

University of Zululand



Educators' Perceptions of Learners with Challenging Behaviour in Secondary Schools in King Cetshwayo District

by

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**A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Education in the field of Educational Psychology**

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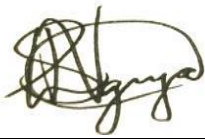
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DECLARATION

I, S'phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya (200710570), declare that this mini-dissertation, which is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Education to the University of Zululand, is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at any university, and that all sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



S'phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district, South Africa. This study was guided by objectives which are to explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour; to establish which strategies educators use to manage learners' challenging behaviour; and to determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour in the said district.

The study adopted qualitative research that used an interpretive paradigm. The study was underpinned by the social learning theory. The participants of this study were selected from secondary schools in the King Cetshwayo District. The research participants were school based support team educators. Purposive sampling was used to select educators from schools. Semi-structured interviews and an open-ended questionnaire were used to collect data. The collected data were analysed using thematic content analyses.

The problem of learner deviancy has taken over the educational arena, afflicting many educational systems around the world. The current situation has become so terrifying that educators and other stakeholders who come into direct contact with challenging behaviour of learners' fear interacting with them, and that causes psychological harm to all parties involved. Local and international literature shows that challenging behaviour damages a school's image. When destructive behaviour dominates a classroom, it becomes impossible for teaching and learning to run smoothly, and that leads to a school becoming dysfunctional. This also poses a challenge to school management as they are supposed to have strategies on how to deal with learners with challenging behaviour, so that the school can achieve its goals and objectives.

The research findings revealed that educators experience several challenges which

seem to be a disturbance of teaching and learning when dealing with learners' challenging behaviour. Examples of the serious issues of misbehaviour of learners or negative class participation in the classroom may be disruptive talking, continuous avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to educator, defiance, and hostility, especially in secondary schools.

Misbehaviour often interrupts the smooth functioning of learning process in the classroom. This can unsettle the educators or other learners in the class. The findings show that school misbehaviour not only intensify with time but also lowers academic achievements and increases unruly behaviour. Misbehaviour is closely associated with disciplinary issues and warrants careful action from educators.

The following recommendations were made that learners should be trained on managing their behaviour. This could include awareness of the effect of such behaviour to themselves and others. DOE should provide continuous support to educators by training them through workshops. They should also consider employing more professionals who will assist educators in supporting learners such as, social workers, psychologists and other.

Keywords: educators' perception, challenging behaviour, learners,
secondary schools.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DBE	—	Department of Basic Education
HOD	—	Head of Department
KZN	—	KwaZulu-Natal
NSC	—	National Senior Certificate
PLF	—	Positive Learning Framework
SBST	—	School Based Support Team
SGB	—	School Governing Body
WIPO	—	World Intellectual Property Organisation
WP6	—	White Paper Six

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The disruptive behaviour of some learners in schools remains a serious challenge facing both developed and developing countries (Nkuba et al., 2019). Therefore, there is a need to understand how different conditions contribute and influence learners' behaviour in schools. Challenging behaviour is said to be a contributing factor to educators' low morale and anxiety (Manning et al., 2017). Communities call for action to be taken to address the issue of challenging behaviour in schools, as it is expected that people should live in harmony and uphold values such as respect, especially of the young generation respecting the older generation.

It has been noted that schools experience elements of challenging behaviour which include bullying, deliberate absenteeism, bunking, disrespect aimed at educators, and repeated violation of schools' rules. It is difficult for schools to function when such elements exist. It is, therefore, very important to investigate the factors that influence behavioural changes in schools, as they lead to instabilities within the schooling system (Hanmoglü, 2018).

Ebo (2018) believed that there is a lot that a society can do to reverse the increasing challenges faced by schools because of learners' challenging behaviour. There is a need for stakeholders in the communities to work together to find lasting solutions. The author further stated that it is because of the lost values and morals that there is an increase in challenging behaviour, especially in schools, partly because schools are seen as mirror image of the society in which they are found.

Additionally, Stein et al. (2016) was of the view that a society's behaviour is also dependent on perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of its members. The authors further asserted that if people in communities do not value the importance of schools and educators, children will not see the need of respecting schools and, therefore, challenging behaviour becomes prevalent. It is vital to explore educators' perceptions towards learners' challenging behaviour if the schools are to overcome these issues. Against this background, the current study explored educators' perceptions and management of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district, South Africa.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

1.2.1 Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura and Robert Walters published "The Social Learning Theory", and it was further elaborated in 1977. Social learning theory, according to Bandura (1971), is a theory that deals with the learning process, social behaviour and the development of new behaviour which is learnt by observing and imitating others. According to the social learning theory, individuals are only affected by someone or something when they have a vested interest or attachment. Hence, there is an association between adolescent friendship and challenging behaviour (Skinner & Wellborn, 2019). The authors further asserted that challenging behaviour friendships are viewed as close and personal by social theorists. According to de Vries et al. (2016), adolescents with challenging behaviour lack confidence when they are alone.

Social learning theorists divide the individuals or groups with whom a person interacts into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are connections with immediate family and friends, while secondary sources of social learning include a much broader range of people, such as educators, neighbours, and church groups. Each of these groups plays a role in shaping an individual's attitudes and values, as well as how a person acts in different social situations.

The other important factors in determining behaviour include timing, duration, frequency, and communication. The greatest effect on a person's behaviour occurs when the association is earlier, longer, more often and closer (Akers & Jennings, 2019). It should be noted that, from the social learning perspective, early interactions with family arguably play a significant role in influencing one's behaviour.

The differential association theory can be divided into two distinct dimensions. The first dimension is behavioural interactional, which describes how deviance is caused by direct association and contact with those who participate in those kinds of behaviour, as well as indirect association and affiliation with more distant reference classes (Akers and Jennings, 2019).

The individuals or groups with whom a person has direct or indirect social interaction are seen as providing the social context in which each of social learning theory's four premises operate. Individuals are subject to different meanings of acceptable and inappropriate behaviour in this social context, as well as a variety of behavioural models that can differentially reinforce moral and anti-moral behaviour within the social background. These models may also be used to learn how to imitate those behaviours.

1.3 Problem Statement

Learners' challenging behaviour can also lead to stress among educators and school administrators and alter the dynamics of every classroom. Educators need to be able to handle behaviour issues efficiently in the classroom so as to achieve learning goals and enhance learners' academic success (Asiyai, 2019). Asking and hearing the perceptions of educators who are often victims of learners' challenging behaviour is one way of finding common ground and a possible solution to this problem. Hence, the current study explored educators' perceptions and management of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district.

1.4.1 Objectives

- To explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour.
- To establish the strategies educators, use to manage learners' challenging behaviour.
- To determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour.

1.4.2 Research Questions

- What are educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour?
- What type of strategies do educators use to manage learners' challenging behaviour?
- What type of support is needed by educators to manage learners with challenging behaviour?

1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1 Research Design

This study implemented a qualitative research method. A qualitative research method contributes rich, detailed insight into educators' perceptions, using their own words; complex analyses of multiple perspectives; and an understanding of the school context that shape learners' experiences of being considered as having 'challenging behaviour' (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

This research design drew on methods that respect the lived experiences and voices of educators in the study. A qualitative design provided a natural setting for interaction between the researcher and participants since the study was done in the participants' community or workplace (Mohajan, 2018).

A paradigm is a set of particular views or beliefs on which people base their understanding of reality (Kamal, 2019). This research has been grounded in an explanatory paradigm that assumes that people have numerous realities. This hypothesis allows qualitative researchers to study occurrences in their natural settings through shared interactions. The researcher studied how educators perceive learners'

challenging behaviour. In this case, the researcher had an opportunity to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Kamal, 2019). The researcher interacted with the participants in a naturalistic way to make sense of how educators perceive learners' challenging behaviour.

1.5.2 Research Paradigm (Interpretivism)

This study utilized an interpretive paradigm because it had characteristics that match with the study's goal of having educators describe in detail how they dealt with learners who displayed challenging behaviour. The chosen paradigm was chosen because of its characteristics, which included allowing individuals to be open, flexible, and free to express themselves. This paradigm led the researcher in selecting research techniques and data collection equipment for describing, exploring, and comprehending educators' experiences in dealing with learners who exhibit problematic behaviour.

1.5.3 Participants

The population of the study was educators who are members of the school base support team in secondary schools within King Cetshwayo District. A population is a grouping of all the units that have the variable attribute being studied and for which generalizations from the research can be made. Qadar et al. (2021) referred to the population as the sampling frame. It is the totality of persons, events, organization units, case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned.

1.5.3 Sampling Method

A sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons from which a representative selection is made (Mujere, 2016). The sample of this study was 10 educators selected from two schools at King Cetshwayo District, who are members of the school-based support team, and the principal who participates as the overseer of the disciplinary committee. A school-based support team is a team that deals with learners who experience barriers to learning, whether it be economic, social, language, class and behaviour (DoE, 2001).

This study adopted a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling method is a type of sample that is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher; it is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics, representative or typical attributes of the population that serve the purpose of the study best (Denscombe, 2017).

1.6 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews. Face to face interactions also assisted the researcher to have a better understanding and deeper perspective of the participants, including their feelings, values and assumptive world (Duncan & Fikse, 2015). Since the subject under study was sensitive, data were gathered in a private and therapeutically secure setting. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in a relaxed, engaging manner, with open ended questions and feedback. The researcher prepared a full set of questions in advance, with the aim to elicit detailed description of participants' experiences. However, the researcher did have an option to vary and alter question during the interviews (Brown & Danaher, 2019).

In qualitative data analysis there are various methods that are used (Browm & Danaher, 2019). In this study, van Kraam's method of data analysis was utilised which involved using every research participant's verbatim transcription the complete transcription of each research participant (Harding, 2018). The steps that were followed in the data analysis included treating the individual transcribed interview by horizontalizing the data, whereby every meaningful was listed. The units were then clustered into common categories or themes, removing overlapping or repetitive statements. The clustered themes and meanings were used to develop a thematic textural description of the interplay between perceptions and management strategies. The analysis of opposing themes and emerging patterns were enabled by a combined textual explanation of all participants. A composite of hierarchical explanation of participant's challenging behaviour learner interactions was arrived at through the method of identifying the participants' experience within a phenomenological context. The themes and attributes that explain how the phenomenon elicited feelings and emotions, as well as the circumstances that elicited the phenomenon were addressed.

1.6.1 Data Quality Control

The truth value of the study and its results were maintained by employing testimonial and coherence validity strategies. The researcher went back to the sources of the information to verify both the credibility of the data and its interpretation in order to promote validity.

Coherence validity was taken into consideration to ensure quality and consistency of interpretation. Unlike quantitative studies, the criterion for validity is not indicated by whether another researcher would use exactly the same words or arrives at identical

description of data. Rather, validity is indicated by whether such difference in wording may be inter-subjectively understood, to reflect an identical meaning or same to those which emerged through the original process of explication by the researcher (Kankam, 2019).

1.7 Ethical and Safety Issues

The research was ethically approved by the University of Zululand's research committee ethical clearance number UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2021/139. The researcher also applied for permission to conduct research to the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Education. Regarding informed consent, a letter asking for permission to conduct individual interviews was sent in advance to all the participants. All participants of the study were informed about the purpose of the study before they participated and thereafter, they signed the consent form. There was commitment that the names of the participants and even the names of their schools would not be revealed. All participants and schools were coded and codes substituted their names.

The study was conducted on a voluntary basis, with participants having the ability to withdraw at any time during the process. Participants were promised follow-up psychological care or a referral if they experienced any stress reactions during the study period, due to the emotional vulnerability of the participants. The handling of data was treated with extreme caution. The information gathered was kept private, and participants' identities were protected. The data were stored in a locked cabinet until the analysis was finished. To ensure full confidentiality, raw data, such as written transcriptions, were shredded after the analysis was completed.

1.7.1 Intellectual Property and Innovation

The World Intellectual Property Organization defines intellectual property (WIPO) as creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images and designs used in commerce. The researcher is aware of the IP rights as set out in the Publicly Financed Research and Development Act of 2008. Therefore, other than the usual copyright issues, the researcher is not expecting any special intellectual property rights to emanate from this research.

1.7.2 Knowledge Dissemination

The information generated by the research, in addition to producing a mini-dissertation, will assist the Department of Education and other researchers for further investigation. The information will be published and be presented in workshops, seminars, local and international conferences.

1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter has outlined the general orientation to the study, the statement of the problem, research aims and objectives. It has also highlighted the research methodology and how the research results will be disseminated.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Chapter 2 provides a literature review on some of the perceptions, management, strategies, and practices of educators when dealing with learners' challenging behaviour from both local and international contexts. The theories that underpin the

study are also explained in detail. This is achieved in accordance with the study's objectives.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This chapter covers the research methodology and design of the study. It focuses on the choice of research method, the research paradigm adopted, study population, the sampling method and data collection instruments used. The data collection procedures and analysis will also be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 Presentation and Interpretation of Data

This chapter discusses the analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected, as well as the presentation of findings gathered from all the targeted samples of the study.

Chapter 5 Summary and Recommendations

This is the last chapter containing a report on the research findings. It gives a summary of the findings, assumptions, and suggestions based on the study's results. There will be recommendations for future studies in the area of challenging behaviour. The limitations to the study and measures to address the limitations are also highlighted.

1.9 Summary

The study's inception and introduction are provided in this chapter. The chapter also provides discussions about the literature review related to this study, the problem statement, aims and objectives of the study, research questions, the contribution to the body of knowledge, research methodology and how data were analysed.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the background of the study, and gave a brief discussion of the theoretical framework and literature review, problem statement, aims and objectives, research methodology and ethical considerations. The literature review will focus on defining and discussing challenging behaviour, prevalence of challenging behaviour, factors that influence behaviour, the effects of challenging behaviour, educators' perception of challenging behaviour. Furthermore, the literature review will discuss two theories which informed the current study: the social learning theory by Albert Bandura and the self-determination theory by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. This chapter will review several literatures related to the study as well as discussion on supporting policies, various perspective on dealing with challenging behaviour, and the management of challenging behaviour.

