

Management of Learner Discipline in Secondary Schools: A Collaborative Effort

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ABSTRACT The focus of this paper is on the management of the learner discipline in the secondary schools. Two secondary schools were sampled for data collection. A qualitative research design was used engaging four focus group interviews with the learners, two focus groups for educators with eight participants each, as well as two one on one interviews for the principals and the other eight educators from both the schools for in-depth interviews. A total of 74 participants were involved. This study considered the collaborative effort in managing learner discipline in secondary schools. It is concluded that educators are experiencing difficulties and constrains to manage the learner behaviour and to handle the nature of learner misconduct in the school and in the classroom. Recommendations were made to assist the principals, educators and the learners to deal with learner misconduct and implement alternative strategies to manage discipline in schools.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of the study was on the management of the learner discipline in secondary schools. It is essential and fundamental to have a strong understanding of what the term “discipline” means in the perspective of education and schooling. Previous researches on the learner behaviour in secondary schools have focused on causal attributes to learner behaviour (Miller et al. 2000; Miller and Lambert 2010). This research aimed at examining the management of learner misconduct and incidences of learner negative behaviour in secondary schools. From a reformation perspective, “discipline” refers to discipleship, in other words: followership (Maphosa and Mammen 2011). It is a world-wide concern that learner discipline is based on how learners conduct themselves at school and seems to be a global problem (Steyn and Wolhuter 2003). Educators operating from a progressive perspective may define school discipline as all activities that contribute to learners’ intrinsic motivation, self-management and decision-making

skills (Ferreira and Badenhorst 2007). There are various forms of learner misconduct, including bullying, gangsterism, drugs and alcohol abuse, conflicts with educators, teenage pregnancy, stealing, satanic rituals in schools that are not allowed according to the school code of conduct (DoE 1996). Minor learner infringements, such as the refusal to follow a teacher’s instructions or being inattentive in the class, occur frequently and have a significant influence on the teaching and learning process in South African schools (Rossouw and Stewart 2008).

Problem Statement

One of the reasons for the collapse of learner discipline in schools might be the development and transformation in the political system of South Africa (Moore 2009). The establishment of the South African School’s Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA), which highlighted the rights and the responsibilities of the learners in school, and the introduction of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, which confirmed Human Rights, and the introduction of the new Department of Education policy, all brought uncertainty to educators, parents and learners (RSA 1996). This transformation required a gradual change in the Department of Education, especially in schools, to ensure the proper maintenance of discipline (DoE 1996;

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RSA 1996). As a result of all these changes learners have become apathetic, impatient, self-centred, overwhelming and harder to motivate, thus resulting in disciplinary problems at schools.

This research focuses on problems of discipline that are faced by secondary schools in the East Rand. It endeavours to put forward recommendations in order to assist those secondary schools to maintain discipline. Among the problems that are faced by these secondary schools are: learners are arriving late to school, they do not wear proper school uniform, they disrespect their educators and fellow learners, they bully other learners, bring dangerous weapons to school and they refuse to do their school work. Rosen (2005) defines discipline as training that develops self-control, character, orderliness or efficiency, strict control to enforce obedience, treatment that controls or punishes and a system of rules. It is interesting to note that the definitions of the term suggest that discipline can have quite different implications for schools.

South Africa is experiencing major challenges in education this is supported by the study conducted by Wolhuter and Russo (2013). However, DoE has put into place the vision plan through the National Development Plan and the Department of Basic Education's Action Plan 2014 that has reiterated the government's position of declaring education a societal issue. DoE has called on for partnership with the community to address challenges facing education in the country (NEEDU 2012; Action Plan 2013). When looking at the reports on the lack of discipline in secondary schools, the absence on consideration for one another in society, the high crime rate, late coming, drug abuse, bullying and other incidences of violence in schools defeat the Action Plan 2014. Learners no longer respect their educators, and parents are apparently not working in collaboration with schools to address the problem of learner misconduct. This raises the fact that there is a lack of values for a safety environment and well-disciplined school community (Singh and Steyn 2013). Disciplinary approaches that promote violence can associate learners to be poor problem solvers with poor anger management and self-management skills. Such behaviour of learners raises the question as to whether are these schools managing discipline of learners? Is there any collaboration within the school's community to manage discipline of learners?

