

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN THE ADOPTION OF
THE LEARNERS CODE OF CONDUCT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

MINI-DISSERTATION

BY

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my late mother Anna, who taught me hard work and commitment, my wife Nomasonto, my kids: Zanele, Nathanael, Blessing-Pius, and Yolanda for their unwavering support and much encouragement during my studies.



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SUMMARY

The learner's code of conduct adopted by a school could contain a set of moral values, norms and principles which the school community should uphold and promote as part of the roles and responsibility of various stakeholders, including the school governing body in the creation of a proper teaching and learning milieu in schools. Furthermore, it should include the mission statement of the school, the school rules must define misconduct and due process to be followed when rules are infringed and also provide for legitimate disciplinary measures.

We live in a time when learners are quick to remind educators of their rights. It has become common place to hear educators and parents complain about a sense of loss of control and to blame the loss on the fact that learners have unbridled rights. The South African Schools Act (section 8(4), makes it clear that nothing shall exempt a learner from complying with the code of conduct of the school. An educator at the school shall have the same rights as a parent to control and discipline the learner according to the code of conduct during the time the learner is in attendance at the school, any classroom, school function or school trip or school related activities.

The main aim of undertaking this research was finding out the perception of parents in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools. The research method used to collect the data was qualitative. During the research, interviews were used to collect data. The researcher also used a voice recorder to record the views of the school governing body members on their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools.

Research findings and recommendations indicated that, school management must be supported by structures like Representative Council of Learners so as to curb ill discipline in the school. All groups with interest in education together with the Education Department must organised workshops, and training sessions so as to give capacity to school governing body members on matters of school governance.



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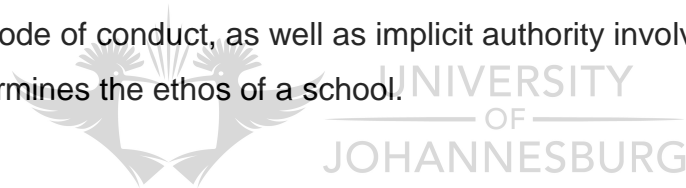


CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Schools are complex organizations with different stakeholders and personalities assembled to achieve a common purpose, which is, teaching and learning. In order to establish relationships and protect the right of individuals, there has to be agreement on conduct for learners at the school level. The legislation emphasizes that the school governing body is the authority responsible for the formulation of the code of conduct (RSA, 1996: (i). The question of authority includes both explicit authority such as policy decisions, policy decisions entails the mandatory function of the school governing body to adopt a learners code of conduct, as well as implicit authority involving the culture and values that determines the ethos of a school.



Maile (2000) maintains that school governing bodies are entrusted with the responsibility and authority to formulate and adopt school policies on a range of issues, such as the code of conduct for learners, missions and the ethos of the school and the school community relations.

The code of conduct should distinguish between what is acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour is binding to every learner of the school. Maximum consultation during the compilation of the code of conduct and genuine incorporation of reasonable suggestions should complete the process of the adoption (Bray, 2005:133).

As school governing bodies in South Africa stand in a position of trust which Davis (1999: 60) simplifies as meaning that a relationship of trust exists between the school and its governing body, they must ensure that the code of conduct is effective and supportive to school management.

To govern efficiently and effectively a governing body must be able not only to make rules for good governance, but also to have the capacity and will to implement these rules in the school situation and enforce them in cases of learners misconduct by means of specific disciplinary measures provided for in the code of conduct (Visser, 2000: 147:150).

According to the South African School's Act 84 of 1996, section 8, the school governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners of the school. Code of conduct contains disciplinary rules for learners which are useful to school discipline. Equally important is the fact that these rules must properly be implemented, and enforced to ensure a disciplined education and school environment. This implies sound school governance and a governing body that is well-informed about the legal nature and consequences of a code of conduct.

The rationale of the South African government for the establishment of school governing bodies was to address the inequalities of a divided education system. Summarised in the Education White Paper 2 the new organization of schools through their governing bodies will advance redress through equitable use of public sources, improve educational quality, and provide for democratic-based decision-making (Department of Education, 1996). The policy document gave birth to the South African Schools Act (SASA) (Act. No 84 of 1996).

1.2 Motivation for the study

Effective teaching and learning depends on sound school governance. Traditionally school governance was in the hands of school principals. Squelch (in Lemmer 2000:128) mentions that the locus of control and decision-making powers have been mainly in the school principal with minimal participation from educators, parents and learners.

Since the mid-1980 to the early 1990's the struggle for democratic management of schools intensified. According to Van Wyk (1998:13) schools became playing fields where war against the state was waged, the aftermath of the struggle gave rise to the

collapse of standards in education in most schools especially the black disadvantaged communities. South Africa through the new democratic government has therefore included most stakeholders in the governing body of a public school, to govern the school. The school governing body is therefore mandated by the South African School's Act, Act 84 of 1996 to decide on the matters of school policy and discipline.

Included in the specific functions of the school governing body, as set in section 20(d) of the Act, is the duty to adopt a Code of Conduct for learners at the school after consultation with the learners, parents and educators. The adopted code of conduct must be in a position to bring about effective teaching and learning in the school as a result support management. The adopted code of conduct for learners may further and fairly assist in addressing issues of good governance, safety, learner misconduct and also bring about the required disciplined environment for teaching and learning to take place.

The possibility and effectiveness of collective parental participation in education lie first in the organisation therefore by means of structure like school governing bodies, which can conduct meaningful communication at all levels with other partners in the teaching sector. This is the only way in which the parental community as a whole can make any meaningful contribution to basic aspect of education (Dekker 1986:912).

In the light of the above background, the role of the school governing body in the adoption of a learner's code of conduct for effective and safer schools is quite significant, as this may be a support system to management.

1.3 Statement of the research problem.

The research problem therefore revolves around the following question: What are the School governing body members perceptions regarding their role in the adoption of the learners code of conduct and the enhancement of good learner conduct?

The sub question is: In which way can the school governing body in schools ensure that the code of conduct is effective and supportive to management so as to curb ill-discipline?

It must be noted that the school governing body which is elected to deal with the interests of a specific parent community and to convey their opinions to the staff is the recommended structure for parent orientation and guidance but also for providing guidance to the educators through the parents (Dekker 1986: 692).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the study seeks to discover the following:

- To establish the parents' perceptions as represented by the school governing body on their role in enhancing good conduct in schools.
- To see how the school governing body can collaborate with the school management in curbing ill-discipline.



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1.5 Research Method

The research data that will be collected during this research is qualitative in nature. This will enable the researcher to get the parent governors' views on issues of learners' conduct in secondary schools. Qualitative research methods enable the researchers to get as much narrative of what is happening in the field as experienced by the participants. Cohen, Marion et.al. (2000:22) state that qualitative research is an interpretive method which seeks to understand the subjective world of participants. According to Roberts (2004:11), it is the study which focuses on people's knowledge of reality, experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon to be researched. The use of qualitative research methodology here will enable me to focus primarily on evidence and understand the participants' perception and experiences of the activity under research.

Case study method of research will be followed in this study. I'm interested in studying the participants very intensively. Case studies focus attention on one or a few instances of social phenomenon, such as village, a family or a juvenile gang.

As Charles Raging and Haward Becker (1992) point out, there is little consensus on what constitute a "case". The case being studied might be a period of time rather than a particular group of people. The limitation of attention to a particular instance of something is the essential characteristics of the case study.

Struwig and Stead (2004) point out that the case study method is not used often since it involves intensive study of a relatively small number of situations or cases.

Furthermore, these writers state that the emphasis of case studies is on arriving at a complete description and understanding of the constructs being studied, despite the small number of persons involved. Boyd, Westfall and Stasch (1981: 45-46) state that case studies are conducted to isolate three factors:

- features that are common to all cases in the general group;
- features that are not common to all cases in the general group;
- features that are unique to specific cases.

One school will be investigated in this study and the researcher will interview two parents from the school governing body, the school principal, an educator and a learner component.