2.2. Challenging Behaviour

Discipline in schools is a crucial component of children's socialisation, moral education, and educational process. The most common forms of learner indiscipline are talking without permission, taunting other learners, truancy, non-completion of assigned work, verbal attacks on other learners and educators, graffiti on classroom and restroom walls, and drug use. Many learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour originate from difficult households where the loving family structure has deteriorated. Learner indiscipline is caused by the educator's code of behaviour, such as the

educator's relationship with the learner and a lack of commitment (Semali & Vumilia, 2016).

Educators frequently face difficulties because of learners' behaviour. When an educator is teaching a big class of learners with varied skills, such behaviour can irritate them. Occasionally the behaviour of a few learners disturbs the usual running of a classroom or school for a short period of time. Educators may have to deal with behaviour that jeopardises their ability to teach learners.

There is no single definition of challenging behaviour that everyone agrees on. In a social context, behaviour is defined as acceptable or not, and it is also moulded by the larger environment in which individuals interact with one another (Gecas, 2017).

Challenging behaviour is defined by special education 2000 as behaviour that jeopardises the learners' or others' physical safety, threatens or causes significant property damage, severely restricts the learners' access to ordinary settings, and interferes with social acceptance, personal well-being and educational performance. (Juhnke & Granello, 2020). Disruptive task behaviour, swearing, responding back or being non-compliant are all examples of challenging behaviour, as are violence, bullying, vandalism and substance abuse (Mkuzo, 2020).

In certain literature, the phrase challenging behaviour is chosen since it emphasises the behaviour's challenge to the system rather than finding it within the individual. Such an approach acknowledges that the definition of behaviour is influenced by social factors. Only when a person's behaviour does not fit into the social environment in which they find themselves, it is considered a problem (Hanimoglu, 2018).

Any learner behaviour that stops an educator from teaching and a learner from learning is considered challenging behaviour (Ng, 2019). Craig et al. (2017) stipulated

that behaviour becomes a problem when it is presented in the wrong location, at the wrong time, in the presence of the wrong individual, and to an excessive degree. The following are some examples of disruptive behaviour: refusing to reply with requests and directions, general commotion, bragging, taunting, annoying or disrupting other learners, leaving their seats without authorisation, speaking out of turn, interrupting the educator or other learners, making inappropriate noises and not paying attention. According to Ogundele (2018), challenging behaviour is defined as behaviour of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the person's or others physical safety is likely to be jeopardised or behaviour that is likely to seriously impede or delay access to, and use of, routine facilities.

Most common behaviour problem among learners include truancy, fighting, shouting, snatching other learners' property, bullying, cheating, viewing pornographic materials, and threatening educators, among others (Kagoiya & Kagama, 2018). Onyechi and Okere (2015) identified the following as deviant behaviours exhibited frequently in classroom: walking out on the educator, noise making, sleeping in class, immorality, use of drugs. No one can deny that little to no learning takes place in a chaotic class with the mentioned activities.

The prevalence of violence is rife in most schools the world over. Silva et al. (2017) pointed out that in the United Kingdom learners are generally noisy, rowdy and disrespectful to educators. The use of foul language, and disrespect towards educators are also confirmed in United States of America. In the Caribbean, the problem of school indiscipline seems to be no different. In Nigerian schools, according to Adeniyi (2019), acts of indiscipline, which include truancy hooliganism, disrespect for school authority, cheating in examinations and drunkenness, were on the increase. A study conducted in Botswana among 200 high school learners reported that

absenteeism, stealing and smoking were most frequently committed offences (Gubbels et al., 2019).

2.2.1 Prevalence of Challenging Behaviour

Problematic behaviour in schools, particularly more severe disruptive and violent behaviour, is a persistent source of concern (Crawshaw, 2015). Severe difficult behaviour appears to start early in life, peaking around the age of four in most children, and then reducing after that. According to Rocque et al. (2017), aggressive behaviour patterns are generally not visible until the age of school enrolment. Up until that point, the behaviour is attributed to things like "the terrible twos" and "boys will be boys." Evidence suggests that a significant proportion of aggressive, disobedient, overactive toddlers and pre-schoolers continue to have problems at school entry age, contradicting popularly held beliefs (Hygen et al., 2015).

Although media attention is drawn to violent behaviour, classroom educators, learners, and parents report that the rising occurrence of disruptive behaviours, such as cursing, confrontational behaviour, disobedience, inattention, and inappropriate clowning, are of greater concern (Fitz-Gerald, 2017). The perpetrators' learning, as well as that of their classmates, is hampered by these behaviours. As a result, schools must have a comprehensive understanding of the types and frequency of disruptive behaviours, as well as information on the children who are most likely to engage in them.

The prevalence rates for learners with emotional or behavioural issues are usually stated to be in the range of 3%–6% of the school population (Fitz-Gerald, 2017). These figures, however, depending on the norms used to identify emotional and behavioural disorders, might vary. If children with minor and short-term behaviour problems are counted, the prevalence of children with problem behaviour could be as high as 40% (Bellis et al., 2018). However, prevalence figures as low as 0.18% may be attained if

only learners who are experiencing the most severe issues are included.

2.3 Factors that Influence Behaviour

There are different factors that influence learners' behaviour, including their surroundings. These aspects are linked to the outside world, specifically the school, peer pressure, family, community, and media. They are the social structures in which people impact learners in their daily lives (O'Keeffe et al., 2011).

2.3.1 The School

Adolescents spend much of their time in school, interacting and socialising with others. It is their natural social environment. However, the learner's behaviour is also influenced by this socio temporal space. In reality, the schools' qualities may have an impact on how learners interact with one another (Panchoo, 2016). According to Disgrace (2016), educators fail to teach positive and good behaviour to learners, which has an impact on what learners see as acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

2.3.2 Peer Pressure

Adolescents are more prone to succumb to peer pressure and engage in unacceptably risky behaviour that may harm themselves or others (Galani, 2015). Furthermore, according to Lukman and Kamadi (2014), peer group pressure has an impact on what a teenager values, knows, wears, eats, and learns. Adolescents engage in disruptive behaviour in groups rather than individually. this is based on social learning theory which states that when teenagers interact with other people, they learn to demonstrate

socially unacceptable behaviour (Bezuidenhout, 2013). Furthermore, when their parents are no longer considered role models, growing adolescents look to their friends at school as role models.

2.3.3 Community

It is possible that the learner's community is socially disorganised. The neighbourhood is dysfunctional when there is poverty, a lack of employment and education possibilities, gang activities, drug activities, and crimes, as well as a lack of neighbourly bonding and community networking (Gambo & Muktar, 2017). As a result, the values of the family and the ideals of this disorganised community are at odds, and the school fails to bring them together. Adolescents who are in this position lack social skills, such as prosocial behaviour and emotional regulation (Vijila et al., 2013). Furthermore, they may show a lack of regard for cultural and traditional standards as well as a low self-esteem. Adolescents with poor self-esteem are unable to control their emotions and behaviour, and they are confused (Naganandini, 2017). As a result, it is clear that learner indiscipline in schools is a reflection of indicators of disorder in the community that surrounds the school and in society as a whole (Amstutz, 2015).

2.3.4 The Media

Adolescents are millennials, and their daily lives at home, at school, and even among their peers are dominated by technology. Their lives are dominated by new media (Connolly & McGuinness, 2018). They are continuously multitasking; they are attending to the lecture while also sending messages, chatting on social media, and even watching YouTube on their mobile phones (Brennan & Dempsey, 2018).

Adolescents also overuse social media, putting themselves at danger for bullying, cyberbullying, sexting, Facebook depression, anxiety, severe isolation, and self-destructive behaviour (Belle, 2017). Furthermore, playing video games is linked to increased aggressive behaviour in adolescents (Lobell et al, 2017), and excessive media violence consumption through video games and television causes adolescents to become more verbally and relationally aggressive with other adolescents, as well as develop less prosocial behaviour. Furthermore, the media easily instils aberrant behaviour and practices in adolescent learners, who develop a distorted idea of sex, love, and affection, as well as a glorified image of violence in society (Ngwokabuenui, 2015).

The learner is not the sole determinant of school dropout or academic performance. There are multi-level and cross-level effects that contribute from an ecological standpoint. Examples of these factors at the individual level are gender, race, and substance use (Cho, 2017); previously failing a grade; and family composition (Lee, 2018). Household poverty and the cost of education, teenage pregnancy, a lack of enthusiasm in schooling, and a history of failing a grade or falling behind in schoolwork were among them (Murphy-Graham et al., 2020). As a result, the current study accounts for demographic factors such as gender and race, academic accomplishment, family composition, and socioeconomic level, substance use and leisure experience.

2.4 The Effects of Challenging Behaviour

Challenging behaviour includes a variety of negative consequences, including a lower quality of life for the individual, a bad influence on the emotional well-being of family

members and educators at school, and a negative impact on the emotional well-being of other learners. Challenging behaviour has been linked to a high rate of school dropout. School dropout is a major challenge despite the fact that youth education is a global priority. Despite the fact that dropout rates vary by country, one continuous finding is that dropping out of school leads to lower psychological, physical, social, and economic health (Lamb & Markussen, 2011).

Dropout rates in South Africa have reached critical levels. Approximately 60% of first-graders will drop out instead of completing the 12th grade. Similarly, just 52% of the age-appropriate population remains enrolled by Grade 12 (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2015).

2.4.1 Poor Academic Performance

Poor academic performance is one of the most frequent indicators used to identify a child with an emotional or behavioural condition (Mooney et al., 2003). Poor academic performance is correlated with childhood trauma in the early years of school and is predicted by academic failure, school dropout, delinquency, and poor employment prospects (Mooney et al., 2003). Problem behaviour and academic trouble have a complicated link. There are learners with problem behaviour who are high achievers as well as learners with academic difficulty who are not underachievers because academic performance varies by curricular level (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). Studies on the academic success of learners with problematic behaviour seem to be lacking (Mupa & Isaac Chinooneka, 2019).

Educators reports, predictably, demonstrated a high bias toward poor academic achievement in relation to curriculum advancement. In the Basic Skills Test question,

this trend was validated: According to the data, 60% of the identified learners scored in bands 1-3 in numeracy and 70% of them did so in groups 1-3 for literacy. These results indicate the widely-held assumption that behavioural problems are significantly predicted by academic failure, and that adolescents who have both are greatly at risk due to their combined academic and behavioural dysfunction.

Academic achievement has long been shown to be inversely associated to antisocial behaviour among young people. Poor academic performance co-occurs with, or is a predictor of, antisocial conduct (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). In their meta-analysis of studies on the relationship between academic performance and misbehaviour, Maguin and Loeber (1996) demonstrated that poor academic performance is correlated with the onset, frequency, persistence, and seriousness of deviant behaviour in both boys and girls. Alternatively, higher academic performance is linked to abstaining or ceasing from offending. Furthermore, regardless of socioeconomic background, poor academic achievement predicts criminality. The connection is not always inevitable, as was seen in this study and highlighted by McEvoy and Welker (2000), and a huge percentage of adolescents in this study with behaviour problems did not exhibit academic difficulties.

2.4.2 Educators' Perception on Learner Behaviour

Perception is the logical systems' processing of external information, such as visual or audio information. The subjective experience of information is commonly a result of perceptual information processing. Perception is the sensory part of the world's experience. It entails both sensing information from the environment and taking action in response to it. We obtain knowledge about the features and aspects of the

environment that are crucial to our existence through the perceptual process (Cherry, 2020).

Perception, according to McLennan et al (2020), is the process through which people organise and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their surroundings. Different people experience things in different ways because each person lends stimuli his or her own meaning, and how a person perceives a situation is frequently more important than the circumstance itself.

Educators in South Africa report finding it very hard to ensure and promote quality learning processes in their classrooms, according to Maarman and Lamont-Mbawuli (2017), due to the disrespectful and highly disruptive behaviour of some learners. A percentage of educators leave the profession each year because of this. Educators who stay in the field are said to be less motivated, attempting to “survive “each school day (Gemedda & Tynjälä, 2015). According to Booysen (2020), educators’ constant battle to handle challenging learner behaviour, which consumes a significant amount of their time and energy, leads to high levels of dissatisfaction and self-doubt. It is reasonable to assume that educators will have differing views on what constitutes challenging behaviour (DoE, 2000). As a result, it is vital to investigate educators’ perspectives on problematic behaviour.

According to Van Wyk (2016), many educators reported that the government’s stance on physical punishment has significantly contributed to an increase in disciplinary problems at school, and the government’s stance on corporal punishment has greatly contributed to a rise in disciplinary challenges at school. However, he believed that it is difficult for educators to properly regulate behaviour in the classroom because they lack a thorough knowledge and grasp of the various theoretical approaches to learner

behaviour. Although a nonviolent, constructive approach is supported at the policy level, educators at the grassroots level do not always agree with or follow this strategy. It is vital to remember that instructors deal with difficult behaviour on a regular basis, and that in many schools, corporal punishment was formerly an important aspect of the relationship between educators and learners. Any transformation process is difficult and complex, and this is no exception (DoE, 2000).

Educators' explanations of difficult behaviours are based on real evidence about difficult patterns. They do, however, reveal a variety of inaccuracies and inadequate perspectives (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Common educator justifications for misbehaviours overheard in staffrooms are "they are not that kind of person"; "they're not very intelligent"; "it's just a few"; "it's usual for 21 their age"; "it's the home life"; and "their brother was like this, too". Other educators feel disempowered as a result of these deficit judgments (Zee & Koomen, 2016). It may lead to negative and deficit thinking, which will destroy learner and educator self-esteem, the classroom environment, relationships, and the school's disciplinary culture.