Objectives of the Study

Educators in South Africa are becoming increasingly stressed due to disciplinary problems of learners in schools. Singh and Steyn (2013) state that schools are integral community-based organisations that ought to be safe havens for all. The objective of this paper is to investigate the collaborative efforts of handling and managing learner misconduct in the secondary schools.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptualisation that places secondary school learners in the role of diminished selves in need of therapeutic intervention has been challenged (Ecclestone and Hayes 2009). There are various factors that contribute to learner misconduct that could be associated to the environmental conditions. Schools should understand that learners are particularly vulnerable to many educational disadvantages (DoE 2013). Theory of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, intuitionism theory avers that there is a fundamental principle of right and wrong, and that there is an authoritative virtue of self-evident truths (Ross 1930). The primary usage of intuitionism is to refer to a doctrine in moral epistemology concerning how people come to know or justifiably believe moral judgements such as that torture is wrong or that virtue is good. Intuitionism in this sense is a theory about how ethical beliefs acquire their justifications. More specifically intuitionism avers that we can know that certain things are good or actions are right by intuition (Audi 2005). In school discipline, one can therefore speak of an act of wrong and right behaviour of learners based on the tenets of intuitionism. In this research it was decided to follow a combined approach that embraces tenets of intuitionism, a judicial conception of the principles of good or acceptable conduct and of contractarianism.

Educators and learners should have an intuitive understanding of what good or acceptable behaviour entails. This should be entailed in the school code of conduct within a legal framework. However, educators, learners and parents are parties to a social contract of this document. Based on this they all have some understanding of what is morally a good conduct. Morality can be a body of standards or principles derived

from a code of conduct from a particular philosophy, religion or culture or it can derive from a standard that a person believes should be universal (Stanford University 2011). Morality may also be specifically synonymous with goodness or rightness.

The school code of conduct should work towards the inclusion of the whole school approach which ensures that classroom discipline reflects the school policies, establishment of ground rules and consistent implementation of rules (DoE 2007).

Safety of Learners in School

Ensuring learners safety in school is the most basic and fundamental concern of educators, administrators, parents, learners and community members (Eckes and Russo 2012). Although learner misconduct might be arguable decreased in some areas, however, its severity has escalated dramatically as evidenced by a number of school shootings, warranting the strict application of zero tolerance policies currently in effect in most schools. Rosen (2005) agrees that a sense of belonging and connectedness has been identified as contributing to improved academic achievement. The unsafe environment at school is an indicator of disciplinary problems that schools are now facing. Some schools are faced with serious learner misconduct and educators have to deal with disruptive behaviour of learners in schools.

School discipline has certain objectives. Amongst them it is to ensure that safety of staff and learners is maintained. Ndamani (2008) eludes that such safety might probably be lacking in many schools as there is violence in schools. Learners are killing each other at schools. They bring dangerous weapons to school. There is no more respect for each other. It is not creating an environment conducive to learning and teaching in schools any longer.

The Western Cape Education Department (DoE 2013) suggests the Operational Education Management (OEM) of discipline which is necessary for the functioning of a school. Indiscipline does not only disrupt teaching and learning but can also endanger other learners and educators in the school. The OEM puts an emphasis on the knowledge of learners and focus on building the relationship within the school and professional management of the learning

process and learning environment. The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) is accountable to the community, through the Minister for Education and Children's Services for managing learner behaviour in schools. They are also responsible for creating safe, orderly, productive and successful learning communities (DoE 2007). Potgieter et al. (1997) asserts that good school discipline is an important feature of effective schools. Learners learn best in an orderly and safe environment. Discipline is therefore one of the most important management functions in a school that requires the principal, the teachers and parents to maintain order and proper discipline that allows for effective teaching and learning.

