STRATEGIES TEACHERS USE TO IMPLEMENT POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

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A b s t r a c t

The use of corporal punishment is still prevalent in South African schools. Statistics South Africa report about 50 per cent of learners are exposed to corporal punishment in the KwaZulu Natal region. In comparison, in Gauteng, 34 per cent of learners are subjected to corporal punishment and in the Eastern Cape, it is close to 20 per cent. In essence, corporal punishment has been illegalized, yet it still manifests in schools. The study explored the strategies teachers use to implement positive discipline in schools. The findings revealed a variety of strategies teachers use with the code of conduct as the most important strategy to implement positive discipline. However, the findings also revealed that many participants believed that using a code of conduct (or positive discipline) to enhance positive behavior was a waste of time and ineffective. Thus, continued to use negative disciplinary measures to deal with misbehaving learners.

1. Introduction

Corporal has been predominant in South African schools until today. Statistics South Africa (2017) reported that in 2016, "approximately 14 million learners attended South African public schools and over 1.3 million learners were still exposed to corporal punishment, although its use declared illegitimate". In 2019, the Minister of Basic Education (DBE) Angie Motshekga, declared that in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) over 50 per cent of learners are still endangered to corporal punishment, in Gauteng, about 34 per cent and in the Eastern Cape close to 20 per cent of learners are exposed to corporal punishment, (ANA, 2017). The South African Council for Educators (SACE) (2021) has declared that in 2020-2021 they have received 367 complaints about the practice of corporal punishment in schools. Following these grievances, SACE removed four teachers from the teaching profession for severely assaulting learners and 23 teachers were prosecuted and found guilty and paid the fine. From the, it is quite clear that corporal punishment is still a norm in South African schools. However, Maphosa & Shumba (2010) and Reyneke (2018) indicate that alternatives to corporal punishment have been pronounced ineffectual by many teachers.

The literature shows that when corporal punishment was abolished in South African schools, teachers felt frustrated and ineffective in terms of dealing with misbehaving learners. Lopes and Oliveira (2017) declare that many teachers felt that they were cornered and put in a trying position because there were no alternatives put in place to replace corporal punishment. As such, they felt disempowered and abandoned when it came to the critical task of maintaining classroom discipline. Maphosa and Shumba (2010) found that teachers encounter challenges in sustaining discipline in schools, in the absence of corporal punishment. To this end, despite its abolishment, cases of using corporal punishment have been reported, for Matlou (2020) this is because most teachers focus on eradicating negative behaviour than teaching appropriate behaviour. Simón and Alonso-Tapia (2016) maintain that discipline is not merely a matter of punishment; rather it is a matter of supporting and directly influencing learners for the better. Mlalazi (2015) purports that corporal punishment has physical, psychological, behavioural, and developmental consequences for a learner. Therefore, teachers must find effective ways of dealing with misbehaving learners.

A move from corporal punishment and other punitive measures (also known as negative disciplinary measures) is positive discipline (PD) (Bilatyi, 2017). Durrant (2021) defines PD as an approach used to direct learner behaviour, by focusing on their psychological and emotional needs. The Eastern Cape DBE (2018) defines PD as an inclusive approach that employs discipline to teach, rather than punish, thereby helping learners to improve academically, and enjoy their time in school. And thus, due to the use of PD in schools, learners can now develop the required social skills to become useful citizens in their communities and beyond, while learning how to manage their behaviour as they acquire the morals, values, and attitudes they will live by as adults (Shields, 2018). Zingman (as cited in Shields, 2018) maintains that when learners experience a sense of belonging, and feel cared for and respected, their behaviour improves, and they strive to always put their best foot forward. Park (2014) acknowledges that where a positive relationship exists between teachers and learners, - learners are less likely to misbehave because they feel valued, recognised and supported. Therefore, the honours remain with the teachers in transforming from their traditional disciplinary strategies to positive disciplinary approaches.

