

RELATING SCHOOL CODES OF CONDUCT TO LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

BY

JANOS PENTZ

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONS

In

Educational Management, Law and Policy Studies

in the

Faculty of Education

University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Dr B Malan

AUGUST 2010

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Full names of student: Janos Pentz

Student number: 99036739

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to

Lirié Pentz

My Newborn Girl

May we as your parents guide you with unconditional love on your journey to
adult hood.

May we as parents be role models to whom you always can look up to.

With love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude to:

My supervisor, Dr Beverley Malan, for her expertise, guidance, patience, motivation and support which contributed towards the completion of this study.

My wife for her ongoing help, support, motivation and patience.

My parents, for laying the foundation of my life.

To God, the honour and the glory for all my blessings undeserved!

Summary

Schools and other educational institutions mirror the violence and moral decay in South African society. Maintaining discipline therefore in schools these days is a difficult task. There are many factors influencing learner behavior and in this study we investigate to see what impact a code of conduct has on learner behavior in selected schools.

I adopted a qualitative approach to answer the research questions that sought to explore whether or not intent of the codes of conduct in sampled schools is primarily moral or administrative, whether the learners in the public secondary schools selected are generally well-behaved, whether or not there is a relationship between learner behaviour and the codes of conduct at the selected schools and whether or not the infusion of values into codes of conduct in general might affect learner behaviour. A case study involving three high schools was conducted. Data was collected through document analysis, interviews and questionnaires.

It has emerged in the findings that, with regard to learner behavior, there is a clear link between learner behaviour and the culture of the school concerned as well as between the culture of the school and the culture of the community that is served by the schools. Regarding the impact that existing codes of conduct have on learner behavior, it seems that the impact that a code can have is related to its development and implementation process. Due to these findings, it seems clear that values need to be considered in the development of a code of conduct. This may lead to a positive relationship between learner behavior and codes of conducts for learners.

The study hopes to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and will be useful to school governing bodies, principals and educators by enabling them to see the benefits

that a code of conduct could have on learner behaviour when values are included in the developmental and implementation process.

KEY WORDS

- 1. Morality**
- 2. Moral development**
- 3. Moral degeneration**
- 4. School discipline**
- 5. Reactive discipline**
- 6. Proactive discipline**
- 7. Code of Conduct**
- 8. Learner behavior**
- 9. Culture**
- 10. Socio-economics**

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CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXTUALISATION AND PROBLEM SETTING

1.1 Introduction and background

The relatively ‘bloodless’ transformation of South Africa - from a country where a white minority ruled, to a country now ruled by a primarily black majority - has been lauded as nothing short of a miracle. One of the aspects of the South African transformation admired by the rest of the world is the largely peaceful transfer of power from apartheid to post-apartheid rulers and the seeming ease with which society, the workplace and institutions of learning moved from the exclusion of certain people to the inclusion of all. This new, multi-cultural, ‘rainbow’ nation, which had previously been excluded from the global market, is now an acknowledged member of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and numerous other international organizations. The international community now welcomes South Africans on all fronts - politically, economically, culturally and educationally.

On closer inspection, though, all is not as it seems. Incidents of corruption, racism, xenophobia, discrimination and violence are on the increase. Statistics show that, overall, South Africans feel less secure than seven years ago (Benjamin 2008). South Africa has the highest rate of violent crime in the world. Statistics show, for example, that 64 South African children are raped each day, with the same happening to some or other woman every 26 seconds (SABC News Bulletin, 7 July 2008). Moreover, 72 percent of South African companies have been victims of or succumbed to bribery and corruption (Pretoria News 2008). Road rage, gay bashing, child abuse and kidnapping have become common, and xenophobia, which first reared its ugly head in 2008, is increasing every day (Van Zyl 2008).

Behaviour such as this is symptomatic of moral degeneration. Where there is no morality there is a disregard for the value of human life and property, a lack of respect and compassion, illegal self-enrichment, and multiple forms of abuse. Associated with such degeneration is the destruction of one's sense of the past, identity, culture and traditions; one's self-knowledge, self-worth and self-respect; one's culture of self-help and self-reliance.

Why then is there such moral deterioration in South Africa? Is the moral fabric of the South African society disintegrating, as Rauch (2005) suggests? If so, is the disintegration caused by fear, anger, desperation, vengeance, loss of power? Should one look to international trends, or aggravating local factors, like poverty and unemployment, for the reasons? Or is it, as De Villiers, Wethmar and Van der Bank (2000) suggest, indicative of the erosion of past value systems?

It is questions like these that led me to consider the reasons for school violence and the problems that teachers have with school discipline. More specifically, I started wondering whether these, too, were merely reflections of the nation's moral degeneration (De Villiers, Wethmar and Van der Bank 2000). If so, could the tide be stopped at school level and would it be possible to use school codes of conduct to this purpose?

1.2 Rationale and problem statement

According to Dibettle (2008) and Magome (2008), South African schools are no longer safe. Teachers and children alike have become victims of psychological and physical violence. School children disrupt classes, intimidate, and even shoot teachers, seemingly without blinking an eye. Teachers are resigning. On the one hand learners are afraid of kidnappers, gun-toting gangsters and drug dealers; on the other, they are afraid of being sexually abused by their teachers. In a nutshell, 'being at school is more dangerous for children than being anywhere else' (Dibettle 2008).

Implicitly acknowledging that schools were unsafe, the central Department of Education developed a range of policies with the purpose of eliminating discrimination, violence and other forms of abuse from schools. The Drug Abuse Policy (DoE 2002b), for example, provides guidelines regarding action against not only drug abusers but also support for those affected by such abuse. Read in conjunction with the Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools (DoE 2001), the primary purpose of this policy is to assist school management teams in their attempts to keep schools safe.

In terms of the South African Schools Act (RSA 1996b), school governing bodies have to ensure that the schools for which they are responsible have similar context-specific policies in place to address issues like these. One such policy, the adoption of which is the responsibility of the School Governing Body (SGB), is a school code of conduct. In terms of the above-mentioned Act, school codes of conduct should be aimed at the creation of a 'disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process' (RSA, 1996b, section 8 [1]).

That the restoration of morality was central to the formulation of the Schools Act (RSA, 1996b, section 8), school safety policies and school codes of conduct, is implied in the 'Manifesto on Values and Human Rights in Education' (DoE, 2002a), commissioned by Kader Asmal, a former Minister of Education. It is also reflected in the number of DoE values and human rights initiatives following the release of the Manifesto. Key amongst these were an Advanced Certificate in Values and Human Rights for teachers (2004), the development and provision of curriculum material dealing with values and human rights at school level (2005), baseline studies on the state of values and human rights in schools in different provinces (2005), educator training in inclusive education (2006), and proposals for the mandatory introduction of a Pledge of Allegiance at schools (2007/8).

None of these initiatives seem to have improved school discipline. The question is, 'Why not?' Does the problem lie with the policies, with their implementation or are there other factors at play? It is to find answers to these questions that I embarked on this study. More specifically, I was interested in determining whether or not school codes of conduct had any impact on learner behaviour. If not, I asked myself, was it because they focused on administrative issues (rules and regulations) rather than on morality (Roos 2003)?

1.3 Research purpose and questions

Intrigued by the notion that a school code of conduct could serve as a tool for moral regeneration I set myself the goal of finding out the extent to which codes of conduct at a number of secondary schools in the Tshwane South school district in South Africa served this purpose. Informed by the assumption that effective codes of conduct have a moral base (Roos 2003), I decided to determine whether or not the primary intent of the codes of conduct of the schools in my sample was primarily administrative or moral, and whether this intent affected the impact that these codes had on learner behaviour. My research is, therefore, guided by the following questions:

- Is the intent of the codes of conduct in selected secondary public schools in the Tshwane South school district primarily moral or administrative?
- Are learners in the selected schools generally well behaved or not?
- Is there a relationship between the behaviour of learners and the codes of conduct at the selected schools?
- Could an argument be made for the need to consider values in the development and implementation of school codes of conduct?

1.4 Research objectives

Directed by these questions, the specific objectives of my study are to determine:

- Whether or not the intent of the codes of conduct in sampled schools is primarily moral or administrative
- Whether or not the learners in the public secondary schools selected are generally well-behaved
- Whether or not there is a relationship between learner behaviour and the codes of conduct at the selected schools
- Whether or not the infusion of values into codes of conduct in general might affect learner behaviour

Informing my research questions is the assumption that factors other than the code of conduct might well have an influence on learner behaviour. Such factors could include socio-economic conditions, traditional values and school culture, amongst others. While the focus of my study is, therefore, on the relationship between learner behaviour and school codes of conduct, I also took cognizance of cultural and socio-economic conditions in the schools concerned.

1.5 Conceptual framework

In that my general research purpose is to determine whether or not the codes of conduct in selected schools in the Tshwane South school district affect learner behaviour, I am looking at a school management issue. However, given my specific focus, namely to determine whether or not the primary intent of school codes of conduct affects their impact on learner behaviour, my research is primarily values rather than management-oriented. The choice to conceptualize my research in terms of values rather than management strategies is logical given the premise on which my research rests, namely that the disciplinary

problems currently experienced in South African public schools could well be symptomatic of moral degeneration in South African society as a whole.

Following Kant (cited in Nieuwenhuis 2007) I distinguish between two kinds of morality, namely a person's ability to self-regulate (*autonomous will*) and obedience to someone else's rules (*heteronomous will*). I do not, however, support Kant's argument that one's morality is unrelated to personal goals and desires or to social conventions. Neither do I support Nietzsche's (cited in Ku 2003) view that morality requires the abdication of social conventions, or virtues, in favour of personalized or relative values. Instead, I support the Campbell and Christopher (1996) view that one's desire for self-actualization might entail, amongst other things, adherence to a personal honour code, hence personal desire and morality could well be related. Moreover, I have taken cognizance of Heenan's (1993) point that true morality requires three things, namely *knowing* what morals are, *taking* a moral position, and *behaving* in accordance with this position.

Acknowledging that morality is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, I also took cognizance of views on morality derived from disciplines other than philosophy. From a sociological perspective, for example, morality, like culture, is regarded as a social construct. Given this perspective I included socio-economic and socio-cultural views in the analysis of codes of conduct, learner behaviour and school discipline. In doing so, I believe, I am providing a more holistic view of morality and the possible causes for its disintegration in South African society and its public schools.

1.6 Clarification of concepts

Key to an understanding of the argument I present in this report are four concepts. They are morality, school discipline, and codes of conduct. Each of

these concepts is discussed in detail in Chapter Two. The brief explanations of each provided here, are derived from these discussions.

1.6.1 Morality

There are many perceptions of morality. This includes 'normative morality', 'law of duty morality' and 'descriptive morality' (see Chapter Two). However, when morality is used in this study, it means the following: A truly moral person is when morality is not determined by fear of punishment or blind obedience to others. Instead, the person acts 'autonomously, freely...in the light of beliefs which in some significant sense they have made their own' (Beck and Earl 2003:149).

1.6.2 Moral degeneration

Moral degeneration refers to the deterioration of the goodness of human behaviour and character, and symptoms are the disregard for the value of human life and property, lack of respect and compassion, illegal self-enrichment in both the private and public sectors, and other despicable forms of crime such as sexual abuse of children, particularly by people who are their own flesh and blood. It also leads to the destruction of one's sense of the past, identity, culture and traditions; one's self-knowledge, self-worth and self-respect; one's culture of self-help and self-reliance.

1.6.3 School discipline

There are many interrelated forms of discipline where reactive discipline is arguably the most well known (see Chapter Two). In this study however, school discipline is concerned with the internalization of values so that a person or persons involved will be intrinsically motivated to lead a disciplined life where learners are able to use their inner sense of self-control to behave responsibly without external monitoring or coercion. Therefore any form of discipline, school

discipline included, should have the moral development of children as primary purpose.

1.6.4 Punishment

Although the terms *discipline* and *punishment* may be used interchangeably, they mean quite different things. Punishment is negative in that it is aimed at the control of learners by educators. Punishment focuses on misbehavior and may do little or nothing to help a learner behave better in the future. It is therefore more reactive and humiliating than corrective and nurturing. Discipline, on the other hand, is proactive and constructive if it is aimed at teaching the learners self-control, respect and the willingness to accept responsibility for their actions. Discipline has to do with learner's ability to self control and restrain. Self control is when learners behave responsible without external monitoring or coercion.

1.6.5 Codes of conduct

In this study, I will regard a code of conduct for learners as a legal, formal consensus contract agreed upon by all those involved in the school situation. The aim of a code of conduct is to foster constructive learning and to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment. It should create a positive climate to empower learners to be moral and democratic in order to uplift their community. It should contain clear guidelines, so that the school can be an effective place of teaching and learning. It should stipulate the disciplinary process and indicate the different levels of offences. It redevelops a sense of accountability, along democratic rather than authoritarian lines. The code should include responsibilities of the parents and may form part of the curriculum. It should be reviewed on a regular basis.

1.7 Theoretical framework

Qualitative research creates opportunities for research participants to relate their experiences and understandings of social phenomena in terms of their own unique frames of reference. Qualitative researchers can, therefore, conduct their investigations without having decided on a particular theoretical framework beforehand. Instead of interpreting the phenomenon from a particular theoretical perspective, researchers who adopt this approach expect the theory to emerge from a study of the phenomenon itself (Bogdan and Biklen 1992). This ‘grounded’ approach to research moves beyond description to the generation or discovery of a theory, abstract analytic schema or process (Creswell 2007). All of these, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990), emerge from the research process through the action and/or interaction of research participants with different views on one or more issues or phenomena.

Given that the shaping of South Africa’s ‘rainbow nation’ is still a work in progress, this seemed like a good approach to take in my investigation. Not only did it allow me flexibility in the collection and analysis of data but it also ensured that I gained a fundamental understanding of the social phenomenon I was investigating. Moreover, this approach prevented me from imposing my own bias on the social phenomenon I was investigating. Instead, it enabled me, in the course of data collection and analysis, to systematically find answers to my initial research question, whether or not there is a relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour.

1.8 Research design and methodology

Given the radical changes to the education system in South Africa since 1994, one would expect people to feel slightly off balance. Many people who find it difficult to cope with different ways of doing things might be resentful, leading them to either implicitly or explicitly oppose whatever causes them discomfort.

Qualitative research, which focuses on the complexities of human decision-making (Johnson 1997), is particularly effective in uncovering hidden feelings and predispositions (Creswell 2007). In opting for qualitative rather quantitative research I hoped not only to determine whether or not there was a relationship between the codes of conduct and learner behaviour but also whether disciplinary problems might be caused by other hidden factors. More specifically, given my premise that poor school discipline could possibly be a reflection of the moral degeneration of South African society, I believed that qualitative research would help me find out whether socio-cultural and socio-economic factors play a role in learner misbehavior and/or in the effectiveness of codes of conduct.

Given the primary purpose of my study, namely to determine whether or not there is a relationship between learner behaviour and the codes of conduct of the secondary schools in my sample, I combined qualitative research with the analysis of school codes of conduct. Whereas qualitative research gave me the opportunity to look at morality, learner behaviour and school discipline from the research participants' points of view (McMillan and Schumacher 1993), the analysis of school codes of conduct gave me some insight into the reasons why some have more impact on learner behaviour than others. In that the mix of qualitative research and document analysis generated multiple answers to single questions (Minger 2001), my own understanding of the social phenomenon I was investigating – codes of conduct and learner behaviour – was deepened. Moreover, the use of more than one sampling method and data collection instrument facilitated the triangulation of data (Patton 1990; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003) thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of my research findings.

With regards to sampling, I decided to use a mix of probability and purposive sampling procedures (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). This mix was meant to provide me with a sample that was both comprehensive and representative of the school population in the country. Using convenience sampling, I restricted my investigation to secondary schools in the area where I live, namely the Tshwane

South district. I then approached the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) for an alphabetical list of secondary schools in the area. Informed by my assumption that there is a link between socio-economic status and morality, I asked the GDE to indicate which schools on the list were regarded as serving 'poor', 'average' or 'wealthy' communities. From this list I planned to randomly select twenty-five schools. This was not, however, possible, because the number of schools in each socio-economic category was uneven. Since there were only three schools in the 'poor' category, I decided to randomly select only three schools from each of the other categories ('average' and 'wealthy') as well.

Having randomly selected the nine schools I arranged a meeting with each of the principals to tell them about my study and to get a general sense not only of learner behaviour in their schools, but also of the impact that they thought their schools codes of conduct had on learner behaviour. In that semi-structured interviews 'set the agenda without presupposing the response' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000:248), the information I collected from my discussions with school principals sensitized me to hidden uncertainties and perceptions. (Creswell 2007)

Using the insights I gained during the interviews I purposively selected a final stratified sample. More specifically, I planned to purposively select two categories of schools, one in which there seemed to be a correlation between learner behaviour and the school code of conduct, and one where this did not seem to be the case. Given the decrease in my initial sample, however, I ended up with only three schools, one where the principal regarded the behaviour of learners as poor, one where it was regarded as average, and one where it was regarded as good.

Having selected the cases for my final sample I obtained copies of the school codes of conduct from the principals concerned. I also asked them to identify teachers and learners who would be willing to share their views on the

relationship between learner behaviour and codes of conduct in their schools with me. The use of knowledgeable people, like the principals, to identify additional research participants (teachers and learners in my case) is an example of snowball sampling (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). My only criterion for the selection of learners was that the final group should consist of no fewer than ten learners who, together, would be representative of the learner population in terms of gender, socio-economic status, culture and behavior.

It was during the course of semi-structured interviews with school principals that I got not only a sense of learner behaviour in their schools but also of the relationship between such behaviour and their school codes of conduct. Given my assumption that codes of conduct with a moral intent have a more positive impact on learner behaviour than those with a purely administrative intent, I started my actual investigation with an analysis of the codes of conduct of the schools in the final sample. My analysis took place at two levels. First, I compared each code with the stipulations regarding school codes of conduct contained in the 'Guidelines for the Consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners' (DoE, 1998) to determine the extent to which the individual school codes satisfied the DoE criteria. Thereafter I used insights gained from literature for a deeper analysis, one aimed at determining whether the primary intent of each school's code of conduct was administrative or moral.

Using the results of this analysis as basis I constructed a semi-structured interview schedule which I planned to use in focus group interviews with a small group of teachers and learners from the schools in my sample. I opted for a focus group interview because it lends itself not only to the uncovering of hidden thoughts and feelings (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000) but also enables the researcher to get a sense of inter-group dynamics. Specifically, I hoped to determine what selected teachers' and learners' thoughts were on school discipline and codes of conduct. In analyzing their views, I hoped I would gain a

better insight into the reasons for the impact or not of their current codes of conduct on learner behaviour.

Data analysis was both inductive and deductive. Each data collection episode was followed by a data analysis episode, with the results of each analysis informing subsequent data collection activities, analysis was inductive. The coding of culminating data started with the grouping of major categories of information (*open coding*), proceeded to the identification of core issues/themes (*axial coding*), and ended with the development of propositions (*axial coding*) (Strauss and Corbin 1990) analysis was deductive.

1.9 Ethical considerations

'Ethical concerns encountered in educational research in particular can be extremely complex and subtle and can place researchers in moral predicaments which may appear quite unresolvable' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000:71). The importance of ethical behavior by the researcher should never be underestimated. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:197) define ethics as something that deals with beliefs about what is 'right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad', while Bogdan and Biklen (1992:49) describe ethics in research as '...the principles of right and wrong'.

Maintaining ethical standards in research is not always easy. Merriam (1988) states that ethical problems occur during data collection and data publication of findings. We can conclude that in order for the researcher to consider ethical aspects, he should have a clear perspective of what is right and wrong. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) believe that the following aspects: 'informed consent, access and acceptance', 'privacy, anonymity and confidentiality' are of great importance as regard the maintenance of good ethical standards.

1.9.1 Informed consent, access and acceptance

Informed consent is defined by Diener and Crandall (1978:101) as ‘the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decision’. ‘As soon as you have an agreed project outline and have read enough to convince yourself that the topic is feasible, it is advisable to make a formal, written approach to the individuals and organizations concerned, outlining your plans.’ (Bell, 1991:53)

To get permission to do one’s study, one has to go through the right official channels. In the case of my study I will first obtain permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct research in selected schools. If this request is granted, letters of permission to conduct the study will be sent to the principals of the selected schools. These letters will contain information pertaining to my study. It contains information on who would possibly be involved; how the information will be obtained and how long each interview / questionnaire will take. The letter would also state that this is a voluntary participation and that at any time if they would feel uncomfortable or would like to stop the study regardless the reason, they are welcome to do so. If there is still uncertainty, they are welcome to contact me and/or my supervisor.

After permission has been granted by the principals I shall personally contact selected participants, explain what my research entails and get their permission to involve them as research participants. In the case of learners, I shall also ask, in writing, for their parents’ permission to issue them with questionnaires and/or to include them in focus group interviews.

1.9.2 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity in itself is an essential component of research. 'The obligation to protect the anonymity of research participants and to keep research data confidential is all-inclusive. It should be fulfilled at all costs (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992 as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000:61). The subjects' identities should be protected so that the information collected does not embarrass or in any way harm them. Anonymity should extend not only to writing, but also to the verbal reporting of information collected through observation' (Bogdan and Biklen 1992:54).

The sample selection for my research was done by using random sampling and therefore creates equal opportunity for all. This will lead to greater confidentiality in that no one knows who was selected; even the researcher had no say in the sample. Furthermore, all selected schools in the sample will not know of each other by me not stating or saying. I will also not discuss this with other schools in any way. All they will know is that my sample consists of schools in the Gauteng District South Region.

1.9.3 Reporting

Typical of qualitative research, my findings are presented as an information-rich, verbal report. Where figures and tables are used they serve simply to summarize, illustrate or validate what is already presented in verbal form. More specifically, I have presented the chapters in the following order:

In **Chapter One** I set the scene. As such, I indicate what the problem is, what I think causes it, why I wanted to investigate it in terms of which theoretical frameworks I planned to do so and how I went about collecting, analyzing and presenting my data. To facilitate a common understanding of the issues raised, I

also identify and briefly define the key concepts used in my study. In this sense, Chapter One sets the parameters for the rest of my study.

In **Chapter Two** I present the insights I gained from a review of academic literature and official documents related to the problem that was the focus of my study. More specifically, I look at the morality, school discipline and codes of conduct with a view to better understand the relationship between them. To help readers of my report follow my train of thought I have also ‘woven’ the insights I gained from reviewing various sources (*articles, books, chapters in books, official documents, and the Internet*) into my presentation of data, into the conclusions that emerged from the data, and into the recommendations informed by these. In this way, I hope, I have facilitated the transferability of my findings to other contexts and enhanced the possibilities for generalization.

In **Chapter Three** I present the findings of my research, first in terms of individual case studies, and then in terms of common notions, patterns, and themes. It is in this chapter that I focus specifically on the relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behavior. In presenting my research findings I have tried to transport readers to the sites where I collected my data. To this purpose I have given each school and each principal a name. These are not their real names but names that, to me, encapsulate the personality of the principal, and the climate and culture of each of the selected schools.

In **Chapter Four** I briefly repeat the parameters set in Chapter One, with specific reference to my research purpose and questions. Using these as point of departure I provide answers to my original research questions as they emerged from the empirical part of my investigation. In presenting my conclusions and recommendations I make use of the insights I gained from the empirical data as well as the literature review. It is in this chapter, too, that I offer some tentative suggestions, informed by my research, on ways of using codes of conduct to improve learner behavior.

1.10 Trustworthiness

The scientific nature of qualitative research is not measured in terms of validity, reliability and objectivity. Instead, qualitative researchers strive to ensure that their research is regarded as trustworthy or credible. Because of this, qualitative researchers are often accused of subjectivity and bias. In order to convince readers of the rigor and scientific nature of my investigation I have taken the trouble to describe in some detail how I went about collecting, analyzing and interpreting data and why I chose specific methods and procedures over others. I have also, whenever the question of bias or subjectivity could have come up, openly stated how my own views supported or differed from what I read or uncovered.

The use of 'truth value', instead of 'internal validity', 'dependability' instead of 'reliability', 'transferability, instead of 'external validity', and 'confirmability' instead of 'objectivity' is recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985:300) as a means of addressing trustworthiness issues in qualitative research. The terminology does not matter, according to Merriam (1991). What matters is the extent to which the findings of a qualitative case study can be trusted. **Truth value** refers to the extent to which the researcher has established confidence in the truth of the findings for the subject or informants and the context in which the study was under taken (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It establishes how confident the researcher is that the findings are true to the research design, informants and context. In qualitative research, truth value is usually obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants. Truth value is subject-oriented, not defined a priori by the researcher (Sandelowski 1986). Also referred to as credibility (Lincoln and Guba 1985), truth value depends on the extent to which the results constitute descriptions or interpretations of human experience that are so accurate that people who share the experience would immediately identify with (Sandelowski, 1986).

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups; it is the ability to generalize from the findings to larger populations. Guba (1981) presented the second perspective on applicability in qualitative research by referring to fittingness or transferability as the criterion against which applicability of qualitative data is assessed. Research will meet this requirement when the findings fit into contexts outside the study situation that are determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that transferability is more the responsibility of the person wanting to transfer the findings to another situation or population than that of the researcher of the original study. They argued that as long as the original researcher presents sufficient descriptive data to allow comparison, he or she has addresses the problem of applicability.

Consistency refers to the extent to which research findings would be similar if replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context. The qualitative environment is not experimentally controlled, but rather complicated by extraneous and unexpected variables. The key to qualitative work is to learn from the informants rather than control for them. The instruments that are assessed for consistency in qualitative research are the researcher and informants, both of whom vary greatly within the research project. Qualitative research emphasizes the uniqueness of the human situation, so that variation in experience rather than identical repetition is sought (Field and Morse 1985). Thus, variability is expected in qualitative research, and consistency is then defined as dependability. Guba's concept of dependability implies tractable variability, that is, variability that can be ascribed to identified sources. Explainable sources of variability might include increased insight on the part of the researcher, informant's fatigue, or changes to the informant's lifestyle situation. Another source of variability stems from the fact that qualitative research looks at the range of experience rather than the average experience, so that the atypical or non normative situation is important to include in the findings.

Neutrality refers to freedom of bias in the research procedure and results (Sandelowski 1986). Neutrality refers to the degree to which findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the researcher and not of other biases, motivations, and perspectives (Guba 1981). Qualitative researchers will try to increase the worth of the findings by decreasing the distance between the researcher and the informants. Lincoln and Guba (1985) shift the emphasis of neutrality in qualitative research from the researcher to the data, so that rather than looking at the neutrality of the investigator, the neutrality of the data were considered. They suggest that conformability be the criterion of neutrality. This will be achieved when the truth value and applicability are established.

1.11 Significance of the study

The focus of this study is on understanding whether or not there is a relation between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour in selected secondary school in Tshwane South, Gauteng. Having looked at this question from an administrative/managerial, as well as a moral/values perspective I believe that I might have succeeded in creating an awareness of the role that culture – values, relationships and attitudes – play in the management of learner behaviour. In this sense, I hope, I would have made some contribution to the regeneration of morality in South African schools.