When dealing with behaviour issues, it is also usual for educators to build a negative focus on the unwanted behaviour, which leads to a 'punishment that fits the crime' approach. Educators are considerably more in agreement about what behaviour is prohibited than what is expected. That is, it is easier for educators to explain what they will not tolerate than it is to specify the right behaviour that they expect. Perhaps this is due to our culture's emphasis on punishment as the primary tool for behaviour modification (Landrum & Kauffman, 2013).

The fact that the participants were first hesitant to admit that they found learner behaviour stressful and difficult to manage is important. Educators' capacity to manage behaviour in their classes is an essential measure of their performance as

educators and, therefore, this was clearly a sensitive topic for them. They discussed the subject more openly after they felt more at ease in the group and agreed that it was one of the key difficulties, they faced under the new education dispensation in South Africa (Nkambule & Amstedarm, 2018). Educators in rural schools mentioned talking out of turn relentlessly, and refusing to obey requests and instructions as general issues, but high levels of aggression, the use of addictive substances, smoking, stealing, and vandalism were listed as types of challenging behaviour in rural schools in less affluent communities.

These findings concur with those of Louw et al. (2012), that learners in the senior phase are more disruptive than those in the Further Education and Training phase. Louw mentioned that this could possibly be ascribed to senior phase learners experiencing less independence and confidence, and having a greater need for peer acceptance (Louw 2012). It is important that educators in the senior phase be made aware of this factor, as acceptance by the peer group often carries more weight than does obedience to authority figures.

Educators from both rural and urban schools highlighted poor school attendance and attention problems as major daily problems. More recently, Woodcock and Woolfson (2019) warned that classroom culture may contribute significantly to lower motivation levels of learners, stating that educators may blame learners for disruptive behaviour when the classroom culture and learning material do not invite learning.

The educators' own lack of motivation, enthusiasm and interest in learners contribute to a general unwillingness to learn and negative behaviour on the part of the learners (Prinsloo, 2015). Thus, educators not only have to teach, but also motivate learners to learn. By contrast, educators in urban schools mentioned that difficult learner behaviour makes significant inroads on their moral and work satisfaction. Butler (2014)

discussed that a general climate of undisciplined classroom behaviour may lead to wasting valuable teaching time and may so undermine educators that they question their self-efficacy. During one of the interviews, one educator mentioned that up to 90% of teaching time is spent on managing learner behaviour. Learners in urban schools appear to be more aware of their rights and are generally less motivated and less inclined to accept authority. One of the educators explained: “They are more arrogant. They are extremely aware of their rights. In the case of the grade eights and nines it is difficult to imagine. It is a complete nightmare they laugh at you”.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Grant and Osanloo (2014) defined theoretical framework as a plan for the whole study that helps to build and support the study, and specifies the study’s philosophy, epistemology and methodology and determine the overall approach to the study. The theoretical framework outlines the path of the research and connects the findings to the theoretical concepts. It also adds meaning to the research, ensuring that it follows the theories’ direction and guarantee that the findings are directly applicable (Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018).

According to the Harris (2018) a theoretical framework is the structure that consists of the research study and provides reasons for conducting the study. As a conclusion the hypothetical system can assist the analyst in establishing the correct analysis approach, expository devices and approaches for the study request. It improves the validity and makes study findings more significant and generalisable (Akinyoye, 2015). For other researchers in the field, establishes a universal ideology or focal point from

which to reinforce creative perspective about the issue and data analysis (Give & Osanloo, 2014).

2.5.1 Social Learning Theory

Robert Sears and his colleagues conducted a study with the intention of combining stimulus-response learning theory into a comprehensive clarification of human behaviour (Grusec, 1992). Albert Bandura and Robert Walters published “The Social Learning Theory”, and it was further elaborated in 1977. Social learning theory, according to Bandura (1971), is a theory that deals with the learning process, social behaviour and the development of new behaviour which is learnt by observing and imitating others. Although social learning can occur at different levels in a range of settings it is ideal for training many learners in a single classroom. Learners are continually monitoring others resulting in a reciprocal and continuous learning. Educators can assist learners learn by framing personal experiences as relevant content, establishing community through peer evaluation, by developing shared practices through group work, and expanding the goal of topic instruction to affect learners’ identities (Restad, 2021).

According to Kart (2019), this theory can be utilised to teach learners positive behaviours. Educators can employ good role models to enhance desired behaviours and, as a result, improve a school’s culture. Positive role models in and out of the classroom will assist not only individual learners but the entire class. Observation is very important to learning. It not only aids in the teaching of learners, but also in their understanding, retention, and application of what they have learnt in their life, allowing them to learn and achieve even more.

Individual's learning is not confined to direct observation, according to Bandura (1977), it can also include imitating others behaviour. To teach one must observe behaviour; encode an image of observed behaviour; recreate the observed image, and be motivated to execute the behaviour. This could be used as a tactic to get learners to replicate a positive behaviour.

2.5.2 Self Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan (1985) came up with the term self-determination in their 1985 book "Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behaviour". The ability to handle one's own relationships, make confident decisions and think for oneself is called self-determination (Deci, 1971).

The macro theory of human motivation and personality is known as self-determination. It is a paradigm that considers two major factors: people have natural growth tendencies and their fundamental psychological requirements. According to Lepper et al. (2016), if the behaviour is purely self-determined, there is a very high likelihood that it is both intrinsically motivated and that the behaviour is performed not for the reward or the prize, but for self-satisfaction, interest, and enjoyment for the behaviour itself. Non-self-determined behaviours are only carried out because they must be carried – not because they are enjoyable or fulfilling to the individual, but because they have little to no alternative on whether or not to participate in a said behaviour. Given that this behaviour is not done willingly, this results in the loss of control.

2.5.3 Self Determination Theory Application

Researchers have discovered that when educators promote a culture of autonomy in the classroom, learners are more intrinsically motivated to study (Goldman et al., 2017). When learners feel supported to investigate, take initiative, discover, and apply solutions to their challenges, they experience autonomy. To foster a sense of competence, educators should provide rapid feedback and extend and challenge learners. When feedback is done appropriately, it only gives the learner insight into how they are doing but it also makes them feel good about their performance.

When learners perceive others listening and responding to them, they feel connected. It is good to congratulate a learner on their accomplishments, but avoiding excessive external rewards for activities that learners already enjoy is critical if they want to boost their internal motivation (Aubret et al., 2019). Learners who are more active in the process of creating educational goals are more likely to feel intrinsically motivated, and improve their performance.

2.6 Policies

2.6.1 White Paper Six

Since the publishing of Education White Paper 6 in 2001, there has been a lot of discussion concerning inclusive education. The sixth white paper focuses on special education, with the goal of creating an inclusive education and training system that recognises that all children can learn and require support. It recognises and respects diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic background, and HIV status, as well as promoting education as a universal human right. It also recognises

that learning occurs not only in the classroom but also at home and in the community (Sharp, 2017).

To address the diverse demands of learners, structures and procedures had to be altered. The purpose of this inclusive education system was to enhance all learners' engagement while minimising their learning experiences and providing a single education system for all learners. To meet the learning needs of learners, adjustments in attitudes, behaviours, teaching methods, the curriculum, and the environment were required. This featured a more flexible curriculum and the formation of district-based support teams to assist learners and educators who needed it (Madlela, 2018).

2.6.2 Barriers to Learning

Barriers to learning are obstacles that exist within the education system as a whole, the learning site, and the learner himself. These difficulties limit learners from accessing learning and development (Sanchez et al., 2019). The term "barriers to learning" refers to the reasons why some learners struggle to learn (Coleman, 2019). The sources of these restrictions can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Physical, sensory, neurological, and developmental disabilities, as well as differences in intellectual capacity, are examples of intrinsic barriers. Extrinsic barriers are external factors that influence a person's ability to learn.

2.6.3 Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SAIS) was designed by the Department of Education to provide support for learners who face

both intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning. The goal of the SAIS strategy is to screen and identify learners who have learning difficulties and to provide support to help them overcome those limitations (Mavuso, 2022). Following that, the approach was changed and made public as a policy. The policy attempts to prevent learners from dropping out of school by identifying and supporting learners who face challenges (De Clercq, 2014b).

There are three stages to the SAIS procedure. Stage 1 involves the school and educator to collect data on each learner to understand their basic requirements, talents, and goals. This information aids the school in identifying learners who may be at risk and require a more proactive approach to avoid further issues.

Stage 2 applies to learners who have been identified as having learning challenges. Intrinsic and extrinsic impediments to learning are documented, and an individual assistance plan is created. The educator can use the individual support plan to keep track of the help given and the progress made. Support is available at the school level.

Stage 3 is a formal assessment review of the material obtained in the previous stages, supervised by the District Base Support Team. The level of help necessary is decided using a multidisciplinary team approach (DoE, 2014a). The levels of support are defined to guarantee that learners receive additional assistance from the right institution and intervention.

2.7 Various Perspectives on Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

According to Franklin and Harrington (2019), Vygotsky's believed that positive social interactions improve cognitive development, it is imperative for educators to foster reliable, respectful relationships within the classroom. Educators should demonstrate

an example of appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication skills and clearly state expectations for caring for one another and showing respect for others. Higher levels of classroom involvement, motivation, and resiliency are encouraged by the development of social skills, friendships, and peer acceptance. It is the role of an educator to honestly evaluate their own preconceptions and prejudicial attitudes as well as be aware of any fundamental negative attitudes present in the classroom in order to prevent harassment, bullying, racism, negative stereotypes, and abuse. (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Both educators and learners should cooperate and work together in a setting that respects diversity and encourages an interest in others.

Professionalism in thought, behaviour, and communication on the part of educators is a non-negotiable expectation and necessity in their capacity as educators. As their actions and inactions, response and negotiations are all seen and convey messages, educators serve as models of appropriate and suitable responses to their peers, parents, and learners every day. Learner behaviour is reinforced and set by the behaviour of the educator: if the educator is unprepared, tardy to class, and disorganized, they cannot reasonably expect their learners to behave differently. (Franklin, 2019). Emotional declines could result in problematic behaviour. Educators should pay attention to their own beliefs and morals, the behaviours they model, and how attentive they are to learners' needs to be able to aid and support learners.

Educators should not be influenced by their learners' undesirable behaviours to the point where they are unable to control themselves while attempting to reform them (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). If educators do not maintain control over their learners' behaviour, they risk creating an environment that is not conducive to teaching and learning. According to Eriksson et al. (2018), it is critical to recognise that learners who exhibit aggressive or confrontational behaviour are likely to have other negative

underlying feelings. These feelings could be a result of unfavourable experiences that learners have at home or the socioeconomic setting in which they live.

According to Bronfenbrenner's exosystemic perspective, each individual is a part of multiple environments at the same time, such as their home, school, and the larger socioeconomic environment, all of which interact with one another (Allan et al., 2018). As a result, rather than psychiatric illness or maladaptive behaviour, behavioural variations are the result of historical and systemic interactions. Problematic behaviour should not be viewed as only the duty of the educator but, rather, it should be addressed by parents, as well as school administration and educational authorities. This will invariably lead to a collaborative strategy that prioritises the management of disruptive behaviour at school, as well as in general (Allan et al., 2018).

Porteus et al. (2001) emphasised the implicit social context of human behaviour, suggesting that effective discipline measures should be examined in the context of relationships surrounding difficult learner behaviour. Peer group pressure frequently cancels the positive work that has been done on an individual level.

As previously stated, one of the educators indicated that her classroom had very little disruptive behaviour and offered the following rules for promoting positive classroom behaviour. First, develop a positive, mutually respectful relationship between the educator and the learner. Second, ensure that learners are aware of the classroom rules and what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Finally, before beginning classroom activities, educators and learners should greet one other politely (Rahayuningsih et al., 2020). Before beginning any activity, she suggests that educators explicitly convey their expectations of the learners. She emphasises the importance of rigorous preparation and planning for each class, as well as the flexibility to make changes and adaptations as needed.

Educators must speak and communicate with authority, as well as foster a positive classroom atmosphere, while also ensuring that the learner's whole development, not just his or her cognitive dimension, is addressed. Educators should be able to meet learners on their level without jeopardising any component of a positive educator-learner relationship, and they should admit when they are wrong. Finally, she stressed the need of discussing poor classroom behaviour with colleagues and seeking their assistance. Educators, she believes, should communicate with one another more frequently and share ideas and tactics (Wilhelm, 2016).

Luhanga (2014) supported this, arguing that educators have a professional responsibility to support learners who display challenging behaviour. It is never acceptable for educators to turn their backs on learners who have behavioural issues, or to count down the days until the end of the year, when the issues become the responsibility of another educator. A disciplinary system at a school should acknowledge and respect the human rights of others, according to the human rights values in South Africa (Freeman, 2017). It is worth noting that one of the educator's defining characteristics is her recognition of the importance of her own involvement in managing learner behaviour. She understands how important it is for her to make a difference in her classroom.

Educators reported being most confident in their abilities to utilise a number of non-aversive tactics such as voice modulation, facial expressions, deliberate ignoring, proximity management, and tension release (Brummelman & Walton, 2015). They also stated that they were eager to employ such tactics. Educators said they were able to establish a consistent classroom routine and clearly defined classroom rules that outlined what learners should do and how they should be enforced. These two areas ranked first and second in terms of willingness.

Educators expressed a strong desire to collaborate and consult with their colleagues and administrators. They were the least confident in their abilities to create and implement a reinforcement hierarchy for each learner, or to apply different reinforcement schedules like fixed-ratio or variable-interval reinforcement. The thorough documentation of learner conduct using charts, graphs, and logs was also a source of worry (Maldonado-Mahauad et al., 2018).

2.8 The Management of Challenging Behaviour

Although the majority of learners inappropriate behaviours are limited, such as talking out of turn and participating in off-task behaviours, evidence has shown that these disruptions to the learning environment and educators' self-efficacy have a negative impact on their stress levels and their ability to perform well. (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Appropriate behaviour management strategies are therefore essential for both educators' wellbeing and learners' academic progress. The best learning environments are those that carefully balance rules, fun, and discovery, with the majority of misbehaviour being avoided. While punishment is a necessary component of classroom management, effective educator leadership and thoughtful planning aimed at preventing or reducing misconduct are also important (Bennett, 2017).

