

Collective ownership:
how parents and schools can maintain
discipline within the existing policy framework

by

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(HDE, BEd and PGDE)

Dissertation submitted to fulfil the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in Policy Studies and Governance in Education

in the

School of Education Studies
Faculty of Education

at the

University of the Free State
Bloemfontein

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January 2017

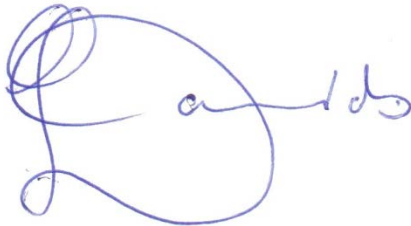
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January 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In completing the study, I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following persons that ensured that the study becomes a reality:

- My supervisors, Dr Adré le Roux and Dr Lynette Jacobs, without your assistance, guidance, encouragement and support, this study would not have been possible. My gratitude cannot be expressed in words or in writing.
- Annamarie du Preez for language editing and proofreading my study.
- My examiners for pointing out some weaknesses and provided positive comments that allowed me to improve the final copy after examination.
- My friends Kallie Mörsner and Dalene Maartens for your help with the printing of my documents.
- The parents who participate in the empirical research. Thank you for such rich information, moreover I enjoyed spending time with you.
- My husband, Gavin, thank you for your constant support and prayers, the wonderful way in which you have always encouraged me through your resources of love, goodwill and strength of mind and spirit.
- My children, Tayleigh, Jayden and Matthew, thank you for your support, prayers and patience.
- All my family members, my parents, my sisters, and my parent-in-laws, thank you for your prayers, phone calls and motivation. Julie, my-right-hand, thank you for taking care of my household and my family.

Above all, I dedicate this study to God, for the strength and wisdom He gave me to complete this study.

SUMMARY

Informed by a general view of learner misbehaviour and its negative influence and effects on the quality of teaching, this study explores the perceptions of parents concerning discipline in schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District. Based on the assumption that discipline is not the sole responsibility of teachers and schools, the aim of this study was to consider how parents and schools can collectively maintain discipline within a policy framework. As such, this study was guided by the question: *How can parents and schools collectively maintain discipline, within the context of the existing policy framework?*

Framed within an Interpretivist paradigm and informed by a qualitative approach, several key findings derived from this study. *Firstly*, a review of literature on democracy and values emphasised the important role of education to provide learners with the opportunity to embrace a democratic way of life. In this regard, it was noted that South African education should promote the constitutional values of *democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism, non-sexism, Ubuntu, an open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect, and reconciliation*. However, in order to accomplish a democratic society, it is necessary to create a democratic environment conducive for effective teaching and learning. Such an environment is only possible when teachers, parents and the broader community uphold constitutional values.

Secondly, a literature review regarding learner misbehaviour showed that violence are at the heart of learner misbehaviour in most South African schools. Problems of indiscipline due to *inter alia*, emotional and professional tension, bullying, gangster-related activities, drugs and alcohol not only have a negative effect on teaching and learning, but hold serious implications for the day-to-day functioning of teachers. Teachers are, however, not solely responsible for discipline as parents are co-responsible for the maintenance of school discipline. By upholding the ideals of a school's code of conduct and through representation on school governing bodies, parents can contribute towards ensuring a safe environment conducive for effective teaching and learning.

Thirdly, data generated through six semi-structured interviews with the parents of school-going children revealed that there is a significant relationship between parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities to maintain discipline at home, and their role in assisting schools to enhance positive learner behaviour. The findings revealed that parents are indeed of the opinion that they should work together with teachers towards positive learner behaviour. Through the analysis of the data, the concept of *collective ownership* gradually emerged and it became necessary to explore the existing policy framework which should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools.

Fourthly, the analysis of education-related documents foregrounded the policy framework that should inform collective ownership for maintaining discipline in schools. These documents include a spectrum of documents having a direct bearing on education, namely *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995), *Education White Paper 2: The Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (1996), the *South African Schools Act* (1996), the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001), *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning experience* (2000), and *Examples of a Code of Conduct for a school* (2008). Informed by the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), the underlying principles and values for collective ownership were highlighted. The document analysis indicated that the notion of collective ownership by parents and teachers entails shared decision-making, co-responsibility and co-accountability for maintaining of school discipline - all of which is protected and promoted within a policy framework.

Lastly, and in order for parents and teachers to maintain school discipline within the existing policy framework, several suggestions are made. These include the development of sound two-way communication, the nurturing of a culture of parental involvement, the encouragement of parent-teacher partnerships, and the utilisation of the existing policy framework.

OPSOMMING

Ingelig deur 'n algemene siening van leerder wangedrag en die negatiewe invloed en uitwerking daarvan op die kwaliteit van onderrig, ondersoek hierdie studie die

persepsies van ouers met betrekking tot dissipline in skole in die Mangaung Metropolitaanse Munisipaliteitsdistrik. Gebaseer op die aanname dat dissipline nie die uitsluitlike verantwoordelikheid van onderwysers en skole is nie, was die doel met die studie om te oorweeg hoe ouers en skole gesamentlik dissipline kan handhaaf binne 'n beleidsraamwerk. As sodanig is hierdie studie gelei deur die vraag: *Hoe kan ouers en skole gesamentlik dissipline binne die konteks van die bestaande beleidsraamwerk handhaaf?*

Geraam binne 'n Interpretivistiese paradigma en ingelig deur 'n kwalitatiewe benadering, is verskeie belangrike bevindings in hierdie studie afgelei. *Eerstens*, beklemtoon 'n oorsig van die literatuur oor demokrasie en waardes die belangrike rol van onderwys om aan leerders die geleentheid te bied om 'n demokratiese leefwyse uit te leef. In hierdie verband is daar opgemerk dat die Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysstelsel die grondwetlike waardes van demokrasie moet bevorder, naamlik *maatskaplike geregtigheid* en *regverdigheid, gelykheid, nie-rassigheid, geslagsgelykheid, Ubuntu, 'n oop samelewing, aanspreeklikheid, die oppergesag van die reg, respek, en versoening*. Ten einde 'n demokratiese samelewing te kweek, is dit nodig om 'n demokratiese omgewing wat bevorderlik is vir effektiewe onderrig en leer te skep. So 'n omgewing sal slegs moontlik wees wanneer onderwysers, ouers en die breër gemeenskap grondwetlike waardes handhaaf.

In die *tweede* plek toon die literatuuroorsig dat gevalle van geweld in die meeste Suid-Afrikaanse skole onderliggend tot leerderwangedrag is. Probleme wat ontstaan as gevolg van 'n gebrek aan dissipline weens onder andere emosionele en professionele spanning, bullebakkerie, bende-erwante aktiwiteite, dwelms en alkohol, het nie net 'n negatiewe uitwerking op onderrig en leer nie, maar hou ook ernstige implikasies vir die dag-tot-dag funksionering van onderwysers in. Onderwysers is egter nie alleen verantwoordelik vir dissipline nie, siende dat ouers mede-verantwoordelik is vir die handhawing van skooldissipline. Deur die voorlewing van die ideale van 'n skool se gedragskode en deur middel van verteenwoordiging op skoolbeheerliggame kan ouers bydra tot die versekering van 'n veilige omgewing wat bevorderlik is vir effektiewe onderrig en leer.

Derdens het die data wat met behulp van ses semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met ouers van skoolgaande kinders gegenereer is, aan die lig gebring dat daar 'n beduidende verband is tussen ouers se begrip van hul rol en verantwoordelikhede om dissipline te handhaaf by die huis, en hul ondersteunende rol aan skole om positiewe leerdergedrag te bevorder. Die bevindinge het getoon dat ouers wel van mening is dat hulle saam met onderwysers moet werk om positiewe leerdergedrag te bevorder. Deur die ontleding van die data het die konsep van kollektiewe eienaarskap geleidelik na vore gekom en daarom was dit nodig om die bestaande beleidsraamwerk te verken wat kollektiewe eienaarskap vir dissipline in skole moet rig.

In die *vierde* plek het die ontleding van onderwysverwante dokumente die beleidsraamwerk wat veronderstel is om kollektiewe eienaarskap vir die handhawing van dissipline in skole in te lig, aan die orde gestel. Hierdie dokumente sluit 'n spektrum van dokumente in wat 'n direkte invloed op die onderwys het, naamlik die *Witskrif oor Onderwys en Opleiding* (1995), *Onderwys Witskrif 2: Die Organisasie, Beheer en Befondsing van skole* (1996), die *Suid-Afrikaanse Skolewet* (1996), *Die Manifesto oor Waardes, Onderwys en Demokrasie* (2001), *Alternatiewe vir Lyfstraf: Die leerervaring* (2000), en *Voorbeelde van 'n gedragskode vir 'n skool* (2008). Met behulp van die *Grondwet van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika* (1996) is die onderliggende beginsels en waardes vir kollektiewe eienaarskap uitgelig. Die dokumentontleding het aangedui dat die idee van kollektiewe eienaarskap deur beide ouers en onderwysers neerkom op gedeelde besluitneming, mede-verantwoordelikhede en mede-verantwoordbaarheid vir die handhawing van skooldissipline - dus aangeleenthede wat alles beskerm en bevorder word binne die beleidsraamwerk.

Laastens en ten einde vir ouers en onderwysers om skooldissipline binne die bestaande beleidsraamwerk in stand te kan hou, is 'n paar voorstelle gemaak. Dit sluit in die ontwikkeling van gesonde tweerigtingkommunikasie, die kweek van 'n kultuur van ouerbetrokkenheid, die aanmoediging van ouer-onderwyser vennootskappe, en die benutting van die bestaande beleidsraamwerk.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

With the long-awaited political and constitutional changes since the first democratic election in 1994, a different societal structure was established through the adoption of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (hereafter *Constitution*) in 1996 (Venter, nd: 1-8). This new societal structure, which is very different from that of the previous discriminatory apartheid era, is characterised by the constitutional principles of democracy, freedoms, equity and social justice (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1, Section 1-6). However, it has been noted that to realise this 'new' South African society, a particular kind of citizen has to be envisaged, namely a democratic and disciplined citizen (Naidoo, 2013: 54; Smit & Oosthuizen, 2011: 55).

Since South Africa became a constitutional democracy in 1994, all South Africans are required to adhere to the supreme law, namely the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA, 1996). Therefore, by implication, South Africa requires democratic and disciplined citizens who not only actively participate in societal matters, but who also live by constitutional principles. As such, South African citizens need to embrace the core values of the *Constitution* that place the emphasis on the democratic ideals of tolerance, respect, and diversity; the promotion of human rights; and active citizen participation to address community problems (RSA, 1996: Preamble). Covalieskie (2006: 57) links concepts like *democratic* and *discipline* with the "qualities of a good citizen", and one could therefore assume that a good citizen will model responsible behaviour, attitudes and democratic values. To live in a democratic society subsequently requires knowledgeable, responsible and active citizens. In other words, a good democratic citizen is someone who has knowledge of society's major social, political and legal institutions; who is aware of his or her rights and responsibilities, and who actively participates in such institutions (Schoeman, 2006: 132-135). Informed by a newly envisaged democratic society and given the important role of school education to bring about democratic and disciplined citizens, the South African government has embarked on the transformation of the entire education system (Chisholm, 2010: 89). In this regard, the *White Paper on Education and Training* (DoE, 1995) (hereafter *White Paper 1*) and the *Education White Paper 2: Organisation, Governance and Funding of*

Schools (DoE, 1996a) respectively articulated the fundamental principles for transformation, namely open access to quality education, redress of educational inequalities, and the utilisation of state resources to achieve equity, community participation, democratic governance, accountability and financial stability. It can therefore be assumed that the education system has the responsibility to contribute to the delivery of democratic and disciplined citizens that are prepared to not only live by constitutional values, but who will lead productive and self-fulfilled lives in a country free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 9(3)).

However, despite the vision of a safe environment where teaching and learning takes place and where learners can be assisted in becoming democratic and disciplined citizens, learner misbehaviour and discipline problems in schools are an obstinate element of a teacher's teaching experience (LeeFon, Jacobs, Le Roux & De Wet, 2013: 1; Marais & Meier, 2010: 41; Ndamani, 2008: 177). According to Wolhuter and Van Staden (2008: 390), discipline problems encountered by most teachers include disruptive behaviour, rudeness, dishonesty, obscene language, moodiness, untidy/wrong clothing, neglect of duty, telling lies and absenteeism. While most teachers in South African schools are demoralised about disciplinary problems (Marais & Meier, 2010: 41; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 3), Smith (2010: 47) also found that the low morale of teachers has a negative impact on the teaching and learning environment.

Teachers are acting *in loco parentis*, and therefore play an important role to maintain discipline (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013: 339). *In loco parentis* means having the same responsibility towards a child as in the case of a parent (Joseph, 2013: 45). According to Joubert and Prinsloo (in De Wet & Jacobs, 2013: 1) teachers are required to take care of learners, to maintain discipline, and to ensure learners' safety. However, to maintain discipline is not the responsibility of teachers only - parents¹ must also assume part of this responsibility (Mncube, Harber & Du Plessis, 2011: 217). Joubert and Bray (2007: 3) support this perception by indicating that schools and parents share

¹ According to SASA (DoE, 1996b, Section 1), the term "**parent**" means (a) the biological or adoptive *parent* or legal guardian of a *learner*; (b) the person legally entitled to custody of a *learner*; or (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraph (a) and (b) towards the *learner's* education at *school*. For the purpose of this study, the term "**parent**" is used to include legal guardians.

the constitutional duty to ensure that education takes place in a disciplined and orderly environment. In addition, research emphasises the importance and advantages of a partnership between teachers and parents when they link children's academic, social and emotional development (Coetzee, Van Niekerk & Wydeman, 2008: 131; Epstein, 2005: 179) to parents' involvement in their children's school life (Powell, Son, File & San Juan, 2010: 269). In the South African context such a partnership is strongly supported by the *South African Schools Act* (DoE, 1996b: Section 16) (hereafter SASA) that sets to promote access, quality and democratic governance in schools by allowing parents to serve on school governing bodies and to be collectively accountable for the governing of schools. In terms of community participation, democratic governance and accountability serve as motivation for parents involved in school governance as key stakeholders in the school community.

Since research indicates that parental involvement contributes to the increase of learner achievement and to the positive change of learner attitudes, schools should prioritise the fostering of parent-school partnerships (Ndamani, 2008: 196). Currently, parents have the platform to not only serve on school governing bodies to exercise their responsibilities as citizens in a democratic South Africa, but also to assist in making collective decisions on behalf of their children. When parents are involved in the decision-making process, they are more likely to support the decisions made and provide valuable perspectives that enhance the decision-making process (Davis, 2000: 19). In addition, in terms of learner discipline, if parents and schools are committed to be counter-accountable for maintaining discipline and to uphold the ideals of the school's code of conduct, schools can become safe environments conducive to effective learning and teaching (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 98).

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Although I was a teacher for only two years and have ten years of experience in Human Resource Development while furthering my postgraduate studies, I have kept a keen interest in educational matters. For the last eight years, I have been a stay-at-home mom, and as a parent I am actively involved in the daily school lives of my children. Through the years and due to my involvement in education, I have gained a general understanding of the increase of the intensity of learner misbehaviour and the negative influence and effects thereof on the quality of teaching (Zulu, Urbani, van der Merwe

& Van der Walt, 2004: 170). In recent years, the media reported on unsafe schools and a high level of school violence (Nair, 2013: 6; Ngcukana, 2009: 1). Various reports on incidences of violence in schools might often be regarded as “unfortunate incidents of isolated instances” on which media attention is concentrated (Burton & Leoschut, 2013: 1). Nevertheless, in most instances these reports do not reflect the reality in many South African schools, and subsequently depicts schools as unruly and unsafe environments for both learners and teachers. As a parent, my interest is in particular with the assumption that the maintenance of discipline is the responsibility of all the relevant stakeholders, and not the sole responsibility of teachers and the school management.

My contention is that a study about the collective ownership of schools and parents for maintaining discipline is of particular importance in the light of a young democracy in which we would like our children to become democratic and responsible South African citizens. In addition, such a study is required due to a reality in which disturbing local media reports constantly highlight the lack of discipline at some schools (Machete, 31 July 2011). De Waal (2011: 187) also maintains that the absence of teachers’ and parents’ willingness to accept accountability for discipline problems contributes to the current discipline problems in schools. In addition, this study found further support in Maree’s comment (Machete, 31 July 2011) that ill-discipline is significantly reduced when both parents and teachers are involved in the education of their children. Notwithstanding the dark picture, I am of the opinion that if parents work closely with teachers, together they can maintain discipline.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND SUB-QUESTIONS

School discipline has two main objectives, namely to ensure the safety of staff and learners, and secondly to create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 161; Wolhuter & Van Staden, 2008: 391). According to Singh and Steyn (2014: 81), a safe, secure and positive environment is vital for learners’ academic performance and holistic development. In addition, the South African *Constitution* (1996) obliges schools to ensure the safety of staff and learners, and to ensure that teaching and learning takes place in a secure environment (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 24; DoE, 1996b: Section 8(2)). It is subsequently the duty and responsibility of all the members of the school community to embrace and uphold

the democratic values and principles underpinning the *Constitution*. As mentioned, SASA (DoE, 1996b: Preamble) also reflects the constitutional provision for democratic structures of governance, and subsequently acknowledges the importance of a democratic society where the rights of all learners, parents and teachers are upheld. In other words, everyone, for example education officials, parents, learners, teachers and members of the society, have to accept the responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the state (Joubert & Bray, 2007: 30). One could assume that such a partnership will also include co-responsibility in maintaining sound school discipline.

However, as already mentioned, schools are currently facing enormous challenges to create and maintain sound learner discipline that is necessary for effective learning and teaching. Although the government provides the necessary education policy framework that aims to create an environment that promotes the safety of learners and teachers and is conducive to the delivery of quality teaching and learning (DoE, 2008: 1), learner misbehaviour is rapidly on the increase. According to Burton (2008a: 1), 15.3% of primary and secondary school learners have experienced some form of violence at school. Incidents like schoolyard fights, bullying and drug abuse are examples of discipline problems. There seems to be a breakdown in discipline in schools (Ndamani, 2008: 177), and according to a research report by Burton and Leoschut (2013: 12), the level of violence is on the increase. SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 29) mandates school governing bodies to adopt a code of conduct for learners as a way of “establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to improve the quality of the learning process”. Nevertheless, there is no national school discipline policy, only guidelines documented as *Alternatives for Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience* (DoE: 2000). While the alarming increase of violence and learner misbehaviour hampers effective learning and teaching in schools, it also infringes on the constitutional rights of both learners and teachers. As most schools pose a considerable risk of violence for learners, few would differ that South African schools are in trouble and need to find ways to strengthen the school system to address discipline problems to ensure a safe, secure and positive environment (Joubert & Squelch, 2005: 23).

Several educational policies and guidelines encourage parental involvement in issues regarding school discipline. These include *inter alia*, the *National Education Policy Act of 1996*, *SASA (1996)*, the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience (2000)*, and *Examples of a Code of Conduct for a school (2008)*. However, despite these policies and guidelines, there still seems to be a lack of collective ownership in the maintaining of discipline at schools (Caspe, Lopez, Chu & Weis, 2011: 1-16). Learners indeed have the legal right to receive teaching and learning in a safe and conducive environment, but it seems that learner misbehaviour in many South African schools violates this very right. In this regard, De Waal (2011: 75) indicates that it remains a challenge to motivate education partners to accept their personal accountability for maintaining safe schools. Parents and schools should start to collectively utilise the existing policy framework to maintain school discipline. If not, one could assume that learner misbehaviour will continue to impede on the delivery of quality education in a safe school environment.

Based on the above, this study was guided by the question: *How can parents and schools collectively maintain discipline, within the context of the existing policy framework?* In an attempt to answer this question, the following sub-questions were asked:

- 1.3.1 What values should guide learner behaviour in a democracy?
- 1.3.2 What is known about the challenges that schools face regarding learner behaviour and discipline?
- 1.3.3 What are the perceptions of parents regarding discipline in schools?
- 1.3.4 What policy framework should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools?
- 1.3.5 How can parents and schools collectively maintain learner behaviour within the existing policy framework?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Derived from the research question, i.e. *How can parents and schools collectively maintain discipline within the context of the existing policy framework?*, the aim of this study was to consider how parents could, within the existing policy framework, take up

collective ownership to assist in the maintaining of school discipline. Therefore, based on the aim of the study, the author subsequently attempted to

- 1.4.1 consider the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy;
- 1.4.2 review literature on the challenges that schools experience with learner behaviour;
- 1.4.3 understand the perspectives of parents regarding discipline in schools;
- 1.4.4 to analyse the policy framework that should inform collective ownership for school discipline ; and
- 1.4.5 contemplate the implications of this research for parents and schools to collectively maintain learner behaviour within the existing policy framework.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This section entails the main aspects of the framework for the research design and the general development of the study. In this regard, Durrheim (2006: 37) proposes some considerations to follow, namely the purpose of the research, the theoretical paradigm informing the research, the context within which the research will be carried out and the research methods to be used for data generation and analysis. Against the clearly stated aim of this research (cf. 1.4), a short exposition is given of the research paradigm, the research methodology and the research methods, all of which were regarded as an integrated apparatus to address the research question in a coherent and logic way.

1.5.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Creswell (2003: 5) defines a research paradigm as a set of beliefs that relate to broad approaches to research, including the application of specific methods. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006: 6) and Scotland (2012: 9), in a similar manner, refer to paradigmatic beliefs as a system of interrelated practice and thinking that define the nature of their enquiry for researchers. According to Fouché and Schurink (2011: 309), a very relevant question to ask during the development of the research topic into a research design is *how should social reality be looked at?* While this question refers to the ontological belief of the research, i.e. the researcher's stance on the nature of reality, *epistemology* on the other hand, specifies the *nature of the relationship* between the researcher (knower) and that which can be known (Durrheim, 2006: 7).

In other words, every research paradigm is based on its own ontological and epistemological set of beliefs.

Ontological beliefs in social science studies are related to the nature of reality and in this regard, Fouché and Schurink's (2011: 309) research refer to two basic answers to the question of *how one should look at social reality*. The one answer alludes to the notion that reality should be viewed as an "external reality of the real world" which should be approached objectively. In this case, it is expected from the researcher to maintain a distant stance when studying the research problem. This particular ontological approach, however, has no bearing on my study as I do not claim objectivity, nor do I wish to distance myself from my research and the research participants. It is the second ontological stance that strongly appeals to my study, namely the belief that there is no truth in the real world (Fouché & Schurink, 2011: 309). Rather, the assumption is made that reality is *subjective* and can only be make sense of through the *empathetic* understanding of a participant's meaning of his or her life world. While the second answer is aimed to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action, it also constitutes the interpretive paradigm which is the paradigm within which this study was framed.

As a research paradigm, Interpretivism is based on the ontological assumption that reality is constructed inter-subjectively through the meanings and understandings we assign to our world (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006: 3; Tuli, 2010: 101). As such, the assumption is that multiple realities exist, all of which are socially constructed. By implication, the epistemological stance of Interpretivism assumes that not only is the human mind the origin of meaning, but that the social world does not exist independently of human knowledge (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006: 3-4). As such, and supported by Nieuwenhuis (2007: 59-60), the interpretive research paradigm assumes that as social life is a distinctively human product, human behaviour is also affected by knowledge of the social world.

As this study was framed within Interpretivism, I subsequently assumed that, as the researcher, the intersect between *who I am* and *how I understand* will always be an integral part of how I understand others, the world and myself. My understanding of collective ownership, i.e. the partnership between the school and parents in

maintaining school discipline, acknowledges and subsequently coincides with multiple understandings thereof. I considered the interpretive paradigm as most suitable for this study, because of its potential to generate new understandings of parents' perspectives on collective ownership to maintain discipline in schools. Framed within the interpretative paradigm, this study enabled me to seek deeper meaning and to obtain practical data embedded in the world of the participants (Van Esch & Van Esch, 2013: 219).

1.5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Ryan, Coughlan and Croning (2007: 742) define a research methodology as the specific or particular approach to and processes of a research study. The research methodology can also be regarded as the body of knowledge that the researcher uses in the research methods, i.e. the specific or particular approaches and processes of the research study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 99). In a similar vein, Crotty (1998: 3) not only explains research methodology as the strategy, plan of action, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods, but clearly links the choice and use of methods to desired outcomes. In other words, methodology refers to exactly *how* the researcher may practically go about with what he or she believes can be known (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006: 6-7).

In line with the ontological belief that my study consisted of people's subjective experiences of the world, I opted for a qualitative research methodology. As a qualitative researcher, my ontological beliefs relate to my view of reality as socially constructed, and to the extent to which I remain depended on the manner in which I answered the research question and sub-questions most truthfully. In addition, I adopted an inter-subjective or interactional epistemological stance toward reality. As my research was based on a subjective relationship between my research subjects and myself as the researcher, my research methodology was mainly interactional, interpretative and qualitative in nature (cf. Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006: 6-7).

In pursuit of the aim of this study, I regarded the qualitative research design as the most appropriate. From the onset I worked with the assumption that a qualitative approach can contribute to a better understanding of the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democratic society; of the perspectives of parents regarding

discipline in schools; and of the challenges that schools experience with learner behaviour. Furthermore, I also assumed that a qualitative methodology would create the space for me to explore the policy framework that could inform collective ownership. This would enable me to contemplate the consequences of this study for parents and schools to collectively improve learner behaviour within the existing policy framework.

1.5.3 RESEARCH METHODS

While a research methodology refers to a particular research approach, research methods are the specific ways and procedures a researcher would use to collect and analyse generated data (Crotty, 1998: 3). As indicated, in this particular research a qualitative research approach was used. Aligning with a qualitative approach, Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 5) consider qualitative research as a multi-method type of approach to conduct research, while harbouring a wide range of different epistemological approaches. For this particular study, various research methods were chosen such as a literature review, semi-structured interviews, document analysis and the drawing of a synthesis. I considered these research methods as not only in alignment with a qualitative research approach, but as most appropriate to address my research objectives in order to eventually reach my research aim. Before I introduce my research methods by means of a brief exposition of each, the summary in Table 1-1 below illustrates how the chosen research methods correspond with my research objectives.

Table 1-1: Summary of research objectives and the methods of data collection

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	RESEARCH METHOD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to consider the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature study and document analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to review literature on the challenges that schools experience with learner behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to understand the perceptions of parents regarding discipline in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to analyse the policy framework that should inform collective ownership for school discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to contemplate the implications of this research for parents and schools to collectively improve learner behaviour within the existing policy framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis of all the above

1.5.3.1 LITERATURE STUDY

As indicated in Table 1-1, a literature study was undertaken to not only gain relevant information regarding the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy, but to determine what has been reported in literature on the challenges experienced by schools regarding learner behaviour. The suitability of a literature study to address the indicated objectives is supported by Omwuegbuzi, Leech and Collins's (2012: 2) definition of a literature study as the process of reviewing literature that involves the critical analysis and interpreting of prior research studies about a specific topic. A literature study therefore also aimed at giving an account of what has been published on a specific topic by accredited scholars and researchers (Fink, 2009: 3; Taylor & Procter: n.d). In this regard, I can state that my literature study involved a review of relevant literature on, *inter alia*, learner discipline in academic journals, scholarly work and newspaper articles. In addition, various internet searches were undertaken to explore relevant databases regarding my research topic. It was my contention that the undertaking of a literature study would enable me to gain theoretical insight in the issues surrounding the values that ought to guide learner behaviour in a democracy, as well as the challenges that schools experience with learner behaviour and discipline.

1.5.3.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Poggenpoel (2003: 143) describes a research interview as a conversation between the researcher (interviewer) and the participant/s (interviewee/s) that is specifically aimed at obtaining information about a specific topic. According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006: 134), interviews are probably the most widely used method of data collection in qualitative research, since it has the ability to provide an undiluted focus on the individual. Furthermore, interviews hold the advantage that the researcher can

make a connection with the participants, while it can also provide rich descriptive data, including a balance between flexibility and intentionality (Richie & Lewis, 2003: 36).

Various authors such as DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006: 134), Knox (2009: 567) and Nieuwenhuis (2007: 87) differentiate between unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews and structured interviews. Unstructured interviews allow for a more informal discussion through which the researcher can explore the perspectives and experiences of the participant interviewee (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 87). Semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, are more formal than unstructured interviews and the interviewer might follow up on clues about a specific topic (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 87). In contrast, structured interviews are in questionnaire format, consisting of detailed closed questions that are developed in advance (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 87; Whiting, 2008: 35). For this particular study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents with school-going children in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District of Bloemfontein. The decision to make use of semi-structured interviews was primarily motivated by the fact that such interviews are in-depth and personal in nature as they allow for intimate interaction. In this regard, Richie and Lewis (2003: 36-37) indicate that semi-structured interviews are well-suited for research that requires an understanding of deeply rooted or delicate phenomena or responses to complex systems, processes or experiences, because of the depth of the focus and the opportunity that they offer for clarification and detailed understanding. The advantage of using in-depth interviews in this case is that I was able to ask open and direct questions in order to generate detailed narratives to produce rich data regarding parents' perspectives on issues of learner behaviour and school discipline.

With regard to the selection of participants, I have opted for the snowball technique with the purpose to identify parents. As part of the preparation, I have contacted two parents that were able to refer me to other parents. I consequently contacted their referrals, who in turn referred me to other parents who were also willing to take part in this research project. Eventually I was able to select six participants who were able to offer insights regarding the realities of learner behaviour in schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District of Bloemfontein. Sargeant (2012: 1) refers to this point in the snowball technique, where the researcher is eventually satisfied that the selected participants will make valuable contributions to the study, as the point of

saturation. A more elaborate exposition of the qualitative research undertaken and the selection process is given in Chapter 3.