Sampling in this study is by way of convenience sampling. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) state that on occasion based on previous knowledge of a population and the specific purpose of the research, investigators use personal judgement to select a sample. As a researcher, I would use my knowledge of area, the Insikazi Circuit to select the secondary school.

Data will be collected by means of interviews, observations and documentary analysis.

The interviews will be semi-structured meaning that I will go into the field with predetermined questions in a systematic and consistent fashion. However, the participants will also be given an opportunity to discuss issues beyond the question's confines. This will allow me to get detailed responses necessary for the purpose of this study. Observations will include a process where I will observe the climate of the school by looking at what is happening at the playground during break.

I will ask permission to visit a sample of classes to see how the learners behave in their classes. I will take notes throughout the observation period.

Documentary analysis will include the analysis of the principal's log book to see how many learners have committed serious offences and how they were punished. I will also be looking at the learners achievements for they might have an impact on their performance.

All data collected will be prepared for analysis by making copies and then identifying units of meaning of the data. All interviews will be transcribed and coded, and responses grouped according to questions asked. The responses to each question will be studied thus gauging the views of the majority of responses.

Validity of study

There are a number of experts who state that validity in qualitative research will result in anecdotal reports that are not analysed adequately (Silverman, 1993). According to Babie (2005:321) Educational research seems to provide measures with greater validity than do survey and experimental measurements, which are often criticized as superficial and not really valid. Therefore, in this study triangulation will present a credible study. The participants will be interviewed, observed and documents will be studied; this presents a good strategy in triangulation gathered.

After the interviews had been conducted I will also give my participants the transcripts so that they can validate what I had recorded as a researcher. My interpretation of data will be given to participants for verification should there be a need to do so.

To maintain and ensure trustworthiness, data will be verified and will include the creation of credibility, consistency, dependability and transferability.

1.6 Demarcations of Research

The research will be conducted in the Ehlanzeni Region at Insikazi Circuit of the Mpumalanga Province. Mpumalanga Province is one of the 9 provinces of the Republic of South Africa. Convenience sampling was used in which the school governing body members were selected. Interviews were administered to the selected school governing body members to establish their perception on their role in enhancing good conduct in school.

1.7 Clarification of concepts

1.7.1 School

According to Soanes (2005:803), a school is an institution for educating children, and Hanks (1984) defines a school as an institution or building at which children and young people usually under the age of 19 receive education.

1.7.2 School Governing Body



A school governing body is a statutory group of people elected to govern the school – school governors represent the school community (Godden: 1994).

1.7.3 Code of Conduct

According to Joubert, et al. (2005:26) a code of conduct is a written statement of rules and principles that apply to a specific group of people like professionals or learners within a school. The Code of Conduct establishes rules for co-existence, order and interpersonal relationships in the school.

1.7.4 Learners

The South African Act (Act 84 of 1996) defines a learner as any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of this Act.

1.8 Research Layout

Chapter 1

The first chapter is an introduction to what the study is all about, a number of concepts are clarified as well as the demarcation of the research.

Chapter 2

Chapter two is about the literature review on what other researchers have already researched about the topic.



Chapter 3

The third chapter will focus on the research methodology that will be used on the study.

Chapter 4

This chapter will deal with analysis of data.

Chapter 5

The fifth chapter focuses on the conclusions as well as the recommendations of the whole study.

1.9 Conclusion

Society expects schools to be orderly and to produce well-educated and well-behaved people. Public concern about poor school results, learner misbehaviour and dysfunctional schools are often reported in the media and the subject of wide spread debate. Society in general and parents (school governing bodies) in particular expects schools to perform well and to maintain a high level of discipline and safety and to keep disruptions to a minimum.

The second chapter will deal with literature survey.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Graig et al (2005:1) states that educational research deals with systematic, patient investigation that employs the scientific methods, which seeks facts and relationships, following a research process that obtains, analyzes and interprets data, while adhering to operating rules of legality, ethics and established research procedures.

The aim of the South African government for the establishment of the school governing bodies was to address the inequalities of a divided education. Summarised in Education White Paper 2, the new organisation of schools through their governing bodies will advance redress through equitable use of public sources, improve educational quality, and provide for democratic school-based decision making (Department of Education, 1996). In keeping with international trends, South African Schools have moved towards greater decentralised governance (Lemmer, 2000:137).

Section 16(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 gives a clear mandate to school governing bodies to decide on matters of policy and the code of conduct. The Principal as mandated Section 16 (3) is responsible for the day to day running of the school and dealing with professional matters. Section 20(d) mandates the school governing body to adopt a code of conduct for learners after consultation with learners, parents and educators.

2.2 Literature Review

The current government envisaged that democratic school governing body structures were needed in order to fully develop the potential of human resources of the country on assuming the reins of government in 1994. Kallaway (2003:11) in support of this system argues that education in whatever form is a fundamental component of

democracy. The school governing body therefore is an important structure in the school governance. It consists of elected representatives from the parent body of the school, staff members of the school as well as participation from the learners of the school.

2.2.1 Involvement of parents in the school

The involvement of parents and the broader community in the school is regarded as the key to effective learning (Department of Education, 1997c:18). The primary responsibility for the education of children lies with parents and the school governing component (Department of Education) (DoE) stresses the need for a healthy parent-school relationship.

Jowett et al. (1991:23) maintain that the aim of parental involvement vary considerably. Some of those identified in their research were the following:

- To establish effective two-way channels of communication, so that parents and professionals are working together and exchanging views and information
- To facilitate parent's involvement in decision making and the new review of school policy.

Many parents feel that decisions about their children's education which includes among others code of conduct, must be made by '**expects**'. Apart from this, Heystek and Louw (1999:26) suggest the following reasons for parent apathy towards involvement in education:

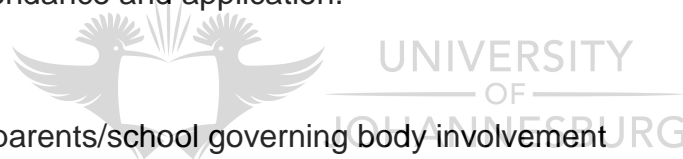
- Parents do not know why and how they can become involvement in education. They leave the education to the educator, who is paid to do the job. For many parents the school brings some relief from parenthood.
- Parents do not have the time to become involved, as many of them are in a battle to survive and they cannot neglect their own jobs in fear of being fired.

The Department of Education's new policy framework is based on the belief that schools can only be effective if they adhere to the new forms of governance that emphasise the interrelatedness of different stakeholders, including the school governing

body in the process of education. Parents are in this case regarded as important partners in education (Department of Education, 2000a:30).

Rutherford (1979:3) attest to the fact that parents want to know what skills their children are learning, how they are doing, what activities they are engaged in, who the educators are, and what are the policies regarding learners conduct of the school are. Sargent (1985:15) points out that the participation of the public in educational affairs is a fact and has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. In addition to the political and cultural benefits, it has also been discovered that education brings dividends in individual happiness and national well-being, both materially and spiritually.

David (1980:193) endorses this view that “the group most deeply involved with the school must always be the parents”... Parents – and learners themselves have a right to know how well the learners are doing in different school work, and to have information on their conduct, attendance and application.



2.2.2 Challenges to parents/school governing body involvement

Lack of participation in educational matters by many parents may be attributed to many factors. Factors such as poverty and socioeconomic, time and financial constraints are often impediments to parental involvement. Some of the failures, challenges and obstacles experienced in parental involvements are:

Lack of knowledge on how to become involved.

The difficulties faced by parents regarding their willingness to get involved in their children’s education and governance are expressed by Swap (1993:25), who states that “almost all parents often do not know what is expected of them or how they might contribute to their child’s schooling”.

According to Swap (1993:25), parents from all backgrounds, whether they are from impoverished families, unemployed parents, illiterates, rural people or squatters, are interested in school governance and in their children's schooling. The lack of knowledge about how to get involved, as well as a lack of time and funds has got to be dealt with. Squelch (1998:55) agrees that parents often "want to help but do not know what they can do or how to go about offering their services". Parents' lack of knowledge on how to become involved intensifies the need for support or guidance and, Squelch (2000: 55) goes on to recommend that parents need to receive information, guidance and support to be able to be actively involved.