The positive learning framework utilises a three-phase framework to improve learner engagement by reducing misbehaviours utilizing self-awareness, management, lesson planning, and remedial strategies (Moore et al., 2017). The positive learning framework (PLF) requires educators to create a supportive, safe environment for the learners well before they enter the classroom. Considerations for the prevention of challenging behaviour include seating arrangement, classroom safety, peer interaction, Displays, groupings, and a thorough explanation of the rules, customs,

procedures, and punishments are all combined. In addition, lesson designs that offer multiple methods of representation and expression and incorporate effective pedagogy, while motivating and engaging learners, also curb misconduct. The use of preventative strategies is fundamental in minimising misbehaviours; however, educators should also have the ability to design and carry out appropriate corrective actions when needed (Moore et al., 2017).

Despite the fact that PLF is implemented by educators, acceptable classroom behaviour principles should be established jointly with learner involvement through a technique called joint fairness, where the set of rules and procedures are represented as rights and obligations (Wei et al., 2021). Classroom behaviour policies that are derivative from a collective value that are more meaningful for learners than a random collection of rules imposed by the educator (Wei et al., 2021). Additionally, providing learners the option to participate in classroom management by structuring rules as a set of rights they are tasked with preserving rules that gives learners the chance to learn about democracy.

2.8.1 Lesson Design

Ensuring that classroom activities create meaningful, relevant learning experiences with the appropriate proportions of academic quality and scaffolding to meet within each learner's zone of proximal development is a crucial component of good lesson planning.

The majority of disruptive behaviours that take place during class activities are prompted by learners who find the activity to be excessively difficult (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017). Even the smartest learners need to understand the objective of the learning activity because, according to study, if they believe it is meaningless or just "busy

work," they are more likely to get distracted and cause problems (Lopes & Oliveria, 2017). Additionally, it has been shown that integrating purposeful movement that supports the curriculum alleviates disruptive behaviour, like inattention and hyperactivity, by increasing learners' endurance for focused work and learning (Nagro et al., 2019).

2.8.2 Implementing Effective Procedures and Routines

The educator's ability to implement and teach procedures is often key to smooth classroom operations. Many disruptions in the learning process result from a lack of adequate procedures. Learners are less likely to interrupt the flow of the lesson and thus negatively impact the learning process when they are aware of what to do when they enter the classroom, how to obtain the educators' attention, and how to change between learning activities (Muijs & Reynolds, 2017). Moreover, research has demonstrated that a lack of clear rules and expectations results in problematic behaviours, poor classroom management, more stressful teaching, and lowered learner achievement (Nagro et al., 2019).

2.8.3 Pacing

Educator effectiveness involves understanding timeframes and recognizing the appropriate time on both explanation and learning activities. As lessons drag on, learners become bored and distracted from the task at hand (Bennett, 2018). Furthermore, if learners are not given sufficient time for explicit explanations, they might assume the task is too difficult, get distracted, and interfere with both their own and other people's learning (Lopes & Oliveira, 2017).

2.8.4 Antecedents

The first step in preventing inappropriate behaviour is recognizing the circumstances or events that lead to it (Holland et al., 2018). Educators and learners can modify the antecedents by considering the incidents that occurred just before the unacceptable behaviour, thereby decreasing the probability of the disruptive behaviour occurring again in the future. A recent study demonstrates antecedence-based behaviour management techniques can benefit learners who are frequently disruptive or exhibit higher-level inappropriate behaviours, such as aggressiveness (Webber et al., 1993).

2.8.5 Proactive Praises

Praise as a method of preventing misbehaviour is a successful way to enhance the learning environment and reduce disruptive, off-task behaviours. Proactive praising has been demonstrated to improve academic performance, potentially increase, and decrease minimal misbehaviour (Storey & Post, 2017). Even though reactive approaches are less effective at managing behaviour, researchers have discovered that educators frequently use proactive praise for academic work and reactive negative responses for problems with inappropriate behaviour. (Storey & Post, 2017).

2.8.6 Reports by Educators

There is a lot of indiscipline in Zimbabwean schools. Eveline High School in Harare has devolved into a chaotic environment, with learners going unpunished for drinking and smoking at school. Educators are unable to control their learners since their authority has been eroded. Disruptive classroom behaviour is harmful in the

classroom. According to Du Plessis (2019), when learners misbehave, they learn less and discourage their friends from learning. Educating interaction is reduced as more time is spent on misbehaviour management rather than teaching. This causes stress for educators because they are diverted from teaching time. Du Plessis (2019) described a study of 805 members of the American Federation of Educators Union and indicated that 17% of educators wasted more than 4 hours per week to disruptive behaviour, while another 19% lost between 2 and 3 hours per week. The time and energy required to deal with some specific learners can be physically and emotionally tiring.

2.8.7 School Discipline Policy

School discipline can be described as “all the strategies that can be used to coordinate, regulate, and arrange individuals and their activities in the school” (Simuforosa & Rosemary, 2014) and to kept in place the guidelines and procedures required to establish and maintain an environment suited to teaching and learning. To maintain an academically oriented environment for teaching and learning, some element of behaviour must be encouraged in the classroom. According to Sieberer-Nagler (2016), one objective of discipline is to establish environment that is favourable to learning. Discipline is designed to eliminate disruptive behaviour in the classroom that may compromise learners’ safety.

2.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the two theoretical frameworks that were used to support this study. These theories are the self-determination theory and the social learning theory. The chapter has focused on the review of the literature on challenging behaviour in South African schools and the world view. This chapter has also compared the

prevalence of challenging behaviour between South African learners of different grades. This literature review assisted the researcher to develop a focus in attempting to answer the research questions of this study.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The researcher addressed the literature allied to this study in Chapter 2 and how it matches with the study's goal. This chapter will discuss the research methods, as well as how the data was analysed using a thematic content analysis method. Research methodology, according to Tuck and McKenzie (2015), is a strategy that describes the use and selection of certain procedures in a study. They also stated that it encompasses whatever the researcher is willing to examine.

Jamshed (2014) argued that the research methodology is a plan or architectural design in which the researcher identifies the best technique to dealing with the topic. He went on to describe research methodology as the selection and application of specific methods to solve a problem.

The researcher discusses the methods utilised to create this study in this chapter. This chapter describes the interpretive paradigm that educators employ to convey their experiences with disruptive behaviour. The qualitative approach, which is used to analyse and generate themes regarding educators' lived experiences with disruptive behaviour in schools, is also discussed in this chapter. In addition, a discussion of the sample's design process is provided in this chapter, along with details on the sample's population and design. Furthermore, the researcher discusses the data collection methods employed in this study, which include interviews. The researcher utilised thematic analysis to interpret the material and describe the thematic analysis after collecting the data. The information about ethical considerations, study limitations, and a summary is also covered at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), research design is a whole plan that is used by a researcher to select various components of a study clearly and logically; these components assist in ensuring that a researcher successfully addresses the research problem. This study adopted qualitative research design to examine the behaviours, opinions, and experiences of individuals through methods of examination (Dawson, 2019). This type of approach typically requires less participants, but more time with each participant. It gives research subjects the opportunity to provide their own opinion on a certain topic.

3.3 Research Methodology

According to Dawson (2019), the key principle that will guide the research is the research methodology. It becomes the general approach to conducting research on the issue and decides the research method that the researcher will employ. The research methodology differs from the research method in that research methods are the tools used to collect data (Dawson, 2019).

When deciding on the best methodology for the topic, the researcher must examine numerous factors. Issues may include research restrictions and ethical quandaries that may have an impact on the quality of the research. Descriptions of each sort of methodology follow.

3.4 Research Paradigm (Interpretivism)

The research paradigm, according to Queiros et al. (2017), is about the study and the researcher's point of view or collection of references for observing life and

comprehending reality. Davies and Fisher (2018) defined a research paradigm as the manner in which a researcher asks research questions and conducts research. Different components of paradigms include ontology, epistemology, axiology, and research procedure. The interpretive pattern is used in this investigation.

This paradigm, according to Moser and Korstje (2018), employs a qualitative research design with a small sample size to collect rich, in-depth data about participants' particular experiences and expertise. The interpretive paradigm is dialectical, which means it seeks solutions and knowledge through dialogue and interaction between the researcher and participants (Davies & Fisher, 2018).

3.4.1 Interpretivism

This study utilized an interpretive paradigm because it had characteristics that match with the study's goal of having educators describe in detail how they dealt with learners who displayed challenging behaviour. The chosen paradigm was chosen because of its characteristics, which included allowing individuals to be open, flexible, and free to express themselves. This paradigm led the researcher in selecting research techniques and data collection equipment for describing, exploring, and comprehending educators' experiences in dealing with learners who exhibit problematic behaviour.

3.5 Research Approach

This study adopted a qualitative approach to allow researchers to discover relevant topics and subjects in detail. According to Rahman (2017), qualitative research has a subjective meaning that includes feelings and emotions about personal life, lived

experiences, behaviours, organisational functions, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between people, based on evaluation. Flick (2014) added that qualitative research produces results by analysing text and images rather than numbers and statistics. It is also about how people generate an understanding of something in the world. This approach was chosen because it allowed participants to provide more specific information about their experience in dealing with learners presenting challenging behaviour in school.

This study is designed to have a qualitative background. The research design was chosen to enable the researcher in evaluating the available support to assist educators in dealing with learner's challenging behaviour in secondary schools. It allowed the researcher to analyse the nonverbal communication of the participants, as well as the spoken words during the conducted interviews.

The interview schedule was reviewed by this study's supervisor, who is a qualified educational psychologist, to ensure relevance to the research questions. The university research and ethics committee approved the interview schedule before each interview session, and the participants were reminded that taking part was voluntary and they were free to leave at any time. During the interview, the researcher used a pen and paper to note important verbal cues and the facial expression of emotions.

For accuracy and efficiency, an audio recorder was used. The researcher explained the use of the audio-recorder and obtained consent for this process, and the opportunity was used to clear any misunderstandings in answering the questions. The interviews audio-recorded for direct verbatim transcriptions for analysis, and the participants' identities were kept anonymous.

3.6 Sampling

3.6.1 Population and Sample

A research population is the group of individual or objects that have similar characteristics (Lind et al., 2017). The population of this study consisted of educators from four secondary schools in King Cetshwayo districts. According to Etikan et al. (2016), a sample is a pre-selected group of people from the overall population. The sample size of this study constituted 10 school-based support team educators in four mainstream secondary schools in King Cetshwayo District.

3.6.2 Sampling Methods

According to Alvi (2016), sampling method is a process where a researcher is selecting a sample from the whole population to conduct a study. Samples in qualitative studies are normally small and purposive (Dospinescu & Lantai, 2016). Sampling is also a method that allows researchers to get information on a large community using a few randomly chosen samples rather of having to contact every single person in the population (Taherdoost, 2016). This study used different sampling methods, the convenient and purposive sampling methods.

A convenient sampling method was used to select the four schools which were conveniently accessible to the researcher. Convenience sampling is a non-random sampling where individuals of the target population are selected for the study's purposes if they meet the criteria, such as ease of accessibility, geographic closeness, availability at a specific time, or desire to participate (Scholtz, 2021). Then from these four schools, 10 educators in a school-based support team were purposively selected to participate in the study, because they are the ones who frequently deal with learners'

challenging behaviours. Ashley (2018) stated that purposive sampling method is a non-probability sample which is formulated according to the characteristics of a population and to suit the objectives of a study.

3.7 Data Collection

The procedure of collecting, measuring, and interpreting correct insights for research using standardised approved techniques is defined as data collection. Based on the facts obtained, researchers might evaluate their hypothesis. In most cases, regardless of the subject of study, data gathering is the first and most significant stage. Depending on the information requested, the approach to data collection varies for various themes of research (Resch et al., 2020).

3.7.1 Interviews

According to Kumar (2014), the interview schedule is a mostly used data collection instrument which is defined as a person-to-person or face-to-face interaction with the specific purpose of gaining information through speaking or discussion. Interview schedules are data collections instrument where a researcher asks one or more participant's questions — mainly open-ended questions and record answers for interpretation based on the study aims (Quad, 2016). Quad added that the main task of the interview is to understand participants' views and opinions. Qualitative studies use various data collection instruments, and interview schedules are the most used data collection instrument in qualitative research (Jamshed, 2014).

Interviews can be in the form of a structured and semi-structured interview, and they either use open-ended or close-ended questions (Doyle, 2017). According to

Alshenqeet (2014), interviews in research is a discussion with the aim of collecting information about a certain topic from the research participant(s) and to interpret information associated with the study objectives. Castillo-Montoya (2016) added that interviews offer researchers with thorough and rich data for understanding participants' experiences and how they make sense out of it.

This study used semi-structured interviews that are associated with the study objectives. A semi-structured interview is a process where the interviewer does not strictly follow any order of questions but is guided by certain questions and aim(s) (Doyle, 2017). Semi-structured interviews use more open-ended questionnaires for different views rather than direct answers (Doyle, 2017).

This study consists of in-depth interviews and open-ended questions about educators' experiences in dealing with challenging behaviour. Participants were informed about their rights before the interviews and that they will be recorded for keeping records and transcribed after recording. The interview process gave participants a chance to express themselves in-details and in their words.

3.8 Validity and Reliability in Interpretivism Paradigm

Validity and reliability are the key aspects of all research and can determine whether a researcher's findings are reliable and trustworthy (Hayashi, 2019). However, in a qualitative study, some researchers recommend against utilising the term validity and instead suggest using terms such as credibility, dependability, confirmability, trustworthiness, verification, and transferability (Cypress, 2017).