More specifically, insights gained from the exploration of this question could contribute to the establishment of common standards for learner behaviour in schools – standards that could form the basis for the development of quality school codes of conduct in all schools. Theoretically, the results of this study could, therefore, lead to the improvement of current school codes of conduct, the promotion of consultative development processes and the safeguarding of schools against violence and abuse on the one hand while, on the other, it could contribute to the development of self-discipline in learners in particular as well as to the moral regeneration of South Africa in general.

1.12 Limitations of the study

As is the case in most qualitative research studies, the findings emerging from this study are applicable only to those schools selected as research sites. Given the different contexts in which schools operate and the different dynamics of each school, these findings cannot be generalized to other schools. However, it may well be possible that other schools will identify with the findings, recognizing the factors identified as impediments to the effectiveness of codes of conduct at research sites as impediments to the effectiveness of their own codes of conduct. They could then use the findings as basis for adjusting or revising their own codes and/or procedures.

1.13 Conclusion

Morality is disintegrating in South Africa. Various structures and bodies have been created to address these problems, but with no success. This moral decay can also be observed in schools. Creating and maintaining a safe, disciplined school environment is one of the most important challenges facing principals and educators in schools today. Many principals and educators are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain discipline in schools, and in the wake of new and changing education legislation and regulations that regulate discipline and punishment in schools make it even more difficult. School codes of conduct are meant to help address this problem. They can only do so, I argued in this chapter, if they fulfill both an administrative and a moral function. It is these dimensions of morality that I investigate in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

MORALITY, SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CODES OF CONDUCT

2.1 Introduction and purpose

School discipline does not occur in a vacuum. More often than not, the principles by which school rules and regulations are informed are derived from one or more national and/or provincial laws or policies. In South Africa, all laws, policies and official documents are required to adhere to the letter and the spirit of the Constitution (RSA 1996a). The law central to the regulation of all school activities, including the development and implementation of school codes of conduct, is the South African Schools Act (RSA 1996b). In terms of this Act, every public school is legally bound to develop, adopt and implement its own unique code of conduct (RSA 1996b, section 8) one which, by law, promotes the fundamental values and protect the human rights enshrined in the Constitution (Joubert & Squelch, 2005).

In Chapter One I suggested that the many acts of corruption, violence and general disregard of the law in South Africa could be symptomatic of moral disintegration. It would seem, I mooted, that the values and human rights enshrined in the Constitution of the country (RSA 1996a) are not reflected in the behaviour of her people or, with specific reference to my study, in the way school learners conduct themselves (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007). Is this perhaps the reason why every public school in South Africa is legally required to have its own code of conduct (RSA 1996b)?

If it were true that the root cause of poor discipline at schools is moral disintegration (De Villiers, Wethmar and Van der Bank, 2000), school codes of

conduct should not only reflect the values of the Constitution but should also be implemented in such a way that these values are reflected in learner behaviour (Joubert and Squelch, 2005). Is the fact that learner conduct currently does not reflect these values an indication that codes of conduct are of poor quality or is it an indication of poor implementation? Or are there other reasons, not related to the code at all?

Informed by these questions I conducted a literature review on morality, codes of conduct, and school discipline. On the one hand the literature review provided me with tentative answers to these questions. On the other hand, it assisted me in the creation of a conceptual frame of reference in terms of which I could conduct an empirical investigation into the impact or not that school codes of conduct have on learner behaviour in general. It is on these insights that I focus in this chapter.

Given the premise on which this study rests, namely that the root cause of poor discipline could be ascribed to moral degeneration, the chapter starts with a discussion of morality. This discussion leads naturally into a discussion of learner behaviour and various strategies by which inappropriate behaviour could be modified and/or controlled. One such strategy, also discussed here, is the use of a code of conduct.

2.2 What constitutes morality?

Morality, according to Morrison and Severino (2003), is what distinguishes human beings from other life forms: it is a uniquely human characteristic. But what is morality? Is it obedience to the law? Is it the same as integrity? And who decides what is moral or not? One's answers to these questions would depend on the way one defines morality. In the descriptive sense it would simply refer to the rules or prescripts governing the behaviour of groups of people (Gert 2002) – society, communities, professions, cultural groups, and religious groups, to name

but a few. While descriptive definitions provide some insight into the ‘what’ of morality, they do not tell us by whom these prescripts are determined and on whose authority they do so. It is only in a normative description of morality that answers to questions like these begin to emerge. Morality, in the normative sense, refers to the kind of behaviour that all ‘rational’ people would regard as ‘normal’ or appropriate under specified conditions (Gert 2002). Prescripts pertaining to behaviour during times of war - the treatment of prisoners of war, or political refugees - would be examples of normative morality. Based on these definitions a diagrammatic representation of morality, according to me, would look something like Figure 2.1.

What emerges from these two views of morality is that moral behaviour is associated with particular standards. These standards are then used to judge the morality or not – that is, the ‘rightness’ or ‘wrongness’ - of a person’s or group’s behaviour. In other words, a person would be regarded as ‘moral’ if/when s/he is perceived to have the ability not only to distinguish right from wrong but also to make decisions based on that knowledge (Gert 2002; Heenan 1993). What is regarded as ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘moral’ or ‘immoral’ is, however, not fixed (Encarta Dictionary): it varies from person to person, from group to group, from context to context, and from generation to generation.

In some instances decisions about right or wrong behaviour would be based on rules or laws, what Fuller (1964) calls the morality of duty; in others it could be derived from personal conscience, or common notions of justice (Gert 2002). Also, what is officially or outwardly declared to be right or just does not always reflect the average person’s or individual’s morality of personal conscience, that is, his/her inner convictions of right or wrong. In fact, a particular group might regard practices that would harm people other than themselves as immoral while another group might equate morality with behaviour that promotes purity or sanctity (Fuller’s 1964). This kind of morality is known as ‘aspirational morality’. Religious groupings, for example, might regard certain rituals as particularly

moral, believing as they do that they are carrying out the dicta/commands of a higher power, such as God. To groups like these there is no such thing as a 'universal morality' (Gert 2002).

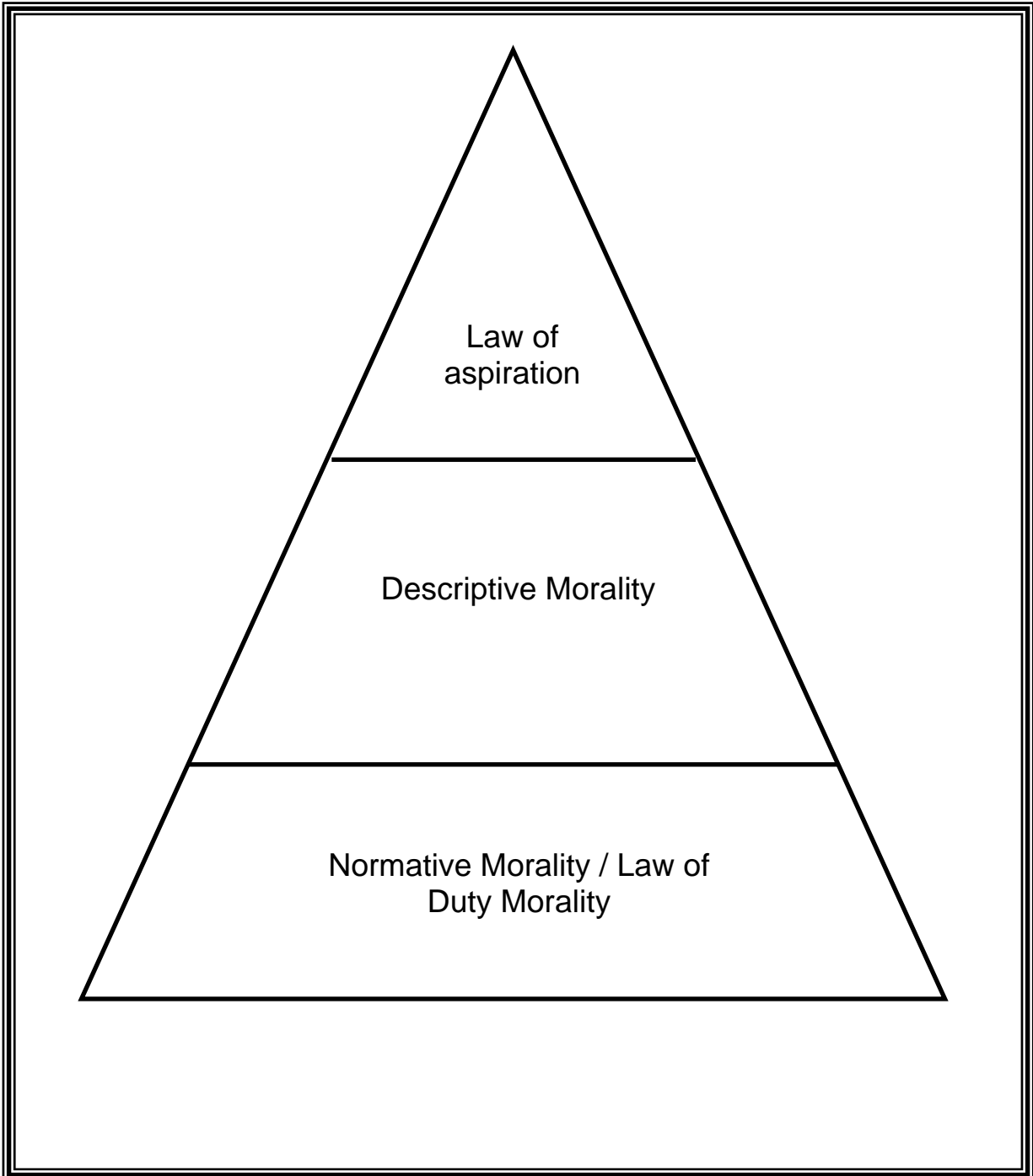


Figure 2.1: Levels of morality

Associated with the view that morality is fluid rather than fixed (Encarta Dictionary) is a sense that the morality or not of an act might lie not in the act itself but in the intent behind the act. According to Fuller (1964), one's intent could be to perform one's duty, or to grow in virtue/morality. In performing one's duty one is, according to Fuller, subscribing to a morality of duty. Given that adherence to a morality of duty is crucial to social control and cohesion, individuals have to adjust their own behaviour in ways that are compliant with the norm of the group. Compliance might involve *taking* an action, *refraining from* an action, or *tailoring an action* to suit another person or persons, often in response to a command issued by an actual or perceived authority (Sternberg 1998:105). This does not mean that commands given by those in positions of authority are always for the good of all (Johansson 2002). This is especially true when adults make decisions about the way children have to behave. According to the theorist Johansson (2002), it is up to those who hold positions of power and/or authority to behave in ways that are ethically responsible. This, Johansson (2002) argues, is only possible if the person in authority is truly moral.

True morality, according to Gilligan and Wiggins (1988) and others (Eisenberg and Strayer, 1987; Hoffman, 1987), comes from the heart not the head and manifests in acts of caring and compassion. According to Gilligan and Wiggins (1988), morality is evidenced by the extent to which a person is willing to sacrifice her/himself for the well-being of someone else. According to Kohlberg (1996), however, it is fairness and a sense of justice rather than mere empathy that constitutes morality. From his point of view moral decisions have a cognitive rather than an affective base. A truly moral person, according to Beck and Earl 2003, is one whose morality is no longer a matter of 'blind obedience to others'. According to him, truly moral people no longer do 'the right thing for fear of reprisal'. Instead, they act 'autonomously, freely...in the light of beliefs which in some significant sense they have made their own'. It is this 'higher' standard of morality, propagated by churches and philosophers, which Fuller (1964) refers to when he talks about a morality of aspiration.

2.3 Moral development

More often than not behaviour that is not experienced as offensive or harmful would be regarded as acceptable and, if it 'fits' the occasion or situation, it would also be regarded as appropriate' (Gert 2002) . This distinction becomes clouded, however, when other factors, like gender, age and culture are taken into consideration. For example, if grown-ups were to throw temper tantrums in public this would be regarded as both unacceptable and inappropriate; if toddlers were to do it, it would be inappropriate but not necessarily unacceptable. And, even if it were regarded as unacceptable, it would be tolerated simply because temper tantrums in toddlers are regarded as normal. Consider gender stereotyping. In many Eastern and African cultures males and females alike wear robes/dresses; in Western society women may choose to wear dresses or trousers but 'real' men wear pants. Moreover, Western society, for example, tends to tolerate male aggression while aggressive behaviour in females creates discomfort. There are, however, cultures where the opposite is true.

Whether 'acceptable' and 'appropriate' behaviour could be equated with 'moral' behaviour is, however, a different matter altogether. While the moral character of a person is reflected in the way s/he conducts her/himself, judgments about the morality of individual or group behaviour vary in relation to the moral framework informing such judgments. If morality is equated with 'blind obedience to others' (Beck and Earl, 2003:149), the transgression of *any* rule would be regarded as immoral. If empathy is considered a key feature of morality, as Gilligan and Wiggins (1988) and others (Eisenberg and Strayer, 1987; Hoffman, 1987) argue, *any act that lacks empathy* would be regarded as immoral. If Kohlberg's (1996) equation of morality with fairness and justice is accepted, *any act that is perceived as unfair or unjust* would be judged immoral.

Key to moral development, according to Coles (2007) is an interaction between nature and nurture. This assumption also seems to lie at the heart of Piaget's

(Piaget and Inhelder 1969) and Kohlberg's (1996) theories on moral development in children. Both these theorists argue that, although children are able to distinguish between that which is right and that which is wrong from a relatively early age, their decisions are influenced by their upbringing and level of intellectual development. However, Kohlberg (1996) argues, since moral judgments require the ability to consider the consequences of one's actions, which is a *cognitive* ability, moral maturity is unlikely before adolescence. Informed by this argument, Kohlberg concludes that moral development in children occurs in six age-related stages (*see Table 2.1*).

Kohlberg argues, moreover, that the development of morality is not simply the result of a normal socialization process. According to him, socializing agents (e.g. parents and teachers) do not *explicitly* teach new forms of thinking. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine them systematically teaching children each of the moral behaviour types. The different kinds of moral behaviour, according to Kohlberg (1996), develop from one's *reflection* on moral problems. Social experiences contribute to moral development only in that they stimulate mental activity. As one engages in discussions and debates with others and finds one's views questioned and challenged, one is motivated to take in new, more comprehensive positions. The more open and democratic such interactions are, these theorists argue, the more likely they are to encourage moral reasoning. The less pressure the children feel simply to conform to authority, the more freedom they have to settle their own differences and formulate their own ideas. The more children's curiosity is aroused, the more interested they are in a topic, the greater their inclination to revise their own cognitive structures and methods (Blatt and Kohlberg, 1975, taken from Crain 1985).

Table 2.1: Kohlberg's moral development stages

Moral stage	Characteristic feature/s
Pre-conventional	<i>Stage 1</i> is characterised by children who avoid breaking rules because they know that transgression will result in punishment while adherence might be rewarded. Since only the negative consequence for themselves, not the impact their behaviour might have on others, are considered, morality in this stage is entirely egocentric.
Conventional	<i>Stage 2</i> (ages 10 -16) Conventional morality – societal rules have become internalized, and therefore the individual conforms because it is right to do so.
Three	In <i>stage 3</i> , people who play an important role in children's lives, tend to look up to them and do what is expected of them. In this stage role models may have a great influence on children's behaviour. They live by the golden rule and therefore acknowledge that the group is more important than their individual needs.
Four	<i>Stage 4</i> becomes orientated towards conscience and the recognition of the social system. They obey laws and fulfil their duties, and will act morally towards a group rather than individuals.
Five	<i>Stage 5</i> (ages 16 and beyond) is the stage of post-conventional morality: persons recognize the importance of social contracts and individual rights. In this stage people abide by the laws because it protects everyone and bring about the greatest good to the greatest number of people. Democratic principle therefore plays a role in decision making and compromise.
Six	In <i>stage 6</i> which few people reach according to Kohlberg, universal principal of justice is the main concern. They believe that it is right to follow universal ethical principles, which they have chosen after considerable thoughtful reflection.

Not all theorists agree with Kohlberg. Gilligan and Wiggins (1988), for example, equating fairness and justice with male morality, criticizes Kohlberg for his exclusion of more compassionate, female, moral behaviour. Simpson (1974), on the other hand, criticizes what he calls Kohlberg's cultural bias, arguing that this makes his model irrelevant to anyone who is not brought up in accordance with a Western philosophical tradition. Crain (1985), criticizing Kohlberg for skimming over ethical complexities, argues that not all moral dilemmas can be solved through reasoning. Crain's (1985) criticism is supported by Reimer et al 1983 (Taken from Crain 1985) who refer specifically to discussions on abortion, each of which varied in terms of context and resulted in non-conclusions. Straughan (1989) also questions the effectiveness of Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions to develop morality. According to Straughan (1987), there is a difference between moral reasoning and moral behaviour: while discussions might sensitize participants to issues of fairness and social justice, thereby enabling them to distinguish between what is morally right and wrong, it does not necessarily follow that the discussions equip them with the moral strength to act morally in the 'real' world. Should they not have the moral strength to act in accordance with their convictions, Straughan (1987) argues, the ensuing cognitive dissonance might result in non-action.

Other theorists (Coles 1997, Edwards 2000), while not explicitly criticizing existing theories on morality and its development, highlight additional factors that could have an impact on children's moral development. Coles (1997) for example, is of the opinion that parental interaction, balanced discipline styles, and a child's own choices play a key role in this regard. Edwards (2000), on the other hand, focuses on the impact of dysfunctional families, various forms of abuse, excessive control and socio-economic conditions, all of which, according to him, could damage a child's self-concept. Such children could, according to Glasser (1986) misbehave (*constantly seeking attention, learned helplessness, clowning around, bullying and passive resistance*) as a means of regaining control over their lives. In this regard Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs (see

Figure 2.2) provides important clues to the possible intent informing misbehaviour.

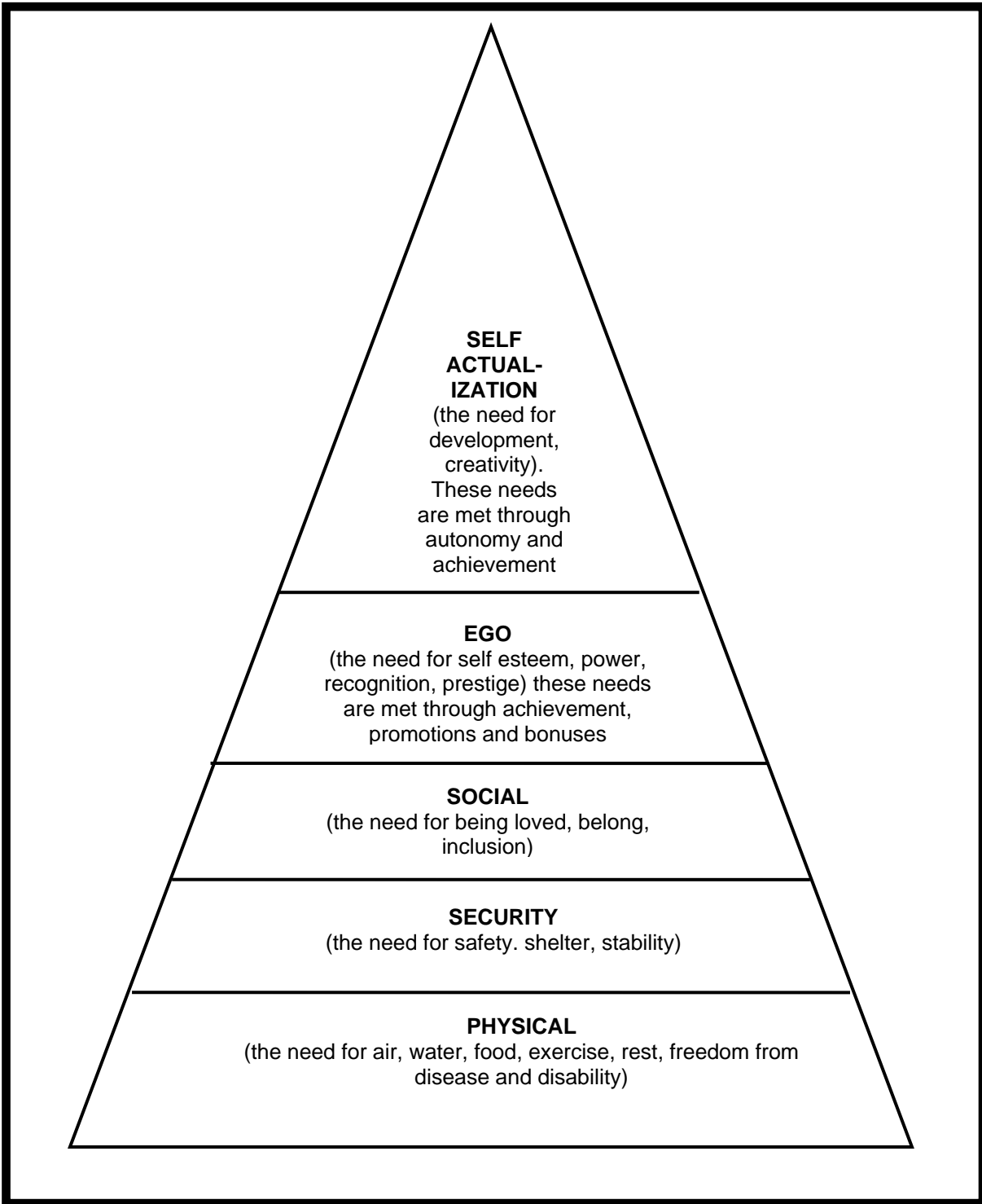


Figure 2.2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs every human being's first priority is to satisfy his/her basic physiological needs, such as the need for food and water. Once these basic needs have been satisfied, one starts thinking about the need for safety and security. The third level of needs, according to Maslow is the need to belong, to feel that other people love and care about one, and to belong to a group. Associated with this need is the need to feel worthy, to have self esteem, which is a fourth-level need. The fifth and final level, which is closely related to the satisfaction of fourth-level needs, is the need of self-actualization, what Sternberg describes as 'a state of mind' in which one feels 'self-fulfilled' (Sternberg 1998:529).

2.4 Maintaining school discipline

While few would argue that discipline is commonly equated with punishment this is not its only meaning (Cartledge, Tiunan and Johnson 2001). It is also equated with restraint and self-control, hence a person is characterized as 'disciplined' if s/he has the ability to remain calm and controlled, even in stressful circumstances. In between these two extremes, however, lie a range of meanings, all informed by notions of order, strictness, control, authority, obedience, correction, and chastisement (Gert 2002).

With reference to school discipline, Duke (2002) argues that its culminating purpose should be the development of responsible graduates. Adding to this, Durant (2007) argues that such discipline should be flexible enough not to stifle learners' curiosity, creativity, critical thinking or individuality. In doing so, those responsible for discipline would ensure that the school experience is a satisfying one for all learners (Duke 2002). Adding to these claims, Moles (1990), argues that school discipline should, in the first instance be aimed at the creation and maintenance of an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. In the second instance, but related to the first, it should be aimed at

ensuring the safety of teachers and learners. How to achieve this, however, is a moot point.

School discipline could be preventative, retributive or rehabilitative (Duke 2002). Those who argue for prevention argue that discipline should have the inculcation of a healthy work ethic as purpose. The intent of school disciplinary procedures, this group argues, should be to teach children respect, courtesy, empathy and perseverance. In short, it should be aimed at providing children with the skills they will need to handle challenging situations and people in the world beyond school. Opposing this view is a school of theorists that sees school discipline as a reactive measure. Intrinsic to their approach is the use of punishment or reward – the negative and positive stimulus theory propagated by behaviorists - to control individual and group behaviour. Assuming that either the fear of punishment or the desire for some or other reward would prevent children from misbehaving, those who subscribe to this paradigm ensure that all parties concerned are fully aware of the rules as well as the consequences for breaking them (Baer, Manning and Shiomi 2006; Cohen, Kinciad and Childs 2007). In addition, and in accordance with Canter and Canter (2001) Assertive Discipline Model, they emphasize teachers' right to create and enforce standards for learner behavior.

In that reactive discipline focuses primarily on punishment and/or loss, with recalcitrant children typically being deprived of things they value – their time, privileges, or freedom - it represents a negative form of discipline. However, it is the kind of discipline with which most teachers and learners are familiar - detention, community service, the writing of lines, cleaning of classrooms, and, of course, corporal punishment. According to a number of theorists (Cohen, Kinciad and Childs 2007; Sugai et al 2000), it is possible that reactive discipline might not be the most effective way of instilling discipline in children. While acknowledging that it results in the immediate elimination or reduction of problem behaviors, they argue that problem behaviour is likely to reoccur unless the cause of the problem

is addressed. Adler (1963) emphasizes the importance of determining why learners feel the need to misbehave and then taking steps to address these needs. As regards the use of corporal punishment in particular, an increasing number of theorists (Cohen, Kinciad and Childs 2007; Lytton 1997; Sprague *et al* 2001; McCurdy, Mark and Eldridge 2003; Maree & Cherian 2004; Robinson *et al* 2005; Durant 2007), are convinced that it does more harm than good and in many countries it has been banned completely.

This was also the case in South Africa. Corporal punishment according to Durant (2007) and Cohen (2007) are only a short term solution, and may not lead to pro-social behavior that is needed in society in the long-term. Corporal punishment may also lead to higher aggression levels and lower levels of internalized morality. Notwithstanding evidence to this effect, principals in Badenhorsts, Steyn and Beukes (2007) study suggested the following counter acting measures, namely: the implementation of a detention system that must be consistent; banning from classrooms and social events for a specific period of time; community service where learners clean the school ground, classrooms etc; empower senior learners to help with discipline and help with general organization; the installment of a central camera system where the principal has access to classrooms via the camera system. These strategies may be effective on a short term basis, and may not be wrong or against the law, however what is fascinating is the fact that these measures are all reactive in form. These measures would be in vain as they would not address the root causes of the problem. In Durban, more than 1500 principals from good to poor socioeconomic classes attended a conference where they discussed the problems faced by OBE, safety in schools and discipline. They asked president Zuma to bring back corporal punishment to restore order in their schools. (Rapport 2009) It is interesting to hear that principals, heads of schools, the people who should lead a school in the future and in the direct direction proposed these types of strategies is in contrasting the views of various authors on how to handle discipline effectively.

Although punishment, applied fairly and appropriately, could have a positive effect on character development and contribute to the maintenance of safe school environments (Feldman 2000) it should be used with care otherwise it might lead to unintended consequences (Bongiovanni 1977). If it is applied arbitrarily, for example, it could cause hostility and resentment. This would also be the case if either the rules or the punishment were regarded by those at the receiving end as unreasonable or unfair. According to Parke and Walters 1967; Grusec and Walters 1977), punishment works best if it is complemented with positive reinforcements; if the individual being punished knows why s/he is being punished; if the punishment takes place directly after the undesirable behaviour has occurred, and if the punishment is sufficiently unpleasant to stop the same behaviour from occurring again in future.

