Qualitative research also refers to a variety of methods and techniques, which share a certain logic. Elliot (1989:1) refers to this research method, as "insider research".

The advantages of this research methodology are:

- Research is conducted in the natural environment of the subject.
- The aim is to understand behaviour so that the researcher is also seen as the subject.
- The research may lead to new hypotheses.

The research for this project was conducted in classrooms, the natural environment of learners and educators. This enabled me to gain a holistic, insider's perspective of the context of discipline from the learner's viewpoint. By engaging as the insider in the research, I had access to the data and the behaviour of the learners on a daily basis, which was an important factor in my attempt to reach an understanding of classroom behaviour.

This insider's perspective of the research process has also been subjected to criticism. Critics maintain that the researcher sees the data through his or her own, subjective viewpoint. To overcome this criticism, I, as the researcher, used a variety of research instruments.

1.3.2 Research design
►Ethnography

Ethnography can be described as the data of cultural anthropology that is derived from the direct observation of behaviour in a particular society. (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:279). The purpose of the ethnographic method is to describe a particular culture (Bailey, 1987:246). Since the purpose of this research was to investigate the behaviour of the learners and four participant educators, the behaviour of learners and participant educators may be regarded as representing the culture of the school. This research, therefore, qualifies as an ethnographic study.

►**Action research**

Within a qualitative framework, I engaged in emancipatory action research. Action research is a form of self-reflection aimed at the improvement of a social practice (Hopkins, 1985:56). The social practice under discussion is the classroom management and teaching styles of the four participating educators. By engaging in action research, the participating educators were provided with the opportunity to enhance their professional development and engage in collaborative work with one another, and with myself as the researcher..

Emancipation or empowerment was evident when:

- The learners were treated as equals and treated others with respect.
- Learners played an active role in deciding on aspects of classroom management.
- Learners took responsibility for their own actions.
- The learners balanced their actions with responsibilities.
- The learners and educators respected the human rights of others as laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

The research was undertaken within a critical research paradigm, involving emancipatory action research. Within the context of the disciplinary crisis in which most schools find themselves, we need to revolutionise our way of thinking about discipline (The "we" referred to here are educators, learners, parents and community members). In the course of action research, knowledge about a social situation is unmasked and steps taken to improve the situation. As a result of this research project, participants were emancipated. The learners were emancipated from an authoritarian form of discipline – a form of discrimination – and the educators were emancipated from discriminating against others and abusing learners.

At present there seems to be a conflict of values between educators and learners. Some believe in the rights of individuals; others do not see individuals as having

rights, or at best do not show a consideration for these rights. Action research begins with values. The practitioner must be aware of what drives his or her life and work so that he or she can be clear about what s/he is doing, and why s/he is doing it. Sometimes we say we believe in something, but are unable, for a variety of reasons, to live according to our beliefs. A starting point for this action research project was to find ways of overcoming this contradiction. In this research the value was respecting human rights. I tried to instil a culture of human rights within the learners and myself. Every learner could expect to be treated in accordance with the Bill of Rights, the Children's Bill of Rights and the rights of learners embedded in education policies. In turn, every learner was expected to respect every one else's rights.

1.3.3   Sampling procedure

The grade 8 classes that participated in the action research project were selected by means of purposive sampling. Since it was impossible to engage all ten natural science grade 8 classes of the school, four classes were selected to participate in the research. Purposive sampling was used to select the classes as it allowed us to choose a case that illustrated some of the feature in which I was interested (Silverman 2000: 104). The classes that were involved complied with certain criteria established by the researcher e.g. the sample should include classes that exhibit behavioural problems as well as classes that are reasonably well behaved. My four colleagues and I identified these classes. An advantage of purposive sampling is that the researcher can use his or her own judgment about which respondents to choose, and picks only those who best meet the purpose of the study, in this case, the classes that cause disciplinary problems. Bailey's (1987:94) advice that researchers should "seek deviant cases rather than average respondents, in order to see what makes them depart from the norm" supports this choice of sampling.

1.3.4   Research instruments

This research was conducted in one school with four classes. I took an active role in collaboration with four colleagues. This small sample compromised the validity of

the study. In order not to further compromise the reliability and validity of the findings, I used a variety of data collection instruments. Triangulation between interviews, questionnaires, observation, and field notes provided me with a more accurate picture of the behaviour of the learners.

►**Interviews**

The research interview is defined as a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information (Cohen & Manion, 1980:271). By interviewing the learners, I was able to elicit information that cannot be directly observed, such as thoughts. During interviews, the informant is allowed to speak for herself/himself. A disadvantage of interviews as a data-collecting instrument is that it can be a subjective tool. During the interview, I made notes. To get the insider perspective I made use of individual interviews as well as focus group interviews. Group interviews had the added advantage that they enabled me to observe interaction between the learners on the topic of discipline.
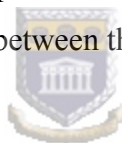
►**Questionnaires**

Open-ended and close-ended questions were used to elicit information from the learners. An advantage of questionnaires was that it was easy to arrange, as I was in direct contact with the respondents on a daily basis. A disadvantage was that some learners were not able to complete the questionnaire fully, for various reasons e.g. poor reading ability.

►**Observations**

Through observing the participants the researcher can note aspects that the learners are reluctant to reveal verbally. The researcher comes to know the learners. These observations are recorded through either field notes or the researcher's diary. In this research, data was obtained through observations of the behaviour of the learners, including their body language, the verbal language and the duration of any of these actions.

►Field notes

Some of the data was captured by means of field notes. I recorded the number (quantitative research) of instances of misbehaviour of the learners every day and compared the number at the beginning and at the end of the research process. This provided some indication of whether the incidence of behavioural problems was increasing or diminishing. This data did not give an in-depth reflection of the situation, because the values and behaviour of humans are difficult to record.

1.3.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the raw data, with the aim of increasing your own understanding of the data (Bogden *et al*., 1982:145). In analysing the data I followed the process suggested by Matthew *et al*. (1994:10) that consists of three phases i.e. data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

►Data reduction

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming the data in the field notes. In this case, the data were clustered together in themes.

►Data display

The data were organised into different categories so that they could be displayed. A display in this sense is an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusions to be drawn. The displays include various types of matrices, graphs, and charts

►Conclusion drawing

In this phase, as the researcher, I decided what this data meant in the social context within which it was gathered and in relation to my research question. I noted

similarities, differences, themes, patterns and explanations. The meanings that I attached to the data were tested for their validity.

1.4   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department (Appendix A) and the Breede-Overberg EMDC, and from the principal of the school to conduct the research in the school. The role players - the learners and four educators - were contacted and they were requested to participate in the research. After these role players gave their consent, the learners and their parents were invited to a meeting, where I gave an outline of the objectives of the research and the role of the learners and educators. At this gathering, I assured the parents, learners, and educators of confidentiality throughout the duration of the research process. To make good the promise of confidentiality, I made it clear to the participants that in recording the data, I would guarantee their anonymity. The rights of the participants were spelled out clearly i.e. that they could refuse to answer any questions during interviews, withdraw from the research at any stage, refuse to be recorded or demand to see any notes or recordings that were made.

1.5   CONCLUSION

Socially unacceptable behaviour is likely to lead to exclusion from certain community activities. The aim of a school system should be total inclusion. The school forms one part of the community, and we as educators should ask ourselves whether it is morally correct to exclude learners from school activities because of their unacceptable behaviour. They are first and foremost learners and children, who inherited the rights, entrenched in the Constitution and the Schools Act. We as educators are charged with the responsibility of developing these learners so that they can adopt values, have higher self-esteem and personal control over their own behaviour through high quality learning.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

When I was at school, some educators made learning easier than others. Learners label educators as "good" or "bad" educators. The question arises: What is the difference between the "good" and "bad" educators? The environmental factors are the same for both groups of educators e.g. the educators are at the same school and the learners have similar socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

A possible answer lies in an educator's success in facilitating learning. A good educator can be described as one in whose class teaching and learning take place. In the learning process, the educator's approach is of paramount importance. The educator's approach to teaching and learning is the result of his or her personal philosophy of teaching and learning. These may be divided into two broad categories: a learner-centred and an educator-centred approach. The differences between the two approaches lay in what the educator does, how the lessons are structured, involvement of learners etc.

In delivering the curriculum content to the learners, educators employ different strategies. A strategy is only a tool to help learners master the learning outcomes. All educators have a favourite way of teaching, which can be regarded as his/her personal teaching style. Educators should bear in mind that no teaching strategy in itself is better than others. Which is the "better" strategy depends on a variety of circumstances e.g. the content matter, age of learners, prior knowledge. Educators should bear in mind that over-emphasis on the preferred or dominant teaching style might result in learners becoming bored.

It is also easier for some educators to maintain discipline in their classes. Some educators experience more disciplinary problems than others do. In exploring

possible answers to the reasons why, educators should avoid blaming the learners and focus on what they the educators are doing in their respective classrooms. Some educators are obviously doing the right things or are doing things right. Are these "right" actions of the educators based on their philosophical view of discipline?

Disciplinary problems arise in all classrooms. Is it possible that the reason why some educators have fewer problems lies in the way they manage their classrooms? In managing discipline in the classroom, different approaches may be employed. The approach also depends on the educator's personal philosophy.

The key concepts pertaining to this research study, which arise from the above discussion, are behaviour, discipline, classroom management, teaching strategy and approaches to managing learners' behaviour. Drawing on the relevant literature, these concepts will be explored in greater detail below.

2.2   CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Discipline has been associated with the term punishment. Discipline and punishment are not the same. Discipline involves teaching learners right from wrong. (Martella *et al*., 2003:3). Definitions of discipline include: training to act in accordance with the rules; instruction to train for proper conduct. Acceptable behaviour is that behaviour which is appropriate for a particular setting. Acceptable behaviour at a party may be regarded as unacceptable behaviour at school. A definition of acceptable behaviour is the behaviour in accordance with the rules. According to the above definitions discipline constitutes teaching learners to behave in a proper fashion.

Self-discipline is the ideal goal and is the opposite of aversive discipline, where unreasonable demands on pupils are enforced through punishment. In managing the

learners' behaviour through a positive discipline approach, the learners are emancipated, and realise that responsibility goes with their rights.

Discipline in a classroom aims at securing children's compliance with adult demands (Kohn, 1996:xii). It is assumed that educators are responsible for control in their classrooms. In maintaining discipline, their focus is on the behaviour of learners and to correct inappropriate behaviour. If anything goes wrong in the classroom, the parents and the education department blame the children or the educators. The approach to classroom management or the teaching strategy of the educator is seldom taken into consideration. For this reason, I focused on these two aspects of classroom management in the research study.

2.3 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

2.3.1 Definition of classroom management

Classroom management is defined as the "… orchestration of classroom life: planning, curriculum, organising procedures and resources, arranging the environment to maximise efficiency, monitoring student progress, anticipating potential problems" (Lemlech, 1988:3). In a classroom that is managed well the students seem to know what is expected of them and what to do when problems of any nature arise. The educators in these well-managed classrooms seem to be successful because they provide for the learners' needs.

2.3.2 Approaches to classroom management

Any approach to the teaching and management task may be linked to the educator's personal view of how much emphasis should be placed on the task aspect and on the human aspect in the classroom situation (Van Schalkwyk & Kruger, 1997:19). The task dimension is the core function of an educator. This core function is teaching and learning. In fulfilling this dimension, educators work with people (learners, parents, colleagues). This is referred to as the human dimension of the teaching and learning

situation. Overemphasising one of these dimensions leads to a certain management style in the classroom.

2.3.3 Classroom management and teaching strategies

Most of the literature regarding the learning situation in the classroom reveals that the educator is integral in producing learning (Brophy, 1979; Brophy & Good, 1986 Gage, 1983; Good, 1983; as reported in Eggen & Kauchak, 1988:4). The above literature emphasises that the educator is the second most important contributor in the development of learners. The most important factor is the home environment. The enormous influence that educators have in the learning process has implications for the types of teaching strategies that are used in the classroom. Two of these implications are that educators should have knowledge and understanding of the classroom and teaching situation, and educators should have the necessary skill and expertise. Educators should have knowledge of different teaching strategies and the skills to apply these strategies.

Since the beginning of formal education, educators have grappled on a daily basis with what teaching strategy is best. In an attempt to answer the question, different researchers have emphasised different aspects of teaching. Anderson (1959) focused on authoritarian versus democratic techniques; Keislar and Schulman (1966) explored discovery-orientated versus expository approaches; Dunkin and Biddle (1974) regarded the distinction between a teacher-centred and a student-centred approach as important; and Peterson and Walberg (1979) studied the direct versus indirect approach to teaching. (the above citations all appeared in Eggen and Kauchak, 1988:6).

The idea that there is no one strategy that can be regarded as best in all teaching situations, originated from Joyce and Weil (1986:123). In the teaching of learners, the strategy selected depends on three factors (Eggen & Kauchak, 1988:8). The factors are: The way in which educators teach depends on their personal philosophy. A

second factor is that students' learning strategies differ and they respond differently to different teaching strategies. The third factor that is important in choosing a teaching strategy is the content that the educator wishes to teach the learners. In planning the lesson, the educator decides on the outcome of the lesson. Different outcomes necessitate that different strategies be employed by educators.

Eggen and Kauchak (1988:7) make the point that a "repertoire of effective instructional strategies that allows interaction with students is essential for active teachers". If educators are central in facilitating learning in learners, they should have knowledge about different teaching strategies and be able to use and select the most suitable one for a particular lesson.

Jacob Kounin (Charles, 1999:35) describes classroom management as including everything educators do in attaining two goals i.e. to create learner involvement and cooperation in all classroom activities and to establish an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Prior to Kounin, researchers regarded discipline and teaching strategy as separate entities. The line of thought at that time was that the purpose of teaching was to help learners acquire the necessary skills and information. Discipline was regarded as a separate method designed to keep learners working and to maintain proper behaviour (Charles, 1999:36).

Kounin's idea was that better instruction by educators leads to better learner behaviour (Catey, 2000:1). This idea implied that if educators manage the class well, the learners are less likely to misbehave. A key concept of Kounin is that the manner in which educators address the misbehaviour of learners is not the key to successful classroom management; the key to successful classroom management is the way in which educators prevent misbehaviour. This emphasises the relationship between effective management and effective teaching.

2.3.4 Classroom management and discipline styles

The core function of the school is teaching and learning. Learners who misbehave prevent educators from teaching, and other learners from learning. Educators need to take action to protect the core function of schools. Measures taken against transgressing learners might involve a change in classroom management or punitive measures against the learners. Good discipline is needed to create and protect an environment conducive to teaching and learning and in order to take counter measures against misbehaving learners discipline plans have been developed, as will be discussed below.

According to Charles (1999:7), the first approach to be regarded as a discipline plan was developed by Redl and Wattenberg in 1951. Their focus was on understanding the difference between individual behaviour and group dynamics. They showed how group behaviour differs from individual behaviour. Redl and Wattenberg's specific techniques for helping educators, deal with misbehaving learners.

In 1965 B.F. Skinner (Charles, 1999:68) introduced the concept behaviour modification. According to this approach the behaviour of learners can be modified if the misbehaviour is followed by consequences. In 1971 Jacob Kounin's model was constructed in which he advocates that classroom management can be used to modify learners' behaviour (Charles, 1999:8). Rudolf Dreikers (Charles, 1999:43) presented his Confronting Mistaken Goals discipline plan, which stated that educators could model democratic behaviour by involving learners in setting rules and consequences. Ginott in 1971 (Charles, 1999:56) promoted a form of discipline plan where messages were used which the learners understood. The educator addresses the inappropriate action of the learner and not the learner's character. Following this system was the work by Lee and Marlene Canter (Charles, 1999:82), which culminated in the assertive discipline plan.

Prior to 1970 there was no real need for systematic classroom control models (Allen, 1996:1) since behavioural problems in the classrooms were minimal. Educators had been able to maintain order by asserting their authority (Allen, 1996:1) and the learners were well behaved. After this period, the discipline in schools deteriorated. This necessitated the development of formal discipline models to deal with disciplinary problems. The following models were developed to assist the educator in preserving some order in the classrooms. References have already been made to the models and a more detailed discussion of these models will now follow. The models to be discussed are:

- The Kounin model (Research-based empirical approach)
- The Neo-Skinnerian model (behavioural approach)
- The Ginott model (democratic approach)
- The Glasser model (non-coercive approach)
- The Dreikurs model (logical consequences approach)
- The Canter Model (assertive discipline approach)
- The cognitive and social learning approach
- The ecological and ecosystemic approach

The above models are summarised from *Building Classroom Discipline: From Models to Practice*, by C. M. Charles (1999).

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►The Kounin model

Kounin's approach is based on research he did on the relationship between teaching methods and learners' behaviour (Ayers & Gray, 1998:21). He focused on the relationship between educator's desists (reprimands/comments) and the response of the learner. This approach is based on the assumptions that any intervention by the educator in respect of the learner will influence others (there will be a ripple effect). A second assumption is that the educators should control learners. Kounin (Charles, 1999:36) further assumes that desists can improve learners' behaviour and educators can improve their control by being "withitness" (being aware of what is going on

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around them). Since Kounin's research is not based on any educational theory, it is an empirical approach (Ayers & Gray, 1998:21). Kounin reaches the conclusion that there is no correlation between desists and older learners' behaviour. He suggests that educators should concentrate on classroom management techniques that engage learners in hands-on task and activities (Ayers & Gray, 1998:21).

Kounin concluded that classroom management is the key factor in good classroom discipline (Charles, 1999:34). Classroom management is what educators do to get learners involved in the lesson; the actions educators take to ensure an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Good discipline is regarded as behaviour that is acceptable within a classroom setting. A major contribution by Kounin is his conclusion that the ways teachers handle misbehaviour after it has occurred is not the key to successful classroom management; the key to successful management is what teachers do to prevent misbehaviour from occurring.

Kounin held the view that "lesson movement" emphasises the relationship between effective management and effective teaching. Lesson movement consists of "withitness", overlapping, momentum and smoothness. Overlapping is the ability to deal with two issues at the same time e.g. while teaching, the educator notices that learners are not paying attention. The educator addresses these learners and continues with the lesson. Momentum refers to the fact that the activities should start on time, keep progressing and end without a rush. Boredom (satiation) can be avoided by providing variety to the lessons. Smoothness occurs when the focus of the lesson is maintained and the educator and learners are not diverted from this.

Kounin also notes that the teacher's action in addressing a learner while he or she is misbehaving influences the other learners not to misbehave. He called this phenomenon the "Ripple Effect". It is noteworthy that Kounin regards specific management techniques as the solution to behavioural problems and that the character

of the educators, such as helpfulness and patience, plays no role in curbing misbehaving.

►The Neo-Skinnerian model

This model places emphasis on reinforcement immediately following a given behaviour, and if this reinforcement is not provided behaviour will weaken. According to Skinner humans behave the way they do because of reinforcement. Reinforcement is anything that happens to the individual after the individual performs a particular action (Charles, 1999:70). Positive reinforcement is the process of supplying a stimulus that reinforces behaviour and negative enforcement is the process of removing something following misbehaviour (Charles, 1999:70). Reinforcement includes verbal approval, high grades, prizes and rewards. Charles is of the opinion that "… humans should turn their efforts to providing conditions that reinforce desired behaviour". The phrase "catch them while they are good" captures the essence of this idea.

One of the principal methods of behaviour modification is operant conditioning (Jackson, 1991:53). According to Ayers and Gray (1998:24), the behavioural approach emphasises observable behaviour and seeks to identify how the behaviour can be reinforced and maintained. Pavlov's and Skinner's theories fall into this category. Acceptable behaviour is reinforced and negative behaviour discouraged. Reinforcement is done through the reward system, but this reward system should be planned in such a manner that positive behaviour is encouraged. Approval, encouragement and attention remain the most effective rewards (Jackson, 1991:56). The behaviour of learners is determined by its consequences. Labels to describe the behaviour should be avoided.