Credibility, dependability and transferability were utilised in this research phase to

ensure trustworthiness. Cypress (2017) described qualitative research as a process of complying to the established principles for verifying the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research phase.

Credibility: Is the degree of confidence that the research's findings are trustworthy. Credibility determines if the research findings are a valid interpretation of the participants' original perspectives and represent feasible information derived from the participants' original data (Miles et al., 2018). To ensure an accurate record of what took place throughout these discussions, the depth interviews were recorded. The participants were given the assurances that discussions would be kept private and that their identities would be kept anonymous, they were further encouraged to participate openly in the interview sessions.

Confirmability: Confirmability is concerned with proving that the data and interpretations of the findings are clearly drawn from the data and not just the inquirer's imagination (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The researcher provided a detailed research data methodology that outlined the phases of data analysis that were conducted to provide support for the decisions made to assure confirmability. This led to the establishment of an accurate reflection of the participants' responses.

Dependability: Dependability entails the evaluation of the study's findings, interpretation, and suggestions by the participants in such a way that each is supported by the data collected from the participants (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

Transferability: Through comprehensive description, the researcher assists a potential user determine whether any information is transferable (Smith, 2018). This perspective refers to how well other researchers may be able to apply the research findings in related circumstances. To ensure that the findings were transferable, the

researcher provided a thorough overview of every research procedure that was used. Transcripts and codes for interviews were used.

3.9 Data Analysis: Thematic Content Analysis

This study analysed collected data from interviews and questionnaires by thematic analysis technique. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting acquired information in themes, and it is a method that organises data in a simple and understandable form (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Lantai and Dospinescu (2016) argued that thematic analysis is a type of data analysis which is used to analyse documents, records, transcribed interviews, letters or any written documents. The researchers added that thematic analysis includes making interpretations by coding certain messages based on their characteristics, and it is associated with the process of discovering understanding in written data being studied.

Thematic analysis is viewed by Alhojailan (2012) as the most convenient method for analysing data in the qualitative studies. It is also used to examine the classification and present data in themes, and it explains data in details and deals with different subjects via interpretations. Nowell et al (2017) mentioned that thematic analysis is mostly used in qualitative studies because it provides core skills for analysing and it is more appropriate for finding interpretations. Alhojailan (2012) added that thematic analysis is used to combine different concepts and opinions to form a new understanding.

Braun and Clarke (2006) contended that thematic analysis should be an initial method for qualitative analysis. They further published that thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that can be used with a variety of epistemology and research

questions. This research used Nowell et al. (2017) six steps in analysing thematic analysis which are: “familiarising yourself with your data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing the report” (Nowell et al., 2017, p.4).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics ensure no harm comes to participants and promotes their welfare. This researcher obtained permission from the Department of Education to investigate bullying in schools. As this study involves educators, the researcher also obtained permission from principals. Informed consent was included, which explained the purpose of the research, nature of the research, expectations from participants, the confidentiality of received information and participants’ right to withdraw from the study at any time. The information gathered from interviews and questionnaires had to be maintained and kept private and confidential. To ensure full confidentiality, raw data, such as written transcriptions, were shredded after the analysis was completed. All participants and schools were coded and codes substituted their names. Participants were given time to read and ask questions before signing the consent forms.

3.11 Summary

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology that underpin this study. The researcher used the descriptive research design and qualitative methods to get personal views from educators. Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were utilised to collect data. The collected data was analysed by thematic analysis to formulate understanding and to provide findings to the identified problem statement. This chapter was based on the proposed research methods in Chapter 1. The

following chapter will present the collected data and the analyses of the themes and understanding.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the study's research methodology and how the collected data was analysed using thematic content analysis. This chapter is focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data obtained from the sample. It aims to analyse and interpret the responses of the participants to make the data meaningful, thus obtaining the research project's findings.

The presented data were collected from 10 participants who were interviewed for the current study. The researcher used semi-structured interviews using tape recordings. These recordings were also used to accurately translate the responses into English, as most of the participants preferred to use IsiZulu. The thematic analysis was used to analyse data and the themes that emerged are discussed at the end of the chapter. The discussion of themes combined the theoretical framework and literature review into the findings.

This study collected data to explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour, thus establish strategies educators use to manage learners' challenging behaviour, to determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour.

4.2 Characteristics of the Research Participants

The study consisted of 10 research participants, and they were males and females. They were currently teaching in their respective schools in King Cetshwayo District during the year 2021. The names and identities of the research participants are

anonymous: numbers and alphabetical characters were used instead of the real names and the names of the school. The profiles of the respondents are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: The characteristics of research participants

Participant number	Gender	Grade taught
1	Male	12
2	Female	12
3	Female	12
4	Female	10
5	Male	10
6	Female	8
7	Female	9
8	Female	8
9	Female	9
10	Male	9

4.3 Themes of the Study

The developed themes were organised according to the study objectives and the associated sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Objectives of the study, main themes, and sub-themes that emerged from data collection

Objectives of the study	Themes	Sub-themes
To explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour.	Disturbance of teaching and learning.	– Attention seeking – Bullying and peer pressure – Poor academic performance – The media
To establish strategies educators, use to manage learners' challenging behaviour.	Accommodating learners' differences.	– Educators building a relationship and respecting learners – Parental involvement – Reinforcement of behaviour – Educator as a role model
To determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour.	Interventions and support in assisting educators dealing with challenging behaviour.	– Involving outside stakeholders – Lack of educators training

4.3 Disturbance of Teaching and Learning

According to this study, the data provided by participants on challenges indicated that educators experience several challenges which seem to be a disturbance of teaching and learning when dealing with learners' challenging behaviour. Disturbances of teaching and learning commonly involved all the participants. They mentioned that in dealing with the learners who are disruptive can be really frustrating because sometimes it becomes hard to finish what they have prepared for the period. Therefore, the planning for the week gets disrupted when the lessons have to be repeated, as more time is spent on disciplining learners than teaching.

Khadzi and Poudel (2022) confirmed that educators always face several challenges in their classrooms due to the diverse behaviours of the learners such as some undesirable behaviours are late arrival, early departure, gossiping, disregard of

deadlines for assignment, irresponsible and disruptive. The following responses support the above-mentioned theme of disturbance of teaching and learning.

4.3.1 Attention Seeking

Learners who seek attention distract the educators when teaching because the educators spend a lot of time attending to them, addressing their behaviour and a lot of time is wasted. Educators reported that the learners who seek-attention do not follow or listen to instructions given to them. They always do the opposite so they can be treated in a special manner from other learners because their behaviour differs from what is expected of them. This theme is supported by the following information found from the research participants responses:

“I stop teaching and give the learners an opportunity to do what they were doing when I get destructed and a lot of time get wasted while I am trying to understand what is the point of what the learner is doing, why are they doing it and give the attention to the learner because maybe they want attention so I give it to them so they can explain why they disrupt the class, only to find that they don’t know why they are doing that they themselves cannot explain their behaviour.” (Participant 2)

“These learners are very aggressive and cannot always take or listen to instruction given to them as a result teaching and learning get disturbed all the time when you have to attend to them. They always seek attention they are always up and down, there is a lot of things that they do.” (Participant 3)

“First of all, learners are not the same those who has a challenging behaviour from my experience they are always seeking attention at that disrupt the teaching and learning., while trying to establish the reason of their behaviour. Those learners you must not fight with them. Understand their problem and then try and find out how can you treat him/her because they want you to treat them special than other learners. Because if you punish them sometimes it

makes them to be worse than before.” (Participant 4)

“Learners would want unnecessary attention they would go out of the class without my permission while I am teaching. The learners would just stand up and cause a havoc and chaos, making it difficult for me to continue with my lesson. They would crack jokes others would laugh which disturbs me from teaching.” (Participant 8)

The above information mentioned by educators could mean that they interpret learners' behaviour as attention seeking, they further seemed to understand that the attention seeking behaviour could have various reasons.

4.3.2 Bullying and Peer Pressure

Another contribution to the challenging behaviour and the change in learners' behaviour mentioned by participants is bullying and peer pressure. Learners from primary get bullied in secondary school and their behaviour change. They do not report the bullying but instead they act out. Other educators reported that those learners who bully others are the same learners who slow down the process of teaching and learning and they show no respect for other learners by being despondent in their learning. This theme is supported by the following information found from the research participants responses:

“In most cases the older learners in high school bully the new learners. You find that the learner was disciplined and they learn new bad behaviours taught by the senior learners. 12345 down the line you will see that a learner has changed compared to what they were, they have changed. They hide that they are bullied in schools.” (Participant 1)

“For me these learners have made the teaching and learning very slow and difficult since they are always up to no good and not respecting learning and their peers in class, they are always irresponsible and not taking initiative to co-

operate in their learning. Some are bully and quick to hit others physically and also bully others emotionally.” (Participant 3)

The educators mentioned in the above information that learner’s disruptive behaviour could mean that it is the result of bullying and peer pressure, their further explained that their behaviour seemed to disrupt the process of teaching and learning.

4.3.3 Poor Academic Performance

The educators reported that those learners do not take studying seriously. When the educators follow up on them, they discover that they are struggling academically which leads to dropping out of the school. This theme is supported by the following information found from the research participants responses:

“The learners who are disruptive always do the opposite when you tell them to sit down, they stand up and you will discover that they are struggling academically.” (Participant 4)

“Learners do not pass and end up dropping out. They do not take their studies serious I also need to account as to why they fail.” (Participant 8)

According to the data provided by the educators above, this could mean learners who are disruptive in class they struggle academically and they are more likely to drop out of school.

4.3.4 The Media

Media is one of the contributing factors to challenging behaviour and the destruction in the process of teaching and learning. Learners focus on their phones instead of participating and focusing on the learning. Other educators reported that those learners who focuses on social media sometimes distract the class by showing other

learners what is trending on the media. This theme is supported by the following information found from the research participants responses:

“When I am teaching a learner will distract a class and make jokes showing a funny picture from the phone and I will be expected to take time disciplining that one learner.” (Participant 1)

“Those learners they talk in class and distract those who are learning. They do not follow instructions they do not write their work because they did not understand due to multitasking. You find that a learner was busy on WhatsApp ... ey ... when you explain the instructions and when they happen to pay attention, they expect you to explain again.” (Participant 4)

Learners use their cell phones to sell drugs and send threatening messages within the school. Learners play on the Internet, chat with friends, and ignore the classroom educator while playing video games on their phone. The impact of media in schools is very bad and disruptive to the learners because they cannot focus at all. Sometimes learners body shame each, bully each on social media and that cause unnecessary fights (Zhang et al., 2022).

“You know what the learners with challenging behaviours sit at the back most of the time they like to put themselves in a place where you cannot easily ask them questions, and group each other so that they are able to have those disruptive moments like making jokes laughing or even just disturbing other learners so they like sitting in the back and not do the work that you are giving them instead they could be using their phones, drawing or doing something not relevant to what you are teaching them.” (Participant 10)

The usage of media can be both beneficial and harmful; it can be used for academic purposes and non-academic purposes as well (Zhou et al., 2022). There is an increasingly common view expressed that modern media are not only seductive but *designed* to be addictive. According to various research, there have been numerous instances of learners using social media to bully, harass, and even promote "hate

speech."

According to Safaria et al, (2016), bullying occurs virtually in Indonesian secondary schools between learners. Cyberbullying can have a negative impact on learners' emotional health as well as their academic performance. Raut and Patil (2016) make an observation about the drawbacks of using social media. They claimed that a lot of fake accounts are used in virtual relationships. Learners may have a serious issue with this if they are drawn to bad individuals. Additionally, teenagers can look for and even download immoral video programs like pornography if social media access is not restricted. (Kamaku & Mberia, 2014).

4.4 Accommodating Learners' Differences.

4.4.1 Building a Relationship and Respecting Learners

The strategy that was mentioned by all participants was to get down to the level of the learners and try to understand them and the causes of their behaviour, to try and find solutions when a learner is disruptive. Other educators reported that befriending and getting closer to the learners helps a lot because they get the opportunity to tell the educator about what causes their disruptive behaviour. The participants stated that although the disruptive learners annoy them, they approach them in a respectful way to avoid negative response and the escalation of the negative behaviour.

The following statements supported this theme:

"I always find time alone with the learners who distract me in class and talk to them about why school and their co-operation is important in class. I calmly tell them how their behaviour disturbed others without hurting their feelings, because when their feelings are hurt, they might not listen attentively and they might respond negatively and also if you talk to them in a negative way, it might

cause them to feel so small and not needed.” (Participant 3)

“I get close to them and befriend them what I have realize is that works for me. Actually, being close to them help them focus on what you are saying or doing sometimes you just need to listen to them actively, you can note as they speak it really makes them feel respected and comforted. We should create an environment for good behaviour as educators, we must take time get to know each of our leaners and build good relationship with them.” (Participant 4)

“What I normally do I befriend those learners who are troublesome because what I have notice is that out of 50 learners, they all come from different backgrounds.” (Participant 5)

“I really try to put myself in their shoes so that I can come to understand them at some sort of level and I really believe treating the other person the way you want to be treated. Obviously, it is frustrating when the child is disruptive in class but I try and approach them in a really mature and respectful manner because I believe that if you simple shout at the learners they are going to push back even more towards you and maybe if you show them that you coming from a place of respect they will be encouraged to comply with you and to obey your classroom rules and adjust their behaviour appropriately.” (Participant 6)

“What I normally do, I try to build a relationship with them and talk to them in a calm, respectful and non-threatening manner.” (Participant 7)

“I pull them aside and talk about the issue privately and my question would be “why are they disturbing me in class? then I will tackle the issue by trying to work with them on solving it and try to come up with the solution.” (Participant 9)

“Usually when I see that learners are disruptive, I like to change the setting of the class. My learners do not have a permanent sitting. So, I like to rotate them it could be after a short test every week just to get them not comfortable where they are sitting because when they are comfortable, they start making distraction or getting destructed or disturbing other learners so each week after having a mini test I rotate them according to marks. This is not to make them feel bad about themselves it’s just to improve. The ones who get the low marks

are always in front so for them to go sit at the back they have to get more marks. Usually, the learners that always make jokes they will study hard to improve so they can sit at the back.” (Participant 10)

Educators seems to use various strategies to accommodate learners and understanding their behaviour. They further explain that they sympathise with the learners which seems to assist them in improving their behaviour.