Most schools have a challenge in dealing with misbehaving learners and that impedes effective teaching and learning. Mainly, learner indiscipline emanates from the use of corporal punishment. Manning and Bear (2017) admit that corporal punishment is still administered in schools. Kunene (2020) purports that a lot still needs to be done to move away from the African cultural belief that "*beating a child, is part of the process of bringing up that child*". Mncube and Mthanti (2014), declare that the use of punitive disciplinary measures such as corporal punishment adds to the ongoing cycle of violence in schools. Similarly, DBE (2018) agrees that corporal punishment leads to the spread of violent behaviours among learners. And this impacts negatively on learners' academic achievement and academic growth. On the other hand, Reyneke (2018) blames the abolition of corporal punishment to be the contributing factor to the high incidence of indiscipline in schools. Despite everything, in the 21st century, the corporal punishment that many educators experienced during their upbringing has no place, therefore turn-around disciplinary strategies must be put in place. This study aims to close the existing gap between negative and positive discipline, thereby exploring what strategies teachers use to implement PD in schools.

2. Research Questions

The research questions that guide this paper are:

- What are the participants' understandings of positive and negative discipline?
- What strategies do teachers use to implement positive discipline in schools?

3. Theoretical Framework

Underpinning the study is Rudolf Dreikurs' (1972) positive discipline theory. Driekurs' (1972) theory holds that all behaviours, including misbehavior, are purposeful and directed toward gaining social recognition. Dreikurs (1972) further explains that learners misbehave in an attempt: to receive attention, gain power over adults, avenge their feelings of being hurt, and mask feelings of inadequacy by withholding their participation. Dreikurs' theory centres on the idea that everyone has the desire to fit in, at that, Dreikurs asserts that all inappropriate behaviours which learners exhibit in the classroom (or school) originate from their inability to fit in or belong. This theorist maintains that the key goal of seeking to belong remains the original stimulus of learner behaviour. As such, if a learner fails to achieve this goal of fitting in then s/he turns to seek revenge, attention, and power. And all that manifests as misbehaviour. Corroborating Driekurs' theory is Jones (2015) who confirms that PD is the approach that recognizes that learners seek to fit into a certain group and if that does not happen, negative behaviour arises. Dreikurs' studied children's behaviour for decades, thereafter, he concluded that misbehaviour always has an intention be it getting attention, seeking power/control, getting revenge, or compensating for feelings of inadequacy. In that regard, this theory in the present study implies that learners' behaviours (including misbehaviours) are purposeful and directed toward gaining social recognition. Therefore, it is going to help teachers understand that learners' internal goals result in specific external behaviour, which suggests that whatever behaviour they exhibit on the outside emanates from internal processes (Joan, 2018). Moreover, it will enable teachers to understand childhood developmental stages as involving a young person developing a sense of belonging or being accepted by other children and adults (if this remains unfulfilled, a child will become anxious and unhappy, and thus develop negative behaviour).

4. Literature Review: positive and negative discipline and strategies used to implement PD

4.1. Negative and Positive Discipline

Moving from punitive means of maintaining discipline (negative discipline) to a positive disciplinary approach is an inventive strategy to offer positive behavioural (positive discipline) support

to learners, (Stevens, 2018). According to Jones (2015) PD centres on non-punitive methods, and it can be taught to learners. The Eastern Cape DBE (2018) sees PD as a comprehensive approach that employs discipline "to teach, rather than punish", thus assisting learners to improve academically while enjoying their schooling days. Durrant (2021) sustains that PD focuses on learners' emotional and psychological needs, and that it is used to modify learner behaviour. From the above, PD is about: teaching learners to take responsibility for their actions, making them feel empowered to deal with their problems, and being able to make sound and informed decisions. Haruyama (2019) agrees that PD helps learners develop self-discipline through their efforts and in that way, it enhances good behaviour in a school rather than giving rise to conflict which is almost inevitable where there are behavioural problems.