►The Ginott Model

Ayers and Gray (1998:17) define this approach as the basic need that learners have for attachment and social belonging. Learners sometimes do not know how to pursue

their objective of belonging to a group and educators should help them. This theory states that the best approach by the educator in helping learners is to develop a democratic classroom. The democratic educator helps learners to develop self-discipline and self-motivation (Ayers & Gray, 1998:17). In a democratic classroom, the educator and the learner collaborate in determining classroom rules and consequences for negative behaviour. Self-discipline is a form of positive discipline that might lead to learners being emancipated (experiencing freedom to participate in classroom matters) which in turn may impact positively on the responsibilities attached to the decisions.

Charles (1999) describes Ginott's contribution as providing ways of shaping inappropriate behaviour into acceptable behaviour. His work showed that communication could be used to develop good relationships between educators and learners. He called this particular style of communication between adults and children "congruent communication" (Charles 1999:57). This congruent communication entails addressing the actions of the learner and not the learner's character. The messages sent during such an approach were termed "sane "messages by Ginott. The model emphasises that the educator should praise the act and not the learner, because the learners that are not being praised might feel hurt.

By focusing on what learners are doing right learners are enticed into cooperating in the classroom. The establishment of disciplined learners occurs over time and is a step-by-step process and learners' cooperation is invited rather than demanded. This is a model to help learners develop their self-esteem and self-discipline, which is the ultimate form of discipline.

►The Glasser model

According to Charles (1999:181), the theme behind the Glasser model is that good behaviour comes from good choices. Glasser contended that learners are in control of their own behaviour and that a particular behaviour results from a conscious decision.

If the choice or decision is good, it produces good behaviour. Glasser suggests that the educator utilises class meetings to discuss and find solutions to their classmates' problem behaviour.

Glasser believes that most misbehaviour occurs when learners get bored in the classroom. If the learners' educational needs are met or if an educator's teaching is of a high quality, learners' behaviour will improve.

In the Glasser model, reasonable consequences should follow good or bad behaviour. A set of class rules is an integral part of this model. The class rules are developed by all the learners and should be enforced. Classroom meetings are the ideal place to develop and maintain behaviour.

►**The Dreikurs model**

According to the Dreikurs model, "… teachers should encourage students without praising their work or character" (Allen, 1996:3). Dreikurs believes that learners' misbehaviour is due to mistaken goals such as getting attention or diverting attention from themselves in order to hide the fact that they cannot cope with the academic material. Mistaken goals are those goals which learners choose when they fail to achieve the genuine goal. This model advocates that learners should be kept occupied with learning activities and this should keep the learners from misbehaving. Discipline is regarded as a tool to encourage (a) a sense of belonging and (b) learner cooperation within the group.

This logic of Dreikurs is the opposite to that of aversive discipline, which focuses on punishment (Charles, 1999:46). According to Dreikurs good discipline does not engage in the use of punishment. Internal discipline is regarded as the best form of discipline and is the result of respectful development of each learner. The educator's role is to redirect the mistaken-goal behaviour towards the correct goal. This redirection of mistaken-goals should be undertaken in a positive way. Dreikurs

considers that joint decision on rules by educators and learners will lead to learners internalising these rules and taking ownership of these rules.

(Martella *et al*. 2003:7) describe Rudolf Dreikurs's natural consequence model. This was based on the assumption that people learn through their interaction with the environment. In the interaction with the environment our behaviour is exposed to three types of negative consequences i.e. natural, arbitrary and logical. A natural consequence of fighting is to get hurt. An arbitrary consequence is indirect e.g., an arbitrary consequence of fighting is being sent to the principal's office. A logical consequence of fighting during break is to give the learner detention during break.

►The Canter Model

According to Charles (1999:82), the Canter model is about meeting learners' needs through managing behaviour humanely through attending to learners' needs through good class rules, teaching proper behaviours and establishing a climate of respect and trust. The Canter model popularised the rights model (Charles, 1999:83). This model recognises the rights of educators as well as those of the learners. Learners have the right to receive education in a safe environment conducive to learning and it is the responsibility of the educator to set and enforce the limits (Charles, 1999:83). The assertive discipline model also refers to the fact that the educators have the right to teach without disruption. This model puts the educator in charge of the class and demands that the administrators provide the necessary support for the educators.

Canter's plan provides space for positive as well as negative consequences, which is applicable according to certain behaviour by the learners. By being assertive, the educator can gain respect from the learners and thus their cooperation.

The assertive model is based on the assumption that learners and educators have rights and responsibilities (Ayers & Gray, 1998:44). This theory advocates the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere through meeting the needs of the

learners, effective planning by the educator, effective implementation of class rules, teaching learners how to behave and engaging in productive dialogue with disruptive learners. The learners describe educators as assertive if they effectively communicate what they deem to be acceptable behaviour. Jackson (1991:44) gives the following definition: "To assert oneself is to take effective action, to use one's authority, to insist on one's rights, to respond appropriately". Assertive and aggressive behaviour should not be confused. Aggressive behaviour is characterised by over-reaction and results in forms of verbal or physical abuse (Jackson, 1991:43). In order for the educators to be assertive, their verbal descriptions should be followed by positive actions. If learners fail to meet the educator's expectations, negative consequences should follow. The consequences, however, should be positive reinforcement. To implement this model an educator needs to develop a classroom discipline model, which includes rules, positive recognition and consequences.

►The cognitive and social learning approach

This approach looks at how cognition and cognitive processes influence the learning and behaviour of educators and learners (Ayers and Gray, 1998:39). Cognitions include beliefs and theories about learning and behaviour, self-image and self-esteem and attitudes (Ayers and Gray, 1998:39). The cognitive approach is based on the idea of schemata, i.e. mental structures that process and interpret experiences.

►The ecological and ecosystemic approach

Molnar and Linquist developed this approach. It is based on the assumption that problems in the classroom are the product of negative systemic interactions or a negative environment. The problems encountered in the classroom can be seen as the result of the interactions between different conflicting systems or people within that environment (Ayers & Gray, 1998:149).

The ecosystemic approach sees problems as a product of negative interactions between educators and between learners and learners. The ecological approach takes

into account the influence the physical environment has on classroom management. The class size, amount of space, seating arrangement, noise level and temperature have an impact on classroom management.

2.3.5   Classroom management styles

The educator has a dual role in the classroom. The educator should teach and educate and he should manage all the activities associated with teaching (Kruger and van Schalkwyk, 1997:4). Kruger and van Schalkwyk (1997:6) argue, "Classroom management is the sum of activities (education and teaching activities excluded) that are necessary to enable the core or main task of the teaching and learning situation to take place effectively". This suggests that the difference between learning success and failure lies in the effectiveness of the educator as classroom manager. The above definition sees classroom management as a means of attaining the educator's objectives in the classroom. This definition also alludes to the fact that the educator should establish certain conditions in the classroom to facilitate effective teaching and learning. The educator, successful teaching, learning, classroom management and learning are intertwined. The management functions are: planning, organisation, control, policy-making, decision-making, communication and motivation (Kruger and van Schalkwyk, 1997:8).

Kruger and van Schalkwyk (1997:19) distinguish three basic styles of management which they derived from the educator's attitude towards task and human dimension i.e. (i) the autocratic classroom management style (ii) the laissez-faire style and (iii) the democratic style.

▶ **The autocratic classroom management style**

This style is seen as an educator-centred style in that the educator's role is paramount (Kruger and van Schalkwyk, 1997:20). The educator's main concern is the learning process of the learners and the management style is considered as being task-orientated. The learner's role is that of listening and learning. The task aspect is

overemphasised in relation to the human aspect. In this management style, the educator assumes a strong leadership role. The educator's role is to give orders; there is no discussion involving learners and educators.

►The laissez-faire or permissive management style

This may be regarded as a child or learner-centred teaching style. The educator believes in a self-realising style and overemphasises the human aspect of the teaching-learning situation (Kruger and van Schalkwyk, 1997:21). The subject content is less important than the development of the child and the educator lets the learners decide on classroom activities. This attitude culminates in an informal type of discipline in the classroom. The educator's leadership role is non-existent and the educator plays a supportive role and remains in the background.

►The democratic management style

This approach requires the educator to have both a good knowledge of people and his/her subject matter. The educator's role is to facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom. The learners are encouraged to participate in all classroom activities in a meaningful way. To achieve this, the educator should be able to balance the human aspect and the task aspect in the classroom. A characteristic of the democratic style is that learners participate in the management activities. An educator's authority is based on his knowledge, expertise and the value system he represents.

The management styles above can all be followed in a classroom. The style depends on the personal view of the educator. Factors that may influence the preferred style are:

- The class group (grade 1, 8, 12 etc);
- The learning content;
- The learning outcomes;
- The educator's view of the class (whether the educator views the class as difficult); and

- The type of teaching activities to be carried out.

Any educator's management style may vary between the above styles, depending on the external factors as described. It is also possible to follow more than one style during the same lesson e.g. be autocratic but allow some democratic behaviour.

2.4 TEACHING MODELS, STRATEGIES, METHODS AND SKILLS

Teaching models represent ways to accomplish instructional goals (Lemlech, 1988:136). Every educator knows that he or she has a variety of methods to choose from to attain the desired instructional outcomes in the classroom. The model chosen will depend on a variety of factors. Some of these factors are: the outcome, grade, experience and learners. An advantage in using a variety of strategies is that the educator can match the instructional outcome with the strategy; the learners with different learning styles can be accommodated and boredom among the learners can be avoided. Marzano *et al*. (2001:10) contend that effective pedagogy involves three related areas: the instructional strategies, the management techniques used by the teacher and the curriculum designed by the teacher.
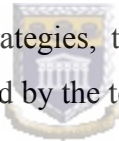
In any classroom, the educator is involved on a continuous basis in making instructional decisions. These instructional decisions include the content to be taught, the outcomes to be reached, the interest of the learners, the prior knowledge of the learners, the instructional methods to be used and the instructional strategies. Glickman (1991: 6) considered that effective teaching is "... not a set of generic practices, but instead is a set of context driven decisions about teaching. Effective teachers do not use the same set of practices for every lesson". Effective teachers constantly reflect on their work, observe whether students are learning or not, and then adjust their practice accordingly.

The following diagram illustrates the **relationship** between teaching or instructional models, instructional strategies, instructional methods and skills (Joyce and Weil, 1986).
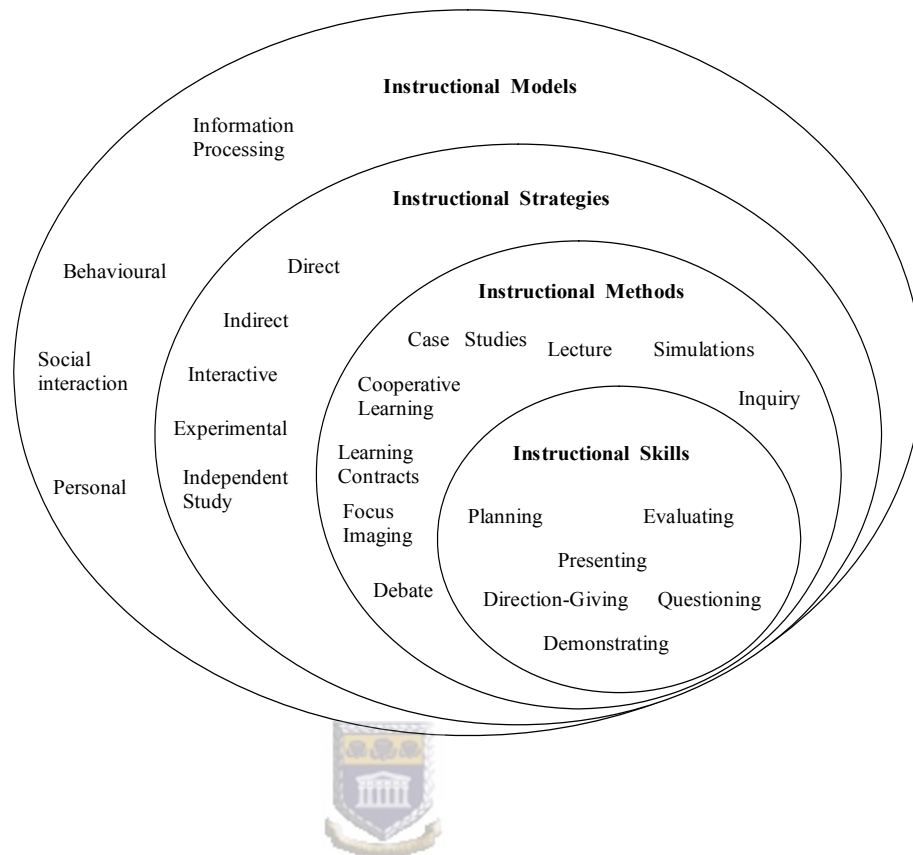
2.4.1 Instructional models

Models represent the broadest level of instructional practices and present a philosophical orientation to instruction. Joyce and Weil (1986) identify four models of instruction namely information processing, behavioural, social interaction, and personal models.

►The information processing model

This model focuses on the acquisition and processing of information (Joyce & Weil, 1986). The main focus of this model is on the cognitive functioning of the learners.

►The behavioural model

This model depicts the relationship between the behaviour of the learners and the learners' self-concept (Joyce & Weil, 1986). According to this model, the behaviour and self-concept of learners should correlate. If the two do not correlate, the

educator's role is to change the behaviour of the learners in order for it to be consistent with the self-concept.

►**The social interaction model**

Here the emphasis is on personal and social interaction among people (Joyce and Weil, 1986). The focal point of this model is to improve the learner's skills to interact with others, to engage in democratic processes and to be a productive, democratic member of society.

►**The personal model**

This model emphasises the development of the person's self-concept. The educator should concentrate on the development of the skills that a person needs to improve his or her self-concept and to create a pride in the uniqueness of oneself.

2.4.2   Instructional strategies

Within each instructional model, several strategies can be used. The instructional strategy is the approach an educator decides on in order to achieve the objectives of the particular lesson. The approach and thus the instructional strategy depend on the learners' prior knowledge, experiences of the learners, learners' interests, learners' learning style, content matter and development level (grade) of the learners.

Different categories of instructional strategies are identified. These categories include direct instruction, indirect instruction, interactive instruction, independent instruction and experiential learning.

2.4.3   Instructional methods

Educators need to create a learning environment and they should specify the nature of the activity in which the learners will be involved (Joyce & Weil, 1986). The different methods are illustrated in the following diagram (Joyce and Weil, 1986).
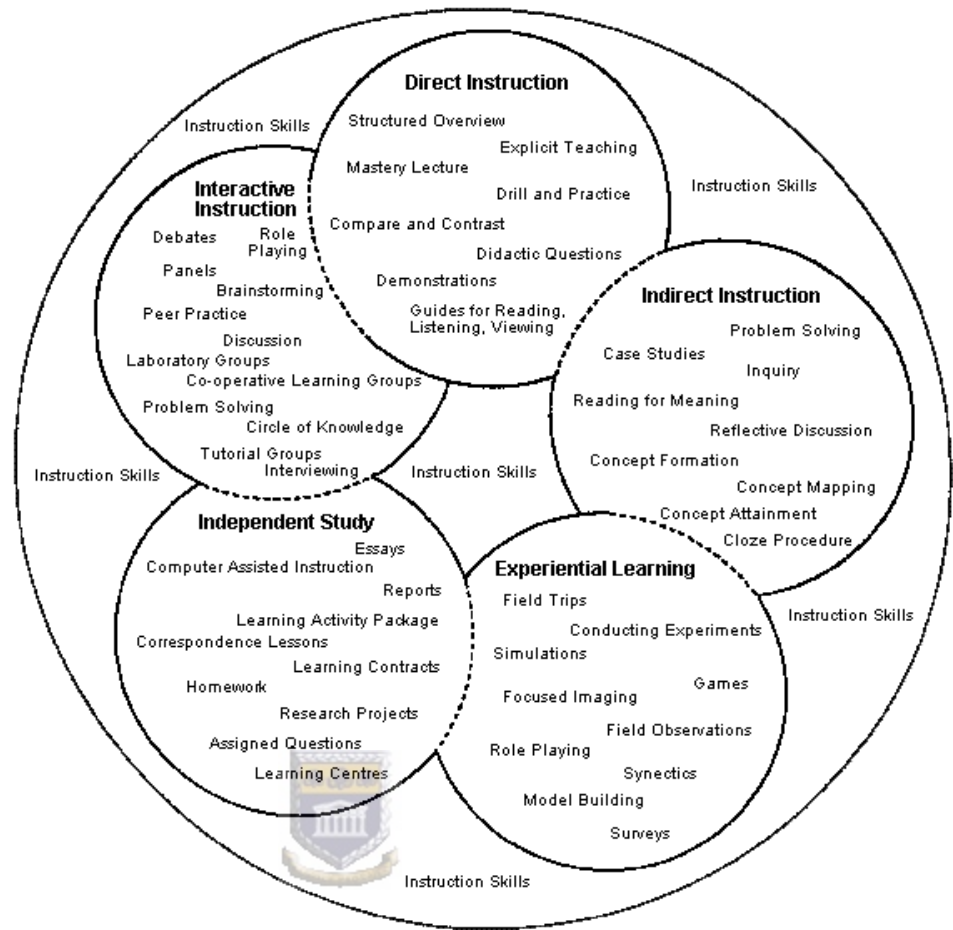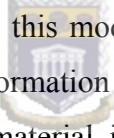
Figure 5. Instructional Strategies

The distinction between the different methods is not always very clear, since they have common characteristics. An educator might choose to use a combination of the different methods. It might also be that the educator starts with one method and ends up using a combination of methods or a different method altogether.

Instructional approaches are classified into two main categories, namely direct and indirect teaching methods. In practice, it is more difficult to classify all methods into these two approaches and some authors use a broader classification system. Instructional approaches can also be categorised into three styles i.e. expository, guided discussion and interaction (Lemlech, 1988:155).

►Expository teaching / direct teaching

The term refers to whole class expository teaching techniques (also called "chalk and talk") (Killen, 2000:2). Exposition means to present and to interpret (Lemlech, 1988:155). This is an educator-focused approach in which the educator is regarded as presenter and interpreter. The educator's purpose is to transmit knowledge and the learners accept the knowledge through listening. The educator conveys the content to the learners in a structured manner organises the learning activities and maintains a high academic standard. The learner is regarded as an empty vessel, waiting to be filled with knowledge by the educator. This model provides a very efficient way to teach since the educator can manage large groups, and information is relayed only once to a large number of learners. In order for this method to be effective, the educator should ensure that everyone is attentive and the lesson should be well organised and structured.

According to Lemlech (1988:156), this mode of instruction is appropriate when the learner is expected to consume information and learn a skill. It is also advantageous to use this approach when new material is presented to the learners. This direct method will develop their knowledge and skills. The expository approach would include reading from textbooks, observing a demonstration, watching films and lecturing.

►Guided discussion

Another instructional strategy used by educators is discussion. "Discussion is an orderly process of face-face group interaction in which people exchange ideas" (Killen, 2000:31). The purpose of the discussion may vary, according to the objective e.g. to solve a problem and enhance learners' understanding. Discussions may be held in small or large groups. As this is a learner-centred strategy it may be used in combination with other methods. In this way, the different strategies complement each other and the learners are more involved. For example, the direct instruction strategy can end in a discussion about the content delivered by the educator. This

might lead to an improved assimilation and understanding of the material. Lemlech (1988:157) differentiates between true discussion and educator-controlled discussion. Real discussion should allow the sharing of ideas based on the personal experiences of the learners. The learners are allowed to challenge, question and clarify some points. True discussions are most effective in smaller groups since a prerequisite for true discussion is that the participants should be able to see one another. In educator-controlled discussions, the educator allows the discussion to progress in a more structured fashion. The educator should try to involve all the learners and to give direction to the discussion through the questions that he asks. Real discussion is unlikely to take place if the educator asks questions only after presenting the content. Questions and answers should emanate from the learners to encourage discussion, which can also be regarded as co-operative thinking. The discussion can be deemed effective if the learners were active participants in an objective, informed reflective debate.

Bridges (in Killen, 2000:32) states that for an exchange of ideas to be called a discussion it should have the following characteristics: the people involved must talk, listen to one another; there should be more than one point of view; they should have the intention of developing their knowledge and understanding.