Lack of skills and expertise

Skills and expertise are key elements of effective involvement in school governance and educational activities. This is emphasised by Van Schalkwyk (1990:99) who refers to the use of competent and trained parents in issues pertaining governance and curricular activities. Mashile (1991:41-420) points out that some parents are unaware of their influence on the education of their children, and believe that it is the task of the school to educate their children.

Some believe that they might mislead their children. Their feeling of inadequacy causes them to withdraw their support to the school. Many such parents openly acknowledge that they are unskilled and blame their lack of involvement on this factor.

Working parents

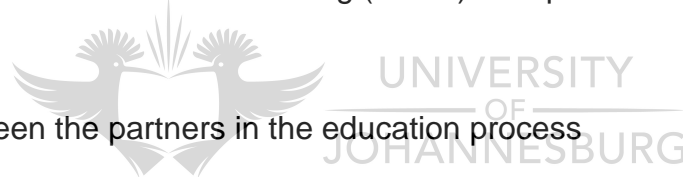
The activities of the school require a lot of time and commitment. This is not always possible for working parents (Dixon 1992; 15). Parents are not always available, and in some cases children live in a house where one or both parents are absent. Such a situation affects parental involvement in school governance to a varying extent (Ferreira 1994: 60).

Poverty

Life in an impoverished environment is often characterised by a lack of stimulation and a feeling of powerlessness to effect changes and to control one's own destiny- including the taking care of one's family. The hardship brought by extreme poverty may prevent parents from focusing on anything beyond the most urgent needs, thus reducing their potential interest in school governance and learning (Mashile 1991:42).

Illiteracy

While it is significant to recognise the obstacle of illiteracy of parents to parental involvement especially in school governance matters, it is equally important to find ways to improve the situation. Parents who take part in school governance could be advised to enrol in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to improve their literacy levels.



2.2.3 Tensions between the partners in the education process

The new era saw an education system that was based on the fundamental principles of democracy, unity, non-discrimination, equality, and equity. The new system invariably led to differences of opinion and tensions between the partners in the education process, and particularly between the Department of Education, as the representative of the government, and the school governing body, as the representative of the community. Tension originates from issues concerning funding of schools, admission requirements at schools, the language policy of schools, learners code of conduct and other school governance issues.

According to Squelch (in Lemmer, 2000: 136) the powers and functions of the school governing body's before 1990 were considerably less demanding than is currently than is the case and that role was predominantly supportive in the nature of the Department of Education (DoE). Naidoo (2003: 3) and Mkhwanazi (2003: 3) share the opinion that

the reasons for the existence of the so-called field of tension must be found in the different interpretations of the changed legislation.

Squelch (in Lemmer, 2000: 128-129) state that an essential feature of agendas for education reform has been the devolution of education management to schools, which implies that at schools level more decentralised decision making responsibility and abilities are developed.

School governing bodies are critical to:

- Improve the quality of education
- Ensure good governance
- Advance the democratic transformation of our society
- Ensure that schools serve the interest of the community and meet the expectations of parents
- Assist in spreading the cost of education across users and society as a whole
- Combat racism, sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, and
- Contribute toward the eradication of poverty, and toward the economic emancipation and well-being of our society.

2.3 Composition of School governing bodies

According to Motimele (2005:3), the South African Schools Act specifies the following three categories of membership to a school governing body:

- Elected members
- The Principal by virtue of his or her official capacity, and
- Co-opted members.

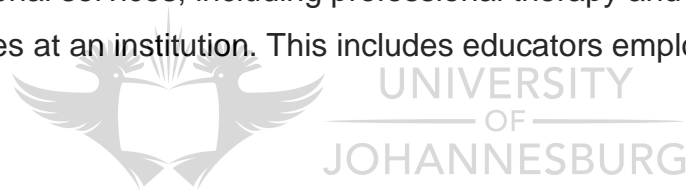
The school governing body comprise the following members:

2.3.1 Parents or guardians of learners at the school

A parent means the biological or guardian of a learner or the person legally entitled to custody of a learner. A parent means the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a parent or guardian, or the person legally entitled to custody of a learner.

2.3.2 Educators at the school

An educator is a person who teaches, educates or trains other people, or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and educational psychological services at an institution. This includes educators employed by the school.



2.3.3 Learners in Grade 8 or higher

Only learners in Grade 8 or higher who are elected members of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) can serve on the school governing body.

Learners with special educational needs in grade 8 or higher may also be elected if this is reasonably practicable.

2.3.4 Members of staff who are not educators

These members are all institutional staff members appointed according to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), who are not educators at that institution, including those employed by the school.

2.3.5 Co-opted Members

These members are co-opted by the school governing body for their expertise and skills. They are part of the school governing body to widen the knowledge and experience base of the governing body.

2.4 Parental Involvement in school governance

For the school governing body to be functional, the majority of its members must be parents (Potgieter et al.1997).

2.4.1 The nature and functions of a school governing body

A school governing body is a statutory body of people elected to govern the school. A governing body is set up by an act of parliament in particular the SASSA. The Schools Act stipulates that the governing body must help and support the principal and other staff at the school in the performance of their professional functions.

In terms of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, school governing bodies are given certain functions which they have to execute. Among other school governing bodies are given the responsibility to develop their own policies specific areas. It must however be borne in mind that the school governing body is not involved in a day-to-day running of the school.

The day-to-day functioning of the school is the responsibility of the principal and the School Management Team (SMT). The following are some of the main functions of the school governing body, as stipulated in Section 20 of the South African School Act:

- Development of the mission statement
- Adopt a code of conduct for the learners at the school
- Adopt a school policy
- Sanction the school development plan (SDP)

- Support the principal and staff
- Financial responsibility
- Ensure the development of the school by providing quality (high standard) education for all learners at the school.

According to the Department of Education (1999), the school governing body can also apply to the Head of Department (HOD) to perform the following functions:

- Determine the admission policy of the school
- Maintain and improve the school property
- Determine extra-mural curriculum of the school
- Inquire into written complains about any pupil.

2.5 Code of Conduct



A code of conduct is a document that contains agree-upon guidelines about how people in a particular organization or structure should behave.

2.5.1 Meaning of “Code of Conduct” at school level

Code of conduct means a collection of a number of binding rules and principles reflecting certain moral standards and values at the school. The word **conduct** refers to the behaviour, acts and omissions of learners. Basically a code of conduct will contain a description of conduct which are regarded as undesirable as well as the response of the school (including punishment) to such conduct. Certain forms of desirable or correct conduct may be included in a code. It is however, impossible to define all forms of good or desirable conduct.

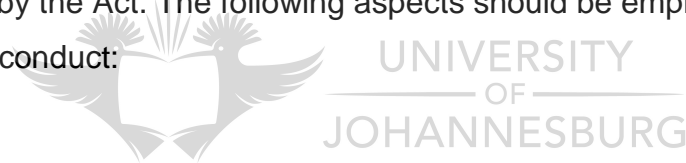
2.5.2 Learners code of conduct

According to Mc Lennan, A. (2000), a code conduct for learners in terms of the South African Schools Act of 1996 contains rules and principles to promote good conduct and to deal with undesirable conduct in the school situation.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996:8(1) stipulates that:

Subject to any applicable provincial law, a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school.8(1)

It is, therefore, expected of each public school to develop its own code of conduct for learners as directed by the Act. The following aspects should be emphasized regarding the learners code of conduct:



- Learners, parents and educators must be involved in the development of the code of conduct
- The code of conduct must inform learners about the way in which they should conduct themselves
- It is important that the school values, norms and morals are reflected in the code of conduct
- The code of conduct must state the legal authority which the school principal, educators and the school governing body have in the school
- The code of conduct should be written in an understanding language level.
- The code of conduct must encourage learners to commit themselves to the teaching and learning culture of the school
- The code of conduct must be displayed at the school and, where possible, a copy be given to each and every learner who enrolls at the school

It is important that the learners should be encouraged to commit themselves to their code of conduct as it promotes exemplary conduct. Learners should own their code of conduct.