Dreikurs (2015) declared that learners' violent and inexcusable behaviours stem from negative disciplinary approaches used by teachers in schools. According to Bilatyi (2017), negative discipline is responsive and aims to correct any behaviours that interrupt teaching and learning. In this regard, the teacher attempts to apply corrective measures to such behaviour. Thus, negative discipline is disciplinary action the teacher takes to stop learner indiscipline hence re-establish and restoring order. Semali and Vumilia (2016) sustain that negative discipline spread violence and violent behaviours in schools, the reason being that such discipline does not help learners to perform academically, but rather attacks their dignity and lowers their self-esteem, inflicting pain and causing distress. Lopes and Oliveira (2017) reasons that negative discipline or punishment brings the worst behaviours and it does not have any constructive enduring outcomes. Similarly, Mbagala (2019) approves that negative discipline instils fear and intimidates learners instead of encouraging them to practise self-discipline. In this instance, the DBE (2018) maintains that negative punishment violates a child's rights to education and protection from all forms of aggression while showing little respect for their human dignity. Lopes and Oliveira (2017) found that beating learners teach them aggression and violent behaviour instead of peace, ignorance instead of respect, and fuels the flames of conflict instead of resolving flashpoints.

4.2. Strategies Used in the Implementation of Positive Discipline in Schools

The literature revealed that a good school discipline channels learners toward the attainment of educational goals and these goals includes learners' academic learning, moral and behavioural development, (Khan, Asia, Iqbal & Ghaffar, 2019). Despite the above, maintaining PD amongst learners remains a challenge. Traditionally, schools vested their trust in punitive

disciplinary approaches which the DBE (2018) has found to be ineffective in addressing learners' behavioural problems. Research proves (DBE, 2018) that negative discipline has physical, psychological, behavioural, and developmental consequences for a learner, and it adds to the ongoing cycle of violence in schools (Mncube & Mthanti, 2014). In curbing these problems, this study aims to explore strategies that teachers use to implement PD in schools, in support of creating a safe educational milieu for all learners. Ngubane (2018) opine that schools require a code of conduct to serve as a framework for establishing appropriate standards of learner behaviour, thereby creating an environment which is conducive to good, quality education. Graham (2017) sustains that an effective school environment which promotes PD should have rules and regulations such as a code, to lay the foundation for acceptable and appropriate learner behaviour. SASA (1996) aver that a code of conduct for the learners is the basic strategy that can be used to implement PD in schools. Sant (2019, p. 657) perceives a code of conduct for learners as "a set of rules targeted at managing learner behaviour to ensure self-discipline, thus allowing schools to remain active, orderly environments where effective teaching and learning can take place". Apart from the code of conduct are positive reinforcement, the modelling of positive behaviour, effective communication, integrated community systems, and the creation of a positive environment (DBE, 2018). These disciplinary strategies were deemed to ensure the safety and dignity of all learners and staff, preserve the integrity of the learning environment, and address the causes of learners' misbehaviour to improve positive behavioural skills and attain long-term outcomes (National Association of School Psychologists [NASP], 2002). Additionally, Durrant (2021) suggests other strategies to be used to implement PD in schools: showing appreciation for and receiving acknowledgement from, superiors and parents; offering concrete feedback and praise for milestone events; being sensitive to signs of difficulty in learners' lives; listening to providing emotional support and acknowledging learners' work while appreciating them as individuals.

On the other hand, Durrant (2021) revealed that most teachers lack an understanding of how PD works, therefore, they resort to what they know, which is physical punishment. Arguably, according to Kunene (2020), children (learners) accept that being beaten (or receiving corporal punishment) is a way of life and it is short and precise. Studies further revealed that PD was ineffective in maintaining discipline in schools and thus was found to be a waste of time, (Ngubane, 2018). Fluke, Olson and Peterson (2014) agree that positively reprimanded learners continue to misbehave and become immune to all of the positive disciplinary measures put in place. This nullifies the aim of PD

approaches. It is at this juncture that teachers ensure to use corporal punishment to correct bad behaviour. Shortly, this proves that negative discipline has not been eradicated from our schools.