►**Interaction method**

This approach involves learners in activities that require consideration of others. The learners depend on one another for stimulation during discussions, to reason, to test ideas, to cooperate etc. Interactive approaches include group investigation, role-play, problem-solving and concept attainment. In the interaction method, the educator is a facilitator in the classroom. The learners receive the content and process the information themselves. It is thus clear that the whole group is responsible for the process of information gathering and this feature makes it an excellent tool for inquiry and problem solving.

Different approaches to classroom instruction have been discussed i.e. the direct instruction, advance organiser, concept attainment and group investigation. A teaching strategy affects classroom management. During direct instruction, most of the learners are quiet, with their attention directed at the educator. During concept attainment and group discussion the method is less structured and interaction with and between learners is encouraged. During group discussions, the level of noise in the class should be higher than during the direct instructional method.

All these approaches are broad descriptions of the existing strategies used by educators. Different strategies used by educators are classified under these broad categories.

Some of these instructional strategies include the direct instruction method, group investigation method, questioning strategies, encouraging responsibilities, initiating small-group instruction, co-operative learning, panel of experts, brainstorming etc. Some of these methods are discussed in more detail.
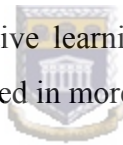
►**Direct instruction method**

In this method, the educator breaks tasks down into small components and teaches systematically until mastery is achieved (Lemlech, 1988:138). Factual material is presented in a direct, logical manner. The educator is totally in control and the learning outcomes are predetermined. This method works well with large groups but the educator is in a position to pay attention to the individual in the group. In using this strategy, the educator can focus on the lesson objective (an academic focus).

►**Group investigation**

Group work occurs when you ask two or more learners to work together (Killen, 2000:73). A characteristic of group work is that learners work together without direct intervention from the educator, but the learners are not left on their own. To accomplish group work successfully, the educator should structure the activity and

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the learning environment to enable learners to work without his intervention. According to Lemlech (1988:143), this model is rooted in the work of John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, Gordon Hullfish and Phillip Smith. The classroom is regarded as a miniature real life environment or democracy and learners should obtain practice in developing the skills needed in real life. In this model the task is organised by clarifying the problem, arranging groups, procedures, material resources etc. This method allows everyone to participate and to pool the ideas and experiences of the group. The educator plays the role of a facilitator and does not provide too much guidance. One of the tasks of the educator is to lead the learners to engage in co-operative learning with other learners. Group investigation teaches group process skills, democratic governance and inquiry skills.

For group work to be successful, the educator must take care of the following factors: The focus should be on learning; the educator must be prepared; the educator should set guidelines for the learners; the educator should facilitate the learning; the educator should monitor the learners all the time.
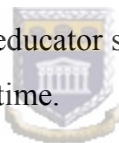
►Concept attainment method

This method is used to help learners gain specific concepts by comparing and contrasting examples that contain attributes of the concept with examples that do not contain the characteristic (Lemlech, 1988:148). This strategy can be used with large groups and smaller groups with the educator who is in control of the learning situation. Concept attainment may be used to teach specific concepts and to help learners to assimilate information (Lemlech, 1988:151). Through gaining an understanding of the concepts, the learner's critical thinking may improve.

►Advance organiser method

In this method the educator plays the role of lecturer. The educator's main objective is to help learners acquire knowledge and the learner's role is to master this information (Lemlech, 1988:152). This is a direct instruction method and the

knowledge is presented in a well-organised and well-structured manner. The educator controls the presentation of the content matter and ensures that the learners understand the structure and logic of the lesson organisation. One advantage of this method is that it can improve the critical thinking abilities of the learners (Lemlech, 1988:154).

►Co-operative learning

Co-operative learning is more than just group work. It encompasses all spheres of learning. Co-operation means working together to achieve shared goals. Co-operative learning is an instructional technique in which learners work together in small groups to maximise their own learning and the learning of their peers" (Killen, 2000:100).

Co-operative learning has the following features (Killen, 2000:100):

- Positive interdependence between learners;
- Face-to-face promotive interaction e.g. sharing in order for learners to help one another;
- Individual accountability – learners in the group are responsible for their learning and for producing the required material;
- Appropriate use of interpersonal skills e.g. communication, trust and conflict resolution; and
- Reflective learners – learners decide if the outcomes were met and how successful the group work was.

2.5   THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

An educator's duty entails instructional as well as managerial tasks. Instruction involves the learning content, setting of outcomes, development of skills, assimilation of knowledge and providing feedback to the learners on their development. Management entails establishing and maintaining conditions in the classroom

conducive to learning such as planning, organising, creating a positive climate and disciplining. Experienced educators are able to carry out both duties without thinking about them as separate entities.

2.6   APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

Different approaches to learning emphasise the fact that individuals perceive and process information in very different ways. Ayers and Gray (1998:6) have identified the following approaches to teaching and learning: (i) Behavioural or operant approach, (ii) Cognitive approach, (iii) Social learning approach and (iv) Constructivist approach.

2.6.1   Behavioural approach

Skinner, who focused on changing the antecedents and consequences of both behaviour and learning, developed this approach (Ayers & Gray, 1998:6). This approach emphasises techniques such as cueing (providing an antecedent stimulus, prompting (giving extra cues), and reinforcement of learning (rewarding an appropriate response). Factors such as environmental antecedents, cognitive processes, behavioural output and environmental consequences form the basis of the cognitive approach. Antecedents are those things that happen prior to behaviour, and consequences are those things that occur just after the behaviour and between the antecedents and the consequences are the cognitive processes (Martella *et al.*, 2003:30)

2.6.2   Cognitive approach

This approach emphasises that the learners should understand the structure of a subject and the value of active learning and inductive reasoning. The educator's role is to guide the learners in discovering the connections between different concepts. One of the fathers of this approach, Ausubel, suggests that the teaching style educators should use is direct instruction or expository teaching in presenting content to the learners.

2.6.3 Social learning approach

This approach focuses on the effect that imitation and modelling has on learning. Observational learning occurs when learners imitate the behaviour of their peers. This imitation may be the result of reinforcement when the learners notice that others were rewarded for particular behaviour. Modelling occurs when the educator demonstrates certain behaviour.

2.6.4 Constructivism

Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. Each of us generates our own "rules" and "mental models," which we use to make sense of our experiences. Learning, therefore, is simply the process of adjusting our mental models to accommodate new experiences. Killen (2000: xviii) distinguishes between cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. Cognitive constructivism focuses on the cognitive processes people use to make sense of their surroundings. Social constructivism treats learning as a social process and learners learn through their interaction with the surroundings.

2.7   THE RNCS AND HUMAN RIGHTS & VALUES

Human rights have been defined as "…generally accepted principles of fairness and justice" or "the universal moral rights that belong equally to all people simply because they are human beings" or "the basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity" (Banks, 2000:1). The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995:2000) has defined human rights education as "training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes …"

Education is regarded as a fundamental human right, but also as a responsibility. By educating learners about their human rights, an educator may strengthen the learners' respect for human rights. This may lead to the development of the learner's self-

respect and dignity. The development of the learner's dignity may result in the learners being more disciplined in school. The school would then produce learners who can contribute in a positive way to society. Human rights education is therefore an essential element in education for modern citizenship.

Human rights education influences learners in the following areas: **knowledge** – by providing information about political systems and human rights; v**alues, beliefs and attitudes** – by developing values and attitudes that uphold democratic practices, the rule of law and human rights principles; and **action** – by developing the skills needed to promote a democratic culture and to take action to defend human rights.

The development of the learner's knowledge, values, beliefs and attitudes is also contained within the National Curriculum Statements (NCS). "The NCS seeks to promote human rights, social justice and environmental justice" (Department of Education Overview, 2003: 9).

Outcomes-based Education (OBE) lies at the heart of our new education system. One of the critical outcomes of OBE is that learners should participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities (Department of Education Overview, 2003: 8). This outcome can only be achieved if the learners know their own rights, insist on their rights and respect the rights of other persons. Schools should be the vehicles where learners are taught their rights and the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

2.8   POLICY AND LEGISLATION REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Certain values and principles are written into our national constitution. The stated aim of the SCHOOLS ACT is to facilitate the democratization of education (Sonn, 2002: 48). These values and principles of the constitution can only be realised if the schools educate the children around these principles. The following expound nationally and

internationally accepted principles regarding the rights of children, as cited in Porteus et al. (2001).

- Convention on the rights of children.

- Article 16 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the State: Institutions must protect children from all forms of torture.

- Article 11.5 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the State: Children in schools shall be treated humanely.

- United Nations Children's Bill lists corporal punishment under forms of torture.

- The SA constitution stipulates that everyone has the right not to be treated in a cruel way.

- Our National Education Policy prohibits corporal punishment at any educational institution.

2.9   CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed at reviewing what literature reveals concerning the different key concepts that had been identified. The central question is whether discipline is concerned with preventing misconduct or punishing the transgressors. In an era where human rights are emphasised, the literature reveals that discipline should be preventative in nature. The enforcement of class rules is no longer allowed by the education department's protocol on discipline. Educators have not been given effective alternatives to corporal punishment or external mechanisms to ensure that learners concentrate on learning.

Changes in the education policy regarding corporal punishment strive to change the way teaching and learning took place in schools. This change in the way teaching and learning took place impacted negatively on the learners' discipline. The external discipline that was enforced on learners was no longer possible. This created the possibility to educate learners on the values entrenched in our constitution, and develops an internal discipline that could lead to self-discipline.

Educators should make a paradigm shift regarding discipline and concentrate on utilising models of discipline, which focus on the development of self-discipline. This is easier said than done. In the schools known to me the culture of engaging in action research to improve a social situation is non-existent.

The prevention of misbehaviour by learners can be accomplished by means of classroom management as suggested by Kounin (Charles, 1999). Kounin concluded that better instruction leads to fewer behavioural problems. Different models suggested by Skinner, Glasser, Ginott and Dreikurs offer different perspectives on classroom management. The literature consulted reveals that alternatives to corporal punishment exist and educators should use these models to help learners develop into well-behaved learners who engage in learning in the classroom. The literature suggests that educators should engage in reflective practices to improve their own practice and develop new strategies for classroom management and for teaching.

The next chapter focuses on the research design and methodology employed during the research project. The aim was to establish whether a correlation exists between teaching strategy and learners' behaviour. To achieve this I conducted this study within a qualitative approach using different data collecting instruments.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of research will have a definite influence on the type of research design that a researcher uses. The purpose of this research was to understand a certain social phenomenon i.e. the learners' discipline, in the natural setting of the classroom. A second purpose of this research in particular was to understand and describe the correlation between the educators' teaching strategies and the behaviour of the learners.

The design chosen by the researcher dictates the data collection methods, and the techniques and instruments, whether the research is a small scale ethnographic study, a case study or a life history. This study is situated within an ethnographic framework.

Different data collection instruments were used to obtain the data necessary to describe a rich description of the social event under investigation. The social phenomenon under scrutiny was the behaviour of learners in the classroom. Questionnaires, interviews, field notes and observations were used to collect the data needed to provide the information and insight necessary to answer the following research questions:

The main research question:

In what ways can an educator's classroom practice improve learners' behaviour, especially with regard to discipline in the classroom?

The subsidiary research questions:

- *Does literature reveal that the educator's classroom practice, underpinned by the implementation of a human rights culture in the classroom, will lead to better behaviour on the part of learners?*

- *Is there a correlation between learners' behaviour and the educator's classroom practice?*

- *How effective are the research instruments for collecting relevant and revealing data?*

- *Does the analysis of the data support the hypothesis that an educator's classroom practice leads to better behaviour on the part of learners?*

3.2   THEORETICAL APPROACH

All research is based on assumptions on what constitutes valid research and which methods are appropriate. This research was done within a critical paradigm. Critical researchers assume that social reality is historically constituted and that it is produced and reproduced by people. The main task of critical research is one of social critique. Critical research focuses on conflicts, contradictions and seeks to be emancipatory, i.e. it attempts to find ways of helping to eliminate the causes of oppression or domination. The interest in emancipation from social relations of dominance and powerlessness are the focus of "Critical Theory (Grundy, 1986:154). Researchers who employ the critical approach have two goals, one is to decrease the gap between the actual problems encountered in a specific setting and the theory used to explain and resolve the problem. The second goal is to assist the participants in identifying and making explicit problems by raising their consciousness to the problem (Grundy, 1986: 167). The interaction of theory and practice through the process of reflection, with the input from critical intent leads to the improvement of a particular situation (Grundy, 1986:359). This research focused on reflecting on the educators' teaching strategy and the learners' behaviour.

In education, action research that is framed in this paradigm will try to transform the educational situation, not merely to improve its effectiveness. It will seek to expose social and historical factors that contribute to inequality and marginalization. Research in this paradigm has a transformative agenda. Research undertaken within a critical paradigm is underpinned by emancipatory interest in freedom and rational autonomy and in empowering people to take greater control of their lives.

The following definition of Action Research by Carr and Kemmis illustrates the essence of research done in a critical paradigm. "Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out" (1986:162).

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM

The research was primarily qualitative in nature. Qualitative data are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts (Matthew *et al*., 1994:6). Qualitative data makes it possible to explore which events led to which consequences and to derive at explanations. While investigating the discipline of learners in the classroom during this study, data were collected which made it possible to examine which classroom practices led to an increase or a decrease in disciplinary problems. Rich description can thus lead to the formation of new concepts and to the generation of new frameworks.

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 270) describes qualitative research as an approach in social research in which the researcher takes the perspective of an insider. In this case, I as the researcher-educator was one of the subjects of the study. Qualitative research also refers to a variety of methods and techniques, which share certain logic. Elliot (1989: 1) refers to this research method as "insider research".

The insider's view in qualitative research means that the researcher has the advantage of being able to observe events while they are occurring. While observing the events, the researcher becomes part of the natural setting, a participant observer of the events under investigation. The insider's perspective means that the researcher exerts no control over the naturally occurring events. Babbie and Mouton (1998: 271), however, argue that the researcher should be more than just a participant observer in the natural setting and make a deliberate attempt to view the actions, practices and behaviour of the social actors from his or her own perspective. As an insider, the researcher is in a position to reach an understanding of the actions observed through the perspective of the actors themselves.

The qualitative researcher seeks to understand the events and actions in their context. Some refer to this approach as a holistic research strategy and contrast it with quantitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:272). Quantitative research is concerned with the analysis of variables and the relationships between them (isolated from their context). By contrast, the objective of qualitative research is to describe and understand events in their natural context.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), "... a qualitative research paradigm refers to that generic research approach in social research according to which research takes as its departure point the insider perspective on social action." Qualitative researchers study the social event from the viewpoint of those involved in that particular social setting. "The primary goal of qualitative research is defined as describing and understanding rather than explaining human behaviour." (Verstehen in Babbie & Mouton, 2001:270). This means that it is a way to help us understand the world in which we live. Qualitative research is concerned with the social aspects of our world and tries to unravel the reason behind our actions, our opinions and our values. Further features of qualitative research as stated by Hancock (1998:2) are:

- Qualitative research is concerned with the opinions and feelings of individuals producing subjective results.

- Qualitative research describes social phenomena as they occur naturally.

- Understanding of a social situation is gained through a holistic perspective.

- The intensive and time-consuming nature of data collection necessitates the use of small samples.

- Data collection is time consuming.

- Data are used to develop concepts and theories that help us to understand the social world.

- Qualitative research is deductive in that it tests theories, which have already been proposed.

The advantages of this research methodology are that research is conducted in the natural environment of the subject; the aim is the understanding of behaviour, the researcher is seen as the subject; the research may lead to new hypotheses. This particular research was conducted in a classroom, the natural environment of learners and educators. This enabled me to gain a holistic, insider's perspective of the context of discipline from the learner's viewpoint. By engaging as the insider in the research, I had access to the data, the behaviour of the learners, on a daily basis, which facilitated my attempts to reach an understanding of classroom behaviour.

The insider's perspective of the research process is one of the reasons for the criticism against qualitative research. Critics maintain that the researcher sees the data through his or her own, subjective viewpoint. To reduce the degree of subjectivity, I made use of a variety of research instruments.

A common criticism against qualitative research is that the results of the study may not be generalised as the sample size is too small. This criticism is not valid in the sense that the objective of qualitative research is to describe and understand the social event. Qualitative research can provide more insight into a specific setting and the generalizability is not a prerequisite.

The reasons for engaging in a qualitative research project are:

- One feature of qualitative research is that it focuses on ordinary events in natural settings and the way my research was done qualifies it as qualitative research.

- The data collected originated from a real situation.

- The data was collected over a four-week period, which made the data ideal for studying the process involved.

- The experiences and meanings learners put on events and processes were recorded.

►**Qualitative versus quantitative research**

"The distinction made between the qualitative and quantitative paradigm lies in the quest for understanding and for in-depth inquiry" (Freebody, 2003:3). In quantitative research, the focus is on the control of all the variables. In qualitative research, the variables are not controlled, but the focus is on understanding and explaining the variables using data collected by various methods (Freebody, 2003:3).

Most researchers do either quantitative or qualitative research but some researchers combine the two. Using more than one research method to obtain data makes triangulation possible. The strength of quantitative research lies in its reliability (repeatability) – the same measurements should yield the same results time after time (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The strength of qualitative research lies in validity (truth) – research using a variety of data collection instruments should lead to in-depth understanding of social phenomena (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

This research project employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods to obtain the data for the analysis stage. Qualitative research was the dominant research method and quantitative research was used only to reduce the huge amount of data obtained using questionnaires and interviews.

►Reliability and validity in qualitative research

One of the criticisms against qualitative research is that the findings cannot be generalised (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:274). However, the strength of qualitative research is embedded in the fact that the aim is to understand the meaning participants attribute to an event and not to generalise.

Reliability is the extent to which interdependent researchers could investigate the same phenomena and reach agreement on the description of the social event that involves the researcher and the participants (Sally, 1993:385). Reliability in quantitative research refers to the repeatability of the instrument and test administration in the study while in qualitative research reliability refers to the consistency of the researcher's role (insider, participant, and outsider), the data collection methods, data recording and interpretation of the participants' meanings from the data by the researcher. Reliability is therefore more difficult to achieve in qualitative research since no two investigators attach the same meaning to observations, interviews or field notes. The social context of the phenomena also influences the data, since the people involved and the time of the research will be different at a later stage.

The strength of qualitative research resides in its validity. Validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of the social event matched the realities of the world (Sally, 1993:391). Validity indicates the occurrences of the research, i.e. whether a study gives a true account of what it is exploring. Validity may be enhanced by research over a lengthy data collection process. The data for this study were collected over a four-week period. The four weeks provided opportunities for continual data collection, observation of the participants in their natural setting (classroom) and allowing the learners to display their natural behaviour. (In the beginning, the learners were conscious of the fact that they were participating in a research project).

To enhance the reliability and validity of qualitative research, researchers make extensive use of triangulation. Denzin (in Babbie & Mouton, 2001:275) defines triangulation as follows:

> Triangulation, or the use of multiple methods, is a plan of action that will raise sociologists above the personal biases that stem from single methodologies. By combining different data collecting methods and different investigators in the same study, observers can partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or method.

Triangulation is regarded as the best way to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research was undertaken within a critical paradigm. The researcher engaged in an emancipatory action research project, and made use of ethnography notions.

3.4.1 Action research

The concern of this emancipatory action research project was to seek to transform the educational situation and not merely improve its effectiveness. Within the context of the disciplinary crisis most schools are in, we need to revolutionise our way of thinking about discipline. The "we" referred to are educators, learners, parents and community members.

The participants were asked the question "**why".** This was aimed at unmasking knowledge about the social situation of the classroom and taking steps to improve the situation. The participants could thus be emancipated through the whole process:

- learners from an authoritarian form of discipline – a form of discrimination, and

- educators from discriminating against others, or abusing others.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:277) contend there are three types of qualitative research design i.e. ethnographic studies, case studies or life histories and action research. The emphasis of qualitative research is on studying events (human actions) in their natural setting and through the eyes of the participants themselves. The actions of the people involved in this study were described in detail and I, as the researcher, explored the data to understand the actions within its context.