Research findings on the impact of reactive and proactive approaches to discipline indicate the need to move away from the former to the latter (Cohen, Kinciad and Childs 2007). Common to proactive, positive approaches to discipline are acceptance of responsibility (Oosthuizen, 2006), mutual respect between teachers and learners, and the creation and maintenance of open lines of communication between teachers, administrators, learners and parents (Oosthuizen, 2006). Communication is a key feature of Glasser's (1986) Reality Therapy, in which class meetings, clearly communicated rules, plans, and contracts, although they may be vetoed by teachers, give learners the opportunity of making positive choices. Positive discipline is effective, according to researchers involved in the Saoi programme, (Sugai *et al* 2000) when learners feel connected to the school, primarily because they believe that teachers care not only about their academic performance but also about them as individuals. Because of their greater psychological safety, learners see themselves as being capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, accomplishing great things, and behaving responsibly. Strahan *et al* (2005) agrees, adding that

teachers have gained new perspectives on disciplinary problems and possible interventions by working alongside rather than against learners who misbehave.

According to Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes (2007) and Ndamani (2004), learner behaviour is influenced, directly or indirectly, by a whole range of other factors, some of which relate to home environment, some to parental issues, some to societal and media influence, and some to government and legal systems.

As regards parental factors, Ndamani (2004) and others (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007; Mentz; Pienaar, cited in Oosthuizen, 2006; Wolhuter and Steyn 2003) argue that the extent to which parents are involved in their children's lives and school activities could be a determining factor in the way the children behave at school. According to Rossouw (2002), many parents are disinterested in their children's education. This apathy, according to Chimenga (2002), is also evident in parent's attitude towards discipline. Both Chimenga (2002) and Rossouw (2002) claim that parents are abdicating their own responsibility in this regard, leaving it to the school and, by implication, to the teachers, to 'discipline' their children (Rossouw, 2002). On the other hand, some parents, by 'talking down to teachers, criticizing the way schools maintain discipline and/or refusing to give teachers permission for their children to be punished in accordance with the school code of conduct, show disrespect for teachers and the system they represent (Oosthuizen, 2006). This is especially true with regard to parents in the higher socio-economic echelons (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007; Rossouw 2002). The mixed messages children get when their parents and the school are at odds over discipline might well result in the children playing the two parties off against each other, thereby getting away with things that they should not (Ndamani 2004).

The following factors, placed in eight categories, have been identified from research and practice (Duke 2002; McCarthy, Cambron-McCabe and Thomas 1998; Morrison & Severino 2003) for consideration in disciplinary decision-

making: student's age, gender, and grade level; student's special considerations (e.g., special education); seriousness of offense; circumstances surrounding the offense; student's prior history of offenses; student's attitude and socio-emotional development level; overall impact of offense on school members and community at-large, and resilience level - that is, whether a student holds a high grade point average, participates in extracurricular events, and has teacher, parent, and community support. The quality of support from teachers, parents, and community members, such as a minister, provides an indication of a student's level of involvement with responsible adults who can provide constructive advice, mentoring, and continued support (Kajs 2006). In addition, novice teachers enter the profession with adequate skills to handle all these discipline problems. However, in cases of poor administration and execution of school discipline, there is the danger that order might break down completely.

This does not mean that parents have no role to play. Not only do they serve as role models for their children, but parental discipline plays an important role in the development of children's self-control (Damon, 1990). Through modeling good interactions, the children take notice and learn how to interact in a morally appropriate way. Therefore, if we want children to learn to respect each other, we too have to show respect to each other, on the road, in business, everywhere. Communication, instead of force when protecting or demanding rights, is a strategy that children are expected to acquire (Baumrind, 1996) from their parents first, and from their teachers second. According to Baumrind, children whose parents are demanding, controlling, and unreasoning result in children becoming fearful, low on initiative, and self esteem. Permissive parents, on the other hand, may be so undemanding that their children become dependent, irresponsible and spoiled. Authoritative but caring parents set standards of responsible behaviour with which they expect their children to comply. They are highly involved, consistent, loving, communicative and willing to listen. They respect their children's views. Their children normally are self reliant, self-controlled and secure. Uninvolved and self-centred parents, on the other hand,

provide a breeding ground for antisocial behaviour. Self-centeredness on the parent's part creates a self-centred children who are moody, impulsive and lack of long term goals.

Finally, the overall moral degeneration of society, evidenced by racial and xenophobic incidents, corruption, rape, and murder, to name but a few, contribute to the erosion of school discipline (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007; Ndamani 2004). Many a time the values that inform such behaviour – such as rebellion, greed, power, and lust - are romanticized in films, television programs, music videos and computer games. Added to these influences, according to Ndamani (2004), is peer identification and peer pressure. Instead of obeying school rules, many children seek peer approval, by adopting the values of the peer group and/or by challenging the adult authority represented by school rules. This brings me to the third position, which reflects the views of non-behaviourist psychologists and educationists (Wenar and Kerig 2000; Kochanska, Aksan, and Koenig 1995).

Education should not be concerned with classical or operant conditioning only. It involves more than just trained behavior. It has to do with the development of children's capacity to understand, know and reason (Beck and Earl 2003). It is in school, according to Bottery (1990) that moral values could be inculcated therefore the way in which morality is taught would affect the way the future generation thinks. The values behind any choice concerning curriculums, management strategies or disciplinary procedures will have an effect on how people behave and think. According to these theorists, there is no guarantee that the external imposition of discipline contribute to character development. All it does is ensure obedience. It is only when discipline results in the internalization of values that the person or persons involved will be intrinsically motivated to lead a disciplined life (Knoetze 2004; Wenar and Kerig 2000). This brings us back to morality, suggesting that any form of discipline, school discipline included, should have the moral development of children as primary purpose.

2.5 Codes of conduct

The phrase, 'code of conduct' could be used to refer to any set of rules dealing with the way in which humans should or should not behave. In written form, laws, policies, or guidelines could theoretically be regarded as codes of conduct (<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/DictionaryResults.aspx?lextyp e=3&search=codes%20of%20conduct>). Professional codes of conduct, too, regulate the behavior of those associated with the profession concerned (*medical practitioners, lawyers, teachers, chartered accountants, to name but a few*) in that they stipulate what is allowed and what not. Codes could, however, also be tacit, representing 'unwritten rules' or 'acceptable standards of behavior' (http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary_1861598315/code.html). Either way, codes of conduct represent the behavioral standards that particular groups of people are expected to meet as well as the criteria according to which their behaviour will be judged.

Applied to school codes of conduct, which is the focus of my study, both types apply - written rules or regulations (*the explicit dimension of the code*) as well as tacit rules and regulations (*unwritten assumptions about the kind of behavior that is regarded as acceptable and appropriate*). In this sense, the code is a reflection of school culture. By implication one would expect the behaviour of the entire school community – school governors, principals, teachers and learners – to reflect the values and attitudes intrinsic to the code. Moreover, the non-verbalized ethos infusing the code would be reflected in the traditions, rituals (*morning assemblies, prize-giving functions, school uniforms, etc*) and symbols (*trophies, certificates, badges, etc.*) that represent the culture and climate of the school (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993).

In South Africa, school codes of conduct are meant to serve both an administrative/managerial and an ethical purpose. To assist governing bodies in their attempts to develop and implement school codes of conduct that comply

with legal requirements the DoE developed the 'Guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners' (Hereafter referred to as the 'guideline document'). This document indicates what purposes codes of conduct should serve, how they should be developed and how they should be implemented. Borrowing from the South African Schools' Act (RSA 1996b, section 8), the Guideline Document points out that the primary aim of school codes of conduct should be the fostering of 'constructive learning' (DoE 1998, section 1.4). In other words, the rules and regulations contained in the code should contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a school environment that is disciplined and *purposeful* (RSA 1996b, section 8 [2]). Since the main purpose of schools should be to educate children, the code of conduct should not only reflect this purpose but also contribute to its achievement (Oosthuizen, 2006). By implication, the code of conduct should clearly stipulate *the roles and responsibilities* of various stakeholders otherwise the rules might not be implemented as they should be.

As regards discipline *per se*, the 'guideline document' stresses the fact that the Code of Conduct should promote positive rather than punitive discipline (DoE, 1998, section 1.4). Learners should be given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes (DoE, 1998, section 1.4, 1.6 and 8.1) and, where punitive measures are included in the code, they should not only be 'informed by relevant legal principles (DoE 1998, section 4.4) but also be proportionate to the particular transgression (DoE 1998, section 3.5 and 7.6). More specifically, the Guideline Document stipulates that all codes of conduct should include a preamble that spells out the principles, philosophy and ethos of the South African Schools Act. More specifically, the preamble should emphasize the importance of a culture of reconciliation, mutual respect, tolerance and peace at all schools. (DoE 1998, section 2.1 and 2.3). Apart from the preamble, school codes of conduct should stipulate what learners may and should do, what the channels of communication, dispute and grievance procedures are (DoE 1998, section 3.4) and what parents' responsibilities should be (DoE 1998, section 6). Moreover, codes of conduct

should describe the disciplinary process (DoE 1998, section 7.1 and 7.2), the different types and levels of offences, and the consequences that would ensue from learners transgressing particular rules (DoE 1998, section 3.5, 8.1 and 8.2). Finally, according to the 'guideline document', school codes of conduct should have the inculcation of moral values as purpose. The rules and regulations included in the code therefore need to function as 'moral standards', teaching learners how to conduct themselves at school in preparation for citizenship. This is only possible, according to De Villiers, Wethmar and Van Der Bank (2000) if the culture and ethos of the school is founded on moral principles; if the members of the governing body and school management team as well as all educators are models of moral integrity. The question, however, is what those moral standards should be? Should they reflect *what is* (social reproduction), or *what should be* (social change)? Furthermore, is citizenship a moral standard?

Beck and Earl (2003) believes that individuals, children, teachers, schools, and governments all have different views on what morality is. There is no definitive answer to who may or may not decide on the moral values to be promoted in schools. However, a code of conduct that does not take cognizance of the values, orientation and needs of the community which it serves, the parent community in particular, has little chance of making any difference in learner behaviour (Oosthuizen, 2006). Greenawalt (1995) and Cole (2007), questioning the role that governments presume to play in the development of morality, concur with Beck and Earl. Arguing that governments are no better than individuals and no more virtuous than the man on the street, they argue that the definition of morality is not a government function. To assume that it is, they argue, would open the door for governments to impose their own, often flawed views of morality on every citizen. Not only would this disallow any notion of 'aspirational morality' but it would give civil servants – teachers in particular – the right to undermine the values taught at home and in communities.

2.6 School discipline

The development of school codes of conduct, according to Wragg and Partington (1989), is an important step in the creation of a school environment that is conducive to positive learning and personal development. Moonsammy and Hassett (1997), expanding on this view, point out that the codes of conduct are also crucial to the management of conflict in schools while De Villiers, Wethmar and Van der Bank (2000) as well as Le Cordeur and Coetzee (2001) emphasize the contribution that such codes could and should make towards moral development and the inculcation of a uniquely South African value system. School Governing Bodies (SGBs), whose task it is to ensure that the schools in their charge have appropriate codes of conduct in place. By implication the intent of such codes should be to prepare learners for civil society. This would assumedly happen if the codes of conduct contribute to the creation of an environment where learners can acquire the requisite expertise, knowledge and skills, as well the moral standards, associated with 'worthy and responsible' citizenship (DoE 1998, section 1.4).

A school code of conduct should preferably be a consensus document, owned by all those who are expected to abide by its dictums (Oosthuizen, 2006; Roach 2006). Real consensus, according to Roach, is reached only when people engage in open discussion and debate on an issue with the objective of discovering the truth and/or agreeing on the best plan. In the course of such discussion/debate, ideas need to be stated publicly so that they can be challenged and defended. Ideally, during the course of such a debate, it will become clear that some ideas are better than others and will thus be accepted by all concerned. While acknowledging that public debates do not always result in consensus, Roach reiterates his faith in the public's ability to engage in public debate and to base their decisions on the outcome of such 'democratic' processes.

Applying the notion of consensus to the development and adoption of school codes of conduct, Moonsammy and Hasset (1997) argue that a Code of Conduct should be a 'formal contract that is jointly negotiated and agreed upon by all those involved in the school situation'. Only then, they argue, will it lay the 'basis for more democratic school management ... (and) redevelop a sense of accountability along democratic rather than authoritarian lines'. These views are also reflected in the South African Schools Act (section 8(1)), which stipulates that, subject to 'any applicable provincial law, a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school'.

Before adopting it, the governing body must involve the parents, learners, educators, and non-educators at the school concerned. After consulting these stakeholders, it is the responsibility of the governing body to adopt the code of conduct (RSA 1996b, 8(1)). After the adoption of the Code of Conduct, each stakeholder must receive a copy thereof. The code may be reviewed annually or when a need arises to change it (DoE 1998, section 1.5) but, should this be the case, all stakeholders should again be consulted.

As regards the implementation of codes of conduct, according to Rosen (2005), principals typically 'distribute the new code at the first assembly of the year, perhaps read a few new rules, and then ... tell students how important it is for the rules to be obeyed'. This notwithstanding research evidence (Rosen 2005) which indicates that, unless people have the opportunity to present their views on the rules concerned they might resist it even if they agree with the rule. This resistance could easily be transferred to the rule makers, the institution concerned, and its operations. This could result in non-compliance with the rules and regulations, 'poorer' work, and engagement in 'clever' disobedience. Also, authoritarian disciplinary plans are typically designed for a small minority of rule breakers and may be unnecessary, inappropriate or counterproductive for the majority (Schimmel 2003). Moreover, authoritarian, 'ambiguous, unexplained,

legalistic, and poorly taught codes of conduct' are often perceived as arbitrarily restricting people's freedoms and rights. Inevitably such perceptions have far-reaching negative consequences (Schimmel, 2003:18-21).

2.7 Conclusion

Mostly, morality is associated with 'right' and 'wrong. This, however, is not fixed. It varies from person to person, from group to group, from context to context, and from generation to generation. There are many perceptions of morality. Morality however cannot be determined by blind obedience to others nor the fear of punishment. Moral development therefore stipulates that interactions should be more open and democratic and less pressure to simply conform to morality. Such interactions may encourage moral reasoning.

Indications are that the primary focus these days regarding discipline in education is punishment orientated and represents negative forms of discipline. Education should not be concerned with classical or operant conditioning only. All it does is ensure obedience and does not help with character building. Proactive positive approaches to discipline on the other hand focuses on acceptance of responsibility, mutual respect between teachers and learners, and the creation and maintenance of open lines of communication between teachers, administrators, learners and parents. It is only when discipline results in the internalization of values that the person or persons involved will be intrinsically motivated to lead a disciplined life.

As indicated in reviewed literature, the main aim of a code of conduct should be to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process. Although a code may contain a set of rules, the code should also set a standard of moral behavior. The purpose of a code is to promote positive discipline, self-discipline

and exemplary conduct. A code of conduct therefore, in South Africa is meant to serve both an administrative/managerial purpose and an ethical purpose.

Therefore, a code of conduct could have a greater impact on learner behavior if it contains positive discipline measures which are aimed at moral development as well.

In the following chapter I present the findings of my research. I focus on the analysis and interpretation of data, identifying its meaning an implication and finally presenting the data in a discussion. It is in this chapter that I focus specifically on the relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behavior.

CHAPTER THREE

SCHOOL CODES OF CONDUCT AND LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

3.1 Introduction and purpose

As indicated in the previous chapter, I am presenting the findings of my empirical investigation in this chapter. More specifically, I present here the empirical evidence that I collected from the three schools that made it to my final sample (see Chapter one for a description of the data collection process). Given my research purpose and questions I coded and restructured the raw data obtained from one-on-one interviews with principals, focus group interviews with teachers and learners, my analysis of school codes of conduct and my observation of school premises, staff and learner relationships in terms of my specific foci.

In the first instance, I present a description of the context in which my investigation took place. Having done so, I provide a verbal sketch of the culture and climate of each school, relating it to learner behavior, school community relations, the code of conduct and the impact it has on the behavior of learners in the school concerned. Using these individual case study sketches as a basis, I consider the insights that the coding and structuring of the data gave me regarding the relationship between learner behavior and codes of conduct. It is these insights that form the basis for the final chapter of my report, in which I attempt to answer my original research questions.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

I used convenience sampling and restricted my investigation to secondary schools in the area where I live, namely the Tshwane South district. I then approached the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) for an alphabetical list

of secondary schools in the area. Informed by my assumption that there is a link between socio-economic status and morality, I asked the GDE to indicate which schools on the list were regarded as serving 'poor', 'average' or 'wealthy' communities. From this list I planned to randomly select twenty-five schools. This was not, however, possible, because the number of schools in each socio-economic category was uneven. Since there were only three schools in the 'poor' category, I decided to randomly select only three schools from each of the other categories ('average' and 'wealthy') as well.

Having randomly selected the nine schools I arranged a meeting with each of the principals to inform them about my study and to obtain a general sense not only of learner behaviour in their schools, but also of the impact that they thought their schools codes of conduct had on learner behaviour. After meeting with the principals, I arranged another meeting with them to conduct a short semi-structured question interview (see Figure 3.1). These interviews were conducted during school hours at a convenient time for the principals as arranged with them.

Using the insights I gained during the interviews I purposively selected a final stratified sample. More specifically, I planned to purposively select two categories of schools, one in which there seemed to be a correlation between learner behaviour and the school code of conduct, and one where this did not seem to be the case. Given the decrease in my initial sample, however, I ended up with only three schools, one where the principal regarded the behaviour of learners as poor, one where it was regarded as average, and one where it was regarded as good.

Having selected the cases for my final sample I obtained copies of the school codes of conduct from the principals concerned. I also asked them to identify teachers and learners who would be willing to share their views on the relationship between learner behaviour and codes of conduct in their schools with me. The use of knowledgeable people, like the principals, to identify additional

research participants (teachers and learners in my case) is an example of snowball sampling (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). My only criterion for the selection of learners was that the final group should consist of no fewer than ten learners who, together, would be representative of the learner population in terms of gender, socio-economic status, culture and behavior.

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview questions

1. Please tell me a bit about the history of your school and the way it has changed over the years.
2. Could you please give me an indication of the current learner population of the school – numbers enrolled, gender, language, race, socio-economic position and so forth?
3. What about the teaching staff? For example, are most of the teachers male or female? Is there a correlation between the composition of the teaching staff and the learner population in terms of gender, language, culture and race?
4. If you were to compare the behaviour of learners in your school with those in other secondary schools in South Africa, would you say that it is above average, average or below average? Please explain why you say so.
5. Why do you think learner behaviour in your school is the way you described it? What factors, according to you, affect the way they conduct themselves? Why do you say so?
6. What do you think could be done to improve the behaviour of school learners in general *and, if applicable*, in your school learner in particular?

Figure 3.1: School principals semi-structured interview schedule

It was during the course of semi-structured interviews with school principals that I became aware of not only a sense of learner behaviour in their schools but also of the relationship between such behaviour and their school codes of conduct. Given my assumption that codes of conduct with a moral intent have a more positive impact on learner behaviour than those with a purely administrative intent, I started my actual investigation with an analysis of the codes of conduct of the schools in the final sample. My analysis took place at two levels. First, I compared each code with the stipulations regarding school codes of conduct contained in the 'Guidelines for the Consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners' (DoE, 1998) to determine the extent to which the individual school codes satisfied the DoE criteria. Thereafter I used insights gained from literature for a deeper analysis, one aimed at determining whether the primary intent of each school's code of conduct was administrative or moral.

Using the results of this analysis, I opted for a semi-structured focus group regarding the learners and teachers. This data collection method (focus group) however was not feasible as two of the three school principals indicated that they were not comfortable with this data collection method. A decision was then made to rather use a semi structured questionnaire where I hoped to determine the thoughts of selected teachers and learners on the school discipline and codes of conduct. In analyzing their views, I hoped that I would gain a better insight into the reasons for the impact or not of their current codes of conduct on learner behaviour.

Therefore, as basis, I constructed semi-structured questionnaires for the teachers (see Figure 4.2) and the learners (see Figure 4.3). The group of teachers and learners consisted of at least 10 participants and were representative of race and gender. The teacher group completed their questionnaire after school hours. In all 3 instances I was available if they had any questions. After completion, the teachers indicated which learners could possibly be interviewed.

A parent form (see Annexure H) was given to every learner who participated in the research. After consent was obtained, from both the parents and the learners who participated, the selected learner group was gathered. The questionnaires of two of the groups were completed during school breaks, while the other group was completed after school. I was available throughout this process for any questions or where clarity was needed.

Teacher questionnaire

1. Please tell me a bit about your school and the way people – management and teachers, teachers and learners, learners and learners, parents and teachers, et cetera – relate to one another.
2. Would you say that the learners in your schools are relatively well behaved? Why do you say so?
3. How do you feel about school codes of conduct in general? Do you think they have an effect on learner behaviour? Why/why not?
4. Should cultural, gender and other differences be considered in the development and implementation of codes of conduct? If so, what factors? If not, why not?
5. How do you feel about your school code of conduct? Is it a good one or not? What would you change if you could? Why?
6. How was your school code of conduct developed? Who were involved in its development and what were their roles in this regard? If you could change the developmental process, would you? If so, why, and how would you do it?
7. How was your school's code of conduct introduced to the school community? Did role players have the opportunity of commenting on it? Did you have a formal launch or was it just implemented?
8. Have you seen a difference in learner behaviour since the school code of conduct was implemented? To what do you ascribe this difference or its lack?
9. Do you think that school codes of conduct should be revised on a regular basis? If so, why, and how often should this happen?

Figure 3.2: Teacher questionnaire

Learner questionnaire

1. Please tell me a bit about your school. Do you like being here? Why/why not?
2. How do learners in your school generally conduct themselves? Do they treat teachers with respect or are they sometimes rude or violent? How do they behave towards other learners? Is there a lot of bullying? What about drug abuse and boy-girl relations?
3. What about teachers? How do they usually treat you, the learners? Do they shout at you or humiliate you? If so, how does that make you feel? How would you like to be treated?
4. Are you happy with the way people treat each other in the school? If not, what would you change and why?
5. I am told that your school has its own code of conduct. How do you feel about your school code of conduct? Is it a good one or not? Why/why not? What would you change if you could?
6. What is included in this code of conduct? What kind of rules and regulations does it contain? Does it spell out the consequences of misbehaviour? Does it spell out disciplinary procedures and so forth? Please tell me as much about this code as you can.
7. Do you think there should be different rules, regulations and punishments for boys and girls? Why/why not?
8. What about different rules, regulations and punishments for people from different cultures, ages, races and religions? Why/why not?
9. Now let's focus on the way in which the code was developed. Who was involved in its development and what roles did these people perform in this regard?
10. What about the implementation of the code? How and by whom was it introduced to you, the learners? Who is responsible for seeing to it that learners adhere to the code? What happens if they don't?
11. Do you think your code of conduct is effective? In other words, does it have a positive effect on learner behaviour? If so, why? If not, what do you think should be changed to make sure that it does?
12. Do you think the time has come for your code of conduct to be revised? If not, why not? If yes, how and by whom should this be done?

Figure 3.3: Learner questionnaire

Data analysis was both inductive and deductive. In that each data collection episode was followed by a data analysis episode, with the results of each analysis informing subsequent data collection activities, analysis was inductive. In that the coding of culminating data started with the grouping of major categories of information (*open coding*), proceeded to the identification of core issues/themes (*axial coding*), and ended with the development of propositions (*axial coding*) (Strauss and Corbin 1990) analysis was deductive.

After the data was transcribed, a summary was compiled. I discussed this summary with each focus group in the three schools and clarified whether the information I obtained was true and reflective of their views and opinions. Additional information was obtained from this and the data was also included in the research data. After completion the participants in each focus group were satisfied regarding the accurate interpretation of their views and opinions.

3.3 Research context

Three schools were included in my investigation of the relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behavior. All three schools are in the Tshwane South school district, which is in Gauteng. Two of the three schools are in Mamelodi. The other one is in Atteridgeville. Informed by my perceptions of the three schools I have given them new names. Not only do these names reflect what I perceive to be the personality and management style of the principal but it also ensures that the schools remain anonymous, as I promised the principals when I first approached them.

Mamelodi, which means ‘mother of melodies’, is situated approximately 20km east of Pretoria. Established as a township for displaced black people in 1953, Mamelodi initially consisted of 16 houses, a far cry from the close to one million people currently residing there. The Mamelodi population has also changed. Its first residents were blue collar workers, employed at bottle-making and brick

factories. The current population is much more diverse, comprising people from all levels of society, pursuing a wide spectrum of careers, as is the case in the rest of the country.

Driving through Mamelodi, on my way to meet the school principal, I saw the diversity reflected in the houses - some of brick, some of corrugated iron, and some of clay – some well maintained, others left to the forces of nature. A state of disrepair was also evident in the roads. Tared roads were pitted with pot holes, dirt roads basically eroded. Street names were non-existent. No one seemed to obey any traffic signs or rules. Pavements had become the domain of free-ranging chickens and goats and litter was strewn around everywhere. Even so, there were a large number of cafes and ‘shebeens’, all of which seemed to be thriving. Everybody seemed to be congregating there, even children in school uniform, during school hours. I wondered whether anybody cared, whether morality had taken a back seat to survival, whether education had a chance in a place like this.

Terrified that I might be hijacked or killed, given Mamelodi’s reputation for crime and violence, I was determined not to stop and ask anybody for directions. To me, a typical white, middleclass male, used to structure, organization, and discipline, Mamelodi was the epitome of chaos and neglect.

Atteridgeville is situated south-west of the Tshwane (Pretoria) Central Business District, and is linked to the city via Church Street. Founded in 1939, it was named after a former city council member, Mrs MP Atteridge, in 1940, A total of 1,533 houses were built between 1940 and 1949, to accommodate people removed from Marabastad, Newclare, Bantule, Lady Selborne and Hove’s Ground. The multi-cultural Atteridgeville population currently comes to approximately 200 000.

Unlike Mamelodi, Atteridgeville seemed cleaner and more organized to me when I first drove through it. The paths leading to the suburb are all tarred and it is greener than Mamelodi. The streets have names and direction boards are clearly visible. Most of the people obey traffic rules. Most houses are made of brick, are surrounded by low walls or fences and most of the gardens are neat. Hawkers are everywhere, trying to sell merchandise ranging from car products to food. It is noticeable that there is much more plants and grass than at Mamelodi. Whereas I felt unsafe in Mamelodi, here I was merely cautious. .

3.4 Case study 1: BOSS secondary school

3.4.1 School culture and climate

BOSS was established in 2001 and is a Quintile 1 ('poorest of the poor') secondary school. The total learner enrolment at the time of my investigation was 1400. Classes are large, typically 45 or more learners per class, and resources for learners and staff are scarce. The staff component consists of 18 male teachers, 26 female teachers, 2 cleaners and 1 gardener/security guard. On my arrival, the gates were locked and the gardener, doing double duty as a security guard, made me sign a 'visitors' book for 'security reasons'. He did nothing, though, to stop learners from leaving and entering the school premises through the holes in the wire fencing. The principal's office, however, seemed relatively secure, with thick burglar bars in front of the windows and across the entire ceiling. According to the principal the '*reinforced security*', was necessary because '*thieves come in to steal electrical appliances, cables and metal objects*', probably the reason why the school has only one computer and one photo-copier.