5.   Research Methodology

Underpinning the study was the interpretivism paradigm which was deemed suitable for unearthing the participants' lived experiences about issues of PD in schools. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017, p. 13) maintain, the interpretive paradigm attempts to "get into the head of the phenomenon being studied to understand and interpret what the subject is thinking or the meaning s/he is making of the context". This qualitative study adopted a phenomenological research design, and this allowed the researchers to gain in-depth knowledge and also a better understanding of the strategies teachers use to implement PD in schools. Christiansen (2010, p. 43) maintains that qualitative research is subjective, in-depth, probing and interpretive. Therefore, it affords the researchers to look at what, why, and how, of the topic under investigation, (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2014). The researchers purposively sampled two schools that professed to use a code of conduct to implement PD and whether the schools used PD approaches to instil PD. Consequently, the targeted sample in each school comprised three disciplinary committee members, one school principal, two SMT members, two teacher representatives in the SGB, and two RCLs were sampled (n=20). Semi-structured interviews, observation and document review were used to collect data. The consent of the participants was sought before data collection.

6.   Data Analysis

The data were analysed using the thematic approach of coding, sorting, and categorization to analyze the responses from the participants and report writing as suggested by Creswell (2013). For data presentation, fictitious names were used for the two sampled schools, namely Nativa Secondary (NS) and Andolex Secondary (AS). At each school the participants were coded: the three disciplinary committee members were coded DCM1, DCM2 and DCM3; the school principal was SP1, the two SMT members SMT1 and SMT2; the two teacher representatives in the SGB, TR-SGB1 and TR-SGB2, and two RCLs, RCL1 and RCL2.

7.   Results and Discussion

Data were analyzed under the following themes:

- Participants' understanding of the positive and negative discipline.
- Strategies used to implement positive discipline.

7.1. Participants' Understandings of Positive and Negative Discipline

In determining whether participants were cognizant of the variances between the two concepts, participants were asked: "What is your understanding of the positive and negative discipline?"

7.1.1.   Positive discipline

The participant's responses revealed that PD is corrective, not punitive, and not associated with inflicting any kind of sociological, mental, physical, or verbal injury, hurt or abuse on another person. It is a type of discipline that teaches a learner how to behave. One participant stated:

Positive discipline is when you reprimand a child for having done something wrong. For example, if a child has done something wrong, you are aware that what he has done is wrong; it does not mean that you condone the behaviour, but you need to come up with strategies to ensure that the child does not repeat the same offence. In this case, you are not using the stick, but you promise a child something that if s/he does good, you will give him or her something good, like a reward or incentive to ensure that s/he continues to do good. In that way, they behave well, voluntarily. (SMT 1, AS)

According to the participant, PD drives good behaviour in individuals. This implies that when disciplining a learner positively, teachers find the most amicable ways of resolving issues, without resorting to punitive.

The RCLs paired PD with school rules and issues of detention, which are indeed closely aligned. RCL 1, from Andolex Secondary, mentioned that PD involved teachers relying on the school rules to enforce discipline. For another learner PD was associated with the absence of corporal punishment:

Positive discipline is when teachers do not beat you when you break the rules. For example, in our school, we are not allowed to come late. When we come late, teachers on duty make us clean the school before we join classes, or sometimes they make us run before they can open [the] school gates for us […] or a learner is given detention, that is positive because they do not use corporal punishment. (RCL 2, NS)

The learners' utterances indicate that a lot still needs to be done about how teachers discipline learners in schools. Giving learners menial tasks to perform or making them run while others are in class learning, amount to a criminal offence, as such acts contravene the Bill of Human Rights, section 29 (1) (RSA, 1996a), which states that everyone has the right to basic

education. In this instance, teachers are not protecting the rights of all learners, but are infringing on their right to an education. Such actions prevent learners from growing up to become responsible citizens who value themselves and respect others (Jones, 2015). Instructing learners to run around aimlessly is synonymous with a power game that teachers (as adults) play, in which learners (as minors) are victimized and mistreated (DBE, 2018). In addition, the DBE (2018) maintains that, in a school setting, teachers must always try to create a child-friendly environment or demonstrate and incorporate basic human rights and educational activities when they teach, as schools are active sites of learning.