Section 9(3) of the South African Schools Act states that:

The behaviour of a learner at a public school, which may constitute serious misconduct, must be determined by the Member of the Executive Council by means of a notice in the Provincial Gazette.

2.5.3 Reasons for adopting a code of conduct

The South African Schools Act places a duty on the governing body of every public school to adopt a code of conduct for its learners. Thus the question is not whether the school governing body involved with the school believe that is a good idea or not, the law says that there must be such a code. The governing body should not unreasonably delay the development and adoption of a code of conduct (Motimele 2005: 8).

2.5.4 Nature and aims of code of conduct

The South African Schools Act describes the nature of the code of conduct that must be adopted. This also gives us an idea of the underlying reasons for adopting and enforcing a code. A code of conduct must be aimed at establishing a (a) **disciplined** and (b) **purposeful** school environment which is dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

The South African Schools Act uses the word **must** to describe the correct objectives and the nature of a code of conduct. This means that a code of conduct or a part of it that does not comply with this requirement will be invalid. The aim of the code of conduct must be to create a particular type of school environment. A school is a wide

expression which refers to the whole situation and context within which learning and teaching take place.

The type of school environment which must be created by a code of conduct is one that is **disciplined** and **purposeful**. It is important to have this as the correct point of departure in thinking about, planning, drafting, negotiating and consulting on approving and enforcing a code of conduct. Undisciplined behaviour or misconduct of a learner poses a threat to a disciplined and purposeful school environment. Positive discipline assists in constructive learning.

Disciplined: refers to positive discipline. It means that learners exhibit qualities such as **self-control**, they have habits of obedience, they accept responsibility and they strive to achieve exemplary conduct. It also means that generally there is good order at the school. Positive discipline does not mean that learners are treated as slaves or are expected to be like puppets.

Purposeful: means that there is a plan to ensure that everything centres around the real reasons why the school exists. A code of conduct is not merely there to have discipline and order at a school. A code of conduct may not prohibit conduct merely because certain persons feel that such conduct is “wrong”. The code of conduct aims to achieve such discipline and order as may be necessary and useful to improve or maintain the quality of the learning process. In other words, learning is either made impossible, more difficult, or less valuable. The code of conduct is intended to identify and then eliminate such conduct from school environment.

2.5.5 The contents of a code of conduct for learners

The school governing body must adopt a code of conduct for learners and this code of conduct must have a particular content. The code of conduct must contain:

- A preamble reflecting the values referred to in the preamble to the South African Schools Act.

- A reference to the legal authority on which the code is based. This means a reference to the South Africa Schools Act and any applicable provincial legislation.
- A list of principles and values which form the basis of the code. These principles and values will obviously include certain fundamental rights, the mission statement of the school and other relevant which the school community deems very important for the purpose of the code.
- A list describing the positive conduct expected of learners that will contribute to a disciplined school environment which will improve or maintain the quality of the learning process. The various areas of conduct should be grouped together for easier reference.
- A list describing certain forms of conduct that are prohibited. There may be categories of misconduct. Misconduct may be defined in various ways but the best is probably to state that any act or omission by a learner that is contrary to the code constitutes misconduct.
- A description of the circumstances to which the code will apply. For example, the code will apply to the conduct of the learner on school premises at any time, or outside school premises under certain circumstances, e.g. when wearing a school uniform or participating in school activities.
- A list of possible penalties and other appropriate measures or responses in the case of a contravention of a code.
- Rules on a due process to be followed in the case of disciplinary proceedings, it means that an allegation of misconduct must be inquired into and dealt with in a fair and reasonable manner, respecting the rights of all those involved in the process.
- Principles dealing with allegations of criminal conduct by the learner
- Propose possible rewards or recommendations in the case of exemplary or correct conduct by learners.
- Provision on how the code is to be amended if necessary and on the interpretation or understanding of the code.
- References to provincial regulations.
- Date on which it comes into effect.

2.5.6 The legal steps in adopting a code of conduct.

During the adoption of a code of conduct the school governing body will have to go through at least the following steps prescribed by law, (Department of Education: 1999).

- a) The governing body must take note of and consider the provision of:
 - The Bill of Rights
 - The guidelines published by the National Minister of Education
 - The applicable sections of the South African Schools Act, and
 - The provisions of any applicable provincial regulation.
- b) The governing body must consult with learners, parents and educators at the school regarding the content of the code.
- c) The governing body must draw up the text of a lawful, reasonable and appropriate code of conduct.
- d) A majority of the members of the school governing body must approve the text of the code of conduct.
- e) The governing body must make the code to be made known to all those who have a direct interest in it namely learners, parents, and educators.

2.5.7 Main steps in adopting a code of conduct

The steps listed hereunder are important in adopting a code of conduct:

- a) Discuss issues with members

The school governing body should start its work with regard to a code of conduct by raising and discussing this issue at a meeting of all its members. Someone should

outline to the members the nature of the task that is to be performed and the most important legal and policy aspect involved.

b) Elect a committee

The school governing body should then elect a committee consisting of some of its members and possibly an expert or other useful appropriate person from outside the governing body (if such a person is available). The committee should undertake the main work involving the adoption of a code.

c) Give instructions

The school governing body may give instruction to the committee with regard to the procedures to be followed and the time frame within which it must complete its work. There may also be instructions regarding progress reports to the full governing body.

d) Get copies of documents

The committee must start its work as soon as possible by obtaining copies and considering all the applicable official documentation. It may, of course, also obtain copies of codes of conduct from other schools and other non-official documentation which may be available.

e) Consider the law

The committee must naturally pay special attention to laws and regulations that are binding on it with regard to the content of a code conduct. In particular the committee should consider the guidelines published by the Minister of Education. As the term “guidelines” indicates, this document is intended to assist and guide governing bodies. School governing bodies may choose not to follow everything in

the guidelines – provided, of course, that there is a good reason for doing so. Nevertheless, all school governing bodies have a duty to consider the guidelines, in other words, seriously think about their content.

f) Debate important issues and the way forward

After consideration of all the official documentation the committee should make a list of factors to be considered regarding a code of conduct as well the general nature of a possible code. It should consider and debate the whole issue thoroughly.

g) Prepare a draft code of conduct and/ or invite others to submit drafts

The committee should agree on and up a code of conduct. The committee may also request others, such as learners, educators, or parents, to prepare drafts if they so wish and submit it to the governing body. The committee's draft and any other realistic drafts must form the basis of all further consultation, negotiation and discussion.

h) Distribute copies

Copies of any drafts must be given to all stakeholders. The key stakeholders are learners, parents and educators at the school. If necessary, the draft(s) may be made available to other persons who can make a positive contribution.

It must be made clear to everyone that the documents distributed are only a draft or drafts for the purpose of consultation and discussion and that no final has been made.

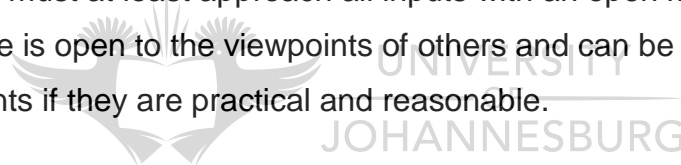
i) Give time to stakeholders

All role players must be given sufficient time to read and think about the draft. They should be invited to either talk to the members of the committee or to give their views and comments in writing.

j) Consultation

The law stipulates that there be consultation with all stakeholders, i.e. learners, parents and educators at the school. Consultation means that the members of the governing body must talk- and listen carefully - to representatives and members of each of these groups at the school about the content and enforcement of a possible code of conduct.