1.5.3.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

A document analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings, which may be revealed by their style and coverage (Richie & Lewis, 2003: 35). In addition, Richie and Lewis (2003: 35) indicate that a document analysis is considered particularly useful where the history of events or experiences has relevance, and where public accounts are needed. As such, a document analysis will typically include public documents like media reports, government papers or publicity material. Within the scope of this particular study, a document analysis was undertaken of various policy documents, in other words official government documents, to determine a policy framework that could inform collective ownership among parents and the school to maintain school discipline. Policy documents that were considered for the document analysis included *inter alia*, the *White Paper 1* (1995), the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), *SASA* (1996), *Education White Paper 2: Organisation, Governance and Funding of schools* (1996), the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001), *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience* (2000) and *Examples of a Code of Conduct for a School* (2008).

1.5.3.4 FINAL SYNTHESIS

For this particular study, the interpretive synthesis approach seemed to be the most appropriate as it acknowledges my role as the researcher as an active interpretive agent, and is mainly inductive iterative in nature (Dixon-Woods *et al.*, 2006: 28; Weed, 2008: 23). All the data generated through the various research methods were drawn together and interpreted in order to contemplate the implications for both parents and schools to improve their discipline policies and practices within the existing policy framework.

1.5.4 INTEGRITY OF THE STUDY

This section provides a brief overview of the strategies employed in this study to ensure the integrity of the research. These strategies include several issues like ethical considerations and other issues regarding the credibility and trustworthiness of this

study. Data gathering for a qualitative study entails an in-depth investigation and description of a phenomenon. In this regard, Ryan *et al.* (2007: 742) indicate that in qualitative research, the researcher not only strives to provide a true picture of the phenomenon under investigation, but that the data analysis process is fundamental in establishing the integrity of the findings.

Below follows a brief discussion of the issues I have considered as criteria to enhance the integrity in this qualitative study (cf. Merriam, 2009: 213-234).

- a) *Credibility or internal validity* in qualitative research aims to describe or understand the phenomena of interest from the participant's perspective. Merriam (2009: 214) describes internal validity as "the extent to which research findings are credible". Although I was aware that I could never capture an objective reality of parents' perspectives on learner discipline, I kept detailed records of the interviews and documented the analysis process (Merriam, 2009: 223; Richie & Lewis, 2003: 276). I applied multiple methods to generate data such as interviews, a literature review and a document analysis. Through member checking – that was when I asked participants to comment on the research findings on their experiences - I ensured that the research findings were congruent with the raw data generated with the help of tape recordings, as well as the transcriptions of the interviews. In addition, member checking by colleagues and my supervisors also helped to clarify biases and assumptions on my part as researcher (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007: 80; Merriam, 2009: 220).
- b) *Consistency or reliability* refers to the extent that the researcher can account for the changes that occur in the study in order for others to replicate the study. To ensure that findings are to some extent consistent with the data generated (Merriam, 2009: 221; Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006: 93), I used multiple methods. In addition, I also included peer reviews, declared my stance as researcher and undertook an audit trail by keeping a reflective journal that described how I collected the data, how I categorised the findings and indicated the decisions I had to make throughout the study.
- c) *Transferability or external validity* refers the extent to which the research findings can be applied or transferred to other situations or contexts (Merriam, 2009: 223). As such, others may assess the similarity between their own situation and this

particular study. I subsequently used thick or detailed descriptions of the research settings and findings that expressed the actual context (Merriam, 2009: 225-227; Shenton, 2004: 63) by providing sufficient descriptive data of quotes from the participants' interviews, notes and documents that facilitated transferability. In addition, to enhance transferability in the selected study sample, I included male and female parents of different social backgrounds and education levels who have a child or children in schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District.

1.5.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher's fundamental ethical responsibility is to ensure that his/her research brings no harm to participants in the course of the research activities (Bak, 2004: 28; Strydom, 2011: 115). As the researcher I therefore had to consider several ethical issues to protect the privacy of participants and to ensure that participants were not deceived in any way (Cohen, Morrison & Manion, 2007: 61-63; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007: 41).

To comply with the ethical considerations, I obtained formal informed consent from the participants who were willingly to participate (Cohen *et al.*, 2007: 61-63; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007: 41; Wasserman, 2006: 72). I ensured the participants that I would protect their identity and privacy and provide them with detailed information about the study and the importance of their participation (cf. 3.2.1.2). I did not deceive any of the participants and I ensured that data was kept locked away at all times. The integrity of this study (cf. 1.5.4) is linked to the issues of ethical consideration that I addressed throughout the whole research process, namely non-maleficence, confidentiality, informed consent, no deceit and voluntary participation. In addition, I applied for and obtained ethical clearance (UFS-HSD2015/0533) from the Ethical Committee of the UFS Faculty of Education.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

In this section, the scientific and geographical demarcation of this study is explained.

1.6.1 SCIENTIFIC DEMARCATION

This study was conducted within *Policy Studies in Education*, which is considered as a sub-discipline of Education. In order to support this statement, I will first explain what

is understood under policy, policy analysis and policy studies in general, and will then refer to education policy studies. *Policy* can be defined as a “relatively stable, a purposeful course of action by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a specific problem or matter of concern” (Anderson, 2013: 6). In addition, Hartshorne (1999: 5) specifies this purposeful course as action taken on by government through “legislation, ordinances and regulations pursued through administration and control, finances and inspection”, assuming to be favourable to the country and its citizens. Similarly, Patton and Sawicki (1993: 21) define *policy analysis* as the “process through which we identify and evaluate alternative policies or programs that are intended to lessen or resolve social, economic, or physical problems”. As such, policies are directive (May & Jochim, 2013: 427) and usually enacted in response to address a problem which impacts on all citizens of a country. On the other hand, Taylor (1997: 24) noted that there is no specific recipe for the studying policies. Although experts differ on what policy analysis entails, many agree that policy analysis is a *process* taken on over a period of time that also includes interpretation and implementation issues (Braun, Maguire & Ball, 2010: 549). According to these authors, different actors interpret policies differently and therefore, policy implementation can vary significantly from its initial intention (Braun *et al.*, 2010: 549). Then again, *policy studies* is significant in the sense that it provides ways of critically analysing policies within a broad social, economic and political context. However, according to Codd (1988: 235), when considering education policy studies and more specifically the analysis of education policy, the focus is often on the *analysis for policy* and/or *the analysis of policy*. While the former refers to the informational base upon which policy is constructed, the analysis of policy entails the critical examination of existing policy. Furthermore, Codd (1988: 235) alludes to policy analysis as a multi-disciplinary field that allows room for the researcher to employ the most relevant theoretical and methodological approach to investigate a policy problem.

Based on the foregoing I chose the qualitative research methodology approach to explore the existing policy framework that could enable me to contemplate the implications of my research findings to schools that want to improve their learner discipline, and subsequently also their learning and teaching environments. As existing policies were analysed in order to derive a policy framework to maintain school discipline, this study therefore resonates strongly with education policy studies.

1.6.2 GEOGRAPHICAL DEMARCATION

South Africa is divided into nine provinces. The Free State province lies in the heart of central South Africa with Bloemfontein as its capital city (see Figure 1). This study concentrates on schools situated in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District of Bloemfontein. I chose Bloemfontein, because it is where I reside. Below is a map of the district boundaries in the Free State and the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District is highlighted in purple. I interviewed six parents from six different schools in Bloemfontein.

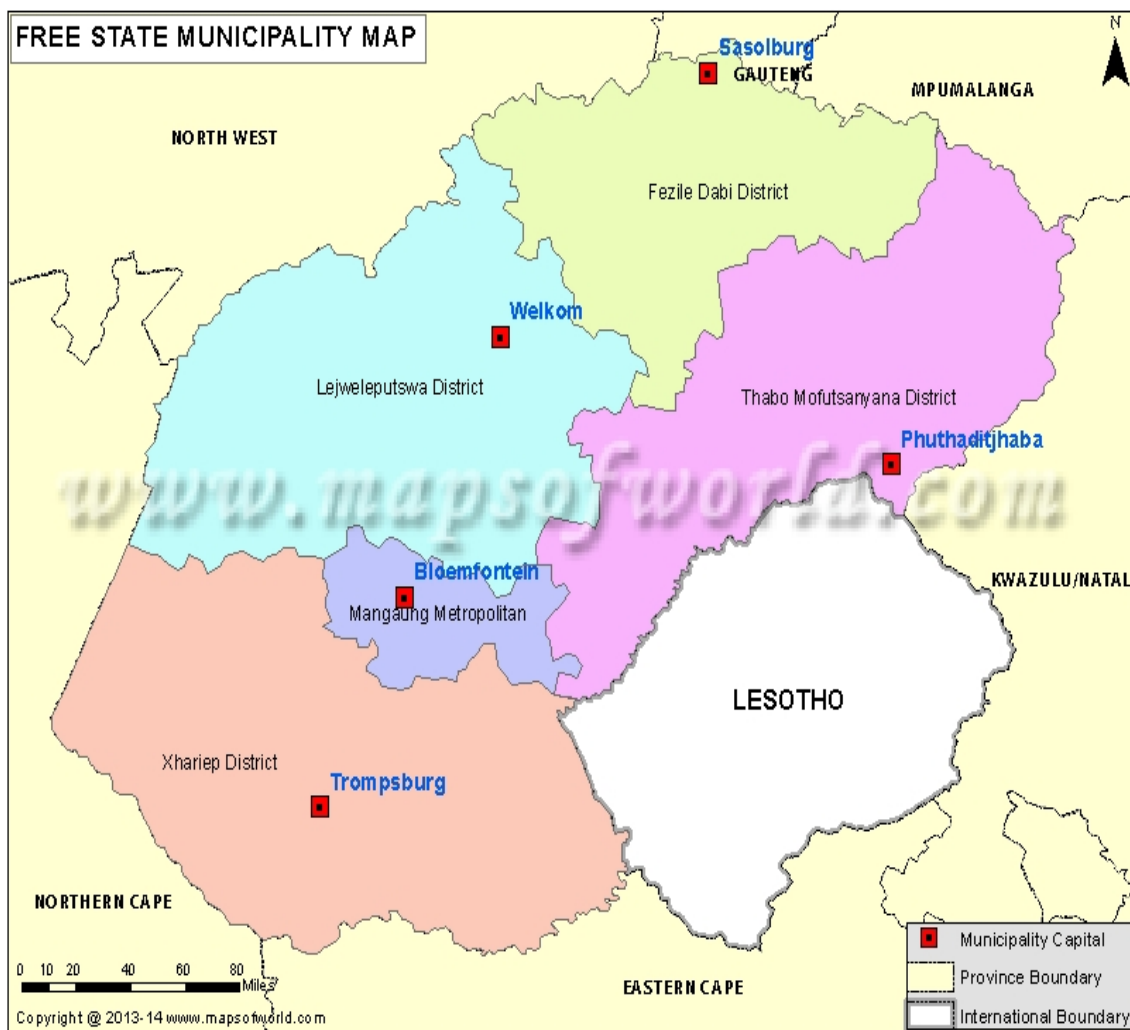


Figure 1: Map of the Free State province, South Africa, indicating the location of Bloemfontein (www.mapquest.com/za/bloemfontein)

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE CHAPTERS

In this study the stated aim and objectives (cf. 1.4) were achieved through consecutive chapters. These chapters provided gradual scaffolding which cumulated in a synthesis of the study findings and suggestions for ways in which parents, and schools can maintain joint discipline within the existing policy framework. As such, a literature review and document analysis were undertaken in Chapter 2 to gain a better understanding of the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy. In Chapter 3 the status and the nature of challenges regarding learner behaviour and discipline in schools were explored through a literature review. It was by means of a literature review that I was able to conceptualise issues of learner behaviour and discipline within the South African context. In Chapter 4 the focus was placed on the generation of data using semi-structured interviews. It was by means of this qualitative approach that I was able to gain a more in-depth understanding of parents' perspectives of discipline in schools. In Chapter 5 an analysis of existing South African education policies was undertaken. The analysis of various relevant documents enabled me to derive a policy framework that could inform collective ownership for the maintenance of discipline within the school context. In conclusion, Chapter 6 served as a synthesis in which the findings of the study were drawn together in various suggestions regarding the role of parents and schools as collective owners of the maintenance of school discipline.

1.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter a brief exposition of this study was presented. Based on the assumption that discipline is not the sole responsibility of teachers and schools, the stated research aim posed an undertaking to investigate and comment on the way in which parents and schools can collectively maintain discipline within a policy framework. Framed within Interpretivism, this qualitative research was undertaken by means of a literature study, a document analysis and semi-structured interviews to realise the aim and objectives of this study.

Given the important role of school education to bring about democratic and disciplined citizens, and to ensure that learning takes place in a safe and conducive environment, the next chapter is informed by a literature review regarding learner behaviour and the values that should inform learner behaviour in a democracy.

CHAPTER 2: VALUES AND LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN A DEMOCRACY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As state in the previous chapter (cf. 1.1), South Africa is a constitutional democracy and its *Constitution* (RSA, 1996) lays the foundation for an open society based on democratic values. As such, it implies that all South Africans have to be democratic, disciplined and responsible citizens who model democratic values and responsible behaviour and attitudes (Schoeman, 2006: 132-133). However, a review of existing literature supports that learner misbehaviour in most South African schools is not only becoming more violent in nature, but constitutes a threat to our young democracy.

Framed within the context of a democratic South Africa, the focus of this chapter is to highlight and understand the values that are supposed to guide learner behaviour in a democracy. By means of a literature review, an exposition is given in this chapter of some basic conceptions of democracy, as well as of the values that are generally associated with a democracy, and in particular with the South African democracy. Against this exposition, conclusions are drawn with regard to values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy.

2.2 DEMOCRACY: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The concept of democracy is highly contested and debateable as there is an abundant literature attempting to define it, and this differs from various perspectives (Bühlmann, Merkel & Wessels, 2008: 3; Campbell, 2008: 1; Landman, 2007: 2). However, in the interest of frugality, I will not add to the debate, but will rather provide a general overview of different conceptual understandings of democracy. My contention is that a general overview of democracy, including an understanding of how the concept evolved over time, will enable me to highlight the implications of democracy for the South African context.

2.2.1 THE ORIGIN OF DEMOCRACY

Literature reveals that the concept *democracy* has its origins in Ancient Greece (5th century B.C) and is derived from the Greek word *demokratia* meaning *demos* (people) and *kratos* (power or rule) (Campbell, 2008: 5; Hendriks & Karsten, 2014: 42). The Greeks originally used the word *demokratia*, when they referred to the poor or the masses that rebelled against abusive ancient rulers. The people of the city-state of Athens developed a way of making decisions that was different from the autocratic ways of ruling, which was in essence “rule (power) by the people” (Hendriks & Karsten, 2014: 42; Mkabela & Luthuli, 1997: 57). This form of governing was *direct* (Gastil & Richards, 2013: 254), meaning that the people exercised their power by making decision through assemblies of courts and jurors (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011: 2). As such, *direct* democracy is based on the rule of law, popular sovereignty and decision-making (Bühlmann *et al.*, 2008: 5), meaning that citizens have “direct control over legislation” (Gastil & Richards, 2013: 255). However, it should be noted that during this time only male citizens could apply for the privileges and duties of the democratic government. The assembly of elite and educated males excluded women, slaves and foreigners from decision-making (Coppedge *et al.*, 2011: 249).

Nevertheless, democracy based on the classic ancient Greek experience influenced current views and understandings of democracy. From the direct and participatory nature of ancient democracy, modern democracy became the preferential form of governance worldwide (Hendriks & Karsten, 2014: 42). In contrast to the direct democracy of ancient Greek cities, modern democracy is a system of representative government for the people as a whole where adult citizens either directly or indirectly elect political leaders to rule on their behalf (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011: 3). In modern politics, many equate democracy in reference to the view that democracy is a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people” (Campbell, 2008: 5; Mkabela & Luthuli, 1997: 57). Conceptions of *democracy* today include *electoral* democracy, *liberal* democracy, *majoritarian* democracy, *egalitarian* democracy, *deliberative* democracy and *participatory* democracy (Coppedge *et al.*, 2011: 248). However, despite the variance in conceptions, there seems to be consensus that, in essence, democracy means *rule by the people* (Mkabela & Luthuli, 1997: 57; Rhoden, 2015: 565).

Literature reveals that many authors distinguish between democracy as a *political ideal* and democracy as a *way of life* in an attempt to define the concept (Dewey, 1927: 282). In the next section, a brief overview is given of these forms of democracy. Such an exposition is regarded as important as it will contribute to highlighting the implications of democracy for the South African context.

2.2.2 DEMOCRACY AS A POLITICAL IDEAL

Given the origin of democracy, democracy as a political concept is defined as “a system of government” in which all citizens are involved in making decisions about public affairs, typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly (Möller & Skaaning, 2013: 3; Rhoden, 2015: 565). In this general view, democracy is an ideal form of political system implying that the core element in a democratic system emphasises the importance of the political institution that embraces the ideal of popular sovereignty, or rule of the people (Dahl, 1971: 2). In other words, within a democratic political institution, each person has an equal right and opportunity to participate in political life (for example, one person one vote) and equal treatment under the law. Similarly, Carbone and Memoli (2015: 6-8) suggest that inclusion, competitive and electoral processes are the main mechanisms in a democratic government. According to them (Carbone & Memoli, 2015), although political inclusion helps legitimise state authorities and make them more effective, it requires a focus on issues such as the degree and forms of political participation or the extent of popular support for the democratic government. Democracy as both the minimal and sole common denominator, presupposes active suffrage and free and fair elections (Dahl, 1989: 221). In this minimalist view, democracy is often defined as *electoral* and *procedural*, with the emphasis on democratic procedures based on equal rights and equal opportunities for all (Bellamy, 2014: 1024; Knutsen, 2011: 58).

In terms of procedural democracy, distinction is made between liberal or illiberal types, meaning that democracy is either liberal or illiberal depending on whether elections are free and fair (Bellamy, 2014: 1024; Gerring, Palmer, Teorell & Zarecki, 2015: 574). Similarly, Möller and Skaaning (2013: 143) regard institutional procedures only as free and fair in the presence of freedom of speech, assembly and association. As such, democracy is defined as *electoral or procedural*, focusing narrowly on the occurrence of deficiencies of an institutional structure (Möller & Skaaning, 2013: 4). However,

Collier and Levitsky (1997: 431) sustain that these *procedural* definitions, also known as *minimalistic* definitions, refer to democratic *procedures*, rather than to substantive policies or other democratic outcomes.

Democracy as an ideal form of political system is often defined in terms of the popular or majority aspect of democracy, based on the citizen's right to vote and to elect representatives (Mair, 2002: 81). This is also known as *populist* democracy. As such, democracy encompasses "the people", emphasising the role of the *demos*, meaning the free association of citizens, the preservation of free elections and the self-determination of political expression. Dieltens (2000: 10) and Bochsler and Kriesi (2013: 70) emphasise the role of citizens in establishing relationships of accountability combined with effective guarantees of civil liberties. In other words, citizens are empowered to rule through competitive elections, which allow them to not only select leaders and discipline those leaders, but also to provide the opportunity to establish relationships of accountability. As such, democracy presupposes fully contested elections with full suffrage and the absence of substantial fraud. Furthermore, some believe that democracy as a political ideal require equal citizens and free public reasoning, also known as *deliberative democracy* (Pateman, 2012: 10). The electoral interpretation of democracy presumes that one dimension of democracy, as a political ideal grounded in elections, has implications on governance and other aspects of democracy. Democracy as a political ideal alludes strongly to the view that democracy is either liberal or illiberal (Zakaria, 1997: 22-43), meaning free and fair elections.

Nevertheless, taken into account the above-mentioned, there seems to be consensus that democracy as a form of an ideal political system includes the right to vote and to elect representatives that embodies the popular or majority aspect of *democracy*. Furthermore, some authors (Knutsen, 2010: 110; Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011: 2) believe that democracy should be viewed as a substantive definition that includes moral conceptual aspects, which I will discuss next.

2.2.3 DEMOCRACY AS A WAY OF LIVING

As indicated in the above, the interpretation of democracy as a political ideal is grounded in the participation of citizens in the election process. By implication the notion of citizenship stands central to politics. According to Shklar in Ventriss (2012:

283), citizenship in return, has implications for government and other aspects of democracy. In order for a democracy to flourish, citizens have the responsibility to play an active role in the political, economic, social and cultural sphere of their country (Pillay & Ragout, 2011: 105). As such, democracy provides citizens with equal opportunities to participate in the decision-making process that involves political, economic, social and cultural issues that affect their lives. In addition, Ventriss (2012: 283) also notes that democracy involves normative motivations such as commitment to collective ideals.

While current research on democracy make reference to *thick* or *substantive*, definitions including important related aspects like constitutional guarantees of social rights and the political realisation of those rights (Möller & Skaaning, 2013: 98; Munck, 2014: 3), others ascribe substantive interdependency of political and economic issues to democracy (Adams & Balfour, 2010: 616; Page, Bartels & Seawright, 2013: 66). In the first view, some define democracy as a system of values, attitudes and practices with particular focus on equal rights (Benhabib, 2012: 38-49; Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011: 2). What is known as *liberal democracy* includes conceptions such as laws based on freedom and equality (Munck, 2014: 3; Rhoden, 2015: 565), and a form of political order based on liberty, equality and rule of law emphasising the protection of individual and group rights (Landman, 2007: 2). Similarly, Diamond and Morlino (2004: 21) define democracy as a system of government of competitive free and fair elections; the active participation of the people in politics and civic life; protection of the human rights of all citizens; and a rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens. Based on these conceptions of democracy, it can be stated that a liberal view of democracy is equated with political freedoms, political equality, equality of individual rights and respect for others' rights. As such, democracy in this sense is not only based on the liberal principles of freedom, equality, the rule of law and human rights, but constitutes a particular way of life.

However, when considering *liberal democratic* principles, notions of governance by the people, either directly through *participation and deliberation* or indirectly through *accountable and responsive representatives* by the majority vote, come into play (Dielkens, 2000: 10; Landman, 2007: 2). Deliberation in democracy subsequently aspires to collective decision-making focusing on the common good, while holding

officials accountable to their constituents and to the principles of democracy (Waldron, 2014: 14). Consequently, democracy in relation to citizens' participation is often expressed for the concern of fundamental human rights (Benhabib, 2013: 38). In this regard, some view democracy as a system of rule by the poor and disadvantaged, implying that democracy is a system of welfare and redistribution aimed at narrowing social inequalities (Block, 2011: 5-21; Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011: 2).

Active citizen participation compels strongly to the notion of liberal principles of freedom and equality, which recognises the moral primacy of the individual (Dewey, 1963: 620). In this view, *social democracy* includes the inheritance of liberal democratic principles such as equality, freedom and justice, advocating for positive social change. According to Dworkin (2011: 335), this form of democracy refers to a "society based on equal opportunity and individual merit, rather than hierarchy or privilege". As such, social democrats advocate for the protection of economic, social and minority rights, emphasising active participation of citizens in the collective decisions-making process that may affect their lives. This view implies ideals and attitudes that should motivate and guide the behaviour of citizens in relation to each other. In order for democracy to flourish, citizens have the responsibility to play an active role in the political, economic, social and cultural sphere of their country (Pillay & Ragout, 2011: 105). As such, democracy provides citizens with equal opportunities to participate in the decision-making process that involves political, economic, social and cultural issues that affects their lives.

Through active citizen participation (*participatory* or *deliberative democracy*), democracy can become a way of living in which citizens of different views and interests can work together to define and solve community problems (Hildreth, 2012: 295). Pateman (2012: 10) emphasises that participation should be "meaningful" since participatory arrangements between government and citizens allow them the opportunity to influence the decision-making of issues that affects their lives. As such, democracy is part of citizens' day-to-day lives in which they can freely participate with others, with due respect for the plurality of views and in the interest of the larger society. More precisely, democracy is an ideal worth striving for in which democracy is a way of life that includes the shared commitment and responsibility for the common good (Fielding, 2012: 45).

Against the foregoing exposition, it can be concluded that democracy as a way of life is a process. As Dewey (1916: 348) so adequately asserted, “democracy is more than a mere form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience”. In a similar vein, Mkabela and Luthuli (1997: 58) assert that democracy as a way of life rests upon “certain conceptions of humanity and how society manages to equalise and make the most of services, opportunities and resources”. According to these authors (Mkabela & Luthuli, 1997), democracy aims to improve and extend relationships within a society. This subsequently calls for education to be democratic in nature. In this regard, Dewey (1916: 14) perceives education as a means to foster, nurture and cultivate the conditions for a democracy. Therefore, by implication, if schools aim to pursue and establish a democratic way of life, they should provide learners the opportunity to learn the meaning of a democratic way of life. In other words, to achieve a democratic society, a democratic school environment conducive for effective learning and teaching must be established.

In the next section, democracy is framed within the South African context. While I do not claim to propose a comprehensive or even fully up-to-date version of democracy in South Africa, I briefly touch on the historic struggle for liberation prior to 1994 as a build-up to the inception of a democratic era.

2.3 DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

As indicated earlier (cf. 2.2.2), democracies over the world emerged, because of preference to various, often different, forms of governments. In this regard, South Africa is no exception.

2.3.1 SOUTH AFRICA: A BRIEF HISTORIC OVERVIEW

When the National Party came into power in 1948, it established a legal framework of an institutionalised system of racial discrimination and segregation (Bachmann & Frost, 2012: 317). This system not only legally separated the majority of black² South

² The term, “whites”, usually refers to those that have retained their European identity and heritage. During the apartheid era, the *Population Registration Act No 30 of 1950* categorised the population as ‘White’, ‘Native’ and ‘Coloured’ with ‘Indian’ as a subcategory of the latter. For the purpose of this study the term “blacks” is used to include Coloureds, blacks and Indians.

Africans from whites in all spheres of society, but also led to the violation of basic human rights and social exclusion (Badat, 2010: 2). In this regard, Booysen (2014: 11) asserts that this ideology of separate development, also known as apartheid, placed constraints on the freedom of movement, beliefs and human dignity. Furthermore, black people were geographically restricted and they were limited in owning land, to where they wanted to live, and in terms of securing employment (Turok, 2014: 750-752). Consequently, without the ownership of land, the majority of the population could not vote and were subsequently denied the freedom to choose the government of their choice (Graham, 2014: 9). As such, South Africa was governed by inequality and the majority had no authorisation in the elections prior to 1994.

As a logical consequence of a system of systemic oppression, the majority of South Africans started to mobilise themselves in protests for freedom and equal rights (Mattes, Davids & Africa, 2000: 4). A well-known example of such protest action was the Soweto Youth Riot in 1976 (Kynoch, 2016: 67), an event that spread over to the rest of the country with a repeat of similar riots in Soweto and Sharpeville in 1984 (Graham, 2014: 7-9). History shows that the struggle for liberation in South Africa marked a period of illegal mass demonstrations (Graham, 2014: 8; Heller, 2012: 652) and violence (Jibril, 2015: 92). In response, South African politics started to take a turn in the early 1990s, and negotiations between the government and other political parties led to a referendum, in which white South Africans voted in favour for all eligible South African citizens to participate in elections (Graham, 2014: 12). Eventually in 1994 (Kynoch, 2016: 67), after 46 years of exclusion, all South Africans were given the opportunity to go to the polls, to elect the first black president, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (Etekepe, 2012: 186). As such, 1994 not only announced the abolishment of apartheid and its discriminatory laws, but also introduced a democratic South Africa (Jansen & Taylor, 2003: 5).

2.3.1.1 POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

The first inclusive elections in 1994 introduced a democracy in South Africa based on a political system of regular, free and fair elections that respect the will of the majority of South Africans (Van Niekerk, 2010: 82; Vincent, 2011: 5). This form of democracy alludes very strongly to a political constitutional democracy. Bellamy (2014: 1024) defines a constitutional democracy as a form of democracy in which regular,

competitive elections for the legislature and executive is based on one person, one vote and majority rule. As such, in South Africa, a political constitutional democracy lays the foundation for an open society based on democratic values that are enshrined in the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996). In other words, South Africa as a constitutional democratic state offers legitimate means for constraining government to rule in the interests of the people by ensuring the protection and promotion of rights (Bellamy, 2014: 1024).

In Diamond's definition (2004: 8) of democracy he firstly includes meaningful and extensive competition at regular intervals, excluding the use of force. Secondly, highly inclusive levels of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies are ensured through regular and fair elections that include all major social groups. Thirdly, democracy is characterised by a level of civil and political liberties (such as the freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom to form and join organisations) sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation. In the view of Diamond (2004: 8) one can therefore conclude that democracy in South Africa is based on a political system in which eligible citizens participate and elect the government through free and fair elections; their rights are protected; they are equal before the law; and their rights include freedom of speech, assembly and discrimination. By this definition, in South Africa, as all citizens are equal and free to participate in free and fair elections, a basis is offered for the provision of a substantive understanding of democracy. By implication, with the advent of democracy in 1994, South African citizens have to embrace a new value system to not only overcome the legacy of the apartheid ideology, but to become democratic citizens.

2.3.1.2 DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

According to Knight, Chighudu and Thandon (2012: 79), one of the most basic indications of democracy is citizen participation in government. In the regard, Dinesen, Norgaard and Klemmensen (2014: 134) also affirm that the foundations of democratic citizenship are based on "generalised trust in other people; norms of citizenship; and participation in organisations".

Covaleskie (2006: 57) links democratic citizenship to a *democratic* and *disciplined* citizen who has the "qualities of a good citizen". A good citizen will subsequently model

responsible behaviour, attitudes and democratic values. Similarly, Schoeman (2006: 132-135) affirms that a democratic society requires knowledgeable, responsible and active citizens. As such, a good democratic citizen is someone who has knowledge of society's major social, political and legal institutions, who is aware of his or her rights and responsibilities, and who actively participates in such institutions. In other words, public participation implies the notion of active and informed citizens in a collective attempt to address specific concerns in the public domain (Fung & Wright, 2003: 260).

In order to counter the inequalities and injustices of the legacy of apartheid and to sustain a newly acquired freedom of democracy, democracy in South Africa is characterised by the constitutional principles of *inter alia*, "human dignity, human rights, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy, freedom, equity and social justice" (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1, Section 1). Since 1994, the new democratic government embarked on a series of new laws aligned with "the values that underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom" (RSA, 1996: Preamble, Section 39(1)) to transform the South African society. Therefore, by implication, democratic citizenship requires citizens who not only actively participate in political and social matters, but who also live according to constitutional principles.