De Klerk and Rens (2003) assert that good school discipline is an important feature for effective teaching and learning to take place. Learners learn best in an orderly and safe environment. Discipline is therefore one of the most important management functions in a school that requires the principals, and the educators to maintain order and proper discipline at school for effective teaching and learning.

Rights of Learners in Relation to Discipline

Section 12 of the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996 (RSA 1996) states that "everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way." In line with the Constitution, the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (DoE 1996) outlines that "no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse of any kind, at any educational institution." Schools have to come up with functional alternative measures in order to deal with indiscipline. This shows the dilemma that schools face in trying to respect children's rights and at the same time finding adequate and meaningful measures to deal with learner indiscipline without infringing on the said rights (OEM 2013).

Section 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that everyone has a right to basic education in the official language of his/her choice in public institutions (RSA 1996). It is important for schools and educators to realise that they are entitled to limit the learner's right to education, should the conduct of the learner infringe upon the right to education of other learners. For such behaviour, the cor-

rect disciplinary measures have to be taken to discipline such a learner. It is important that the schools compile a discipline policy that outlines the required behaviour in the school in line with the South African schools Act of 1996. In South Africa, directors, district directors, principals and school based staff, including teachers, are accountable to the Chief Executive, Department for Education and Children's Services, for implementing the School Discipline Policy (DoE 2007).

Disruptive Behaviour of Learners

The following problems are encountered by most educators on daily basis as described by Steyn and Wolhuter (2003), disruptive behaviour, rudeness, dishonesty, obscene language, cheekiness, untidiness, not wearing school uniform, neglect of duty to be performed, telling of lies and absenteeism. At the same time there exist reasons of concern about wide spectrum of problems which educators encounter on weekly basis for example, absenteeism, telling lies, moodiness, wrong clothing, neglect of duty and bullying and also about serious forms of discipline problems such as vandalism, theft and violence which occurs on monthly basis (Steyn and Wolhuter 2003).

Two issues arise in discussions concerning discipline. The first pertains to values such as respect, honesty, responsibility and self-discipline that are not emphasised sufficiently and therefore can have little impact on schools. The second issue pertains to those values that presently should be regarded as important for South Africa. The ideals of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), featuring notions of child-centeredness and strategies such as group work, will not succeed if a lack of discipline, including self-discipline exists. The reasons why the South African society has not succeeded in eradicating the problem of a lack of self-discipline include the overemphasis of individual rights, the negligence of personal responsibility, the lack of a fully-fledged public value system, failure by learners to be self-disciplined, failure of the system to guide learners to think and judge for themselves, and the absence of self-disciplined role-models (De Klerk and Rens 2003).

Factors Contributing to Learner Misconduct

The social and physical environments play the integral part in providing guidance to be-

havioural patterns of learners in the school. Behaviour can be affected by the socio-economic status, poverty situation and violence within the community, family composition, health status, and guidance and counselling.

Greenberg et al. (2003) agree that a sense of belonging and connectedness has been identified as contributing to improved academic achievement. With the help of the South African Schools Act of 1996, schools have to compile rules and regulations for the learners to be adopted by the SGB as the Code of Conduct for the school. Schools should make discipline a priority, because no matter how effective the teacher or the teaching strategy is, without discipline, no effective learning will take place at that school (DoE 2001).

To put icing on the cake, there are challenges surrounding the SGB who are mostly illiterate and semi-illiterate who find it difficult to draw and implement policies, which then becomes the burden of SMT to structure functional policies around discipline (Potgieter et al. 1997). No matter how hard educators try to vary their teaching methods and style as a way of intervening to improve learner performance, discipline always remains a threat to the day to day running of schools, which impacts directly to the effective teaching and learning process.

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METHODOLOGY

The research paradigm for this study was based on constructivism, a paradigm based on knowledge and meaning from the interaction between the participants experiences and their ideas on the phenomenon (Maree 2014). Research methodology is concerned with under-

standing the processes and the social and cultural contexts which underlie various behavioural patterns and are mostly concerned with exploring the “why” question of the research (Maree 2014). A qualitative research design was used to collect data for this study. A semi-structured interview format was adopted. This enabled particular aspect to be explored while simultaneously offering space to consider emergent themes and to enable respondents to be more relaxed in answering questions on the management of discipline of learners in the schools (Cohen et al. 2004).