Teachers were unhappy at the school, regarding it as dysfunctional because 'there are no systems in place'. 'If I had it my way I would quit today from my school', one teacher claimed. Learners, though, liked being at school even

though they were unhappy with the way teachers treated them. Intrigued by this, I asked what it was that they liked about being at school. Their response: they felt 'safe', the school 'provided' them with food, they did not have to pay school fees and they received all their 'stationery for free'. The principal confirmed that a feeding scheme, sponsored by various organizations, provides 90% of the learners with their daily meal. He also pointed out that at school the learners '*do have running water, a privilege most learners don't enjoy at home*'. Moreover, they are allowed to take water home, even though this means that some of them have to carry it as far as four to eight kilometers at a time.

3.4.2 Learner behaviour

Although the principal acknowledged that bullying, stabbing, and learners being in possession of firearms at his school used to be a feature of learner behaviour in his school, he claims that this is no longer the case. According to him, these transgressions were committed by 'over-age' learners and, since the introduction of 'age limits per grade' incidents like these have disappeared. He then mentioned that some behavioural problems are caused by learners' socio-economic circumstances but that he does not accept that as an excuse since it is circumstances like these that should motivate learners to 'do better' and 'create a better life' for themselves. Informed by these claims, the principal expressed his opinion that learner behaviour in his school is no worse than in any other school in the area. In fact, he indicated, he knows that it is not because principals talk about learner behaviour at their regularly scheduled principals' meetings. Teachers disagreed. According to teachers, bullying, violent fighting, drug abuse, pornography, vandalism, littering and raping are common at the school. According to them, and the principal agreed, this might be due to a lack of parental involvement.

3.4.3 School community relationships

During their focus group interview teachers indicated that there was no unity amongst the staff and little communication between management and teachers. They ascribed this to the principal's authoritarian management style, claiming that teachers are 'demoralized because some, if not most, of the ideas forwarded during staff meetings are vetoed by the principal'. Relationships between teachers and learners are, however, fine, the teachers claimed. Learners disagreed. According to them, teachers 'do not care'; they 'only come to school to get paid, whether they do their job or not'. Some even come to school 'under the influence of alcohol'. While some teachers try to 'motivate' them they tend to focus on the negative effect of not learning - 'failing' - rather than on the benefits to learners if they were to pass. Moreover, the learners claimed, some teachers humiliate them through 'name calling', and corporal punishment, which teachers equate with 'love' and the means to help learners pass. Worst of all, according to learners, is that teachers 'force' pregnant girls to 'leave school'.

The principal and teachers are in agreement about the lack of parental involvement in the school. 'It really seems like they (the children) come to a day-care centre; they (*the parents*) do not get involved in their children's education'. This, all parties agreed, might be one of the reasons learners misbehave at school.

3.4.4 School code of conduct

When I first spoke to the principal he indicated that he did not have a copy available at the moment because it was in the process of being 'reviewed', something that happens every year. When I enquired as to the reason, the principal indicated that it was because the code formed part of the Constitution of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). According to him, the new RCL first discusses possible changes to the existing code with teachers. On

conclusion of the consultation 'period', the RCL gives each class representative a copy of the code. S/he then informs learners in his class of the content. New learners receive a copy of the code and teachers explain the rules to them.

Impressed by the apparently 'democratic' spirit informing the development of the code I agreed to return for a copy. Although the principal and I agreed on a date I had to return to the school four times before I had a copy in hand. By this time, as is evident from an entry I made in my research journal, I was highly frustrated, and beginning to doubt whether the school really had a code of conduct.

"I cannot believe that I am driving back AGAIN to the school for their code of conduct. This is now the fourth time. Do they even have a code of conduct?"

Having eventually obtained a copy of the RLC Constitution, which comprised four pages, I was pleasantly surprised by its user-friendly tone and style as well as what seemed to be a commitment to the values and human rights of the Constitution. The 'objectives' of the code - to achieve unity, to maintain a healthy environment, and to embrace an all inclusive decision making process – led me to believe that the rules and regulations in the code would be aimed not only at the attainment of these objectives but also at the promotion of the values and the protection of the human rights informing them (see Figure 3.4 for the code of conduct summary or for complete code of conduct, see Annexure E).

Having rearranged the rules in terms of what, to me, seemed to be their primary thrust, I came to the conclusion that they were aimed at one of two things - the creation of a particular school image or on the maintenance of an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Rules dealing with school attendance, punctuality, class disruptions, and vandalism are clearly focused on the creation of a sound teaching/learning environment whereas rules on dress code, hair style, and treatment of visitors are primarily concerned with the image of the

school and its learners. Others, aimed at the elimination of unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, fighting, gambling, possession of weapons, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, and the use of foul language could be related to either the creation of a healthy teaching/learning environment or to the image of the school as a whole.

'BOSS' SECONDARY SCHOOL – SUMMARY OF CODE OF CONDUCT

Constitution of the representative council of learners (RCL)

Learner's code of conduct

- Learners should be in classes within three minutes of the bell for the end of the lesson.
- Learners are not to be in the toilets without the educators permission.
- Arriving late for class, giving being from the toilets as a reason is unacceptable.
- Learners are to be in possession of permission card/note from staff member who delayed him/her to arrive late.
- Learners found outside after the three minutes of changing periods are to be in possession of permission card from an educator
- Learners should stand and greet an educator at the beginning of the lesson
- Learners may not disrupt other classes in progress.
- Indecent laughing and attention seeking outburst are not allowed.
- Talking with raised voice or whistling is unacceptable.
- Authority of educators shall be respected.
- Educators may request a learner to separate himself/herself from other learners if he/she is causing disturbances in the order of the class.
- Learners are to maintain at school for the duration of the school day. Permission to leave early must be obtained from the office.

Absenteeism

- School attendance is compulsory. Absence from school is viewed in a very serious light.
- If a learner is absent from school for more than ten days in a term, parents will be notified.
- If a learner is absent, a letter from parents must be produced on the learner's return and handed to register educator. This letter will be filed.
- Learners are expected to produce a Doctor's sick note if absent.
- Learner bunking lessons are to suffer consequences. Bunking of lessons is unacceptable.

Homework

- Homework is to completed and be presented during the next lesson.
- It is no excuse to leave books at home, homework shall be considered not done.

Foul Language

- Learners are to use respectful language towards educators and fellow learners.
- Swearing and or undesirable language is not allow.

Theft

- Theft is viewed as a criminal offence. Learners caught stealing may be charged with a criminal offence.

Harassment / Fighting

- Fighting cannot be condoned.
- Even under provocation, fighting will not be accepted.
- Encouraging a fight will not be accepted.
- Bullying others will not be tolerated.
- Verbal or physical harassment will not be tolerated.
- Rude behaviour towards educators cannot be tolerated.
- Unnecessary back -chatting to educators cannot be condoned.
- Revenging or retaliation will not be accepted.
- Sexually harassment will not be accepted.

Public appearance

- Learner must not engage in excessive physical contact, i.e. fondling, caressing etc.
- Public indecency is prohibited, e.g. urinating in public or against the wall.

Gambling

- Gambling of any kind is prohibited, e.g. throwing of dice~ spinning etc.
- Gambling in class, toilets or anywhere in the school premises is not allowed.

Weapons

- Learners are not allowed to carry dangerous weapons to school, i.e. guns, knives, pangas, etc.
- Learners may be searched for weapons at any time.
- Weapons will be confiscated.

Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs

- Learners should not be found in possession of smoking materials i.e.
- Learners may not be under the influence of alcohol.
- Spectatorship of smoking and alcohol drinking is not allowed.

Vandalism

- Learners are to be proud of their school property.
- Destruction, defacing of school property is unacceptable.
- Learners will be held liable for all damage caused to school property.
- Vandalism also includes breaking of school furniture, writing on school furniture, breaking windows / doors.
- Learners are not to write their names on chairs or desks. Writing anything on desks is regarded as vandalism.

Learner appearances

- Learners are request to take pride in their personal appearance.
- Learners are to be neat at all times.
- Male learners are to tug their shirt inside their trousers at all times.
- Shoes are to be polished on daily basis.
- All learners are to have combined out hair.
- Fancy hair styles, singles, dreadlocks, artificial hair are not allowed.
- Hair may not be dyed.
- Hair must always be neat.
- Female learners may not wear make-up i.e. eyebrows, colourful lipsticks, etc.
- Whistling in the school premises is not allowed.
- Learners are not allowed to shout or call each other by raising their voices loudly.
- Learners may not spit or throw object off balconies.
- Littering is not allowed. Learners are to use the provided dustbins. "MANNERS MAKES THE MAN", learners should be respectful and courteous to all adults in the school premises and to all visitors.
- Learners should show polite behaviour when queuing to buy food during breaks.
- "BE HELPFUL"! If a visitor appears to be lost or needs help, politely ask if assistance is needed.
- Remember to use the words "PLEASE" and "THANK YOU" and smile.
- Learners are expected to behave impeccable on and off the school premises.
- Talking to strangers or any other person over the fence during school hours is not allowed.
- Staffrooms and Administration block is out of bounds for learners except learners on specific errands. ..
- Learners may not bring walkmans, radios etc to school without permission from educators.
- Chewing gum is not allowed.
- Learners may not bring the following to school, roller blades, skateboards, roller skates and cell phones. Learners shall report to school fifteen minutes before the school starts.
- The first bell shall ring five minutes before the starting time.
- Learners shall immediately assemble at assembly and stand quietly in their rows.

Assembly

- Assembly shall be called at least twice a week.
- Learners shall form straight rows according to their classes.
- There is to be total silence at the assembly grounds.
- Jeering, booing and any kind of outburst/or derogatory remarks are not allowed.
- Learners are not to shout anybody conducting assembly.

Figure 3.4: 'Boss' secondary school – summary of code of conduct

I was, however, somewhat amazed at what seemed to me the ‘absoluteness’ of certain rules, which gave me a sense that the overall purpose of the rules was external control rather than self-discipline. This inflexibility was especially evident in rules dealing with punctuality, toilet breaks, time allowed to change classes, homework and class disruptions. Not only does the code forbid any learner from leaving the class, for whatever reason, even to go to the toilet, without ‘permission’ but it also imposes a limit on the time they are allowed to move from one class to the other. The code also warns learners that ‘absenteeism’ is regarded in a ‘very serious light’, so serious that it is mandatory for learners who have been absent from school to submit a letter from either a parent or a doctor. Learners are warned that these letters *will* be filed for future reference.

That the code of conduct also attempts to teach learners socially acceptable behaviour could be inferred from the emphasis that the code places on pleasing social behaviour, rules that address language usage and conduct towards teachers, fellow learners and visitors. Learners are urged, for example, to be polite, to ‘*smile*’ and ‘*say please and thank you*’ to visitors, not to ‘*back-chat*’ teachers, and to ‘*use respectful language*’ in their dealings with teachers and fellow learners. Learners are also warned in the code that ‘*indecent laughing*’, ‘*attention seeking*’ ‘*outbursts*’, ‘*talking with raised voices*’ and ‘*whistling*’ in classes are forbidden. One could possibly argue that some of these rules are, albeit not explicitly, aimed at the inculcation of the respect, non-violence, tolerance – all derived from the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The way in which they are phrased, however, suggests otherwise. More particularly, their phrasing as non-negotiable commands - ‘*will not be tolerated*’, ‘*will be confiscated*’ – suggest that it is the adults/teachers who are in charge and the children/learners who must obey. The ‘zero tolerance’ attitude towards those who *dare* to disobey their elders is also reflected in the wording of rules which, on the surface, seem to have the safety of teachers and learners at heart. Examples of these are:

'No dangerous weapons are allowed at the school'.

'Searches may be conducted at any time'.

'All weapons will be confiscated'.

'Learners will be held liable for all damages caused to school property'.

Finally, the code includes a special section on learner behaviour during assemblies. In this section learners are instructed to *'line up'* and warned that no *'shouting, booing, jeering, outbursts or any derogatory remarks'* will be 'tolerated'.

3.4.5 Impact of code of conduct on learner behaviour

The principal, the teachers and the learners at the school were in agreement that a code of conduct could, in a positive way, assist in the maintenance of positive discipline because learners would be 'clear on the rules and the consequences'. More specifically, according to one of the teachers, a code could ensure 'consistency' because all the teachers would be bound to the infliction of discipline as stipulated in the code.

The principal, referring to his school's code of conduct, was adamant that it held learners 'accountable to their commitments that they make in there'. Teachers and learners had a very different opinion. A number of teachers found the code ineffective, claiming that it was 'just a piece of paper that is put safely in a file somewhere in the strong room'. According to them, 'the code was just developed to please the Department'. Others were not even aware that there was a code. According to them, 'neither the SGB nor the parents know about this document'. According to yet others, who seemed to support the views already expressed, 'learners do not have a set of rules given to them; they only listen to what we say'.

Interestingly enough, some learners agreed with the teachers that they did not know 'the contents of the code of conduct' probably because, as another learner

explained, it is 'sometimes hidden'. Others indicated that the RCL had 'drafted and introduced' a code of conduct to them, believing that 'they' (the RCL) 'knew what we deserve'. Some learners found many of the rules 'oppressive', especially the ones on uniform and hair style which, they indicated, they would like to be 'relaxed'. At least half the learners indicated that they would be happier with the code of conduct, and more inclined to obey it, if it also stipulated the consequences associated with the transgression of each rule. According to this group, this kind of uniformity would ensure that punishment is 'fair' to everybody.

Following this comment I asked whether the rules and punishments should accommodate gender and cultural differences. While some learners considered this a possibility the majority were quite adamant that no distinctions or exceptions should be considered. According to this group, learners, they did not 'care' about gender or cultural differences. 'If they enter the school premises, they must do what is supposed to be done in school, rather than doing what is supposed to be done at the streets or at home. There is only place for one culture, and that is the school's culture', they said.

3.3.6 Conclusion

Based on what I found at BOSS I came to the conclusion that all is not well. While learners like coming to school this is not because they enjoy learning. Instead, it is because the school provides them with food and water, the basic necessities of life. This, by their own admission, makes them 'feel safe'. The way teachers treat them – calling them names, threatening them with failure, and beating them undermine this safety. Moreover, the ways in which the rules in the code of conduct restrict their freedom of movement and speech make no contribution to their moral development. Instead of teaching them the value of self-restraint, it stifles their curiosity and creativity. Instead of teaching them how to exercise their rights responsibly it teaches them to blindly obey. This they do, even though they disagree with the rules because this is the culture of the school.

This also relates to the culture of poverty within which they were born, which by implication teaches them how to behave and/or to survive.

Although the learners like school, this does not mean that they are happy at school. Relationships among the different members of the school community, including learners, are tense. Teachers are unhappy and dissatisfied with the way in which the principal manages the school; learners are unhappy with the way the teachers treat them; the principal is unhappy because thieves break in and steal equipment that is essential to the effective running of the school. The principal, hiding behind conditions at neighbouring schools, refuses even to acknowledge that there is a problem. A degree of shame and blame surrounds everybody involved at the school.

Notwithstanding the grand ideals expressed in the RCL Constitution, the school environment is anything but conducive to good teaching and learning. Instead of promoting 'self-discipline' and encouraging 'exemplary conduct' by allowing learners to observe and experience', BL's code of conduct serves only as a means of controlling learner behaviour. Even in this sense it falls short. It does not include the consequences of misbehaving; it does not describe disciplinary procedures or due process. Its contents are not properly communicated. As regards the promotion of values and the protection of learner rights the code fails outright. Nowhere does it set a standard for 'moral behavior', develop leadership, or equip learners with the 'expertise, knowledge and skills' required of 'worthy and responsible citizens' (DoE 1998, section 1.4).

3.5 Case study 2: TEAM secondary school

3.5.1 School culture and climate

TEAM, established in an old beer hall in 1978, is situated in Mamelodi West, in the older part of the town. Big trees, green grass and plants surround the school. The streets, pavements and gardens are clean and tidy and the houses, mostly

brick buildings, have well-maintained gardens. In 1979 TEAM it moved to a new structure. Originally envisaged as a Junior Secondary School, it gradually expanded to include senior learners. In 1988 its first group of matriculants wrote the school-leaving examination. Learner enrolment, which used to be around 1500, currently stands at 1073 because many learners have now moved to the newly developed eastern part of Mamelodi East. The learner population is made up of Zulus, Tsongas, Swazis and Ndebele's, with female learners outnumbering the males.

The school is surrounded by a palisade brick wall and all the gates are locked during school time. Since there was no security guard around to open the gate, I struggled to enter. Even though I had an appointment I just had to wait until somebody realized that I was there. I noticed, while I was waiting, that there were burglar bars in front of all the windows and that there was very little litter lying around on the playground, very different from BL. Somebody eventually spotted me at the gate, fetched the keys from reception, let me in, and accompanied me to the principal's office where I had to wait. On the way there I passed a number of learners and educators, some of whom greeted me politely while others simply ignored me.

While I waited for the principal I studied the pictures and trophies on display in his office. Prominently displayed were the vision and mission statements replicated here.

Vision Statement

To provide an effective quality education to the community that we serve with intension to produce a society that is equal to the challenge of life.

Mission Statement

To develop the school as a whole to ensure a clean, safe environment, good discipline, productiveness and effective learning is maintained.

The appearance of the school grounds, the way I was received, together with the symbolic representations of school culture in the principal's office gave me a sense that this was a very different school to the one I had previously visited. Perhaps, I thought, it was because the school, which was categorized as a Quintile 3 (average socio-economic status) school, serviced a somewhat higher socio-economic group. After all, their school fees were R300 per annum. I was somewhat surprised, therefore, to learn that a large number of the learners qualified for food provided by the school feeding scheme.

3.5.2 Learner behaviour

The principal and teachers alike acknowledge that the school has some problems with learner behaviour but not as many as the media claims. According to them, learners are usually quite well behaved. Unacceptable learner behaviour included bullying, fighting between learners, stealing, smoking and 'bunking of classes'. Their biggest problem currently, according to the principal, is drug-related, with learners 'experimenting' with different kinds of drugs. As yet they do not know how to deal with this problem.

According to the principal, the best way to improve learner behaviour is through parental involvement. Such involvement, he believes, contributes to better relationships and ensures that parents, teachers and learners work together. He is convinced that teachers undermine their own authority by too easily giving up on problems. As far as he is concerned their impact on learner behaviour would be much greater if they 'worked as a team', 'preached team work' to learners, and

showed concern not only for their subjects but also for the ‘personal well-being of learners’.

When asked whether the diversity of the learner population has any effect on learner behaviour, the principal indicated that he has not as yet encountered this but that they ‘try not to emphasize that (*the diversity*) too much’.

3.5.3 School community relationships

Notwithstanding indications that, in a sense, the principal believes that teachers do not utilize their potential to the full, there seems to be a good relationship between him and his staff. Teachers indicated that there is ‘good communication’ between them and ‘management’, and that the principal and his management team ‘respect’ and give them ‘clear guidance’. The relationship with parents was, however, poor. Because of this, the school made the effort to specifically invite younger parents and parents of new learners to get involved in school matters. Unfortunately, according to the principal and teachers, the drive was unsuccessful.

Most teachers also believed that the relationship between learners and teachers was good. Not all learners agreed, indicating that it ‘could be better’. According to them it is up to the teacher to ‘respect the learner’ otherwise the learner will lose respect for the teacher and ‘start misbehaving’. Others were more vehement, accusing teachers of being ‘unprofessional’, shouting and swearing at learners in order to get rid of their own ‘stress’. The third group was more discerning, indicating that while the majority of teachers treat them ‘well’ there are some who treat them ‘like dogs’.

3.5.4 School code of conduct

The TEAM Code of Conduct (see Figure 3.5 for the code of conduct summary or for the complete code of conduct, see Annexure F) consists of three pages and is extremely user-friendly. Informing the code is the determination to create a disciplined environment. This, according to the principal, will ensure that the school functions properly and attains its objectives. These objectives, listed in the code, are to:

- Facilitate learning and teaching in the school
- Ensure that there is order and discipline in the school
- Provide guidelines for the conduct and set standards of moral behaviour
- Promote self-discipline and constructive learning.

Like the BOSS code of conduct, the TEAM code also deals with learner appearance, punctuality, class disruptions, absenteeism, homework, language, and various unacceptable behaviours. Unlike the BOSS code, though, it one provides reasons for the rules. The section on learner appearance, for example, describes in detail what the uniform for boys and girls is in different seasons. While stating that it is compulsory to wear the correct school uniform, the code emphasizes that the real reason why they should wear their uniform with pride is that it identifies them as members of their school, a membership of which they should be proud of.

The consequences of transgressing the rules are clearly spelt out. Provided that code is implemented as it should be learners would have little reason to feel that they are being unfairly treated when they are punished. Because the rules address transgressions in general terms only, without hidden threats or military specificity, there is room for negotiation and flexibility in exceptional circumstances. Also, the use of 'shall not' instead of dictatorial phrases like 'prohibited', 'not tolerated', et cetera, as was the case in the BOSS code,

suggests that learners are expected to restrain themselves, to accept responsibility for their own behaviour, rather than trying to buck the system. Interestingly, learners objected to the flexibility inherent in the code. According to them, more rules should be added to the code and the code itself needs to be stricter.

'TEAM' SECONDARY SCHOOL – SUMMARY OF CODE OF CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE LEARNERS AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES AND PROCEDURES.

1. THE AIM OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- a. To Facilitate learning and teaching in the school
- b. To ensure that there is order and discipline in the school
- c. To provide guidelines for conduct and set standards of moral behavior.
- d. To promote self-discipline and constructive learning.

2. SCOPE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The code of conduct must be adhered to on school property before, during and after school hours and at all school events, both on and off the school property.

3. THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The school can function properly and attain its objectives only in a disciplined environment. The basis of such discipline resides in the rules to which all learners without exception shall adhere.

LEARNERS SHALL NOT:

- Be late for school in the morning or for class.
- Wear clothes other than the prescribed uniform as set out in this school policy.
- Skip classes.
- Fail to do or complete work assigned to them by educators.
- Cheat or be dishonest in a test or examination.
- Be absent from school without good reason
- Be disrespectful and or arrogant towards educators in the course of their duties.
- Disrupt class routine, for example, by making a noise or making out of turn comments or jokes.
- Fight or bully other learners
- Steal from educators or other learners
- Be in possession of weapons of any kind
- Smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or be in possession of land or use drugs of any kind.
- Commit any offence *crime* that would discredit the school.
- Use obscene language.
- Threaten fellow learners and or educators.

4. SCHOOL UNIFORM & GENERAL APPEARANCES

School uniform is by definition "the distinctive dress worn by members of the same body"
School uniform is to be worn proudly. Learners are encouraged to be neat at all times. Personal appearance is important. We believe that it enhances a sense of personal pride. Trendy fashion styles in the school are therefore discourage.

Figure 3.5: 'Team' secondary school – summary of code of conduct

The code states that all learners 'shall adhere' to all the rules in the code of conduct, 'before, during and after school hours', and 'at all school events, both on and off the school property. Teachers and learners were divided on the issue of different punishments for boys and girls on the one hand and the accommodation of cultural differences on the other. One of the teachers is of the opinion that consideration should be given to 'disability' but she was vague on what this should entail. Another teacher, pointing out that the code currently prohibits all accessories, thought that it might be time to allow cultural accessories such as those that boys and girls are expected to wear after initiation. Some learners like the idea that girls and boys should be punished differently, citing physical differences between them as justification; others objected to the fact, adding that it would be unfair.

Where the code is definitely lacking is in its lack of attention to due process. This point was also raised by learners, who indicated that they were unsure of the school's disciplinary procedures. All they knew was that if a learner misbehaves badly s/he will be ordered to report to the deputy principal's office. Given that 'serious misbehaviour' is directly related to the individual teacher's and/or the deputy principal's subjective judgment, it undermines consistency and could result in 'unfair' punishment.

Most teachers and learners were unsure about the way in which their code was developed and implemented because it took place a long time ago. They agreed, however, that all stakeholders should take part in the developmental process and that the code itself should be revised on a regular basis. As regards implementation, the principal explained that it was the responsibility of the register teacher to provide each learner in her/his class with a copy of the code and to discuss it with them. Based on this discussion, the learners, in conjunction with the teacher concerned, have to formulate classroom rules which are in line with the code of conduct. According to some learners their register teachers neglected to discuss the code. According to them they were issued with the code

and told to 'paste it' into their books. Some learners were of the opinion that the code should be 'more visible'. Teachers, on the other hand, were more concerned about the fact that new learners, those who enroll after the beginning of the year, are either not provided with a code or do not have it explained to them.

Although teachers and learners agreed that a good code of conduct should have a positive effect on learner behaviour they were not all that sure that the TEAM code was as effective as it should be. While learners ascribed the seeming ineffectiveness to 'unclear' rules, teachers ascribed it to poor implementation and lacked monitoring.

3.5.5 Conclusion

Indications are that learner behaviour in TEAM is generally acceptable. While there are learners who misbehave, discipline seems, on the whole, better than at other schools in the area. This could be due to a number of interdependent factors - a culture of mutual respect (with some exceptions), an environment that is clean and well secured, a climate of accommodation, the slightly higher socio-economic status from which the majority of learners come, the code of conduct, or a combination of all of these.

In that the rules are not simply stated, but justified and accompanied by consequences, it would seem as if the code serves both of the functions – administrative and moral - stipulated in relevant legislation and policies. In that the rules and their consequences leave room for flexibility, and the justifications encourage self-restraint and commitment to the vision and mission of the school, the code promotes positive discipline. Of concern is the omission of any reference to due process, the fact that the code has never been reviewed since its initial development and teachers' and learners' comments about inconsistent or non-implementation. The current school population may hold very different

values than the ones who were initially involved in the development of the code. Reviewing the code is therefore a moral imperative. Moreover, if parents, as key stakeholders, are specifically invited to participate in this process, the problem that the school encounters with parental non-involvement might be partially addressed. And if, as the principal and teachers agree, parental involvement usually results in better learner behavior, learners may surprise everybody with behavior that is no less than exemplary.

3.6 Case study 3: KHAYA secondary school

3.6.1 School context

Unlike the other two schools, which are located in Mamelodi, KHAYA is located in Atteridgeville. Khaya was established in 1979, mainly for pregnant schoolgirls but is now a co-educational school. The first cohort of boys was admitted in 1981, and in 1984 the school had its first matric group. The school now consist of 780 learners coming from a range of different ethnics groups.

Although the school is categorised as Quintile 2 (poor school), my overall impression was that it was well maintained. The school is surrounded by a wire fence and the only access to the school premises is via the main gate. This gate is controlled by a security guard. Each time I visited the school, there was also a metro police car patrolling the surrounding area. The grounds were impeccably neat. Woolworths helps the school with a feeding scheme for those learners who have no other source of feeding. An enormous vegetable garden was cultivated on the premises. Some of the school's walls served as art canvasses, displaying various pictures painted by the learners. Overall, the learners were friendly and helpful. All the teachers greeted me while I was waiting for the principal and they were dressed neatly. There seems to be order in the school and calmness.