2.3.2 DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP INFORMED BY CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

As indicated in the above, South Africa as a constitutional democracy requires all South Africans to adhere to the supreme law, namely the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA, 1996). Consequently, South African citizens need to embrace the core values of the *Constitution* that place the emphasis on the democratic ideals of tolerance, respect, and diversity and the promotion of human rights (RSA, 1996: Preamble). Therefore, it implies active citizen participation in addressing community problems.

Aligned with the fundamental democratic values of liberty, equality and rule of law, the South African democracy is founded on democratic principles and is embedded in the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2) as part of the *Constitution*, which describes and protects the democratic values of *freedom, equality and human dignity*. The *Bill of Rights* as the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa highlights the rights of all South African citizens and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and

freedom. As such, the *Constitution* with the *Bill of Rights*, lay the foundation for “a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights”, aiming to both improve “the quality of life of all citizens and freeing the “potential of each person” (RSA, 1996: Preamble).

In the pursuit of establishing a new democratic society, the government envisaged to promote the values of democracy through the education system. The latter hinges on the belief that education is an important vehicle to promote a democratic value system (Harber & Mncube, 2011: 241). By implication, “if democracy has a moral and ideal meaning” (Dewey, 1916: 349), education should provide learners the opportunity to learn the meaning of a democratic way of life. To achieve a democratic society, it is necessary to create a democratic environment conducive for effective learning and teaching. As such, education can enhance nation building and citizenship through the teaching and learning of democratic values and norms can be taught and learned (Christie, 2008: 9; November, Alexander & Van Wyk, 2010: 787). Furthermore, it is implied that the values and attitudes of teachers, learners, parents and the broader community can change. Consequently, one can assume that the education system has the responsibility to contribute to the delivery of democratic and disciplined citizens that are prepared to not only live according constitutional values, but who will lead a productive and self-fulfilled life in a country free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (cf. RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 9(3)).

Taking into account the important role of values and principles in the guiding of behaviour, it is necessary to view issues of *learner behaviour* in the light of a democracy and the implications democratic values hold for South African schools in particular.

2.4 ISSUES OF LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

Although the new democratic government has the vision for a safe environment where teaching and learning can take place (DoE, 2008: 1) and where learners can be assisted in becoming democratic and disciplined citizens, learner misbehaviour and discipline problems in schools remain a major concern (Marais & Meier, 2010: 41; Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014: 1).

Although this chapter is not aimed at joining the debate on corporal punishment, it is worth noting that many teachers ascribe the current lack of discipline in schools to the abolishment of corporal punishment (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 104; Naong, 2007: 283). In addition, research found that in the absence of effective discipline methods, most teachers feel helpless in dealing with discipline problems and consequently, their low morale has a negative impact on teaching and learning (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 3; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 389; Smith, 2010: 47).

Although corporal punishment is banned under the *South African School Act* (DoE, 1996b) and despite the *Constitution's* stipulation that “everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way” (RSA, 1996: Section 12), many teachers still use corporal punishment to maintain discipline (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 389; Moyo *et al.*, 2014: 3). In this regard, teachers often feel that as the focus is more on learners' rights, without counter-balancing it responsibility, they are left vulnerable, and their rights in return, are neglected and violated (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 396; Mncube & Harber, 2010: 618). In a similar vein, some authors (Rampa, 2014: 22; Roussouw, 2003: 413) find that an over-emphasis on human rights, contributes to the lack of discipline, respect and the rejection of authority. On the one hand Rampa, (2014: 21-22) indicates that the entitlement of “pupil power” often leads to intimidation and violence, and on the other hand, the lack of support from role-players and the lack of proper training to implement alternative discipline strategies are all contributable factors to the lack of learner discipline in schools.

Four years after the abolishment of corporal punishment, the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience* (DoE, 2000) (hereafter *ATCP*) was introduced to address the concerns around learner misbehaviour and the improvement of a culture of learning and teaching. However, many teachers felt that it came too late since they have no alternatives or suggestions to deal with discipline problems in the absence of corporal punishment (Moyo *et al.*, 2014: 8). Although the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 5) provides teachers with disciplinary strategies that encourage them to adopt and apply non-violent, constructive, and positive disciplinary approaches such as withdrawal of privileges, behavioural modification, time-out for misbehaving learners, and preventative, corrective, and supportive disciplinary methods, learner misbehaviour is still escalating (Burton & Leoschut, 2013: 12; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013: 2). One can

therefore conclude that the issue of disruptive learner behaviour is not only a major concern for the safety of teachers and learners, but that it also contributes to the deterioration of the culture of learning and teaching.

2.4.1 LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN A DEMOCRACY

While democracy has the goal to enhance democratic citizenship that models responsible behaviour, attitudes and democratic values (cf. 2.3.1.2), the following two questions arose, namely: *what are the values that should guide learner behaviour in our young democracy?* and *how are responsible behaviour, attitudes and democratic values promoted?*

2.4.1.1 DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

Literature reveals that the concept of *value* is sometimes misinterpreted and many use values interchangeably with terms like *morals*, *virtues* and *principles* (Maharaj & Nieuwenhuis, 2009: 129). For example, Halstead and Taylor (2000: 169) define *values* as “principles and fundamental convictions, which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged to be good and desirable”, using the term *values* interchangeably with *principles*. According to Becker, De Wet and Vollenhoven (2015: 6), the concept *value* indicates moral actions or internalised values. In this view, Schwartz (2012: 4) explains that values are socially desirable concepts that are expressed when people interact socially. As such, values may refer to a particular belief system, for example the belief that democracy is the best social/political system; a mode of conduct, for example to be honest, tolerant and courageous; a state of existence that expresses peace, tolerance and equality; or a moral judgment that expresses truth, beauty, and justice.

Values, in the general sense of the word are seen as aspects of life that are considered important and worthwhile in relation with other people, for example friendship and good family values (Solomon & Fataar, 2011: 225; Veugelers, 2000: 37). *Morals*, on the other hand are, by definition, guiding principles for behaviour (Chippendale, 2001: 1), meaning that an individual uses moral reasoning to make choices about what one morally ought to do. In other words, we use moral reasoning to make choices based on our personal and societal values, assumptions and beliefs. As such, morality requires specifics about what is good or bad, and right or wrong. Like morals, ethics

prescribe what is considered as appropriate behaviour in our daily life. In this regard, values presuppose an ideal, implying that beliefs inform values. According to Chippendale (2001: 1), principles inform our choice of values, morals and ethics. In support of the latter, Bond (2015: 5) notes that many of us base our beliefs or ideals on religion, culture, peer groups, and society's perception of what is good or bad; thus on what is regarded as desirable or undesirable. Democratic values are therefore guiding principles that serve as a code of conduct created from ideals for behaviour.

In light of the above, one can concur that a democracy based on the fundamental democratic values of *dignity, freedom and equality* (cf. 3.2.3) implies that an ideal democratic society should include ideals about a good life where all people are of equal moral worth (Ober, 2012: 827). Democracy as a political system is therefore also an ideal where all people are not only regarded as of equal worth, but in which they actively and collectively participate in the decision-making process to advance the good life. Consequently, democracy has the intrinsic value that constitutes *norms and principles* to direct *behaviour* in a democratic society. Aligned with this view, democracy presupposes a free and open society and one can therefore assume that as a society or its values changes, so too new laws will develop. This necessitates me to view learner behaviour in the South African context.

2.4.1.2 LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, South African citizens have to embrace a new value system to overcome the legacy of apartheid. The values and attitudes of citizens (teachers, learners, parents and the community) should be aligned with democratic values. To realise this 'new' South African society, a particular kind of citizen has to be envisaged, namely a democratic and disciplined one (Naidoo, 2013: 55; Smit & Oosthuizen, 2011: 55).

Drawing on the ideals enshrined in the *Constitution* the latter proposes a set of specific values that all South Africans can ascribe to (Du Preez & Roux, 2010: 15). The *values* that underpin the South African society are *inter alia* "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms" (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1 Section 1 (a)). On the other hand, Section 7(1) of the *Constitution* highlights dignity, equality and freedom as democratic values. The government undertakes to respect,

promote and protect the fundamental human rights of all citizens, such as freedom and equality as enshrined in the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2).

Values indicate moral actions and ethics that prescribe what is considered appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in our daily lives. The values of the *Constitution* emphasise the democratic ideals of **tolerance**, **respect**, and **diversity**; the promotion of **human rights**; and active citizen **participation** to address community problems (RSA, 1996: Preamble). By implication, the *Constitution* provides and enforces principles and norms to measure right and wrong. Furthermore, the *Constitution* as the supreme law of the country obliges education authorities to ensure that democratic values and tolerance are cultivated within the context of teaching and learning.

A relevant and significant document regarding the cultivation of values in the school context is the *Manifesto on Democracy, Values and Education* (DoE, 2001) (hereafter the *Manifesto*). The initial Ministry report of the Working Group on Values in Education, Values, Education and Democracy (DoE, 2000) identified six democratic qualities to promote democracy through education, namely **equity**, **tolerance**, **multilingualism**, **openness**, **accountability** and **social honour**. The final document on Democracy, Values and Education was adopted in 2001 and identifies ten values that education should promote, namely *democracy*, **social justice and equity**, **equality**, **non-racism**, **non-sexism**, **Ubuntu**, **an open society**, **accountability**, **rule of law**, **respect** and **reconciliation** (DoE, 2001: 3-4). By implication, the *Manifesto* is aimed at equipping learners to become disciplined and responsible citizens.

In the *Manifesto*, democracy is described as “a society’s means to engage critically with itself” (DoE, 2001: 12). Education is seen as the key to equip the country’s young citizens with the abilities and skills to critically engage and act responsibly in public life. On the other hand, the principles of **social justice** and **equity** involve true freedom from the “material straits of poverty” and the government is obligated to ensure that all South Africans have access to schooling (DoE, 2001: 12). By implication, education is regarded as the single most important resource in addressing poverty. In addition to the goal of providing all South Africans with equal access to receive education, no one should be denied access to education on the basis of “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age,

disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth” (DoE, 2001: 13; RSA, 1996: Section 1 (c)). Aligned with the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 1(c)) the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 13) **describes non-racism and non-sexism** as practices towards “readdressing the imbalances of the past where people were oppressed or devalued because of their race or their gender”. By implication, schools should be a place where learners and teachers feel safe. In addition, black learners and female learners have to be “afforded the same opportunities to free their potential as white students and male students” (DoE, 2001: 13). **Human dignity** or **Ubuntu means** that “I am human because you are human” (DoE, 2001: 14). The concept embodies “the mutual understanding and the active appreciation of the value of human difference” (DoE, 2001: 3).

As indicated earlier (cf. 3.2.3) the South African *Constitution* “lays the foundation of an open and democratic society” (RSA, 1996: Preamble; RSA, 1996: Section 39(1)). An open society rests on the understanding that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of artistic creativity, academic freedom and freedom of scientific research, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association (RSA, 1996: Section 15-18). The *Manifesto* encourages the education curriculum to cherish an open society of debate, discussion and critical thought and free of violence (DoE, 2001: 14). Lastly, the value of **accountability** describes responsibility as essential of holding the powerful to account that serves as a reminder that there can be no rights without responsibilities (DoE, 2001: 14). The value of accountability in education is institutionalised according to codes of conduct for learners, teachers, school governing bodies and educational authorities, which in turn, are accountable to the broader community and to the citizens of the democratic society (DoE, 2001: 14-15). In support of the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001) the government introduced policy documents on *Religion in Education* and *Human Rights Education* to be implemented in the school curriculum in order to address issues related to human rights (Roux, 2012: 29).

In accordance with the above exposition of constitutional values, it can be derived that in the South African democracy, education has the important role to equip learners to become responsible, democratic and disciplined citizens. However, it also implies that teachers, parents and the broader community members should be citizens who live according to constitutional values, in other words citizens that are productive and lead

self-fulfilled lives free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 9 (3)).

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter provided a literature review on some basic conceptions of democracy, as well as the values that are generally associated with a democracy, and in particular with the South African democracy. Based on the literature review, it could be indicated that democracy is much more than just a political concept. Rather, democracy informs and supports a way of living that requires responsible and disciplined citizens whose attitudes and democratic behaviour are shaped by constitutional values. With regard to education, it was indicated that learners should be provided the opportunities to learn the meaning of a democratic way of life. Education in South Africa should therefore promote **democracy, social justice** and **equity, equality, non-racism, non-sexism, Ubuntu, an open society, accountability, rule of law, respect** and **reconciliation** (DoE, 2001: 3-4). However, to achieve a democratic society, it is necessary to create a democratic environment conducive for effective learning and teaching. In addition, the latter will only be possible when teachers, parents and the broader community uphold such constitutional values.

In the next chapter, I review literature on some of the challenges that schools experience regarding discipline issues to determine the effect of negative learner behaviour on other learners, teachers and parents.

CHAPTER 3: LEARNER BEHAVIOUR AND SCHOOLS' EXPERIENCES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

School discipline has, amongst others, two main objectives (cf. 1.3), namely to ensure the order and safety of staff and learners, and secondly to create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (Bechuke & Debeila, 2012: 241; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 161; Wolhuter & Van Staden, 2008: 391). Since learners spend the majority of the day and most of the year at school, it is imperative that the environment in which learning occurs is safe, trusting and nurturing. Although there are indeed schools that have succeeded in establishing order and ensuring the safety of staff and learners (Wolhuter & Steyn, 2003: 536), there are numerous schools across South Africa that experience an increase in learner problems (Tintswalo, 2014: 52) and discipline that have a negative effect on learners and in turn on teachers as well.

Such misbehaviour of learners is a great concern for the safety of everybody, especially what is happening in classrooms. Studies, for instance, indicate that learners are likely to be victimised at school and that violent disruptions on school premises can sometimes be lethal (Burton, 2008a: 2; Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 3; Jefthas & Artz, 2007: 47). Other studies such as LeeFon *et al.* (2013: 1-2) share the frustrations of teachers with ill-behaved learners and disinterested parents. Many teachers, parents, and learners who are crucial role-players (Oosthuizen, 2003: 3), are deeply concerned about learner misbehaviour that disrupts the learning process in classrooms and therefore negatively affects teaching and learning.

An abundance of literature has explained the realities of learner misbehaviour. In this chapter I will firstly provide an overview of existing literature pertaining to the behaviour of learners at school, including the challenges that schools face regarding learner behaviour. Secondly I will investigate the effect of negative learner behaviour on other learners, teachers and parents. Thirdly I will review how parents and schools deal with negative learner behaviour. I will subsequently reflect of values and discipline as discussed in the previous chapter (cf. 2.4) that should guide learner behaviour. It is

my contention that while a literature study will assist me to become familiar with the existing body of knowledge of discipline issues, a conceptual understanding thereof will inform my empirical work in Chapter 4.

3.2 AN OVERVIEW OF TYPICAL CHALLENGES THAT SCHOOLS FACE

Burton (2008: 1) stated that schools are seen as the environment where individuals are developed and prepared for their role in the community. Discipline is necessary for the functioning of a school. The degree to which schools would succeed in developing and preparing learners for their role in the community depends upon the attitudes and behaviour of learners and teachers in the classroom.

Recent research found that in the apparent absence of effective discipline methods, most teachers feel helpless in dealing with discipline problems, and consequently, their low morale has a negative impact on teaching and learning (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 3; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 389; Smith, 2010: 47). One of the reasons that are given, is the abolishment of corporal punishment. I therefore first discuss the abolishment of corporal punishment and then the general understanding of disruptive learner behaviour in the next section.

3.2.1 ABOLISHMENT OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Aligned with the *Constitution's* stipulation that "everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way" (RSA, 1996: Section 12), corporal punishment is banned under the SASA (DoE, 1996b). However, a number of people, including teachers and parents, perceived the abolishment of corporal punishment with mixed feelings. While some sectors of society have reacted positively, because of said legislation that affirms human dignity, others have expressed concern, opposing that it has been a mistake, and contributes to poor discipline in schools (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 104; Parker-Jenkins, 1999: 75; Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014: 435). According to Chisholm (2010: 81), after the banning of corporal punishment under SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 47) schools were faced with the dilemma in trying to respect children's rights and at the same time finding adequate and meaningful measures to deal with learner indiscipline without violating on the said rights.

The problem seems to be that many schools are failing to establish such measures (Chisholm, 2010: 82; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 389) and are grappling with the issue of human rights. Maphosa and Shumba (2010: 397) argue that the emphasis on children's rights as opposed to the use of corporal punishment has led to dissoluteness in learners, who they no longer have respect for their teachers. This perception is supported by Joubert and Bray (2007: 81), who note that an overemphasis of human rights is detectable in schools, at home and in the community. On the one hand, in spite of the clear stipulation that corporal punishment is not allowed, research suggests that many teachers still using it to maintain discipline (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 389; Moyo *et al.*, 2014: 3; Wolhuter & Russo, 2013: 9).

It is clear from the above that the transformation from a traditional system of discipline to human rights based discipline system, has not been very successful, and that teachers are grappling with learner behaviour. I discuss negative learner behaviour under three headings. Firstly, I will look at behaviour that causes disruptions in class, and thus inhibit teaching and learning. Secondly, I then discuss negative behaviour directed at others.

3.2.2 DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Disruptive behaviour seems to be one of the most frequently discussed problems in South African schools. Facing disruptive behaviour seems to be an inevitable part the working environment of many teachers. Such behaviour by learners may include disruptive talking also while teachers are teaching, walking around the room, clowning, dawdling and not doing assigned tasks (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 2; Reed & Kirkpatrick, 1998: 3; Sun & Shek, 2012: 3; Wolhuter & Van Staden, 2008: 390). Learners furthermore swear, answer back, are disobedient, storm out of classrooms, act disrespectful and in general are (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 224; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006: 423; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 2). According to Foncha, Kepe and Abongdia (2014: 1160), these learner disruptions range from infrequent to frequent and are a difficult occurrence in everyday classroom.

While disruptive behaviour could be seen as merely inappropriate behaviour in the classroom (e.g. Gordon and Browne in Marais and Meier (2010: 43). Mabeba and Prinsloo (2000: 24), explain that disruptive behaviour in classrooms is attributable to

disciplinary problems in schools that affect the fundamental rights of the learner to feel safe and be treated with respect in the learning environment. When learners are in conflict with other learners it contributes to an unbearable atmosphere in the classroom. It is therefore important to also look at negative harmful behaviour between role-players.

3.2.3 LEARNER ON LEARNER NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Research suggests that schools facing major challenges with violent learner behaviour that is on the increase and make schools unsafe for other learners. Although many different demarcations of school violence exist, I will discuss violence in general, and then specifically bullying and cyberbullying.

3.2.3.1 VIOLENCE

Schools are generally considered to be safe environments where learning and teaching can take place (cf. 3.2). According to Singh and Steyn (2014: 81), a safe, secure and positive environment is vital for learners' academic performance and holistic development. However, various studies indicate that learners are most likely to be victimised by learners known to them (Burton, 2008a: 1-16; Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 10; Jeffthas & Artz, 2007: 47). Violent disruptions can even lead to death on school premises, as portray in the media – something that significantly influences schools negatively. The following are captions of various recent newspaper articles: “Boy stabbed to death at rural school” (Ngcukana, 2007: 3) and “Matric pupil killed in fight” (Ngcukana, 2009: 1). These depict some schools as unsafe for learners. Subsequently, learners are vulnerable to attacks from other learners who threaten them on the school premises.

Various dynamics play a critical role in cause violence in schools, including biological, family, school and environmental factors (Singh, Mbokodi & Msila, 2004: 81; Singh & Steyn, 2014: 82). For the purpose of this study, in this section I will briefly provide an overview on school violence as part of the many challenges South African schools are facing, without focusing on such dynamics.

Studies indicate that school violence in general continue to be significant problems for teachers, administrative staff, schools, parents and learners (Epstein, 2013: 115; Mncube, 2010: 234), and recent studies indicate that school violence might even

become more prevalent (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 95; Mncube & Harber, 2014: 235; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014: 49). In the school context, violence constitutes a violation of bodily and psychological harm and therefore a serious violation of learners' right to freedom and security of the person. I concur with Zulu *et al.* (2004: 177) that see school violence as wilful and illegal violent acts within the school context.

As discussed in section 3.2.2, disruptive learner behaviour disrupts teaching and learning. Literature shows that it could evolve into violent behaviour that endangers the security of other learners and teachers (Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 3; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011b: 191). Learners involved in criminal or violent behaviour often are under the influence of alcohol and drugs (Carney, Myers, Lobard & Flisher, 2013: 448; Mestry, 2015: 657; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 99; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014: 49). Learners would even use guns and dangerous weapons to threaten the lives of other learners (Astor, Guerra & Van Acker, 2010: 69; Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 96; Matoti, 2010: 577) and even rape other learners (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 100). Despite the guidelines and rules on the safety in schools that clearly stipulate schools are gun-free zones and that dangerous weapons are not permissible on the premises, some learners disregard these rules. Learners bring dangerous weapons to school and use them to attack other learners (Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 10; Jefthas & Artz, 2007: 45). Harber and Muthkrishna (2000: 424) indicate that schools and their learners are regular prey of gangsterism. In some cases learners are part of gangs and participate in violent acts at school. Various studies confirm that learners are required to accept gang norms, which often include the use of violence (Harber & Muthkrishna, 2000: 424; Mncube, 2014: 419; Mohlaloka, Jacobs & De Wet, 2016: 715).

In addition, sexual harassment, intimidation and violence against females constitute a violation of their bodily and psychological honour and therefore also a serious violation of their right to freedom and security of the person. A Human Rights Watch study on the issue of sexual violence within schools found that girls experienced sexual violence and harassment at the hands of male learners (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, Online). In this report (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, Online), it was found that boys would fondle the girls, make aggressive sexual advances and verbally degrade the girls especially when girls perceived by boys to be arrogant, assertive or who held leadership positions and performed well at school were more likely to be victimised.

While it is estimated that only 4.7% of sexual assaults incidences in schools are reported (Burton & Leoschut, 2013: 16), studies found that many schools fail to address girls' reports of violence (Prinsloo, 2006: 310). Girls who speak out risk further harassment or violence. The foregoing suggests that school violence is indeed a real challenge in schools. In the next section I discuss another challenge in terms of learner-on-learner behaviour namely bullying.

3.2.3.2 BULLYING

Although bullying is a well-known phenomenon in schools, research on the topic only dates back to some thirty years ago, at schools in Scandinavia (Olweus, 2003: 12). Since then studies of bullying among schoolchildren began to attract wider attention and many research studies have been published on the nature and causes of bullying (Dooley, Pyzalski & Cross, 2009: 182; Prinsloo, 2008: 27; Slonje, Smith & Frisen, 2012: 147). In addition, bullying requires rigorous criteria for classifying learners as bullies or victims (Olweus, 2003: 48-50; Dooley *et al.*, 2009: 182). In this regard, this section highlights bullying as learner-on-learner negative behaviour. Firstly, it is necessary to view some understandings on bullying in order to eventually highlight the effect of bullying in South African schools.

Bullying is demarcated in terms of specific characteristics. A learner is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed repeatedly and systematically over a period to negative actions on the part of one or more learners (Olweus, 2003: 48). There is a real or perceived imbalance of power and/or status between victims and perpetrators, which is misused and there is intentionality to harm. During bullying, it is difficult for the victim to defend himself or herself (De Wet & Jacobs, 2008: 201; Slonje *et al.*, 2012: 2). An isolated incident between two persons of equal power is not considered bullying (Olweus, 2003: 52; Singh & Steyn, 2014: 83; Slonje *et al.*, 2012: 147). Although aggressive actions may escalate to bullying if they are not addressed, one distinguishing factor between aggressive actions and bullying is the frequency and prolonged existence of the action. Victims have difficulty defending themselves (Olweus, 2003: 48; Olweus, 2012: 1; Slonje *et al.*, 2012: 147).

Amongst his many works, Olweus (2003: 51) compiled a profile of bullying at schools that shows bullying can take many forms is often proactive aggression, that is, aggressive behaviour that usually occurs without apparent provocation or threat on the

part of the victim (De Wet, 2016: 29; De Wet & Jacobs, 2008: 202). Studies on bullying generally distinguish between direct or indirect bullying. According to De Wet and Jacobs (2006: 55), direct bullying involves physical contact or verbal abuse, such as threats, name-calling, sarcasm, persistent teasing, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation and abusive comments (Mncube & Harber, 2014: 326). Indirect bullying involve subtle social manipulations such as gossip, spread of rumours and exclusion from a group. In recent years various studies in South Africa (Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 11; Burton & Leoschut, 2013: 18; De Wet, 2005: 706) show that bullying became a widespread problem in schools and that most learners will experience some form of bullying at some point in their school careers. Teachers are faced with the challenge to discourage this behaviour as it affects effective teaching and learning, and will beyond doubt impact negatively on learner performance within the school.

Studies found that bullying occurs in all schools regardless of level, school size, setting, racial composition and whether a school is in a wealthy, middle class or poor area. Marais and Meier (2010: 50) found that some learners in schools have a tendency of bullying other learners. A respondent in their study supports this, indicating "*learners are so mean and cruel and take pleasure in hitting one another*" (Marais & Meier, 2010: 50). Burton and Leoschut (2011: 12) reveal that 15,3% of all learners (roughly 1 821 054 learners) experienced some or other form of violence at school, of which bullying is one. Bullying is also part school boarders' life (De Wet & Jacobs, 2008: 213).

Based on the above, one can therefore concur that bullying is a serious problem since these actions by learners intend to do harm to fellow learners.

3.2.3.3 CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying or electronic bullying is a relatively new form of bullying among learners that has become a major concern for parents and schools (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009: 1). Built on the general understanding of bullying of intentional; repeatedly harmful behaviour exposed towards a victim that is helpless, cyberbullying is the systematic abuse of power occurring using information and communication technologies such as mobile/cell phones or the internet (Olweus, 2012: 1; Popovac & Leoschut, 2012: 1; Slonje *et al.*, 2012: 147). Cyber violence might be new, but it is developing rapidly with new technology and fashions, for example, new social networks sites that appear fast.

According to De Wet (2016: 31), cyberbullying includes unwelcome sexting, cyber stalking, posting embarrassing content about someone, stealing personal information, unreasonable intimidation during gaming, creating fake profiles on social network sites and sending threatening, mean or defaming text messages or images. In addition, Burton and Mutongwizo (2009: 1-12) assert that over a third (37%) of young people surveyed in the Crime for Justice and Crime Prevention study admitted to having experienced some form of cyber aggression either at home or at school.

Many researchers argued or implied that cyberbullying it is very difficult for adults to discover and counteract due to the technology used (Badenhorst, 2011: 1; Slonje *et al.*, 2012: 148). The differences between cyber bullying and traditional bullying indicate the challenge lies in the method used. While Dooley *et al.* (2009: 183) suggest that the behaviour is important and not the medium, schools, especially teachers and parents need to be aware of the challenges that cyberbullying poses in modern times.

3.2.4 LEARNER ON TEACHER NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Learner on teacher negative behaviour is becoming a serious problem in both primary and secondary schools. De Wet and Jacobs (2006: 54, 62-69) found that amongst teachers in both primary and secondary schools, 14.3% of them were physically victimized by learners. Negative learner behaviour often involves violent behaviour that have a huge impact on effective teaching in schools. Learner behaviour ranges from disrespectful behaviour to bullying, victimizing or intimidation, verbal and physical abuse, threats or gestures, theft, vandalism (including damaging classrooms (painting graffiti on walls and doors), damaging private property (vandalising teachers cars), and in some cases, physical abuse (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006: 62; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler & Feinberg, 2005: 183). De Wet and Jacobs (2006: 62) affirm that learner on teacher behaviour physical abuse (learners throwing objects at teachers), verbal abuse (learners shouting and swearing at teachers), learners making sexual comments at teachers, spreading rumours about teachers and ignoring them. Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014: 43) note that violence in schools is often gang-related that place the teacher in direct line of being harm by learners.

Despite the existence of official policies and protocols, learner misbehaviour, violence, physical and sexual abuse and gang activities are still the order of the day in many

South African schools. Although teachers are supposed to be teaching and to be in charge (De Wet, 2010: 190), it often happens that learners humiliate teachers in front of other learners. Learners also bully teachers, and deliberately and repeatedly aim to harm them physically, emotionally, socially and/or professionally. For instance, Pervin and Turner in Ozkiloglu and Kartal (2012: 3435), describe learners abusing teachers by ignoring teachers, swearing at or mocking teachers, gossiping about teachers and damaging their personal property.

De Wet and Jacobs's study (2006: 51) on teacher targeted bullying in the Free State and the Eastern Cape revealed that 79.7% of the teachers who took part in their survey were exposed to some or other form of bullying during their teaching careers. They also found that although the frequency differs 79.7% of teachers are exposed to some or other form of bullying and victimisation. In the Western Cape a young female teacher's hair was set alight by a grade 9-learner (The Daily News, 2013: 7), which shows that attacks on teachers are becoming increasingly more violent as learner-discipline worsen.