As teachers working in schools, we are confronted on a daily basis with many questions, issues, and problems dealing with children, parents, and the curriculum. Sometimes our ways of dealing with these challenges are successful, and we feel we have improved our educational situation. At other times, some of these difficulties seem insurmountable. To help us improve our educational practice Kurt Lewin proposed action research (Ebbut, 1985:151). It is designed to assist the educators in their search for answers to questions regarding how to make life in schools better for teachers and learners.

There are multiple purposes for teachers to engage in action research: the professional, personal, and political (Noffke, 1997 as reported in Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Those who engage in action research for professional purposes see it as a form of research that produces new knowledge. They see action research as a means for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Personal purposes will be the greater understanding of one's own work.

Before the current democratic government came to power, punishment in various forms, including corporal punishment, was used as the dominant form of discipline in schools. After 1994 various legislation, policies and rules were passed to abolish corporal punishment and thus help to instil democracy as a way of life, protect children's rights and let people be treated with dignity. This right to be protected

belongs to every citizen, regardless of sex, age, gender, class, power status, etc. The implication of the new approach is that learners have to discipline themselves rather than be disciplined externally by educators. Educators do not feel that learners meet their responsibilities in this regard; in their view, learners abuse their rights and misbehave at schools because there are no disciplinary measures available.

At present there seems to be a conflict of values between educators and learners. Every one of us is influenced by our values. Some people value the rights of individuals; others do not see individuals as having rights. Action research begins with values that the practitioner should be aware of what drives his life and work so that he can be clear about what he is doing, and why he is doing it. Sometimes we say we believe in something, but, for a variety of reasons, our behaviour does not reflect these beliefs. A starting point for action research would be to find ways of overcoming this contradiction. In this study, the value identified was one of human rights. I as an educator tried to instil a culture of human rights in my colleagues, the learners and myself. Every learner could expect to be treated in accordance with the Bill of Rights and the Children's Bill of Rights, as well as the rights of learners embedded in education policies. In turn, every learner would be expected to respect every one else's rights.

Kemmis (Ebbut, 1985:157) defines action research as "… trying out an idea in practice with a view of improving or changing something, trying to have a real effect on the situation". Action research is a combination of both action and research.

The following definitions illustrate some of the many ways of describing action research: (Taken from Teacher-as-Researcher – Eric Digest).

- Action research is the process in which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct, and evaluate their decisions and actions (Stephen Corey, 1953).

- Action research in education is a study conducted by colleagues in a school setting of the results of their activities to improve instruction (Carl Glickman, 1991).

- Action research is a fancy way of saying let us study what is happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place (Emily Calhoun, 1994).

- The term action research refers to a study of the common phenomena of human behaviour namely: planning, acting, fact-finding, and analysis. Because action research is an ongoing process, the cycle is repeated to form a spiral (Kurt Lewin , 1947).

Action research can be described as a family of research designs, which pursues action (or change) and research (or understanding) at the same time. The understanding obtained allows change that is more informed and at the same time is informed by that change. Most forms of action research use a cycle that alternates between action and critical reflection. It is about the nature of the learning process, about the link between practice and reflection. It is a process that takes shape as understanding increases. Winter (Cohen et al, 1980:174) sees action research as a way of investigating professional experience, which links practice and the analysis of practice into a single developing sequence and which links researchers and research participants into a single community of interested colleagues.

Action research is fundamentally regarded as a form of strategic action aimed at the improvement of a particular social practice such as teaching (Hopkins, 1985). Traditional research is aimed at the development of theory by means of testing propositions or predictions. A consequence of action research is that it relates practice and theory. It has action as its focus, not passive observation. It requires researchers to act reflectively in ways that lead to an improvement of the teaching practices in a particular classroom. This means that theory does not prescribe practice; each informs the other. In action research, the practitioner is seen as the subject rather than the object of research. An implication of this is that action research is a qualitative form

of research that recognises the validity of the ethnographic observation and of interpretive concepts. Action research is a form of self-reflection. It is systematic and reflective. As defined by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), action research consists of four phases that take place in a cycle. These four phases are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Planning – all the members of the research team reflect on 'what are' the realities of their particular practices, and begin to search for "what ought to be?"

Acting – the researchers implement the plan they have developed, addressing all or a particular set of problems.

Observing – the collection of data takes place simultaneously with the action. Observation is important for subsequent reflection and action.

Reflecting – the researchers reflect upon what is happening in their project, developing revised action plans based upon what they are learning from the process of planning, acting, and observing.

In action research, the participants themselves in consultation with the researcher determine the aim of the research. The researcher becomes a full participant. Action research is democratic. It encourages a greater degree of talk and interaction between colleagues, inviting collaboration that should be based on equality. Collaboration is a practical necessity, providing a means of collegial support. This means collaboration between colleagues with common interests. For Winter (1989) collaboration means that everyone's point of view is seen as a contribution to resources of understanding; no-one's point of view will be taken as the final understanding as to what all the other points of view really mean. In traditional research, the researcher should remain neutral.

Action research is future orientated and its direction can change, but it is grounded in present practice and seeks to relate retrospective understandings reached through past action, observation and reflection to prospective plans for the future.

The reasons I decided to do action research in order to improve my practice are as follows:

- Action research deals with your own problems, not someone else's.
- Action research can lead to better teaching and learning.
- We can gain better control over our own teaching practices.
- Action research can break down some of the hierarchical barriers.
- We examine our habits.
- Action research helps us to develop stronger collegial relationships.

At first glance, action research would seem to be common sense. When confronted with a problem, we often make a plan, carry it through, and reflect on the results. Action research involves going beyond the problem in an attempt to try to understand why the problem appears to us in the way it does. The lack of discipline in schools can be used to illustrate this point. This study of collaborative action research focused on how action research can improve the practitioner's own understanding of his educational practices. The goal was to help my colleagues and me examine problems associated with our own practice and initiate strategies and techniques to attempt solutions to these problems, which are primarily problems of classroom management and discipline. The learners must be able to differentiate between right and wrong and make the correct decisions because it is the right thing to do. This is only possible if the learners have bought into the concept of human rights (not only for the self but for all) and self-discipline.

3.4.2 Ethnography

Ethnography can be described as the data of cultural anthropology that is derived from the direct observation of behaviour in a particular society (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:279). Spradley takes a similar line to that of Babbie and Mouton when he states that ethnography is the work of describing culture. Hammersley & Atkinson (1989: 6-7) argue that:

> Ethnographers have developed an alternative view of the proper nature of social research, often termed 'naturalism'... Naturalism proposes that, as far as possible, the social world should be studied in its 'natural' state, undisturbed by the researcher. Hence 'natural', not 'artificial' settings like experiments or formal interviews should be the primary source of data. Furthermore, the research should be carried out in ways that are sensitive to the nature of the setting. A key element of naturalism is the demand that the researcher adopts an attitude of 'respect' or 'appreciation' toward the social world. ... A first requirement of social research according to this view then, is fidelity to the phenomena under study, not to any particular set of methodological principles ... Moreover, social phenomena are regarded as quite distinct in character from natural phenomena ... the social world cannot be understood in terms of causal relationships or by the subsumption of social events under universal laws. This is because human actions are based upon, or infused by, social meanings: intentions, motives, attitudes, and beliefs ... The same physical stimulus can mean different things to different people, and, indeed, to the same person at different times.

> ... According to naturalism, in order to understand people's behaviour we must use an approach that gives us access to the meanings that guide that behaviour. Fortunately the capacities we have developed as social actors can give us such access. As participant observers we can learn the culture or subculture of the people we are studying. We can come to interpret the world in the same way that they do.

Ethnographic studies entail extensive fieldwork by the researcher. Data collection techniques include structured and semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The data is interpreted from the perspective of the participants.

An advantage of ethnography is its flexibility (Fox, 1998:4). An ethnographic study holds the advantage that the researcher can change the focus of the study as the data are gathered. This particular research project can be regarded as an ethnographic study since I was trying to uncover the norms, values ands shared meanings of the people involved in the study (the learners and my colleagues).

The purpose of the ethnographic method is to describe a particular culture (Bailey, 1987:246). Since the purpose of this research was to investigate the behaviour of the learners and the participant educators or the culture of discipline that exists in our school, this research qualifies as an ethnographic study
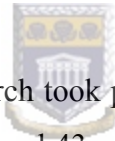
The school where the action research took place is situated in a rural area. There are about 1 400 learners in the school and 43 educators. Most of the learners belong to a single parent, single income family. There is no after-school adult supervision for these learners. The parents of these learners are uneducated and do not grasp the academic challenges that their children are facing. Since 1994, the discipline in the school has deteriorated. If serious conflict between educators and learners is to be avoided, some sort of discipline has to be established. This deterioration of discipline has a definite negative effect on the curriculum and the outcomes the learners have to achieve while at school.

3.5   SAMPLING

Qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people in their natural context and studied in depth (Matthew *et al*., 1994:27). Qualitative samples tend to be purposive, rather than random, because random sampling can result in bias samples if the numbers are small (Matthews *et al*., 1994:27). Purposive sampling allows the

researcher to choose a case because it illustrates some feature in which the researcher is interested (Silverman, 2000:104). This allows the researcher to choose cases in terms of their relevance to the study and the researcher is allowed to choose deviant cases (Silverman, 2000:105). The advantage of purposive sampling is that a few cases studied intensively, may result in in-depth insights about the topic. In this research project, I, as the researcher, contacted all the educators involved with the grade eights, and informed them about the research project. I asked educators to become involved in the project voluntarily. Most of the educators saw the research as an extra burden and did not want to become involved. However, four educators were willing to participate.

The grade eight classes, which participated in the project, were selected after a discussion amongst the four educators who had volunteered. We selected four classes (4 x 50 learners), which displayed behaviour characteristics across the continuum of discipline. The behaviour of the classes varied from very good to inappropriate. Sally (1993: 378) supports this method of sampling and states that purposive sampling requires information about the variations, (in this case the classes) and that the researcher should search for samples that are likely to be knowledgeable and informative concerning the phenomena about to be investigated. The classes chosen should display all the features that are normally associated with discipline i.e. good and poor behaviour.

3.6   RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Research instruments are a way of gathering data concerning the research focus. Gathering data using different research instruments is in fact creating different ways to study the social event being researched.

►Interviews

The basic interview is one of the most frequently used instruments of gathering data within the qualitative approach (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:289). A qualitative

interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent with the interviewer pursuing a certain direction with the interviewee in order to elicit certain information from the respondents.

A **focus group interview** involves the asking of open-ended questions based on the topic being investigated. The advantage of open-ended questions is to provide the opportunity for both the interviewee and interviewer to cover the topic in more detail and depth. Through these open-ended questions, the researcher can prompt the interviewee for more detail or clarification.

The focus group interview occurs when a group of people is interviewed simultaneously to discuss a topic of interest. The main advantage of focus groups is the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic with the minimum of time required. It is also easy to assemble the focus group. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:292), an advantage of focus groups is the ability to observe the interaction within the group. The group discussions provided direct information about the issues on which the group differed and on those upon which they agreed.
The focus group consisted of the four educators who participated in the research project. The advantage of this group was that they all taught the different classes involved in the research project. They taught different learning areas to these classes. The manner in which the focus group was formed meant that normal pitfalls in constituting a focus group could be avoided. Such a pitfall would be using a set of friends who simply reiterate one another's opinion. Another disadvantage that was eliminated was that the size of the group was small rather than too large. Large groups require a high level of interviewing skills from the researcher, which I did not possess.

My role as researcher was to pose the questions. Open-ended questions were used and I used the responses of the educators to prompt them for more detail if I thought it necessary. On several occasions, the interviewees' responses led to discussions not

pertinent to the research and I had to focus their thoughts on the topic. On other occasions, the responses of the educators led to a new line of inquiry that I had not thought of.

The interviews took place in the hour after school when the learners had left school (non-contact time). Getting the educators together was problematic since the educators were involved in different extra-curricular activities after school. The educators who participated in the research had only had this particular time for academic interventions. After several failed attempts, the interviews finally took place. The duration of the interviews was limited to one hour each since two of the educators were dependant on colleagues for their transport.

All the participants in the interviews were informed of the procedures and purpose of the interviews. The interviewees had already agreed to participate in the study and had given their permission for the information obtained to be used for research purposes. I also informed the participants of their rights to withdraw from the interview at any stage, their right not to answer any question that they did not feel comfortable with. I assured them that the content of the interview would remain confidential and emphasised their right to see the transcript and the researcher's interpretation of the interview.

My interviews took the form of semi-structured interviews. This meant that I interacted with the educators. (I asked questions, asked for more detail or clarification during the interview). During the interview, I tried to refrain from forcing the interview in a particular direction (by providing answers, for example) and concentrated on keeping the interviewees focused on the topic. The interviewees were encouraged to express themselves. My objective through focus group interviews was to elicit the group's perspective on the topic through encouraging discussion so that their understanding of the topic would be revealed in the course of the discussion. In the course of these discussions, their understanding of the topic was revealed. The

complete interview was audio recorded and the recorder was placed in such a way that everybody could see it. Each interview lasted for approximately one hour.

Two separate interviews were held with the interviewees. The focus of the first interview was on the correlation between human rights and discipline. During the first week of the study, the educators completed an observation sheet on the behaviour of the learners in their respective classes.

The methodology used in the classroom, whenever a learner transgressed, was to encourage discussion in which the effect of the misbehaviour of the learner on himself, the other learners and society was highlighted. The discussion was also to emphasise which rights of the other learners had not been respected. The educator was briefed to encourage learners to demand that everybody should respect their rights.

A second objective was to obtain information on the impact of the teaching style on learners' behaviour. Educators were briefed before the commencement of the study, to use a different teaching style whenever they introduced a new lesson. The educators involved in the research attended a short workshop on different teaching strategies, which was facilitated by the researcher. This was done to ensure that everybody had some knowledge about different teaching strategies. It was very difficult to keep the educators focused on the behaviour of the whole class. Educators tended to focus on the three or four learners whose behaviour created problems and to lose perspective on the behaviour of the rest of the class. During the briefing on what to observe, I emphasised that the class as a unit should be observed and not only the few learners whose behaviour posed problems.

Directly after the interview I transcribed the whole interview and gave the transcript to the participants in order for them to ascertain the accuracy of the transcript. This

method also allows the interviewees the opportunity to change their actual words if these do not reflect their intention.

►Observation and participant observation

In order to ascertain the level of discipline in the classrooms, I decided on observation as a method of collecting information. In my opinion, observation is an excellent instrument to gain a "rich picture" of any social phenomenon such as the behaviour of learners in a classroom. Observation as an ethnographic method is widely used to explore what goes on between people to enhance our understanding of the interaction (Fox, 1998:1). Observation not only includes the visual, but also all the other senses and the interpretation of the sensed data (Fox, 1998:2). Since the objective of ethnographic research is to seek and document the truth about social phenomena, the researcher should not use this as the sole data-collecting instrument. In the case of this research, I took care to minimise possible error by verifying the results of the observation by comparing these with the results obtained from multiple data collecting instruments.

According to Freebody (2003:82), observation means participating in the actions of the people in the research setting and getting to know their ways of doing. The researcher becomes part of the everyday life of the participants. This means that the researcher takes part in the everyday actions of the participants. As an insider researcher, I assigned this role to myself. I could observe the learners and the educators without interfering with their daily classes. At the same time I was being confronted with the same situations, as I was an educator at the same school. The learners and educators were asked to observe one another and complete a structured observation sheet afterwards. The different educators completed this observation sheet at the beginning of the research project (**pre-evaluation**). The participants in the research project, the educators, completed the observation sheet the day the research project commenced. The learners observed their fellow learners and were also asked to complete the observation sheet on the first day of the research project.

The project lasted for four weeks, during which the educators were asked to implement two strategies, namely:

- The educator was asked to use a new teaching strategy in every new lesson.
- The educator should handle any misbehaviour by learners by facilitating a discussion with human rights as its main topic. The discussion should focus on three areas i.e. (i) the impact the misbehaviour has on the rights of the fellow learners. (The educator's role was trying to extract from the learners which of the rights of the other learners had not been respected by the transgressors.) (ii) The educator was also asked to elicit from the other learners what the impact of the learners' inappropriate behaviour had been on him or herself. (iii) The last point the educator was to establish during this discussion was the possible negative consequence of the misbehaviour by the particular learners on society. This ongoing engagement with the concept of learners' rights was aimed at imparting knowledge about their rights. A secondary objective was to sensitise them to their rights, which should lead the learners insisting that everyone (educators, learners, adults) respect their rights. This knowledge of their rights should also increase their respect for the rights of others. Another objective of this discussion on human rights versus misbehaviour was to convey to the learners that rights and responsibilities were two concepts that were inextricably bound.

At the end of the four weeks, the end of the research project, the educators and learners were asked to complete the same observation sheets (**post-evaluation**). It was hoped that a comparison and an analysis of the responses would make it possible to assess whether the two-pronged strategy of classroom management and human rights awareness, as an intervention strategy had been successful or not in preventing misbehaviour by learners.

The purpose of this participant observation research was to describe, analyse, and interpret this collaborative action research project. "Immersing one in an alien way of

life in order to gain knowledge, an understanding, of that way of life is called **participant observation**: intense social interaction between researcher and the subjects, in the milieu of the latter"(Bogdan & Taylor, 1975:5). In this research project, the researcher form part of the school and can be regarded as an insider.

An **advantage** of observation as a research instrument resides in the fact that it can be done anywhere. An aspect of observation to be taken into account is the importance of taking accurate notes of the event being investigated. In observation, the researcher should be both observant and pensive in recording all the processes of the event. During observation, the researcher's field notes should include both the empirical observations and the researcher's interpretations of the events. For the duration of observing the behaviour of the learners in the different classes, the educators were asked to record anything they deemed to be appropriate for research as soon as possible and not to trust their memories.

The role of the researcher was planned to be one of participant observer. This did not eventuate since all the researcher's grade eight classes were assigned to another educator, due to the researcher's administrative responsibilities.

Discipline of learners is related to the behaviour of humans, and this behaviour can be directed and recorded by the researcher. This is primary data and the researcher does not rely on the descriptions and accounts of others, as this secondary data may be inaccurate. As the researcher as participant can be regarded in some instances as an outsider/insider participant, s/he can observe things/actions that participants take for granted. Another advantage is that the researcher can observe actions, gestures, facial expressions that are not taken into account in interviews and questionnaires. A last advantage of observation is that it can be used as part of triangulation, to validate the data obtained through other research instruments.

Observation as a research instrument also has its **limitations**. The first limitation is that the learners can change the way they behave, as they are conscious of the fact that they are being observed. A second limitation is that the behaviour is recorded as seen through eyes of the subjective researcher. Another critique is that observation is a time consuming process. People may suddenly come to see the researcher as a researcher and not as a colleague. This may be interpreted as a loss of trust in you. Furthermore, people sometimes like to be looked at, and will act to retain that attention. This effect, the unintentional impact of observers on a setting, is called the Hawthorne effect (Fox, 1998:10). This effect compromises the validity of the research in a study aimed at investigating the social actors' natural behaviour. Some respondents might be prejudiced in favour of or against the researcher and this could also compromise the research project. Emotional involvement on the part of the researcher also alters the subjects' behaviours. On the other hand, if the researcher keeps a distance between the respondents and the researcher, the respondents' behaviour might also be altered. The researcher's prejudices in favour of or against some of the respondents constitute another factor that could influence the researcher's observations. Researchers sometimes become too involved in the research and lose their objectivity towards the participants. In a study of this kind, there is the danger that researchers could alienate some subjects while mediating conflicts or giving advice. Researchers can also discourage some subjects by having too strong an association with the authorities.

►Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a convenient way of collecting data from a large number of individuals. In this study, 3 different questionnaires were developed.

An **advantage** of questionnaires is that they are cost effective. This is especially true for studies involving large sample sizes and large geographic areas. Written

questionnaires become even more cost effective as the number of research questions increases.

Questionnaires are easy to analyse. Data entry and tabulation for nearly all surveys can be easily done with many computer software packages.