7.1.2. Negative discipline

By contrast, the participants viewed negative discipline as any punitive measures which inflict pain on a learner. Such discipline does not benefit learners academically but makes them resentful since (in most cases) teachers use it to vent their anger and make the child suffer. One participant stated:

Negative discipline is the discipline that is enforced, or it is where learners are forced to behave in a good manner, and it is not their choice. They behave in such a manner because they know that if they misbehave, they will be beaten. (SP 1, NS)

Diametrically opposing positive and negative discipline, one participant stated:

Negative discipline is the total opposite of positive discipline, as it is characterised by causing pain and abuse – it can be name-calling, physical [ ] or emotional[ ] abuse. (TR-SGB 1, AS)

The participants emphasized that negative discipline is strongly associated with causing pain or abusing a learner so that s/he is forced to behave in a particular manner. It was worth noting that some learners were not sure what PD involved. But had something to say about negative discipline:

Caning is negative, but teachers still use it to discipline. But what I have noticed, is that learners who are beaten usually misbehave, and they know that their mistakes will be corrected here and there, but they never [stop] disrupting [the] class. (RCL 2, AS)

The participants' responses revealed that teachers continue to use corporal punishment, which is negative. Interestingly, a learner participant mentioned that caned learners continued misbehaving, making it difficult for others to follow the lesson.
As much as teachers discipline learners by using corporal punishment, the findings suggested that it perpetuates violent or antisocial behaviour. Corroborating these findings are Semali and

Vumilia (2016) and Mncube and Mthanti (2014), who maintain that corporal punishment perpetuates violence in schools. Moreover, while punishing one learner, no teaching or learning is taking place, which is to the detriment of the rest of the class. Teachers are thereby punishing innocent learners, who have not done anything wrong, by depriving them of valuable learning time and leaving them unattended. Such punishment also eats into the time a teacher needs to cover the expected curriculum, as outlined in the Annual Teaching Plan.

The findings showed that negative discipline inflicts pain on, and causes physical harm to, a learner, but it can also damage that child physically, emotionally, sociologically, and mentally. Negative discipline causes shame. This finding corroborates that of Shields (2018), which posits that most teachers still resort to punitive measures, believing that to be part of their role. Morrel (2001 in Matlou, 2020) declares that, in the past, corporal punishment was thought to assist learners in discovering the "right" way of behaving, with fear being deemed crucial for developing a conscience in them. Nelson (2000) declares that beating someone – particularly a defenseless minor– constitutes a cowardly, violent act. Matlou (2020) found that abusive/punitive/negative punishment increased aggression in learners. Puzzlingly, despite teachers resorting to negative or violent disciplinary measures, learners are expected to demonstrate appropriate and positive behaviour – a scenario which is not fair on any level.

7.2. Strategies Used in the Implementation of Positive Discipline in Schools

The study participants were asked: "What strategies do teachers use to implement positive discipline in schools?" The findings revealed that teachers made use of the code of conduct and classroom rules as the main strategies for disciplining misbehaving learners.

The findings also revealed that teachers used a research-based, positive classroom management approach; positive reinforcement, and integrated community support services, modelled good behaviour, relied on parental involvement and communication but also used detention, and the withdrawal of privileges. For instance:

To implement positive discipline in schools, we use the code of conduct as a strategy to communicate expectations clearly to the learners. By establishing and enforcing clear rules and consequences about learner behaviour, learners know what kind of behaviour is expected from them. They know what behaviour is allowed and what type is not permitted. In addition, the code must

be broken down into classroom rules, where learners are situated. (DCM 1, NS)

The participant recognized the use of the learners' code of conduct as a means of relaying educators' expectations to the learners, and of describing these in a way which the learners will understand. Sentiments were echoed by another participant, who stated that they use the code of conduct for learners to implement PD. Because it gives direction in terms of what is expected of the learners, in terms of behaviour in the school, (SMT 1, AS). This participant agreed that the code and classroom rules acted as a guide and communicated what qualified as "expected learner behaviour" during school hours.

From the participants' comments, it was clear that the code served to spell out to the learners what constituted desired behaviour. From the data collected on the disciplinary committees' incident reports, it became evident that the code of conduct for learners was followed in dealing with matters relating to learner behaviour in and out of the classroom. For instance, it was documented that while one learner was found kissing another in full view of other learners, the learner was asked to write a report in the incident book, for record purposes. The data obtained from observations showed that both schools used a code of conduct to deal with misbehaving learners and that learners were aware of the measures that would be taken against them if they were found to have violated the code. From the above it can be deduced that the code of conduct served as a guiding document, to ensure a fair, just, and appropriate sanction for the offender.