Research also shows that teachers are also victims of gang-related violence in schools. Although, gang violence affects everybody in the community, research (Jefthas & Artz, 2007: 45; Mncube, 2014: 419) reveals that schools are vulnerable. Learners often join forces with criminals outside the school that cause classroom behaviour to erupt into full blow violence inside and outside classrooms (Burton & Leoschut, 2011: 14; Jefthas & Artz, 2007: 45; Mncube, 2014: 416). Many teachers are consequently victims of theft, vandalism and violent attacks. In such circumstances it is unlikely for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Research reveals that learner aggressions directed at teachers are found in both primary and secondary schools (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006: 62; Marais & Meier, 2010: 49). In this regard, De Wet and Jacobs (2013: 190) found in their study that 14.3% of teachers in both primary and secondary schools are subjected to physical victimisation by learners. While most research on physical violence have been conducted on secondary schools, Marais and Meier (2010: 50) found in a study amongst Foundation Phase teachers that learners react aggressively to situations on a daily basis. Marais and Meier found that aggression was a serious form of disruptive behaviour. For

example learners in Grade 1 -3 would break windows, blocking toilets with toilet paper, scratching teachers' cars, puncturing teachers' car tyres, and damaging plants and trees (Marais & Meier, 2010: 49)

The afore-mentioned reveals that learner discipline problems have a negative impact on the teaching and learning in schools. Therefore, learner's disruptive behaviour is a call for help and at the same time is a serious challenge to the continued existence of a school. Despite, the extensive research on bullying in schools, there is little research published on cyberbullying or sexting where learners bullying teachers using electronic means such as mobile/cell phones or the internet. In the South African context only a few reports on incidents of cyberbullying towards teachers exist. I could find only one incident where learners use cyberspace to infringe on teachers dignity. According to Mawdsley, Smit and Wolhuter (2013: 158), three high school boys published an alleged defamatory image of the principal and deputy principal of their school in 2006. One boy apparently created the defamatory image electronically by attaching the heads and faces of the principal and deputy principal to a picture of two naked men sitting next to each other in a sexually suggestive and intimate manner. The school badge from the school website was used it to obscure the men's genitals. The image was sent to a friend's mobile phone, who forwarded it to other learners at the school. It was also found that one of the accused printed the image and placed it on the school's notice board. Such learner behaviour, by implication caused other learners to see it as a joke and may lead to that other learners copy this behaviour.

Taking into consideration all the above, an obvious conclusion to be drawn is that such incident challenge the status and authority of teachers with an associated breakdown in discipline. Moreover, few would deny that schools need to find ways to address the negative effect of violence, bullying and cyberbullying on learners, teachers and parents which will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 THE EFFECT OF NEGATIVE LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

As indicated earlier, discipline is necessary for the functioning of a school. In contrast, disruptive behaviour or other forms of misconduct by learners often negatively affect fellow learners' and teachers' safety and security in schools.

The following section is a brief overview of the effect of what learners do that impact negatively on the learning and teaching environment in schools.

3.3.1 EFFECT ON LEARNERS

Studies shows that learners as the perpetrators have negative thoughts either about themselves and other people (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 110; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 2). This means that they have no respect for school rules and are regardless of the effect that their behaviour have on other learners or teachers. Studies indicated that learners are either perpetrators or victims of a range of problems, and that bullying in particular is becoming a serious problem that affects them negatively (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013: 12; Olweus, 2003: 48; Singh & Steyn, 2014: 81). Victims of bullying are at high risk of experiencing academic, emotional, social, and behavioural difficulties. In this regard, Singh and Steyn (2013: 84) reveal that verbal and physical aggression, and threatening, and intimidating behaviour, are associated with poor academic outcomes for perpetrators and victims.

Although many authors focus on the physical harm conflict on a person, bullying has a long-term effect on the perpetrator as well. In addition, Ward (2007: 15) and Tofi, Farington & Lösel (2011: 407) note that there is a significant association between bullying behaviour and offender behaviour later in life. Although bullying behaviour occurs at all ages, a growing body of research indicates it is most common in secondary schools (Mncube & Steinmann, 2014: 205; Myburg & Poggenpoel, 2009: 447). According to Burton and Leoschut (2011: 4), learners who endorse higher aggressive attitudes are more likely to engage in violent behaviour in school. A lack of control, poor anger behaviour, impatience and tendencies towards moodiness are common among children who engage in school violence (Burton, 2008a: 1-15). Aggression can be spoken words or verbal statements that are motivated by anger and/or can be physical behaviours used to express aggression. According to Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2009: 453), physical aggression involves physical actions in the form of pulling hair, kicking, hitting, pinching, pushing, scratching, spitting, destroying personal property, coercion for sex, rolling eyes and pulling faces. There is little doubt that negative learner behaviour has a negative effect on learners, and this is not conducive for learning and teaching.

According to Singh and Steyn (2014: 84), learners with poor academic skills become frustrated, lose academic motivation and, as a result, eventually resort to violent behaviour. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013: 11-12) found that young learners, especially those in Grades 8 and 9, are vulnerable to school violence. Perpetrators target these youngsters since they cannot defend themselves against bullies. Girls in particular are targeted, because they are more vulnerable due to being physically weaker. In a study done by Burton and Leoschut (2013: 41) four types of violence were explored: threats of violence, assault, sexual assault and robbery. These authors report that learners in schools were responsible for approximately 90% of the threats, sexual assaults, robberies and thefts of personal belongings. In the case of assault, fellow learners at the school perpetrated only 69.8% of these crimes. The study also revealed that whether against other learners or teachers, learners were perpetrators of 90% of the violence that happens in schools. Moreover, criminal behaviour such as rape, bullying and intimidation of other learners creates a disruptive and unsafe environment that is not conducive for effective teaching and learning. This also contributes to poor academic performance and dropout of learners (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 100).

From the above it is clear that incidents of negative learner behaviour occur in some schools on a daily basis, and the school boundaries or in the close vicinity of schools. Gang activities and violence in schools as discussed in 3.2.3.1 have a negative influence on learners. I subsequently concur with the large volume of literature on learner discipline that negative learner behaviour is associated with poor academic outcomes and physiological effects on the learners as perpetrators and victims (Barnes, Brynard & De Wet, 2012: 71; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011b: 187; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014: 199). As such, the effect of negative learner on other learners is not conducive for effective learning in schools.

School violence is a critical problem in most schools and it does not only negatively affect learners, but teachers as well.

3.3.2 EFFECT ON TEACHERS

As indicated in the previous section, misconduct by learners often negatively affect fellow learner's safety and security in schools. This is equally true for teachers. Teachers often experience severe psychological trauma in extreme cases of disruptive

behaviour such as bullying and violent behaviour directed at them (De Wet, 2006: 61; De Witt & Lessing, 2013: 3; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 3).

While learner discipline problems have a negative effect on learners with regarding to the teaching and learning in schools, it has a negative impact on teachers' personal and professional well-being (De Wet, 2014: 1). Learner disruptive behaviour in classrooms, often directed at teachers, cause high levels of professional stress and personal distress (De Witt & Lessing, 2013: 3; Marais & Meier, 2010: 41). Furthermore, Burton in De Wet (2010: 190) noted that learners' disrespect towards teachers, high levels of school violence, continual and rapid change, economic uncertainty, unrealistic expectations and a general feeling of disempowerment all contribute to teachers' lack of motivation.

Teachers stand in the direct line of learner's disruptive behaviour, since they have a duty to deal with disruptive learners in their classes (Mtsweni, 2008: 47). Teachers however find it difficult to deal with learners' lack of respect and responsibility, disobedience, aggression and the rejection of authority. Research shows that there is a decline of respect for teachers in South African schools. In this regard, Matoti (2010: 577) confirms that learners do not respect teachers. Maphosa and Shumba (2010: 395) further point to the possibility that an overemphasis on learners' rights and an apparent disregard for teachers relate to the abolishment of corporal punishment (cf. 3.2.1) that furthermore contributes that teachers feel disempowered and helpless. Subsequently, some teachers even give up trying to discipline learner behaviour (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 2).

Although most schools have a code of conduct to regulate learner behaviour, it appears that it does not always have the desired effect. When learners do not comply with school rules teachers feeling disempowered by their unruly (De Witt & Lessing, 2013: 3; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 98). This has a negative impact on their job satisfaction, a feeling supported by LeeFon *et al.* (2013: 2), who found that teachers feel helpless and frustrated by learner misbehaviour. It even prevents them from going to work sometimes. Furthermore, teachers are frustrated with learners coming to school unprepared, and this, together with their unruly behaviour, hampers teaching and learning. Teachers' feeling of disempowered within the classroom setting and constant

stress caused by learner misbehaviour as discussed (cf. 3.2.2.1 and 3.2.2) can result in teachers becoming depressed. This may sometimes result in violent behaviour being displayed towards learners. Subsequently, learner misbehaviour affect teachers negatively and many of them manifest symptoms of disengage behaviour (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 225), resulting in their inability to add pedagogical value to their teaching efforts (Oosthuizen, Roux & Van der Walt, 2003: 27). Because of being traumatised by learner misbehaviour teachers tend to follow a natural defence mechanism by ignoring difficult learners. One can derived that learner disruptive behaviour in classrooms as discussed in cf. 3.2.1, seems to be largely responsible for teachers' emotional experience of learner misbehaviour.

Literature shows that teachers are also feeling helpless, because of a lack of support from parents, the school management and education authorities (LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 2). According to Bester and Du Plessis (2010: 227) some teachers perceive a lack of support from the Department of Education in their efforts to rid schools of troublemakers who they have attempted to expel on reasonable grounds. While the lack of support from the education system demoralised teachers, Bester and Du Plessis (2010: 220) note that some teachers also believe it contributes to violence, because a message of no consequences for violence is sent to both teachers and learners. One can conclude that inadequate feedback from the disciplinary system, as part of the education system, is contributing to the persistence of violence and adds to teachers' despair and disempowerment.

Literature also reveals that teachers' perceived victimization has been found to be associated with fear, physical and emotional symptoms, impaired personal relationships, and work performance (De Wet, 2014: 1; De Witt & Lessing, 2013: 3; Naong, 2007: 297). A particular threat to teachers' well-being is victimisation and bullying. This is supported by De Wet (2010: 39) stating that teachers as victims of bullying generally lose their enthusiasm and passion for the profession. They also experience greater disciplinary problems in the classroom. In an empirical study amongst teachers in the Free State, Gauteng and North West provinces, Wolhuter and Van Staden (2008: 390) found that situations regarding learner discipline cause 85% of teachers to be sometimes be unhappy in their work. It has further led to health problems in the case of 54% teachers. Learner misbehaviour and violent behaviour

by learners can also affect the personal lives of teachers, which lead to tension with their family members at home (Shields, Nadasen & Hanneke, 2015: 53). These effects on teaching and learning are becoming an increasingly serious problem, to such an extent that teachers consider leaving the profession (De Witt & Lessing, 2013: 7) so there is a need to address this urgently.

Teachers feel also helpless, because they cannot take any decisive action against troublemakers, because of fear for victimisation and their own safety (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010: 195). Teachers in schools fear for their lives, because they know that learners bring weapons to school (cf. 3.2.3.1). In such circumstances, it is unlikely for effective teaching and learning to take place. De Wet (2010: 195) indicates in her study that some participants perceived these threats to be life threatening, stating "*I feared for my life*". Teachers who feel unsafe and fear intimidation often take long periods of sick leave, because of stress related problems. Accordingly, teachers are becoming discouraged, demoralised and exhausted leading to absenteeism, which again affects teaching and learning negatively.

As indicated earlier (cf. 4) bullying is one of the major problems that affect most schools in South Africa. Marais and Meier (2010: 50) found that some learners in the school have a tendency of bullying other learners. A respondent in their study supports this, indicating "...learners are so mean and cruel and take pleasure in hurting one another" (Marais & Meier, 2010: 50). Teachers are faced with the challenge to discourage learner misbehaviour, because it adversely affects effective teaching and learning, and has a negative impact on learner performance.

Aligned with the above and earlier discussion (cf. 3.2.3.1; 3.2.3.2 and 3.2.3.3), negative learner behaviour directed at teachers is an indication that learners' misbehaviour poses a serious threat for teachers' private and professional lives. Taking into consideration all of the above, learner misbehaviour clearly has a major impact on teachers as they spend much time struggling with it. This in turn affects the quality of education they are able to deliver, and is a significant contributor to teachers' stress. Since, one of the goals of discipline at school is to create an environment conducive to learning and teaching, and to ensure the safety of staff and learners (Wolhuter & Van Staden, 2008: 391), it appears not to be happening in some schools. Moreover,

the school's goals to provide learning and teaching in a safe environment end up not being achieved, since high levels violence in schools suggest that it robs many learners of the opportunity to achieve their optimal educational development. Subsequently, one concur with various authors that negative learner behaviour and violence in schools are indeed having a negative impact on the teaching and teachers (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 209; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013: 12; Singh & Steyn, 2014: 81), since they are the ones that experiencing these problems first-hand. These views are supported by Roussouw (2003: 413) who states, "if disruptive behaviour prevails, education cannot be successful". Therefore, teachers' well-being is important in order for teaching and learning to take place in schools.

3.3.3 EFFECT ON PARENTS

As indicated earlier, negative learner behaviour and violence in schools are indeed having a negative impact on teachers (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 209; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 45; Matoti, 2010: 570; Wolhuter & Van Staden, 2008: 390) and subsequently on teaching and learning. While research shows that learner exposed to violent behaviour and aggression (Marais & Meier, 2010: 41; Mestry, 2015: 656; Roussouw, 2003: 426) may also expose others at school to aggression and violence, parents are also affected by the misbehaviour and the lack of discipline exposed by the child/children (Roussouw, 2003: 423).

While a vast body of literature exists on the effects of parent involvement on learners' attitudes, behaviour and academic performance (Epstein, 2013: 116; Lemmer, 2007: 218; Mncube, 2010: 233; Van Wyk, 2007: 136), I find that little literature exists on the implications of negative learner behaviour on parents. Nevertheless, according to research, learners who are responsible for ill-discipline, violence and uncalled vandalism in a school tend to be having trouble academically, and they are frequently troublemakers in their communities and at home (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010: 213; Mestry, 2015: 661; Roussouw, 2003: 424). Consequently, this behaviour spilling over to schools and lead to learners' destructive behaviours at school. As such, these learners are usually physically aggressive, sometimes violent, often over age for grades, have a negative attitude towards school, and repeatedly absent and lazy to do the schoolwork.

Parents, as primary educators have the responsibility to discipline their child/children. However, some parents find it difficult to maintain discipline at home. While Rossouw (2003: 431) indicates that the lack of respect stems from home values, where parents do not show respect towards those in authority in the wider community, Ndlamini (2008: 180) notes that parents themselves may foster a lack of discipline from their children. In support, some researchers (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010: 397; Roussouw, 2003: 415) perceive the overemphasis on human rights as a reason why a lack of discipline prevails in schools and, by implication, also at home and in the community. Since many learners get into trouble, because of their lack of respect for authority figures in school and at home, it is believed that parents are afraid of their children and end up feeling helpless (Roussouw, 2003: 426). Today, most parents will express the view that school discipline has changed substantially when compared with when they attended school years ago. Moreover, parents sometimes feel that learners at secondary school are “a law unto themselves” (The Star, 2001: 11). Many parents therefore feel that they are losing this battle, because of their children’s lack for respect, for authority, and with it their ability to positively influence their children’s behaviour.

Taking into account that learners are susceptible to peer pressure, which increases during early adolescence (Allen, Chango, Szwedo, Schad & Marston, 2012: 337; Allen, Porter & McFarland, 2006: 155), negative learner behaviour is often linked to negative influences. For instance, peer pressure to engage in drug use, drinking, vandalism, theft or other risky behaviour also contribute to the effect of negative behaviour towards adults. As such, one can derive that adolescent learners are significantly more likely to use substances if friends are using them, and if substance use is common amongst their peers. On the other hand, parents often complain about the influence of alcohol, drug abuse and gangsterism as the causes of violence in their homes. As indicated earlier, school violence and gangsterism affect the whole community (cf. 3.3.2) and it has an emotional effect on parents as well, especially when their school-going children are involved in gangs. Learners’ relationships with their parents are usually negatively affected by their engagement in gangs and often have a devastating effect on parents. An example of a newspaper headline reads “parents despair as gang fights keep claiming lives” (Damba, 2012: 5).

Since parents play a key role in maintaining discipline, negative learner behaviour by implication has a direct impact on parents. Moreover, few would differ that parents and schools need to find ways to address the negative effects of disruptive learner behaviour.

3.4 DEALING WITH NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR

As mentioned earlier (cf. 3.1 and 3.2) it is generally accepted that a safe school is a prerequisite for successful teaching and learning, and that good discipline is the most important characteristic of an effective school (Prinsloo, 2005: 10). In support, Barnes *et al.* (2012: 70) describe safe schools as characterised by good discipline, communication, a culture and climate conducive to teaching and learning, good administrative practices and an absence of crime and violence. Literature shows, however, that some schools are no longer safe places (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 95; Mncube, 2014: 235; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014: 49). Subsequently, a lack of school safety contributes to learners experiencing higher levels of violence at schools (Barnes *et al.*, 2012: 69) that need to be urgently addressed.

Despite the measures that have been put in place by the Department of Education, research shows that negative learner behaviour is escalating into violence in schools. The threat to school safety and security is not only the concern of educational authorities, but should be the responsibility of all stakeholders, especially parents and educators. It therefore becomes imperative for schools and parents to work closely together to fight the epidemic of violence in schools. Subsequently, in the next section, I look at how schools and parents can find ways and means to deal with negative learner behaviour.

3.4.1 THE BLAME GAME

As indicated in the introductory chapter (cf. 1.1), teachers are acting *in loco parentis*, (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013: 339; Joseph, 2013: 45), meaning that teachers have the same responsibility towards a child as a parent. As such, teachers are required to take care of learners, to maintain discipline, and to ensure learners' safety (Joubert and Prinsloo in De Wet and Jacobs (2013: 1) in schools. However, to maintain discipline is not only the responsibility of teachers, parents must also assume part of this responsibility (Mncube *et al.*, 2011: 217). Parents and schools are co-responsible and

accountable to each other to ensure that teaching and learning can take place in a safe environment.

Research shows that parents expect schools to teach their children proper conduct, without acknowledging their own responsibilities (Ndamani, 2008: 181; Roussouw, 2003: 426). In this regard, Makgopa and Mokehele (2013: 225) explain that parents sometimes fail to do what they are supposed to do, not because they are ignorant, but usually, because they simply do not understand their educational responsibilities. This might be why they tend to shift their responsibilities of discipline at schools to teachers. This is one way of shifting the blame, since at times parents perceive their role as external to the school environment with respect to dealing with the lack of discipline in schools (Ndamani, 2008: 181). However, parents themselves may foster a lack of discipline in their children (Roussouw, 2003: 423), because they sometimes interfere in what the teachers are doing and refuse to allow their children to be punished. Although it is important for parents to have a say in the way their children are taught, they should trust that most teachers as professionals know what they are doing. However, nobody can deny that schools find it challenging working with parents especially where teachers have opinions about parents regarding poverty, language differences, or low education. Regarding parents' ability to support schools Gomathi and Phil (2013: 53) note that many parents lack the skills, knowledge and resources to interact effectively with the teachers and school authorities. From the part of schools there is often a lack of commitment to reach out to parents. As such, one can derive that parents are sometimes reluctant to get involved in school activities.

Literature shows that this breakdown in communication is often one of the reasons that parents and schools blame each other for discipline problems (Agolli & Rada, 2015: 69; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013: 219). Parents and teachers have a common goal, namely to ensure that learners perform well in their daily activities in the classroom. It is therefore reasonable to say that parents and teachers are partners in the process of preparing the youth for the future. This means that parents and teachers must be in constant communication in their pursuit to enable children to become responsible adults. Teachers must make time to inform parents about their children's progress in the classroom. Likewise, parents need to make the effort to find out how their children

are performing in the classroom. It is not supposed to be a matter of who should approach whom first.

Since parents and teachers have a common goal, namely to ensure that learners succeed in their schoolwork, trust and respect are equally important in this relationship. Communication also helps to build trust between teachers and parents, both of whom are expected to collaborate in the process of educating learners in their charge. Subsequently, parents and teachers should be in continuous communication with each other to ensure that parents do not neglect to provide their children with appropriate educational assistance.

Although parental involvement is positively linked to learners' attitude, behaviour and academic success (Epstein, 2005: 179; Lemmer, 2007: 218), many parents are not as involved in their children's schooling as teachers would like them to be. Research shows that parents want to be involved (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011: 46) in their children's education, but is often not clear what role the parents are expected to play in schools. Many teachers do want parents to become involved when it comes to the school curriculum, especially in the foundation and elementary school levels. In my personal experiences as a stay-at-home parent and partner at my sons' school, I sometimes helped to supervise classes when needed. Partnerships with parents may be as important in the education of a child as direct learning and teaching.

Based on the above it is clear that parents and teachers should be co-responsible and accountable to each other since their common goal is to ensure that learners become responsible and disciplined adults. Schools should find ways to deal with problems that might hamper this goal.

3.4.2 SCHOOLS' STRATEGIES DEALING WITH NEGATIVE LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

As indicated earlier (cf. 3.3), negative learner behaviour causes considerable stress, anxiety and undue pressure on teachers and parents. With the escalating levels of negative learner behaviour, teachers are finding it more and more demanding to create an orderly school environment. In addition, the number of offences that include aggressive peer fighting, the use of obscenities against teachers, vandalism of school property, bullying, truancy and drug and substance abuse (cf. 3.2) also frustrate parents. Moreover, teachers often complain of learner behavioural problems of the

learners and express hopelessness (cf. 3.2.2), because strategies to counteract ill-discipline are not effective. Strategies that work in one school may not necessarily work in another. Teachers are subsequently becoming increasingly concerned about the situation as in some cases their safety is at risk.

As literature confirms the seriousness and prevalence of violence in schools (Barnes, *et al.*, 2012; Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Jacobs, 2014), few would deny that schools need to find ways to address the negative effect it has on learners and teachers. While a number of strategies towards the management of learner behaviour exist, one should also be aware of the danger to apply strategies too rigidly. In order for disciplinary strategies to be successful, they should be constructive and appropriate (Masitsa, 2008: 239).

While numerous researches have emphasised the importance of all stakeholders within the school environment, the next section will only highlight the roles of parents and teachers. I work from the assumption that teachers and parents as important stakeholders, need to seek collectively effective strategies to address learner discipline in schools.

3.4.2.1 PARENTS' STRATEGIES

Traditionally, parental involvement in schools has been limited to activities such as parent-teacher-organisation meetings and parent-teacher conferences. Today, however, researchers (Singh & Steyn, 2013: 6) positively link parental involvement with learner academic success, higher attendance rates and lower suspension rates, affirming parents as vitally important part of the school system.

According to Makgoba and Mokhele (2013: 222), it is the responsibility of parents to create a disciplined home environment since learners do learn well under conditions that are conducive to learning. Various researchers suggest several ways in which parents can create such an environment (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 104; Bitsko, Phipps, Roehrs & Barnheiser, 2000: 9; Makgoba & Mokhele, 2013: 224). For example, according to Bitsko *et al.* (2000: 9) parents can create opportunities for their children to develop responsibility as part of their daily routine. In this regard, Baruth and Mokoena (2016: 103) suggest campaigns, workshops and seminars for learners, teachers, parents and the community in addressing learner disciplinary problems,

since schools can assist parents by providing suggestions of activities that build responsibility. It is imperative for parents to take on the primary responsibility in establishing the concept of self-control and responsibility in their children. According to research, parents need to create warm, open and loving environments so that their children develop practices of positive behaviour (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 104; Luiselli *et al.*, 2005: 183). Parents could therefore assist teachers to create a safe environment at school. In this regard, Mbokodi and Singh (2011: 45) suggest that parents should ensure that their children attend school and arrive at school on time as part of fostering discipline in learners. In support, many authors link learner absenteeism with gangsterism and drug and alcohol use, because of a lack of supervision at home (Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013: 224; Singh & Steyn, 2014: 85). Even in cases where both parents work, or in single parent households, it is imperative that parents and teachers listen to the child's concerns and make time to investigate problems of ill-discipline by engaging with schools and other parties involved. It is therefore important that parents take responsibility for becoming actively involved in schools to address learner misbehaviour.

Some researchers suggest that parent partnerships lead to greater achievement, irrespective of socio-economic status, background, educational level and unemployment (Blankstein, 2004: 167; Cotton, 2001: 4). Others however indicate that parents, especially those from impoverished backgrounds, need to be empowered if they are to make a significant contribution to their children's education (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011: 47; Singh *et al.*, 2004: 306). By law parents are co-accountable with education partners to address school related issues (De Waal & Serfontein, 2015: 2329).

3.4.2.2 SCHOOLS/TEACHERS' STRATEGIES

One way in which schools can tackle the prevalence of violence and learner misconduct is through the implementation of legislation, policies and regulations enacted by the Department of Education. Although these documents provide a framework for the actions of principals, teachers and other stakeholders engaged in education, the aim is not to discuss the legal framework in detail. However, it is worth noting the importance of discussion and communication in a framework where the accountability and responsibility of parents and teachers are clear. The *South African*

Schools Act (DoE, 1996b) provides parents the opportunity to serve on the governing body of a school. This allows them to become involved in developing strategies to resolve problems with persistent rule-breakers and the excessively unmanageable learners (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 97; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 99). While the *SASA* (DoE, 1996b, Sections 8 and 9) provides disciplinary procedures for serious misconduct, like how to deal with learners who bully, the *Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners* (DoE, 1998) deals with serious violations. Such violations include conduct which endangers and violates the safety of others, possession or use of dangerous weapons, possession or use of unauthorised drugs or alcohol, fighting, assault or battery, immoral behaviour or profanity, theft or possession of stolen property, criminal behaviour such as rape, and the bullying and intimidation of other learners. It is subsequently the responsibility of schools to see that the policy framework provided is not only properly enforced, but that they should continuously seek strategies to implement the framework.

Policies only provide the framework - it is still up to schools to find ways to address important school-related issues (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 99). Baruth and Mokoena (2016: 103) note that it is important for schools to set up regular meetings with parents to share the school's goals and the curriculum. In this way parents will become more involve and more aware of what is actually taking place at school. Moreover, parents will obtain a better understanding of their child's education and in doing so, they become partners in the educational process. Parents can for example work together through cooperative organising, such as parents' associations, to monitor their children's progress and hold the school accountable on its achievements. In this regard, parents' associations can create the opportunity for parents and teachers to establish a relationship based on trust and respect. Such relationship can result in home environments that are more conducive to learning and improve communication and consistency between home and school. These changes can lead to safer, more responsive schools. However, Mbokodi and Singh (2011: 45) attain that positive role modelling and discipline at home by parents would make a significant difference in learners' behaviour at school. Bitsko *et al.* (2000: 4) note that schools can support parents by providing suggestions of activities that instil a sense of responsibility in their children. A partnership between parents and schools is an instrument to improve and

develop the schools as parents involve themselves in the schools' activities in order to benefit their children's education.

Successful partnerships between teachers and parents have been linked with better academic achievement (cf. 3.4.2.1 and cf. 3.4.2.2) and positive behaviour (Lemmer, 2007: 218). In this regard, Smit (2010: 48) suggests that schools should start with the involvement of parents in the drafting of the code of conduct for learners towards establishing a disciplined environment. Joubert and Serakwane (2009: 134), however, argue that schools should also include involving the parents in the management of their children's behaviour. Such a relationship can create the opportunity for parents and teachers to become involved in a more formal and structured partnership concerning the education of the learner. One can therefore assume that parents, who are involved in drafting strategies towards the establishment of a disciplined environment, have a thorough understanding of the rules and regulations of the school, will be able to strengthen the rules, and underline the importance of respecting teachers.

Teachers have the responsibility to address learner behaviour in classrooms and in schools. While the task of maintaining discipline in the classroom often appears to be the sole responsibility of teachers, learners should be given the opportunity to be responsible for their own actions. By creating the space for learners to be responsible, teachers give learners the chance to be accountable for their behaviour (DoE, 2000: 14, Maphosa & Mammen, 2011a: 144). In support of a positive approach to discipline LeeFon *et al.* (2013: 4) suggest a non-punitive form of discipline that involves collaboration rather than confrontation with learners. They also advise for the acknowledgement, respect and appreciation of learners, and for teachers to 'empower themselves with knowledge and a better understanding of the concept of discipline and not see the classroom as a battlefield'. A non-punitive form of discipline also implies the significance of values to address learner misconduct which I will discuss in the next section.

3.4.3 REFLECTING ON VALUES AND DISCIPLINE

Although the importance of values in dealing with negative learner behaviour was dealt with in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.1), I deem it necessary to again reflect on values. Values

indicate moral actions that are socially desirable and expressed when people socially interact (Becker *et al.*, 2015: 6; Schwartz, 2012: 4).

Literature shows that values in education are an important tool to address school discipline (Harber & Mncube, 2011: 241; LeeFon *et al.*, 2013: 241). Since this study is framed within the context of a democratic South Africa, it has been indicated that constitutional values ought to guide learner behaviour (cf. 2.4.1.2). In this regard, the values of the *Constitution* emphasise the democratic ideals of *tolerance*, *respect*, and *diversity*, the promotion of *human rights*, and active citizen participation to address problems (RSA, 1996: Preamble). Parents as partners in maintaining discipline problems in schools should take careful note of the obligations that the norms and values enshrined in the *Constitution* and *Bill of Rights* place upon them (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw, 2004: 85).

In this section, I reflect on the values discussed in Chapter 2 with specific reference to the role of constitutional values in addressing learner discipline problems. This section emphasises the importance of parents and schools to ensure that children become responsible, democratic and disciplined citizens. Moreover, it further emphasises that teachers and parents should also be citizens who live by the constitutional values and who are productive, leading self-fulfilled lives free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 9(3)). However, in order to address the increasingly negative learner behaviour and its threat to school safety and security one can posit that learner behaviour is not only the concern of schools, but of all stakeholders. The maintenance of discipline in a democratic environment conducive for effective learning and teaching will therefore only be possible when teachers and parents uphold such constitutional values.

3.4.3.1 PARENTS

It is usually expected from parents to uphold certain values and a certain level of discipline at home in order for their children to be disciplined learners and to become disciplined adults. The values nurtured at school and those nurtured at home and in the community are often at odds and this results in a complex situation (Du Preez & Roux, 2010: 22). By implication, values nurtured at school and those nurtured at home

might differ and can result in conflict and challenges to maintain order and discipline in the classroom.

Research indicates that a child's disruptive and aggressive behaviour shaped in the home is transferred to the school and peer environments. Physical abuse may for example be seen at home and then perpetuated at school in the form of bullying (Baruth & Mokoena, 2016: 97). Parents as the primary educators should take the responsibility to seek ways to address such problems with the school. Parents should further play an active part in the upbringing of their own children by nurturing their children's lives, by teaching them norms and values that should be respected when it comes to learners that harm other learners (Banks, 1997: 3). Any observable deviation should be punished appropriately and non-violently, and the observance of family rules should be non-negotiable. In seeking ways to deal with negative learner behaviour the importance of parents to work collectively with teachers cannot be overemphasised.