4.4.2 Parental Involvement

Another strategy that was mentioned by some participants was to involve parents for the solutions when a learner is disruptive. Other educators reported that involving parents helps a lot because they attend a meeting for discussions and solutions. On the other hand, this strategy is not effective because not all parents attend meetings, even if they are called in for cases that involve their children. Other parents report that they are also having a difficulty in dealing with the learner behaviour at home. The following statements were selected to support this theme:

“Well, well, well, if the problem persist, I contact the parents of the learner and let them know about the challenges that I have with their child and let them know that it is difficult for me to teach their child. I usually find out that those learners are troublesome even at home. Parents also complain about the learner’s behaviour they will tell me that they are also having a hard time at home with their behaviour. If we do not have a support from the parent, I leave it like that but I am against that disruptive behaviour in my class.” (Participant 2)

“I always maintain frequent communication with parents for managing challenging behaviours it is important to keep parents on the loop of their learner’s behaviour and ensure that we work together to establish that similar notes at home and the school.” (Participant 3)

“The support that we have so far, we get it from the School Governing Body.

The principal asks the SGB and they usually have the meeting with the parents of the learner who misbehave and rude. That is the only support I can say we have.” (Participant 4)

“Parental involvement is one of the best strategies we can do. Sometimes you can deal with the same behaviour for 3 months until you talk to the parent, they will let you know how to deal with the child behaviour.” (Participant 5)

Educators reported that involving parents seems to assist in getting to understand learner`s behaviour as well as involving SGB. Communication between the educators and educators seems to have a positive outcome when it comes to learners` behaviour. Furthermore, they described that School Governing Body`s strategy of having meeting with parents helps them to feel supported by parents.

4.4.3 Reinforcement of Behaviour

The strategy mentioned by the participants was using positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour. They found that praising and acknowledging good behaviour in class and in front of other learners motivated learners to also behave well.

“There is something called positive and negative reinforcement. What I normally do I just apply that method the positive reinforcement. It is whereby you encourage the learners who are doing very well by acknowledging their good behaviour like if a learner is always punctual, always quiet and listen to instructions. If you acknowledge that learner in front of others, that is a positive reinforcement because you are encouraging him/ her to do more better and there is a negative reinforcement whereby a learner misbehave and you intervene by minor punishment.” (Participant 5)

“We must always give them credits when they have done well, rather than waiting for them to misbehave and start noticing.” (Participant 3)

“I do not believe in punitive approaches to discipline. Punitive discipline makes

the learner feel smaller than what they are and I never want to break down the learner I always want to uplift the, although I find it challenging to understand their disruptive behaviour.” (Participant 6)

The information provided by educators could mean that praising the good behaviour of learners as a strategy to motivate and promote good behaviour so that it can be more likely to occur in the future. They seemed to use it as a strategy to discourage disruptive behaviour which could be caused by various reasons.

4.4.4 Educator as a Role Model

Another strategy that was mentioned by participants was for an educator to be a role model and portray the behaviour for the learners, so that learners can learn from them. Instead of shouting at them and educators considered the choice of words they use since they have an impact on how learners respond to them. The following statements support this theme:

“Firstly, as educators it is very important to understand that learners quickly learn how to behave. We have to be their role model we need to mind our own behaviour because they do watch us and get clue on how to behave at school. We must use words like please all the time and that might give them an idea that it is good to say please, rather than being disrespectful and also when we speak, we should be calm because that will help them to apply the same approach than being an opposite.” (Participant 3)

The above information provided by educators could mean that they find it effective being role models to learners and displaying the behaviour that they expect from learners.

4.5 Interventions and Support in Assisting Educators Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

4.5.1 Involve Outside Stakeholders

Some of the participants in this study reported that there is not much support given in their schools but others stated that they involve other stakeholders as a strategy for dealing with challenging behaviour in their schools. The stakeholders mentioned during interviews are social workers, parents and the School Governing Body (SGB). The research participants emphasised the use of other professionals because educators are not well-equipped or trained to deal with bullying. This view was supported by the different participants who reported the following in their interviews.

“The social worker and the school management team communicate with the parents of which most of the time is a futile exercise because mostly parents have given up on their learners and we turn to go with the flow of what is happening.” (Participants 2)

“Having a social worker in school may help a lot because we can just refer those learners to them and they may talk to them about their emotions and problems that can help educators, and also to involve parents in daily lives at school, because school is their second home.” (Participant 3)

“Basically, there is no support from government, government does not support educators at all with regards to challenging learners but the support that we have is from some of the parents and SGB. Every year we update the policy on how to deal with a challenging learner.” (Participant 5)

“At my school there is not much support given if I go to my HOD or the principal they say that they will speak to the child but I feel that their approach to speaking to the child goes nowhere it’s not really directive and it does not send across the right message.” (Participants 6)

“There is no support given to us.” (Participant 7)

There is evidence that different stakeholders are included in resolving the issue of disruption in schools. The researcher noted that the issue of educators experiencing difficulties in handling challenging behaviour results in involving social workers for additional interventions. The self-determination theory discusses competence, which is one of the three elements which can promote educators' ability to set goals about intervening in school challenging behaviours. It seems that educators desire to intervene in school but they eventually involve other stakeholders because they are not well-equipped to deal with challenging behaviour.

4.5.2 Lack of Training of Educators

Lack of educators' training on challenging behaviours leads to poor teaching and learning and causes educators to suffer more because of not getting adequate support and help. Educators emphasised the need for training to deal with challenging behaviours in a professional and helpful manner. Educators stated that the Department of Education was not supporting them. They further said the Department of Education stopped the use of corporal punishment but did not provide them or train them with strategies to replace it. The researcher found the following responses to expose the need for training for educators.

"I recommend that if the department can assist us, with training on how to deal with challenging learners if they can intervene because the corporal punishment is no longer allowed." (Participant 4)

"A short-term solution that could probably be sustainable such as forming support groups for educators who are struggling to cope. It could be at the school and maybe that school could reach out to other school in the immediate community and ask fellow educators how they manage. Together in the support group they can share strategies they have implemented and things that they

have tried to deal with this issue.” (Participant 6)

“As long as you have strategies to deal with such behaviour in the classroom and understanding the cause of the behaviour you can handle it effectively and keep class disruption to a minimum.” (Participant 7)

“I would recommend that department of education provides us training on how we can deal with challenging learners.” (Participant 8)

“I recommend that this issue of educators struggling with challenging behaviour should be taken into consideration for the next generation to be well equipped. Educators should be taught strategies on how to deal with such learners.” (Participant 9)

The lack of educators’ training about dealing with challenging behaviour was reported to be the main problem that contributed to the disruption of teaching and learning. The research participants strongly recommended getting more training about dealing with cause, prevention and handling challenging behaviours in schools. Educators feel that they are not fully in control of school discipline because they lack the necessary skills to handle challenging behaviour. The educators recommended getting more training to deal with challenging behaviour.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

4.6.1 Sub-theme 1: Disturbance of Teaching and Learning

The research findings indicated that educators experience several challenges which disturb teaching and learning when dealing with learners’ challenging behaviour. This information is similar to the findings of Shamnadh and Anzari (2019), who stated that misbehaviour of learners or negative class participation in the classroom may be disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching

activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to educator, defiance, and hostility is one of the serious issues especially in secondary classrooms. Misbehaviour often interrupts the smooth functioning of learning process in the classroom. This can unsettle the educators or other learners in the class. Studies have shown that school misbehaviour not only intensifies with time but also lowers academic achievements and increases unruly behaviour (Biagioli et al., 2019). Misbehaviour is closely associated with disciplinary issues that warrants careful action from educators.

The study by Mohamed (2018) discovered that learners' misbehaviour in classrooms interrupts the smooth functioning of teaching learning process. Many factors are considered to be responsible for the learners' classroom misbehaviour. Learners' lack of interest, lack of motivation, attention seeking, the classroom environment, educators' attitude, the community and the family background of the learners are some of the factors mainly contributing to this. Dealing with learner misbehaviour within the classroom could be a major task for educators. It makes the educators to perceive the sources before managing disruptive behaviour. There are not any stereotypes for resolving the problem, since learners are completely different from one another, and that makes the educator offer completely different responses to each individual child. An inappropriate reaction to learner misbehaviour in the classes can make the matter worse and affect as the teaching and learning progresses.

4.6.2 Sub-theme 2: Attention Seeking

The research findings specified that learners' attention seeking behaviour contributes a lot into disturbance of teaching and learning process. Shamnadh and Anzari (2019) stipulated that attention seeking behaviour is anything that a learner does to

deliberately draw attention to themselves may be from his/her peer group or educators in the classrooms. Being the centre of attention is a common desire for learners, some more than others. Acting out by making fun of others, swearing, talking out of turn or simply being uncooperative are a few ways of learners misbehaving in the classroom, seeking others' attention. These behaviours are designed specifically to make other notice them. The need to gain and hold the attention of others appears to be a general human characteristic. Some children try to gain others' attention, such as parents or educators, by being natural and friendly when they grow up in positive environments; in contrast, some children find they can gain the attention of others by anti-social behaviour for example being impatient or angry rather than by social behaviour.

The study by Ruirie (2018) pointed out that a general climate of undisciplined classroom behaviour may lead to wasting valuable teaching time and may so undermine educators that they question their self-efficacy. During one of the interviews, one educator mentioned that up to 90% of teaching time is spent on managing learner behaviour. Learners in urban schools appear to be more aware of their rights and are generally less motivated and less inclined to accept authority. One of the educators explained: They are more arrogant. They are extremely aware of their rights.

4.6.3 Sub-theme 3: Bullying and Peer Pressure

The findings on this theme highlighted that another contributor to the challenging behaviour and the change in learners' behaviour is bullying and peer pressure. The study of Gilani (2015) suggested that adolescents are more prone to succumb to peer pressure and engage in unacceptably risky behaviour that may harm themselves or others. Furthermore, according to Abdulrahman and Education (2020), peer group

pressure has an impact on what a teenager values, knows, wears, eats, and learns. According to Belle (2017), adolescents engage in disruptive behaviour in groups rather than individually. This is based on social learning theory which states that when teenagers interact with other people, they learn to demonstrate socially unacceptable behaviour. Furthermore, when their parents are no longer considered role models, growing adolescents look to their friends at school as role models.

4.6.4 Sub-theme 4: Poor Academic Performance

It was noted from this research findings that participants reported that learners who are struggling and have poor academic performance do not take studying seriously. Garwood et al. (2018) stated that special needs can also be an important factor in misbehaviour in classrooms. If learners are struggling with the work they are assigned or in the learning process, and the educator does not manage to make it accessible, there is a high chance that those learners may tend to misbehave in the class. In addition to this, misbehaviour may arise if the learners are unable to fulfil the task assigned to them by the educators.

Sometimes, the work may be too difficult to do or the educator explains unclear demands on how the work has to be completed. This situation makes learners learning difficult as they have no idea about what to do and thus resulting in the disruption of learning process in the classroom. Valkov (2018) stated that poor academic achievement, school drop-out, delinquency, and low employment prospects are all predictors of poor academic accomplishment, which is linked to childhood trauma in the early years of school. Problem behaviour and academic trouble have a complicated relationship. Academic achievement varies by particular subject, and learners with behavioural problems might be high achievers as well as learners who

struggle academically.

Chow and Wehby (2018) supported the widely-held belief that academic failure is a major predictor of problematic behaviours, and adolescents who have both are twice at risk due to their academic and behavioural dysfunction. Academic achievement has long been shown to be inversely associated to antisocial behaviour among young people. Poor academic performance co-occurs with, or is a predictor of, antisocial conduct. Moffitt (2018) found that poor academic performance is connected to the onset, frequency, persistence, and intensity of problem behaviours in both boys and girls in their meta-analysis of studies on the connection between academic performance and delinquency. Higher academic performance, alternatively, is linked to abstaining or ceasing from offending. Furthermore, regardless of socioeconomic background, poor academic achievement predicts criminality. However, as discovered in this study and emphasised by McEvoy and Welker (2000), the link is not always automatic, and a sizable proportion of adolescents with problem behaviours in this study did not show academic deficiencies.

4.6.5 Sub-theme 5: The Media

Adolescents are modern 'millennials', and their daily lives at home, at school, and even among their peers is dominated by technology. Their lives are dominated by new media (Lowell & Morris, 2019). They are continuously multitasking in class by also sending messages, chatting on social media, and even watching YouTube on their mobile phones (Ettinger & Cohen, 2020). Adolescents also overuse social media, putting themselves at danger for bullying, click-forming, sexting, Facebook depression, anxiety, severe isolation, and self-destructive behaviour (Belle, 2017).

Furthermore, playing video games is related to aggressive behaviour in adolescents and excessive media violence consumption through video games and television causes adolescents to become more verbally and relationally aggressive with other adolescents, as well as develop less prosocial behaviour (Quwaider et al., 2019). Furthermore, the media easily instils aberrant behaviour and practices in adolescent learners, who develop a distorted idea of sex, love, and affection, as well as a glorified image of violence in society (Ngwokabuenui, 2015).

4.6.6 Sub-theme 6: Educators Building a Relationship and Respecting Learners

The researcher found that the participants build a friendly relationship and they respect learners as a way to 'get down' to their level and in trying to understand them and the cause of their behaviour. Ibrahim and Zaatari (2020) conducted a study that recommended that educators need to first develop positive, mutually respectful relationships between them and learners. Second, they need to ensure that learners are aware of the classroom rules and what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Finally, before beginning classroom activities, educators and learners should greet one other polite. Before beginning any activity, she suggests that educators explicitly convey their expectations of the learners. She emphasises the importance of rigorous preparation and planning for each class, as well as the flexibility to make changes and adaptations as needed.