Apart from the vision and mission statements of the school, which were prominently displayed in the principal's office, numerous trophies were displayed all over. My overall impression was that the school was very proud of its heritage and determined to keep its memory alive. This pride was reflected in the vision and mission statements, which read as follows:

- **Vision statement** – The institution seeks to achieve and uphold high standard of learning and teaching, to produce creative and critical thinkers and to lay strength and sound foundation for future careers.

- **Mission statement.** KHAYA is an open school which adopts its fundamental mission as:
 - The pursuit of academic excellence in the scientific search and discovery for transfer and dissemination of knowledge through research, teaching, learning and service to the society.
 - Develop full potential of individuals according to one's ability, aptitude and interest.
 - Applies academic merit as the primary criteria in the appointment of staff and admission of students.
 - Respect human dignity, values and rights of the individuals.
 - Pursues the development of its students as total person towards worthy, informed, balanced, independent and responsible citizens.
 - To promote teamwork amongst all stakeholders of the school
 - To uphold the schools motto: *Scientia Est Potentia*

These statements were not merely stated, but lived. This was evident from learner comments on the way in which they experience being a learner at this particular school. Without exception they indicated that they enjoyed being at KHAYA. This was not only because they feel safe and do not have to pay school fees, but also because their teachers are 'qualified, friendly and on time'. They

indicated, moreover, that the school strives to be the best, and that it believes that learners are able to reach their full potential according to their particular ability.

3.6.2 Learner behaviour

The principal, as well as the teachers interviewed, are 'very fortunate' in that the behavior of their learners, is 'superior' to that of other schools 'in the area'. When I asked on what basis they made that judgment, they told me that, in their 'interaction' with teachers from other schools, they 'usually share ... experiences'. The principal ascribes this good behavior to being 'in charge of the school', 'improved parental involvement, and 'visible policing'. The 'first institution', according to the principal, 'is home', but the help and support of the community is also important. If they could 'improve *this* relationship', he believed, they would be able to 'change the moral fibre of the school *and* the community'.

Tagging on to this, the principal indicated that the learners at his school were not perfect. Certain problems keep on recurring. These include 'bunking classes, bullying, smoking cigarettes, gambling, fighting with each other, and drug abuse'. According to learners, the major problem in the school is 'bullying', which is not addressed, primarily because learners, fearing retaliation, do not report it. When I inquired as to the reason for these problems, the principal mentioned socio-economic factors. He then told me about the many learners who are the sole providers for their families, who have no money and receive no help from the government. This not only distracts these learners' attention from their schoolwork but 'worrying' about their own and their family's survival also makes them short of temper. It is for learners like this, according to the principal, that the vegetable garden was created, and Woolworths was approached for help.

3.6.3 School community relationships

The principal and teachers alike indicated that the relationship between teachers and management is very good. There is proper communication on the side of management, and an open door policy to discuss issues and concerns. Overall the teachers felt that they were respected. While both the principal and the teachers emphasized the importance of parental involvement in school affairs, especially since it leads to better learner behavior, parents were only just beginning to show an interest.

Learners and teachers agreed that there was a good relationship amongst them, although teachers indicated that maintaining this kind of relationships was getting even more challenging. There were some learners who felt that the way in which some teachers expressed themselves did not always reflect sufficient sensitivity to the different backgrounds from which learners come. In addition, according to learners, teachers sometimes still inflicted corporal punishment for specific transgressions. Overall, though, learners seemed to like their teachers. According to them, teachers showed them the kind of 'love, care and acceptance' that caring 'parents' showed their children.

Peer relations among learners seem less amicable. Some learners complained that 'gossiping' occurred on a regular basis, others reported that 'ignorance' sometimes caused 'conflict...between learners of different cultural groups'. Consequently, they would 'like to address this problem by discussing differences on a more regular basis'. That there was cultural tension was confirmed by teachers, who indicated that 'different backgrounds lead to tension'. The principal, though, shrugged this off as a minor problem.

3.6.4 Code of conduct

The primary purpose of the KHAYA code of conduct (see 3.6 for the code of conduct summary or for the complete code of conduct, see Annexure G) is to ensure order and discipline in the school because, so it is assumed, this will 'facilitate learning and teaching' at the school and 'provide for legitimate disciplinary measures'. Learners are generally happy with the content of the code and do not want to change it to accommodate differences in gender, culture, age, race or religion. According to them, to do so would constitute 'illegal' and 'unfair discrimination'. While some teachers were open to the idea others were of the opinion that there was no need to change the code. Problems in this regard could, according to the latter group, be addressed by means of awareness programs where cultural and other differences are discussed.

Most of the teachers and learners believed that a code of conduct should be reviewed every year. In the reviewing process, all stakeholders should be consulted again. In the beginning the teachers however were concerned that "some of the things have been changed as the years gone by, but honestly those changes remained in the minutes, and the code of conduct has not changed"

The kind of behaviour addressed in the code does not differ much from that of the other two schools: punctuality, absenteeism, homework/class work, theft, violence, and banned substances. The code differs from the others, though, in that it also specifies prohibited areas, addresses school property issues and includes a section on parental responsibility. There are, however, a number of rules that are specifically aimed at ensuring that teaching and learning are not disrupted. One of these is that no cell phones are allowed at school. If there are urgent messages these should be left with the administrators who will convey it to the learners during break or after school.

'KHAYA' SECONDARY SCHOOL – SUMMARY OF CODE OF CONDUCT

WHY THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

- To ensure that there is order and discipline in the school.
- Facilitation of learning and teaching at school.
- To provide for legitimate discipline measures.

LEARNERS ARE EXPECTED TO:

1. Take care of all the school properties with utmost care.
2. Refrain from littering.
3. Behave respectfully towards educators, administrators, support staff as well as their fellow learners.
4. Cases of attempted intimidation in the classrooms or elsewhere will not be tolerated.
5. Punctuality in the morning and for each period is important.
6. Be present at all times during school hours.
7. Behave in a dignified and self-controlled manner in keeping with the high standards of our school.
8. Follow good hygiene procedures -washing regularly. Keeping the classrooms clean, toilets procedures.
9. No smoking is allowed for health reasons.
10. No drugs trafficking. This is a drug free zone.
11. Obey all the instructions given by the authority of the school i.e. principal, educators, administrators and the support staff.
12. Learners should provide parental excuse letters or relevant certificates when absent from school with dates and telephone numbers therein.
13. No dangerous weapons may be brought to school.
14. All valuables and money should be handed in to the school office for safekeeping if not then the school will not take any responsibility for the theft.
15. No Learners may go near the staff members' cars.
16. Learners belong in the classrooms not in the staff room.
17. If a student is absent from school for more than 10 school days without a valid and acceptable reason and without informing us about this absenteeism she/he will be deregistered. This decision is at the sole discretion of the principal.
18. The learners may not receive visitors during the school day. Urgent messages may be left with the administrators and they will hand it out at break or after school.
19. No cheating nor copying during tests and examinations will be tolerated.
20. Home work, class work, portfolios and projects should be done by all the learners at school.
21. Cellular telephones are prohibited.
22. If learners rock on chairs, tables or break doors and windows, a fine will be imposed upon the learner concerned.
23. Any physical violence on the premises will result in all the guilty parties being instantly suspended.

PARENTS / GUARDIANS

1. Parents/guardians should take full responsibility for their children
2. Make sure that children do their school work.
3. Learners should be punctual at all times.

The school welcomes parents to school. The better we know your child and the parent, the greater the benefit to your child. Feel warmly welcome to visit the secretary, principal or staff. The appointments with educators or principal may be made through the school administrators. If any problem arises at home (e.g. death of a family member) inform the school so that we can give the learner support at that time. If the child is sick please phone us and send us a letter or the relevant certificate and when she/he returns to school.

Four quarterly parents' meetings are held at school. We expect all the parents/guardians to be present as a sign of responsibility and accountability.

Important matters are communicated to parents by means of letters.

Figure 3.6: 'Kaya' secondary school – summary of code of conduct

As is the case in the TEAM code of conduct, the KHAYA code explains the rules in terms of the value they would have for the school in general and the learners in particular. Instead of emphasizing what learners are *not* allowed to do, this code focuses on what they *should* do. It *asks* them, for example, to 'behave respectfully' to 'obey educators, administrators, and support staff', urging them to behave in a 'dignified and self-controlled manner, in keeping with the high standards' of their school. In addition, the code contains 'rules' that are aimed at the protection of teachers' and learners' property and person. One of these is the rule that all valuables and money should be handed in at the school office for safekeeping. If the learners do not abide by this rule the school will not take any responsibility for the loss of property or theft. Others include learners not being allowed to go near staff members' cars or the staff room, and no visitors being allowed during school hours.

Like the other two codes the KHAYA code does, however, also include rules that, because they are non-negotiable, are phrased as commands and/or warnings. 'No attempted intimidation in the classrooms or elsewhere will (*for example*) be tolerated'. Neither will cheating or copying during tests and examinations. 'No dangerous weapons may be taken to school' and any 'physical violence on the premises will result in the guilty parties being instantly suspended'.

Rules on absenteeism are even more stringent and specific than those at BOSS. If absent from school, all learners are expected to provide parental excuse letters or relevant certificates. These letters should contain the date and the relevant phone number. Should a learner be absent from school for more than ten school days without a valid reason and without informing the school about this absenteeism, the principal can use his discretion and it may lead to deregistration.

The code of conduct invites and welcomes all parents to the school and explains the procedure if parents would like to visit the school. The code urges parents to

'full responsibility for their children', which includes ensuring that their children do their school work and arrive on time for school. It also emphasizes the importance of parents attending parents' meetings to ensure all round responsibility and accountability.

3.6.5. Impact of the code on learner behaviour

Teachers were unanimous in their view that the development and implementation of their code has had a positive effect on learner behaviour: they noticed a decrease in 'late coming' and behavioural problems in general and an increase in 'respect towards teachers'. They ascribe this not only to the fact that they have a code but to the quality of the code which, they claim, is 'superior'. Even so, they believe that the code cannot 'stand alone'; it needs 'parental involvement' to guarantee exemplary behaviour. Learners, too, regarded their code as 'fair' and, importantly, ensuring a 'safe environment'.

Concerning the **development** of the code, most of the teachers and learners said that the code was based on the Constitution, SASA, GDE, and other relevant education policies and document. Their description of the development process suggested that it was inclusive of all stakeholders. Each stakeholder had a section to look at - parents at governance issues, and learners at the Bill of Rights. Teachers were responsible for managing and overseeing the whole process, providing information, and giving feedback to the parents, learners and the management team.

Implementing the code involved giving a copy to each learner at the start of the year. The register teacher then discusses and clarifies all the rules, as well as the purpose served by the code of conduct. Parents are informed of the content of the code of conduct during the first parents meeting at the beginning of the year. Later in the year, another opportunity is given to learners to discuss, clarify and ask questions regarding the code, usually during the Life Orientation period.

These discussions are part of a regular reviewing process, with possible changes and new ideas being brought to the staff meeting.

3.6.6 Conclusion

KHAYA school seems to have better learner behavior than surrounding schools. They are strict, but seem to care for each other. Although the school falls in a poor category, it does not wait for help from the department. Rather, the school tries to overcome their problems through own initiatives, such as the vegetable garden and feeding scheme. All those interviewed during the course of my investigation believe that the community and parents play a pivotal role in learner behavior; consequently they work closely in cooperation with the Metro Police.

This is the only school where there seems to be a clear relationship between learner behaviour and the code of conduct. Perhaps this is because the code is still relatively new and was developed by all those who have a stake in the school. Although teachers claim their code is of superior quality it does, from an administrative point of view, have flaws. It does not indicate what disciplinary procedures are and, with some exceptions, does not stipulate the consequences of misbehaviour. Due process is also neglected.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, data were collected by means of observation, one-one-one interviews with school principals, focus group interviews with teachers and learners, and an analysis of school codes of conduct provided to me by the principals concerned. A number of similarities and differences between the three schools and their codes of conduct emerged from my analysis of the data.

First of all, I realized that there were marked differences in the personalities and management styles of the principals of the three schools. I realized, moreover, that these differences affected their views of learner behaviour and the impact that codes of conduct in general could have on learner behaviour and the codes of conduct of their own schools on the behaviour of their learners.

The BOSS principal seemed unwilling to accept responsibility for poor discipline, using the excuse that the other schools have the same problems that he has. Comments made by teachers suggest that relations between him and the rest of the staff is poor and that, because of this, teachers and learners do very much as they please. In the other two schools, TEAM and KHAYA, staff relations were good, this notwithstanding the fact that the principal of KHAYA came across as very strict, almost militaristic. Indications are that he needed to be in charge, and the only outsiders he used to help him are as military as he is, namely the police. The TEAM principal, on the other hand, was very empathetic and committed to 'teamwork' hence he regularly discussed problems and solutions with staff members to ensure that they know exactly what is expected of them.

All three principals believe that socio-economic conditions play a role in learner behaviour. Each of them however responded differently. The TEAM principal believes that it is often used as an excuse for bad behaviour; the BOSS principal believes that it should act as stimulus for learners to improve themselves, while the KHAYA principal takes steps to support those who have to grow up in poor socio-economic circumstances.

None of these principals wanted to return to the implementation of corporal punishment, all three indicated that a code of conduct should have an effect on learner behaviour, but none of them were confident that their own codes of conduct had that effect. Instead, the one principal who believed that his school's discipline was good, ascribed it to his management style and police involvement.

Secondly, I realized that, while behaviour varied from school to school, there was no clear indication that socio-economic factors affected learner behaviour: two schools serviced economically poor learners but in only one of them the behaviour was bad. In the third school it was, to all appearance, good. Moreover, the behaviour in the Quintile 3 school, which was better off economically, was also bad. With the exception of the teachers from BOSS, however, most teachers seemed relatively unconcerned about the behaviour of learners, suggesting that even violent behaviour has become so common that it no longer raises the eyebrows.

Parental involvement was also named as a major concern in all three schools. The teachers believe that parents are no longer involved in their children's education. They strongly believe that parental involvement in the school will minimize some behaviour problems.

The codes of conduct of the three schools were similar in that they consisted of a heading, a preamble and rules that indicated what learners may/shall not do. They are also similar in that they neglect to explain the disciplinary system and procedures, due process, dispute resolution, suspension and expulsion. They differ from each other in that only two of them address dress code, one leans towards positive rather than negative discipline - as suggested in the Guideline Document (1998:1.4) - and only one of includes a section on parental involvement and responsibility.

Perceptions of the functions that could or should be served by codes of conduct were similar in that all those who participated in my study were of the opinion that it should consist primarily of a set of rules that spells out what is allowed and what not. Interestingly, though, all the teachers who were interviewed believe that a code of conduct can and should have a positive effect on learner behaviour. It was interesting to note that most learners said that the code should be stricter

and that it should contain more rules and stipulate consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

Regarding differences, most teachers and learners indicated that there should be no difference between punishment for boys and girls, nor should the code accommodate differences of culture, gender, religion and other. Could this be indicative of xenophobia or are there different understandings of constitutional concepts like tolerance, diversity, and discrimination? Like the principals, not all the teachers and learners were convinced that their own codes of conduct had that effect – only teachers and learners at KHAYA. They were also the only ones who considered their code of conduct as good, and who were involved in its development. This seems to suggest that stakeholder involvement and ownership is crucial to the effectiveness of codes of conduct. What is also important, given the findings presented here is that communication about the processes followed in implementation, and regular review are key factors in the effectiveness or non effectiveness of school codes of conduct.

These findings not only raised a number of questions in my mind but also suggested that people's perceptions of the functional and moral value of codes of conduct are quite similar but very different from what the law requires. It is obvious, for example, that the words 'discrimination' and 'equality' are used without real understanding. It is unclear whether principals, teachers or learners have ever considered cultural, gender and other differences in relation to the Constitution or the code of conduct. Even where conflict between cultures is acknowledged, it is effectively ignored. Principals allude to it as 'no great deal', while learners insist on 'equality'. It would seem as if teachers and learners alike are so indoctrinated regarding 'no discrimination' and 'equality' that they are afraid even to consider difference and the rights of minorities. Nor do they know how to ensure that these rights are protected.

My second set of questions regards corporal punishment. Why do teachers still resort to it? Is it out of habit? Is it because of frustration and anger? Is it the only punishment that works? Is it because it is a quick and easy solution, hassle free, and requires no administrative procedures? Or is it because there is a total lack of structure in the school, meaning no good code of conduct, no consequences, no leadership and no alternative?

My final observation was that most of the learners said that they enjoyed being at school even when they are unhappy with the way teachers and other learners treat them. The reasons they give for their 'enjoyment' are free food, no school fees, free stationery, and feeling safe. This made me wonder what the goal of education is in a poor socio economic society which is overwhelmed with poverty and broken families. Does it differ from the 'ideal' goal of education, and can the 'ideal' goal still be obtained if basic needs are not addressed? More importantly, what function do schools serve in these communities? To my mind this seeming discrepancy confirms Maslow's theory regarding human needs. More specifically it seems to confirm his argument that there are different levels of needs and that an individual cannot reach the next level if the previous one is not satisfied. In these schools the first and second level (food, water and safety) are fulfilled by the school. The third level, which addresses the need to belong will probably for most not be fulfilled, although the KHAYA code tries to encourage it, through nurturing, good relationships and pride in the school and its traditions. The fourth level, dealing with self esteem, is so far away from these children's minds that they might never reach the 5th level of self-actualization.

These findings suggest that apart from its reproduction function, schools should perhaps also consider the possibility that they could contribute to change and liberation from systemic oppression (Chapter 2). While it could be argued that the schools in my sample, and probably others as well, in serving a social welfare function is doing exactly that. However, if this is the only function it serves, the school will never fulfil any other function. It will then only be a welfare

organisation. I would argue, therefore, that a code of conduct should perhaps also serve a social upliftment function so as to help learners move up the Maslow ladder towards self-actualization. In this regard school codes should encourage feelings of belonging, including friendship, intimacy and family. They should also foster good relationships between learners and others, relationships that are based on respect, and self-esteem. In this sense the BOSS principal is correct in saying that socio-economic conditions should not be used as a crutch but as the launching pad towards a better life.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter One I argued that one of the reasons why the DoE had developed and released a whole range of policies related to school discipline (see Chapter 1) was the realization that South African public schools were not safe. These policies, mentioned in Chapter One, included policies on drug abuse (DoE 2002b), safety measures to be taken at public schools (DoE 2001), and school codes of conduct.

My position on the effectiveness of these policies, namely that they do not seem to have had any effect on learner behaviour or school discipline, was also introduced in Chapter One. Not knowing why this was the case, I decided to investigate the relationship between learner behaviour and school codes of conduct. More specifically, I decided to find out what purposes are served by codes of conduct in the three schools that made up my sample. In doing so, I also wanted to find out whether or not learner behaviour was influenced by any other factors. More specifically, I wanted to determine whether school codes of conduct served a moral or an administrative purpose or both (Roos, 2003:485), and whether differences in the intent of codes of conduct were reflected in the impact these codes had on learner behaviour.

As indicated in Chapter one, and reiterated in Chapter Three, my investigation was directed by four questions, namely:

- Is the intent of the codes of conduct in selected secondary public schools in the Tshwane South school district primarily moral or administrative?
- Are learners in the selected schools generally well behaved or not?

- Is there a relationship between the behaviour of learners and the codes of conduct at the selected schools?
- Could an argument be made for the need to consider values in the development and implementation of school codes of conduct?

Together, I believed, the answers to these four questions would supply me with an answer to my main research question, namely, whether or not there is a relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour in the schools that served as case studies for my investigation.

In Chapter Two, informed by my review of literature on morality, school discipline and codes of conduct, I highlighted some of the reasons for the seeming ineffectiveness of these policy documents. In Chapter Three I presented the results of my investigation into the codes of conduct of the sampled schools, the behaviour of their learners, and the impact that teachers and learners thought their codes had on learner behaviour. While there was some evidence that codes of conduct had the potential to reduce misbehaviour (see Chapter Three), I realized that school codes of conduct alone, no matter how good they were, could not address the disciplinary problems currently experienced at South African public schools. Rather, I discovered, learner behaviour is influenced by school culture, teacher/learner relationships, school management and parental involvement.

In this chapter, I relate the outcomes of my case study investigation to the insights I gained from my literature review on morality, learner discipline and codes of conduct in general. In doing so, I hope to answer my original research question, namely, whether or not there is a relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour, not only in terms of the sampled schools, but also as indicative of general trends. Before I do so, however, I present my thoughts on related issues as reflected in each of the afore-mentioned sub-questions. More specifically, I blend the insights I gained from my literature review with those I

gained during the course of my empirical investigation. While the discussions are applicable to the three schools that served as case studies only, I suggest that what I say about them might have credence for other public schools in South Africa too. In doing so, I hope, I have succeeded in presenting readers of my report not only with a picture of what *is*, but also with a picture of what *could be*.

4.2 Case study comparisons

As indicated in Chapter Three, there are obvious differences in learner behaviour and school discipline across the three schools that served as cases for my investigation. Perceptions about learner behaviour and reasons for their misbehaviour also varied as did the ways in which teachers and principals responded to unacceptable conduct. As indicated in Table 4.1, the range of misdemeanours in TEAM is much more comprehensive than in either of the other two schools, yet teachers were not particularly concerned about learner misconduct. In fact, they were quite defensive, claiming that ‘it is not as bad as the media makes it out to be’.

Common across schools is misconduct typical of adolescents: bullying, smoking, drugs, and playground fights, with learners across schools citing bullying as the most common and traumatic. Even in KHAYA, where discipline seems to be good, bullying is a major problem, especially since teachers are either unaware of it or because they choose to ignore it. It would seem though, as if acts of violence are more common in the two Mamelodi schools than in the Atteridgeville one. Such behaviour could well be, as Glasser (1986) argues, be symptomatic of children’s desperate attempts to regain control over their lives. To treat the symptoms without determining the cause, I would argue, would probably be a waste of effort. Based on what I saw and heard at the schools I studied, I believe that there is no single factor that causes learner misbehaviour. My data suggest that in some cases learner misbehaviour could be ascribed to the climate and culture of the area in which the school is located (Badenhorst et al 2007), in

others to dysfunctional families and parental styles of discipline (Coles, Edwards, Glasser 1986), the climate and culture of the school, the management style of the respective principals, the attitude of teachers towards learners, or the codes of conduct of the schools concerned.

At BOSS, for example, everybody seems unhappy but instead of accepting responsibility for this unhappiness they blame external factors or one another. The toxic shame and blame culture does nothing to facilitate learning. At TEAM teachers are happy but learners are not. Not willing to face up to their problems they sweep them under the carpet. At KHAYA everybody feels valued, respects one another and takes pride in their school and their own achievements. Learner behaviour in all three these schools reflect these differences in culture: at BOSS learners express their anger by acting violently, at TEAM by means of resistance (stealing and bunking classes). At KHAYA learners talk through their problems. What is also noticeable is that behaviour at the two older schools, the two with a history, a heritage, and specific traditions is better than at the relatively new one, BOSS.

In analyzing my data I realized that a misdemeanour that is not mentioned by anybody at BOSS is bunking while it features in both the others. Whether this is indicative of greater commitment to learning or not, could, however, not be determined. Theft is mentioned only in Atteridgeville, not in BOSS, where learners are the poorest of the poor. What is suggested by the commonality of certain types of misconduct in all schools, and the absence of other types where one would expect it, suggests that the link between specific misbehaviours and their causes are much more complex than they seem at first. More specifically, as regards the schools in my study, none of the misbehaviours could be specifically linked to socio-economic factors (poor learners in all three schools), cultural diversity (only mentioned as a concern in KHAYA), or parental involvement (poor in all three schools).

Table 4.1: Behavioural profiles of sampled schools

School	BOSS	TEAM	KHAYA
Location	Mamelodi East.	Mamelodi West	Atteridgeville
History	Established in 2001 as secondary school.	Established as a Junior Secondary School in an old beer hall in 1978. Moved to a new structure in 1979. Now proper secondary school. First matrics in 1988.	Established in 1979, mainly for pregnant schoolgirls. Now co-educational school, with boys first admitted in 1981. First matrics in 1984.
Population	1400 learners, mostly living in informal settlements; 34 staff members (18 male; 26 female).	1073 learners; mix of ethnic groups.	780 learners; mix of ethnic groups.
Quintile	Quintile 1 ('poorest of the poor'). 'Free education'.	Quintile 3 (somewhat higher socio-economic group). School fees R300 per annum.	Although the school falls into Quintile 2 (poor school).
Feeding scheme	NGO provides for all learners. Learners take ware home from school.	School feeding scheme provides food to large majority of learners.	Woolworths provides food to the needy but school also has own vegetable garden.
Appearance	Unkempt, no trees or lawn, litter all around.	Relatively neat and well maintained. Odd litter lying around.	Well maintained, with impeccably neat grounds. Walls covered with learners' art work.
Security	Access easy- through holes in wire fencing. Gates locked all day. Visitors' book kept by grounds-man. Thick burglar bars cover windows & ceiling of principal's office.	Access difficult. Palisade brick wall around school. Gates locked. No security guard or bell. Burglar bars cover all the windows.	Access restricted – main gate only, controlled by security guard. Metro police patrol area.
School experience	Teachers unhappy: school dysfunctional; principal dictatorial; would leave if possible. Claimed' Learners like school: free food, stationery & education; 'safe' environment.	Teachers neutral; learners 'feel safe'; some pride in school achievements evidence in trophies.	Teachers & learners enjoy school: second 'home'; good relations; believe in themselves; proud of school heritage & achievements; committed to excellence.

Management style	Distant: no staff consultation; staff proposals vetoed; meets only with other principals; sympathetic to learner needs without accepting poverty as excuse for anything.	Participatory: open door policy; good communication; guides & encourages teachers to 'trust in their own potential'; believes in teamwork.	Patriarchal: 'in charge' but open door policy; manages & monitors rather than leads.
Parental involvement	Little if any: regards school as 'day care centre'.	Improving slowly due to efforts from school side but still very little.	Positive but little involvement; good community relations.
Staff relations	No staff unity; little communication between management and teachers.	Mutual respect & good communication between teachers & management'.	Familial & respectful: principal protects, motivates, counsels; teachers work together.
Teacher/learner relations	'Fine' according to teachers; poor, according to learners: teachers only do the job for money; don't care about learners.	Good, according to learners: variable, according to learners.	Good but challenging according to teachers; learners trust & look up to teachers; regard them as substitute parents.
Learner relations	Unhealthy; violent.	Good on surface but unstable underneath.	Amicable on the whole but gossiping & 'cultural conflict' increasing.
Perceptions of learner conduct	Teachers critical; principal satisfied it is 'no worse' than in neighbouring schools.	Not as bad as the media makes it sound.	'Superior' to that of other schools 'in the area'.
Actual conduct	Bullying, stabbing, rape, drug abuse, possession of firearms, vandalizing school property, litter pornography.	Smoking, bunking classes, experimenting with drugs, fighting, bullying, stabbing, stealing.	Bunking classes, bullying, smoking cigarettes, gambling, fighting.
Causes of misconduct	Age ('over-aged learners'), lack of parental involvement & socio-economic factors cited.	Age & curiosity (adolescents experimenting with drugs) & cultural diversity cited.	Socio-economic factors (learners sole providers for destitute families).