3.4.3.2 TEACHERS

If we were to assume that parents are doing their part in accepting responsibility and accountability for their child's behaviour (cf. 3.4.2.1), one could accept that teachers should take responsibility to enhance such efforts of parents.

As indicated earlier, (cf. 2.3.2 and cf. 3.4.3.1), education is an important vehicle to promote a democratic value system (Harber & Mncube, 2011: 241). By implication, "if democracy has a moral and ideal meaning" (Dewey, 1916: 349) education and teachers should provide learners with the opportunity to learn the meaning of a democratic way of life. In order to achieve a democratic society free of violence, it is therefore necessary to create a democratic environment conducive for effective learning and teaching. In this regard, research shows that education can enhance the notion of disciplined citizens through the teaching and learning of democratic values and norms (Christie, 2008: 9; November *et al.*, 2010: 7). By implication, teachers and parents' values and attitudes also need to change. One can assume that schools have the responsibility to enhance partnerships with these parents that are prepared to not only live according constitutional values (cf. 2.4.1.1), but who will lead learners to a productive and self-fulfilled life in a country free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (cf. RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Section 9(3)).

Research on discipline frequently highlights the robust relationship between maintaining discipline in classrooms and instilling certain values (De Klerk & Rens, 2003: 353; Masitsa, 2008: 163; Wolhuter & Steyn, 2003: 529). Teachers are role models and they should uphold strong values that flow over to the way in which they address learner misbehaviour. Teachers can promote the ideas of *democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism, non-sexism, Ubuntu, an open society, accountability, rule of law, respect and reconciliation* (DoE, 2001: 3-4) among learners, which will eventually help to create an environment conducive for effective learning and teaching. In addition, Du Preez and Roux (2010: 24) note that the *Manifesto on Democracy, Values and Education* (DoE, 2001) could serve as an example of a benchmark of values to underpin discipline. Joubert and Serakwane (2009: 135) suggest that teachers should implement a democratic teaching style and ought to do away with autocratic and permissive teaching styles. Joubert and Squelch (2005: 2) warn that discipline does however not happen by chance, as it needs to be persistently managed through firm guidance by the teacher who should continually discourage learner misbehaviour. Several researchers suggest that teachers and learners should work together in creating classroom rules, together determining the consequences of misbehaviour (Coetzee *et al.*, 2008: 92; Joubert & Bray, 2007: 81; Oosthuizen, 2010: 4). In support of co-operation amongst teachers and learners, Mtsweni (2008: 28) notes that classroom rules will give the learners some rights and obligations and might support them in becoming more committed to attain the objectives of a discipline classroom. By implication, teachers should be confident in their ability to guide learners to become self-disciplined individuals and take responsibility for their behaviour.

Although the rights of learners are often blamed for the problems in schools (cf.3.4.2.1), a true understanding of the values that inform democracy (cf. 2.3.2) and the responsibilities that go together with human rights (DoE, 2000: 9) can be nurtured in the classroom to the benefit of everybody. Although learners' rights and freedoms should never validate their misbehaviour, teachers should be critical of their own behaviour. In this regard, LeeFon *et al.* (2013: 3) suggest that teachers should not only concentrate on changing the behaviour of learners, but also on changing their own. While research shows that harsh and insulting words can influence learners negatively, it also suggests that teachers should stop using corporal punishment and

reactive authoritarian practices (Joubert & Serakwane, 2009: 131; Venter & Van Niekerk, 2011: 255). Venter and Van Niekerk (2011: 253) are also in favour of using positive and constructive disciplinary techniques that take into account respect for the learners, as well as their human dignity. As a consequence, if teachers role model the values of respect and dignity learners as a consequence will experience such values role modelled by teachers positively. Subsequently, learners will experience teacher's attitudes positive and in return will role model the values of respect and human dignity towards teachers and other learners.

As mentioned before schools can support parents by suggesting activities that instil a sense of responsibility in their children (Bitsko *et al.*, 2000: 4). Parents and schools also have the opportunity to engage in discussions and communication in a framework where the accountability and responsibility of parents and teachers to address learner misconduct is clear. If parents and schools work together collectively to instil values in learners by using positive and constructive discipline, learners could start to remodel this positive behaviour.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter highlights the extent of violence and crime experienced in most of South African schools, and its subsequent negative effects on teaching and learning.

This chapter in particular highlights learner misbehaviour and violence in schools as a harsh reality that hold serious implications for teachers' functioning. I foregrounded various causes of violence that are at the heart of learner misbehaviour. These causes include emotional and professional tension, bullying, gangster-related activities, drugs and alcohol, and no support when dealing with undesirable. However, as indicated in Chapter one (cf. 1.2 and cf. 3.4.3), the maintenance of discipline is the responsibility of all relevant stakeholders, so therefore parents are co-accountable with schools for maintaining discipline. Moreover, parents play a key role in maintaining discipline and upholding the ideals of a school's code of conduct to ensure a safe environment conducive for effective teaching and learning (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012: 99). In this regard, parents need to take co-ownership of learner problems in schools.

Based on the exposition in this chapter, it can be concluded that parents and schools are co-responsible and accountable to ensure that teaching and learning takes place in a safe environment. The focus of the next chapter is to gain an understanding of parents' perspectives regarding their roles and responsibilities as collective partners to maintain discipline in schools.

CHAPTER 4: PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS ON LEARNER DISCIPLINE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 a general overview of the values that should guide learner discipline in a democracy was given. An exploration of literature revealed that education plays an important role to bring about responsible and disciplined citizens (cf. 2.2) that should live according constitutional and democratic values in order to shape their attitudes and democratic behaviour. However, despite the South African government's vision for a safe environment where teaching and learning takes place and where learners can be assisted in becoming democratic and disciplined citizens, learner misbehaviour and discipline problems in schools remains a major concern for teachers and parents, and this was discussed in Chapter 3.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the perceptions of parents regarding learner discipline in schools, using data generated from semi-structured interviews. It was by means of this qualitative approach that I was able to gain a more in-depth understanding of parents' perspectives of discipline in schools. First, this chapter provides details on the research methodology and methods that have been employed, followed by the findings and the discussion of the collected and analysed data.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methods to be used in this study were presented in chapter one (cf. 1.5.1-1.5.3.4). In this section these methods, which are framed within a qualitative approach are briefly summarised.

4.2.1 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

My research methodology was mainly interactional, interpretative and qualitative in nature, which allows for a rich and deeper understanding of parents' perspectives and experiences, using interactive strategies like asking open-ended questions and recording their responses in their real-life situation. I worked from the assumption that a qualitative approach can contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon

under study. Qualitative research as a type of educational research is a multi-method approach to conduct research in a subjective and biased manner (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011: 5). For example, qualitative research allowed me as the researcher to obtain the views of parents by asking broad and general questions. The responses to these questions are described, analysed and grouped into themes.

4.2.1.1 SELECTIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 115), a qualitative study has not the intent to generalise to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon. To obtain a better understanding of the phenomenon under study, the researcher selects individuals and sites with the purpose of the study in mind. For the purpose of this study, as part of the preparation, I have contacted two parents with school going children that were able to refer me to other parents. I then contacted their referrals, who in turn referred me to other parents with school-going children who were also willing to participate in this research. This approach is called the snowball technique (Sargeant, 2012: 1). Eventually, I was able to select six parents, five females and one male, from a range of ethnicity groups, who have school-going children in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District for interviews. Aligned with the integrity of this research study I provide the following details of the participants selected, while still maintaining confidentiality:

Participant One (39 years old) is a single mother, working as a full-time domestic worker. Her child attends a previously disadvantage school in the township.

Participant Two (32 years old) is a single mother, working as a kitchen worker. Her child is attending a previously disadvantage school in the township.

Participant Three (44 years old) is a single working mother working as a school transport worker. Her child is attending a previously disadvantage school in the township.

Participant Four (42 years old) is a single father who works part-time as a gardener. Currently his son is attending a former Model C school close to the Central Business District (CBD).

Participant Five (33 years old) is married and a working mother of two children, with a child attending a former Model C school in town.

Participant Six (33 years old) is married and a working mother of two children who both attend a privileged school in a middle class suburb.

The selection was made on the basis whether they would be available within the period set for interviews. These interviews were based on questions obtained from the literature review. Before conducting the interviews I had to consider several ethical issues.

4.2.2 THE INTEGRITY OF THE RESEARCH

As a qualitative study a researcher seeks an in-depth description of phenomena, it requires specific considerations regarding the integrity of the study.

4.2.2.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a researcher it is my fundamental ethical responsibility to ensure that my research brings no harm to the participants because of research activities. Creswell (2003: 5) reminds us that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the research is ethically acceptable, and Cohen *et al.* (2007: 61-63) suggest that the researcher has to get informed consent of the participants who are willing to participate in the study. The researcher further has to protect the privacy of participants (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010: 121) and ensure that the participants are not deceived in any way (Cohen *et al.*, 2007: 61-63; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007: 41). I took care to restrict access to participants' characteristics, responses, behaviour, and other information by applying anonymity, confidentiality and appropriate storing of data.

Linked to the steps mentioned above to ensure the integrity of the study, I took into consideration the following ethical issues to enhance ultimate credibility in this study: namely, non-maleficence, confidentiality, informed consent, no deceit and voluntary participation. First, I formally informed the prospective participants what the study was about, that there was no possible risk in taking part in this study and that their identities would remain undisclosed and that all data contained identifiers would be removed prior to the commencement of the interviews. I also indicated that their rights to privacy

would be respected and protected and informed them that they had the right to refuse to take part in the research. If they choose to take part, and any issue would arise making them uncomfortable, they would be free to discontinue their participation with no further repercussions. In line with this, I obtained their informed consent in writing in the format given in Appendix A. There was no deception in this study. I obtained ethical clearance (UFS-HSD2015/0533) from the Ethical Committee of the UFS Faculty of Education.

On the issue of ethical considerations in research in qualitative research, Merriam (2009: 213-234) suggests “credibility or internal validity, consistency or reliability and transferability or external validity” as criteria to enhance the integrity in qualitative research.

4.2.2.2 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

a) Credibility

Merriam (2009: 214) describes credibility or internal validity in qualitative research as “the extent to which research findings are credible”, thus, by implication, the degree to which methods are used to generate these findings, can be trusted. As such, I used multiple methods to collect data such as literature studies, document analysis, interviews and a synthesis study on all these methods. I kept detailed records of the interviews and documented the analysis process (Merriam, 2009: 223) explaining how I arrived at the research findings. Furthermore, in order to ensure credibility, I asked the participants to comment on the research findings based on their experiences. This strategy is called member checking (Botes, 2003: 80; Merriam, 2009: 217) that allows me the opportunity to clarify obscurities and uncertainties to ensure credibility. In addition, my colleagues and supervisors helped me to clarified biases and assumptions on my part as researcher, which is known as peer reviews (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007: 80; Merriam, 2009: 220).

b) Consistency or reliability

Using multiple methods in this study it helped me to ensure that the findings were to some extent consistent with the data collected (Durrheim, 2006: 93; Merriam, 2009: 221) in order for others to replicate my study. Although others who repeat this study may obtain different results, because of numerous interpretations, this strategy allows

me to declare my stance as researcher. I undertook an audit trail by keeping a reflective journal. An audit trail depends on my ability to provide an account for the changes that could have occurred in the study by describing how I collected the data, how I categorised the findings and indicated the decisions I made throughout the study. In the audit trail in this study I recorded my reflections, the questions, and some issues or new ideas that occurred to me.

Merriam (2009: 222) states that the use of multiple methods to collect consistent and dependable data can be seen as a strategy for obtaining data that is “most congruent with reality as understood by the participants”. In other words, by following the audit trail, readers are able to authenticate the findings of this study. Strategies such as using multiple methods, member checking (Merriam, 2009: 217), peer reviews, declaring my position as qualitative researcher and keeping detailed record of the themes that arose during the data analysis ultimately enhanced *consistency* in this study. These strategies will to some extent account whether my findings are consistent with the collected data. This will also allow other researchers to replicate the study.

c) *Transferability or internal validity*

Merriam (2009: 223) defines transferability or external validity as the extent to which the research findings can be apply or be transferred to other situations or contexts. In other words, others may assess the similarity between their situation and the study that place the onus of transferability largely on the reader (Mertens, 2010: 259). I provided a detailed audit trail to enable the reader to determine the degree of similarity between the study and the context. This should provide sufficient detail about the research methodology for someone who wants to repeat this study and with some understanding of what I did.

Although there is no generalisation in a qualitative study (Merriam, 2009: 224), it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide sufficient descriptive data about the context of the study in order for readers to make a comparison with their own situations. I used tape recordings and transcriptions of the interviews, detailed recordings of the interviews and documentation of the analysis process to ensure that the findings are congruent with the collection of raw data. Through member checking (asking participants to comment on the research findings), I was also able to provide thick or

detailed descriptions of the research findings to express the actual context (Merriam, 2009: 226; Shenton, 2004: 63) in order to facilitate *transferability*. The detail research methodology in Chapter 1 of this study included background and contextual data and the selection of participants that will enable readers to compare their situation with the context of this study.

Furthermore, as researcher, I had to explain the benefits of this study for the community, as this study has the potential to inform school discipline policies and practices in schools.

4.2.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

Semi-structured interviews with parents were employed as a data collection strategy in order to learn and understand more about the opinions and experiences of parents in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District regarding learner discipline. I collected data by setting up an introductory meeting with the interviewees. The advantage of conducting interviews is that I was able to probe and could asked follow-up questions in order to clarify certain answers from the participants.

In the following sections I explain the data collection techniques in more detail.

Based on my literature review on values and learner behaviour in a democracy (Chapter 2), as well as my literature review (Chapter 3) various issues were identified, and I captured them into basic interview questions:

1. How do you see the role of parents in maintaining discipline at schools?
2. What do you personally do to support your child/children in terms of their behaviour at school?
3. How do you deal with behavioural problems that your child/children might experience?
4. How would you like the school to include you in matters pertaining to your child/children's behaviour?
5. Do you think parents know the school disciplinary policies and what is stated in the code of conduct of the school? Explain.
6. As a parent, are you in possession of a written copy of the code of conduct of the school? Explain.

As indicated these questions merely stimulated open discussion, thus at this point the data analysis techniques will now be discussed.

4.2.3.1 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

A brief overview on how the data was captured for the purpose of data analysis and interpretations is as follow:

a) Field notes and reflective journal

I made notes during the interview, which I added to my reflective journal that helped me when doing member checking. Throughout the study, I penned down my personal thoughts and experiences in my reflective journal during the research process. This helped me to take into consideration my role as researcher in the data collection (Creswell, 2007: 38). I documented my impressions and experiences during my interaction with the participants as part of reflecting my thoughts. Capturing the dates, times and places and describing basic information about what has been experienced, provided my personal insight gained as researcher.

b) Audio recordings

Interviews with parents who have school-going children in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District and follow-up member checking sessions were audio-recorded. In using an audio recorder, I made recording of the participants' verbatim responses (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 104). Creswell (2007: 34-41) agrees that the using of audio recordings is useful to capture verbal data for revisiting the transcribed date at a later stage.

c) Coding

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 105), in qualitative data analysis a code is generated line by line when a researcher constructs data into meaningful analytical units. Aligned with qualitative data analysis, firstly I familiarise myself with the data by organising and preparing my personal notes and transcripts. This attributes interpreted meaning to each individual data for later purposes of pattern detection and categorisation (2007: 109). In other words, a code represents and captures individual data's content and essence. During this step, I manually pre-coded the data, by circling, highlighting and

underlining participants' responses that I found striking and relevant, and that could serve as illustrative examples when discussing the data.

While preparing the data for coding, I became familiar with the contents by repeatedly listening to the interviews and eventually transcribing the interviewees' responses into text. Views expressed by the parents were summarised and samples of their extracts were presented verbatim. In other words, the verbatim quotations provides an account of what parents had said in their own words. Recording their responses helped me with later transcription and coding. With the second step of the data analysis I relied on my research journal to verify the raw data during informal conversations with the participants via *sms*, phone calls and follow-up meetings.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

I conducted one-to-one interviews with parents who have school-going children at schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality District. Interviews were conducted in order to learn and understand more about parent's opinions and experiences regarding to learner behaviour and discipline in schools.

The advantage of conducting interviews is that it allowed me to probed and asked follow-up question for clarifying certain answers from participants (cf. 1.5). By asking open-ended questions and recording their responses for later transcription and coding, I was able to obtain the parents' perspectives and realities regarding learner behaviour and discipline in schools.

During the qualitative content analysis, I identified several themes and sub-themes, which were then divided into five categories.

4.3.1 PARENTS' ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Many participants held the view that parents are a vitally important part of the school system. As such, they do have an important responsibility to actively assist teachers to reduce the incidents of disciplinary problems at school

Equally important in assisting the school in addressing the problem of learner discipline is the involvement of parents in their children's behaviour. Aspects related to these will be discussed in the section that follows.

4.3.1.1 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Participants agreed that parents need to be involved (*"parents have to work together with teachers and SGB's to maintain discipline in schools"*). They understand that the schools provide school rules that their children have to abide by, as they had to sign a copy of it (*"we are aware of the school rules, we signed a Code of Conduct"*). They believed that it is good for them to know what the schools expect from them (*"it gave me an idea as to how to relate and to regulate [the child's] behaviour"*).

On the one hand, it was pointed out by the parents that they are not in the class themselves so they cannot be held accountable for the behaviour of their children, and that the teachers have the professional authority in class to deal with that. One participant explained this as follows: *"I cannot as a parent be responsible in the class so I am not there to be able to discipline my child. I expect the teacher to handle discipline"*. On the other hand, the participants understand that parents need to know what is going on in the schools regarding discipline. They understand that it cannot be expected from the teachers to discipline the children alone (*"we cannot overburden the teachers and we do nothing"*). One participant who explained that while parents need to support the teachers, the discipline of learners is not the parents' responsibility alone, and neither the teachers' responsibility alone. This explanation captured the balance. Still, they indicated that parents at the same time should do the necessary education at home (*"cleaning his room is also a form of discipline, that is why we also have rules in our house"*).

It became clear during the interviews that parents also have their own frustrations. One participant pointed out that they work hard to discipline their children, but that a child is not a marionette that one can control. As one participant explained: *"I think kids will always try their boundaries"*. Another explained: *"sometime the child comes home with that ill-discipline that they learn from their friends"*.

During the interviews, it became evident that participants regard maintaining discipline at schools the equal responsibility of parents and schools.

4.3.2 PARTICIPANTS' PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ABOUT OTHER PARENTS

Some participants pointed out that in their experience not all parents are involved in maintaining discipline or even in school matters. Participants expressed the concern

that parents' failure to exercise control over their children contributes to a lack of discipline (*"...the parents are very lenient to monitor and to see the change in their child...there are no rules. So, how much more the child uses his ill-discipline in front of the teacher"*).

Various reasons for this inattention were suggested. Some parents have challenges to support the school, as one participant explained: *"I think many parents work long hours, it is maybe a single parent, they maybe want to, but cannot be involved at the school"*. Other parents are viewed as being uninterested. One participant said that some parents *"neglect"* their children, while another explained that *"some parents just leave it to the school to solve the problems"*. In support, another participant pointed out: *"nowadays the teacher disciplines our children and at the same time we have no discipline measures at home"*.

Still, the participants indicated that they do participate in school matters and are aware of other parents' involvement (*"we attend parent-teacher meetings, class meetings... So, I notice that kind of involvement from the parents"*). On the one hand, it was pointed out that not all parents use the Code of Conduct effectively (*"most parents know about the Code of Conduct, but they act as if they do not know what it is about"*). As one participant explained: *"...I think many do not understand, sometimes you'll find when a child is in trouble, the parent will argue and confront the teacher in front of the children..."*.

I thus learnt from the interviews that participants perceive some other parents as uninvolved. It was suggested that some parents are either too lenient or uninterested. While one of the reasons suggested for this was others' working conditions it was also pointed out that there could be a lack of discipline at home, and also lack of knowledge of school's code of conduct. Although participants' experience with and views about other parents' involvement differ, it is clear that parents and teachers should work together towards positive learner behaviour.

4.3.3 PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON TEACHERS

The participants indicated that it can be difficult to approach some teachers. Some participants found the communication gap between teachers and parent challenging, (*"it is difficult to address problems with the teachers, without making it personal;"*

sometimes the teacher might find it offensive or personal"). As a participant pointed out: *"when you approach a teacher; it does not mean it is about her, it is about the child"*. Another participant pointed out that, she would appreciate it if the teacher can talk to her if there is a problem: *"before they become big problems"*. Still, the participants believed that parents and teachers can find common ground in what is best for the child when addressing a problem (*"so obviously, we have a common so we can meet each other half way"*).

Participants also acknowledge that teachers face many challenges: *"We are a community, we are not alone"*. In other words, while a parent has the interest of one child at heart, the teacher is responsible for the learners as a collective (*"we as parents need to be involved, maybe because teachers are busy, maybe because there are so many children in the school"*). Another participant agreed that *"...the teacher cannot do everything...as parent you need to take the teacher's hand, so that she takes your hand"*. Still, participants believe there should be a platform for open communication.

In conclusion, from the interviews I learnt that the participants perceived some teachers to become offensive when addressing problems with the teacher. However, participants acknowledge that teachers need support from parents and communities.

Aspects of parental support follow in the next section.

4.3.4 HOW PARENTS SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN TOWARDS DISCIPLINED BEHAVIOUR

Participants said that they attend parent-teacher meetings to find out how they can help to improve their children's schoolwork (*"parents sit with the teacher to know where he is lacking; how can and what can be done to improve his work and what kind of discipline he is lacking"*). Participants understand that showing interest in their children's schoolwork it is a form of discipline. One participant suggested that parents should ask the child about his day (*"do you have homework, how was your day? It is a type of discipline"*). Another participant agreed: *"By showing interest in my child's well-being, not only when there is a problem, but it shows her I care and support her"*.

It was emphasised that problems should be addressed immediately *"before they become big problems"*. Participants mentioned that communication is imperative to

enforce discipline at home and shared their experiences: One participant narrated: *“I do sit down and explain to him and I do tell him how it is supposed to be, and why that there are rules, and I tell him what is expected of him”*. Another participant explained how she responds to ill-discipline at school: *“...basically I punish her, she cannot go out, I do not give her pocket-money, and she must help me at home”*. They found that *“rules are not there to spoil his fun, but to help him and others”* and also guide them to discipline their children at home.

When there are problems between learners, participants indicated that it sometimes helps to talk to the parents of the other child involved. As one participant explained, it is important: *“to find out the truth before it becomes ugly”*. Even more significant, another participant suggested regular visits to the school (*“go see how your child is doing, not only when there are problems”*) to show parental support.

It became evident from the interviews that the participants believe they support their children by communicating with them and by ensuring that punishment fit their misbehaviour at home. They also seem convinced that parents should address problems with other parents involved, and should visit schools to show their interest in the child's general well-being. Participants understood that engaging in open communication, parents and the school can help to enforce discipline at home.

4.3.5 THE AVAILABILITY AND RELEVANCE OF POLICY PROCEDURES

The participants appreciated and respected schools' procedures to regulate their children's behaviour. As one participant explained: *“...there are those measures. ...like one day my child was involved in [bad behaviour]. So I attended the disciplinary hearing”*. Another participant said that by explaining the rules to her child helped her to address some of his problems (*“we address it, we equipped him, then use the Code of Conduct to make him understand, and to explain what the procedure is...”*).

Still, many participants agreed that a Code of Conduct is an important document, but is in doubt whether all parents comply with it (*“we, as parents have to know the Code of Conduct and hopefully we all will comply with it”*). The majority of participants see it as an important tool and as a form of reference to regulate behaviour. As a participant explained: *“...we definitely find it a source of reference... I think it will also help us as parents to work together with the school”*. Another in support explained: *“it is a*

document I can use to help my child, to guide her about her behaviour at home and even at school, because it will help her in the future”.

It became evident from the data that the participants acknowledge and appreciate the availability and relevance of policy procedures to enhance learner behaviour at home and at schools. The availability and relevance of policy procedures forms part of support for parents with discipline.

4.3.6 VALUES

The majority of the participants agreed that working together with the schools means that discipline at home is important. They believed that the values of respect, trust and responsibility will help their children to work together as a community (*“we are a community, we do not walk alone”*). The majority of participants believe that rules at home should complement the school rules.

They understand that this is necessary in order for their children to function as a discipline citizen one day. As one participant explained: *“...you need to equip your children by teaching them values. We need to address his behaviour, he is a growing child”*. Certain values were highlighted, such as respect (*“by showing respect for your child, encourage the child to show respect for you as parent, teacher and leads to trust and better relationships”*) tolerance (*“there are children with different cultures”*) and responsibility (*“...the child must choose friends that respect the teachers and that do their work. If there is discipline in their work at school, then there will be discipline for the teachers”*). Participants believe that teaching their children these values enhance school discipline.

From the above it is clear that parents believe they should uphold values and discipline at home in order for their children to be disciplined at schools and to become disciplined adults one day. Instilling values of respect, tolerance and responsibility in their children also form part of support towards schools to maintain discipline.

4.3.7 SUGGESTIONS ON PROMOTING COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP FOR DISCIPLINE

During the interviews the participants made some suggestions as to how parents and schools can work together to maintain discipline at schools. Participants stated that

schools do encourage parents to be involved in school matters. The need for parents to meet with each other so that parents as a collective can discuss discipline at school was also pointed out (“...if we can have time to discuss the [disciplinary] measures as parent to parent; to find how committed we are to apply to the disciplinary measures at school”). Another participant suggested that parents should attend school events; so that parents can also get to know each other (“...attending sport activities allow parents to learn to know other parents and to see how your child interacts with other children”).

What is clear from all the above, is the evolving concept of *collective ownership*. Participants understand that they have to work together with schools to maintain discipline at schools. Participants appreciate that schools include them as parents in disciplinary matters at school. Participants understand their role and responsibilities to maintain discipline at home in order to assist schools in this regard.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I reported on the views of the six parents as discussed during interviews with them. The aim was to understand the realities of parents with regarding to learner behaviour and discipline in schools. Particular attention was paid to the themes that had emerged during the interviews with the parents with the sole intention of answering the research question. It has emerged that it is not the sole responsibility of the school to maintain discipline. The participants believe that they should not bear the responsibility to maintain discipline alone, since they are not there in the classroom to monitor their children's behaviour. The participants believe that discipline in schools could be improved if parents and teachers are collectively responsible for maintaining discipline.

From the above it is clear that parents and teachers should work together towards positive learner behaviour even if there are challenges. I was thus able to identify the emerging concept of *collective ownership*. The participants clearly understand their roles and responsibilities to maintain discipline at home in order to assist schools in this regard. Participants realised that they have to work together with schools to maintain discipline at schools. Moreover, this study concurs with Joubert and Bray (2007: 82) that parents should support the school and directs their children to abide by

all school rules and regulations and to accept responsibility for any misconduct on their part. It is therefore agreed that the existing school rules and regulations with regard to collective ownership for discipline in schools will enhance the management of learner misbehaviour in schools. In the next chapter, the extent of the existing policy framework that should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools will be explored.

CHAPTER 5: AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION-RELATED DOCUMENTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter it was indicated that parents who participated in this study believe that discipline in schools could be improved if parents and teachers are collectively responsible for maintaining school discipline. The notion of collective ownership was, by implication, foregrounded when the participants were in agreement that the existing school rules and regulations with regard to collective ownership of discipline in schools will enhance learner misbehaviour. It is therefore against the background of the previous chapter that I now focus on exploring the existing policy framework that should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools.

5.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In this section I provide a framework for an analysis of education-related documents perceived as important for this particular study. While these documents all relate to issues of discipline, whether implicit or explicit, I also need to frame my analysis in my conceptual understanding of collective ownership. In this section of this study I therefore not only propose a framework for analysis, but also a framework of analysis.

5.2.1 FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

In order to explore the extent of the policy framework that should inform collective ownership for school discipline, I analyse various official education-related documents. However, before undertaking the analysis, I need to reiterate the definition of a document analysis. A document analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings, which may be revealed by their style and coverage (Richie & Lewis, 2003: 35). A document analysis of a policy will subsequently enable me to reveal those aspects of the text that are not overtly stated, specifically, because that which is not obviously stated in a policy is just as significant as explicitly mentioned aspects. My analysis will consequently

focus on both the obvious and underlying meanings rooted in the relevant education-related documents. The documents included for analysis are the:

- *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996),
- *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995), *Education White Paper 2: The Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (1996),
- *South African Schools Act* (1996), the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001),
- *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning experience* (2000), and
- *Examples of a Code of Conduct for a school* (2008).

My analysis is therefore premised on the assumption that the framework for the analysis of the mentioned documents includes two guiding questions, namely *what are the underlying principles that inform collective ownership?* and *to what extent does the policy framework inform collective ownership for discipline in schools?*

It is assumed that an analysis of these documents could assist in exploring the extent of the policy framework that should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools in particular as addressed by the government of South Africa.

5.2.2 FRAMING OF ANALYSIS

In order to analyse the documents in terms of the above-mentioned questions, it is important to first elucidate my understanding of collective ownership. My assumption is that if a conceptual understanding of collective ownership serves as a framework of analysis, the analysis of documents could be framed in terms of their contribution to collective ownership.

Neither the term *ownership* nor the term *collective* is self-explanatory. To find a definition of the term *collective ownership* has not been easy, since many authors define it in terms of property, land or a product owned by people (Hilty, 2011: 1; Rai & Boyle, 2007: 389-392). On the one hand, the notion of collective ownership to some extent may be understood as just a theoretical–legal construction that is based on certain (theoretical) considerations on how a more cooperative world might be organised within the current legal system (Schovsbo, 2010: 3). On the other hand, Rai and Boyle (2007: 390), state that the term *collective ownership* inclines to replicate the

response of those groups that are concerned about increasingly observed unrestrained behaviour within the area of regulation. Therefore in the broader sense, one can assume that the prohibition of certain behaviour subsequently implies that learner misbehaviour is not allowed and prohibited by law. Collective ownership involves the responses of parents and schools as concerned groups who take ownership of learner discipline, notwithstanding with the requisite that they have to ensure the regulation of issues of learner behaviour. However, taking collective ownership of issues of learner discipline does not only mean taking responsibility for learner discipline, but also implies that schools and parents, as collective owners have to agree on what actions will be taken to address discipline issues effectively within a framework of educational policies.