The research findings further suggest that teachers use research-based positive strategies, such as planning to interest lessons, focusing on and recognizing the positives and addressing disruptions head-on. Thus, in enhancing PD in schools, teachers seek to meet learners' needs and keep them absorbed while encouraging them to participate in class, to avoid boredom. One participant noted:

Teachers reprimand their learners for getting out of hand by planning interesting lessons that will keep them busy. For example, a misbehaving learner during a lesson can be asked to read and asked to talk and explain the keywords to other learners. (SP 1, AS)

This participant emphasized that learners must be given ample work in class, to ensure that they remain occupied with schoolwork, rather than becoming distracted or turning a lesson into leisure time. Learners tend to misbehave if they are not involved or engaged. This finding suggests that charging a learner with a task or additional responsibility may motivate him/her to

try, or to do well. Moreover, a learner learns that by being of service, s/he is responsible, respected, and noticed. Worryingly, the researchers' observations revealed that some teachers do not treat their learners with respect. For instance, one of the teachers was shouting at her learners using harsh words during break time. This showed partly that teachers do not respect their learners.

Furthermore, the participants were of the view that positive reinforcement, and modelling good behaviour work:

Positive reinforcement is used to enforce positive discipline in schools. For example, when learners display appropriate behaviour, teachers must applaud and reinforce that through rewards and privileges. [....]. Another thing, children are good at copying one's behaviour [...] Therefore, we model appropriate behaviour for learners to follow. (SMT 2, AS)

Learner participants confirmed this, "being an RCL feels good, teachers give us the responsibility to monitor learners during assembly and break time. And, once a month, we are called to the principal's office and given recognition and applauded for doing this job. That recognition makes me feel responsible and motivated to do right, always", (RCL 2, NS). This proved that learners who behaved positively were recognized for doing well and were encouraged to sustain their positive behaviour. The participants' responses indicated that good behaviour is often taught and learned unintentionally, without either party noticing it. Setting a good example, and always acting professionally, are what one would expect of a role model. The participant posited that learners copy teachers' behaviour, thus teachers must be conscious of their image, and how they interact with others. Durrant (2010) notes that a teacher should always be on time to ensure that everything is in order. Importantly, s/he needs to quieten learners, so that they are prepared to be taught. According to Dreikurs (2015), learning can take place while observing others, with the observer modelling the sought-after behaviour. This comment serves to confirm that teachers can be positive (or negative!) role models, by demonstrating to their learners what constitutes (in)appropriate behaviour in an educational setting. It is for this reason that Dreikurs (2015) refers to positive modelling as facilitating observational learning because learners observe and act according to what they have observed.

The research findings further revealed the notion of integrating community support structures such as *churches, social workers, the police, etc.,* to enhance PD amongst that cohort. One principal explained:

Teachers work hand in hand with community structures like the church, social workers, the police, etc., to help enforce positive

discipline in our learners. Families' and learners' underlying problems like behaviour, health issues, socioeconomic status, status quo, etc., can contribute to learners' discipline and can be barriers to their success. (SP 1, AS)

The other participating principal attested:

In addressing issues of indiscipline ... such as drug usage, violence, and everything ... some matters will be beyond the control of the institution and, in that instance, SAPS [the South African Police Service] will have to play its role. We call SAPS, not to arrest, but because we want that learner to see the mistake that has been made, and to assist a learner to be rehabilitated in a way. (SP 1, NS)

The participants drew the researchers' attention to the fact that learner backgrounds contribute to behaviour problems, and some cases relating to learner indiscipline become too big for the school to handle, thus they resort to calling the police and social workers to the school. From the findings, it emerged that the main aim of involving these structures was to maximize the scope of aid received from people with the expertise to deal with learner misbehaviour. Maphosa (2011) maintains that experts have the know-how and are well-acquainted. This finding corroborates that of Bilatyi (2017), who maintains that the main idea behind involving integrated community support, is to lessen behavioural problems in schools and to develop integrated systems within the school community as well as at the family level.