While all three principals share the views of theorists who hold that parental involvement in school affairs affect the way children behave at schools (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007; Mentz, Wolhuter and Steyn 2003; Rossouw, 2003; Chimenga, 2002), my findings do not support this.

What may well have an influence is the way in which the school, teachers in particular, respond to learner needs and misbehaviour (Oosthuizen, 2006). While all three schools make them feel 'safe', according to learners, and provide them with food, only BOSS explicitly makes an effort also to relieve the need of the learners' families, allowing the children to take water home. While KHAYA is aware of the fact that children are the sole providers of their destitute families, they provide only in the basic needs of the learners. KHAYA is, however, the only one of the schools that has, on their own initiative, taken steps to provide for their own learners by creating a vegetable garden on the school premises. That all learners feel safe at school, even at BOSS, which is obviously not safe (see Table 4.1), is a matter of concern. In fact, the only school which seems really safe, so safe that it is inaccessible to anyone but teachers and learners, is KHAYA.

It is the emotional climate that is affected by discipline. In BOSS and TEAM, more so in the former than the latter, teachers use negative forms of discipline to motivate or punish learners - threatening them with failure, inflicting corporal punishment, suspension, or expulsion. At these schools discipline is equated with punishment (Cartledge et al. 2001: 26). Intrinsic to its maintenance is the use of punishment or reward, with teachers having the right to create and enforce standards for learner behavior (Canter, 1976). Of greater concern is the indication that none of the teachers seem to realize that there may well be a connection between the use of corporal punishment and the anti-social and violent behaviour of learners at their school (Cohen et al., 2007; Lytton 1997; Sprague, Walker, Golly, White, Myers & Shannon 2001; Mc Curdy, Mannella and

Eldridge 2003; Maree and Cherian 2004; Robinson, Funk, Beth & Bush 2005; Durant, 2007).

At KHAYA, discipline is equated with on the other hand, restraint and self-control: learners know what the consequences are if they transgress the rules and regard the ways in which they are punished as fair and just. At this school, discipline is flexible enough not to stifle learners' curiosity, creativity, critical thinking or individuality and, by its very nature, contributes to the development of responsible adults (Duke, 1989). In that discipline in this school has as primary purpose the creation and maintenance of an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning, it teaches learners respect, courtesy, perseverance and a healthy work ethic (Moles, 1989). At this school discipline tends to be positive rather than negative: everybody accepts responsibility for the way they conduct themselves, communication between teachers, administrators, and learners is valued, learners feel connected to the school, believe that teachers care about them as well as about their academic performance. Because learners feel psychologically safe, they believe that they are capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, and accomplishing great things (Strahan et al, 2005). It is only KHAYA, therefore, that can lay claim to the creation of an environment that is truly conducive to teaching and learning, not only physically but also emotionally. It is the only school where learners feel good about themselves, where they really like their teachers, where they take pride in their own and the school's appearance, and where they are committed to self-improvement through education.

As regards the codes of conduct of the various schools, they obviously serve different purposes. The BOSS code, notwithstanding its grand ideals, is aimed primarily at control: instead of promoting self-discipline, it stifles learners' curiosity and creativity; instead of teaching them what is right and wrong, it teaches them to obey authority. While it may serve to stop misbehaviour in its tracks, it makes no contribution to learners' moral development. The TEAM code of conduct,

while being somewhat more flexible, is nonetheless undemocratic: nowhere does it refer to learners' rights, to due process, or related procedures. In this sense it fails, both as an administrative and as a guideline for moral development. The KHAYA code, while flawed in many ways, does reflect some awareness of the relation between administrative effectiveness and moral development. It is the only one of the three codes that seem to have any effect on learner behaviour, not because it is good, but because it is relatively new, was developed with rather than for learners and, consequently, reflects the norms and values of its target group.

Regardless of their strengths and weaknesses, all three codes are inadequate if measured against the criteria contained in the 'Guideline Document'. They do not, as required, spell out the principles, philosophy and ethos of the South African Schools Act DoE 1998, section 1.4), by which they are supposed to be informed. They do not, except implicitly in the TEAM and KHAYA codes, emphasize the importance of a culture of reconciliation, mutual respect, tolerance and peace at all schools. They do not describe the different types and levels of offences or the consequences that would ensue from learners transgressing particular rules (DoE 1998, section 3.5, 8.1 and 8.2), the disciplinary process (DoE 1998, section 7.1 and 7.2), the channels of communication, dispute and grievance procedures (DoE 1998, section 3.4) or parents' responsibilities in this regard. Finally, according to the Guideline Document, school codes of conduct should have the inculcation of moral values as purpose.

While school codes of conduct do, therefore, have a role to play in the creation of sound teaching/learning environments (Wragg and Partington, 1989), in the maintenance of discipline, and in the management of conflict at schools, they cannot do so in isolation of the external and internal factors mentioned earlier. Key amongst these is school culture. And, since culture reflects the values, beliefs and principles of particular groups (Rauch 2005), it is important for the group concerned to be involved in the development and review of their codes of

conduct. Only when they feel a sense of ownership, as in KHAYA's case, will they adhere to the code. Only then can the code contribute to moral development.

4.3 Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the afore-going comparison of the three sampled schools with regard to learner behaviour, codes of conduct, school culture, parental involvement and socio-economic conditions, the answers to the research questions I posed in Chapter One, and repeated in this chapter, seem obvious.

With regard to *learner behaviour*, I can only conclude that it varies across schools. More specifically, there seems to be a clear link between learner behaviour and the culture of the school concerned, i.e. its traditions, heritage, and symbols, as well as between the culture of the school and the culture of the community that is served by the schools (Oosthuizen, 2006). A key feature of this culture is the quality of human relationships – teachers and management, teachers and learners, school and community, and learners with one another.

Informed by this conclusion I would argue that, in order for a school code of conduct to have a positive effect on learner behaviour it should reflect the values of the school as well as the values of the community in which the school is located. Should community values undermine learners' opportunities to obtain maximum benefit from their education or if community values and school values conflict, new values must be negotiated, not imposed. In other words, everybody that is part of the school community must be involved, either in person or by representation, in the development and upholding of the code. As indicated in the case of Khaya, this will give them a sense of ownership and pride, key elements in the creation of a positive culture/ climate.

As regards the *impact* that existing codes of conduct have on learners in the schools concerned, indications are that this, too, varies. This variation does not, however, seem to be related to the quality or the intent of the codes of conduct. Rather, it would seem that its impact is related to the development and implementation processes. Where the code was developed by teachers or representative learner councils, the majority of learners were either neutral or negative towards it. Consequently, they overtly or covertly resisted it. The data seem to suggest therefore that adherence to a code of conduct depends on the involvement of all stakeholders, not only in the development of the code but also in its implementation. By implication, teachers, learners and parents need to reach consensus on the content and implementation of the code (Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes 2007; Mentz, Wolhuter and Steyn 2003; Rossouw, 2003; Chimenga, 2002).

Impact also seems to be related to the intent of the code. The less it is aimed at control, the more positive its effect on learner behaviour. The primary purpose of all three codes seems to be administrative but where the inclination of the school is towards positive rather than negative discipline moral development does occur, albeit implicitly. In KHAYA, where positive discipline is the norm rather than the exception, learners take pride in themselves and their achievements and are willing to accept responsibility for their actions. In other words, they are developing self-restraint and self-discipline. Informed by this conclusion I would, therefore, recommend that codes of conduct should reflect a shift away from negative towards positive discipline. Only then is there a chance that such codes would improve school discipline and restore morality.

Do I think, therefore, that a case could be made for the need to consider values in the development of school codes of conduct? Most definitely, I do. One of the ways in which values could be incorporated into school codes of conduct are including a section on how learners *should*, rather than *should not*, behave since this could contribute to character building. An awareness of individual and group

responsibility should form part of this section. Another approach would be to ensure that rules and punishment procedures included in the code are aimed at issues rather than at persons (Oosthuizen, 2006).

Finally, is there a relationship between learner behaviour and school codes of conduct? My answer to this question is at best ambiguous. My findings suggest that there is: where the code is regarded as unjust, unfair or not reflecting the needs or values of the target group of learners, behaviour is poor. Where learners and teachers were involved in the development of the code it is regarded as fair, just and effective. This is the case irrespective of the intent of the code: what seems to be the determining factor is ownership (see earlier). It might also be effective if all those affected by the code have the opportunity to clarify not only their values but also their views on what is just, fair and appropriate (see discussion of Kohlberg's values clarification model in Chapter Two) prior to the development of the code.

A significant finding was that, although learners in the schools I studied are not willing to acknowledge this yet, there seems to be a need to accommodate difference in the formulation of rules and their consequences. Cultural diversity is cited as a concern by different parties in all three schools. Nobody seems ready or willing, however, to consider the possibility of addressing tensions in this regard in the spirit of the Constitution, that is to think of ways in which the code of conduct could promote tolerance on the one hand, and accommodation rather than simulation on the other. As my research findings indicate, codes of conduct do not currently reflect these values. In fact, they do not even reflect the principles, philosophy and ethos of the South African Schools Act DoE 1998, section 1.4), by which they are supposed to be informed.

I would recommend therefore, that a one size fits all disciplinary policy will not work – not across schools, and not within a school. If the policy, and this includes the code of conduct, does not acknowledge the differences between learners as

regards ability, age, gender, and culture (Duke 2002; McCarthy, Cambron-McCabe and Thomas 1998; Morrison and Severino 2003), and if there is no distinction between different levels of misdemeanour and the severity of the ensuing punishment, discipline will not prevail. More importantly, the moral dimension of discipline will be absent, both in terms of Kohlberg's definition of morality as fairness and justice, as well as in terms of Gilligan's definition of it as empathy.

Another significant finding is that no definitive conclusions could be drawn about the relationship between learner behaviour and socio-economic class. The only conclusion that could be drawn in this regard is that poverty and the need to survive (see Maslow's hierarchy of needs in Chapter Two) does have an effect on the values whereby children and their parents live. My findings indicate that drug abuse, theft and bullying, to name but a few, are regarded as necessary for survival rather than as a lack of values. It seems that they accept their circumstances and that what less poor communities would regard as criminal has become an acceptable part of their cultural heritage. In schools where poverty is addressed, by for example food gardens, the values seem to change. I would recommend therefore, that codes of conduct, where the community is poor, should encourage behaviour that reflects the principle of ubuntu.

4.4 Recommendation for further research

The findings of this study indicate the need to include, as a matter of urgency, values in the development and implementation of school codes of conduct. A number of strategies for doing so have already been mentioned. Further research is, however, required in these areas where I could not provide definitive answers. These include the following:

- The accommodation of diversity in school rules as well as in the consequences of breaking such rules

- Ways in which consensus could be reached on what constitutes justice, fairness and appropriateness as related to school discipline
- Ways in which school and community values could be aligned to the benefit of all concerned
- Ways in which school codes of conduct could contribute to character development, social justice and alleviation of poverty
- The formulation of rules and regulations in such a way that they address issues rather than behaviour

Of all of these, the two most important areas that should be further researched if codes of conduct are to become more than purely administrative documents are (a) the relationship, between learner behaviour and the accommodation of diversity in school codes of conduct, and (b) strategies to renegotiate the values of poverty without threatening the survival of those who currently subscribe to 'poverty' values.

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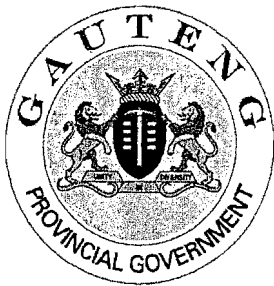
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Enquiries : Shadrack Phele MIRMSA
Tel. No. : [+2711] 355 0285

Tuesday, 07 April 2009

Mr Janos Pentz
Postnet Suite 401
PO Box X10
Elarduspark
PRETORIA
0047

Dear Mr Janos Pentz

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: PROJECT

The Gauteng Department of Education hereby grants permission to conduct research in its institutions as per application.

Topic of research : "Is there a Relationship between Schools Codes of Conduct and Learner Behaviour?."
Nature of research : M.Ed [Educational Management, Law & Policy]
Name of institution : University of Pretoria
Supervisor/Promoter : Dr. B Malan

Upon completion of the research project the researcher is obliged to furnish the Department with copy of the research report (electronic or hard copy).

The Department wishes you success in your academic pursuit.

Yours in Tirisano,


p.p. Shadrack Phele [MIRMSA]

Mmapulua Kekana
Chief Director: Information & Knowledge Management
Gauteng Department of Education

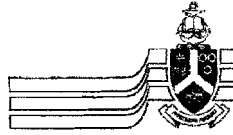
I CERTIFY THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS A TRUE REPRODUCTION (COPY) OF THE ORIGINAL WHICH WAS HANDED TO ME FOR AUTHENTICATION. I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT FROM MY OBSERVATION, AN AMENDMENT OR CHANGE WAS NOT MADE TO THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT.

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

EM09/08/06

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd

Relating School Codes of Conduct to Learner Behaviour

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Janos Pentz

DEPARTMENT

Department of Education Management and Policy Studies

DATE CONSIDERED

26 August 2010

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE Prof L Ebersohn

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Ebersohn', written over a horizontal line.

DATE

26 August 2010

CC

Dr BF Malan
Ms Jeannie Beukes

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education – Skole Opvoedkundige
School of Educational Studies – School van
Opvoedkundige Studies
Department of Education Management and Policy
Skooldepartement of Opleedingstudies en
Pedagogiek

The Principal

██████████

████████████████████

Dear Madam / Sir

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a student at the University of Pretoria currently busy with an M.Ed degree in Educational Management, Law and Policy. For my research paper in this course, I am conducting a study in order to determine whether or not there is any relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour.

Having obtained permission from the Department of Education to conduct my research in a limited number of secondary schools in the Tshwane South school district (please see attached letter) I randomly selected nine schools as possible research sites. Since your school was one of the selected schools I am now approaching you, as principal of the school to interview you, a group of six teachers - identified by you – as well as a group of six learners - identified by teachers - about learner behaviour and your school code of conduct in general. Since I also have to analyze the code of conduct of all the schools participating in my study I shall also require a copy of your school's code of conduct.

Should you agree to my request I shall conduct interviews after school hours at a time and place convenient to all concerned. Each group interview should last a maximum of 45min. The name of the school and the identity of all those participating in the interviews will be kept confidential - pseudonyms will be assigned throughout. Since all

participants will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement they will be bound not to reveal the names of fellow participants. The agreement will also bind them not to discuss what was said during interviews with anyone not part of the group.

I would also like your permission to tape/voice record interview sessions, so that I may transcribe what was said in order to have an accurate account for my paper. The tape recordings and transcripts will be kept in a safe place and their contents will be used for research purposes only.

There would be no direct benefit from or risk to you, your school or to any participating learner or teacher. If at any time, any participant feels uncomfortable with the research or experiences any problems in this regard, s/he may withdraw without any consequences to her/him. Should you have any questions about the course or the research paper, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, Dr Beverley Malan (bewer@worldonline.co.za or 011-740-2828 or cell 0844402828)

While you are under no obligation to grant me permission – research participation is voluntary – I would really appreciate your cooperation and participation. Should you wish to be kept informed of my research progress and my eventual findings I promise to share these with you as and when available?

Should you decide to grant me permission to conduct research in your school I kindly request that you complete the attached form as an indication your school is voluntarily participating in my research study and that possible concerns about the process have been addressed in this letter or in follow-up discussions. Please return the completed form to my home address or contact me on either of my phone numbers or my e-mail to collect it, whichever is more convenient for you.

Sincerely yours,



Janos Pentz

Student Researcher

079 504 5737 (cell)

011 895 1440 (fax)

janos.pentz@pfizer.com



Dr Beverley Malan

Supervisor

084-440-2828 (cell)

011-740-2828 (home)

bewer@worldonline.co.za

PRINCIPAL RESEARCH AGREEMENT

In signing this consent form I, _____, the principal of _____

_____ indicate that I have read the letter accompanying this form and understand the nature and purpose of the research concerned. I understand that, should I have any questions, I know whom to contact for answers. I agree, moreover, to allow the student to conduct the research described in my school provided that his activities do not in any way disrupt my school, the teachers or the learners involved.

In giving the student permission to conduct his research, I agree, moreover, to:

- Avail myself for a one-on-one interview with the researcher
- Identify six teachers who are willing and able to enter into a discussion with the researcher on the issues being investigated
- Issue and collect letters asking teachers for their consent to participate in this research project.
- Ask teachers to identify six learners (3 boys and three girls) who could make a meaningful contribution to in this regard and whose parents will be amenable to their participation
- Make the necessary arrangements, in conjunction with the student researcher, teachers and students concerned, regarding the venue and time for focus group interviews

I understand that I shall receive a copy of this consent form once all relevant parties have signed it and that the conditions set out herein are binding on all signatories.

Principal's Name (print) _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date signed: 12-10-2009

Name of Researcher (print): Mr. J Pentz

Name of Supervisor (print): Dr. B Malan

Signature of Researcher:

Date signed: 04/10/2009

Signature of Supervisor:

Date signed: 04/10/2009



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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Faculty of Education, Department of Curriculum Studies
School of Educational Leadership and Management
Department of Educational Studies
Department of Educational Management and Policy
School of Educational Leadership and Management
Pretoria, South Africa

RESEARCH CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I, [redacted], the principal/
a teacher/ a learner (*please underline the applicable designation*), at
[redacted]

(name of the school) hereby commit myself to freely and honestly participate
in a group discussion facilitated by Janos Pentz, a research student at the
University of Pretoria. In doing so I promise not to reveal the names of any
person participating in this group discussion to anybody else and not to
discuss the questions or any discussions of these with any person not part of
this group.

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 12-10-2009



BOSS SECONDARY SCHOOL

Constitution of the representative council of learners (RCL)

Preamble: We learners of [REDACTED] school commit ourselves to the rules of the school as contained in the code of conduct for learners which are primordial and fair, we further commit ourselves to abide by the constitution of the RCL.

Objectives

- To achieve unity
- To maintain a healthy environment.
- Embrace an all inclusive decision making process.

Membership

- All learners of the school.

Eligibility

- All Bona Lesedi learners at the school.
- All class reps should be members of the RCL
- The class rep shall elect amongst themselves the executive of the RCL.

Termination of membership

- Any member of the RCL may voluntary resign
- All resignation should be put in writing
- A member of the RCL may be suspended or terminated from the RCL.
- Before any of the sanctions can be done the RCL must conduct an inquiry and provide the member with an opportunity to provide evidence in order to defend him/herself.
- All the RCL members must do their work properly.

The Executive

- The meeting of the RCL shall be held every first week of the month

President

- Shall chair all meetings
- Shall enforce the constitution
- Sign minutes
- Shall represent the RCL at official functions and perform all duties associated with the office.

The vice – President

The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Keep a record of all monies received and used
- (b) Submit regular reports on the financial position of the RCL and prepare an annual financial statement

The Secretary shall:

- (a) Keep minutes and record decisions taken by the members
- (b) Prepare the agenda for each meeting
- (c) Keep a file of all correspondence received and sent out.

The additional member

- Must always be present at the meeting of the SGB
- She/He has to report to the RCL members after the meeting.
- The President, secretary and treasure shall be the member of the SGB.

Learner's code of conduct

- Learners should be in classes within three minutes of the bell for the end of the lesson.
- Learners are not to be in the toilets without the educators permission.
- Arriving late for class, giving being from the toilets as a reason is unacceptable.
- Learners are to be in possession of permission card/note from staff member who delayed him/her to arrive late.
- Learners found outside after the three minutes of changing periods are to be in possession of permission card from an educator
- Learners should stand and greet an educator at the beginning of the lesson
- Learners may not disrupt other classes in progress.
- Indecent laughing and attention seeking outburst are not allowed.
- Talking with raised voice or whistling is unacceptable.
- Authority of educators shall be respected.
- Educators may request a learner to separate himself/herself from other learners if he/she is causing disturbances in the order of the class.
- Learners are to maintain at school for the duration of the school day. Permission to leave early must be obtained from the office.

Absenteeism

- School attendance is compulsory. Absence from school is viewed in a very serious light.
- If a learner is absent from school for more than ten days in a term, parents will be notified.
- If a learner is absent, a letter from parents must be produced on the learner's return and handed to register educator. This letter will be filed.
- Learners are expected to produce a Doctor's sick note if absent.
- Learner bunking lessons are to suffer consequences. Bunking of lessons is unacceptable.

Homework

- Homework is to completed and be presented during the next lesson.
- It is no excuse to leave books at home, homework shall be considered not done.

Foul language

- Learners are to use respectful language towards educators and fellow learners.
- Swearing and / or undesirable language is not allowed.

Theft

- Theft is viewed as a criminal offence. Learners caught stealing may be charged with a criminal offence.

Harassment / Fighting

- Fighting cannot be condoned.
- Even under provocation, fighting will not be accepted.
- Encouraging a fight will not be accepted.
- Bullying others will not be tolerated.
- Verbal or physical harassment will not be tolerated.
- Rude behaviour towards educators cannot be tolerated.
- Unnecessary back – chatting to educators cannot be condoned.
- Revenging or retaliation will not be accepted.
- Sexually harassment will not be accepted.

Public appearance

- Learner must not engage in excessive physical contact, i.e. fondling, caressing etc.
- Public indecency is prohibited, e.g. urinating in public or against the wall.

Gambling

- Gambling of any kind is prohibited, e.g. throwing of dice or spinning etc.
- Gambling in class, toilets or anywhere in the school premises is not allowed.

Weapons

- Learners are not allowed to carry dangerous weapons to school, i.e. guns, knives, pangas, etc.
- Learners may be searched for weapons at any time.
- Weapons will be confiscated.

Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs

- Learners should not be found in possession of smoking materials i.e.
- Learners may not be under the influence of alcohol.
- Spectatorship of smoking and alcohol drinking is not allowed.

Vandalism

- Learners are to be proud of their school property.
- Destruction, defacing of school property is unacceptable.
- Learners will be held liable for all damage caused to school property.
- Vandalism also includes breaking of school furniture, writing on school furniture, breaking windows, breaking doors.
- Learners are not to write their names on chairs or desks. Writing any thing on desks is regarded as vandalism.

Learners appearance

- Learners are request to take pride in their personal appearance.
- Learners are to be neat at all times.
- Male learners are to tug their shirt inside their trousers at all times.
- Shoes are to be polished on daily basis.
- All learners are to have combined out hair.
- Fancy hair styles, singles, dreadlocks, artificial hair are not allowed.
- Hair may not be dyed.
- Hair must always be neat.
- Female learners may not wear make-up i.e. eyebrows, colourful lipsticks, etc.
- Whistling in the school premises is not allowed.
- Learners are not allowed to shout or call each other by raising their voices loudly.
- Learners may not spit or throw object off balconies.
- Littering is not allowed. Learners are to use the provided dustbins. “MANNERS MAKETH A MAN”, learners should be respectful and courteous to all adults in the school premises and to all visitors.
- Learners should show polite behaviour when queuing to buy food during breakes.
- “BE HELPFUL”! If a visitor appears to be lost or needs help, politely ask if assistance is needed.
- Remember to use the words “PLEASE” and “THANK YOU” and smile.
- Learners are expected to behave impeccable on and off the school premises.
- Talking to strangers or any other person over the fence during school hours is not allowed.
- Staffrooms and Administration block is out of bounds for learners except learners on specific errands.
- Learners may not bring walkmans, radios etc to school without permission from educators.
- Chewing gum is not allowed.
- Learners may not bring the following to school, roller blades, skateboards, roller skates and cell phones.
- Learners shall report to school fifteen minutes before the school starts.
- The first bell shall ring five minutes before the starting time.
- Learners shall immediately assemble at assembly and stand quietly in their rows.

Assembly

- Assembly shall be called at least twice a week.
- Learners shall form straight rows according to their classes.
- There is to be total silence at the assembly grounds.
- Jeering, booing and any kind of outburst/or derogatory remarks are not allowed.
- Learners are not to shout anybody conducting assembly.



TEAM SECONDARY SCHOOL

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE LEARNERS AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES AND PROCEDURES.

1. THE AIM OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1.1 To facilitate learning and teaching in the school.
- 1.2 To ensure that there is order and discipline in the school
- 1.3 To provide guidelines for conduct and set standards of moral behaviour.
- 1.4 To promote self-discipline and constructive learning.

2. SCOPE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The code of conduct must be adhered to on school property before, during and after school hours and at all school events, both on and off the school property.

3. THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The school can function properly and attain its objectives only in a disciplined environment. The basis of such discipline resides in the rules to which all learners without exception shall adhere.

LEARNERS SHALL NOT :

- Be late for school in the morning or for class.
- Wear clothes other than the prescribed uniform as set out in this school policy.
- Skip classes.
- Fail to do or complete work assigned to them by educators.
- Cheat or be dishonest in a test or examination.
- Be absent from school without good reason
- Be disrespectful and or arrogant towards educators in the course of their duties.
- Disrupt class routine, for example, by making a noise or making out of turn comments or jokes.
- Fight or bully other learners

- Steal from educators or other learners
- Be in possession of weapons of any kind
- Smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or be in possession of /and or use drugs of any kind.
- Commit any offence /crime that would discredit the school.
- Use obscene language.
- Threaten fellow learners and or educators.

4. GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

4.1 SCHOOL UNIFORM

School uniform is by definition “the distinctive dress worn by members of the same body” School uniform is to be worn proudly. Learners are encouraged to be neat at all times.

Personal appearance is important. We believe that it enhances a sense of personal pride. Trendy fashion styles in the school are therefore discouraged and the following uniform is compulsory.

SUMMER DRESS :

GIRLS

Navy Skirt
Blue /White Shirt
School T-Shirt
School Socks
School Scarf /Tie

BOYS

Navy /Grey Trouser
Blue /White Shirt
School T-Shirt
School Socks
School Tie

WINTER DRESS :

GIRLS

School Jersey
School Tracksuit
Grey Trousers

BOYS

School Jersey
School Tracksuit

NAVY BLUE DRY – MAC FOR ALL

N.B: all items of uniform above prefixed with “school” shall have as a dominant colour, navy trimmed with powder blue, and /or white trimmed with navy.

4.2 GENERAL APPEARANCE

Dress code is complemented by neatness of the general appearance of learners. To this end, the following shall not be permissible

- Dyeing hair to an unnatural colour e.g green
- Bleaching hair
- Dreadlocks
- Plaited hair for boys
- Hair ornaments and jewellery
- Make up and nail polish

KHAYA SECONDARY SCHOOL

CODE OF CONDUCT

WHY THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

- ❖ To ensure that there is order and discipline in the school.
- ❖ Facilitation of learning and teaching at school.
- ❖ To provide for legitimate discipline measures.