Literature reveals (Day, 2014; Gerlak & Heikkila, 2011; 2013, Termeer, Breeman & Dewulf, 2010) that in general *collectives* assume many forms and manifestations of collective action. According to Gerlak and Heikkila (2011: 619) many of society's most troublesome problems must be solved through collaborative arrangements. Collaborative arrangements involve various actors working collectively, and using a collective process, to solve a complex problem. In this regard, a number of authors (Day, 2014; Gerlak & Heikkila, 2011) have shown that various collective contexts involve collective processes and a collective product usually (emerges from the process). Collective products might include shared ideas, strategies, rules or policies to solve a complex problem – something that is of great significance to this chapter.

From the above it seems that collective contexts and collective products require multi-actor collaboration. In this regard, Gray (1989: 912-930) refers to mutual interdependence regarding a problem, joint ownership of decisions, collective responsibility and collaboration as critical to the process of multi-actor collaboration. It can therefore be derived that when people collectively take ownership of problems, collective action or collaboration is to the benefit of that group. In other words, collective ownership involves the ideal principles of co-operation and collective action. Within the school context, it could be argued that it will be in the best interest of learners if the school, including teachers, and parents work collectively using the existing policy framework to maintain discipline. In support of co-operation and collaboration, Maphosa and Shumba (2010: 297) state that our schools need a more collaborative

relationship approach in which all stakeholders are engaged in a tradition of working together in open and collaborative ways. However, De Waal (2011: 75) noted that it remains a challenge to motivate parents to accept personal responsibility for maintaining discipline in schools. If parents are not involved, one could assume that learner misbehaviour will continue to hamper the delivery of quality education in a safe school environment.

Based on the above the term *collective ownership* can be perceived as a collective action involving a group of people who take ownership of problems that could be regulated with legislation. My understanding of collective ownership is that it is concerned with the extent to which stakeholders take ownership of problems in the best interest of a group. Collective ownership subsequently requires the joint involvement of stakeholders to collectively seek solutions for problems to the benefit of the group. Schools and parents should take responsibility to work together by using the existing policy framework in seeking solutions for problems of discipline.

To sum up, an analysis of education-related documents should enable me to foreground the existing policy framework for collective ownership for discipline in schools. It should be noted that my analysis is premised on my understanding that learner behaviour in a democracy should be informed and directed by constitutional values (cf. .2.4.1).

5.3 THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1996

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* is the supreme law of the country and any “law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid” (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1 (2)). I find this document significant for inclusion in my document analysis as all other policies, including education policies, are subject to its authority and should therefore be in line with its provisions and stipulations. Given the relationship between the *Constitution* and other policies and acts, this document is particularly appropriate for determining the underlying values that inform collective ownership.

As indicated in Chapter 1, since the first democratic election in 1994 a different societal structure was established through the adoption of the *Constitution* in 1996 (Venter, nd:

1-8). This new societal structure was very different from the previous discriminatory dispensation in that it was characterised by principles of democracy, freedom, equity and social justice (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1, Section 1-6). However, the *Constitution* alone cannot bring about democracy, equity and social justice, rather all South African citizens are required to strive to bring life to all the ideals and values that the *Constitution* guarantees. In essence, the *Constitution* compels and presupposes co-operation amongst and participation of all South Africans (RSA, 1996: Section 3(2)(b)). Section 3(2)(b) which subjects all citizens to equal duties and responsibilities, stipulates that “all citizens are equally subject to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship”. When read together with Section 28 (1(b)), according to which every child has the right to “family care or parental care”, it implies parental duties and responsibilities to schools. Subsequently, one can derive that parents have a duty and responsibility to be actively involved on decision-making matters regarding their children. Although the *Constitution* is not specifically directed to education, Section 29 (1)(a) reflects on education as a basic right by indicating that “everyone has the right to a basic education”. As the primary aim of the *Constitution* is to establish a representative democracy (RSA, 1996: Preamble), since education is protected as a basic right and while a child has the right to parental or family care, it can be assumed that a democratic school will be based on the distribution and sharing of decision-making power. By implication, parents or guardians should participate in decisions that affect the children in their care.

Collective decisions, however, must result from processes of collective deliberation that are conducted rationally and fairly among free and equal individuals. As the cornerstone of democracy, the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter Two, Section 7) “enshrines the rights of all South African citizens and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom”. Based on the founding provision of democratic citizenship (RSA, 1996: Section 1(a)(d)) and children’s basic right to education (RSA, 1996: Section 29 (1)(a)), parents by implication as caretakers and democratic citizens have a duty to ensure that their children’s right to education is upheld. Given the framework of collective ownership, parents as democratic citizens have the responsibility to uphold these constitutional rights – they subsequently have a duty and responsibility to send their children to school. Section 1(d) is also of significant in the sense that the principles of “accountability, responsiveness and openness” embrace

the notion of collective ownership. For example, reference to the constitutional principle of democracy (RSA, 1996: Preamble) is often followed by the idea that *accountability, responsiveness* and *openness* are based on constitutional values and principles enshrined in the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 195(1)). In this regard, Section 195(1) indicate that

[p]ublic administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the *Constitution* including the following principles:

(d) services must be provided impartially **fairly, equitably and without bias**

[my emphasis];

(e) people's needs must be responded to, and the public must to **participate in policy-making**;

(f) public administration must be **accountable** [my emphasis];

(g) **transparency** [my emphasis] must be fostered.

Although this section refers to the governance of public administration, in my opinion, it also relates to democratic school governance. Furthermore, within the framework of collective ownership, the principle of *participation* implies a relationship based on **fairness, equity, accountability** and **transparency**. In alignment with Section 3(b), the *Constitution* also implies that both parents and teachers as democratic citizens have a mutual responsibility to form a partnership in order to fulfil their legal obligation. With regard to mutual responsibility, Joubert and Bray (2007: 19) stress that **trust, openness** and **respect** should form part of such a partnership. Two key principles, namely **mutual respect** and **trust** have to evolve between teachers and parents in order to maintain a partnership characterised by constitutional values such as **human dignity, equality** and **freedom** (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1(a)). Nevertheless, in order to maintain a partnership characterised by **human dignity, equality** and **freedom**, the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 41 (1)(h)) obliges all citizens to adhere to the principle of **co-governance** when stating that

[a]ll spheres of government and all organs of state within each sphere must-

(h) co-operate with one another in mutual respect and good faith by-

(i) fostering friendly relations;

(ii) assisting and supporting one another;

(iii) informing one another of, and consulting one another on, matters of common interest;

- (v) adhering to agreed procedures.

Although the above refers to the principles of co-operative and inter-governmental relations, the principle of **co-operation** have a direct implication for school governance and partnerships, implying that **mutual respect** and **trust** have to evolve between teachers and parents in school governance. In other words, democratic school governance emphasises that decisions must be based on consultation, collaboration, co-operation, partnership, mutual trust and participation of all affected parties in the school community. When considering this, it can be derived that *co-operation* amongst parents and schools significantly underscore collective ownership. Schools and parents must therefore share power and foster good relations on matters of interest by coordinating their actions within the legal framework and relevant procedures. With regard to power-sharing, Joubert and Bray (2007: 13) note that it involves the creation and maintenance of partnerships as schools and parents have a constitutional duty to ensure that education takes place in a disciplined and orderly environment. As such, schools need a collaborative relationship approach in which all stakeholders are engaged in working together in open and collaborative ways. By implication, such a collaborative relationship is underscored by the *Constitution*.

As co-operation refers to working together by a group of individuals towards the achievement of a common goal, cooperative decision-making is generally seen as an interactive or participatory approach to school governance (Mncube, 2010: 235). In this regard, Squelch (1999: 130) stresses that school governance requires *active participation* of all stakeholders who have a vested interest in the school. As such, it can be assumed that co-operative school governance will afford and empower stakeholders to be represented on decision-making structures by allowing them to take co-responsibility for decisions. Furthermore, school governance structures can create an opportunity for parents and teachers to develop a sense of ownership of the school. Subsequently parents and teacher therefore take responsibility for what is happening at school (Beane & Apple, 1999: 1-29), especially when it comes to securing the well-being of all citizens (RSA, 1996: Chapter 3, Section 41(b)). In support of democratic school governance, Mncube (2009: 83) is of the opinion that all stakeholders should be in agreement of active and responsible roles to encourage tolerance, rational

discussion and collective decision-making. As such, parents as important stakeholders have an important role to play in collective decision-making.

While parents, as partners, have to participate in collective decision-making with schools, teachers have an important role to play regarding the safety and protection of learners, not only in terms of the *Constitution* and other legislation (Coetzee & Mienie, 2013: 78), but also in terms of their *in loco parentis* status (cf. 1.1). The *in loco parentis* status of teachers subsequently obliges schools to protect learners from harm (De Wet & Jacobs, 2013: 1). Such protection is in accordance with the stipulation in Section 24(a) in the *Bill of Rights* according to which “everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being”. By implication, schools have the responsibility and legal obligation to ensure that education takes place in an environment conducive for teaching and learning. Although it is the responsibility of schools to ensure a safe environment, parents also need to be involved in managing schools by solving problems, sharing in decision-making and fostering co-operation amongst all stakeholders. Partnerships in schools, in particular parents and teachers as collective owners of the maintenance of school discipline, to a great extent determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

From the above analysis, it seems that the *Constitution* embraces collective ownership based on the principles of **democracy, co-operation, active participation, collaboration,** and **partnership** with **shared decision-making** and **power-sharing**. As shared decision-making and power-sharing imply collective ownership, decisions should be made on the basis of **collaboration, co-operation, partnership, mutual trust** and **participation**. As the *Constitution* of South Africa obliges and presupposes cooperation amongst the people of South Africa, it can be concluded that the *Constitution* forms the basis for partnerships (Joubert & Bray, 2007: 12). Framed within my conceptual understanding of *collective ownership*, I contend that if parents and schools do not collectively seek effective solutions to maintain discipline, it is unlikely that the constitutional vision of **democracy, active participation, collaboration, shared decision-making** and **power-sharing** will be achieved.

The next section will analyse the 1995 *White Paper on Education and Training* with specific reference to how it envisions participation and collective decision-making in the South African education system.

5.4 WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING, 1995

As indicated in the analysis of the *Constitution*, parents as stakeholders in education have, by implication, an important role to play in collective decision-making. However, this collective decision-making was already implied in *White Paper 1*, which was published one year before prior to the formal adoption of the 1996 *Constitution*. *White Paper 1* is the first official document on education and training after the 1994 democratic elections and represents the newly elected government's first steps to the transformation of South Africa through education.

For this chapter, the analysis of *White Paper 1* is of particular interest as it reflects on the concept of participation and collective decision-making in education, which appeals to the collective strength of communities (DoE, 1995). In this regard, Section 2 in Chapter 3 indicates that the South African government is convinced that

[a]ppropriate education and training can empower people to participate effectively in all the processes of democratic society, social activity, cultural expression, and community life, and can help citizens to build a nation free of race, gender and every other form of discrimination.

It was subsequently assumed that through education South Africans can be empowered to become active democratic citizens who will participate effectively in a democratic society - a democratic citizenship as later envisaged in the *Constitution* that compels and presupposes **co-operation** amongst and **participation** of all South Africans (RSA, 1996: Section 3(2)(b)). *White Paper 1* (DoE, 1995) subsequently advocates for the empowerment of the South African people in the hope that this will contribute towards **active participation**, **partnerships** and **collective decision-making**, including responsiveness towards collective ownership. Furthermore, the document embraces democratic governance by implying that schools and communities should form a relationship and take ownership of their communities. Democratic governance is in particular framed against the legacy of apartheid when it is indicated in Section 10 of Chapter 4 that

[t]he relationship between schools and many of the communities they are expected to serve has been disrupted and distorted by the crisis of legitimacy. The rehabilitation of the schools and colleges must go hand in hand with the restoration of the ownership of these institutions to their communities through the establishment and empowerment of legitimate, representative governance bodies.

The notion of schools and communities to work together in order to restore the legacy of the past is further strengthened by the *Constitution* which compels and presupposes co-operation amongst and participation of all South Africans through democratic governance (RSA, 1996: Section 3(2)(b)). In the school context, democratic governance assumes the participation and involvement of all stakeholders through representation on governance bodies. Based on the above, it is my assumption that *White Paper 1* underscores the notion of collective ownership when indicating that schools and communities must work together to take ownership of educational institutions. In Chapter 4, Section 11 *White Paper 1* further states that

[t]he principle of democratic governance should increasingly be reflected in every level of the system, by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making of elected representatives of the main stakeholders, interest groups and roleplayers. This requires a commitment by education authorities at all levels to share all relevant information with stakeholder groups, and to treat them genuinely as partners.

The document subsequently announces that the decision-making authority of schools in the public sector would be shared among parents, teachers, the community (government and civil society) and the learners, in ways that would support the core values of democracy. A school governance structure should involve all stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles, encouraging tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making. The South African education system not only provides for collective decision-making through democratic governance, but by implication urges parents and schools to become involved as collective partners in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making regarding the maintenance of school discipline. As such, democratic governance is valued and embraced for the platform it provides

parents to be involved in education through collective decision-making. By promoting democratic governance, *White Paper 1* underscores collective ownership by providing parents and schools the opportunity to collectively make decisions to address school problems. The decision-making authority of schools in the public sector should therefore be shared among parents, teachers, the community and the learners, in ways that would support the core values of democracy as stated in Section 16:

[t]he education system must counter the legacy of violence by promoting the values underlying the democratic process and the charter of fundamental rights, the importance of due process of law and the exercise of civic responsibility, and by teaching values and skills for conflict management and conflict resolution, the importance of mediation, and the benefits of toleration and co-operation. Thus peace and stability will become the normal condition of our schools and colleges, and citizens will be empowered to participate confidently and constructively in social and civic life.

From the above it is clear that education has the responsibility to promote and develop democratic values that would empower democratic citizenship based on civic responsibility. It can thus be inferred that in principle, *White Paper 1* promotes on the basis of **co-operation** and collective ownership, active citizenship as a means to effectively address problems.

It should also be noted that *White Paper 1* underscores the values of tolerance and co-operation in order to promote peace and stability. Since, South African education has the responsibility to promote and develop constitutional values (cf. 5.3), it can be argued that education needs to foster and promote civic responsibility. As such, the Department of Education (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 16) acknowledges the responsibility of education and training to promote the “exercise of civic responsibility”. In line with this, the DoE (DoE, 1995: Chapter 6, Section 6) undertakes to “strive in good faith to create policies which interpret the provisions of the *Constitution* in a balanced manner, and promote its broad intentions and values”. It can subsequently be inferred that *White Paper 1* not only promotes the development of responsible citizens, but that civic responsible and democratic citizenship promote partnership and collective ownership.

White Paper 1 (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 1) also articulates transformation “for the benefit of the country as a whole” through empowering “people to participate actively in all the processes of democratic society”. Furthermore, the Department of Education acknowledges the importance of participation when they call upon all South Africans to build a democratic nation. In this regard, it is stated in Section 22 of Chapter 2 that

[t]he efforts of all South Africans will be needed to reconstruct and develop the national education and training systems so that is able to... build our democratic nation. The ministry invites the goodwill and active participation of all parents, teachers and other educators, students, community leaders; religious bodies, NGOs, academic institutions, workers, business, the media, and development agencies in bringing about the transformation we all seek.

Based on the above quotation, one can derive that **participation** and **active participation** which appeal to the collective strength of the community underscore collective ownership through community participation; democratic governance (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 11), accountability and financial stability (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 12). As such, the education system must provide school governance structures that create an opportunity for parents to not only develop a sense of ownership of the school, but to take responsibility for maintaining discipline in schools. *White Paper 1* (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 3) fosters democratic institutional management at school level by maintaining that

[t]he education system taken as a whole, embodies and promotes the collective moral perspective of its citizens, that is the code of values by which the society wishes to live and consents to be judged.

Accordingly, South African education embraces, fosters and promotes the values of **human dignity, equality, human rights** and **freedom**, all of which are enshrined in the 1996 *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 1(a)). As envisaged by *White Paper 1*, South African education should be infused with the values of the broader South African society. As articulated in the *Constitution*, it is also anticipated that these values will be actively developed in learners. Subsequently, parents and teachers as collective owners have to act as role-models for these values. For example, if parents and schools assume the responsibility to interpret the values of **democracy, co-operation**,

and **active participation** (cf. 2.2.3 and cf. 2.3.2), learners would be able to model these democratic values. In other words, if parents and teachers interpret and portray democratic values by their way of living, learners will experience it as authentic and would want to model these values in their own lives.

In conclusion it can be noted that *White Paper 1* not only emphasises the importance of democratic governance through the enhancement of participation and collective decision-making, but also promotes and advances partnership and collective ownership. Based on the analysis it could be indicated that the South African government is committed to provide a platform for parents and schools to collectively address learner discipline in schools.

Having looked at how *White Paper 1* underscores collective ownership through democratic governance, the next document to be analysed is *Education White Paper 2* of 1996.

5.5 EDUCATION WHITE PAPER 2: ORGANISATION, GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING OF SCHOOLS, 1996

As indicated in the previous section, *White Paper 1* is an important document focussing on the importance of education to enhance *participation* and **collective decision-making** in education. Aligned with the analysis of the *Constitution*, parents as stakeholders in education have by implication, an important role to play in **collective decision-making**. The *White Paper on the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (DoE, 1996a: Section 3) on the other hand, provides the platform for all stakeholders to **participate** in school governance and to make collective decisions regarding school-related issues.

White Paper 2 (DoE, 1996a) envisages that the structure of school organisation should create the conditions for developing a coherent, integrated, flexible national system that advances redress, the equitable use of public resources, an improvement in educational quality across the system, **democratic governance** [my emphasis], and school-based decision-making within provincial guidelines. The new structure must be brought about through a well-managed process of negotiated change, based on the

understanding that each public school should embody a **partnership** [my emphasis] between the provincial education authorities and a local community.

Taking its cue from the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996) and *White Paper 1* (DoE, 1995), this document seemingly advocates for the fostering of democratic institutional management at school level. As cited, democratic governance should be based on the understanding that each public school should embody a **partnership** between education authorities and communities. By implication, all stakeholder groups should be accorded active and responsible roles to encourage **tolerance**, **rational discussion** and **collective decision-making**. The South African government not only has a vision of fostering **partnerships** through school governance, but also expects parents and schools to accept the responsibility for **collective decision-making** in order to improve education.

White Paper 2 (DoE, 1996a: Section 1.5) embraces two kinds of policy positions that underscore the call for collective ownership in school governance. In Section 1.5 it is indicated that

[t]he first [category] includes decisions on a new structure for school organisation, including a framework of school categories, proposals concerning **school ownership** [my emphasis] and **governance** [my emphasis], and observations on school funding. The second [category] comprises decisions on **processes of negotiation** [my emphasis] to bring the new structure into existence, and processes of capacity building, which must occur if the full scope of the Ministry's proposals on governance is to be realised.

The first policy category suggests a new structure for schools and addresses the issue of school ownership among the most complex of the legacies from the previous system of school organisation (cf. 5.3). As such, *White Paper 2* proposes that decisions on a new structure for school organisation, including a framework of school categories, concerns school **ownership** and **governance**. The second category comprises decisions on processes of negotiation to bring the new structure into existence, and processes of capacity building, which must occur within the full scope of the Ministry's proposals on governance.

In alignment with the *Constitution* and *White Paper 1*, *White Paper 2* advocates democratic governance, because it not only ensures a platform for shareholders to actively **participate** in education, but also embraces **collective decision-making**. As ownership is collectively embraced and promoted, **collective decision-making** is underpinned by **ownership**. *White Paper 2* (DoE, 1996a: Section 1(1.5)) underscores collective ownership when it maintains a proposed national framework of school organisation and **ownership**, including norms and standards on school governance. Aligned with this proposed national framework, the government endorses the rights of parents to be involved in their children's education (DoE, 1996a: Section 1, sub-sections (1.10 and 1.11) through democratic governance. Concerning democratic governance *White Paper 2* therefore clearly underscores the importance of parents and schools to work together.

This document (DoE, 1996a: Section 3.6) further provides clear stipulations on the roles and responsibilities of parents and schools as important stakeholders in school governance and policy-making when stating that

- [a] school governance structure should involve all stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles encourage tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making.

Based on the afore-mentioned it is clear that *White Paper 2* (DoE, 1996a: Section 3.6) endorses the core values of **democracy**, namely **representation** (of all stakeholder groups) **participation** (in active and responsible roles), **tolerance**, **rational discussion** and **collective decision-making**. An important matter that can be derived is that the South African government provides the platform for parents and schools to collectively seek solutions to improve schooling. Aligned with the *Constitution* (cf. 5.3) that compels and presupposes **co-operation** and **participation** (RSA, 1996: Section 3(2)(b)) and *White Paper 1* (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 11) that underscore democratic governance, parents and schools need to work together to improve the quality of schooling. Active participation not only allows for the establishment of a sound partnership, but also ensures community-based decision-making. Fundamental to **democracy** and **democratic governance, participation** ensures that all relevant parties are consulted and involved in decision-making (DoE,

1996a: Section 3.6). Participation also guarantees that the concept of collective ownership remains relevant to the needs of the community and the larger society.

The educational implications of **collective decision-making** are evident in *White Paper 2* as it provides a platform for parents to be partners in collectively addressing school-related issues. The *South African Schools Act* of 1996, on the other hand, provides more substantive support for the South African government's commitment to involve parents in collective decision-making. In order to elucidate this substantive support, the South African Schools Act is the next document to be analysed.

5.6 SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996

As indicated, the aim of this chapter is to analyse education-related documents with regard to those sections that hold either direct or indirect implications for collective ownership. As such, it is not within the scope of this section to analyse the entire *South African Schools Act (SASA)* in detail. I will only focus on the extent to which SASA places the responsibility of maintaining discipline in schools, on teachers and parents.

Before analysing the SASA, I find it important to first define the terms *act* and *legislation* in order to help to underscore the rationale for analysing this particular document in terms of collective ownership and school discipline. According to Oosthuizen (2003: 15), "legislation is the stipulations of Parliament and promulgated as Acts". Oosthuizen (2003) furthermore explains that legislation can be defined as "any Act, proclamation or ordinance of Parliament or any measure with legal power". Aligned with this definition and the *Constitution*, the hope for the SASA is to entrench values stipulated by the *Constitution* and to provide guiding principles to be followed by all stakeholders involved in education. The SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 16(1)) gave formal effect to the establishment of democratic structures of school governance by stating that "all public state schools in South Africa must have democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs) comprising parents, learners, educators, non-teaching staff and the school principal". As such, a pertinent space has been created in South African education for the establishment of a partnership between the government, the parent as individual and the SGB which comprises of elected representatives from the community.

As the *SGB* has legal authority to perform its functions regarding the **governance** of the school in terms of the *SASA*, one can derive that the parents are official partners in the governance of their children's school. In terms of **governance**, this **partnership** is legally constituted in Sections 16 (1) and (2) (DoE, 1996b) with the stipulations that "the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body" and "the governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school". As the governing body acts on behalf of the school and in the name of the school, it should exercise its function to the best interest of the school and all its learners. The latter is in particular supported by the reference that the "governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school". The *SASA* thus strongly implies that a **partnership** exists between the state, the parent (as individual) and the governing body (as elected representative of the parent and school community). Aligned with the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 41 (1)(h)), such a partnership in education cannot be effective without **mutual trust** and **respect** (cf. 5.3). Furthermore and in alignment with *White Paper 1* (DoE, 1995: Chapter 6, Section 6), for a governing body to be in a position of trust, it must act in good faith and carry out its duties and functions diligently and in the best interest of the school. In terms of the authority of *SGBs*, and by implication the established partnership between the school and its stakeholders, Section 20 (DoE, 1996b) refers *inter alia*, to the following:

- promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;
- adopt a code of conduct for all learners at school;
- support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions; and
- encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school.

Taking into consideration the above and aligned with the *Constitution*, *White Paper 1* and *White Paper 2*, the *SASA* gives formal effect to the establishment of democratic structures of school governance. The establishment of such democratic structures are important as they provide the basis for **co-operative governance** between education authorities and the school community. According to Mncube (2009: 85), school governance structures create an opportunity for all stakeholders (including community

representatives) to develop a sense of **ownership** of the school, which facilitates taking responsibility for what happens at the school. This view corresponds with the framework for **collective ownership** (cf. 5.2.2) in that ownership requires the joint involvement of stakeholders to collectively seek solutions for problems to the greater benefit of the group. Joint involvement in turn, enables parents and teachers in particular, to develop a sense of **ownership** regarding the school and as such take **responsibility** and accept **accountability** for what is happening at the school. As a participatory and democratic process, **collective ownership** could also foster and strengthen feelings of **ownership** of learning that contribute to the establishment of a disciplined and purposeful school environment. The value of participation subsequently lies in the potential that it holds for involvement in **collective decision-making** and **collective action** to address school discipline.

The SASA subsequently recognises the principles of *co-operation* and *collective ownership* as it creates measures to ensure learner discipline when parents as stakeholders are encouraged to promote the best interest of schools and learners. Section 8(2) (DoE, 1996) highlights the important role of SGBs in the establishment and maintenance of sound discipline by compiling a code of conduct that

must be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenances of the quality of the learning process.

As representatives on the SGB, parents have to play an active role in the establishment and maintenance of sound discipline through their involvement in compiling a code of conduct. Parents as collective owners, have to ensure that a code of conduct has, as its primary goal, the establishment of a disciplined and purposeful school environment that enhances the quality of the learning process.

With regard to maintaining discipline, the SASA (DoE, 1996b) compels parents as individuals or representatives of the community serving on SGBs to compile a code of conduct in order to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment. One can therefore derive that the SASA adheres to the democratic principles of the *Constitution* by instructing schools, as institutions operating within the broader public administration (cf. 5.4 and cf. 5.5), to manage and govern schools based on participation, shared decision-making and accountability.

5.7 THE MANIFESTO ON VALUES, EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY, 2001

Based on my analysis of preceding documents it can be noted that they hold direct and indirect implications for collective ownership. The analysis shows considerable responsiveness towards *collective ownership* based on democratic governance, implying participation, transparency and accountability. Furthermore, the analysis also revealed that education is the key to empower all South Africans to become democratic citizens and to exercise their democratic rights.

Aligned with the analysis of the *Constitution*, the *Manifesto* underscores those values in education that suggest collective ownership to address matters of learner discipline in school, hence its inclusion in my analysis. Although, the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001) identifies ten values aligned with the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996), it is not in the scope of this section to analysis the entire *Manifesto* in detail. Rather, I will only focus on the extent to which the *Manifesto* underscores those values in education that suggest collective ownership to address matters of learner discipline. Aligned with the *Constitution*, the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 3) justifies its own existence as

[f]ounded on the idea that the Constitution expresses South Africans' shared aspirations, and the moral and ethical direction they have set for the future. As a vision of a society based on equity, justice and freedom for all it is less a description of South Africa as it exists than a document that compels transformation.

The *Manifesto* is subsequently founded on the idea that the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Preamble) articulates, “a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights”. While education is regarded as the most important vehicle to instil democratic values in learners, the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 3) provides several educational strategies for the establishment of constitutional values by stating that it

[e]xplores the ideals and concepts of Democracy, Social Justice, Equality, Non-racism and Non-sexism, *Ubuntu* (Human Dignity), An Open Society, Accountability (Responsibility), The Rule of Law, Respect, and Reconciliation in a way that suggests how the Constitution can be taught, as part of the curriculum, and brought to life in the classroom, as well as

applied practically in programmes and policy making by educators, administrators, governing bodies and officials.

The *Manifesto* also acknowledges the important role of education in instilling the ideals of the *Constitution* by advocating for the incorporation of constitutional values in the school curriculum. In alignment with the *Constitution*, the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 12) regards education as the key to empower all South Africans to exercise their democratic rights and to shape their destiny, by providing all South Africans, especially learners, the tools to participate in public life, to think critically, and to act responsibly. By implication, the *Manifesto* regards the goal of education as the equipping of young citizens with the abilities and skills to engage critically and act responsibly in public life.

It is important to note that the DoE (2001: 12) acknowledges the important role of various role players in the transmission of values when stating that

[t]hey [values] are applicable to all within education, parents to educators, community members, private sector business-people and learners. Building consensus and understanding difference through dialogue is at the heart of NURTURING A CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS. It calls not only for dialogue, but the space for safe expression. Nurturing a culture of communication and **participation** [my emphasis] in schools means opening up channels of dialogue between parents, educators, learners and officials: such a culture will produce confident, inquiring and empowered citizens.

While the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 12) calls for South African education to be grounded in democratic principles and values, it simultaneously envisages parents and schools to be collectively involved in the instilling of values. By calling parents and schools to nurture a culture of communication and *participation* in schools, a space is provided for parents and schools to engage in collective ownership with regard to school-related matters such as *inter alia* issues pertaining to school discipline.

In the above exposition three important issues were highlighted, namely that education has the task to instil the principles enshrined in the *Constitution*, that education has the important role to equip learners to become responsible, democratic and disciplined citizens in the South African democracy; and that teachers, parents and the broader

community should also be citizens who live by constitutional values. For education to equip learners to become disciplined and responsible citizens, schools and parents must assume collective responsibility by enacting the *Manifesto* in order to maintain, *inter alia*, school discipline. In order to determine the extent to which the *Manifesto* underscores collective ownership, my analysis will from this point focuses on the values of **openness**, **accountability**, and **respect**, all of which imply collaboration amongst stakeholders.