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to collect data for this study. Interview schedule with open ended questions that allowed probing to enable respondents to be more relaxed in answering questions on management of the learner discipline in secondary schools was used.

Participants’ Selection Sampling

Qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive rather than probability or random sampling approaches. Purposive selection of participants was done because of some defining characteristics that made them the holders of the data needed for the study. Sampling decisions were therefore made for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions (Maree 2014).

The population included two secondary schools, in Sedibeng District, Gauteng Province. The findings are therefore valid to these secondary schools. The population for this paper comprises of 2 principals, 105 educators and 2009 learners from two secondary schools. The total population for the study was 2116. Therefore, a sample for this paper was constituted as follows:

The participants were selected according to purposive selection. Maree (2014) describes purposeful sampling as not only considering the selection of the participants but also involves the settings, incidents, events and activities for data collection which all take place in the participant’s settings and for this case it will be the school setting. Educators have a major responsibility of managing discipline at school. The

two secondary school principals, sixteen educators including those who are in the disciplinary committees in these schools, sixty learners including those who are the Representative Council of Learners (RCL), in the schools were interviewed. These participants are important to this study because they provided their first-hand experience with disciplinary matters at their schools.

Data Collection Strategy

Interview schedule was designed and questions were grouped into knowledge themes of the school’s code of conduct, experiences of learner behaviour in the classroom and in school premises, knowledge of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, procedures and management of the learner sanctions, detentions and expulsion, perceptions of changes in the behaviour amongst the learners. Interviews were designed to enable progressive focusing on key emerging topics and allow probing question that may emerge (DoE 1996). The entire data collection process was recorded using an audio recorder and field notes with the permission of the participants.

There were two principals, one from each secondary school, 16 educators, 8 educators from each school and there were 48 learners, 24 from each secondary school including members from Representative Council of Learners (RCL). The total sample was 74 respondents. There were two focus groups of learners per school. Each group had 12 respondents. Two focus groups of educators. Each group with 8 participants and another 8 one-on-one basis interviews for educators with an intention to explore widely and deeper into the phenomenon researched on management of discipline and learner misconduct in school. Lastly there were two one-on-one interviews for the school principals one from each secondary school. All respondents were informed of ethical consideration and privacy of the participant. Permission to conduct interviews was obtained from the participating schools officials.

Interviews

Semi-structured interview method was employed. An interview schedule was used to guide the interviewer on questions that were relevant

to the research on the management of discipline of the learners in the secondary schools. Such a schedule was used to ensure that all relevant topics were covered during the interviews (Maree 2014). The interview allowed the researcher to examine fundamental questions about the way discipline was maintained in the two secondary schools. Interviews for the principals were conducted in the principals' office, during the scheduled time in all two schools. Educator interviews were conducted in the school staff room, prepared for the session. During each process, the interview guide was used to develop the discussion among the respondents. This method of interviewing accommodated a minimum number of respondents (Creswell 2012). Particular attention was paid to the data bearing on the question of the management of discipline of the learners in secondary schools in the East Rand, Gauteng province, South Africa.

Focus group interview was used to collect data from educators and learners. There were six focus groups, three from each school that were conducted. These focus groups were conducted in the respondents' school. Each interview lasted for about sixty minutes. English was the medium of instruction as all two schools were secondary level and all participants could communicate in English. A brief set of field notes during the session as the validation of the recorded comments was made. Respondents were informed about the recording device during the interview session. Key sites were also recorded during these sessions (Maree 2014). The same questions were asked in both schools. Additional probing questions were phrased carefully so as not to be leading, thereby invalidating data, and were based on remarks made by the respondents. To ensure maximum participation, respondents were allowed to discuss issues in question with each other. Maree (2014) points out that, focus groups are characterised by the interaction between participants from which the researcher discovers how they feel about a specific issue.