Most people are familiar with questionnaires. Nearly everyone has had some experience in completing questionnaires and the questionnaires generally do not make people anxious.

Questionnaires reduce bias. There is uniform presentation of the questions and the researcher's own opinions do not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner. There were no verbal or visual clues to influence the respondent. Questionnaires are also less intrusive than telephone or face-to-face interviews.

One of the major **disadvantages** of written questionnaires is the possibility of low response rates. Another disadvantage of questionnaires is the inability to probe responses. Questionnaires are structured instruments. They allow little flexibility with respect to response format. For instance, they do not always take account of the fact that respondents often want to qualify their answers. By allowing frequent space for comments, the researcher can partially overcome this disadvantage. Comments are among the most helpful of all the information on the questionnaire, and they usually provide insightful information that would have otherwise been lost.

There are two other important disadvantages. Firstly, nearly ninety per cent of all spoken communication is visual. Gestures and other visual cues, which form part of spoken communication, cannot be utilised when written questionnaires are used. Secondly, the literacy levels of the respondents have to be reasonable in order for them to complete the questionnaires.

The purpose of the questionnaires was:
- To obtain data on the behaviour of the learners in the classroom.

- To ascertain whether the human rights strategy in handling discipline was effective.

- To determine the existence of a correlation between an educators' teaching style and discipline.

The huge amount of data collected by means of the questionnaires contributed to the 'richness" of the overall data. Three questionnaires were designed:

- The first questionnaire dealt with the educator's teaching style.

- The topic of the second questionnaire was the learners' behaviour, and

- The third aimed to elicit the educator's perspective on the correlation between behaviour /discipline of learners and the different teaching strategies used by educators.

The learners and educators completed the first and second questionnaires on the day that the study commenced. This was the **pre-evaluation**. At the end of the research project the same two questionnaires were completed by the respondents i.e. the educators and learners (**post-evaluation**). The comparison between the data obtained from the pre- and post-evaluation made it possible to assess the effectiveness of using human rights as a strategy to maintain discipline in the classroom. This research project used emancipatory action research. The underlying assumption was that the participants would be emancipated in the following ways:

- Learners from the authoritarian form of discipline – a form of discrimination;

- Educators from discriminating against others and abusing others' rights;

- Educators from exerting an authoritarian form of discipline to encouraging a form of discipline based on human rights.

The data obtained from the second questionnaire revealed that the educator's management style had changed over the four weeks. The questionnaires were managed as follows:

- All the questionnaires were provided with titles.

- The learners completed the questionnaires themselves. The educators involved in the research project helped the learners by explaining all the questions to them. The responses of the learners were pre-coded as "yes" or "no". The help provided by the educators was necessary since the learners were not all at a grade eight level of literacy.

- The response rate of the questionnaires was very high since the questionnaires were completed under the supervision of the educators.

- The learners completed the questionnaire for every educator that participated in the research. This means that they completed the questionnaire four times.

- The questionnaire was completed when the study commenced and again at the end of the research project (after four weeks).

The theme of the third questionnaire was the teaching strategy and how it impacted on the discipline of the learners. This questionnaire was not completed exclusively by the four critical friends, but by all the educators who taught a subject to the grade eight learners. The response rate to this questionnaire was also high since the topic was very relevant to the educators. The open-endedness of the questionnaire gave educators the opportunity to express their own views.

►**Field notes**

A problem that was encountered by the educators was what to record during observations and what to leave out. This problem was partially solved as the structured observation sheet indicates most of the actions that were to be observed. This meant, however, that some of the behaviour of the learners, which was regarded as pertinent to the study, was not on the observation sheet. To enhance the reliability of the data the educators were asked to keep field notes on any behaviour they deemed important to the study. The field notes were written directly after any incident took place. The field notes added more value to the observations as the educators had more freedom to record their own observations and to use their own words. During note taking the educators could also record the body language, facial

expressions and tone of voice used by the learners. The richness of a natural setting may be problematic for note taking (huge amount of information). This problem was overcome as the educators were given the following guidelines i.e.

- The people involved should be the learners and not the educators.

- The activity should be recorded.

- The actions of the learners should be recorded.

- The actions should be behaviour related.

- Anything they as educators regarded as important.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission to conduct the study was first sought from the principal and school governing body. Since the school governing body represents the parents, I deemed it unnecessary to obtain the permission from the parents. Permission was sought from the Breede-Overberg Education Management Development Centre (EMDC) to conduct the research in the school. The director of the EMDC referred the letter to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) for permission in accordance with the Western Cape Education Department's protocol on research. Permission was granted by the Education Department for this study to take place at the school where I was teaching. After permission had been granted (Appendix 1), I gathered the role players (parents, learners, principal), where I gave an outline of the objectives of the research, the role of the learners and educators. At this gathering, I assured the parents, learners, and educators of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy while they were participating in the research process. The rights of the participants were spelled out clearly i.e. they could refuse to answer any question during interviews, withdraw from the research at any stage, refuse to be audio recorded and they could demand to see any notes or recordings.

3.8   DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative research generates a huge amount of data that needs to be summarised, described and analysed. The phenomenon under investigation needs to be described, classified and patterns and relationships identified. The first step in analyzing the data is to develop a thorough and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation. Denzin (in Babbie and Mouton, 2001) calls this a "thick description". Mathhew et al. (1994: 6) suggest the following steps in data analysis:

- Data reduction;
- Data display and
- Conclusion drawing and verification.

►Data reduction

The huge amount of data collected in a qualitative study needs to be reduced so that it is more manageable. In this research, all the responses to the questions in the structured questionnaires were entered on the computer. It was then a simple matter to tot up how many people answered the question in a given way i.e. how many learners thought that an educator assisted them in making decisions. All this information could be used to compare the responses from the different classes with regard to a particular educator. All the responses that had a negative impact on discipline could be clustered and then compared with the positive responses. All the data could be categorised and tabulated with the aid of a computer. The advantage of tabulation was that the data were presented visually and were therefore easier to analyse. The next step was to use quantitative data analysis to complement the qualitative analysis. True quantitative data analysis methods were not used.

The data collected through open-ended questionnaires and interviews required a different technique. The data needed to be transcribed. Next I had to familiarise myself with the data through reviewing, reading and listening to the data. After that I had to create codes for all units of data referring to the same categories. The different small categories needed to be coded to form a larger theme.

►Data display

In order to analyse the data, researchers need to identify bits of data that can be clustered together. This is referred to as creating categories of data. These categories can be grouped into larger units. After this is done, the different codes and themes can be compared and contrasted. The next step is to look at the relationships between the different codes. This is the process of data display that was used in this research.

3.9   CONCLUSION

The research was primarily qualitative. Mouton (2001:271) describes qualitative research as the approach in social research in which the researcher takes the perspective of an insider.

The qualitative research design chosen was ethnography. The aim of the research was to investigate the behaviour of the learners and to uncover the norms, values and meanings that both educators and learners attach to behaviour and discipline. This investigation took place in the natural setting of formal schooling i.e. the classroom during formal school time.

Qualitative approaches to data collection involve direct interaction with individuals on a one to one basis or in a group setting. Observation, focus group interviews, questionnaires and field notes were used to collect the data. The interviews used in this study were semi-structured. A series of open-ended questions were used to elicit information pertaining to the discipline of learners and the teaching strategy of educators. This was done in order to ascertain whether there was a correlation between teaching style and behaviour and whether the establishment of a human rights culture had had a positive impact on the learners' discipline.

Observation was chosen as a data-collecting instrument because it is a well-established method of exploring social phenomena. It made it possible to provide a detailed description of the social event, the behaviour of learners, in the natural

setting of the classroom. This rich description provided the data that were necessary to explore the meaning and values of the participants.

The research design made provision for triangulation by using a variety of methods to obtain data. Triangulation was necessary to validate the findings and to avoid possible criticism that ethnographic practice does not provide accurate explanations.

Questionnaires were used since it is an easy way to obtain information provided the literacy level of the respondents is satisfactory. This study made use of structured and open-ended questionnaires. The response rate of the questionnaires was good and valuable information was collected.

During data analysis the data reduction, data display and presentation flow suggested by Matthew et al. (1994) was used to make sense of the large amount of data collected.

In the next chapter, the data collected will be presented and discussed. Qualitative data are subjective, interpretive, descriptive and holistic. To make sense of the data the codes and themes that were revealed were compared and contrasted.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Data analysis is defined by Bogden and Bilken (1982:145) as "… the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves working with your data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others".

The core of qualitative analysis is based on three processes i.e. describing the phenomenon under investigation, grouping the data (creating categories) and looking for links between the different categories. The first step in qualitative data analysis is to develop a thorough and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation. Denzin (in Babbie and Mouton, 2001:271) call this a "thick description". "Thin" description merely states facts but a thick description includes information about the context of the act. "Thick" description states the facts, the context in which the action is taking place and the similarities and differences in the data.

4.1.1   The context

Discipline is an essential part of teaching. What is discipline? Where adults exercise a form of control over learners this is called external discipline (Sonn, 2002:24). With this definition, discipline is seen as a way of life in accordance with certain rules. Three pillars form the basis for this type of discipline: Respect for authority figures, a system of rewards and punishment, and a set of consequences (Sonn, 2002:24).

Another form of external discipline is positive discipline (Sonn, 2002:25). According to this view, the educator should focus on positive aspects of behaviour in the class, reinforcing good behaviour through rewards and involve learners in decision-making about rewards and punishment (Sonn, 2002:25).

Where learners partake actively in the decision making process, self discipline is emphasized (Sonn, 2002:26). Self-disciplined learners are empowered with responsibility and thus take charge of their own actions (Sonn, 2002:26). They have acquired problem solving and conflict-resolution skills, which enable them to deal with problems, which may arise out of their interaction with one another (Sonn, 2002:26).

As vice-principal, my position enables me to show a group of educators and myself that there are alternatives to corporal punishment. Discipline is the changing of unacceptable behaviour to acceptable behaviour (acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as defined by the norms, values and culture of the school). Our expectations of students' behaviour must be taught to learners. In the teaching process, we must realise that the only variable we can control is our own. The other two variables in the discipline situation (learners and learning) cannot be controlled 100 % by the educator. Through a model of self-discipline, using the Bill of Rights, an attempt was made to understand and handle discipline concerns effectively. The whole objective of this action research project was that the best way to deal with school misbehaviour is by preventing it. Therefore, the participant educators should not only correct misbehaviour but also teach appropriate behaviour and coping skills.

4.1.2 Rationale for the research

- Teachers are concerned about the breakdown of discipline in schools.
- Teachers feel that their right to teach is being infringed by undisciplined learners.

- The right of other learners to receive education is impaired.
- Through the use of the principles of human rights learners should be made aware that their rights are accompanied by responsibilities.
- The right to teach in an environment conducive to teaching and learning is impaired, and
- The right of the learners to receive teaching is violated by the misbehaviour of other learners.

4.1.3 The objectives of this study

This study set out:

- To determine the current classroom practices of educators;
- To determine whether there is a correlation between learner's behaviour and classroom practice through action research;
- To explore the extent to which a culture of human rights can contribute to improved classroom behaviour;
- To analyse whether the data collected support the notion that classroom practice influence learner's behaviour.

Data were collected to make it possible for these objectives to be realised. The data collecting instruments were discussed in the previous chapter were observation, questionnaires, and interviews field notes.

4.1.4 Methodology in classroom

The researcher had briefed the educators who participated in the research to employ the following strategy in the classroom whenever learners transgressed: The educators were to discuss and teach the learners about their rights that are entrenched within the Bill of Rights, The Children's Bill of Rights, and the White Paper on Education. After the rights had been discussed, the discussion was to go on to the topic of the responsibilities that go with the rights. Learners were then to be asked to list the responsibilities that go with each right e.g. If a learner has the right to

education, the learner has the responsibility to attend school and make an effort to attain the skills levels necessary to ensure progression. Another example is that no learner has the right to violate another learner's right to receive education. Educators were to emphasise that educators also had rights and responsibilities and the learners should include them in their discussion.

The educators were asked to facilitate a discussion with learner misbehaviour as the focal point. The discussion should obtain from the learners the following information:

- The rights which had been violated;

- Whose rights had been violated;

- The impact of this violation on the other learners;

- The impact of the transgression on the misbehaving learner; and

- The possible future consequence of continued transgressions by this learner on society.

The educator was to end this discussion by pointing out to learners that their awareness of their rights should culminate in a demand that everybody should respect their rights. Part of the educator's task during this discussion was to point out to learners that their parents or guardians, the educators, the senior staff and the principal were the persons that should protect these rights. The learners were to be encouraged to complain to educators if somebody had violated their rights. If the educators were unable to protect the learner's rights, the complaint should be taken to the senior management of the school. If the learners were still not happy, the parent of such a learner should contact the principal and lodge a complaint against a specific learner. Consciousness-raising of human rights was thus used as an intervention strategy in disciplinary matters and to instil respect for others and a form of self-discipline in each learner.

A second objective was to obtain information on the impact of the teaching style on the learners' behaviour. Educators were briefed before the commencement of the

study to employ a different teaching style whenever they introduced a new lesson. The educators involved in the research attended a short workshop on different teaching strategies, which was facilitated by the researcher. This was done to ensure that everybody have some knowledge about the different teaching strategies.

4.2   PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

The qualitative research methodology used generated a large amount of data. The huge amount of words collected through interviews, observational techniques and questionnaires needed to be described and summarised. The summarising of the mass of data collected is called analysis (Hancock, 1998:16).

This study made limited use of quantitative research in that it collected data using questionnaires. By quantifying the data collected through questionnaires, the data was reduced. This made the data more manageable and I was able to present the data in the visual format of graphs and tables.

The basic data analysis procedure used for the data collected through interviews, field notes and open-ended questionnaires were the following:

- Familiarisation with the data through reading and listening;
- Transcription of the data;
- Coding of segments of the data in order to uncover differences and similarities;
- Grouping the data together (codes that are similar) and the creation of categories, and
- Grouping categories together to create themes.

4.2.1   Questionnaires

Two structured questionnaires were designed to obtain information from the learners and the educators.

The first questionnaire (appendix B) aimed at determining the educator's management style. Educators and learners completed this questionnaire. At the start of the research project, the learners in the respective classes that received instruction from the educator were asked to complete the questionnaire for all four educators separately. The learners completed the same questionnaire four times. The educators were asked to observe each other teaching and to complete the same questionnaire during this observation. This methodology of observing the same educator through different participants was done to increase the validity and reliability of the data. This could also be regarded as a form of triangulation. This completed questionnaire can be regarded as the pre-evaluation. The same questionnaire was completed in similar fashion at the end of the research project (after four weeks). This can be termed post-evaluation observation. Four educators and five classes (50 learners each) participated in the research project. The learners involved were all in grade 8 and their average age was 14 years. The four educators were teaching different learning areas and this difference was a huge advantage in this study since the different learning areas requires different teaching styles and skills from both the educators and the learners. A challenge to the completion of the questionnaires was the lack of reading skills the learners displayed. The questions were designed to be short, direct, and easy to understand. Despite this, the four educators who participated in the study had to help the learners by reading and explaining the questions to the learners. The help provided by the educators led to the added advantage that a high number of questionnaires were returned.

The scale used in any questionnaire is a way of ensuring that questions are asked in a fair and balanced way (Mathers *et al*. 1998:24). A scale is not a precise tool but can only assess attitudes in a relative way. The scale used in the questionnaire was a two-point scale with "yes" or "no" options. This scale was deliberately chosen by the researcher to force the learners and educators to make a choice. The questionnaire was completed in the presence and with the help of the educators so if a neutral

option had been given it might have meant that the learners would have chosen the middle statement in order not to antagonise the educator.

The first questionnaire consisted of twenty questions and included both positive and negative aspects concerning the educator's management style. The responses from the questionnaire were captured on a computer. The pre-evaluation and post-evaluation data were captured separately. The responses from the different classes and from the different educators were also entered as separate data. The data from the questionnaire were captured in this way to enable the researcher to cross-reference the data during data analysis. Once the data had been captured, an array of tables was created to present the data in a more visual form and to facilitate data analysis and the drawing of conclusions. Different tables were created to compare the findings.

►Questionnaire one (Appendix B)

The questionnaire was administered at the start of the research study (pre-evaluation). At the end of the research, the learners completed the same questionnaire. This second completion was regarded as post-evaluation. The questions in the questionnaire were clustered together and the "yes" answers were displayed in the graphs. The pre-evaluation responses were compared with the post-evaluation responses to ascertain whether the intervention strategy had had any impact on the behaviour of the learners.

Cluster 1: Questions 1 and 2

Question 1: Enforces the rules and policy.

Question 2: Gives the learners orders.

The theme of these questions is that the educator is ***authoritarian***. The educators enforce rules and the learners' life skills of decision-making, democratic behaviour and self-discipline are not enhanced or developed.

Cluster 2: Questions 3, 4, 8, 9,12, 19 and 20

Question 3: Assists learners in decision-making.

Question 4: Clarifies the classroom rules and routines.

Question 8: Educator's own behaviour is exemplary.

Question 9: Teaches the learners what constitutes acceptable behaviour.

Question 12: Encourages cooperation.

Question 19: Respects learners' rights.

Question 20: Protect learners' rights.

The theme that was derived from these questions is the ***rights and responsibilities*** of the learners.

Cluster 3: Questions 6, 9, 13, 16, 18, 17 and 15

Question 6: Enforces discipline using punishment.

Question 9: Teaches the learners what constitutes acceptable behaviour.

Question 13: Prevents problems from arising.

Question 16: Provides opportunities for good behaviour.

Question 18: Educator is in control of learners.

Question 17: Encourages discussions in class.

Question 15: Supports the efforts of the learners.

These questions depict the existence and employment of ***a disciplinary policy or disciplinary management style*** in the classroom

Cluster 4: Questions 5, 7, 10, 14, 16, 18, 19 and 20

Question 5: Expects compliance from the learners.

Question 7: Controls learners' behaviour.

Question 10: Expects learners to tolerate their classmates' behaviour.

Question 14: Isolates learners who are behaving unacceptably.

Question 16: Provides opportunities for good behaviour.

Question 18: Is in control of learners.

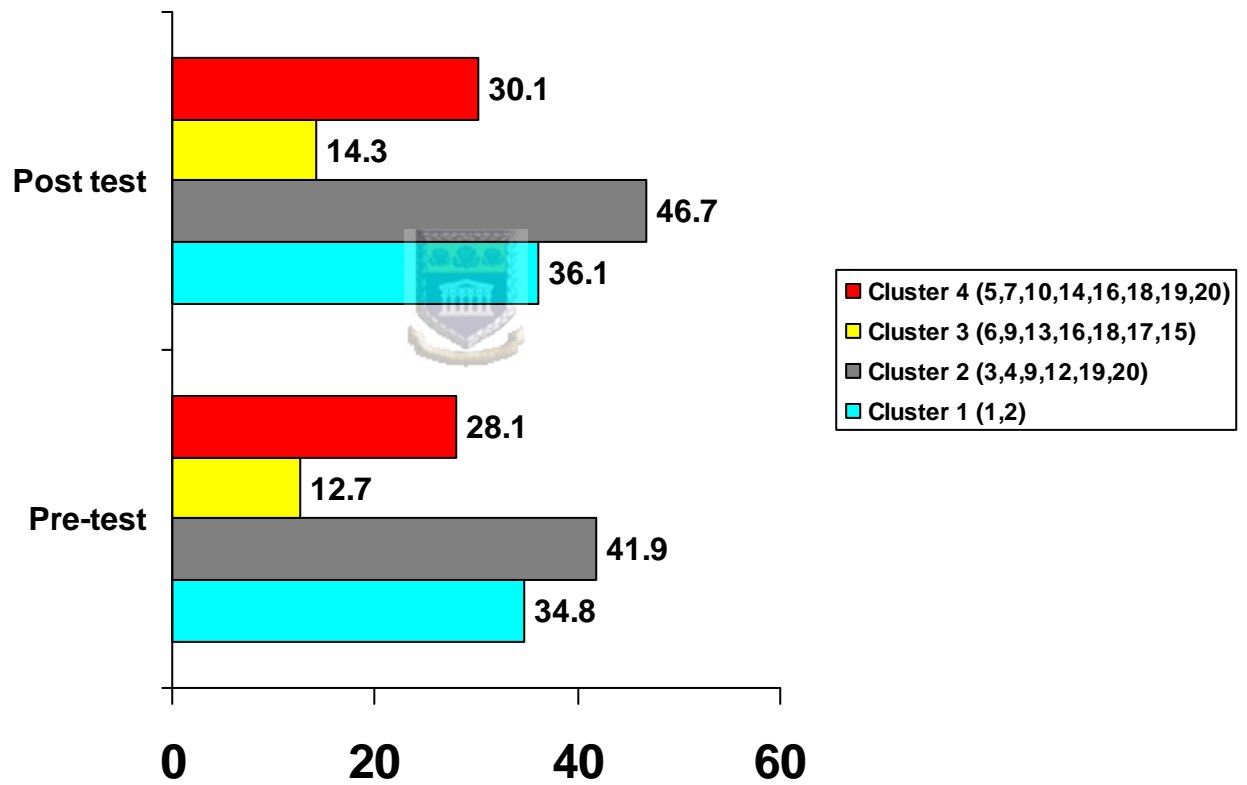*Question 19*: Respects learners' rights.