The findings of Wilhelm (2016) emphasised that educators must speak and communicate with authority, as well as foster a positive classroom atmosphere, while

also ensuring that a learner's whole development, not just his or her cognitive dimension, is addressed. Educators should be able to meet learners on their level without jeopardising any component of a positive educator-learner relationship, and they should admit when they are wrong. Finally, she stressed the need for discussing poor classroom behaviour with colleagues and seeking their assistance. Educators, she believed, should communicate with one another more frequently and share ideas and tactics.

Zee and Koomen (2016) found that educators' explanations of difficult behaviours are based on real evidence about difficult patterns. They do, however, reveal a variety of inaccuracies and inadequate perspectives. If educators feel disempowered because of these deficit judgments It will lead to negative and deficit thinking, which will destroy learner and educator self-esteem, the classroom environment, relationships, and the school's disciplinary culture.

When dealing with behaviour issues, it is also usual for educators to build a negative focus on the unwanted behaviour, which leads to a 'punishment that fits the crime' approach. Educators are considerably more in agreement about what behaviour is prohibited than what is expected. That is, it is easier for educators to explain what they will not tolerate than it is to specify the right behaviour that they expect. Perhaps this is due to our culture's emphasis on punishment as the primary tool for behaviour modification.

4.6.7 Sub-theme 7: Parental Involvement

As mentioned, involving parents for interventions is important for positive outcomes and collaboration between school and parents. This research findings show that

participants prefer to use this strategy because they want to work together with parents to deal with the challenging behaviour in together at school and at home. This strategy is also used to encourage parents to assist the school in managing challenging behaviour. It was also discovered that parents also experience the same challenge at home regarding the challenging behaviour and they also do not know how to deal with it. Westwood's (2018) study stated that problematic behaviour should not be viewed as only the duty of the educator but, rather, it should be addressed by parents, as well as school administration and educational authorities. This will invariably lead to a collaborative strategy that prioritises the management of disruptive behaviour at school, as well as in general.

In a study conducted by Masten (2018), educators indicated that a learner's home environment played a significant effect in the development of disruptive behaviour. The learner's school and home lives must be consistent, and parents must be involved in intervention programs. According to the poll, 82% of educators and 74% of parents stated that ill-discipline by parents at home was mostly to blame for behaviour problems in schools, and 69% of educators believed that discipline would improve if parents took greater accountability at home. Surprisingly, only 34% of parents believed they had successfully instilled discipline in their child. Many parents (43%) stated that if the educator did not spend so much time dealing with classroom discipline, their child would learn a lot more. The same number of parents believed that the school's discipline of general misbehaviour needed to be addressed.

Hertzog (2021) found that parents' harshness and harsh discipline contributed to the ability to predict disruptive behaviour in children. However, it was discovered that parenting strategies (and delinquent classmates) could not be utilised to predict educator responses when grading disruptive behaviour. When deciding how to cope

with disruptive behaviour, parents must consider their own children's qualities.

Van Petegem et al.'s (2018) study that looked at characteristics that contribute to disruptive behaviour in early life discovered that if the child had a lower degree of physiological regulation, that is they were unable to properly manage their own behaviour, their mother would need to have greater control over their behaviour. More structure would assist these children. If a child has a high level of physiological regulation, his or her reaction to strong maternal control may result in more disruptive behaviour. Thus, parents must determine their child's level of frustration and how they react to discipline; they must also consider whether or not their child is capable of regulating their own behaviour (Van Petegem et al., 2018).

4.6.8 Sub-theme 8: Reinforcement of Behaviour

The researcher found that the educators use positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour and to model it in the classroom. Franklin and Harrington (2019) developed a study that recommend that, to improve classroom environment praise as a method of preventing misconduct is an effective technique because it improves the classroom environment and minimizes disruptive, off-task behaviours. The use of proactive praise has been shown to reduce low-level misbehaviour and increase engagement, on-task performance, and academic achievement. Franklin and Harrington's (2019) study found that educators despite the fact that reactive approaches are less effective at managing behaviour, to focus positive proactive praise toward academic work and rely on negative reactive reactions for concerns with inappropriate behaviour.

Shamnadh and Anzari's (2019) research findings also disclosed that appropriate

behaviour management techniques like general praise, behaviour specific praise; and stating clear rules met the criteria of excellent strategies. These straightforward techniques can promote learner classroom engagement and can decrease disruptive classroom behaviours. Using learning strategies, classroom management by the educator, creating stronger bonds among the learners and establishing an interactive educational environment can be helpful in coping with learners' disruptive behaviours. Presenting the educational course content using appealing and diverse methods can be a successful strategy in handling the learners' aggression. Teaching strategies along with friendship strategies have also been recommended. Interactive teaching strategies and discovering the learners' learning abilities can improve the educator-learner relationship. Further, social skills can improve the educator-learner relationship and largely lead to a safe educational environment.

4.6.9 Sub-theme 9: Educator as a Role Model

The researcher found that participants use the strategy of educators being the role models and portrays the behaviour for the learners, so that learners can learn from them. Hawkins and Weis (2017), suggested that social learning theory can be utilised to teach learners positive behaviours. Educators can employ good role models to enhance desired behaviours and, as a result, improve a school's culture. Positive role models in and out of the classroom will assist not only individual learners but the entire class. It not only aids in the teaching of learners, but also in their understanding, retention, and application of what they have learnt in their life, allowing them to learn and achieve even more. An individual's learning is not confined to direct observation. According to Rumjaun and Narod (2020), it can also include imitating others' behaviour. To teach, one must observe behaviour; encode an image of observed

behaviour; recreate the observed image, and be motivated to execute the behaviour. This imitation could be used as a tactic to get learners to replicate a positive behaviour. According to the research by Rodriguez-Carrillo et al. (2020), aligned to Vygotsky's theory that constructive social interactions enhance cognitive development, it is crucial for educators to establish genuine, respectful connections in the classroom. Educators must provide an example of appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication skills and clearly state expectations for caring for one another and showing respect for others.

The study by Vollet et al. (2017) discovered that establishing friendships, developing social skills, and being accepted by peers all increase learners' engagement in class, motivation, and resilience. Professionalism concept, behaviour, and communication among educators is a non-negotiable expectation and demand in their capacity as educators, according to the study by Daza and Lund (2021). As their actions and inactions, replies and negotiations are all seen and convey messages, educators serve as models of desirable and suitable responses to their peers, parents, and learners every day. When educators are unprepared, tardy, and disorganized in class, they cannot expect their learners to behave differently if this is how they themselves behave. Educators' actions reinforce and create the expectation of learner behaviour.

4.6.10 Sub-theme 10: Involve Outside Stakeholders

This research's findings show that the participants use other stakeholders to handle disruptive learners. They use other stakeholders because they want to ensure that proper and adequate interventions are provided. Other stakeholders are involved because educators believe that they are not well trained to deal with learners'

challenging behaviours. This information is similar to the findings Schleicher (2016), who discussed that more than 87% of educators requested more knowledge about challenging behaviour because they are not well-trained about it. The research findings show that there are different stakeholders involved, for instance, social workers and psychologist are also involved to provide professional help especially to disruptive learners. The study in South Africa by Masilo (2018) recommended that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) should consider employing different specialists in all schools to deal with challenges faced by learners and the Department of Social Development should create programmes about crime awareness and preventions in schools.

4.6.11 Sub-theme 11: Lack of Educators Training

Educators in South Africa report finding it very difficult to ensure and promote quality learning processes in their classrooms, according to Maarman and Lamont-Mbawuli (2017), due to the disrespectful and highly disruptive behaviour of some learners. A percentage of educators leave the profession each year as a result of this. Educators who stay in the field are said to be less motivated, attempting to “survive” each school day (Gemedda & Tynjälä, 2015). According to Booysen (2020), educators’ constant battle to handle challenging learner behaviour, which consumes a significant amount of their time and energy, leads to high levels of dissatisfaction and self-doubt. It is reasonable to assume that educators will have differing views on what constitutes challenging behaviour (Biesta, 2017).

According to Van Wyk (2016), many educators reported that the government’s stance on physical punishment has significantly contributed to an increase in disciplinary problems at school. However, he believed that it is difficult for educators to properly

regulate behaviour in the classroom because they lack a thorough knowledge and grasp of the various theoretical approaches to learner behaviour.

Although a nonviolent, constructive approach is supported at the policy level, educators at a fundamental level do not always agree with or follow this strategy. It is vital to remember that educators deal with difficult behaviour on a regular basis, and that in many schools, corporal punishment was formerly an important aspect of the relationship between educators and learners. Any transformation process is difficult and complex, and this is no exception (Biesta, 2017).

4.12 Summary

This chapter concentrated on the data analysis and theme formations. The 11 themes were used by the researcher to classify the information gathered. To articulate understanding, the collected data were thematically analysed. The themes were designed in response to the study's research questions. This chapter also included a data discussion, which presented data at both the theoretical and empirical levels. The summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5 IMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed data analysis, data presentation and the interpretation of gathered information. The collected data was analysed using thematic content analysis method. The findings of this study were presented in line with the three objectives of the study. The conclusions and recommendations that are discussed in this chapter are derived from the findings of the previous chapter. The purpose of this study was to explore educators' perceptions of learners with challenging behaviour, the strategies and the support needed of 10 educators in secondary schools at King Cetshwayo District. A literature review conducted revealed that there are different causes of challenging behaviour, various perspective on dealing with challenging behaviour, and the management of challenging behaviour and it was classified in an international and African context.

5.2 The Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to explore educators' perceptions and management of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district. This study is guided by the following three objectives:

- To explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour.
- To establish strategies educators, use to manage learners' challenging behaviour.
- To determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour.

5.3 REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5.3.1 What is the Educators' Perceptions of Learners' Challenging Behaviour?

The participants in this study had various common perceptions and experience in learners' challenging behaviour. The participants reported that bullying and peer pressure are the causes of disruption during teaching and learning. They further indicated that they perceive attention seeking and social media as a challenging behaviour when dealing with learners in secondary schools. This has been confirmed by Bandura (2017), that learners have a higher likelihood to give in to peer pressure and engage in inappropriate behaviour that may be destructive to them or to others. Hascher and Hadjar (2018) further revealed that learners display disruptive behaviour in groups, not individually. The social learning theory states that adolescents learn to parade socially unacceptable behaviour when they interact with other people. In addition, growing adolescents look to their peers at school as their role models as their parents are no longer considered as role models to them (Parveen et al., 2022).

Peer pressure leads learners to use drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and weapons, bully learners who do not fit in with the group, and engage in criminal gang activity (McCuddy, 2021). They frequently disobey the school rules to express their disagreement school authority and to challenge it; hence, they engage in antisocial behaviour (Mwaniki, 2018). Additionally, Swanzen (2018) revealed that adolescents are members of the millennial generation; therefore, their everyday lives are dominated by technology at home, at school, and even within their social group. Their lives are dominated by new media. They frequently engage in multi-tasking: paying attention to the lecture, while also sending texts, chatting on social media, and even

watching YouTube on their mobile devices (Kuznekoff et al., 2015).

5.3.2 What Type of Strategies Educators Use to Manage Learners' Challenging Behaviour?

The participants of the study felt that they are not well equipped on how to deal with learners' challenging behaviour. However, they reported that they have adopted various strategies that seem to be somewhat helpful. The participants' strategies are building the relationship and respecting learners, involving parents and reinforcing and encouraging good behaviour.

Shamnadh and Anzari (2019) disclosed that appropriate behaviour management techniques like general praise, behaviour specific praise; and stating clear rules met the criteria of excellent strategies. The study conducted by Hawkins and Weis (2017) suggested that social learning theory can be utilised to teach learners positive behaviours. Educators can employ good role models to enhance desired behaviours and, as a result, improve a school's culture. Another strategy reported in this study is building a friendly relationship and respecting learners to get down to their level and in trying to understand them and the cause of their behaviour. Ibrahim and Zaatari (2020) conducted a study that recommends that educators need to first develop a positive, mutually respectful relationship between the educator and the learner.

5.3.3 What Type of Support is Needed by Educators to Manage Learners with Challenging Behaviour?

Regardless of the nature or extent of the type of training the participants in this study received, educators concurred in their view that they were never equipped on how to deal with learners' challenging behaviour. They expressed feelings of uncertainty and

indecisiveness when dealing with disruptive behaviours that are commonly associated with their duties as educators and they were concerned that may cause harm in the process. They felt inadequate because of not being trained, and they tended to rely on personal values, their own understanding of right and wrong to deal with challenging behaviours.

The findings revealed that involving stakeholders such as social workers and psychologist provide professional help especially to disruptive learners. A study in South Africa by Masilo (2018) recommended that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) should consider employing different specialists in all schools to deal with challenges faced by learners and the Department of Social Development should create programmes about crime awareness and preventions in schools. The participants reported that they had not received training related to dealing with challenging behaviour.

5.4 Potential Contribution of the Study

Considering that there is limited research on educators' perception of learners with challenging behaviour in secondary schools in South Africa, this study could serve as a guide for further research. Furthermore, this study provided insight into the possible existing gaps available in supporting educators to deal with learners' challenging behaviour. Therefore, this could inspire thinking about continuous development trainings that can address the knowledge gap reported in this study by the participants.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study has limitations that need to be investigated in the future to decrease of challenging behaviour in our society. The first limitation of this study is that it was conducted in one district because of the availability of funds and time regarding completion of the master's degree. This study is also limited to secondary schools only, and this excludes primary schools, although challenging behaviour definitely exists in primary schools. The researcher conducted this study in secondary schools because educators possibly face a greater issue when they have to deal with the challenging behaviour of learners. Another limitation of this study is that it only deals with educators, not parents or other stakeholders. The researcher decided to conduct the study on educators because learners spend most of their time in school with educators rather than other people.