Data Analysis

The analysis was done through interconnected steps and formed a spiral of activities from coding and organising themes representing the data and forming interpretation of them (Creswell 2013). In this case were the rough notes

taken during the interviews, the transcripts of the recorded stories, any documents that may have been provided by the participants to the researcher were used. The content of all the interviews were thoroughly analysed to determine common factors within the educators' stories before the report could be written. The final step in the process was the interpretation and coding of data into themes and discussion of themes.

Trustworthiness Aspects

Trustworthiness is one of the important instruments of a qualitative research, needed to be continuously assessed using the consistency checks, procedures and credibility of the stakeholders. Trustworthiness of this study relied on credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Ethical Aspects

Maree (2014) points out that it is imperative to obtain clearance from an ethics committee when human subjects are involved in any kind of research of an empirical nature. Department of Education Sedibeng District was consulted to obtain permission to conduct research in the selected secondary schools. Further permission was obtained from the three secondary school principals to conduct this research study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data was analysed and categorised and coded. Codes were then reduced into three themes. They were:

- Recurring late coming, bunking, bullying and substance abuse
- The social and environmental factors influencing discipline
- The effects of discipline in these schools.

Recurring Late Coming, Bunking, Bullying and Substance Abuse

Participants voiced out the problems of recurring late coming of learners to school which affected the teaching time. It has been stated in the beginning of this paper that if a learner misses the beginning of a class, he/she misses the critical background and organisation informa-

tion necessary for deeper understanding of the lesson taught. Late coming leads to absenteeism. It was pointed out during discussions that the sequence of late coming led to absenteeism of learners. Steyn and Wolhuter (2003), Ndamani (2008) and Potgieter et al. (1997) state that absenteeism, rudeness, bullying are serious forms of misconduct in the schools. The school time allocation and timetable were not fully adhered to as learners were arriving late even after the first period was done. It was discovered that it was not only the problem of late coming but bunking of classes prevailed.

One educator participant said:

“Some learners are locked outside the school gate in the morning when they are late so as not to enter the class at any time of their arrival to disturb the teaching and learning which was already happening in the classroom. It sounds as if our learners are enjoying to be locked outside the school gate because some of them go back home knowing that their parents are not there. Most of our late coming learners go to roam around in town and I think that is where they fall into prey of the drug dealers. They start taking drugs and some start smuggling them.”

The political status of South Africa led to a radical transformation within the department of Education and this paradigm shift had an impact on the control system of learners in schools. This led to the establishment of the SASA of 1996 (DoE 1996) which was not comprehensively understood by learners as well as educators. The school should develop a school code of conduct which will include the omissions of proper functions, the disjunction between right and wrong. Moral behaviour could be included in the school code of conduct. Substance abuse by learners had a major influence on the discipline challenges of learners in the classroom. Educators were experiencing difficulties of learners who use drugs.

Educators identified the following:

“Learners are bunking lessons, and staying outside their classes, making a lot of disruptive noise that would disturb other classes during their learning. However, we can-not stop the lesson and move outside to reprimand them from making disturbing noise. As a result teaching and learning is disturbed”

Each school should compile a discipline policy that will outline the required and acceptable

behaviour of learners in the school (Malhebe 2004).

The Social and Environmental Factors Influencing Discipline

The social background of learners, moral values and norms of the community does not motivate, support, and promote good behaviour of learners. The community could have a major influence on the behaviour of learners. It was discovered from the discussions with educators and learners that there are learners who come from broken families where there is a single parent who is an alcoholic. Such parents do not contribute at all to the good and acceptable behaviour of their children. Educators are faced with a situation of motivating learners who would not listen to them. Parents can contribute to the development of problem behaviour in their children by failing to equip them with social skills and support. Some parents model inappropriate behaviour to their children (Van Wyk 2001; Ndamani 2008).

There are families that are headed by young learners as their parents are deceased. These learners were tired at school because of the parental responsibilities that they performed every day. They do not have time to write home work because they are busy with other responsibilities of the young brothers and sisters. They said their educators say to them that failure to write home work is a misconduct.