Question 20: Protects learners' rights.

The above questions are grouped together on the basis of their concern with the **behaviour** of the learners

Only the "yes" answers are illustrated in the graph

TABLE 1

Comparing the OVERALL responses.

The graph presents the overall results in terms of the different clusters. The respondents "yes" answers were put into the graph. A comparison between the pre- and post-evaluation results was made. The graph shows that the learners perceived the educators as having become slightly more authoritarian in the post-evaluation. This result was surprising in that the brief given to the educators was to facilitate discussions on discipline within the classroom and between learners. The teaching strategy the educators used varied, and the educators drew on both a direct and an indirect approach to learning. The direct teaching approach does not involve the learners actively in classroom activities whereas the indirect teaching strategy results in learners' participating more fully in classroom activities. It was expected that the learners' would have perceived the educators as having become more democratic, since the learners' level of participation in all activities in the classroom had increased. A possible explanation for this response is that Cluster 5 (behaviour of learners) shows an increase in responses, which means that the learners' behaviour had become more appropriate. The learners might have perceived the increase in order in the class as authoritarian management by the educator.

The results emanating from the remaining three clusters show a definite improvement in the responses by the learners. The learners' awareness of their rights and responsibilities had increased (Cluster 2). The theme of Cluster 3 is a management strategy related to discipline and in this the learners' responses suggest that the discipline strategy was more detectable in the classroom. This result was expected since the educators implemented a definite strategy as discussed previously. Cluster 4 relates to the behaviour of the learners. The results are very promising in that the learners' behaviour had become slightly more acceptable. The responses improved from 28,1% to 30,1%.

TABLE 2

A comparison of the responses of the different **EDUCATORS** to the questions in the four clusters.

Legend:
- Cluster 4 (5,7,10,14,16,18,19,20)
- Cluster 3 (6,9,13,16,18,17,15)
- Cluster 2 (3,4,9,12,19,20)
- Cluster 1 (1,2)

Educator 4 Post Evaluation
- 25.2
- 12.2
- 39.5
- 26.5

Educator 4 Pre Evaluation
- 22.8
- 10
- 35.6
- 18.3

Educator 3 Post Evaluation
- 61.3
- 19.4
- 48.4
- 38.7

Educator 3 Pre Evaluation
- 23.7
- 23.7
- 39.5
- 39.5

Educator 2 Post Evaluation
- 26.4
- 20.8
- 34.7
- 31.9

Educator 2 Pre Evaluation
- 26
- 22.1
- 41.6
- 45.5

Educator 1 Post Evaluation
- 30.3
- 12.4
- 56.8
- 44.9

Educator 1 Pre Evaluation
- 33.8
- 9.8
- 47.6
- 43.6

The same clusters with exactly the same themes are compared in this graph. The first graph compares the overall results obtained from the first questionnaire. The second graph depicts the learners' pre-and post-evaluation behaviour as captured in the individual educators' responses.

The educator's personal management style can be classified as democratic, laissez-faire or indifferent, authoritative or authoritarian

It is clear that Educator One's personal management style did not change during this research study. This can be deduced from Cluster 1. Educators Two and Four became less authoritarian (Cluster 1). The learners' perception is that Educator Two became less protective of their rights. The graph illustrates that the learners' behaviour in Educator Two's classes did not improve significantly. The learners' responses in all four clusters increased. This meant that in this particular educator's class the educator had become slightly more authoritarian: respect for and knowledge pertaining to rights had improved and the learners' behaviour in general was more acceptable.
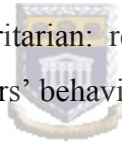
Cluster 2 illustrates that awareness of the rights and responsibilities increased between pre- evaluation and post-evaluation. The learners' responses indicate that it was only in Educator Two's classes that the learners' awareness and knowledge of their rights and responsibilities decreased. This is clearly an anomaly since awareness and knowledge of rights and responsibilities in one class remains part of the learners' knowledge base and cannot be forgotten once these learners enter a different educator's class.

TABLE 3

Comparing the responses of the different **CLASSES**.
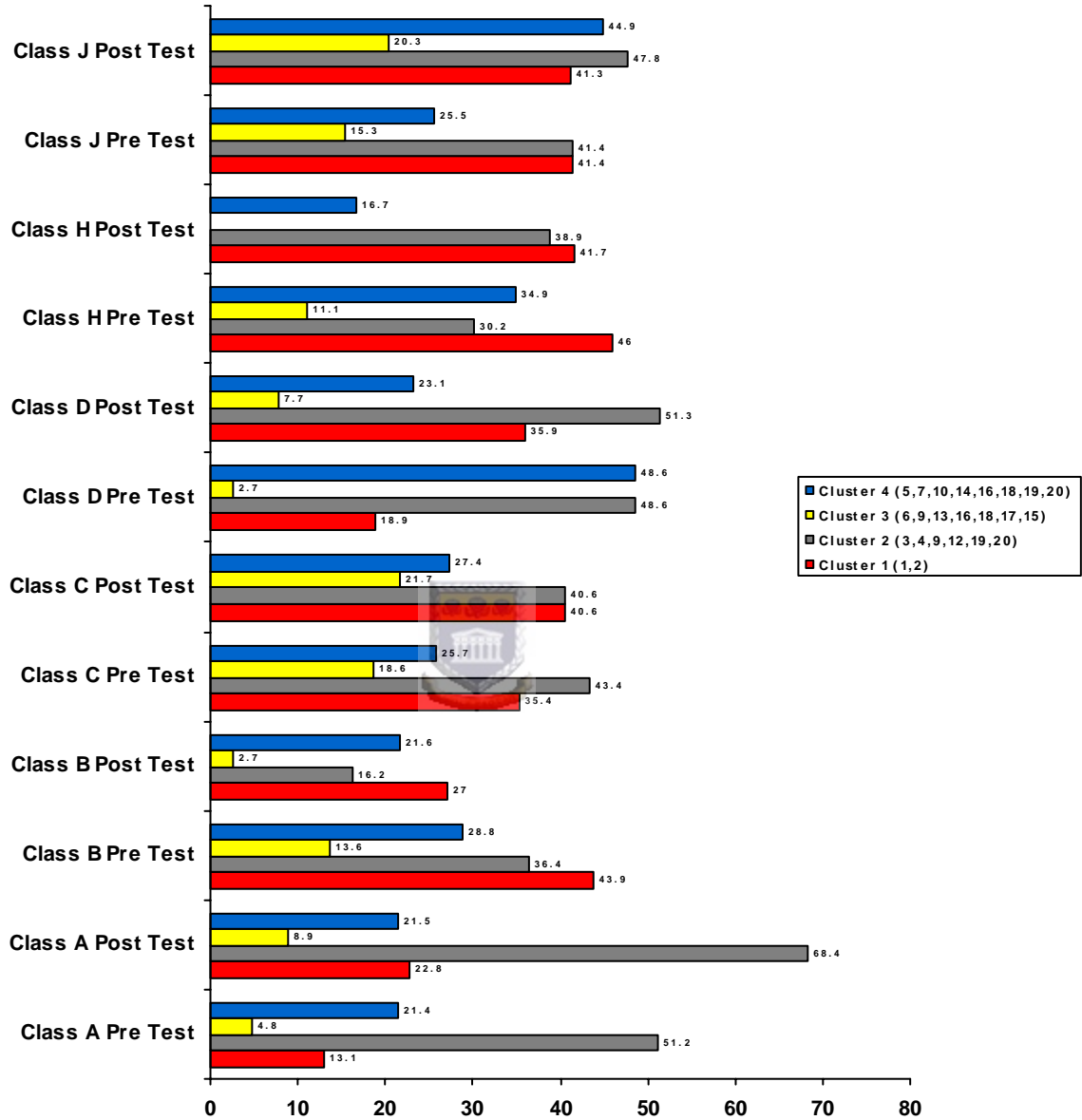
The above graph compares the responses by the different classes with regard to the different clusters. The comparison between the pre- and post-evaluation of the responses in connection with Cluster 1 are consistent with the previous graphs. This particular graph shows that with the exception of classes B and J, all the classes perceived a strengthening of the educator's authoritarian form of classroom

management. The employment of human rights as an intervention strategy and the discussions facilitated by the educators should have led to learners perceiving the educators as less authoritarian. The learners' behaviour has become more acceptable. Behaviour that is more acceptable results in a classroom becoming more orderly. This increase in order in the classroom might be the result that learners are of the opinion that the educators have become more authoritarian. This is an explanation for this anomaly in the data. Classes B and J differ from the rest and their responses illustrate that the educators have become less authoritarian and more democratic.

►**Questionnaire two (Appendix C)**

To make sense of the data collected the questions were clustered together according to themes. The following themes emanated from the questions.

CLUSTER 1: Questions 1, 2 and 13 – The theme is *cooperation.*

Question 1: Learners enter the classroom.

Question 2: Noise level of learners.

Question 13: Lesson ends in an orderly fashion.

CLUSTER 2: Questions 3, 4, 5 – Theme is *commencement of the lesson.*

Question 3: Learners take out equipment.

Question 4: Learners and educator greet one another.

Question 5: Learners take out their books.

CLUSTER 3: Questions 12, 8, 10 and 11 – Theme is *listening skills.*

Question 12: Learners chat to each other during lesson.

Question 8: Learners interrupt educator during lesson.

Question 10: Educator has to repeat instructions.

Question 11: Educator has to shout to be heard.

CLUSTER 4: Questions 9, 12, 7 and 6 - Theme is **cooperation.**

Question 9: Learners are not interested in the lesson.

Question 12: Learners chat to each other during lesson.

Question 7: Active participation during lesson.

Question 6: Learners behave in a disciplined way during lesson.

TABLE 4

The graph illustrates only the positive responses collected from the questionnaire.
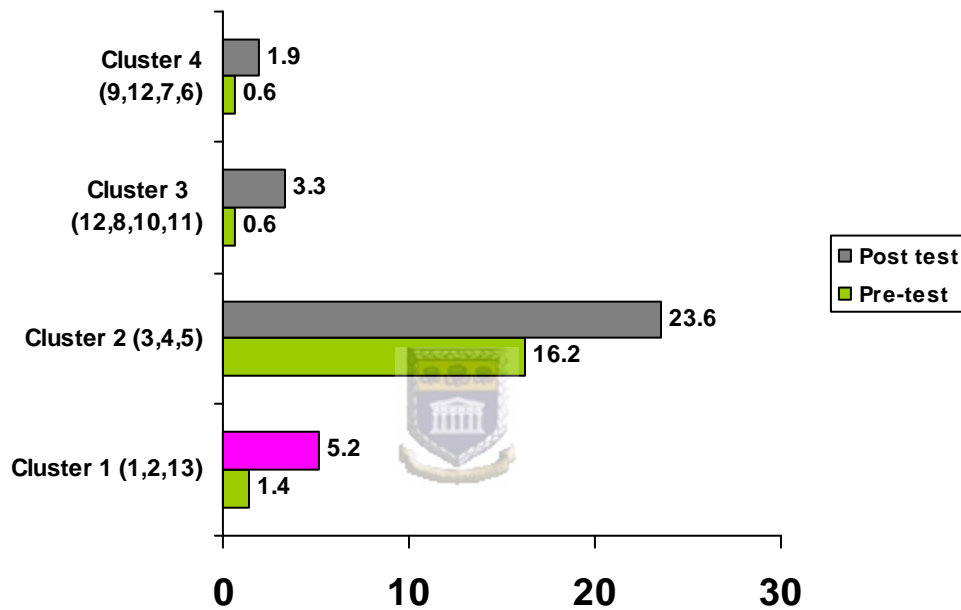
It is evident that all the clusters illustrate an increase in positive responses from the pre-evaluation to the post-evaluation. This demonstrates that the learners' cooperation (Cluster 4) improved after the educators introduced both the different teaching strategies and used human rights as an intervention strategy whenever learners behaved inappropriately.

The theme of Cluster 1 is orderly commencement of the lesson, which seems to have improved from pre- to post-evaluation. One may conclude that this orderly start to the lesson had a positive effect on the learners' participation in the class, their behaviour

and the learners' listening skills. The four clusters are interrelated and influence one another; an improvement in one area results in an improvement in the other clusters.

►**Questionnaire three (Appendix D)**

This objective of the questionnaire was to elicit the educator's perspective on the correlation between behaviour and discipline of learners and the different teaching strategies used by educators. The questionnaire was distributed among all the educators who were involved with the grade eight learners. Sixteen questionnaires were distributed and eleven were returned.

This was an unstructured questionnaire with the purpose of eliciting information regarding the correlation between teaching strategy and discipline without influencing the educator's opinion in a particular direction. It is evident from the questionnaire that the preferred teaching strategy is the direct one. All of the educators that completed the questionnaire reported that they made use of the direct teaching method. The educators listed seven teaching strategies they used in their classrooms. These teaching strategies were: direct teaching, small group work, co-operative learning, role play, debates and games.

NUMBER OF EDUCATORS	*NUMBER OF TEACHING STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY EDUCATORS*
1	6
2	5
3	4
4	3
1	2

The table shows that only one educator implemented a range of 6 teaching strategies. All the educators included the direct teaching method in their range of teaching strategies. The majority of educators made use of three different teaching strategies.

The educators' responses revealed that they all felt that teaching has an impact on the discipline of learners. The motivation for this argument included boredom if a specific teaching style was overused. The educator's rationale is that bored learners were looking for and inventing ways to enliven the class and themselves and this led to behavioural problems. The learners were not interested in what the educator presented to them and the attention of the learners was easily distracted. Another reason presented by the educators is that the more organised and structured a lesson is, the fewer the disciplinary problems there are.

Two teaching strategies were regarded as impacting positively on the learners' discipline i.e. the direct teaching strategy and research assignments. The main motivation for this was that in direct teaching the educator is in control of the learners. The educators viewed research assignments as a way of creating a learning climate in which learners engaged actively in the learning process. One educator stated that direct teaching could only be seen as positively influencing the discipline of learners if the short concentration span of learners was taken into account.

Small group work and co-operative learning were regarded as two strategies that impact negatively on the discipline of learners. Reasons cited are: (i) that learners do not possess the necessary skills to participate actively in these indirect teaching activities and (ii) learners lack the necessary knowledge of the subject under discussion. This inability to participate leads to learners behaving inappropriately.

Educators had different opinions on what constituted appropriate or inappropriate behaviour from learners. Most of the educators regarded active participation in a lesson as appropriate behaviour in the class. The second criterion for acceptable behaviour was silence or an acceptable noise level during instruction. Inappropriate behaviour was described as chatting to friends during lessons, not accepting the educator's authority, not participating, disturbing the concentration of others, unnecessary movement by learners and a lack of interest on the part of learners.

Not all of the respondents of the questionnaire had received formal instruction in using teaching strategies. Teaching strategies did not form part of the formal curriculum during the training of educators. The respondents were at one that the formal development of teaching strategies through training at university or college or in-service training by the education department would provide educators with new skills to overcome the new challenges of the new curriculum 2005.

The respondents to the questionnaire agreed that using the same teaching strategy would be a cause of disciplinary problems in the classroom. A variation in teaching methods would result in learners' interest being aroused in the activities in the classroom. This enhancement of the learner's interest might augment their academic performance.

4.2.2   Interviews

Two unstructured interviews were conducted between the researcher and the four participant educators. The aim of the first interview was determining if human rights as an intervention strategy in school discipline was successful. The objective of the second interview was to ascertain whether there was a correlation between educators' teaching strategies and the behaviour of learners. Both interviews lasted for one hour and took place in the non-contact time after the learners had left. The educators who were involved were the four that volunteered to participate in the study. The interviews were audio recorded and the recorder was placed in a conspicuous place. All the participants were assured that the content of the interviews would be handled confidentially and that anonymity would be guaranteed.

The interview is a qualitative data-collecting instrument. Analysis involves summarising the data collected and looking for similarities and differences in the data. One method of identifying small pieces of data in the text is to label these pieces of data. This is called coding of the data. By using coding, data obtained during the

interview from different interviewees can be compared. This requires a process called content analysis (Hancock, 1998:17). Content analysis is a procedure for the categorisation of verbal or behaviour data, for purposes of classification, summarisation and tabulation (Hancock, 1998:17). Analysis of the data can be done on a descriptive level and a higher level of analysis called interpretive analysis. Descriptive analysis gives an account of what was said during an interview but on an interpretive level, the meaning of the responses is looked for. The stages in analyzing the data collected from both an interview an open-ended questionnaire in this study are as follows:

- A transcript of the data collected was made. The verbal data was transcribed verbatim immediately after the interview.
- Familiarisation with the data was accomplished through reading and re-reading the data.
- Data, which seemed similar, were grouped together. This is called the coding of the data.
- Similar codes were grouped together to form categories.
- Codes and categories were compared to find similarities or differences.
- The last stage was the description of the data and the interpretation of the data.

►**Interview one**

The **objective** of this interview was to ascertain the impact of human rights as an intervention strategy concerning discipline.

The educators all expressed the view that the discipline of the learners had improved as a result of using human rights as an intervention strategy. The success of this particular strategy ranged from a slight improvement to a dramatic improvement. One educator stated that "*My dissipline het merkwaardig verbeter en kan definitief toegeskryf word aan die menseregte inslag wat ek gevolg het*".

Three of the four educators followed the methodology suggested by the researcher i.e. making the learners aware of their rights; facilitating discussions when transgressions occur in the classroom with the rights of the learners as the main argument; encouraging learners to insist on respect for their rights; demanding that the educators and guardians protect their rights. One of the participant educators joined the project later than the others. This educator also experienced the least success with human rights awareness as a strategy to enhance the learners' discipline. This educator noted that learners were familiar with the whole process and that they initiated the discussions themselves in this particular class. The educator interpreted the learners' actions as not taking the whole exercise very seriously. "*Die leerders het grappies gemaak van die hele bespreking en was nie ernstig nie*". Initiating the discussion when somebody misbehaved displayed a certain amount of knowledge pertaining to human rights. This constituted evidence that the other educators definitely were active participants in the research study.

Another educator implemented only part of the strategy at the outset of the study. This educator only informed the learners about their rights and facilitated the discussions if there was a breakdown in the discipline of the class. This particular participant omitted to encourage learners to insist that their rights be respected and protected by the educator. The researcher's own observation was that this educator experienced more disciplinary problems compared to the other three (before the start of the study). These problems continued in the early part of the study. The group of educators who participated in the study met once a week to discuss problems and to compare experiences. During the first session, this particular educator revealed the lack of any improvement in the behaviour of the learners and was surprised to learn of the success of two of the educators. This discussion revealed that he had omitted to encourage learners to insist on respect for their rights and to insist on protection of these rights from the respective guardians. He implemented the complete strategy and during the research group's ensuing weekly session, his report was more positive.

According to this particular educator, there was a noteworthy increase in discipline or fewer disciplinary problems in his classes.