From the participants' responses, parental involvement and improved two-way communication were among the strategies used to implement PD in schools. The participant detailed:

When dealing with misbehaving learners, we call a parent in to discuss the matter. These kids do not want to see [their] parents in school, because parents might be told stories [about the] things they do at school. So, in a way, when a parent leaves whatever that s/he is supposed to be doing – including going to work – just to attend the disciplinary hearing, that alone is a punishment on its own [for both]. Now it compels the parent to play their role in terms of calling the child, in order that s/he avoids being in school now and again. (TR-SGB 1, AS)

As that participant alluded to, discussing matters about learner misbehaviour with a parent who is called to the school is somewhat humiliating for both parties, yet it offers all stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the situation and come up with a viable resolution. Jones (2015) confirms that maintaining a healthy relationship with parents is crucial in implementing PD.

Corroborating this finding, the data gathered from the disciplinary committee's incident book revealed that a group of learners repeatedly swore at other learners. Besides swearing, instances were recorded whereby members of the group were caught selling drugs to other learners at the school. It was evident that the learners in question were suspended for three days and were handed letters requesting their parents to report to the school. From the meeting, it was recorded that the parents were required to sign the incident book, to confirm that they agreed to participate in, and understood the discussions. Following this meeting, the learners were referred to counselling and referred to rehabilitation centres. Jaiswal (2017) confirmed that parents were perceived as teachers' collaborators and that their involvement assisted in enhancing PD and served to ensure that the school functioned properly. Some would, however, argue that parental involvement is not working, and presents a challenge for township schools. This stems from the fact that most parents in townships cannot read or write. In many cases, learners have no parents (taking responsibility for what is essentially a child-headed household), and often guardians are not too interested in learners' academic well-being. As SMT 2 (AS) declared, in terms of the capacity of parents, most were illiterate and therefore did not truly understand the need for a child to go to school – as a result, they were not active in ensuring the success of their children's education.

The study also found that withdrawing privileges, detention, and learner isolation were strategies teachers used to enhance PD in their classrooms. In township schools, misbehaving learners are usually good at sports, and if they do something wrong at school, they are removed from the team or maybe detained. One participant explained:

One of the learners in my school had behavioural problems and we tried to help him while disciplining him positively at the same time. We made him the captain of soccer. Since then, the learner is better, because he knows that if he misbehaves, he will be removed from being a captain, and banned from playing soccer. And sometimes we detain them. (TR-SGB 2, NS)

This participant emphasized the withdrawal of privilege and detention as a technique to guide a learner with disciplinary problems.

From the participants' comments, it emanated that detention and withdrawal of privilege assisted in curbing unwanted behaviour while teaching learners how to behave positively. The findings also revealed that, in most cases, misbehaving learners performed well in sporting activities, and schools used that as leverage to guide learners towards improving their antisocial behaviours.

By contrast, one participant declared:

Detention is not working, sometimes learners misbehave intentionally, so they subscribe to detention, perhaps maybe because they are running away from the duties to perform at home. And some learners use detention as an excuse to create spare time to socialize and spend time with their friends and sometimes engage in wrongdoings within and outside the school. (TR-SGB 1, NS)

This participant emphasised that detention was not always effective, because some learners misbehaved on purpose so that they would have to stay behind after school, rather than having to face difficult situations at home once they left the premises. This made it difficult for teachers to eradicate bad behaviour. Jones (2015) argues that realistic efforts are difficult to establish since many learners with behavioural difficulties appear resistant to recommended interventions. The DBE (2018) concedes that some learners become immune, reluctant or negligent, and are slow to respond positively to targeted interventions which are put in place to offer them behavioural support.