Poverty has stricken many families in the area, especially in the informal settlements. Majority of learners go to school on empty stomachs and they experience difficulty in concentrating in class, and they play truancy. Some of them come late to school because they are not motivated to go to school with empty stomachs. This happens due to social need that they are experiencing. De Klerk and Rens (2003) and Rosen (2005) state that social factors have negative effects on good school discipline.

Learners stated during the interviews that:

“The problem that I am experiencing is lack of food at home. Sometimes we sleep without eating or even go to school with empty stomach. I find it difficult to concentrate at school and I would be thinking about what I will eat when I arrive at home knowing that there is no food. This is so disturbing for me. Other educators do not understand they say that I am naughty and ill-discipline.”

Teachers were faced with disrespectful learners who would not listen to them and sometimes refused to do their school and home work. The lack of moral development of learners from home had an impact in discipline. Rosen (2005) asserts that lack of moral training and modelling by the parents contributes towards lack of discipline in schools.

Neatness of the school and cleanliness of their classrooms were a big problem as other classrooms were dirty. Teaching and learning happens effectively in the neat environment. Neatness is part of moral development of learners for effective learning. Ndamani (2008) affirms that parents have the tendency of shifting their role of instilling good morals in their children to the educators and this causes problems for educators as they need parental support in handling learner discipline. De Klerk and Rens (2003) state that good school discipline is an important feature for effective teaching and learning and that learners learn best in an orderly and safe environment.

The Effects of Discipline in These Secondary Schools

There are educators who come to school without preparing their lessons. They arrive late in class and some completely missed lessons intentionally. They also failed to react to ill-disciplined learners or condoned miscreant behaviour. The whole school approach (DoE 2012) supports the fact that classroom discipline reflects the school's policies, professional management of the teaching and learning process, correct teaching methodology and consistent implementation of the rules. Educators might be faced with difficulties that would lead to learner misconduct.

Some schools were not properly and safely secured. There was no proper fencing and in some instances the school fence had holes where gangsters and hooligans would come through and disturb the school at any time. Gangsterism was a big issue in the two schools. There are learners who are involved in gangs in the township, and they brought their gang issues into the schools which resulted in clashes amongst the learners and subsequent disruption in the school. Other incidents related to threats, physical injuries and bullying. Burglary and stealing of valuable school properties and facilities was

rife in the two secondary schools. This caused a draw back for the schools in trying to provide Learner and Teacher Support Material (LTSM) for effective teaching and learning. Safety in schools is as important as the home environment. De Klerk and Rens (2003) assert that effective schooling happens in a safe environment.

Learners said:

"We would like to start the day with morning-prayer at the assembly. There is a lot of misbehaviour in our school so we think that if we can pray before entering our class things could be better. We raised this issue with the educators but they were not in favour of that."

Poor communication channels between learners and educators and amongst educators themselves was a problem. Some learners wanted the morning assembly to be reinstated at school on daily basis.

There was evidence of a laissez-faire atmosphere in another school; some learners do what they want, and there was no action taken against them. Some educators do not cooperate with the principal, the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB) an indication of the lack of teamwork in the school was discovered. Malhebe (2008) emphasises the importance of collaboration of SMT and SGB for the effective management of discipline in the school.

High rate of pregnancy in the schools was a problem because educators and other learners could not cope with pregnant girls. These girls were frequently absent from school and did not want to cooperate with educators.