The committee is not obliged to accept everything that parents, educators or learners may have to say, but must at least approach all inputs with an open mind. An “open mind” means that one is open to the viewpoints of others and can be persuaded to accept such viewpoints if they are practical and reasonable.



k) Make changes to draft code

After the required consultation, the committee must look at the draft code it has prepared again and include all the inputs which merit inclusion. An input will merit inclusion if it is reasonable, realistic, lawful and has sufficient support from the stakeholders. It may also be necessary for the committee to seek legal or other or other advice if it is unsure about something. The committee must then draw up a final draft code of conduct for consideration by the full governing body.

l) Consider final draft

A copy of the final draft code must be distributed to all the members of the governing body for their consideration. The final draft must be discussed at a meeting of the full

governing body. On this occasion the members of the committee which developed the code and consulted with others about it, may give a report on the reasons for including or committing certain things in the final draft. They may also be required to report on their consultation with stakeholders.

m) Approve draft

If a majority of the members of the governing body are satisfied with the final draft, they may approve it formally. However, it may happen that members suggested certain changes. If a majority of members support these changes they must be included.

n) Consult again if necessary

If important changes are suggested regarding new matters on which no consultation has taken place, this should be referred back to the committee. The committee then has to consult with the stakeholders again. After such consultation the draft must once more be brought before the full school governing body.

o) Final approval

If the school governing body is satisfied, the final draft may be approved formally and then becomes the school's code of conduct for all learners. The school governing body must also decide on a date on which the code of conduct will come into operation. All these decisions must be minuted carefully.

p) Publish code to stakeholders

The school governing body should at this juncture decide on how the code is to be made known to all stakeholders, which include parents, educators and learners.

Conclusion

The role of the school governing body in the adoption of a code of conduct for learners remains an integral facet at ensuring that there is effective management and assisting learners in receiving constructive learning. Effective teaching and learning can be easily attained when the school governing body starts to use their legal duties as provided by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, to develop, adopt and implement the code of learners conduct for sound education.

The management role that school governing bodies play in schools requires a thorough knowledge of the following management aspects, as identified by Davidoff and Lazarus (1999:67):

- Management of systems
- Management of time
- Management of tension/stress
- Management of conflict and
- Care for all in the school



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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

The aim of this study is to discuss the role of school governing body in the adoption of a code of conduct for learners in secondary schools. Chapter II of this study reflected a significant background to the investigation which is contained in this research. In this chapter the research design will be discussed and the instrument used to collect data will be described.



3.1 The meaning of research

The word research comes from the French researcher- to search after or to investigate and is defined as “a careful, systematic, patient investigation undertaken to discover or establish facts and relationship (Craig & Mertler, 2005:6). Research is called for when one is confronted with a question or problem that has no readily available answer.

3.2 Research design

According to Thomas (1990:60) the research design indicates activities the investigator and the participants should perform and the order in which they should occur. Research design is often seen as a complex, arcane subject that only methodologists or statisticians can possibly understand, so it is presumed that the experts' prescription must be slavishly followed (Slavin, 1992:2).

The purpose of research design is to determine as unambiguously as possible whether or not hypothesis are true. A good research design simply rules out the greatest possible number of alternative explanations for a particular outcome.

Qualitative research, which is also known as ethnographic or naturalistic research, is going to be used here. A qualitative research design was chosen as a result that it gave the researcher the opportunity and time to give and provide a detailed description of the role of the school governing body in the adoption of a code of conduct for learners in secondary schools.

This research is intended to explore important social phenomena by immersing the investigator in the situation for extended periods. It is intended to produce information on a given setting in full richness and complexity. In general, the qualitative researcher begins with an open mind and, at most, a few hunches about what he or she may see, and start with a full-blown plan (Slavin, 1992:65).

In education, qualitative research involves much more than sitting around in schools or classrooms talking. It is built on a set of key assumptions which, to one degree or another, underline all qualitative investigations. According to Bogden (1982), qualitative research has the following characteristics:

1. *Qualitative research uses the natural setting as the direct sources of data and researchers as the key instrument.*

Researchers enter and spend considerable time in schools, neighbourhood, and other environments learning about educational concerns. During this research, much time will be spent in the school interviewing an educator, a learner, the principal and the parent's component of the school governing body. Qualitative researchers go to a particular setting under the study because they are concerned with the context.

When the data with which they are concerned are produced by subjects, as in the case of official records, researchers want to know where, how, and under what circumstances it came into being.

2. Qualitative researcher is descriptive.

Data collected are in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The written results of the researcher contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation. Data that will be collected during this research will include interviews, field notes, personal documents and other official records.

The qualitative research approach demands that the world be approached with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.

3. Meaning is of essential concern to the qualitative approach.

Qualitative researchers are concerned with what are called participant perspective. During collection of data the researcher will focus part of his work on parents' perspectives on their children's education regarding the adoption of the code of conduct in the school.

Qualitative researchers in education can continually be found asking questions of people they are learning from to discover what they are experiencing. How they interpret their experiences, and how they themselves structure the social world in which they live.

3.3 Sampling

One very important aspect of research design is sampling. A sample is a process whereby a small number representing the whole is chosen for research (Yin, 1994:132). The most important principle in sampling is that each member of the population from which the sample is drawn should have an equal and known probability of being selected. Slavin (1992:95) state that the larger the sample drawn, the smaller the sample error will be.

Judgemental sampling, also known as purposive sampling will be used in this research so as to select the parent components of the governing body, educator as well as the learner component. Mertler (2005:143) attest to the fact that purposive sampling is used to select certain segments of the population for study. The researcher uses his judgement as to which segment should be inclined. In this research one principal of a secondary school, two parents, an educator and a learner will be interviewed in relation to the adoption of learners' code of conduct for its effectiveness and support to management at secondary schools.

3.4 Data Collection

Data are the raw materials used to construct meaning in research. According to Slavin (1992:70) in qualitative research, the data may be observations, descriptions, recordings, or photographs of what is going on in the setting under study. In this investigation data was collected through interviews with all relevant stakeholders, which include members of governing body, an educator and the learner component. The literature review and field notes will also form part of data collection.

3.4.1 Field Notes

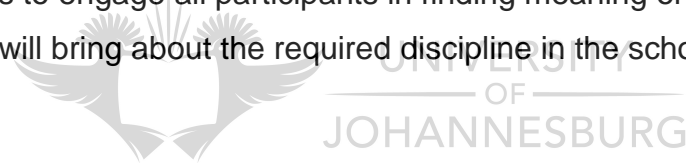
In most kinds of participants or nonparticipants observation studies fields notes are the most important data that are collected. Field notes usually contain description of the key individuals being observed and of the physical setting and other contextual features. The guideline for the adoption of the code conduct (RSA, 1998) provides that parents are expected to support the school by monitoring the behaviour of their children. The researcher will observe and note how parents respond towards monitoring the behaviour of their children.

3.4.2 Interviews

According to Gall & Borg (2003: 279) interviews are used to seek data by talking directly with informants. The properly conducted interview is not a chat but is organized to obtain useful information in a short amount of time. Soanes (2005:475) defines, interview as a meeting, conference, and visit to a person with a view to publishing a report of his conversation. Interviews are used to collect information regarding an individual's experiences and knowledge.

Mertler & Charles (2005:38) maintain that interview is organised around a predetermined set off questions but allows the questioner to provide encouragement, ask probing questions, and request additional information.

Respondents are easily influenced by the interviewer's manner, encouragement, and request for clarification, so that a person's responses to the same questions may vary substantially from one interview to another (Smith, 1992). The aim of the interview during the research is to engage all participants in finding meaning on how the code of conduct for learners will bring about the required discipline in the school.



3.4.3 Interview process

Kvale (1996:3-5) offers two metaphors for interviewing: the interviewer as a “miner” or as a “traveller”, the interviewer wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people encountered.

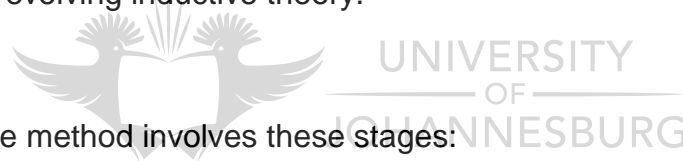
During the interview process, questioning will involve the researcher asking questions directly the participants or informants. Questioning during the interview process will not be done haphazardly but in a carefully planned manner. Participants will be asked questions in the same sequence, thus following a semi-structured open-ended interview process.