Aligned with the SASA (DoE, 1996b), the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 14) highlights the value of **openness** by indicating a strong and active relationship between parents and schools (cf. 5.6)

[t]he value of **openness** [my emphasis] is at the core of the South African educational curriculum, which cherishes debate, discussion and critical thought, for it is understood that a society that knows how to talk and how to listen does not need to resort to violence. Being a democrat in an open society means being a participant rather than an observer: it means talking and listening and assessing all the time. It means being empowered to read and to think, it means being given the opportunity to create artistically. It means being given access to as wide a range of information as possible through as wide a range of media as possible - and also being given the tools to process this information critically and intelligently.

The value of **openness** subsequently implies debate, discussion and critical thought, and active participation. Active participation not only allows for the establishment of a sound partnership, but it also ensures community-based decision-making. Fundamental to sound partnership, active participation ensures that all relevant parties are consulted and involved in decision-making. Within the framework of collective ownership (cf. 5.2.2) that underscores collective participation and collective collaboration, this implies that teachers and parents as democratic citizens should enter into an open relationship. The value of **openness** not only encourages a culture of dialogue, debate and discussion between teachers and parents, but also suggests a relationship in which information can be shared in order to establish a flourishing partnership. As indicated earlier, nurturing a culture of **communication** and **participation** in schools means opening up channels of dialogue between parents and

teachers in such a way that **mutual respect** develops between them. It means that parents as individuals and representatives of a SGB are actively involved and committed to the best interests of the school as conflict can be solved peacefully in a critical and intelligent manner. By implication and since this study deals with collective ownership and school discipline, it can be assumed that within a culture of **openness**, the school and parents will as a collective discuss, deliberate and find solutions for issues pertaining to discipline. However, parents need to be empowered (DoE, 2001: 14) to determine the purpose and accessibility of educational solutions. Schools as education partners should therefore take responsibility for organising many opportunities to create awareness among parents about their important role they play in the educational success of their children.

It can be derived that the value of **openness** implies a partnership that underscores collective ownership through which parents and teachers address school problems by seeking solutions in a peaceful manner. If the value of **openness** implies a partnership, it also implies the need to hold each other accountable in the participatory and democratic process (RSA, 1996: Section 195(d)). Aligned with the *Constitution's* stipulation (RSA, 1996: Section 195(d)(g)) that public administration, including the public school system, must be governed by accountability and transparency (cf. 5.4), the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 46) emphasises "the importance of institutionalising the lines of accountability". As indicated earlier (cf. 5.3), children are the responsibility of parents, and teachers, *in loco parentis*, are accountable to SGBs and the educational authorities. Aligned with the SASA, SGBs and the educational authorities are in turn accountable to the citizens of the democratic society (cf. 5.6). The importance of **accountability** in schools implies that parents and teachers are responsible for the well-being of learners (DoE, 1995: Chapter 6, Section 6).

In addition to the above, the value of **accountability** in education is legalised according to the codes of conduct for learners, teachers, SGBs and the educational authorities, which in turn, are accountable to the broader community and to the citizens of the democratic society (DoE, 2001: 14-15). It can therefore be assumed that the value of **accountability** regarding the fulfilling of constitutional obligations in Section 2 and Section 3(2)(b) of the *Constitution* is equivalent to the entitlement of fundamental rights as a feature of democratic citizenship (Section 3(2)(a)). The value of **accountability**

is therefore described as a responsibility essential for “holding the powerful to account” which serves as a reminder that there can be no rights without responsibilities (DoE, 2001: 14). Holding parents accountable would therefore imply expecting them to accept responsibility for positively participating in school-related activities. However, as indicated in the previous paragraph, not only parents have a responsibility towards their children, but accountability, transparency and responsiveness should also be demanded from teachers. Parents and teachers are therefore co-accountable for the well-being of learners and should engage in a positive relationship in the best interest of learners.

With regard to **accountability**, **transparency** and **responsiveness**, the values of **openness** and **accountability** in the *Manifesto* emphasise the importance of *respect* and dialogue (DoE, 2001: 12). Although **respect** as a value is not explicitly defined in the *Constitution*, it is implied in *Bill of Rights*. Aligned with the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2), the *Manifesto* (DoE, 2001: 15) emphasises the government’s commitment to the values of respect and responsibility when stating that “**respect** [my emphasis] is implicit in the way the *Bill of Rights* governs not just the government’s relationship with citizens, but citizens’ relationships with each other“. On the importance of partnerships and co-operation, *White Paper 1* (cf. 5.4), *White Paper 2* (cf. 5.5) and *SASA* (cf. 5.6) all underscore **mutual respect** as an essential precondition for communication, teamwork and productivity. By implication, partnerships between parents and teachers cannot flourish if there is not **mutual respect** between them.

Based on the values of **openness**, **accountability** and **respect**, and framed within my understanding of collective ownership (cf. 5.2.2), it can be inferred that the *Manifesto* requires the joint involvement of parents and teachers to form a partnership. In essence, the values of **openness**, **accountably** and **respect** enable parents and teachers to develop a sense of ownership and to take responsibility and accept accountability for addressing school-related issues. The value of **participation** subsequently lies in the potential it holds for involving of parents in collective decision-making and collective action to address school matters such as learner discipline. It can therefore be assumed that parents and teachers as collective owners need to form partnerships based on the values of **openness**, **accountability** and **respect** in order to collectively seek solutions for school-related problems to the benefit of the school.

The educational implications for collective decision-making are evident in the *Manifesto* in that the latter suggests educational strategies for the establishment of constitutional values. While the above documents allude both directly and indirectly to collective ownership and its implication for, *inter alia*, the addressing of issues pertaining to school discipline, the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: the Learning Experience* (DoE, 2000) provides substantive support for addressing learner discipline in schools. As such, the next document to be analysed is the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: the Learning Experience* of 2000.

5.8 ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE, 2000

With the adoption of the *Constitution* the foundation was laid for a democratic South Africa based on values such as freedom, equality and human dignity. The right to human treatment is one of the important rights included in *the Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2, Sections 10, 12(e) and 28) and specific reference is made to the way people (including children) should be treated. In keeping with the values and principles of the *Constitution*, the SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 10(1)) has banned all forms of corporal punishment in schools and places of education, and states that “[n]o person may administer corporal punishment at a *school* to a *learner*”.

In alignment with *White Paper 1* (cf. 5.4) and *White Paper 2* (cf. 5.5), the SASA (DoE: 1996b, Preamble) underscores collaboration amongst parents and teachers to accept responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools. The *Manifesto* on the other hand, provides a framework for instilling and nurturing constitutional values in young South African citizens. It was indicated that the educational implications for collective decision-making by parents and teachers are informed by values and educational strategies. Bearing all this in mind, I deem the analysis of the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience* (DoE, 2000) (hereafter *ATCP*) as significant in determining the values that underscore collective ownership between parents and teachers to specifically maintain discipline in schools.

In keeping with the values and principles of the *Constitution*, and SASA (DoE, 1996b), *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: Preface) affirms the inhuman nature of corporal punishment by stating that

[c]orporal punishment is by its very nature, anti-human and ultimately an abusive practice that entrenches the idea that violence provides a solution to every problem in the classroom. The removal of corporal punishment and the elimination of other dehumanising practices in our schools are necessary steps towards the development of a culture of human rights in our country. Of course, rights must be exercised responsibly.

The banning of corporal punishment in schools is not only regarded as a necessary step towards the development of a culture of human rights in a democratic South Africa, but is framed within new legislation and should “reflect on the idea that the growth of a culture of democracy and peace in society demands that its citizens are able to uphold the values of justice, equality, freedom and tolerance” (DoE, 2000: Preface).

While teachers relied heavily on the use of corporal punishment during the previous regime (cf. DoE, 2000: Section 1.1), its banning left schools, and teachers in particular, with the dilemma of 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. Smith (2010: 34) supports this tension by indicating that after 1994, new legislation required teachers to make a paradigm shift regarding how discipline should be maintained in schools. As such, schools had to come up with functional alternative measures in order to deal with indiscipline. In this regard the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: Preface)

provides ideas on how the void can be filled through proactive and constructive alternatives that ultimately contribute to the growth of well-balanced children who are able to interact with each other and their world in a respectful, tolerant and responsible manner.

At the same time, it should be noted that the *ATCP* promotes the value of *accountability* (responsibility) to enhance a culture of human rights when referring in its preface that “rights must be exercised responsibly”.

The notion of collective ownership is underscored by the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: Preface) in that it seeks

to ensure that the positive and constructive discipline that is sought is based on consensus among educators, learners and all who are

associated with schooling. It provides an outline of future, reasonable conduct expected from those subject to necessary rules and those who must apply them. I hope that its creativity will convince teachers.

With regard to collective agreement, the document implies a relationship between teachers and parents based on consensus in order to maintain discipline. Aligned with the SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 8), schools have to develop their own disciplinary codes, which in turn is regarded as essential for the successful implementation of an alternative to corporal punishment. Of importance for the setting up of such a framework is consensus by all parties involved, including clarity regarding the consequences for misbehaviour. In other words, there should be consensus among teachers and parents on where they stand with regard to issues of discipline. Codes of conduct should therefore be adopted with the participation of all parties, as their position on issues of discipline should be clearly articulated, especially with regard to alternatives to corporal punishment.

As teachers have authority due to the principle of *in loco parentis* (cf. 1.3), the parent, by implication, gives the teacher the authority to act on his or her behalf. Although Section 28 (1(b)) of the *Constitution*, highlights the duty of the parent to protect his or her child by taking adequate care, it can be assumed that the teacher when acting in the place of the parent, also has the duty to protect learners against any form of ill-discipline. Parents therefore have the responsibility to teach their children to accept teachers as their parents *in loco parentis*, or at least as guardians. In addition, parents are given a formal role in school governance (DoE, 1996b: Section 16). *White Paper 2* (DoE, 1996a: Section 3(1)) emphasises that parents and schools should work together collectively to maintain discipline. The collaborative efforts of teachers and parents regarding issues pertaining to discipline should always be aimed at inspiring learners to make smart choices and to develop positive behaviour (cf. Mtsweni 2008: 45). In this regard, the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 13-14) encourages teachers to involve parents in discussions about *inter alia* behaviour problems.

In order to assist teachers with alternatives to corporal punishment, the *ATCP* urge teachers to manage the learning process and the learning environment enthusiastically and professionally. In this regard, the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: Preface), makes reference to the fact that discipline must be positive and constructive in order to ensure a safe

learning environment. Teachers must manage the school environment based on the understanding that

discipline rather than punishment is used proactively and constructively.

In such a system, learners experience an educative, corrective approach in which they learn to exercise self-control, respect others and accept the consequences of their actions (DoE, 2000: 9).

Based on this understanding of discipline, the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 5) provides teachers with disciplinary strategies that encourage them to adopt and apply non-violent constructive and positive disciplinary approaches. In addition, the document (DoE, 2000: 10-12) also proposes an array of alternative strategies for maintaining discipline in the classroom.

In alignment with the *SASA* (DoE, 1996b), the *ATCP* affirms positive discipline as opposed to punitive and punishment-oriented discipline. In order to facilitate constructive learning, the school environment should be corrective in the sense that it should teach learners self-control, respect and accountability. By implication, *ATCP* underscores the values of *respect* and *accountability* in the maintenance of school discipline. Central to this document is the commitment from teachers to approach discipline as a positive, learning process, which is underpinned, by values and attitudes of peace, tolerance, respect, dignity and human rights. This notion of values and attitudes also filters through the document (DoE, 2000: 10-12) when stating that learners must be presented with possible alternatives that focus on “rewarding learners for effort as well as good behaviour. Learners attempt to keep the rules, because they have been discussed and agreed upon is respectful, dignified as well as physically and verbally non-violent”.

Although the *ATCP* mainly addresses teachers about maintaining school discipline, the document aligns strongly with the *SASA* (DoE, 1996b: Section 20) which compels parents to play an active role in maintaining discipline. As a consequence, the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 20) also underscores collective ownership when stating that

[t]he code of conduct is as much about the school’s values, ethos and mission as it is about rules and regulations. It should be a positive document. The school governing body must draw up the code of conduct after an open and democratic process of consultation and negotiation with educators, learners and parents.

All members of the school community should feel **ownership** [my emphasis] of the code of conduct by playing a role in putting it together. The code of conduct should be displayed at the school and all learners should be familiar with it and comply with it.

The code of conduct must therefore include the values, ethos and mission of the school that are regarded as pertinent for the regulation of behaviour. By implication parents as individuals and representatives on the *SGB* must take the responsibility for their role in maintaining discipline at the school. It is through the partnership between teachers and parents that the code of conduct becomes essential to the successful implementation of an alternative to corporal punishment. In this regard, the *ATCP* sets up the framework and the consequences for misbehaviour in such a way that all stakeholders will have clarity on where they stand with regard to issues of discipline. The adoption of a code of conduct should always take place with the participation of all parties involved. Such participation is further strengthened with the need for open consultation and negotiation between teachers and parents when compiling a code of conduct. As such, the notion of collective ownership is further underlined in the *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 22) when urging parents to make sure that

- they become involved in the school's activities, and
- they have the right to participate in the life of the school as provision is made for the democratic governance of schools (SGBs).

The *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 22) subsequently acknowledges the active role of parents in the school lives of their children. Aligned with the principle of active participation and co-operation as enshrined in the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996: Section 41), the *SASA* (cf. 5.6) introduced school level codes of conduct and gave parents an unprecedented involvement in school affairs in line with consensual democratic ideas about school governance. The above affirms parents' involvement and participation. The *ATCP* (DoE, 2000: 20) subsequently underscores collective ownership.

The last document to be reviewed is *Example of a Code of Conduct for a School* (2008) as it provides directives for collective decision-making, and, by implication, collective ownership for maintaining school discipline.

5.9 EXAMPLE OF A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR A SCHOOL, 2008

It has been established that a school's SGB should play an important role in the establishment and maintenance of sound discipline (Joubert & Bray, 2007: 80). For this reason, the SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 8(2)) mandates SGBs to adopt a code of conduct for learners as a way of "establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to improving the quality of the learning process". As such, the introduction of school-level codes of conduct gives parents an unprecedented involvement in school affairs based on consensual democratic ideas regarding school governance. Aligned with the SASA, it is envisaged that a code of conduct is essential to the successful implementation of alternatives to corporal punishment as promoted in the ATCP (DoE, 2000). The document *Example of a Code of Conduct for a school*³ (DoE, 2008) (hereafter *Code of Conduct*) presents an example of what a school's code of conduct should look like. As a code of conduct is constituted by the SASA, it could be assumed that this example is aligned with all the requirements for "a disciplined and purposeful school environment" (DoE, 1996b: Section 8(2)).

The *Code of Conduct* is divided into two parts. Part 1 (DoE, 2008: Section 1(a-i)) spells out rules regarding learner behaviour and disciplinary process to be implemented concerning transgressions, while Part 2 (DoE, 2008: Section 2(a-f)) covers disciplinary measures, decisions on processes of negotiation, and processes of capacity building. In the introduction the *Code of Conduct* (DoE, 2008: 1) affirms the government's commitment to the delivery of quality teaching and learning in that

[t]his School is committed to providing an environment for the delivery of quality teaching and learning by:

- Promoting the rights and safety of all learners and teachers and parents
- Ensuring learners' responsibility for their own actions and behaviours

³ In alignment with the title of the document, *Example of a Code of Conduct for a School*, the latter is written in the form of an example and reference is continuously made to "this School". When used by a school, "this School" will typically be replaced by the name of the particular school. As such, reference to "this School" is generic and applies to any school.

- Prohibiting all forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance.
- Eliminating disruptive and offensive conduct.

By implication, a code of conduct can be regarded as a form of subordinate legislation that not only supports the values of human dignity, equality and freedom, but which reflects the democratic principles enshrined in the *Constitution* (RSA, 1996). In addition, the school can be regarded as an institution that intends to:

establish a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning at the School. Nothing shall exempt a learner from complying with the School rules. Ignorance of School rules is, therefore, not an acceptable excuse (DoE, 2008: 1).

Of particular interest, however, is that the establishment of such “a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning” have significant implications for both teachers and parents. In Part 1, (DoE, 2008: Section B) it is stated that “[p]arents/guardians, learners, teachers and School Governing Body (SGB) members are jointly responsible for ensuring that all learners attend School”. This implied joint responsibility is further strengthened with the statement that

[i]f a learner does not attend School regularly; the relevant register teacher will report the absence of the learner to the parent and the principal in writing. The register teacher must keep an accurate register of learner attendance and must keep copies of all communication to parents when absence from the classroom is reported (DoE, 2008: Part 1, Section B(1)).

While parents have to ensure that their child attends school, and since teachers have to keep parents informed, a joint responsibility is subsequently strongly implied.

While the above alludes to collective ownership, the latter is further strengthened by one of the general principles in a code of conduct that refers to the fact that the school “will contact parents/guardians when a learner’s behaviour becomes a cause of concern and will endeavour, in a spirit of constructive partnership, to resolve the problem” (DoE, 2008: Part 1, Section A(4)). Reference to a “constructive partnership” subsequently foregrounds the notion that teachers and parents are partners in not only resolving discipline problems, but also in the upholding of sound school discipline. Such a constructive partnership implies collective decision-making, which in turn, is a characteristic of collective ownership. Premised on the assumption that collective

ownership is built on partnership and participation, the *Code of Conduct* (DoE, 2008) clearly see parents as jointly responsible for ensuring a safe and sound teaching and learning environment.

Part 2 of the *Code of Conduct* covers the disciplinary measures that comprise decisions on processes of negotiation and processes of capacity building. In the introduction to Part 2 (DoE, 2008: 12), the responsibility of the teacher is in particular foregrounded in that

[e]very teacher is responsible for discipline and has the full authority and responsibility to correct the behaviour of learners whenever such correction is necessary. Any corrective measure or disciplinary action will correspond with and be appropriate to the offence. All learners will abide by the discipline system that has been developed to assist and guide learner behaviour in the School.

However, although the teacher is regarded as responsible for discipline and has the full authority and responsibility to correct the behaviour of learners whenever such correction is necessary, the latter must always be appropriate to the offence (DoE, 2008: 12). Furthermore, while the *Code of Conduct* (DoE, 2008: 12) compels learners to abide by the discipline system that has been developed to assist and guide learner behaviour in a school, the code itself must be informed by other related documents such as the *ACTP* (cf. 5.8) and *SASA* (cf. 5.6).

The responsibilities of teachers regarding issues of discipline, however, can never be divorced from the important role of the parent. As such, the responsibilities of teachers should remain framed “in a spirit of constructive partnership” (DoE, 2008: Part 1, Section A4) through which teachers together with parents, try to resolve problems of discipline. In essence, the *Code of Conduct* (DoE, 2008) articulates collective ownership, and offers directives for collective decision-making in order “to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning at the School” (DoE, 2008, Part 1, Introduction).

5.10 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The analysis of various documents in this chapter was primarily aimed at exploring the policy framework that exists for the maintenance of school discipline. The documents included in this chapter are all official documents that not only have a direct bearing on education, but also more specifically, allude to the notion of collective ownership in maintaining school discipline. My presentation of a policy framework is based on each policy document that was analysed. The framework comprises a reference to the objective of each document, linked with the page numbers in my study; the underlying values that inform collective ownership; and the implications for collective ownership for the maintenance of discipline. The overall aim of the framework is to emphasise the obvious and underlying meanings of collective ownership as rooted in these documents. Based on the analysis the policy framework that underscores collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline can be summarised as follows (cf. Table 5.1):

Table 5-1: Framework for collective ownership for discipline

Document	Objective	Underlying values that inform collective ownership	Implications for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>South African Constitution, 1996</i> 	To provide a legal framework for democratisation, sets out the rights and duties of its citizens, and defines the structure of the government (cf. pp. 84 & 85).	<p>Within a framework of democracy, collective ownership is informed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-operation (cf. p. 86) • active participation, and (cf. p. 86) • partnership (cf. p. 86). <p><i>Collective decision-making</i> and power sharing, as aspects of <i>collective ownership</i>, is built on mutual trust, co-accountability, collaboration and consultation (cf. p. 86).</p>	<p>Since, the <i>Constitution</i> compels and presupposes co-operation amongst and participation of all South Africans (RSA, 1996: Section 3(2)(b)), parents and teachers as a collective need to seek solutions for discipline problems to the benefit of schools as a whole. In order for teachers and parents to take up collective ownership for issues of discipline, they have to form a partnership, based on collective decision-making and power sharing. By implication, such a partnership should be built on mutual trust, co-accountability,</p>

Document	Objective	Underlying values that inform collective ownership	Implications for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline
			collaboration and consultation . These values should be regarded as prerequisites for accepting <i>collective ownership</i> with regard to the maintenance of discipline in schools (cf. p. 86).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>White Paper on Education and Training, 1995</i> 	To serve as a reference for education policy and legislative developments, including the empowerment of all South Africans to become active democratic citizens who will effectively participate in a democratic society (cf. p.88).	Aligned with the previously mentioned constitutional values, <i>White Paper 1</i> highlights participation and collective decision-making through democratic governance “by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4(11) (cf. pp 88 & 89).	Democratic governance requires parents and teachers to become involved as collective partners in consultation and decision-making regarding the maintenance of school discipline. Subsequently, the concept of active participation and collective decision-making in education appeals, by implication, to the collective strength of partners (cf. p. 89).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>White Paper 2, Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools, 1996</i> 	To propose a national framework for school organisation, governance and funding, including the norms and standards for school governance (cf. pp. 92).	Aligned with <i>White Paper 1, White Paper 2</i> , provides a framework for “ democratic governance and school-based decision-making” (DoE, 1996a: Section 1(1.1)) through negotiation based on partnership . As such, collective ownership entails school-based decision-making informed by negotiation and partnership (cf. p. 92).	In order for parents to accept collective ownership for discipline issues, they have to become involved as a collective in negotiations and decision-making regarding the maintenance of discipline in schools (cf. p. 95).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>South African Schools Act, 1996</i> 	To provide for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools, to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools, and to provide for matters connected with this (cf. p. 95).	<i>The SASA</i> confirms the constitutional values for collective ownership, namely partnership, mutual trust and respect in that it legally constitutes collective decision-making in Section 16 (1) and (2) (DoE, 1996b) with the stipulations that “the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body” and	Since <i>SGBs</i> has legal authority to perform its functions and governance of the school in terms of the <i>SASA</i> , parents and teachers should form a partnership for collective decision-making based on mutual trust and respect . By implication, parents (<i>SGBs</i>) are in an official partnership with schools regarding the governance of their

Document	Objective	Underlying values that inform collective ownership	Implications for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline
		“the governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school” (cf. p. 96).	children’s schools in order to maintain <i>inter alia</i> , discipline in schools (cf. p. 96).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy</i>, 2001 	To embrace the spirit of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa (DoE, 2001: Foreword), including the establishment of values in schools based on the ideals of nation-building in the new democratic South Africa (cf. p. 98).	The underlying values of active participation , openness , accountability , partnership and collective decision-making identified in the <i>Manifesto</i> are based on the assumption that “building consensus and understanding difference through dialogue is at the heart of NURTURING A CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS” (DoE, 2001: 12) (cf. p. 99).	In order for parents and teachers to take up collective ownership for issues of discipline, they need to collectively play an important role to instil values in learners. In other words, parents and teachers as role-models have to expose of and instil democratic values. Subsequently, parents and teachers have to nurture a culture of communication and participation , in order to engage in collective ownership with regard to school-related matters such as <i>inter alia</i> issues pertaining to school discipline (cf. p. 99).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience</i>, 2000 	To provide alternatives to corporal punishment based on consensus among parents and teachers, and informed by the notion of positive and constructive discipline (cf. p. 103).	The values of partnership , accountability (responsibility) and decision-making “based on consensus ” (DoE, 2000: Preface) underpin collective ownership (cf. p. 104).	Aligned with SASA (DoE, 1996b: Section 8), schools have to develop their own disciplinary code, which in turn is regarded as essential for the successful implementation of an alternative to corporal punishment. Subsequently, parents and teachers should form a relationship based on consensus on where they stand with regard to issues of discipline, especially with regard to alternatives to corporal punishment (cf. p. 105).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Example of a Code of Conduct for a School</i>, 2008 	To provide an example of what a school’s code of conduct should look like, including the establishment of a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning for the successful	The underlying values of accountability and collective decision-making “in a spirit of constructive partnership in order to resolve the problem” (DoE, 2008: Part 1, Section A(4)) underscore collective ownership .	In order for parents and teachers to take joint responsibility “to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning”, they should form a constructive partnership based on responsibility ,

Document	Objective	Underlying values that inform collective ownership	Implications for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline
	implementation of alternatives to corporal punishment (cf. p. 108).		accountability and collective decision-making . Parents and teachers are therefore jointly responsible for ensuring a safe teaching and learning environment (cf. 109).

The policy framework in Table 5.1 depicts how various official documents provide support for collective ownership. It should be noted how the support for collective ownership stems from the *Constitution*, is strengthened by various education-related documents and enforced by the *South African Schools Act* of 1996. This policy framework subsequently makes provision for collective ownership by parents and teachers to share decision-making, responsibilities and accountability for the maintenance of discipline in schools. As such, teachers are not solely responsible for maintaining school discipline; rather, the maintenance of school discipline should be a collective and collaborative effort by both teachers and parents.

However, within the context of this study, I find it important to establish a link between the policy framework and the interview findings (cf. Chapter 4). In Table 5.2 below, I indicate how the themes that emerged from the interviews not only align with the various policy documents, but feed into a supportive framework or plan for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline.

Table 5-2: Link between the policy framework and interview categories

Themes from the interviews findings	Policy document	Proposition
Values are essential for the enhancement of school discipline (cf. 4.3.6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>South African Constitution</i>, 1996 (cf. 5.3). 	The promotion of democratic values include constitutional values such as tolerance, respect and diversity , the promotion of human rights and active citizen participation .
Participants' views on teachers are that two-way communication between parents and teachers is challenging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy</i>, 2001 (cf. 5.7). 	Sound two-way communication should be established.

Themes from the interviews findings	Policy document	Proposition
They regard two-way communication as imperative for creating a safe environment in which constitutional values can be promoted (cf. 4.3.3).		
Participants agreed that parental involvement is important to maintain discipline in schools. (cf. 4.3.1.1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>South Schools Act, 1996</i> (cf. 5.6). 	The nurturing a culture of parental involvement and enhancing a partnership between parents and schools is important.
The availability and relevance of policy procedures is important as part of the support that should be provided to parents in order to maintain discipline at home (cf. 4.3.5).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>South African Constitution, 1996</i> (cf. 5.6). • <i>White Paper on Education and Training, 1995</i> (cf. 5.4). • <i>Education White Paper 2, Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools, 1996</i> (cf. 5.5). • <i>South Schools Act, 1996</i> (cf. 5.6). • <i>Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001</i> (cf. 5.7). • <i>Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience, 2000</i> (cf. 5.8). • <i>Example of a Code of Conduct for a School, 2008</i> (cf. 5.9). 	The existing policies should be utilised as a broader policy framework.

5.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an analysis was undertaken of various South African official documents that have a direct bearing on education. The aim of this chapter was to present the existing policy framework that informs and supports collective ownership for maintaining discipline in schools. I also included in this chapter a link between the interview findings and the policy framework. The latter was important in the sense that it foregrounded the propositions for collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline. In the next chapter I present concluding comments on how parents and schools can collectively work within the existing policy framework to maintain school discipline.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUDING COMMENTS: HOW PARENTS AND SCHOOLS CAN WORK COLLECTIVELY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to consider how parents and schools can collectively maintain discipline within the context of the existing policy framework. As such, all chapters in this study contributed towards the realisation of this aim. The purpose of this chapter is to draw on my entire study in order to comment on how parents and teachers can take collective ownership for school discipline within the existing policy framework. Before I comment on what I regard as the implications for parents and schools to collectively maintain learning behaviour, I will first give a concise overview as to how my study unfolded. I include in this chapter the limitations of my study, but also ideas for further research.

6.2 A SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY

While Chapter 1 entailed an overview of the study, the four subsequent chapters contributed towards elucidating the notion of collective ownership in different ways.

The literature review and document analysis undertaken in Chapter 2 provided a conceptual understanding of the values that should guide learner behaviour in a democracy. The aim of this chapter was to become familiar with the existing body of knowledge regarding democracy, and in particular with the values associated with a democracy. Framed in the South African context, the exposition of democracy as a political ideal and as a way of life foregrounded implications for a democratic South Africa. A review of the literature revealed that education plays an important role in bringing about responsible and disciplined citizens that should live by constitutional and democratic values. As such, education plays an important role in shaping attitudes and democratic behaviour (cf. 2.2). The importance of Chapter 2 lies with highlighting the underlying democratic values which would, by implication, constitute the foundation for collective ownership. My contention was that the knowledge and insights gained from the exposition of the values that should inform democratic citizenship, would

ultimately feed into the analysis of the education-related documents discussed in Chapter 5.

In Chapter 3, a literature review was undertaken to highlight and understand the behaviour of learners in schools. In particular, the emphasis was placed on the challenges that schools face regarding learner behaviour. The aim of this chapter was to review the behaviour of learners that has a negative impact on other learners, on teachers and on parents, and to indicate how parents and schools deal with such negative behaviour. By drawing on the importance of values (cf. Chapter 2) when dealing with negative learner behaviour, it was my contention that a thorough understanding of discipline is important for informing the empirical work that was done in Chapter 4. Chapter 3 concurs that discipline problems are not the responsibility of teachers alone. Rather, I agree with Joubert and Bray (2007: 82) that parents should support the school, direct their children to abide by all school rules and regulations, and encourage them to accept responsibility for any misconduct on their part. It is therefore concluded that the existing school rules and regulations with regard to collective ownership for discipline in schools will enhance learner behaviour in schools.

Chapter 4 provided the analysis and interpretation of the empirical research undertaken in this study. The focus of this chapter was the analysis and discussion of data generated with the help of semi-structured interviews. The aim of this chapter was to understand the realities of parents with regarding to learner behaviour and discipline in schools. The interconnection between the preceding chapters and the informative role thereof for the undertaking of the empirical research find realisation in this chapter. While the literature review and document analysis in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively provided particular perspectives on the issue of democratic values and discipline, the subjective views of parents placed issues of learner discipline within the school context. In a similar manner, the knowledge and understanding gained from Chapters 2 and 3 informed the interview schedule that was used to gain an in-depth understanding of parents' perspectives of discipline in schools. My intention was that such an in-depth understanding should ultimately be framed within the boarder policy framework that was foregrounded in Chapter 5.