LEARNERS ARE EXPECTED TO:

1. Take care of all the school properties with utmost care.
2. Refrain from littering.
3. Behave respectfully towards educators, administrators, support staff as well as their fellow learners.
4. Cases of attempted intimidation in the classrooms or elsewhere will not be tolerated.
5. Punctuality in the morning and for each period is important.
6. Be present at all times during school hours.
7. Behave in a dignified and self-controlled manner in keeping with the high standards of our school.
8. Follow good hygiene procedures – washing regularly. Keeping the classrooms clean, toilets procedures.
9. No smoking is allowed for health reasons.

10. No drugs trafficking. This is a drug free zone.
11. Obey all the instructions given by the authority of the school i.e. principal, educators, administrators and the support staff.
12. Learners should provide parental excuse letters or relevant certificates when absent from school with dates and telephone numbers therein.
13. No dangerous weapons may be brought to school.
14. All valuables and money should be handed in to the school office for safekeeping if not then the school will not take any responsibility for the theft.
15. No learners may go near the staff members' cars.
16. Learners belong in the classrooms not in the staff room.
17. If a student is absent from school for more than 10 school days without a valid and acceptable reason and without informing us about this absenteeism she/he will be deregistered. This decision is at the sole discretion of the principal.
18. The learners may not receive visitors during the school day. Urgent messages may be left with the administrators and they will hand it out at break or after school.
19. No cheating nor copying during tests and examinations will be tolerated.
20. Home work, class work, portfolios and projects should be done by all the learners at school.
21. Cellular telephones are prohibited.
22. If learners rock on chairs, tables or break doors and windows, a fine will be imposed upon the learner concerned.
23. Any physical violence on the premises will result in all the guilty parties being instantly suspended.

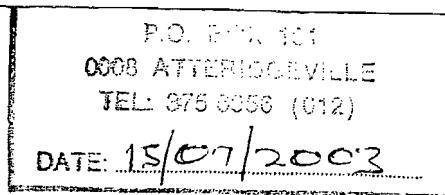
PARENTS/GUARDIANS

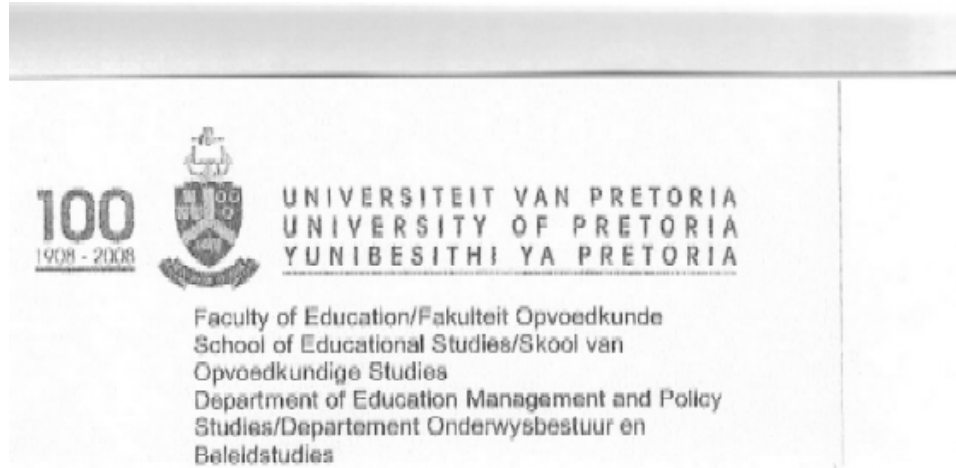
1. Parents/guardians should take full responsibility for their children.
2. Make sure that children do their school work.
3. Learners should be punctual to school at all times.

The school welcomes parents to school. The better we know your child and the parent, the greater the benefit to your child. Feel warmly welcome to visit the secretary, principal or staff. The appointments with educators or principal may be made through the school administrators. If any problem arises at home (e.g. death of a family member) inform the school so that we can give the learner support at that time. If the child is sick please phone us and send us a letter or the relevant certificate and when she/he returns to school.

Four quarterly parents' meetings are held at school. We expect all the parents/guardians to be present as a sign of responsibility and accountability.

Important matters are communicated to parents by means of letters.





Dear Parent

RE: PERMISSION TO INVOLVE YOUR CHILD IN A SCHOOL RESEARCH PROJECT

I am a student at the University of Pretoria and am currently busy with an M.Ed degree in Educational Management, Law and Policy. For my research paper in this course, I am conducting a study of school codes of conduct in order to determine whether or not there is any relationship between it and learner behaviour.

I have already obtained permission to conduct my research from the Department of Education and the principal of the school your child attends. Your child was identified by some of the teachers as a learner son who will be able to make a significant contribution to my study. I have formally asked your child whether s/he will be willing to take part in a group discussion of 45 minutes, after school hours, but since s/he is still of school-going age I need to have your consent to involve him/her in this manner.

The name of the school and the identity of all those participating in the interviews will be kept confidential - pseudonyms will be assigned throughout. Also, since all participants will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, which will bind them not to reveal the names of fellow participants or to discuss what was said during the discussion with anyone but those who were part of the discussion. There should therefore be no risk to your child. However, should you have any questions about my research, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, Dr Beverley Malan (bewer@worldonline.co.za or 011-740-2828 or cell 0844402828)

Should you decide to grant me permission to involve your child in my research, I kindly request that you complete the attached form and to give it to your child, who will return it, with his/her letter of consent, to the school principal or a teacher designated by the principal to collect permission letters.

Sincerely yours,



Janos Pentz
Student Researcher
079 504 5737 (cell)
011 895 1440 (tel)
janos.pentz@pfizer.com



Dr Beverley Malan
Supervisor
084-440-2828 (cell)
011-740-2828
bewer@worldonline.co.za

RESEARCH AGREEMENT

I, _____, as the parent/guardian of _____
_____, a learner at _____
_____ (name of school), give permission for my child/ward to participate in a group discussion
facilitate by Janos Pentz, a student researcher at the University of Pretoria. I give my permission on
condition that the identity of my child/ward will not be disclosed in the student's research report or in any
discussions that may result from this research.

Parent's/Guardian's Name (print) _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature _____

Date: _____

Name of Researcher (print): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date signed: _____

Name of Supervisor (print): _____

Signature of Supervisor: _____

Date signed: _____



BOSS SECONDARY SCHOOL

SP1: The principle of [REDACTED] Secondary School, [REDACTED] Thank you so much for agreeing to do the research first of all Sir and second of all, thank you for your time. I really, really do appreciate it; I know you're very busy at the moment.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: Now Sir, just the whole research. Um, first of all, the research, everything will be kept confidentially. Your school's name will nowhere be – I mean, it will be – be kept private. It will nowhere in the research state or anything. And this is not – this is a way just to find out what's going on. This is not to say that a school is worse than a other school or to – to rectify anything. This is just research in its sense.

So um, my whole research is – is going to be on – you read a lot in the – in the newspapers of discipline problems and today of the whole human rights and all that stuff, and um I'm researching to see if a code of conduct of a school have any influence on learner behaviour. So that's my main question and as we go along I will talk on that.

SP2: Okay.

SP1: Are you ready?

SP2: Ready.

SP1: All right. Do speak a bit louder please.

SP2: Okay, all right. I will.

SP1: All right, Mr (Mashete??) a history of your school. How did it – tell me a bit about the history of your school and how it changed over time. For instance, how old is the school, how did you perceive – did the learners change, the teachers, staff, all that stuff.

SP2: Yes. Eh, this school was established in 2001. I arrived in 2002. At the time it was still grade nine, so we went up to grade 12. So up to so far we have had three grade 12s. This will be the fourth grade 12s that we – we are producing. The school is situated in the far east of Mamelodi. We are serving learners from the squatter camp. Most – most of our learners – I'll say 90 – 90 percent, they come from the informal settlement. Um, that – that – that begins to explain the – the type of socioeconomic background our learners come from. The – we are – the school is classified as the poor – as the poorest of the poor. That is why we are quintile one. It's a no-fee school started in 2007.

As far as discipline is concerned, we had challenges in 2003 and 2004 because what we realised is that the school eh, enrolled overage learners who were not necessarily

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interested in completing their education but eh to while away time. So we – we became very strict. We learnt a lot. We became very strict and start to - the age limits per grades. Then since then eh we don't have serious eh disciplinary problems.

Um, the – the challenges that we had in 2003, I remember we – we retrieved the – a – a loaded gun from one of the learners, we had problems with drugs. We had problems with eh – violent problems eh where one learner will stab another and so on and so on. But since then – like we – like I'm saying, we have started to the age limits for grades so we – we - the problems that we have are normal problems that we'll expect from (inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP1: So actually said your discipline has actually increased, is better now than it were when you just started?

SP2: Yes. Yes, quite better.

SP1: If you compare it to other schools in the region, would – would you say your – your learners' discipline is average, the same as the other schools, do you think it's a bit better, the discipline, or do you think it's worse than the other schools?

SP2: I think it's the average.

SP1: Is it the average?

SP2: Ja, it's the average. Ja.

SP1: Why do you say that?

SP2: Because we – when we – we meet annually as principals in Mamelodi. Ah, not annually, every month. We have monthly meetings as principals of high schools in Mamelodi and amongst other things that we discuss, is the whole question of discipline in our schools. And we're able to hear information and that is why I'm saying what they are talking about is what I'll be talking about. We have common problems. And I – I – I think discipline is much better than when – when I came here in 2002.

SP1: Okay, interesting. Tell me quickly, the way you describe your learner behaviour now, what factors do you think influence your learners' behaviour?

SP2: Number one, like I said, we – we don't have overage learners so they are still, we think, the correct age limit. When you talk to them, they really listen and I think what motivates eh the – their poor background serves as motivation itself eh because all they want to do is to get out of that socioeconomic conditions through education. So they know that for them to get out of that poverty ... eh ...

(audio break)

SP2: Um, they also have a code of conduct drafted. We – we involve them in the drafting of the constitution and every year when we – we review our policies, eh we also engage them. The RCL will – will take part when we review the code of conduct. And –

SP1: You review that each year then?

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SP2: Yes.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Yes, we review our policies including the code of conduct –

SP1: Ja.

SP2: -- every year. So we invite the RCL especially on this one. So they – they will then take it to class reps, eh discuss it with the class reps. From there the class reps will – will – will do so with learners in class. Just one, to update newcomers in the school as far as the code of conduct is concerned, and also to remind them that this is how we're supposed to conduct ourselves and so on. So I think it does work. Eh, though there are challenges but those challenges are not really earthmoving challenges; they are challenges that we can always handle.

SP1: Okay. Interesting. Sir, coming back, just quickly – I'm going to talk – ask a few questions on the population of your school. For instance, how many learners are enrolled, do you know how many male-female approximately? Is it – which languages are taught at the school, stuff like that, can you maybe –

SP2: Officially we have 1 419 learners. That – that – that is the official eh number that is established in the tenth day school in January but after that there will learners coming in due to various reasons. We are – we are situated in – in a – in an informal settlement place where parents migrate every year. So we find that eh the parent has a genuine case. So at the moment when I check we are standing at 1 466.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Ja, but the official one is 1 419.

SP1: Is there more boys than girls?

SP2: Eh, I'll say we have more girls than boys. Eh, I think about 70 per cent will be girls.

SP1: Oh okay, it's a lot.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: And the ethnic groups?

SP2: We have three ethnic groups, the Zulus, Pedis and Tsongas. The Pedis make about 60 per cent of – of the population here, and the Zulus will be about 30 per cent, and Tsongas will be very few, less than 10 per cent.

SP1: And the languages that you taught – that you –

SP2: Yes, we are also teaching those three languages.

SP1: Also those three – three languages?

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SP2: Yes. Yeah, Zulu, Tsonga and Pedi, ja.

SP1: Oh okay. Tell me Sir, the teacher population now, how many teachers are you?

SP2: We are 44 at the moment. Next year we'll be 46.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Eh, we have eight HODs, next year there will be 10, two deputy principals and one principal. Majority of our staff members are females. Out of this 44 it will be 18 males and the rest is females –

SP1: Then females.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: And ethnic groups in the teachers?

SP2: Pedis are in the majority.

SP1: Is it majority Pedis?

SP2: Ja. Ja, it's Pedis. It's simply because we – we are situated in a Pedi area.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: Ja.

SP2: Most of the people in Mamelodi are Pedis. Of course a few Zulus and a few Tsongas but the majority will be people of Pedi origin.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: I want to come back to factors influencing. You read a lot on the newspaper – you lead – you read about um socioeconomics that has an influence on learner behaviour, parental involvement, drugs, violence. Do you – do you also see that socioeconomics can have an influence on behaviour?

SP2: It certainly does. It does certainly does.

SP1: And why?

SP2: It's – it's I think um you – you – you – your social background, for instance, you have learners who come from a poor background who live – who do not necessarily live with their parents. We have child-headed families. You have learners living with their aunties and uncles. You have learners living alone. That's why I'm saying you have child-headed families. And you have a situation where people are living in a clustered, high-densely populated area. So you have a situation where there is no privacy.



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Parents end up – learners end up seeing old people doing things they are not supposed to see and so on and it really does impact on the way they grow up.

SP1: You spoke on the parents. How is the parental involvement in your school?

SP2: Eh, it's not up to desired level. You – when you call parents to the school, they will tell you "They are working. Their employers will not allow them to come to school. If they come to school their salaries will be docked". And they are really not eh – as involved as we will wish them to be, maybe because of the challenges they have. Like I understand that most of the learners do not live with their parents. Their parents are either in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and so on. So when we call their parents they will tell you, "My parents are in Mpuma" or their parents are no longer alive. We have such cases; many of them. So it becomes a problem. So parental involvement really is – is quite minimal.

SP1: I've looked yesterday on the internet that because you're a quintile one school, also the department – the parents do not have to pay school fees.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: Is that this year still the same?

SP2: Yes. That's correct.

SP1: Mr Mashete, last question.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: What do you think could be done to improve the behaviour of school learners in general and then, if applicable, in your school?

SP2: I think we – we need to stick to the code of conduct and eh whenever you draft it or you want to review it, involve these learners so that you can hold them accountable to their commitments that they make in there. It does work. It works with us because whenever we have a problem then we refer them to the code of conduct to say, "But this is the commitment that you make as learners and you are not living up to it" and then it does work. So I think eh if – if – if we could stick to that I think it does help in terms of eh discipline at the school.

SP1: Okay. You said now the code of conduct review, the learners, everything, how do you get the learners involved or are they involved if you then revise the code of conduct?

SP2: Yes. Like I was saying, we do it with the RCL over here and they involve eh class reps and ultimately we preach it in – in lessons, life orientation, at assembly we preach it and so on. So they get – they really do get involved.

SP1: Mr Mashete, that's going to be all.

SP2: Okay.

SP1: That's all from my side.

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SP2: Oh, thank you very much.

SP1: I want to thank you so much –

SP2: Ja.

SP1: for – for your time. As I've just explained, I've nine schools at the moment and I'm going all over the place and finding out this, the code of conduct as well as the interview with the principal. From there I'm going to analyse it and then I'm just going to choose one school in each. So one school in a lower socioeconomic group, in the average, as well as the high socioeconomic group.

SP2: Okay.

SP1: I will keep you up to dated if you are chosen.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: If you aren't we are finish.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: If you – if you are chosen, what I'm going to do is, I'm going to ask you then – I need some teachers – about five – a bit more maybe – teachers. They're going to sit in a group. We call that a focus group and we're going to – I'm also going to ask a few questions but they need to answer that and discuss it also between themselves. Then I'm going to ask the teachers for also a few learners that we can discuss the same thing. Both of the interviews will probably take about 40-45 minutes and that will be it then from my side.

I will keep you definitely up to date with the whole research and I also want to find out, if my research is at the – is finish, do you want a copy, do you want to know what was – what was um – what happened –

SP2: Your findings and so on?

SP1: Yeah, the findings.

SP2: I would very much like that.

SP1: All right.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: I will definitely do so.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: But thank you so much for your time. I know it's almost lunch or it was lunch.

SP2: No, it's fine.



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SP1: And apologies again for that.

SP2: No problem.

SP1: All right.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: Thank you so much.

(Bona Lesedi - 12 Oct 2009 Part 1 ends and Bona Lesedi - 12 Oct 2009 Part 2 commences)

SP2: (in progress) – and the official – the problem with officials is that they say, "No, do something" but they won't tell you what – what to do. But we see (inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP1: That's interesting. There's – it's almost that they – they took it away but there's nothing else that they're looking at and – and you also said –

SP2: Ja.

SP1: --- interesting. I mean, the media also plays – I don't know how you feel about that, the media that's playing a huge role. I mean, if there's a principal that they can black –

SP2: Ja.

SP1: I mean, they – they just –

SP2: They'll be very happy to (inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP1: Ja, they're happy and –

SP2: Ja, but they're not happy with the situation.

SP1: No, they're not.

SP2: Ja, because – like - like for instance as an example, how do you deal with a boy who has – who has a weapon if – a dangerous boy? A boy stabs another one and then they're talking about procedures of discipline, like you are saying. You know what we do? Off record Mr (IDSO??) we – we – we handle it our own way. We don't – we don't handle it the official way. You see, so if your boy, we'll find you in this yard we'll kill you. That's - that's expulsion for us. If the Department comes and say, "You've expelled this boy".

"No. No-no-no-no we haven't. Any documentation that says so? No, we haven't". But that's – that's how we do it. We can't live with criminal elements here. A person who's a danger to other kids and teachers here, no, we do it our own way.

SP3: You see, that is what I meant with (what are?? way or??) your customs. If a person in this community rape a child or a woman, you will not read it in Beeld or Rapport --

SP1: Mm.

Video/Audio file name: [REDACTED] - 12 Oct 2009 Part 1 and 2
22 mins

SP2: Mm.

SP3: -- or even in any newspaper. Why? The community just deal with it, finish and klaar.

?: Ja.

SP3: And I wish we could do it the same way in the white community but they – there it is not –

SP1: I think I –

SP3: (inaudible - cross-talking) the same way.

SP1: Ja, sorry to interrupt, but I think the white community in a sense – now look, that's just my own thing – we – we – we expect everything to happen but we don't take accountability.

SP3: Ja.

SP1: I mean, in our community we want to have a security village now and – ag, it's a huge thing now but to – just to get the partners going and just to get at a meeting, --

SP3: Ja.

SP1: -- it's shocking but everybody is complaining about crime. I mean, we have a very high crime area. But, I mean, they do nothing about that but it's easy to sit back and say all the problems and everything and let's try to find solutions. And I think the white community especially, we are almost too busy and too – I won't say lazy but – we expect things just to happen but we don't want to do anything ourselves.

XX: Ja.

SP3: A black policeman once told me what I have said to you now. He said, "Meneer, we have our own measures within the community and you will not hear about it on the radio or television or you will not read about it". Ah, I mean, um, take for yourself, you said to me um, like what often happen is that the community will just – will just gather and they will stone this rapist to death and they will just walk away. And the police will come and the police will just drive away because they don't know who took – who they must take into custody.

SP1: Responsible, ja.

SP3: Ne? Um I think a last thought is ah for your sake talking in general, parents must take responsibility.

SP1: I agree with you but we just spoke about that. A lot of their children, I mean, it's aunts – living with aunts and parents is not here and I mean – and I've spoken to a few schools now and a lot of the other schools is actually of the point that they – that they um – that they say that the parents is nowadays, they feel that the schools would actually educate their children, that the parents don't want to have that responsibility anymore.



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XX: Ja.

SP3: Ja, but you see now what happens –

SP2: In actual fact a parent will come and say, "Please help me. This – I cannot control this kid". You know? So we have to be teachers and policemen –

SP1: The social responsibility –

SP2: Ja, they will come and say, "This kid did not sleep at home for the whole weekend". The parent comes and cries.

SP1: Oi, I don't know.

SP2: And they expect us to – to – to change that – that (inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP3: (inaudible - speaking softly) meneer –

SP1: Is there a solution?

SP3: Hoor hier, no it was very nice to speak to you.

SP1: Ja, same here.

SP3: Please let us know when you concluded --

SP1: Yes, no I said I will (inaudible - noise) everything and I'm still –

(inaudible - cross-talking)

SP1: Well, I'm still busy. This is just the first part. There's a few phases that I still need to –

SP3: And then we will speak to the media and respond to your thesis.

(chuckling)

SP1: All right (inaudible - cross-talking).

SP3: Sakkie Kotze (sp).

SP1: Sakkie Kotze.

SP3: Man dis net soos ons in die ou tye (indiscernible - 0:05:02.0) praat, inspekteur onderwys.

SP1: Oh, okay.

SP3: Ons noem dit nou deesdae EDS.

SP1: Oh, okay. So ons moet nou Maandag (inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP3: Ja, soos in my dae there was even a – a special parking place for the inspector.

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(inaudible - cross-talking)

SP1: I remember. The school was – we always had to perform, "Die inspekteure kom" and I
(inaudible - cross-talking) –

SP2: Ja.

SP3: To a certain extent it still exists and he was talking about this WSET. Dis – ons het in
die ou dae gepraat van (inaudible - noise) inspeksie.

SP1: Ja.

XX: Ja.

(audio ends)

'TEAM' SECONDARY SCHOOL

- SP1: All right. [REDACTED] thank you so much for the opportunity, especially in your case, thank you for coming in but we could've made other arrangements. Sir, just quickly, the first of – or your identity of the school is going to keep private.
- SP2: Mm-mm [indicates affirmative].
- SP1: So you don't have to worry about - anything that is said here will be keep between us as well as my researcher but we will assign different names to the schools.
- SP2: All right.
- SP1: All right Sir, first of all, please tell me a bit about the history of you school and how it's changed over the time?
- SP2: You mean when it was established and so on?
- SP1: Ja, just – just basic stuff.
- SP2: All right. The school was started in 1978 as a junior secondary school – um – to help take off the load from the two high schools that were, you know, admitting learners up until grade 12. So this was started in 1978 in an old beer hall. From there this structure here was built. Er, we moved in here in 1979. It was a junior secondary school. Then it stayed that way until about 1987. I think they had their – it had its first matric in 1988. Ja, so that in short. Then in terms of er enrolment, it has grown – it had grown at that time. Er, at one stage it had – the school had something like 1 500 learners but there has been a decline in the enrolment because this is the old – this part is the old section of the township and, you know, many people have moved to Mamelodi East now.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: So there is a declining enrolment in the school.
- SP1: How many learners approximately now?
- SP2: At the moment we have 1 073.
- SP1: One thousand, seventy three. Male or female, almost the same? Relation?
- SP2: No, more - more females. I can't give you the exact numbers —
- SP1: All right, no that's fine.
- SP2: -- but females are more.
- SP1: And tell me um culture wise, is it the same culture, languages spoken here?
- SP2: No, we have um – um Zulu and Tsonga but then remember for Zulu, they are doing Zulu but some are Swazis, others Ndebele. It's mainly Ndebele, Swazi.
- SP1: And the languages that you taught here?
- SP2: We teach Zulu and Tsonga only.
- SP1: English and Zulu?
- SP2: No, Zulu and xiTsonga. You mean African languages?
- SP1: Ja, ja.

- SP2: Ja, isiZulu and eh xiTsonga.
- SP1: Okay, and English, I mean, just the language itself —
- SP2: English, that's the medium of instruction, yes.
- SP1: All right.
- SP2: Ja.
- SP1: Tell me teacher wise, is the population almost the same as the learners? Meaning in culture the same, is there also a specific amount of Ndebele teachers or —
- SP2: No.
- SP1: Is there no relation?
- SP2: It's very - very diverse, yes.
- SP1: Is it?
- SP2: (indiscernible - 0:02:44.6)
- SP1: All right Sir, like you've read, my whole research is about, I mean – it's about a code of conduct and if there's any influence on the relationship of - of learners and behaviour and stuff like that. I mean, we read in the newspapers a lot of discipline problems —
- SP2: Ja.
- SP1: -- and stuff like that.
- SP2: Mm.
- SP1: Can we just maybe start, in this enrolling of the schools, do you think your learners' behaviour is average, maybe above average, or below average, if you compare it to different other schools?
- SP2: Mmm, I wouldn't talk much about other schools but eh I think the behaviour of the majority of my students is – is – is – is average.
- SP1: Is it?
- SP2: Ja. They are well behaved generally. We – we do pick up problems but I think we – it's very few if you compare that to the population of the school. The majority of eh students behave well.
- SP1: Why do you – why would – why would you say average? Why would you say it's average? What contributes to that factor?
- SP2: Um, maybe, you know, talking about what you want at the school. And we – we – we try to emphasis discipline and eh, we make it our target right from the beginning of the year. We – we – we talk to the learners, we give them the code of conduct. We sit with them and actually – we sit with them and actually go through the code of conduct.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: And then after that each teacher then with – with – with his or her own learners decide on the classroom rules but generally most of those would be based on the code of conduct of the school. Maybe that in itself but maybe also coupled to the fact that eh we – we – we - we talk about these things more regularly until they do them right.
- SP1: All right.
- SP2: Ja.

- SP1: Are there factors that contribute maybe to the way that the learners conduct themselves, maybe in the society also? What problems do you actually see and what factors contribute to your learner behaviour do you think?
- SP2: Well maybe also the – the – the parents. Quite a number of parents also want their – their children to learn. And I think if there's this working relationship between the parents of the school you won't have much of a problem. You know, the one should not ignore what the other is doing.
- SP1: Mm.
- SP2: So we – we – we – we actually involve them a lot. If we do pick up —
- SP1: And are they --
- SP2: Ja, if we do pick up problems we call them in.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: Ja. We talk to them and we also say, "Look, this is what we do at school. We would expect you to do the same".
- SP1: And the parents, are they a lot involved in your school or are you also struggling maybe to get them involved?
- SP2: We are struggling to get them involved, let me be honest with that. It's quite a struggle.
- SP1: Definitely.
- SP2: Some you will see for the first time when you've had problems with their – with their um children, and maybe also because we – we – we – we are a bit strict on that. If we call in a parent, sometimes we are forced to do it and the parent does not come. We say to the child, "You'll come when your parent comes to school". It might be against the rules but we – we are forced to do that to get the parent in.
- SP1: All right.
- SP2: And in many of the cases they – they – they respond.
- SP1: Tell me a bit more on maybe violence in school. Is there drug problems, do you perceive that?
- SP2: Yes, drug problem, it's a huge, huge, huge, huge problem. Um, I think mainly because of the area around the school.
- SP1: And do you think the drug problems will then influence learner behaviour?
- SP2: Yes, it definitely does, in the case of particular learners.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: You actually see their problem as a result of, you know, their drug-taking habits. I'll give you an example. You see, we have palisade fencing?
- SP1: Yes, I do.
- SP2: But you do have children who would sometimes jump. They go over the fence, this palisade fencing. And you ask yourself, what would prompt a learner to do that.
- SP1: Mm.
- SP2: A closer look at that, many times you find they are users. So that's – that's – that's a problem.
- SP1: Tell me um from the – from the Department, the socioeconomic you are – you are at the moment in quintal three.
- SP2: Mm-hm [indicates affirmative].