Open-ended interviews are common tool of qualitative research and attempts to let the person being interviewed tell his or her story, respond at length, and lead the interview in directions other than those anticipated by the researcher. The researcher will try to avoid questions that can be answered “yes” or “no” or in simple responses.

3.5 Analyzing the data

Babie (2005:386) defines qualitative data analysis as the nonnumerical assessment of observations made through participant observation, content analysis, in-depth interviews, and other qualitative research techniques. The purpose of data analysis is to discover underlying meaning and patterns of relationships. Lofland et al. (1995:127) suggest that frequencies, magnitudes, structures, processes, causes, and consequences are different ways of looking for patterns in a particular research topic.

The researcher is able to understand more about the phenomenon being researched by using the constant comparative method of data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:126). For the purpose of this investigation the constant comparative method of data analysis was used. According to Babie (2005:390), constant comparative method is a component of the grounded theory in which observations are compared with one another and with the evolving inductive theory.



Constant comparative method involves these stages:

- “Comparing incidents applicable to each category”, as per research topic a comparison will be made between the governing body members as how they understand the concept: Learners code of conduct and its adoption thereof.
- “Integrating categories and their properties”. The researcher begins to note relationship among concepts.
- “Delimiting the theory”. Eventually, as the patterns of relationships among concepts become clearer, the researcher will ignore some of the concepts initially noted but evidently irrelevant to the inquiry.
- “Writing theory”. The researcher will put his findings into words to be shared with others. The act of communicating one’s understanding of a topic modifies and improves one’s own grasp.

3.6 Trustworthiness of the research

Trustworthiness in an inquiry makes it significant that researchers and others should have total confidence in the best possible conduct of the investigation as well as in the result of any particular enquiry (Merriam 2002). In order to maintain and ensure trustworthiness, information will include the creation of credibility, transferability, dependability, and consistency:

3.6.1 Credibility

It is important to note that maintenance of objectivity through triangulation is considered one of the key approaches of improving the probability of credible findings. The establishment of the credibility of findings entails both ensuring that the research is carried out according to the canons of a good practice and submitting research findings to the members of a social world who were studied for confirmation that the investigator has correctly understood that social world. Credibility of all findings shall therefore be strictly ensured.

3.6.2 Transferability

The concept of transferability is about how the findings can be generalised or transferred from a perspective sample of population to the whole group. The idea of determining whether the findings are transferable, rest with user of the findings and not with the investigator.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be replicated. This implies that if the study on: The role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learners' code of conduct in secondary schools is repeated, will it yield the same

results? Dependability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results (Merriam, 2002).

3.6.4 Consistency

This is the extent to which the findings of the present empirical research would remain consistent in the event of the research being replicated.

3.7 Ethics and standards of research

Ethics is typically associated with morality, and both deals with matters of right and wrong. Conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group is considered ethical. The community of educational researchers most pride itself on ethical and moral behaviour with respect to the practice of their profession. A lack of ethical behaviour on the part of educational researchers will lead only to lack of credible research studies.

Babie (2005:59) states that, social research takes place in a social context.

Researchers must therefore take into account many ethical and political considerations alongside scientific ones in designing and executing their research. Anyone involved in social research, needs to be aware of the general agreements shared by researchers about what is proper and improper. The most significant ethical agreements that prevail in social research are:

3.7.1 Voluntary participation

During the research participants were informed that their contributions and participation will be voluntary. Participants were advised to withdraw anytime they felt there was an intrusion into their lives. All personal information that participants revealed was handled confidentially.

3.7.2 No harm to participants

Social research should never harm people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study. During the research all participants that included governing body members, learner component and educators were free from any form of embarrassment, harm or anything that would have endangered their home life, friendships, careers, emotional or psychological distress.

A research project guarantees anonymity when the researcher, not just the people who read about the research cannot identify a given response with a given respondent. Confidentiality is guaranteed when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly. Fairness and honesty was ensured and a sense of integrity displayed to all participants.

3.8 Conclusion



Educational research, a careful, systematic, patient investigation, leads to a new knowledge through the use of the scientific method, which involves clarifying a problem, formulating research questions or hypothesis, obtaining pertinent information, analyzing data, describing the findings, and drawing conclusions that answer the questions or test the hypothesis.

Strict operating procedures will be followed in this investigation to ensure that participants are protected, information is reliable, data are analyzed properly and reported accurately, and findings and conclusions are persuasively drawn from the data.

CHAPTER 4

THE ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

The topics listed hereunder were dealt with in chapter 3 above: Meaning of research, qualitative research, methodology, sampling and data collection as well. The 4th chapter will specifically concentrate on data analysis and interpretation with regard to the role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools.

4.2. Data collection and study sample



The aim of the research was to collect data based on the role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learners' code of conduct at Secondary Schools. The sample of the study comprised members of the school governing body of a Secondary School. Members involved in the study included, the school principal, an educator, the chair person of the governing body, one learner component and a parent component.


The members who formed part of this research study agreed to take part without any force or constraints. Participants were also advised to indicate when discussions and questions pertaining the research compromises their integrity. A letter of request to conduct the research was also forwarded to the Circuit Manager of the department of Education, upon receiving the permission to conduct the research- the principal of the Secondary School earmarked for the research was presented with the letter of permission.

4.3. Analysis of Data

According to Babie (2005:387), data analysis is the non-numerical assessment of observation made through participant observation, content analysis, in-depth interviews, and other qualitative research techniques. The aim of data analysis is to understand the various constructive elements of collected data through an inspection of the relationship concepts or variables (Mouton 2003: 108).

Data collected during the interviews will be prepared for analysis by making copies and then identifying units of meaning in the data. During the identification of themes and categories open coding was used. Strause et al. (1990:62) defines open coding as part of analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data.

The themes and categories listed hereunder were developed during the process of comparison of information according to sets of meaning.

- 
- Ineffectiveness of learners code of conduct to school management for purposes of curbing ill discipline
 - School governing body's perception regarding their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct
 - Parental involvement in school governance
 - Knowledge of department of policies

The themes as listed above will be discussed and some examples will also be taken from the interview transcript in Appendix A.

4.4. Summary of themes and categories

Table 1, below gives a brief summary of the themes and categories identified through data analysis of the research.

Table 1

Themes	Categories
Ineffectiveness of learners code of conduct to school management for purposes of curbing ill discipline	Disunity between school management and school governing body
School governing body's perception regarding their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct.	Lack of capacity
Parental involvement in school governance	Use of corporal punishment
Knowledge of department policies	*Expulsion of learners *All learners to have a copy of code of conduct for good behaviour

The themes and categories on Table 1 will be discussed below:

4.5 Ineffectiveness of learner's code of conduct to school management for purposes of curbing ill discipline: Theme 1

According to Squelch (2000:42), Planning for good discipline begins with a broad school policy empowering principals and educators to deal with a multiplicity of possible behaviour problems.

It appeared that management was failing to curb ill discipline from the school because some learners would be found outside classes while teaching and learning was taking place.

The principal stated that:

“Ja, not that much, you sometimes find learners sitting behind toilet buildings during times when teaching and learning is taking place, and you see that is bad practice, such actions by learners are not tolerated, you have to them to task”



A parent component of the school governing body indicated that:

“....yes we sometimes see learners behaving bad- because I work in the school yard, I witness these behaviours”

On the effectiveness of the learners code of conduct and ill discipline the chairperson of the school governing body has to say:

“There are small pockets of misbehaviour, they are generally behaving good to answer your question but we have not reached the 100% we have targeted for”

The learner component of the governing body stated that:

“Not at all, my fellow learners has few challenges when coming to conduct, only a few of the male learners still has discipline problems”

4.5.1 Disunity between school management and school governing body

During the interview process it came to light that there was disunity between the school management and the school governing body when taking decisions on issues pertaining learner ill discipline, this state of affair was revealed by the parent component in the governing body of the school.