In Chapter 5 an analysis of various official education-related documents was undertaken with the aim to establish the broader policy framework that could inform collective ownership for discipline in schools. The analysis of education-related documents was, in particular, informed by my understanding that parents and schools are collectively responsible for maintaining discipline in schools. By drawing on the previous chapters and by means of a document analysis, I subsequently elucidate in Chapter 4 the broader policy framework that could inform collective ownership for discipline in South African schools.

The interconnection between Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 culminates in this final chapter in which I comment on how parents and schools can collectively maintain learner behaviour within the existing policy framework.

6.3 MAINTAINING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORK

As indicated, the primary purpose of this study was to consider how parents and schools should take up collective ownership for maintaining school discipline within the existing policy framework. Informed by this study, and in particular by the alignment between the policy framework and the interview findings (see Table 5.2), I propose four ways in which parents and schools can collectively maintain school discipline, namely through

- promoting democratic values;
- establishing sound two-way communication;
- nurturing a culture of parental involvement and enhancing a partnership between parents and schools; and
- utilising the broader policy framework.

6.3.1 PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES

The literature review in Chapter 2 indicated the link between the role of education in establishing a safe and conducive learning environment (cf. 2.3.2) and the bringing about of responsible and disciplined citizens. As such, schools play an important role in teaching learners to become democratic citizens whose attitudes and behaviour are shaped by leading a life in accordance with constitutional and democratic values (cf. 2.3.1.2). The document analysis undertaken in Chapter 5 underscored the South

African government's commitment to not only protect education as a basic human right (cf. 5.3), but to provide a platform for parents to become actively and collectively involved in schools to help find strategies to maintain school discipline (cf. 3.4.2 – 3.4.2.2). However, if parents do not make use of this platform, collective ownership cannot be realised. In order to create a democratic environment conducive for effective learning and teaching, both schools and parents must embrace the opportunity to collectively work together by upholding constitutional values such as **tolerance**, **respect** and **diversity**, the promotion of **human rights**, and active citizen **participation** (cf. 2.4.1.2).

As indicated, education is the one vehicle which should provide learners with the opportunity to become responsible and disciplined adults (cf. 2.3.1.2) in a safe teaching and learning environment. So unless the lack of school safety is not urgently addressed, violence in schools in South Africa will not only continue to impact negatively on learners, but learners will also be denied the opportunity to become responsible and disciplined adults. By implication, it will also deny learners a future in which they as parents can take up collective ownership for their children's schooling. From the empirical part of this study it appears that parents do realise that the maintenance of discipline is the responsibility of all relevant stakeholders (cf. 1.2 and cf. 4.3). In this regard, the participants seem to be aware that if they do not work together with teachers (cf. 4.3.1) and instil values in their children, the foundation for collective ownership would be not sufficiently be laid.

The document analysis undertaken in Chapter 5 underscore the South African government's commitment to not only protect education as a basic human right (cf. 5.3), but to ensure the promotion of **democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism, non-sexism, Ubuntu, an open society, accountability, rule of law, respect** and **reconciliation** (cf. 2.4.1.1). Although the government realises the important role of education in promoting constitutional values, some schools are not safe spaces and as a consequence the promotion of democratic values is hampered. While learners' rights to attend a safe schooling environment is theoretically protected and promoted by the *Constitution*, in reality this right is violated for many learners who are victimised and bullied at schools (cf. 3.3). Such violation is equally true for teachers who are negatively affected by learners' disruptive behaviour (cf. 3.3.2). Various

challenges that hinder teachers to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities were highlighted in Chapter 3. Teachers, however, play an important role to protect learners from harm. This role is compelled by the *Constitution* and other legislation, as well as by their *in loco parentis* status (cf. 1.1 and 5.3). In accordance with the *Bill of Rights* (cf. 5.3), teachers and learners have the right to a safe environment - learner misbehaviour that threatens the safety of learners and teachers is subsequently unconstitutional.

6.3.2 ESTABLISH SOUND TWO WAY COMMUNICATION

Given the importance of constitutional and democratic values for establishing a safe teaching and learning environment for the development of responsible and democratic citizens, it is my contention that a partnership between parents and teachers should be informed by values. Therefore, unless parents and teachers collectively instil constitutional and democratic values in their learners and children respectively, the possibility will always remain that indiscipline at schools will continue to violate a much required safe teaching and learning environment. In order for parents and teachers to collectively work towards establishing a safe teaching and learning environment with sound values, they have to effectively communicate with one another. As such, it can be assumed that sound communication – two-way communication - between parents and teachers is imperative for creating a safe environment in which constitutional values can be promoted.

The literature review indicated that a safe and effective school is characterised by sound communication, a culture and climate conducive to teaching and learning, good administrative practices, and an absence of crime and violence (cf. 3.4). However, the literature also revealed that a breakdown in communication is often one of the reasons why parents and schools blame each other for discipline-related problems (cf. 3.4.1). Learner misbehaviour and violence in schools are not only harsh realities that hold serious implications for the effective functioning of learners and teachers, but it seems as if a lack of sound communication between parents and schools often contributes to learner misbehaviour (cf. 3.4.1). The latter was substantiated by the findings in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.3.3) when the participants indicated how a breakdown in communication contributes to discipline problems. In this regard, it was indicated how some parents experience frustration of distance (cf. 4.3.6) in the sense that they often

find it difficult to approach some teachers without making it personal. As such, some participants find the communication gap between teachers and parents challenging (cf. 4.3.3). The literature (cf. 3.4.1) also indicate that in cases where sound communication is lacking between parents and teachers, interactions may emerge primarily from situations motivated by learner misbehaviour. Interactions stemming from learner misconduct often cause frustration for one or both parties.

It is subsequently suggested that the best way to reduce negative feelings and to avoid misunderstanding between parents and teachers is to have regular, clear and established lines of communication (cf. 4.3.6). The importance of two-way communication was also corroborated by the data that emerged from the interviews when it was shown that when parents and teachers engage in open communication, they can both assist in enforcing discipline (cf. 4.3.4). The participants also indicated that in order for parents and teachers to take up collective ownership for issues of discipline, they have to collectively instil values in their children and learners (cf. 4.3.6). The importance of sound communication was also underscored in the document analysis undertaken in Chapter 5. In particular it was indicated how the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001) centres dialogue as the most contributing factor in building consensus and an understanding of difference (cf. 5.7). This document (DoE, 2001) refines the imperative role of dialogue when placing it at “the heart of NURTURING A CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS”. It is subsequently suggested that the establishment of sound communication between teachers and parents - that is communication based on trust, respect and collaboration - is a prerequisite for nurturing a culture of communication and participation. By implication, sound communication is essential for parental involvement and the building of parent-teacher partnerships. Parents and teachers therefore need to establish sound school-to-home and home-to-school communication. It is assumed that good communication will not only encourage parental involvement, but will, by implication, support the establishment of a parent-teacher partnership that could have a positive influence on the teaching and learning environment. In addition, a strong parent-teacher relationship has the potential to feed into a school a climate conducive to parents and teachers collectively finding strategies to help their children/learners towards optimal development and success (cf. 3.4 - 3.4.2.2).

In the section that follows, I comment on how sound communication can encourage and enhance a culture of parental involvement, while simultaneously assisting in the formation of parent-teacher partnerships.

6.3.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

Although it could be argued that there is a close link between parental involvement and the establishment of parent-teacher partnerships, I discuss these notions under separate headings in this section so as to comment on how sound communication underscores the nurturing of a culture of parental involvement and the establishment of parent-teacher partnerships. However, the close relation will filter through the discussion.

6.3.3.1 NURTURING A CULTURE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

From the foregoing exposition it has become clear that sound communication between parents and teachers is imperative for encouraging a culture of parental involvement (cf. also 1.1 and 3.4.1). The importance of parental involvement seems to be positively linked with the academic success of learners, higher attendance rates and lower suspension rates (cf. 1.1; 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.1). The policy framework unpacked in Chapter 5 furthermore not only affirms the vital role of parental involvement, but also emphasises the promotion of a parent-teacher partnership built on mutual trust and respect (cf. 5.3 - 5.9). In particular, the *South African Schools Act* (1996) provides the platform for parents to actively participate in school decisions through their representation on school governing bodies (cf. 5.6). Given the legal status of parents to perform their parental duties and responsibilities (cf. 5.3) and teachers having *in loco parentis* status (cf. 1.1 and 3.4.1), it could be accepted that schools should seek and encourage parental involvement. By implication and in order for parents and teachers to collectively seek ways to *inter alia* address issues such as learner misbehaviour, parental involvement should be informed by effective communication. With regard to the importance of communication, it was revealed during the interviews that schools encourage parental involvement in school matters by providing parents with a copy of their respective schools' Code of Conduct (cf. 4.3.5). In addition, the participants also commented on the communicative role of parent-teacher meetings. It was highlighted that such meetings provide the space for parents and teachers to discuss learner performance and behaviour (cf. 4.3.4).

Literature also shows that communication *from* the parents to the school and more conventional communication from the school *to* the parents encourage parental involvement (cf. 3.4.2). Although parental involvement is linked to school success (cf. 1.1), the literature shows that schools frequently fail to establish strong links between the home and the school (cf. 3.3.2). Effective parental involvement is subsequently often absent in some schools. Although the literature pays little attention to when and how communication from parent to teacher might happen, it is shown that teachers and parents must be in constant communication in their pursuit for enabling children to become responsible adults (cf. 3.4.1). It should not be a matter of who approaches whom first, rather the research findings suggest that problems should be addressed “*before they become big problems*” (cf. 4.3.4). As the literature indicates that parents and schools can collectively find ways to enhance learner behaviour (cf. 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.2.2), I contend that one of way of nurturing a culture of parental involvement is through the establishment of two-way communication. Sound two-way communication can for example enhance parental involvement when teachers assist parents to create opportunities for their children to develop responsibility as part of their daily routine. In this regard, the findings of this study illustrate how parents appreciate and respect schools’ procedures to regulate their children’s behaviour (cf. 4.3.5). In addition, through sound communication and subsequent parental involvement, parents can work collectively with teachers to find strategies to enhance learner behaviour (cf. 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.2.2).

The broader policy framework which provides both the basis and the platform for parents and teachers to share decision-making, responsibilities and accountability for the maintenance of discipline in schools (cf. 5.10), strengthen the framework for collective ownership. In this regard, I am of the opinion that through continuous communication both parents and teachers can explore the existing policy framework in order to better understand their respective and collective roles in maintaining school discipline. As indicated, the *South African Schools Act* (1996) provides the platform for parents to actively participate in school decisions. When both parents and teachers act upon their respective roles and responsibilities (cf. 3.4.1 and 5.3), it can be assumed that parent involvement and collective ownership will be enhanced. The importance of assuming collective ownership by both parents and teachers is also

highlighted by the findings of this study when the participants confirmed that parents and teachers should work together in the best interests of the child (cf. 4.3.3).

The close link between the culture at home and that of the school is corroborated by the participants in this study when they indicate that by teaching their children *respect, tolerance and responsibility*, they can contribute towards enhancing learner discipline (cf. 4.3.6). In this regard, literature also indicates that a positive attitude towards the school can feed into improved behaviour, both at home and school (cf. 3.3.3). Parental involvement is subsequently influenced by the way in which parents interact with their children at home. In this regard, the participants note that by assisting their children with schoolwork at home not only sends the message that parents are supportive of the school, but can also feed into instilling discipline in their children (cf. 4.3.1.1 and 4.3.6). Homework activities that intentionally involve parents (cf. 4.3.4) not only promote parental involvement, but also motivate parents as primary educators to meet their obligations in assisting with the development of their children (cf. 1.2). Therefore, in order to assist in the nurturing of a culture of parental involvement, schools should provide families with assistance and ideas about what to do at home, how to support their children, and to identify issues and challenges that could strengthen effective parent involvement.

Although there seems to be overwhelming consensus that parental involvement is required for the optimal development of the child (cf. 1.1 and 3.4.2.2), the need for effective communication is once again foregrounded. In this regard, the findings of the study show that parents *want* to know how to work with teachers in positive ways and how to become involved to effectively address learner discipline (cf. 4.3.1 - 4.3.7). The findings subsequently support that parents want to be informed on *how* to connect and communicate with teachers (cf. 4.3). Although a parent-teacher relationship is a two-way process, it seems that teachers have more power when it comes to *how* and *when* communication occurs. At times parents perceive their roles as external to the school environment and subsequently tend to expect the school to solve problems of discipline (cf. 3.4.1). The tendency of some schools to organise parent-teacher meetings when and if problems with learners arise, encourages re-active parental involvement, rather than pro-active involvement. Once again, the importance of two-way communication is foregrounded – teachers should inform parents on a regular

basis about their children's progress (cf. 4.3.3) and parents should not only make an effort to find out about their children's performance and behaviour, but should regularly inform teachers about their concerns regarding their children or circumstances at home (cf. 4.3.3).

Another important suggestion that emerged from the findings about how parents and schools can work together to maintain discipline at schools, was the need for parents to meet with each other to collectively discuss school discipline (cf. 4.3.7). The nurturing of a culture of parental involvement can be enforced when schools provide opportunities for school events where parents can get to know each other. The importance of school events is in particular highlighted as such events can also provide the opportunity for parents to see how their own children interact with other children. The nurturing of a culture of parental involvement subsequently has the potential to enhance sound partnerships.

6.3.3.2 ENHANCING A PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

From the literature review it became clear that learner misbehaviour not only affects effective teaching and teaching negatively, but that parent-teacher partnerships are important to address problems of discipline (cf. 3.2). The findings of this study affirm that parents are co-responsible and accountable for ensuring a safe teaching and learning environment (cf. 4.3.1). However, although the maintenance of discipline is a joint responsibility, it seems that in some schools the parent-teacher partnership is often constrained (cf. 1.2 and 3.4.3.1) due to a difference between the values nurtured at school and those nurtured at home. A discrepancy between values often results in conflict and challenges in maintaining discipline in the classroom. In addition, both the literature and the research findings indicate that parent-teacher partnerships often suffer from a lack of clarification of respective roles (cf. 3.4.1 and 4.3.3). It could indeed be assumed that any ambiguity regarding responsibilities and accountability will have an influence on the way in which parents and teachers collectively engage in issues of discipline. As representatives on the *SGB*, parents should play an active role in compiling a school's Code of Conduct (cf. 5.6). The compilation of a Code of Conduct not only provides the platform to eliminate any ambiguity regarding parents' and teachers' respective roles and responsibilities, but also provides the space to elucidate the school's ideals and expectations for learner behaviour (cf. 5.2.2). In this regard,

the participants in this study also confirmed that parents appreciate and respect the school's procedures to regulate their children's behaviour (cf. 4.3.5). As such, the participants feel that the explanation of school rules to their children can assist in addressing problems of discipline. It is subsequently suggested that a school's Code of Conduct should not simply be handed to parents, but rather that the code be communicated in such a way that parents are motivated to uphold its ideals (cf. 4.3.5). It is my contention that the willingness of parents to uphold the ideals and values embedded in a school's Code of Conduct will feed into the formation of parent-teacher partnerships. The establishment of such partnerships is imperative for parents and teachers to collectively address issues of school discipline.

To further clarify the respective roles in the parent-teacher partnership, it is important to first note that although the common denominator for both parents and teachers is always the best interest of the child, their roles are naturally at odds (cf. 3.4.1). The parent only works for the benefit of his or her child, while teachers work in the social network of the school where there are other teachers, administrators and other children in the classroom. These roles often pose certain challenges, and in this regard the participants noted that although there are often too many children in a class, keeping the teacher busy (cf. 4.3.5), parents should meet teachers half way. While teachers have the professional authority to maintain discipline in the classroom, it is suggested that parents can meet teachers half way by informing the school about concerns they might have about their own children (cf. 4.3.3). The benefit of parent-to-school communication is powerful when it is consistently characterised by mutual respect, the ability to listen to one another, and positive teacher responses to parents' concerns. If parents and teachers are able to establish an effective partnership through effective communication, they should be able to collectively work towards finding strategies and solutions for issues of school discipline. In addition, they should be able to counterbalance the problems often associated with parent-teacher relationships, namely conflict, a lack of role clarification, blaming each other for learners' ill-discipline, and a lack of sound communication (cf. 3.4.1). As the common ground of a parent-teacher partnership is the best interest of the child, both parents and teachers should seriously pursue the establishment of effective and productive relationships.

6.3.4 UTILISING THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR MAINTAINING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Education policies are usually enacted in response to a particular problem or when a need in society emerges that should be addressed through legislation (cf. 5.2.2). In order to address learner discipline, because of *inter alia* a breakdown in communication (cf. 3.4.1), the abolishment of corporal punishment (cf. 3.2.1) and a lack of alternative discipline measures (cf. 5.8), it is suggested that parents and schools should collectively utilise the existing policy framework as espoused in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.10). As the policy framework provides the scope for parents and teachers to assume collective ownership for the maintenance of school discipline, it is imperative that such a framework should be used to its fullest. As such, both parents and teachers need to understand how their individual and collective roles are protected and promoted by a legal framework.

In the first instance, it should be understood how the policy framework informs collective ownership through the promotion of a parent-school partnership built on *mutual trust and respect* (cf. 5.3). It has so far been suggested that parents and teachers, in order to contribute towards a collective maintaining of learner discipline, should promote constitutional and democratic values (cf. 2.4.1.1 and 5.3), establish sound communication to nurture a culture of parental involvement, and enhance parent-teacher partnerships. In this regard, both parents and teachers must be clear in their understanding of how the *Constitution*, as the supreme law of the country, compels and pre-supposes co-operation (RSA, 1996). Education is protected as a basic right, and the formulation of all school policies should be framed within and communicated as the vehicle and opportunity for both parents and teachers, as democratic citizens, to accept their mutual responsibility to fulfil their legal obligations (cf. 5.3).

Parents, in particular, need to understand that their role is not separate from the school. Rather, they need to be encouraged to use the platforms which the policy framework provide for them became co-responsible to ensure a safe environment for teaching and learning. As such, the policy framework foregrounds on the one hand, and by implication, the importance of sound communication. On the other hand, the framework provides a platform through the *South African Schools Act* (1996) and

school governing bodies for parents to actively participate in policy matters, such as *inter alia* school discipline policies. In addition, and within the policy framework, several other educational policies and guidelines encourage parental involvement in issues regarding school discipline. By means of the compilation of a code of conduct for a school, parents are granted the opportunity to formulate documents such as the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience* (2000), and *Examples of a Code of Conduct for a school* (2008). As parents have the platform to serve on school governing bodies to exercise their responsibilities as citizens in a democratic South Africa, they should be encouraged and motivated to use this opportunity to partner with schools in making collective decisions on behalf of their children (cf. 5.2). Active participation subsequently not only allows for the establishment of sound partnerships, but it also ensures shared decision-making. Fundamental to sound partnerships, active participation ensures that all relevant parties are consulted and involved in decision-making. By implication, parents and teachers should enter into an open relationship - such an open relationship is not only a prerequisite for collective participation and collective collaboration, but is supported by the framework of collective ownership (cf. 5.2.2).

However, as only some parents serve as representatives on the school governing body, other parents' involvement should be carefully considered. Effective parent-teacher partnerships should go beyond mere partnerships between those parents who serve on the school governing body and teachers. Rather, the framing of two-way communication within the context of the policy framework should feed into the nurturing of a culture conducive to parental involvement. As such, the policy framework should be utilised as a safe and democratic space for all parents to collectively explore alongside teachers those values and ideals (cf. 3.4.3.1 and 3.4.3.2) that strongly underscore collective ownership for learner discipline. Schools should, in order to encourage parental involvement, take their cue from the literature and official documents (cf. 5.3 -5.9) that support the notion that when parents are involved in decision-making processes, they are more likely to provide valuable perspectives that could enhance the process. Also, by being involved, parents are also more likely to support the decisions that are made. Innovative strategies to enhance school-to-home and home-to-school communication should, on the one hand, be aimed at strengthening productive parental representation. On the other hand, general parental

involvement should be encouraged and enhanced in a democratic setting where all parents have a voice in a safe democratic space informed by the existing policy framework. Parents and teachers should collectively work towards taking up collective ownership for issues of discipline. As espoused in this chapter, parents and teachers should be prepared to collectively instil constitutional values (cf. 3.4.3.1 and 3.4.3.2) and to be role models who live a life infused with constitutional values (cf. 5.3). However, the pre-requisite for utilising the policy framework to the advantage of collective ownership for maintaining school-related issues, such as discipline, remains a strong culture of *communication and participation*.

In the foregoing exposition conclusions were drawn from the entire study to comment on how parents and schools can assume collective ownership for maintaining school discipline within the existing policy framework.

6.4 CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE STUDY

As with all research studies the undertaking of this study was met with certain challenges and limitations. While the challenges provided the space for innovative solutions in order to address and overcome them, the limitations of the study opened up new opportunities for research.

6.4.1 CHALLENGES

Although my role and position as researcher resulted in various positive outcomes, as I was actively involved in the data generation process, I did experience some challenges. The first challenge was to not allow my own subjective experiences, opinions and assumptions to influence the findings of this study. As such, I was constantly aware of this challenge and kept a research journal from the onset in order to remain aware and be mindful of my own subjective thoughts and the potential effects of these thoughts on the study. Another challenge I experienced relates to the issue of language. Although I consider myself bilingual in terms of English and Afrikaans, it was challenging to engage with participants who use English as a second or third language. As some participants at times struggled to clearly express themselves, I also had to be careful not to enforce my own assumed understanding onto what the participants wanted to explain. In this regard I relied on their non-verbal body language

and also checked the participants' responses with them in order to ensure that I do not misinterpret their opinions.

6.4.2 LIMITATIONS

In addition to the challenges experienced during the undertaking of the research, the study also has certain limitations. For the data generation I only conducted semi-structured interviews and did not follow it up with a second round of interviews or an open questionnaire. In hindsight, these could have strengthened my understanding of their views, especially in terms of my lack of previous experience in conducting interviews. I should have piloted my questions before conducting the interviews to get more practice, to check the formulation and also to get more comfortable to ask follow-up questions. In addition, the challenge of working with participants who do not use English as a first language could have been curbed by allowing the participants to converse in their mother tongue during the interviews (I could have used a translator to translate it afterwards). Although I relied on non-verbal behaviour and clues during the interviews, it is possible that I might have missed some non-verbal clues or misunderstood a participant.

6.4.3 OPPORTUNITIES

In the undertaking of this study I found that there is only a limited amount of information available on the notion of collective ownership within the South African context. In this regard I could only trace references to collective ownership, and these were mainly related to land ownership and the business environment. Very little is available on parents taking collective ownership for discipline problems in South African education. The lack of literature on parents and collective ownership could be regarded as both an advantage and a disadvantage to this study. On the one hand, the lack of literature enabled me to explore a new research field and to construct new meanings. On the other hand, it also limited my study in the sense that I had to rely on limited sources in my conceptualisation and meaning-making of collective ownership. Although I am of the opinion that this study could contribute towards the discourse on parents taking ownership for learner discipline problems, I also foresee new possibilities for research stemming from this study. As such, and without limiting the scope of social research in South Africa, I suggest that research should be undertaken with a specific focus on social issues like parental involvement and partnership, albeit with a pertinent framing

within the unifying theme of collective ownership within the existing policy framework. My contention is research with a focus on common themes like sound communication, parental involvement and partnership could serve as impetus for further research undertakings on collective ownership for learner discipline.

6.4.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The focus of my study was collective ownership and with a specific emphasis on how parents and schools can maintain discipline within the existing policy framework. Although collective ownership entails two-way communication between parents and teachers, and requires parent-teacher partnerships, my study only included the perspectives of parents. The study provides insight into parents' perceptions on school discipline and how they could collectively work with the school to enhance learner behaviour and develop discipline policies. I regard this as a limitation - that the study only included parents' perspectives. Despite the history of ownership (cf. 5.2.2) and this study's focus on achieving collective ownership between parents and teachers, very little extensive research appears to have been published on collective ownership between parents and schools to maintain discipline in the South African context. If my study had included the perspectives of teachers, their views and experiences on their and parents' respective roles and responsibilities, it would have strengthened the findings of the study. It is subsequently necessary to undertake an integrated study which includes parents', teachers' and learners' perspectives on collective ownership. Such a study could provide for a more encompassing focus and understanding on collective ownership between parents and teachers, especially with regard to maintaining school discipline.

6.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this study was to consider how parents could, within the existing policy framework, take up collective ownership to assist in the maintaining of school discipline. In order to operationalise this aim, the study unfolded in different chapters, each feeding into the other in the gradual process to answer the research question. Although the exposition of the synthesis of this study (cf. 6.2) indicates the interconnection between the various chapters, it should be noted that each chapter corresponded and responded to a specific research question. In response to the question "what values should guide learner behaviour in a democracy?" a literature

study provided an encompassing exposition of democracy and the values associated with democracy (cf. Chapter 2). While the exposition highlighted the values that should guide learner behaviour, it also fed into the second research question, namely “what is known about the challenges that schools face regarding learner behaviour and discipline?” In an attempt to answer this question, a literature review was undertaken which not only indicated the challenges that schools face with regard to learner misbehaviour, but underscored the fact that discipline problems are not the responsibility of teachers alone, but of all stakeholders, in particular parents (cf. Chapter 3). In alignment with my third sub-question “what are the perceptions of parents regarding discipline in schools?” data was generated from interviews. In general the findings of the empirical part of this study revealed a general consensus by parents that discipline in schools could be improved if parents and teachers are collectively responsible for maintaining discipline (cf. Chapter 4). My fourth research question, namely “what policy framework should inform collective ownership for discipline in schools?” constituted a document analysis of education-related documents. The analysis provided the insight into the provision and support for collective ownership by parents and teachers to share decision-making, responsibilities and accountability for the maintenance of discipline in schools (Chapter 5).

My last research question, namely “how can parents and schools collectively maintain learner behaviour within the existing policy framework?” constituted the core of this final chapter. Following from the logical sequence of the preceding chapters, I considered four important issues for addressing the main research question in this chapter. In this regard, I comment on the promotion of democratic values, the establishment of sound communication, the nurturing of parental involvement and the enhancement of parent-teacher partnerships, and the utilisation of the existing policy framework. It is my contention that if parents and teachers collectively instil values in learners by using positive and constructive discipline, learners will start to remodel positive behaviour. Moreover, if parents and teachers are prepared to live according to constitutional values (cf. 2.4.1.1), learners will also become productive and live a self-fulfilled life in a country free from violence, discrimination and prejudice (cf. RSA, 1996, Chapter 2, Section 9(3)). Such an instillment of constitutional values has the potential to feed into the establishment of not only a safe teaching and learning

environment for the development of future responsible and democratic citizens, but also for parent-teacher partnerships. However, as indicated in this chapter, partnerships require sound two-way communication between parents and teachers – two-way communication is a pre-requisite for the nurturing of parental involvement that would ultimately enhance sound parent-teacher partnership. Subsequently, the establishment of a sound parent-teacher partnership should provide parents and teachers the opportunity to work as a collective to maintain discipline within the existing policy framework. By implication, the existing policy framework should be explored and utilised for the expression, protection and promotion of collective ownership.

Schools in general are seen as safe places, characterised by good discipline, communication, a culture and climate conducive to teaching and learning, good administrative practices and an absence of crime and violence. Therefore, in conclusion, I am of the opinion that parents and teachers as a collective can be a powerful force when they remain focused on their common goal, namely the protection of every learner's right to a teaching and learning environment that is free from harm, both to his or her health and well-being.

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ADDENDA

ADDENDUM A: CONSENT LETTER

Researcher: Gale E Davids

Study Leader: Dr. Lynette Jacobs

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INFORMED CONSENT:

Dear: _____

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project:

COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP: HOW PARENTS AND SCHOOLS CAN MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The study is about obtaining the views and perspectives of parents regarding their role and responsibilities as collective owners to maintain discipline in schools. The reason I am doing this study is to examine the role of parents as collective owners to address issues of learner behaviour and school discipline by utilising the existing policies.

There are no possible risks to you in taking part in this study, however, I undertake to protect your identity and keep all information confidential. I am sure you will benefit from this study as this study may be of value to schools who want to improve their discipline policies.

While I greatly appreciate your participation in this important study and the valuable contribution, you can make, your participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part in this study. If you choose to take part, and an issue arises

which makes you uncomfortable, you may at any time stop your participation with no further repercussions.

If you experience any discomfort or unhappiness with the way the research is conducted, please feel free to contact me directly to discuss it, and note that you are free to contact my study supervisor (indicated above).

Please note, that interviews will be conducted in English, should you prefer that it is done in your mother tongue, please free do indicate so on the consent form below. Should any difficult personal issues arise during the course of this research, I will endeavour to see that a qualified expert is contacted and able to assist you.

I thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Gale Esmé Davids

ADDENDUM B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



Faculty of Education

02-Nov-2016

Dear Mrs Gale Davids

Ethics Clearance: Collective ownership: how parents and schools can maintain discipline within the existing policy framework

Principal Investigator: **Mrs Gale Davids**

Department: Research Development (Bloemfontein Campus)

APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Education, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2015/0533**

This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance.

Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours faithfully



Dr. Juliet Ramohai

Chairperson: Ethics Committee

Education Ethics Committee Office of the Dean: Education

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ADDENDUM C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name of interviewer:

Name of interviewee:

Date of interview:

Place of interview:

Interview Questions

(I will follow-up on matters pertaining to whatever issues that may arise.)

- How do you see the role of parents in maintaining discipline at schools?
- What has been your experience in this regard?
- What do you personally do to support your child/children in terms of their behaviour at school?
- How do you deal with problems that your child/children might experience?
- How would you like the school to include you in matters pertaining to your child/children's behaviour? What is your experience in this regard?
- Do you think parents know the school disciplinary policies and what is stated in the code of conduct of the school? What is your experience in this regard?
- As a parent, are you in possession of a written copy of the code of conduct of the school? What is your experience in this regard?