An incident book review contradicted the finding that learner isolation and the withdrawal of privilege helped them to unlearn bad behaviour. It revealed many cases in which learners did not comply with the sanctions imposed on them, in line with their transgressions. For example, learners bunked in detention and left the premises without permission. Other reports stated that learners stayed behind when their fellow learners left after school but did not perform the tasks they were assigned to do. Such indiscipline made teachers feel helpless and frustrated about the corrective measures proposed for dealing with misbehaving learners. Corroborating this finding are Fluke et al. (2014), who maintain that detention does not reduce future difficulties in terms of behaviour, but may be seen as rewarding, rather than punishing bad conduct. Bunking detention may be a minor issue, but if occurs repeatedly, it becomes a major disciplinary crisis. Haruyama (2019) posits that if minor misbehaviours occur, it is vital to deal with them expeditiously yet cautiously so that they do not escalate into fully-fledged disciplinary crises. Therefore, teachers must take timeous action in helping the learner to unlearn unwanted behaviour.

As the research findings revealed, the schools employed a variety of strategies to enhance positive discipline, with the code of conduct for learners being the most important one. A learners' code of conduct is a legal entity, as determined by SASA (RSA, 1996b), and it represents a means of controlling the functioning of schools. The emerging findings of this study collaborated with those of Sant (2019) and DBE (2018), who posit that the main aim of a learners' code of conduct, is to communicate the expected behaviour in school, by encouraging positivity and self-discipline. The observations and document review showed that the schools under study had rules supplementing/standing in for a code of conduct for learners, but the rules differed from one teacher to the next. Furthermore, being underpinned by Dreikurs' (1972) theory, which suggests that a learner's misbehaviour is directed toward a goal, it was evident that learners misbehaved because they were looking for attention or wanted to establish some power over adults, retaliated when feeling hurt and became aggressive. From the statements reflected here, PD aims to eliminate bad behaviours and teach self-discipline to learners, as well as how to act meaningfully in obeying the school rules. Arguably, some findings proved some of these positives [discussed above] to be ineffective in managing learners' bad behaviours.

8. Conclusions

The current study acknowledges that positive discipline deals with learners' state of mind and concedes that they have to be taught how to behave. Here, how a learner is "made" to behave, is what is at issue – it should be achieved positively, without resorting to coercion or force. By contrast, as the findings showed, negative discipline is viewed as a traditional way of disciplining, which attempts to deal with the immediate circumstances, rather than teaching lifelong coping skills. And it is closely associated with pain, hurt, suffering, and humiliation (for the recipient), and has a lasting effect on a learner. Furthermore, the findings revealed that teachers used a variety of positive disciplinary strategies to enhance discipline in schools, with the code of conduct as the main strategy. On the contrary, the findings further revealed that PD was a waste of time and ineffective to correct misbehaving learners. Learners were found to be immune and slow to respond to any recommended PD strategies. The failure of PD strategies to attain their predetermined aim resulted in teachers using negative disciplinary measures, such as corporal punishment. Corroborating these findings are Semali and Vumilia (2016), who attest that negative discipline still exists in schools. Based on the findings, 26 years after corporal punishment was outlawed, teachers continue to administer and use it as a strategy to manage learner behaviour although it was prohibited. In South African schools about 14 million learners were found to have received corporal punishment with above 1.3 million learners still vulnerable to corporal punishment. Schools in the KZN schools are in the 50 per cent lead in using corporal punishment, (Statistics South Africa, 2017). A corporal punishment spike has touched even SACE which has taken further steps to deal with the teachers reported to have applied physical punishment to the learners. The findings suggest that in most schools in South

Africa, corporal punishment is still a norm. Thus, in South Africa, we are still far from attaining PD in schools. Sant (2019) blames this on the government and departmental officials for introducing PD without proper planning or a programme of action to indicate how this approach can achieve its predetermined goal of enhancing discipline and eradicating corporal punishment from schools.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that the DBE should enhance professional development programmers for teachers, to maximize the scope of the positive disciplinary measures at their disposal. This initiative will not only capacitate teachers but will also enable them to establish a violence-free environment which is conducive to teaching and learning. Prominently, the findings note that after the abolition of corporal punishment in South African schools, teachers felt powerless and incapable of maintaining discipline in class. Thus, the study recommends advocacy on the part of the DBE. Schools should be offered support programmers/workshops/training (i.e., internet-based training) to assist teachers with alternative ways of enhancing PD in schools.

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