The parent-governor indicated that:

“The school management team and the school governing body ought to work side by side so as to make the school functional. They need to work collaboratively on number of things in the school – like in addressing late coming or and violent behaviour emm... we can build this school if we work together with the management team which sometimes took decisions alone”

The chairperson of the school governing body said:

“...this relationship between ourselves and management has enable the learners to fair well and we would like to improve this relationship because to me it has not reached the level I would want”

The chairperson further commented and said:

“There isn’t much that I can say, but I wish it can improve because there are areas where I feel we should have been consulted, like to some learners who continue to misbehave at the school”

4.6. School governing body's perception regarding their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct: Theme 2

It appeared that the perception of some of the school governing body members was not clear when coming to their roles in the adoption of the code of conduct. According to Visser (2000: 147-150) the governing body's functions as set out in section 20 of the Schools Act, is to govern efficiently and effectively. A governing body must be able not only to make rules for good governance but also to have the capacity and will to implement these rules in the school situation and enforce them in cases of learner misconduct by means of specific disciplinary measures provided for in the code of conduct.

One participant mentioned that:



“Well, although we did not get more training on this, I think it is important because it tells us as learners how we should conduct ourselves in the school”

Another participant went on to say:

“The code of conduct is important however as school governors we don't have more information about it because when there are issues of learner misconduct we sometimes fail to take the right decision in line with the offence”

A parent-governor further indicated that:

“The role played by the school governing body is very big indeed because the school governing body is there to ensure that school policies including the code of conduct is followed and this needs more knowledge and understanding on our part as school governors and we are always found wanting”

4.6.1 Lack of capacity

The lack of capacity has made some of parents elected to the school governing body to unceremoniously quit before their term comes to an end. This according to some of the participants was as result of incapacity.

The learner component of the school governing body indicated that:

“I think it depends – it depends on how far that parent has gone to school...but some parents I think don’t understand the code of conduct that is why some do not last long, maybe they need training”

Training is a learning process that involves the acquisition of skills, concepts, rules or attitudes to enhance performance (Byars and Rue, 2000:203).

The principal stated that:

“Their understanding? Ja... I think they have less or little understanding..... However we have a duty to teach and advise them on such school issues”

Another participant responded by saying:

“I think we as school governors need more workshop or capacity on the working and effectiveness of the code of conduct”

One participant further said:

“I would not give a direct answer but I think some are not ready for challenges involved in school governing body and maybe issues of incapacity”

4.7. Parental involvement in school governance: Theme 3

It appeared that parental involvement in school governance is not up to its best level. According to Swap (1993:25) parents from all backgrounds, whether they are from impoverished families, unemployed parents, illiterates, rural people or squatters, are interested in school governance and in their children’s schooling. The lack of knowledge about how to get involved as well as the lack of time and funds has got to be dealt with.

A parent component of the school governing body said:

“...but some parents do not come or care. Parents must not send children to school and leave everything to teachers, they ought to get involved”

The chairperson of the school governing body indicated that parental involvement means that parents must not overwork children at home.

The chairperson said:

“Parents must guard against piling children with lot of work that will stop them from doing homework and other school related work”

The learner component from the school governing body stated that some parents do not end their term of office when elected to the school governing body. The learner said:

“...you can see that some parents are involved, in the school here they are involved and when elected but the problem is that when time progresses some quit and we are forced to have by-elections”

4.7.1 The use of corporal punishment

It was noted that thou parents may respond well when invited into the school, but they do not understand the education departments policies, some were still insisting that children must be punished. According to the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner.

The school principal indicated that:

“...they still feel that the department is not acting according to their favour by abolishing corporal punishment, whenever we call solve their children’s issues they conclude by saying, this is a small issue, which can be solved by two or three lashes”

Joubert and Squelch (2005: 50) maintains that parents may not give the principal or educators permission to use corporal punishment on their children; nor may parents (instead of a principal or educator) administer corporal punishment to their own children on a school property. Anyone who ignores this regulation commits an offence and can be charged in a court of law.

The principal further indicated that:

“When you invite them to solve their children brush with the school rules, they insist on beating the hell out of them”

About teacher's dealing with corporal punishment, the learner-governor stated:

“No, but they can shout too much to those who don't sometimes submit work, ja, they shout!”

Lund (1996:43-45) states that disciplinary incidents should be dealt with as soon as possible and that punishment should not be given in anger or in haste. Moreover, once the punishment has been administered, the case must be closed and the learner and educator should start with a clean state to discourage the educator and or learner from holding a grudge.

4.8 Knowledge of department policies: Theme 4

Knowledge of education policy related matters during this era of education transformation is important. It appeared that the principal was still using terminologies like prefects with Representative Council of Learners simultaneously.

He indicated that:

“...structures put in school...structures that are there, the prefects, RCL's”

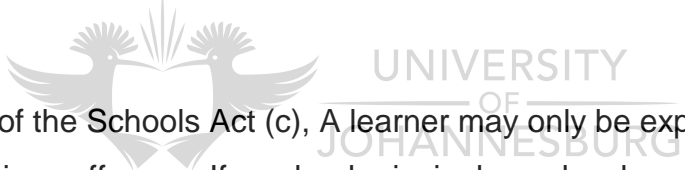
The fact of the matter is that the prefect system was replaced by RCL's (Representative council of learners). The South African Schools Act provides for the establishment of an RCL in all schools offering grade 8 and higher. The RCL is the official body representing all learners at a secondary school. It consists of learner members who are democratically elected from each class at a school and who represent the views of learners regarding all aspects of their education.

4.8.1 Expulsion of learners

Joubert and Squelch (2005:90) states that expulsion may only be used in case of serious offences. Only the Head of Department may expel a learner from a public school.

One participant indicated that:

“....and teachers who are daily working with learners should without any reluctance report to the school governing body any misconduct that is contrary to the code of conduct so that the school governing body can exercise their powers to ensure the effectiveness of the code of conduct in the school, Oh! here again a learner whose behaviour warrants expulsion the school governing body should do so and without hesitation or fear or favour”



In terms of section 9 of the Schools Act (c), A learner may only be expelled by the Head of Department for serious offences. If a school principal expels a learner without the permission of the Head of Department he or she will have performed an *ultra vires* act and be in contravention of this Act.

4.8.2 All learners to have a copy of code of conduct for a good behaviour.

During the interview process some participants agreed that learners are given copies of the code of conduct so as to foster good behaviour at the school.

One participant indicated that:

“....we give each learner a copy of the code of conduct and patiently goes through each specific rule that has to do with school hours...”

Another participant indicated that:

“Certainly yes, at the beginning of the year we go through each and every point that is in the code of conduct with the learners....”

One participant indicated that not all learners get the copy of the code of conduct.

The participant indicated that:

“I think they or we have to see to it that all learners has the copy of the code of conduct, but I’m afraid because those learners who join us in the middle of the year don’t get the copies- I think we must see to it that learners love or own, yes own the code of conduct”



It appeared that good behaviour was going to be a challenge to those learners who do not have the copy of the code of conduct.

According to a report on school discipline by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate in England (HMI) (in Charlton & David, 1993:5), “good behaviour is a necessary condition for effective teaching and learning to take place, and an important outcome of education which society rightly expects”.

All themes has been discussed, chapter four is now summarized below.

4.9 Summary

A brief overview of data analysis and interpretation was provided in this chapter. There were four themes that were developed.

- Ineffectiveness of learner's code of conduct to school management for purposes of curbing ill discipline.

School management was failing to curb ill discipline from school.

- School governing body's perception regarding their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct.

School governing members were not clear about their roles in the adoption of the code of conduct.

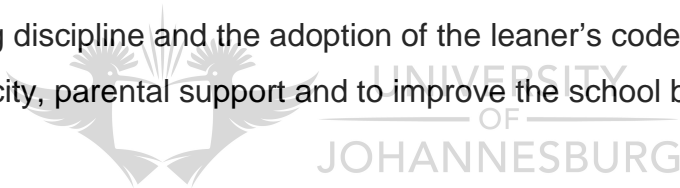
- Parental involvement in school governance.

Parental involvement in school governance was not up to its best level.

- Knowledge of departmental policies

Departmental policies were not properly followed in the school.