The protection of the learners' rights played a strong role in creating more disciplined learners. Two educators implemented this part of the strategy from the commencement of the study and were rewarded with a vast improvement in the discipline of the learners. An educator commented one morning before school:

> *Die menseregte strategie is besig om vrugte af te werp. Twee ouers het my gisteraand gekontak en gevra dat hulle kinders se regte beskerm moet word in die skool anders sal hulle die owerheid kontak.*

The learners who created the problems, their parents and the parents of the complainant (learner) were invited to the school. The researcher facilitated the discussions between these different groups. During the discussion, the importance of respect for individuals, respect for rights of others and the importance of rights in society as a whole were stressed. The parents of the learner who caused behavioural problems were very understanding and made this comment:

> *Die skool moet die gedrag van leerders vorm sodat die gemeenskap minder probleme ondervind.*

The researcher and the complainant's parent stressed to the other party (transgressing learner and the guardian) that this behavioural modification through human rights awareness is the responsibility of the parents and the school as a community. The parents and the educators should support one another in this regard. After this discussion, this particular learner (the learner who caused behavioural problems in all the educators' classes in which he received instruction) changed into a "model" scholar. The ripple effect of the visit by the two groups of parents on the class was

very noticeable. This particular class behaved in an exemplary manner for two days after this incident.

►**Interview two**

The **objective** of this interview was to ascertain whether a correlation exists between teaching strategy and learners' behaviour.

In order to ascertain if learning strategy correlates with learners' behaviour the educators were asked to implement different teaching strategies in their classes. The researcher stressed that although many educators have a preferred strategy, all the educators should expose the learners to different strategies during their respective lessons. The educators deal with different learning areas with the classes involved in the research. An advantage is that the different learning areas focus on different teaching strategies. Through the different learning areas, the learners would be exposed to different teaching strategies. Another added advantage of a situation in which all the educators engaged in different teaching strategies, is that the learners participate actively in the different activities and their level of competencies in these activities improved.

A workshop was run on different teaching strategies, which the four participant educators attended with the researcher. This was done to ensure an awareness of different teaching strategies. The research team agreed that they would not tell the learners about the effect that the different teaching strategies that they were going to use could have on them since the objective was to establish if there was a correlation between teaching strategy and learners' behaviour. The rationale was that if learners were made aware that their behaviour was linked to different teaching strategies they might alter their behaviour. This would defeat the purpose of the research since the research was undertaken to investigate learners' behaviour in the natural setting. Since the research study was done over a short period of four weeks, the participant educators felt that the results might not be normal since the learner's behaviour

varied. The educators implemented the different strategies and observed to see if the behaviour of the learners did improve or not.

The researcher stressed the educators should not base their assessment of class behaviour on two or three learners who had transgressed only, but consider the behaviour of all of the learners in reaching their assessment.

In response to the first question by the interviewer, the four educators confirmed that they all used different teaching strategies with every new lesson. The strategies used ranged from the direct teaching method, to small group co-operative learning, experimental work and research-based activities.

The educators agreed that there was a noticeable difference in the behaviour of learners when different teaching strategies were implemented. The educators also concurred that they experienced the least amount of problems when the direct teaching method was put into practice:
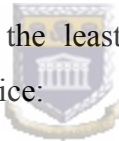
> *Die direkte styl veroorsaak dat leerders stilsit. Ek bereik die meeste sukses (met dissipline) met hierdie styl.*

According to this group of educators, the discipline in the class deteriorated when indirect methods were employed. During small group work (co-operative learning) the educators observed that the learners moved around a lot, the level of noise in the class was unacceptably high, the learners were not focused on the task and the learners did not cooperate in order to meet the demands of the task. Some of the groups were not able to give feedback after a task was completed. The educators all felt that the level of discipline in their classes was unacceptable. In response to a question by the interviewer, the group expressed the view that they were not confusing high levels of noise with disciplinary or behavioural problems.

The lack of concentration on the task by the learners led to a discussion on whether the learners possessed the skills level (at a grade 8 level) to actually engage meaningfully in the activity. Did the learners have the listening, verbal, communication, and knowledge skills to participate in co-operative learning activities? Did the learners know what small group work entails? The research group thought that learners displayed a lack of skills or inadequate skills when indirect teaching strategies were used. The lack of skills led to high noise levels, the learners not participating in the task given and to learners not reaching the necessary levels of achievement in the different outcomes decided on by the educator. In the opinion of the participant educators, the learners regarded any indirect teaching strategy not as "real instruction" but as leisure time ('speeltyd"). "Real instruction" being defined as when teaching and learning takes place. The learners regarded direct teaching by the educators as the only real instruction or teaching. Any other strategy was perceived as "leisure time".

What emanated from the discussion was that the educators should either incorporate more indirect teaching strategies or make a conscious effort to increase the learners' capacity to engage when various indirect teaching strategies were used. The consensus was that if the learners' capacity improved this improvement would culminate in an increase in the level of competency they were able to demonstrate in the various outcomes.

The lack of skill level by the learners could also be a reflection of the skill level displayed by the educator when engaging in direct teaching strategies. Most educators received their education in an era when the only form of teaching strategy was the direct teaching method. In their training as educators, different teaching strategies were not part of the curriculum. If the educators were not sufficiently knowledgeable to implement indirect teaching strategies, it could explain why the learners were not able to achieve the necessary levels of skills needed in this area. The participant educators were adamant that the above statement was not accurate.

Een klas se dissipline is uitstaande omdat hierdie betrokke klas die vaardigheid en kennis het om die take te verrig. Gebrek aan vaardigheid by die leerders is nie die regstreekse gevolg van die opvoeder se gebrek aan vaardigheid nie.

They felt that educators had been exposed to different teaching strategies through observing colleagues and during in-service training and workshops. The educators felt the pressure to achieve good results since the Education Department measured their performance on the results achieved by their learners. This meant that they had to make sure that they completed their respective curricula. They felt that the time allocated to the different learning areas did not make provision for "extra" elements/knowledge/skills to be added to the existing curriculum. Another concern was that if the educators did make time to improve the learners' skills by using indirect teaching strategies, there would be total chaos in their classes until the learners reached an acceptable skills level. The concern expressed by the educators was that the senior management of the school would not tolerate that situation. The educators were not willing to take the risks involved in experimenting with different strategies.

A natural response to an activity, which involves many learners and results in boredom is problems with discipline. Would the same situation not result (disciplinary problems due to boredom) if educators engaged day after day, and year after year, in the same direct approach to teaching? The result of the same teaching strategy might be that learners became bored and behavioural problems resulted. The educators all felt that this statement might be true but explained that the schools are results driven. They were not willing to jeopardise their position as educators by doing something that might or might not be feasible. The participant educators were willing to use different teaching strategies but not to the extent that they taught the strategy and not the content/skills as stated in the curriculum of the learning area. The educators were willing to engage in a long-term project (improve the skills level of

learners in using indict teaching strategies) of this nature only under certain conditions.

All four educators agreed that the direct teaching strategy meant fewer disciplinary problems, while indirect strategies led to an increase in behavioural transgressions by learners. One educator concluded the interview with the statement that a combination of teaching strategy and human rights as an intervention strategy when transgressions occurred was the reason for the vast improvement in the behaviour of the learners. The two-pronged strategy also had an effect on the learners who had displayed inappropriate behaviour to every educator in the school.

4.3   CONCLUSION

The second interview and the third questionnaire showed that there was a definitive correlation between classroom management and the behaviour of learners. This interview and questionnaire focused on the interrelationship between teaching strategy and discipline of the learners. The response during the interview and to the questionnaire indicates that the teaching strategy implemented by the educator plays an important role in the behaviour of the learners. Classroom management entails all that occurs within a classroom. Teaching strategy forms part of all that the educator does in his classroom and therefore is regarded as an integral part of classroom management. This study concludes that there is a link between teaching strategy and behaviour, and that different teaching strategies result in the learners' inappropriate behaviour ranging from slightly inappropriate to strongly inappropriate. Through the creation of a culture of human rights and the use of different teaching strategies the learners' behaviour had once more become more acceptable. The four educators' views of learners' behaviour were unduly influenced by the inappropriate behaviour of a small group of learners. In the briefing that the educators received, the researcher emphasised that the behaviour of the class as a whole should be taken into account and the educators' judgment of the behaviour of the class should not be based on the behaviour of a minority of learners whose behaviour is unacceptable. This did not

occur as was evident from comments made during the interview. The educators pointed out that the class was behaving inappropriately but the next response from an educator showed that it was a minority of learners that were misbehaving.

> *As ek die drie leerders uit die klas sit, is die klas doodstil en die leerders werk baie mooi saam.*

Kounin has demonstrated this relationship between classroom management and discipline in 1970 in *Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms*. Kounin concluded that the ways teachers handle misbehaviour once it occurs is not the key to successful classroom management: the key lies instead in what teachers do to prevent management problems from occurring at all (Charles, 1999: 36). In his study, Kounin found that good classroom management is linked to high levels of learners' involvement. The second interview and third questionnaire corroborated this particular conclusion reached by Kounin. During the interview, the educators emphasised that learners' active involvement in the lesson led to more acceptable behaviour than when the learners were passive as during the direct teaching strategy. The educators' concern was that the learners did not possess the necessary skills to participate in the class activities necessary to achieve the desired outcomes and this inability of the learners resulted in disciplinary problems when the learners were asked to engage in an indirect teaching strategy.

Regarding a question about implementing only one teaching strategy all the time as being the cause of behavioural problems through boredom, the educators were in agreement that the view might be correct. Kounin argues that boredom (satiation) can be avoided by introducing variety in lessons (Charles, 1999:37). The educators considered that the direct teaching strategy resulted in fewer behavioural problems in comparison to the indirect methods. The above finding might be construed as an anomaly since literature views active participating learners as learners behaving more

acceptably (Allen; 2000:2). The educators related this phenomenon to the fact that the learners did not possess the necessary skills to participate fully in the activities.

Kounin (Charles, 1999:40) emphasises the strong relationship between effective management and discipline through what he termed "withitness", overlapping, momentum, smoothness and group focus. "Withitness" means that the educator is aware of what is happening in the classroom at all times. Overlapping refers to the educator's ability to attend to two incidents at the same time. The educator is able to facilitate the learner's co-operative learning and prevent disciplinary problems at the same time.

The conclusions reached during this study lend support to Kounin's view that there is a relationship between teaching strategy and learner's behaviour. Kounin based his research on the idea that better instruction leads to fewer behavioural problems.

The strategy that was followed during this research whenever behavioural problems occurred was that the educators facilitated discussions on human rights in the classroom. If the inappropriate behaviour continued, the learners whose rights were infringed were encouraged to seek protection for their rights. An appeal to human rights was used as an intervention strategy when the learners showed inappropriate behaviour. The evidence collected during the questionnaires and interviews showed that this intervention strategy led to fewer behavioural problems provided that the complete strategy was implemented. When the intervention was confined to a discussion of human rights, the learner's inappropriate behaviour did not improve. It was only when the guardians of the learners who were not transgressing visited the school and insisted that learner rights should be respected that there were fewer learner transgressions.

Any intervention by the educator when behavioural problems occurs is termed by Kounin as a "desist" (Charles, 1999:35). Kounin (Charles, 1999:36) observed that

when a desist is used on one learner it influences the behaviour of the other learners. Kounin (Charles, 1999:36) coined this effect as the "ripple effect". The educators who participated in the study also observed the ripple effect. If a desist occurred in the form of a guardian's visit to the school and a call on learners to be accountable for their actions, not only the misbehaving learners' behaviour improved, but also the behaviour of the rest of the learners improved.

This research project reiterates the findings of other previous researchers. B.F. Skinner's behavioural model (Charles, 1999:56) and the Glasser model (Charles, 1999:181) demonstrate that behaviour is conditioned by its consequences. This consequence can be translated into a desist, the term coined by Kounin. The Glasser model stresses that class meetings should be utilised as a means of developing discipline within the classroom. This is congruent with the human rights discussion facilitated by the educator during this current study. The Dreiker model (Charles, 1999:43) regards discipline not as punishment but as a means of self-control. Human rights awareness as an intervention strategy has as its objective the development of respect for other human beings (specific learners) and this respect should culminate in controlling one's behaviour.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This collaborative action research project investigated the existence of a correlation between classroom strategy and the behaviour of learners by means of action research. This study also included the use of human rights as an intervention strategy to correct learners' behaviour if transgressions occur. A subsidiary objective was to determine the success of human rights as a preventive measure with regard to inappropriate behaviour by learners.

The data collected during the research project, and which were presented in the previous chapter, should be the measuring instrument to support or reject the hypothesis of a correlation between classroom strategy and behaviour. The data collected should provide evidence of the efficacy of establishing a culture of human rights as a means of preventing or changing inappropriate behaviour to behaviour that is more acceptable. In this chapter, the data collected during the research project will be used to draw conclusions about the possibility of using human rights as an intervention strategy in the classroom whenever learners misbehave. The data obtained by means of the various research instruments will be used to establish a correlation between a teaching strategy and the behaviour of learners.

5.2   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section deals separately with conclusions and recommendations for each of the following three objectives of this study, namely:

1.   To determine a correlation between learners' behaviour and an educator's classroom practice;

2.   To determine the classroom practice of educators.

3. To determine to which extent a culture of human rights can contribute to improved classroom behaviour.

5.2.1 Objective: To determine a correlation between learners' behaviour and an educator's classroom practice

►Background

The research design used in this study was action research. As practising educators in an ever-changing school environment, we are confronted with many challenges on a daily basis. The particular challenge in this study was concerned with the classroom practice, discipline and human rights culture within the school setting. In order to deal with this challenge, a research methodology of action research was decided on by the researcher. The rationale behind this decision was the fact that action research is

> ... a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Kemmis and McTaggert, 1988).

The main objective of action research is the study of one's own social situation with the idea of improving it.

Action research involves two activities as evident in its definition i.e. action and research. Action research may be utilised as a powerful tool to improve a certain practice on the part of a particular educator, or in a particular class or the entire school. Educators engage in the action part of action research all the time. The action involves learners, classroom instruction, colleagues and parents. After a particular action has been taken, we reflect on the possibility that we could have taken another, better action, which might have resulted in a better teaching situation or better

behaviour by learners. This implies that action research is practical in nature and very suitable for a real life situation of the classroom.

Educators conduct the research part of action research without realising that they are involved in the research. Educators interview parents, learners and colleagues whenever they need information concerning an aspect of school life. In preparation for a parent teacher interview the test results of the learners are studied. This sort of research in the everyday practice of educators can result in a more effective teaching practice.

To ascertain the correlation between educators' teaching strategy and learners' behaviour four educators from a specific school were involved in action research. The spiral of action research consisted of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. After the initial planning of the research, the plan was implemented. The collecting of the data to support or reject the research hypothesis followed this stage. The data collecting procedures were interviews, observations, questionnaires and field notes. In using action research we as participants dealt with our own problems and not someone else's. As the four educators were working on the same study, this research project is an example of collaborative action research. After each stage the participants reflected on their practice and revised the implementation of the research plan where necessary. The reflecting stage also had the advantage that educators could ascertain whether they implemented the plan successfully, shared their experiences with their colleagues and learnt from the experiences of the other participants.

►**Conclusions**

By engaging in an action research study, the following gains were made:

The participant educators developed a better understanding of their own educational practices. This better understanding of our own practices culminated in an

improvement of a particular practice. The practice under scrutiny was the teaching strategy employed by the four participants and its impact on the learners' discipline.

The procedure followed in the classroom, pertaining to teaching strategy was one of changing the teaching strategy in every new lesson plan. The improvement in the educators' teaching practice as well as the learners behaviour were immediately visible since the educators' own knowledge regarding teaching strategies improved as they were forced to collect information on teaching strategies.

Through this engagement with action research, the participants were forced to examine their own   teaching practices more closely. The participant educators examined not only their own teaching strategies but also commented on the strategy of the other participant educators.

The collegial relationship between the four educators who participated in the research was strengthened through action research since we had to share information on a regular basis on the development of the project and the learners' behaviour.

The action research project, in which the four educators engaged, also resulted in breaking down the hierarchical barrier between the vice-principal (myself) and one particular participant.

The educators adopted a different teaching strategy whenever a new lesson was presented to the learners. All the learners involved in the research completed a questionnaire pertaining to the learners' behaviour. The four educators, in order to establish the educator's view of the learner's behaviour, completed the same questionnaire. This completed questionnaire was regarded as the pre-evaluation. The same procedure was followed at the end of the research project. The questionnaire completed was regarded as the post evaluation. By comparing the results of the pre-evaluation with those of the post-evaluation, conclusions could be drawn regarding

the impact of teaching strategy on the behaviour of learners. The evidence collected through the interview with the educators, and the results from the questionnaire showed that the modification of the learners' behaviour from inappropriate to more acceptable took place.

Action research is a democratic process. Action research encourages a greater interaction and collaboration between the participants. In this particular study, the four educators involved and the researcher became equal partners in the study. The participants' active and total participation was needed to complete this project. To accomplish the total collaboration between participants the researcher needed to develop a team with a shared vision and ownership of the study. This shared vision was created through the need to change the learners' unacceptable behaviour and educators' moral obligation to teach as well as to develop within learners the need to learn. The behaviour problems that existed in some schools and in some educators' classes made it impossible for educators to carry out their duties.

The reflection phase of action research is the ideal method that educators can use to improve their practice. Through this retrospective analysis of the educators' actions (teaching strategy and discipline in this case), improvements to the current practice can be made.

Through reflection during the research project, the communication gap between management of this school and the educators was identified. During the interview, the educators expressed the concern that if they spent too much time on the development of group work skills, they would not be able to complete enough content matter to satisfy the management of the school. Another concern was that while the learners' skills were developing, the noise level in the class might reach unacceptable levels before the situation improved. The rationale for the development of skills was that if an educator spent more time on developing the building blocks, he or she would need less time for teaching and learning. An easy solution to the educators' concern was to

approach management and engage in dialogue over the situation of skills development. The educators did not regard this solution as practical and we as a group identified the lack of communication between management and educators as a major challenge at the school. Without reflective practice, important aspects such as the above would remain a problem area that would not be addressed.

►**Recommendations**

- The staff of schools should engage in action research. Action research is about improving our own practices. Improving our practices involves learning to do things in a new way. Action research should form part of a school's professional development plan.

- Reflective practices on all aspects of school environment should be an integral part of top management strategy to the challenges in a school.

- A member of the management team in the school should drive action research as part of the school's development programme or as reflective practice. Any programme is successful in a school only if there is a driving force behind the idea.

The collaborative aspect of action research might lead to the development of a staff that would be united as a team with a shared ownership of the development program. This shared vision might also impact positively on other areas of school life that need improvement.

5.2.2 Objective: To determine the classroom practice of educators

►**Background**

The third questionnaire was an open-ended questionnaire with the intention of eliciting information regarding the teaching practice of educators. The responses to

the questionnaire indicated that the educators were engaging with different teaching strategies. From the questionnaire, it emerged that the majority of the educators made use of only two or three different teaching strategies. Educators who taught different learning areas completed this questionnaire and this indicated that only two or three different teaching strategies were being used in all learning areas. This minimal use of different teaching strategies means that the learners were exposed to only a few strategies. This lack of exposure could mean that learners do not acquire certain skills that are inherently embedded within the different strategies not being used. The teaching strategies that were listed by all educators were direct instruction and small group work. The use of these two strategies by most educators could lead to learners' becoming bored and this satiation may result in inappropriate behaviour by learners. Kounin found that misbehaviour is more likely to occur as students became bored or "satiated" (Charles, 1999:40).

The educators indicated in the questionnaire that they felt that the employment of different teaching strategies was of paramount importance to get learners actively involved in the lesson and to prevent learners from misbehaving. This view accords with the view of Kounin who found that "...many teachers used techniques that rekindled student interest when it lagged, therefore avoiding the misbehaviour that would otherwise occur" (Charles, 1999:40). Charles (1999:40) also reports that Kounin found that effective teachers offer a variety of instructional activities. This use of a variety of teaching strategies and instructional activities resulted in changes in the learners thought, actions and use of senses. The learners remained focused on the activity at hand and the instances of incidence of inappropriate behaviour decreased.