- SP1: Do you think the socioeconomic circumstances can also contribute to the learner behaviour?
- SP2: So many people say but I – I – you know, I have a problem with that viewpoint. Um, you know, poverty is – is (indiscernible - 0:07:31.7) – okay, it is a contributing factor but I think – you do get many students who come from a very poor, poor surroundings but they behave well. They behave well. So I would put that down to, you know, from my own observations, I would put that down to – to - to peer pressure more than socioeconomic.
- SP1: Okay, hundred percent.
- SP2: Because I look at the – the – the – the - some of these guys whose behaviour is wayward and you look at the company they keep.
- SP1: Mm.
- SP2: Ja.
- SP1: (inaudible - speaking softly)
- SP2: And then – ja.
- SP1: And that's the influence.
- SP2: Doesn't want to – ja. You know in the school here, you - you do find many learners with very poor background, very poor background but they are focused with – come to school, they try to do their work –
- SP1: Good.
- SP2: -- and em – I'm not too sure that socioeconomic problems – socioeconomic problem should actually be a reason for poor behaviour.
- SP1: Interesting. Sir, last question. What do you think could be done to improve the behaviour of school learners in general and then, if applicable, in your school then?
- SP2: Okay. I'll tell you, I am - I'm a big believer in discipline, you know, and I think if we work hard enough as teachers – if we work hard enough as teachers we will minimize behavioural problems. Example, you know, it – it shouldn't be – with teachers, it shouldn't be content based and talk about, you know, the subject that we are teaching only. Eh I think the more we interact with these children, eh get to listen to them, you know, solve their problem sometimes, like instances of bullying and so on, if you solve those you minimise the problems of violence in the school. I think --
- SP1: How will you solve those?
- SP2: The – the – the – the - the issues of bullying and so on?
- SP1: Ja.
- SP2: I think in many instances if a case is reported, we make sure that we attend to it and we – we follow it up and we talk to some of these learners because we've experienced extreme violence because of bullying.
- SP1: Mm.
- SP2: We've actually had firsthand experience of that when a boy was stabbed. He was almost killed in the school but when we checked, we found he had been bullying. Then we started saying as teachers, let's be – let's look, let's not just be teachers, let's see whether there are problems. If you see that a child seems to be having a problem, talk to these children. If you find that there is a bully, we - we call those in. We talk to them and show them that their - what they are doing is not going to benefit them, it's not going to benefit the school in any way. I think
- SP1: So you would say that teacher's involvement and the hard work, that's going to be the —

- SP2: I think —
- SP1: -- answer?
- SP2: I think teachers can – I still insist that teachers can make a difference. I still insist, whether it's sport – we sometimes undermine the - the amount of power we have but I think there's a lot more that we can do if we can just put our minds to it. Many a times some of the problems, I think teachers give up quite easily but if you work as a team and preach the same gospel, you're bound not to have problems.
- SP1: All right.
- SP2: Or you'll minimise your problems basically. We will still get problems. Children will always fight but children are children, some of these things will happen in school.
- SP1: All right. And tell me culture and differences, there's – there's – you don't receive any problems in, let's say violence between different cultures? Not at all?
- SP2: No.
- SP1: All right.
- SP2: No. Um, we actually try also not to – to – to emphasise that too much but from my observation – you see even with – er – um – you know, in the groups – in the groups of friends, you – you find them from different ethnic groups.
- SP1: Ja.
- SP2: Ja.
- SP1: Hundred percent.
- SP2: So I don't think that's much of a problem.
- SP1: Mr. Mojapelo that's going to be all. You can rush to the hospital.
- SP2: Okay. I'm – I'm —
- SP1: Thank you so much. No, I really do appreciate it. Thank you for the friendliness. I'll keep you up – up to date precisely the way forward and stuff like that.
- SP2: Okay.
- SP1: I - I do understand that you – you probably going to have a problem maybe with the teachers in this time um I'll let you know. Just to inform you quickly, how it works is I have nine – I have selected nine schools. Three of them, lower socioeconomic class, three of them middle socioeconomic and three higher socioeconomic class.
- SP2: Mm.
- SP1: I'm going to go all of them, having interview with the principle as well as getting the code of conduct. From there on I'm going to analyse it and then I'm just going to choose one in each group. So um it may be that I am going to come back to you and ask for the teachers' and the learners' participation or it may be that I'm going to choose a other school and you aren't going to be selected. However I will keep up to date each time, what's going on precisely and if you were selected or not.
- SP: Ja.
- SP1: All right?
- SP2: Ja. No, just phone and we'll see if there is a window of opportunity to do something I'll help – I'll help you out.
- SP1: I would really appreciate it. Ag, thank you so much for your time.

SP2: Just phone and then we'll see.

SP1: And thank you for coming in, I really do appreciate it.

SP2: You're welcome.

(audio ends)

KHAYA SECONDARY SCHOOL

- SP1: All right, we are ready. [REDACTED] (sp), thank you so much for giving me the opportunity. I know you're very busy. I really do appreciate it.
- SP2: Mm.
- SP1: Like I said, I want to see if there's any – any relationship between a code of conduct for learners and learner behaviour.
- SP2: Mm-hm.
- SP1: This is just the first phase.
- SP2: Mm.
- SP1: So ja, just please tell me – I also need to inform you that your identity of the school as well as your name will be kept private.
- SP2: Mm.
- SP1: It will not be um - anywhere in the research it will be named.
- SP2: That's right.
- SP1: All right. Sir just in short, can you maybe tell me about – about the history of the school and how it's changed over that time. So maybe how long you've been here, how – how do you view the learners, how old is the school, just basic stuff.
- SP2: Ja. Um, let's first start with the history of the school first. The school was established in 1979. Actually it was intended for learners who were pregnant then. It should have been a girls' school in fact but then because of the principals, this dynamic person, the boys were also allowed to come in. At first the school went up to form three, that is grade 10, and then in two years time we have to go up to grade 11. That was in 1984. That's when we started our grade 12 in 1984. And then since then it's changed hands – the school, from one principal to the other. Now if you look at the pictures here they will tell you the story that I'm the fifth principal of the school.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: Now ever since then – but I've been part of the school all along from principal number one but just as an educator.
- SP1: Oh okay.
- SP2: Then I've got to go through the ranks. I went through the ranks until to where I am today as principal of the school.

In terms of learner behaviour which is what we have got to address vis-à-vis the code of conduct. The code of conduct, we've got to understand that it has to be

dynamic as well because this political scenario also gave a different change in terms of the constitution of the school as well as, you know, how to go about um, let's say, you know, how to develop these kids because you'll remember then, there was corporal punishment --

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- which is now out of question. It's a non – it's a non-negotiable.

SP1: Mm.

SP2: You don't use corporal punishment at all. But as a school what we did was, first we involved the parents. That is the parents and the educators as well as the learners, to come up with a code of conduct that must be owned by everybody – by every stakeholder at the school. So what we did was we indicated salient, you know, pertinent areas that we – we thought are very important – where - such as coming to school. Learners should be punctual, uniform, there should be uniform. You'll remember uniform also was also a question mark sometime back. But because of people starting to realise safety and security doesn't only come in terms of – eh in terms of whats-a-name – in terms of um – um what do you call this, code of conduct.

SP1: Oh yes.

SP2: The uniform also plays an important role because if you're learners then you are able to identify that learner.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Can we possibly –

SP1: Ja please, go for it. There's no problem --

(interruption)

SP1: All right.

SP2: I – I'm sorry about that.

SP1: No problem Sir.

SP2: As I was saying, you know, a uniform is very important so that we are able to identify these kids because they can put any other uniform and we'll see this is a learner form this school. However, coming to school, we said – like I said, late coming it's a non-negotiable --

SP1: Mm-hm.

SP2: -- that we also looked into, uniform. And as well as full participation in terms of learner – in – in terms of the ah the schooling matters to do their homework, to be able to say the parents must also sign the books to monitor their children's work. But then of course we do have problems sometimes where learners will bunk classes. In such cases we'll involve first the standard principal, and then from there the class

educator, the learner himself or herself, and then thereafter call in the parents to try and solve this. But then in cases where we cannot go where – with which we've got – we have recently, we refer to the LO Department, that is Life Orientation Department, that will then refer the child to the police station. The police station in itself has got a structure wherein there – there's this thing of behaviour modification and then they go through that. That is in short what I can say about learner behaviour.

And then to say are there any other problems? Other problems are that, you know, in townships there is this problem of drugs and what have you which, of course, we at the school do not have much of a problem with.

(interruption)

SP2: Ja, ah – like – as I was saying, that you see townships have got this problem with the – the drug called nyaope and all that. Ja, the – the – we as a school do not have – don't have much of a problem in terms of that abuse.

SP1: Mm-hm.

SP2: However, we are also using the – the Metro Police. There was a programme that the Metro Police – that it's running that would say – they would come and identify learners if any, and refer them for – for rehabilitation but thus far our – our list is zero so far. So we couldn't just pick up all learners who are using it on the school premises. I don't know outside school but when they come to school in the schoolyard we don't have symptoms of that so far.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: And then the other thing that was a problem, you – you'll find people sticking around the – you know, hanging around the premises outside, then that I dealt with. I dealt with it this way. I informed the – the security personnel at school to make it a point that, you know, --

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- they must tell these people to go away from the whats-a-name, from the school fence but at the same time much help came because of visible eh policing. The policing – the police are taking rounds so as these people do not give us a problem anymore.

And then the other thing, I don't know whether it will impact on behaviour in terms of learners, it's a question of burglary. I don't know whether it will be relevant in this discussion –

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- but why do I bring it up? Because we experience a lot of burglary here at the school. We thought maybe at the same it is the learners who are giving out information –

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- and that would of course contradict the code of conduct because in terms of the code of conduct we expect everybody to behave according to the norms and the ethos of the school. So we – we looked into that. I reported several cases in terms of – of burglary and investigations are on but nothing has pointed thus far to any school learner –

SP1: Okay.

SP2: -- of the school to be, you know, implicated in – in the – in the investigations. So –

SP1: So – so – so tell me, do you think that let's say socioeconomic classes, --

SP2: Ja. Ja.

SP1: -- do you think that plays a role in learner behaviour then?

SP2: Socioeconomic, it does. Definitely it should. It should. You know, since eh I do not want to go back to this thing of saying, "All right, let's go and get the then government" –

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- that – that will be quite irrelevant because behaviour is behaviour. I believe psychologically, you know, learners, the first institution is home –

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- and what you learn at home you've got to transfer here at school. And this school has got to develop that as well, so that's why there's consultation. But at the same time yes, we've got learners who are running families, --

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- he, you've got learners who come to school without a cent in their pocket that – and then of course will impact on their behaviour. Then what we did as a school, we went out. We are proud to say Woolworths is helping us to run our feeding scheme here. So as a result we have identified learners – such learners and then at the same time what we did – we are trying to – we feed these learners. Probably when you walked in here now you must have seen learners –

SP1: Mm.

SP2: -- the queuing up, that is for feeding scheme. And if you look outside there, there's a garden there. They have eh vegetables that will also help in terms of feeding these learners.

SP1: You've touched upon it a bit. If you compare your school –

SP2: Mm-hm.

- SP1: -- Saulsridge, to other schools in the area, do you think the learner behaviour is below par, or do you think it's the same as the other schools, or do you think it's a bit better than the other schools?
- SP2: I do not want to blow my trumpet here but many eh people who visit this school would – the first thing that they would recognise, they'll say, "You know, your children are very disciplined". I don't know whether it is – it's a recommendation but eh it's not – if it was said by one person but different people who – who visit this school will always say, "You know, we've been going to different high schools but this is a different high school". Because what – we can take a walk right now down to – to the buildings, they – immediately they see somebody or the other – a person in charge, they – they are in class. You will – you won't even realise there are learners in class except when it is break or when they go for LO. And even the level of noise, you'll realise that it's – it's a bit quiet. I don't know whether it is far much better or what but that is the recommendation that I always heard from –
- SP1: All right, that's good.
- SP2: -- from people who visit the school to say it is –
- SP1: Just more basic then, how long have you been the principal now?
- SP2: All right. For the sake of principalship, what happened in – this is the year 2009 – in 2002 the principal left the school. And then I was acting and we – we were changing. You know, I was acting for this x-number of months, the other person will do it and then the interviews were held this year, 2009, of which I was appointed --
- SP1: Congratulations.
- SP2: -- but from the 1st of April. Yes.
- SP1: Congratulations.
- SP2: That's it.
- SP1: Quickly, how many learners are there in the school?
- SP2: We've got about eh – this year my – my – my role has dropped a bit because of the school that has been built just across the road (indiscernible - 0:10:26.1), so I'm at 780 right now.
- SP1: (inaudible - cross-talking)
- SP2: Seven hundred and eighty, ja with three grade 12 classes –
- SP1: And tell me, it is also mixed ethnic groups?
- SP2: Yes, mixed ethnic groups that I have here in terms of eh – I'm giving three learning areas home languages.
- SP1: Yes.

- SP2: I'm giving the Sepedi, isiZulu and Tsi Tsonga.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: Those are the three languages that I'm giving.
- SP1: And tell me, the teacher staff, also ethnic groups, is it also mixed?
- SP2: Ja, it is also mixed as a result – that's why we've got educators who are teaching Tsi Tsonga, some are teaching Sepedi, some are teaching eh isiZulu, and of course you'll find teachers who are ethnically Tswana and so on and so on.
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: Ja, we have that.
- SP1: Mr Mangenya (sp), do you find that different ethnic groups sometimes is in conflict with each other because of the ethnic groups?
- SP2: Eh (chuckling). Ja – yes and no. You know, let me cite an example. For example, on the 24th of September we have a cultural day at school but which we celebrated just before on the 23rd. Now as they were performing there I was looking at, you know, the behaviour to see what is happening. You – you'll realise that when the Tsonga group is coming there is this lot of applause and when the Sothos are coming, it's a – no, there's this boo. When the isiZulu is coming there is no, you know. And that in itself you'll find where they're sitting itself. If you look at the people, the way they were seated, they divided themselves but at the end of the day it doesn't come to a point where it becomes a conflict.
- SP1: Ja.
- SP2: It's just a question –
- SP1: Okay.
- SP2: -- to say, you know, we think our culture is far much better than theirs and they think theirs is –
- SP1: Ja.
- SP2: And even if you look at the different dances of different groups, of course it will tell youth that every ethnic group will feel "We are the best".
- SP1: Mm.
- SP2: You see? So in terms of conflict, I – it's a yes and a no but it doesn't come out clearly to say where you see, you know, some are below – in terms of a code of conduct, I mean, in terms of being aware others are under-graded, they will treat them more or less the same.
- SP1: Mm.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: Mr Mangenya (sp) I got the idea that you're very community based. I mean, you asked for the police, you ask for the parents, they must be involved in this stuff, --

SP2: Ja.

SP1: -- tell me, what do you think could be done to improve the behaviour of school learners in general, and if applicable, then in your school?

SP2: I think a lot of parental involvement because eh you now, if we – we involve parents a lot, if they can role - that the role of parents in that case, I think that can go a very long way. And if we can establish a community for us in which, you know, behaviour is discussed in general – not necessarily to say school X, school B - but to say, "Let's change the moral fibre of the whole community," I think it – it can be a benefit to a large extent.

SP1: So do you think that is main thing that you –

SP2: Ja.

SP1: Okay.

SP2: Ja.

SP1: Mr Mangenya (sp) that's it.

SP2: Thank you.

SP1: Thank you so much for your time, I really do appreciate and good luck and congratulations again on your principalship and –

SP2: Mm.

SP1: -- I believe you have a lot of work to do.

SP2: Sure.

SP1: Um, just lastly Sir, um like I said, this is the phase one.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: I'm going now – I've nine schools at the moment –

SP2: Mm-hm.

SP1: -- which three is socioeconomic classes is the lower middleclass of – in the letter –

SP2: That's right.

SP1: And I'm going to – to them and I'm doing – or getting the code of conduct and then also asking you - um interview.

SP2: Mm-hm.

SP1: And from thereon I'm just going to choose one in each group.

SP2: Yes.

SP1: So I will keep you informed precisely what's going on, if I'm going to need some extra – extra time or if I'm not.

SP2: Mm.

SP1: And I also then want to ask you if – if at the end of my research um, do you want to be informed of the findings of what happened in the research?

SP2: I would appreciate that.

SP1: All right, I will definitely give it to you.

SP2: That's right.

SP1: Thank you so much again.

SP2: And thank you Sir.

SP1: Thank you.

SP2: Sure.

(audio ends)



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1930-2030



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education/Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
School of Educational Studies/Skool van
Opvoedkundige Studies
Department of Education Management and Policy
Studies/Departement Onderwysbestuur en
Beleidstudies

Dear Teacher

RE: PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am a student at the University of Pretoria currently busy with an M.Ed degree in Educational Management, Law and Policy. For my research paper in this course, I am conducting a study in order to determine whether or not there is any relationship between school codes of conduct and learner behaviour.

Having obtained permission from both the Department of Education and your school I asked your principal to identify teachers who would add value to my research. You were one of the teachers s/he identified. This letter serves as a request to you to participate in a focus group discussion on school codes of conduct and learner behaviour.

The questionnaire given will not take longer than 20min as I understand that time is of the essence for all. Your name and surname will not be mentioned – I shall use pseudonyms.

There would be no direct benefit or risk towards you. However, if at any time you feel uncomfortable or experience any problems, you may withdraw and I shall honour your decision. If you have any questions about the course or the research paper, please do not hesitate to contact me, or either my supervisor, Dr Beverley Malan (bewer@worldonline.co.za or 011-740-2828 or cell 0844402828)

While you are under no obligation to grant me permission – research participation is voluntary – I shall really appreciate your cooperation in this regard. If you do agree to participate, please sign the attached permission form and return it either to me personally or to your principal, who will pass it on to me.

Sincerely yours



Janos Pentz

Student Researcher

079 504 5737(cell)

012 347 6692 (tel)

janos.pentz@pfizer.com



Dr Beverley Malan

Supervisor

084-440-2828 (cell)

011-740-2828

bewer@worldonline.co.za



TEACHER RESEARCH AGREEMENT

I, [REDACTED]
Sowbadya High School, have read the attached letter in which the research study was explained. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have been answered to my satisfaction. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I am also aware that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty. I agree to participate in the research study as a focus group participant provided that my name will at no stage be linked to any comment or contribution made by me during this interview.

Name of Teacher Participant: [REDACTED] Ndoi

Signature of Teacher Participant: [Signature]

Date signed: 02/03/2010

Name of Researcher (print): Janos Pentz

Signature of Researcher: [Signature]

Date signed: 02/03/2010

Name of Supervisor (print): Dr B Malan

Signature of Supervisor: [Signature]

Date signed: _____

Dear Teacher

Thank you for being willing to participate in my research in completing the questionnaire on your school's code of conduct and learner behaviour.

Important:

- The questionnaire should be completed on your own and should not be discussed with other teachers.
- Please give a true reflection of your opinions/ feelings / statements. This is vital!
- Please try to give as many information as possible. If there is not enough space, please write on the back of the page.
- The questionnaire will not take longer than 20 min to complete.
- The questionnaire consists of 9 questions.

Interview Questions - Teachers

1. Please tell me a bit about your school and the way people – management and teachers, teachers and learners, learners and learners, parents and teachers, et cetera – relate to one another.

① School - Saubridge is one of the high schools in Atteridgeville and Sandhurst. The school has more than thousand learners, and it is "no fee" school. There are 37 educators and 10 personnel staff members.

② Teachers/educators As mentioned - above, there school has 37 educators i.e. Principal, two deputy principals, six Head of Departments and 29 PL1 educators. The management of the school meet every morning before classes at school commences, Tuesday to Thursday there are regular management meetings and one general staff meeting once per month.

③ Parents! Parents are more involved with the education of their children. The SGB (School governing Body) represent the interest of the parents in school.

[Type text]

(NB) The above mentioned stakeholders and the involvement of the department of education - Provincial make it easy for the management of the school to run it smoothly.

2. Would you say that the learners in your schools are relatively well behaved? Why do you say so?

Learner Behaviour - Code of Conduct

It is the policy of the school to give each learner a code of conduct as a monitoring tool. Our school is one of the more disciplined learners school in Atteridgeville and Saulville. Late-coming, bunking classes, absenteeism, disrespect, such incident are often not reported.

School Management team, parents, component work together to ensure that teaching and learning takes place without any disturbances. It is noted by members of the community that the school is so disciplined therefore they send their children to school even we do have kids that comes from afar.

3. How do you feel about school codes of conduct in general? Do you think they have an effect on learner behaviour? Why/why not

The school code of conduct aligned with the ~~School African School Act~~ ^{South Africa} School Act (SASA). To discipline a learner we are guide by policy as well as the above mentioned Act. We play by books as it is embraced in the Constitution of the Country.

4. Should cultural, gender and other differences be considered in the development and implementation of codes of conduct? If so, what factors? If not, why not?

Culture, gender etc are more respected. The dominating ethnic group in our school are Tsongas / Shanganas. Equally, respect as stated in the constitution be the guiding aspect in our school.

We do have learners from neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique. But all learners are equal and they do receive the same respect.

5. How do you feel about your school code of conduct? Is it a good one or not? What would you change if you could? Why?

Our code of conduct ^{are} satisfactory, for now we do not need to change or amend ~~them~~ ~~for now~~ our code of code (RCL), parents and educators are happy. We are getting few problems of ill-discipline because the code of conduct have no loop hole.

6. How was your school code of conduct developed? Who were involved in its development and what were their roles in this regard? If you could change the development process, would you? If so, why, and how would you do it?

It was a consultative process. All stakeholders were involved, i.e. parents, learners, educators and our frame of reference ^{were} ~~was~~ the following: Constitution, SASSA, GDE Education policy and other relevant document. U

7. How was your school of code introduced to the school community? Did role players have the opportunity of commenting on it? Did you have a formal launch or was it just implemented?

Our Code of Conduct ~~was~~ ^{was} were introduced to parents/community in our ~~General Annual Meeting~~ Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the end of our academic year. Parents (SGB), RCL and educators had an opportunity to look into it before ~~it~~ its launch. We do not impose policies to our stakeholders

[Type text]

8. Have you seen a difference in learner behaviour since the school code of conduct was implemented? To what do you ascribe this difference or its lack?

There is a big/huge differences between now and then, learners behave well. They own the code of conduct. Less problems like bullying, fighting but more time for effective learning and teaching.

9. Do you think that school codes of conduct should be revised on a regular basis? If so, why, and how often should this happen?

The school code of conduct need to be revised if need arise, life is not static, it is full of challenges that have impact on teaching and learning. Amendments need to be done to bridge the gaps.

[Type text]

Grade 115 Room 21

Dear Learner

Thank you for being willing to participate in my research in completing the questionnaire on your school's code of conduct and learner behaviour.

Important:

- The questionnaire should be completed on your own and should not be discussed with other teachers.
- Please give a true reflection of your opinions/ feelings / statements. This is vital!
- Please try to give as many information as possible. If there is not enough space, please write on the back of the page.
- The questionnaire will not take longer than 20 min to complete.
- The questionnaire consists of 12 questions.

Interview Questions

1. Please tell me a bit about your school. Do you like being here? Why/why not?

Yes I like being here. I am saying this because since I have been to Sandridge Secondary School at 2007, I have never heard that people were fighting that they even killed each other. Yes I do agree there are fights at school almost everyday due to lack of self-control. The teachers/educators and staff members are always ready to resolve it without including people from outside. I am at grade 11, we usually complain of a lot of work but I have realised that it is a good thing, when teachers give us a lot of work.

2. How do learners in your school generally conduct themselves? Do they treat teachers with respect or are they sometimes rude or violent? How do they behave towards other learners? Is there a lot of bullying? What about drug abuse and boy-girl relations?

I am saying this including myself. We the learners of this school, no matter the grade. We are very disrespectful. I never knew the code of conduct and never knew what is going on in it. Some of the things are practised but most of them are violated. We do things without thinking how will they affect others. The only drug that I know that is used at Saulridge is smoking. Both teachers and learners especially boys are smoking in toilets and other hidden areas and even privately.

3. What about teachers? How do they usually treat you, the learners? Do they shout at you or humiliate you? If so, how does that make you feel? How would you like to be treated?

Some teachers are treating us bad, but many of them are trying their own means to be good. The teachers like to say that when we are doing something we saw it from our parents. They tell us they are not our Grandparents. That makes me feel hated/disliked. That makes me feel that my parents never taught me the right thing. I would like to be treated in a way that when I have done something wrong they show me the right way. When someone has done something wrong they usually say that we all did it. (one rotten potato spoil the whole bag).

4. Are you happy with the way people treat each other in the school? If not, what would you change and why?

No I am not happy with the way we treat each other. I would like ~~to~~ change the way we communicate to each other. The teachers are blaming learners and learners are blaming teachers.

5. I am told that your school has its own code of conduct.

- How do you feel about your school code of conduct?

I feel safe and secured. The only thing that I hate about it is the conduct that says no cellphones, because I stay alone at home, so I have to communicate with my sister and parents.

- Is it a good one or not? Why/why not?

It is a good one because all the dangerous things are not needed, even though we break them. If you are not living according to the code you get punished. The code of conduct keeps our school moving.

- What would you change if you could?

I would say that you are not allowed to use your cellphones during school hours.

6. On your schools code of conduct:

- What is included in this code of conduct?

No smoking is allowed for health reasons.

- What kind of rules and regulations does it contain?

No one is allowed to smoke in the school premises,
whether you are an educator or a learner

- Does it spell out the consequences of misbehaviour?

Yes it says that it is for health reason. You are
exposing our school

- Does it spell out disciplinary procedures and so forth?

No it does not. I only realised that sometimes
cigarettes are found in the pupils pockets and they just
take them away.

- Please tell me as much about this code as you can.

The Code of Conduct is made up of different kinds of rules.
We have to follow to be part of the school. Our
Code of Conduct includes all the important things we need
to do and not do. If you break them you will be
in trouble.

7. Do you think there should be different rules, regulations and punishments for boys and girls? Why/why not?

No I think the rules are all fine. I am saying this because the code of conduct has included all the rules. There should be one punishment so that we can be the same because this is a democratic country.

8. What about different rules, regulations and punishments for people from different cultures, ages, races and religions? Why/why not?

I think there should be not other rules but the same rules because many people decided on the rules. One punishment for all cultures so that one can be forced to obey. If you choose a punishment you can choose an easy one that can make you repeat again.

9. Now let's focus on the way in which the code was developed. Who was involved in its development and what roles did these people perform in this regard?

I think that the educators, SGB, Parents and School Staff was involved in its development. Every person came with rules. Then they were put on a chart, then the most important ones were chosen.

10. What about the implementation of the code? How and by whom was it introduced to you, the learners? Who is responsible for seeing to it that learners adhere to the code? What happens if they don't?

The principal told us that we are welcome to come and look at it. The principal, the teachers and the RCLs are responsible. They get punished.

11. Do you think your code of conduct is effective? In other words, does it have a positive effect on learner behaviour? If so, why? If not, what do you think should be changed to make sure that it does?

Yes it does. It is the one that helps us daily in school. It is negative to negative things and wants us to do positive.

12. Do you think the time has come for your code of conduct to be revised? If not, why not? If yes, how and by whom should this be done?

Yes this is the time, Many of us are from different school which practice different rules. We have to know the rules and obey them. Both the learners and educators have to do so. The code should be written down on the chalk board of each class or typed to be pasted in each class.