CONCLUSION

An investigation on the management of learner discipline in the secondary schools in the East Rand was reported in this paper. The collaborative effort of the SMT, SGB, educators and learners is vital in maintaining discipline. It has been discovered that management of discipline of learners in secondary schools should receive first priority in each school. Appropriate documents should be made available in order to assist in the management of discipline. If the school is unable to maintain discipline among its learners, that might result in ineffective teaching and learning in the school. Discovery was reached that stakeholders in education including parents are not supporting educators in ar-

eas pertaining to discipline. However, in most cases they have an intuitive understanding and an insight into “what good and acceptable” conduct of behaviour entails. However, a calling for a collaborative effort to the stakeholders who have interest in education to work together in managing discipline of learners in the secondary schools is essential. Therefore, they should do their best to assist and root out what is known as “bad and unacceptable” behaviour of learners in secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is difficult for learners to learn in a chaotic environment as well as educators can-not teach in a disorderly environment. The creation of collaborative school environment becomes essential for effective teaching and learning. There are guidelines specifically to certain processes which must be followed by the school managers in case of unacceptable behaviour of learners. Behaviour which is not acceptable includes:

- Refusal to participate in the education programme or
- Disobedience of instruction which regulates the conduct of learners or
- Causes which are likely to cause damage or bring the school into disrespect or
- The behaviour that is likely to impede significantly the learning of other learners in school.

From the challenges that the secondary schools are experiencing, the following recommendations could assist the principals, educators, learners, and other stakeholders that have interest in education to have an intuitive understanding and the insight of what good or acceptable behaviour and the way of good conduct. Schools should try to condemn the bad or unacceptable behaviour for effective discipline in secondary schools. This is an effort that could be achieved through collaboration of the school management, educators and learners. The following recommendations are made to the school Principal, educators and learners in this research:

Recommendations for the Principals

Principals should collaborate with the SMT and SGB to develop the School Code of Conduct. He/she should ensure that this document is drawn up by all the interested parties in the

school, and it is respected in the school in order to maintain order and good behaviour of learners. It is not enough to develop the document without adopting it. It should be adopted in order to allow all the school community to own the document and respect it.

After adopting the code of conduct, a discipline policy must be compiled for the school. The policy should contain the code of appropriate behaviour that applies when learners are within and outside the school and should state the ways in which that code is to be enforced. However, if the principal becomes aware of the persistent of breaches of that code by learners to the extent that the reputation of the school is dented, it is appropriate for him/her to intervene with a disciplinary measure commensurate with the offence in order to maintain good discipline in the school.

Recommendations for the Educators

Classroom management is essential to maintaining a safe environment where learners can learn and educators can also teach effectively. Acceptable behaviour should start in the classroom and could be observed outside the classroom in the school environment. Extrinsic motivators may be one helpful approach to helping educators maintain discipline starting from the classroom to the entire school discipline. Classroom management is very important as it leads to the development of intrinsic motivation. Educators should play the role of learner motivator in trying to establish control.

Educators need to be committed, involved and dedicated towards their daily and contractual responsibilities as they form essential elements to receive the top priority. Time management should start with the educators first so that learners would realise the importance of managing time. Educators should refrain from sending learners to shops and or outside school premises during school hours.

Educators should be willing to guide and teach learners at all times at school and that should be a prerogative effort. Formation of teamwork amongst educators, and SGBs is necessary for the promotion of effective teaching and learning. Educators should inculcate a good and acceptable behaviour in the learners and combat all what is known as undesirable behaviour of the learners. The more positive the learners’

perception of the educators' feelings towards him/her, the better the classroom behaviour and discipline will be in the school.

Recommendations for the Learners

It is imperative for learners to respect fellow learners and their educators. Due to the various challenges that are facing South Africa including family structure, drug abuse and deceases that claim lives of people, those who have huge responsibilities of heading the family should ask for assistance from neighbours and from local social services. This could be done through school management to request for assistance from the social services to assist with programmes for learner support. Such learners might unintentionally be misbehaving by arriving late to school, failure to do homework due to the tasks the learner has to fulfil at home. All learners should take the responsibility of being a learner and know that "bad and unacceptable" behaviour is not allowed at school. Example of bad and acceptable behaviour is late coming, rudeness, absenteeism, disruptive behaviour and untidiness disrespect of everyone is not acceptable. Each child has a right and a responsibility to perform.

Collaborative engagement of learners in the development and formulation of the school code of conduct and school policy will make them respect the school rule as they were part of the process. Learners should not feel as if they are left out when school rules are made. The distinction should be made clear to them on what an acceptable behaviour is.

NOTE

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