Having determined which teaching strategies educators claimed to employ, the question that arose was whether they had the knowledge about those teaching strategies that they did not employ.

In the experience of this researcher, the educators' training did not include the development of teaching strategies. The knowledge the educators involved had pertaining to teaching strategies was obtained through observing their fellow teachers and through experience. The responses of most of the educators to a question pertaining to the need for formal development of teaching strategies indicated that they felt the need for skills training in teaching strategies. They indicated the need for development especially in the strategies that they did not utilise.

►**Conclusions**

- Classroom management is a key factor in curbing disciplinary problems.
- Teaching strategies can promote acceptable behaviour
- Educators should employ teaching strategies that keep the learners focused and interested in classroom activities.
- Teachers should acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to implement a variety of teaching strategies.
- Teaching strategies as a preventive measure, rather than punishment, can direct learners' behaviour.

Answers were not found to the following questions since they fall outside the scope of the research project, and are regarded as a gap in this research.

- Are some instructional strategies more effective at certain grade levels?
- Are some instructional strategies more effective with learners from different backgrounds?
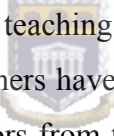- Are certain strategies more effective in certain learning areas?

►**Recommendation**

It is evident from the conclusions drawn that teaching strategy is an important alternative to the coercive methods that were previously used to solve disciplinary problems in classrooms. To employ any teaching strategy the educator needs the knowledge and skills relevant to the strategy. In making decisions on relating to

teaching and learning the educator needs to take many variables into account e.g. the grade, age of learners, content material, outcomes to be reached, learning processes by the learner and the teaching strategy. In order to make an informed decision concerning these matters the educator needs a strong theoretical and practical base. This conceptual base can only be obtained through the formal development of these strategies. The recommendation is that educators' training should include in-depth training and practise in teaching strategies and the Education Department should provide the opportunities for in-service training of these aspects of classroom management.

5.2.3   Objective: To explore the extent to which a culture of human rights can contribute to improved classroom behaviour

►**Background**

The core function of schools is teaching and learning. The educators have the responsibility to teach and the learners have the responsibility to learn. Inappropriate behaviour may prevent the educators from teaching or the learners from learning. If learners misbehave and disrupt the lesson, teaching and learning cannot take place in the classroom.

Misbehaving learners prevent educators from fulfilling their duty to teach. If educators cannot execute their primary task, they should seek ways to improve the learners' attention, then gain the learners' cooperation and encourage appropriate behaviour. Kounin (Charles, 1999:35) uses lesson movement to accentuate the relationship between effective classroom management and effective teaching. The lesson movement consisted of "withitness", overlapping, momentum and smoothness.

The definition of behaviour is any action taken by anyone, and the definition of misbehaviour is behaviour that is considered inappropriate for the setting or situation (Charles, 1999:2). Misbehaviour can only be undertaken purposefully and cannot

happen accidentally since grade 8 learners should know what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within a school setting.

Discipline is the action taken by the educator to change the unacceptable behaviour of learners to appropriate behaviour. Charles (1999:261) lists three aspects of discipline:

- Preventive discipline – Educators carry this aspect of discipline out before the learners misbehave. Kounin (Charles, 1999:37) supports this philosophy as his work concluded that the key to successful classroom discipline is what teachers do to prevent misbehaviour – not the ways teachers handle misbehaviour once it occurs.

- Supportive discipline – This form of discipline can be seen in the actions of the educators whenever they notice the first signs that learners are about to misbehave.

- Corrective discipline – This aspect of discipline occurs when the preventive and supportive disciplinary measures were not effective.

This particular research looks at how successful different teaching strategies could be in preventing disciplinary problems. This part of the research is similar to the research done by Kounin and is a preventive form of discipline as defined by Charles. This research also investigated whether creating a culture of human rights could transform behaviour from being unacceptable to acceptable. This action can be regarded as fitting the description of corrective discipline given above.

The educators who engaged in the action research project were to employ the following strategy whenever disciplinary problems arose. The steps that the educators had to take were:

- Impart knowledge about human rights to the learners. The rights of learners were to be explicitly named. The rights of the educators and the responsibilities of the learners were to be discussed in the class.

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- The second step would be taken when the learners misbehaved. The educators were to facilitate a discussion on the negative impact of the transgression on the learners, the rest of the class and ultimately society.
- If the transgressions were to continue, the educators had to encourage the aggrieved learners to demand protection of their rights. In a school setting, educators should protect the learners' rights. If educators are unable to provide protection, the senior management should get involved. If the learners' rights are still being violated the learners, parents/guardians should visit the school and demand that the principal protect the learners' rights.

The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (Banks; 2000:1) has defined human rights as "…training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes which are directed to :
- The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
- The promotion of understanding, respect, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous people and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
- The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society.

The rationale behind the strategy of utilising human rights awareness as an intervention strategy to improve inappropriate behaviour is that people who do not know their rights are more susceptible to having their rights abused by other people. The opposite situation is that people who know their rights might respect others' rights and might demand that others respect their rights.

If learners know their rights this might have a snowball effect. The knowledge might lead to respect for others' rights, respect for own rights and the building of a just and

free society. If learners acknowledge that all people have rights, this might lead learners to treat all people with fairness, justice and dignity. If learners acquired these skills and knowledge in schools, they could contribute to the development of a more just or humane society.

The success rate of the educators involved in correcting the learner's inappropriate behaviour varied from very successful to only slightly successful. Two educators implemented the complete strategy and were most successful in correcting the behaviour of the learners. In these two educators' classes the aggrieved learners complained to their parents whenever misbehaving learners did not want to stop their transgressions. The visits of the parents to the school and the subsequent discussion in the principal's or vice-principal's office with the parties involved had a definite positive effect on the rest of the learners in the class. This is an example of the "ripple effect" of Kounin. The ripple effect occurs when a teacher's method of handling misbehaviour influences the other learners to behave appropriately. This method is in keeping with the class-meeting concept of Kohn. Kohn contends that class meetings offer the best forum for addressing questions that affect the class (Charles, 1999:234). One of the four participant educators commenced using the intervention strategy much later than the others. My observation was that this particular educator regarded this as an extra duty. The learners in some of the classes initiated discussions on human rights and this forced the educator to participate in the research project. The behaviour of the learners in this educator's class showed only a slight improvement. This educator implemented the strategy but did not encourage the learners to demand their rights. He did not mention this part to the learners. The rationale behind his decision was based on the fact that in his experience the senior management of the school were not very helpful in disciplinary matters. Another reason might be that he did not form part of the local community since he was of another nationality. In a discussion on parent involvement, he mentioned that he could not communicate with the parents. In the research group weekly session, this educator learned of the successes of two educators and they ascribed it to the involvement of the senior

management and the parents. As a result of this discussion the educator also encouraged the learners to demand their rights whenever they felt they were being disregarded. By engaging in the complete intervention programme, this particular educator also reported that some of the learners' behaviour had improved.

The data collected could not be used to determine if the grade 8 learners possessed the necessary emotional development to grasp fully the concept of rights and responsibilities. In the view of the group of educators involved, some of the grade 8 learners had an egotistical concept of human rights. The learners claimed the rights that they were entitled to, but did not want the responsibilities that accompanied these rights. They always claimed their rights if it was to their advantage to do so. Some of the learners did not attach any value to the discussions on human rights. The educators, who engaged in the research project, attributed this attitude to the non-existence of the respect for rights that the learners witness in their communities and society as a whole. The parents/guardians of these learners are not educated and could not inform the children of these rights. Some adults also do not practice these values of human rights and democracy. (The school where the research took place is situated in a disadvantaged area.) The issue of the awareness of human rights on the part of adults in the community outside the school did not fall within the scope of the research project but was an observation made by the educators involved.

►Conclusions
- A culture of human rights infused into the classroom can contribute to learners behaving more appropriately.
- The respect for the rights of other learners was strengthened.
- Learners learn to respect the dignity of others.
- Learners' understanding and acceptance of the differences among them were promoted.

The discussions with human rights as a central theme had the added advantage of developing the learner's communication and listening skills.

►**Recommendations**

- Not all the learners acknowledge the value of human rights, although it is an integral part of the constitution of South Africa. The transformation and emancipation of the society should start at school level. To accomplish this ambitious outcome at school level, the school should inform the parents and learners of their rights and responsibilities. This information could be disseminated to the various role players in different forms. Guest speakers could be invited to schools to address the learners on issues pertaining to human rights. The learners could be actively involved through a competition to draw posters on the topic of human rights. All the learners in the schools should be involved in such competitions and different categories of entries, e.g. single, group, class or family entries, could be encouraged.

- The parents' information on human rights could be broadened through circulars that are distributed to the schools. These circulars should contain information on the rights and responsibilities of educators and learners. A human rights week, with different activities, could be organised. Such a campaign on human rights should be part of a school's year plan.

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- It would be beneficial for both learners and educators to learn about and discuss human rights. Human rights should form part of the curriculum in every subject. The National Curriculum Statement is based on the principle of human rights. In practice, only the life orientation educator deals with this subject. A limitation in the current practice is that the educators are not in possession of a standard curriculum on human rights. Another limitation in the practice of implementing the curriculum on human rights is that educators cannot spend enough time on this crucial aspect of the curriculum.

- Parents and educators should be in regular contact. The success of the intervention strategy in this research project was the direct result of verbal and written communication between the educators and the parents and the parents' visits to the school.

- The final recommendation is that schools should develop their own discipline plan. In designing a discipline plan, the three aspects of discipline i.e. preventive discipline, supportive discipline and corrective discipline should be incorporated. A discipline system or plan accomplishes the following (Charles, 1999:259):
    - It prevents most misbehaviour.
    - It redirects misbehaviour positively.
    - It promotes trusting relationships between educators and learners.
    - Learners accept it as fair.
    - It secures parental support.

5.3   CONCLUSION

The proposed discipline plan is based on the combination of classroom management and human rights awareness. This research has shown that a teaching strategy could be employed as a useful instrument in preventing learners from misbehaving. In order to be able to employ different teaching strategies on a regular basis means that these strategies must form part of the educator's repertoire of skills and knowledge. Glickman (1991: 6) correctly states that effective teachers do not use the same set of practices for every lesson. Classroom management includes all the things an educator does to get the learners' cooperation in all classroom activities and to secure an environment conducive to teaching and learning. The traditional school discipline system consists of a policy on discipline drawn up by educators, learners and the school governing body. The second component of such a system consists of rules describing acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. The third component is the consequences that learners face whenever these rules are not adhered to. This

traditional discipline system is based on compliance. Kohn (in Charles, 1999:226) argues against such compliance and for classrooms that promote thinking, decision-making and consideration for others. Thinking learners who consider other humans will lead to the development of self-control end responsibility within these learners.

The use of teaching strategy in the proposed discipline plan can be viewed as the preventive aspect of discipline. Kounin (Charles, 1999:38) concluded that the ways teachers handle misbehaviour once it occurs is not the key to successful classroom management, but rather what teachers do to prevent management problems from occurring in the first place. The next step is that the educator should facilitate a discussion on human rights whenever a learner transgresses. The discussion should point out the impact of the misbehaviour on the learner, fellow learners and the society. The corrective aspect of discipline occurs when the learners demand that the educator, parent or senior management of the school protects the learners' rights.
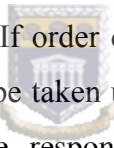
The above model develops the learners' thinking skills; make them responsible for their own rights, and force them to make decisions. The human rights model is congruent with the constitution of South Africa. This model provides the perfect vehicle for educators to incorporate human rights into the curriculum of the different learning areas.

Schools should develop a comprehensive discipline plan, which should consist of three aspects i.e. preventive, supportive and corrective discipline. The emphasis should be on preventive discipline. This model is consistent with what was revealed by literature. The model used in this research project, emphasises using teaching strategies as a preventive form of discipline and using human rights as the corrective form of discipline. By engaging in different teaching strategies the educators move from being "traditional" educators (who use predominantly only the direct teaching method) to outcomes-based educators who act as the facilitators of teaching and learning in the classroom. Human rights as an intervention strategy have the added

advantage that school life is integrated into the society as a whole. Learners experience the rules of society as being different from those of the schools e.g. in a school, their rights are protected but gangsters in society have no respect for the rights of others. By engaging continuously with human rights at schools, learners might gain the ability to demand respect for and protection of their rights in society.

In the 20 years I have been employed in schools, discipline has definitely deteriorated. This deterioration was markedly observable in the post 1994 era. After 1994 corporal punishment was abolished in schools. The constitution of the Republic of South Africa has put the emphasis on human rights. These two changes had a marked effect on discipline within the schools.

Control, made possible by the learners' fear of corporal punishment, was no longer possible. Educators will have to develop alternatives to corporal punishment in order to have order in their classrooms. If order does not exist within classrooms, a huge proportion of classroom time will be taken up by activities other than instruction. At present disciplinary problems are responsible for a large portion of this lost instructional time.

Since external control of learners is not a feasible option, educators have to explore possible alternatives. One option is to develop self-discipline in learners through various models of discipline. Kounin (Charles, 1999:36) uses "desists" and classroom management to prevent misbehaviours from occurring. Skinner (Charles, 1999:69) utilises the concept of consequences to strengthen correct behaviour in learners.

Teachers know that good discipline is needed in order to create a climate conducive to learning in a classroom. Kounin (Charles, 1999: 36) concurs, since he believes that the better the instruction is the fewer behaviour problems an educator will have in the classroom.

"What children learn depends not only on what they are taught but also on how they are taught…" (Saskatchewan Education, 1988:0). This statement emphasises the importance of educators' employment of different teaching strategies in the classrooms. Glickman (1991:6) also states that "Effective teachers do not use the same set of practices for every lesson ... Instead, what effective teachers do is constantly reflect about their work, observe whether students are learning or not, and, then adjust their practice accordingly".

The above quotation from Glickman encapsulates the underlying assumption of this research. Undesirable behaviour can be prevented through the use of strategies such as management strategies and the application of behavioural modification models, which focus on developing learners' self-discipline, self-esteem and self-concept. Educators should employ these new strategies to help transform our post apartheid learners into productive members of society.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

WORD VOLTOOI DEUR OPVOEDERS EN LEERDERS

GESTRUKTUREERDE OBSERVASIE BLAD

VASSTELLING VAN 'N OPVOEDER SE ONDERRIG STYL

DOEL

Hierdie aktiwiteit verskaf aan opvoeders die geleentheid om vas te stel hoe hul onderrig styl voorsien in die behoeftes van die leerders

INSTRUKSIES

LEERDERS WORD GEVRA OM DIE OPVOEDER VIR 'N WEEK TE OBSERVEER EN AAN DIE EINDE VAN DIE WEEK DIE VOLGENDE TABEL TE VOLTOOI

DATUM : ……….. KLAS :…….

TABEL

Die Opvoeder ………

		JA	NEE			JA	NEE
1	Dwing reëls en beleid af			11	Moedig self dissipline aan		
2	Sê leerders voor wat om te doen			12	Moedig samewerking aan		
3	Help leerders met besluitnemimg			13	Voorkom dat probleme in die klas vererger		
4	Verduidelik reëls en klaskamerbeleid			14	Indien probleme ontstaan word dié leerders geisoleer		

					(eenkant, privaat hanteer)		
5	Verwag om gehoorsaam te word			15	Ondersteun leerders se insette en pogings		
6	Dwing leerders tot gehoorsaamheid deur strafmaatreëls te gebruik			16	Skep geleenthede vir goeie gedrag		
7	Oefen beheer oor leerders se gedrag uit			17	Moedig besprekings aan		
8	Se eie gedrag is aanvaarbaar			18	Het volle beheer oor die leerders		
9	Leer die leerders watter gedrag is aanvaarbaar			19	Respekteer leerders se regte		
10	Verwag van leerders om bedaagsaamheid te toon aan ander			20	Sorg dat leerders mekaar se regte respekteer		

APPENDIX C

GESTRUKTUREERDE WAARNEMINGS BLAD

WAARNEMING VAN LEERDERS IN DIE KLASKAMER SITUASIE

DOEL

Om die aktiwiteite in die klaskamer te analiseer. Hierdie inligting sal gebruik word om vas te stel watter optredes veroorsaak probleme en die aksies wat benodig word om die probleme aan te spreek.

INSTRUKSIES

'n Kollega word gevra om die klas te observeer wat in die aksie navorsing sal deelneem.. hierdie opvoeder moet die volgende table voltooi en ook waarnemings neerskryf wat nie in die table voorkom nie.

	AKTIWITEIT	Goed	Gemiddeld	Swak
1	Leerders kom klaskamer binne			
2	Geraasvlak van leerders			
3	Leerders haal apparaat uit			
4	Leerders en opvoeder groet mekaar			
5	Leerders haal hul boeke uit			
6	Dissipline heers tydens die les			
7	Aktiewe deelname van leerders tydens les			

8	Les word deur leerders onderbreek			
9	Leerders is passief en glad nie in die les geïnteresseer nie			
10	Opvoeder moet opdragte herhaal			
11	Opvoeder word gedwing om hom/haar stem te verhef			
12	Leerders gesels onderling met mekaar tydens les			
13	Ordelike verdaging aan einde van lesuur			
14	Les eindig op tyd			
15				
16				
17				

Opvoeders kan enige gepaste waarneming byvoeg. (Positiewe sowel as negatiewe gedrag) (Aangepas uit Ayers en Gray, 1998)

APPENDIX D

VASSTELLING OF ONDERRIGSTYL DISSIPLINE BEINVLOED

WORD DEUR OPVOEDERS VOLTOOI

1. Watter van die volgende onderrigstyle gebruik u in u klaskamer ? Merk met 'n **X**

Direkte leer (Chalk & Talk)		Rol spel		Speletjies	
Klein Groep		Debatte			
Koöperatiewe Leer		Navorsings take		Ander(Spesifiseer)	

Ander:

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Sal 'n spesifieke onderrigstyl van 'n opvoeder (in u opinie) enige invloed het op die dissipline van leerders ? Motiveer asseblief.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

3 Watter van bg onderrigstyle bevorder die uitoefening van dissipline ?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

4 Watter van bg onderrigstyle lei tot swak dissipline in u klaskamer ?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

5 Watter van die volgende klasatmosfeer situasies beskou u as goeie dissipline ?

　　　　　Merk met 'n **X**

Voeg enige eienskappe by wat u dink nog kortkom in hierdie tabel.

Stilte in klas		
Matige geraas		
Geen beweging		
Aktiewe deelname van leerders tydens les		

6 Beskryf in u eie woorde wat u beskou as goeie dissipline tydens 'n aktiewe les in u

　　klaskamer ? (optrede van leerders)

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7 Beskryf in u eie woorde wat u beskou as swak dissipline tydens 'n aktiewe les in u

　　klaskamer (optrede van leerders)

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

8 Watter faktore in 'n onderrigstyl is bevorderlik vir goeie dissipline ? (indien enige)

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

9 Watter faktore in 'n onderrigstyl is bevorderlik vir swak dissipline ? (Indien enige)

……………………………………………………………………………………………

10 Watter eienskappe (vaardighede) besit u as opvoeder sodat die onderrigstyl

(**genoem in 2**)goeie dissipline veroorsaak ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

11. Is die vaardighede wat u in **9** genoem het formeel ontwikkel (tydens opleiding in
kollege/universiteit of tydens indiensopleidingskursusse)?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

12. Watter vaardighede benodig u as opvoeder sodat die onderrigstyl (genoem in 4),
ook sal lei tot goeie dissipline ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

13. Dink u formele ontwikkeling in onderrigstyle ,wat volgens u, tot swak dissipline
aanleiding gee, sal lei tot 'n verbetering in u onderrig en 'n positiewe tendens in
dissipline ? Motiveer.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

14. Noem eksterne faktore wat disspline in u klas belemmer. bv. Grootte van klas,
lokale, ens.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

15. Lewer kommentaar op die volgende stelling: **Dieselfde onderrigstyl ,dag na
dag , sal die leerders verveel en leerders sal dan uit verveeldheid dissiplinêre
probleme veroorsaak.**

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………