5.6 Suggestions and Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study shows that educators are not trained to deal with challenging behaviour in schools. Educators reported that school administrators and the Department of Education were not supporting them through training and providing strategies on how to deal with challenging behaviour. The findings of this study resulted in recommending different future research to be conducted. It is recommended to conduct more studies exploring what types of strategies and training are required for educators to deal with disruptive and challenging behaviour in schools. Other research to be conducted should be associated with the limitations that are faced by educators when dealing with challenging behaviour. Future research should explore how the limits experienced by educators when intervening.

5.6.1 Recommendations for the Department of Education

- Provide training, strategies, and policies to assist learners in dealing with challenging behaviour.
- Support schools by employing enough professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, etc., to support educators in dealing with learners' challenging behaviour in school.
- Educators to be cautious of different forms of indiscipline in schools to create safe and conducive learning environment. Schools should have constant staff development workshops that focus on indiscipline causes, types and preventative approaches to the management of discipline.
- Good relationships should exist between parents and school authorities so that they work together in trying to reduce indiscipline. Both the home and school environment should be made exciting and conducive for learning for learners.

5.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore educators' perception of learners with challenging behaviour in secondary schools at King Cetshwayo. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there is no support and training on how to deal with learners' challenging behaviour as participants experienced difficulty on how to manage challenging behaviour. This finding in this study aligned with international research which argued that educators are not adequately equipped to manage the challenging behaviour (Bush & Glover, 2016). Although the study was limited in scope, the findings can be used to guide further research into supporting educators on how

to deal with learners' challenging behaviour. Furthermore, this study made a contribution to address an existing gap in the current knowledge in this field of enquiry, as there are limited studies that exist in South Africa.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Participant Informed Consent Declaration

INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION (Participant)

Project Title: Educators' perception of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo District

Ms S`phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya from the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Zululand has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project, and this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. That they are free to refuse consent without giving reasons and still take part in the main trial.
2. An explanation of the genetic research study in simple layman's terms, including the justification for the study, must be given.
3. Arrangements to protect their privacy and confidentiality and whether or not specimens will be identifiable, coded but linked to identifiers or completely anonymous. The advantages and disadvantages of the chosen option should also be spelt out.
4. That they are free to withdraw consent for the research without explanation or prejudice and if their specimen has remained linked and is identifiable, it will be destroyed
5. Be told whether or not feedback or results will be available and if not, an explanation must be given.
6. Be asked whether or not they wish to be told of research results that could be of relevance to them as individuals?
7. Give details about the involvement of other family members, if applicable and must give consent for researchers to approach other family members.
8. Be assured that material and information will not be released for other uses without their consent.
9. Consent for storage should be requested. Information as to where and for how long should be provided.
10. When researchers propose to collect genetic material and information from individuals chosen by their membership of a particular collectively, consent should be sought from appropriate collective representatives as well as from the individuals concerned.

I, have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

.....
Participant's signature

.....
Date

APPENDIX A2: Participant Informed Consent Declaration (IsiZulu)

INGXENYE YAKA A: OZODLALA INDIMA UWENZA ISIVUMELWANO LAPHA

IMVUME KOZOBEBEBUZZA (kozobebuzwa)

Isihloko salolucwanongo: Ukuqonda kothisha mayelana nabantwana abahluphayo ezikoleni zamabanga aphezulu esifundeni sase Nkosi uCetshwayo

UNkosazane S`phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya osuka enNyuvesi yasoNgoye enza izifundo zezemfundo ethinta ingqondo, ungicelile ukuthola imvume ukuba ngibe yinxenye yalolucwaningo.

Indlela nenhloso yalolucwaningo olucwaningwayo, lesi sivumelwano sichaziwe kimi ngolwimi engilqondayo.

Ngiyazi ngalokhu:

1. Ukuthi ngikhululekile ukunqaba ngaphandle kwesizathu futhi ngingaphinde ngiqhubeke uma ngithanda.
2. Incazelo yengqikithi nokujula kwalolucwaningo ngichazeliwe ngakho ngendlela ecacile nezwakalayo nokuthi senziwe lani ngazisiwe.
3. Amalungiselelo okuvikela engizokusho nesithunzi sami noma yini enginganikela ngayo ukuba isebenziswe uzokwazeka, isebenziswe kodwa angeke ngidalulwe kubantu nakunoma ubani Ubuhle nobubi bezinqumo zishiwo kimi.
4. Ngazisiwe ukuthi nginganqamula ukuhlanganyela kulolucwaningo ngaphandle kokucindazeleka and uma kukhona okuthathwe kimi kuzobhubhiswa emva kocwaningo.
5. Ngazisiwe ukuthi ingabe imiphumela izoba khona noma cha yalolucwaningo kumele ngithole incazelo.
6. Ngibuziwe ukuthi ngiyafisa noma cha ukuthi ngaziswe ngemiphumela yalolucwaningo okungaqondana hleze nami uqobo.
7. Nginesiqiniseko sokuthi konke okusebenzisiwe nolwazi ngeke kusabalaliswe isinomikanjani ngaphandle kwemvume yami.
8. Imvume yokugcinwa kwezinto kumele itholakale noma icelwe kimi. Ulwazi ukuthi luzogcinwa futhi iskhathi esingakanani kumele ngaziswe.
9. Uma abacwaningi becela ukuthatha izicubu ezithile emzimbeni wami uma sibaningi ngikhetheke, bazofuna imvume kimina nakulabo engizobe ngikhethwe nabo ngamunye.

Mina.....ngifundile lokhu okubhalwe ngaphezulu ngavumelana nakho ngoba kuchaziwe kimi ngolwimi engilqondayo futhi ngiyazi ngalento noma ngalengxenywe yomningwane yesivumelwano. Ngiyibuzile yonke imibuzo engifisile ukuyibuza ngaphenduleka kahle kakhulu. Ngiaqonda ngokuphelele ukuthi yini elindeleke kimi kulolucwaningo.

Mina angicindezelwanga nanoma ngabe iyiphi indlela, ngiyazithandela ukuba yingxenywe yalolucwaningo okukhulunywa ngalo ngaphezulu

.....
Ukusayina kozibandakanyayo

.....
Usuku

APPENDIX B: Researcher's Declaration

RESEARCHER'S DECLARATION

I, S`phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to

.....

- Requested him/her to ask questions if anything was unclear and I have answered them as best I can
- I am satisfied that s/he sufficiently understands all aspects of the research to make an informed decision on whether or not to participate.
- The conversation took place in isiZulu / English
- I used/did not use an interpreter



08/11/2021

Researcher's signature

Date

APPENDIX C: Sample Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW INFORMATION SHEET

Purpose of the research: To explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo District. The researcher will further attempt to develop a program to empower and support educators in dealing with challenging learners.

What you will do in this research: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview. You will be asked several questions. Some of them will be about educator's perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour. Others will encompass enquiring about the types of strategies educators use to manage learners' challenging behaviour. With your permission, I will tape-record the interviews so I don't have to make so many notes. You will not be asked to state your name on the recording.

Time required: The interview will take approximately 40 minutes.

Risks: Medium risk because data will be collected from people.

Benefits: This is a chance for you to tell your story about your experiences in dealing with learners who have a challenging behaviour and suggest the type of support is needed by educators to manage learners with challenging behaviour.

Confidentiality: Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. At no cost will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a random numerical code. Anyone who helps me transcribe responses will only know you by this code. The recording will be destroyed when my dissertation has been accepted. The transcript, without your name, will be kept until the research is complete.

The key code linking your name with your number will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked office, and no one else will have access to it. It will be destroyed after the submission of the research study. The data you give me will be used for the research study being conducted, and also for an article, I am currently writing and may be used as the basis for articles or presentations in the future. I will not use your name or information that would identify you in any publications or presentations.

Participation and withdrawal: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You will receive payment based on the proportion of the study you completed. You may withdraw by informing the experimenter that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked). You may skip any question during the interview, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

To Contact the Researcher: If you have questions or concerns about this research, please contact S`phelele Lindokuhle Ngwenya, 18 Cactus Drive Grantham Park Empangeni 3880, 0799638037 sphehngwenya@gmail.com. You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: [D.R Nzima, Prof, 035 902 6236, NzimaD@unizulu.ac.za].

APPENDIX C1: Interview Schedule (English)

Topic of this study:

Educators' perception of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo District.

1. Explain your experience in teaching learners with challenging behaviour who are disruptive in class.
2. What difficulties you have experienced when teaching learners with challenging behaviour?
3. Explain how do you identify learners with challenging behaviour in class?
4. What do you normally do when supporting learners with challenging behaviour?
5. Describe the support given to educators who are dealing challenging learners in your school.
6. What can you recommend based on your experience in helping educators struggling with challenging behaviour?

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your contribution is much appreciated.

APPENDIX C2: Interview Schedule (Isizulu)

UHLA LWEMIBUZO EBUZWAYO

Isihloko salolucwaningo:

Ukuqonda kothisha mayelana nabantwana abangaziphathi ngokufanele ezikoleni zamabanga aphezulu esifundeni sase Nkosi uCetshwayo

1. Ngicela uchaze ngokomlando wakho ngokusebenza ngezingane ezinenkinga yokuziphatha ngendlela engafanele ekilasini.
2. Iziphi izingqinamba osuke wahlabezana nazo ekufundiseni izingane ezinenkinga yokuziphatha ngendlela engamukelekile?
3. Ngicela uchaze ukuthi ukwazi kanjani ukubona izingane ezinenkinga yokuziphatha ngendlela engamukelekile emabangeni aphezulu.
4. Yini ovamise ukuyenza uma uzama ukulekelela abantwana abanenkinga yokuziphatha ngendlela engamukelekile emabangeni aphezulu?
5. Hlaziya uhlobo lokulekelela isikole sakho esisinikeza izingane ezinenkinga yokungaziphathi ngendlela eyamukelekile.
6. Ikuphi ongakusho noma uveze umbono wakho ngezinto ezingenziwa ngokolwazi lwakho onalo ngokusebenza nabantwana abanenkinga yokungaziphathi ngendlela eyamukelekile?

Ngiyabonga ngokuba yingxenye kulolucwaningo. Uvo lwakho lubaluleke kakhulu futhi luyancomeka.

APPENDIX D: Ethical Clearance Certificate

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-030)



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
Tel: 035 902 6324/6374
Email: MangeleS@unizulu.ac.za/
MkwanaziMM@unizulu.ac.za

PROVISIONAL APPROVAL - ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2021/139					
Project Title	Educators' perceptions of learners with challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district					
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	S.L Ngwenya					
Supervisor and Co- supervisor	Prof D.R Nzima					
Department	Educational Psychology and Special Education					
Faculty	Education					
Type of Risk	Medium Risk – Data collection from people					
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year	Master's	☒	Doctoral	Departmental	

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby grants provisional approval pending gatekeeper/permission letter from the following institution(s):

a) Department of Education – KwaZulu-Natal

The Researcher may therefore NOT commence with data collection until gatekeeper/permission letter is obtained. The letter can be sent to MangeleS@unizulu.ac.za or MkwanaziMM@unizulu.ac.za so that final approval letter will be issued for data collection to commence.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: (1) Principal researcher must provide gatekeeper/permission letter of where the research will be conducted and submit to UZREC to acquire full approval certificate of 1- year.

The UZREC wishes the researcher well in conducting research.


Prof. Nokuthula Kunene
Chairperson: University Research Ethics Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research & Innovation
08 December 2021

CHAIRPERSON
UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND RESEARCH
ETHICS COMMITTEE (UZREC)
REG NO: UZREC 171110-30

08-12-2021

RESEARCH & INNOVATION OFFICE

APPENDIX E: A Letter to Department of Basic Education

University of Zululand
PO Box X 1001
KwaDlangezwa
3886
Email: sphehngwenya@gmail.com
08 November 2021

The Director: Research Strategy Development and ECMIS
KZN-Department of Education
Private Bag X 9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Sir/Madam

A REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH EDUCATORS AS SUBJECTS

I am researching Masters in the faculty of Education, Department of Educational Psychology and Special Needs at the University of Zululand. I am writing this letter to request permission to research with educators in KwaZulu Natal at King Cetshwayo Districts. The selected schools from the mentioned District are Empangeni High School and Old Mill School.

The aim of the study is to explore educators' perceptions and management of learners' challenging behaviour in secondary schools in King Cetshwayo district.

The aims of the study are:

- To explore educators' perceptions of learners' challenging behaviour.
- To establish strategies educators, use to manage learners' challenging behaviour.
- To determine the type of support needed by educators to manage learners' challenging behaviour.

I hereby seek your consent to a research project.

To assist you in reaching a decision I have attached the following documents:

- a) A copy of an ethical clearance certificate issued by the university
- b) A copy of research instruments that I intend to use in my research

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. Our contact details are as follows:

Ms S.L. Ngwenya sphehngwenya@gmail.com cell: 0799638037
Prof D.R. Nzima NzimaD@unizulu.ac.za

Upon completion of this study, I undertake to provide you with a bound copy of this thesis. Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Ms SL Ngwenya
Name



Signature

APPENDIX F: Proof of Language Editing



18 January 2023

CERTIFICATE

S'phelele L. Ngwenya

Dear S'phelele

Thank you for using Impela Editing Services to edit your Master's dissertation entitled "*Educators' Perceptions of Learners with Challenging Behaviour in Secondary Schools in King Cetshwayo District*".

I have proofread for errors of grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax and typing mistakes. I have formatted your work and checked the references (this means checking the formatting), as according to the format specified by APA 7th edition referencing guideline. I believe your work to be error free.

PLEASE NOTE: Impela Editing accepts no fault if an author makes changes to a document after a certificate has been issued.

I wish you the very best in your submission.

Kind regards

Helen Bond (Bachelor of Arts, HDE)