Lastly extracts from the transcripts were given to illustrate the different themes and categories. It appeared that even if the school governing body was hands-on at issues concerning discipline and the adoption of the learner's code of conduct, they still needed capacity, parental support and to improve the school behaviour.



In chapter five the focus will be on findings of the research and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the fourth chapter, data analysis was done and the results were development of themes and various categories and findings were discussed as well. In chapter five the research findings will be discussed and recommendations given.

5.2 SUMMARY

In the first chapter, the orientation to the study was given and a brief discussion of the aims of the research design, methodology, demarcation of the research and definition of concepts was given.

The general aim of the research study was to establish the school governing body's perceptions regarding their role in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct. The specific aims of this study were to:

- Establish the parents perception on their role in enhancing good conduct in the school; and
- See how the school governing body can collaborate with school management in curbing ill discipline.

The second chapter of the research study presented a literature review on the composition of the school governing body in public schools, parental involvement in school governance, which dealt much on challenges faced by parents regarding their

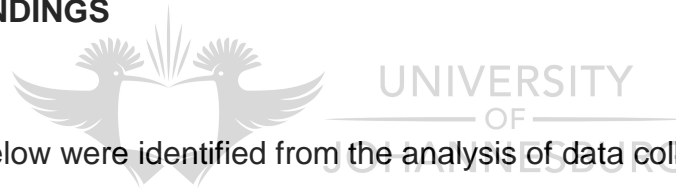
participation in the education of their children and the main steps in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct.

The third chapter of the research study presented an overview of the research design, the research method and how data was collected. The type of research design was a qualitative one. The trustworthiness of the research study was also discussed. Judgemental sampling which is also known as purposive sampling was discussed.

The fourth chapter dealt with data analysis and its interpretation. Four themes and categories were developed and then discussed. Parents' perceptions on their roles to enhance good conduct at schools were analysed.

The fifth chapter will present the significant empirical findings of the study:

5.3 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



The themes listed below were identified from the analysis of data collected:

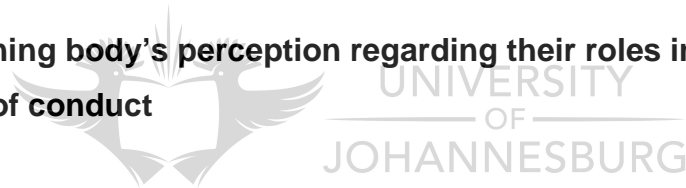
- Ineffectiveness of learner's code of conduct to school management for purposes of curbing ill discipline
- School governing body's perception regarding their role in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct
- Parental involvement in school governance
- Knowledge of departmental policies

5.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS DISCUSSION

5.4.1 Ineffectiveness of learner's code of conduct to management for purposes of curbing ill discipline

From the data that was analysed, it can be concluded that management was failing to curb ill discipline in the school. They were not in a position to use the code of conduct to their advantage, should they not receive assistance from other stakeholders like the Representative of Council of Learners, the general teaching staff or volunteering parents patrolling the school premises, the culture of teaching and learning would severely get affected. Learners that continue bunking classes should be brought to book. The participants further indicated disunity between school management and school governing body, and this needed to be resolved as a matter of urgency.

5.4.2 School governing body's perception regarding their roles in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct



School governing body members did not know their clear roles in relation to the adoption of the code of conduct – they lacked the capacity regarding their roles and duties, therefore the education department needed to come in and organised workshops, train and give capacity. Incompetent school governing body may render the school ungovernable thus capacity building was very eminent.

5.4.3 Parental involvement in school governance

Parental involvement was a huge hindrance regarding the governance of the school. Although some parents would come to the school when invited they had little or no knowledge of the school functioning and governance. The school has a duty to educate its community about school related matters; school has to be centres' of information.

There was lack of parental support. Participants indicated that parents felt that the department has let them down in abolishing corporal punishment, some parents were still in favour of beating ill disciplined learners. Educators were becoming frustrated about learners not willing to submit school work and to learn.

5.4.4 Knowledge of department policies

The research study indicated that there was lack of knowledge of departmental policies by school authorities. A terminology like, prefects was a language still spoken in the premises of the school. The research further shown that school authorities were not clear about issues of learner expulsion. Submissions made by some participants indicated that learner expulsion in case of serious offences was a school governing body's prerogative. Capacity building was therefore needed as a matter of urgency. It appeared that not all learners were in possession of the copies of code of conduct and such actions would disable learner's knowledge of the school conduct.



5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

1

The learner's code of conduct is a very important tool that when efficiently and effectively implemented schools can become centres of good behaviour where teaching and learning is enjoyed by all involved. The researcher therefore recommends that school management be supported in curbing ill discipline in the school. Structures like Representative Council of Learners ought to be actively involved in bringing about order in the school. School management has to set up a timetable for school monitoring, teachers with free periods may be included in the timetable so that they may do some monitoring as teaching and learning progresses. Period registers must be introduced to deal with learners bunking classes.

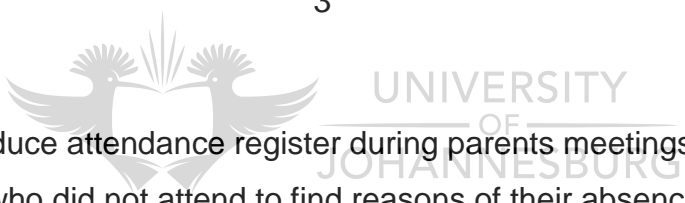
School management must ensure that educators prepare when going to class, some disruptions that lead to learners bunking classes may be the results of educators'

unpreparedness when going to classes. The school governing body members should be part of all decisions taken in the school so as to avoid complaints and disunity. There ought to be unity between management and school governing body.

2

The researcher suggest that stakeholders in partnership with education and the education department itself organise weekends workshop and training sessions in order to give capacity to school governing body members about their specific functions and roles and on issues of code of conduct. During school parents meetings, parents should be advised to support their children and assist them in doing school related work and homework.

3

The logo of the University of Johannesburg, featuring two stylized birds facing each other with a shield between them, and the text 'UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG' in a serif font.

Schools should introduce attendance register during parents meetings, and a follow-up be made to parents who did not attend to find reasons of their absence and at the same time encouraging them to support all initiatives that the school brings. In case of parents not attending meetings because of serious engagements, the school must introduce News Letters so as to update them. Management should further introduce an SMS programme where parents who did not attend meetings can be updated as well, and for dispatching school information and important announcements. During parents meetings legal experts are to be invited to give assistance on legal issues pertaining corporal punishment. Parents are to be aware of the dangers of beating children. Parents are to be encouraged to be partners in the education of their children.

4

The researcher recommends that school management should update themselves with department policy handbooks; they should visit the Education Department Website so as to find the latest information on policy changes and current updates of the

department. School principals should be the source of information and give proper advises to school governing bodies.

5

In case of learners committing serious offences and there are possibilities of learner expulsion, the principal should refer such matters to the Head of Department. Each learner in the school must have a copy of the learner's code of conduct. Learners who are admitted in the middle of the year should be given a copy of the code of conduct. The Teacher Liaison Officer in the school should provide a term programme where learners will receive workshops on the code of conduct. The Representative Council of Learners should at student meetings have slots where the code of conduct is discussed. At home parents should talk about the code of conduct and help their children to understand it.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY



Suggestions are that further research be done on the following topics:

- The roles played by representative of council of learners and the teacher liaison officer in maintaining learner discipline

5.7 CONCLUSION

The learner's code of conduct is a very significant facet of the school. The Education department has a very huge role to play in addressing issues of school governing body incapacity, by bringing in programmes that would assist in training which will bring about skill acquisition for school governing body members. Discipline is essential for efficient and effective teaching and learning. It is not possible to learn and teach in a situation that is unsafe, disorderly and disruptive.

Creating and maintaining a safe, disciplined school situation is very important in the wake of new education legislation and regulation that regulate discipline and punishment in schools. It is therefore suggested that educators, education specialists and principals constantly receive workshops on current department policies.



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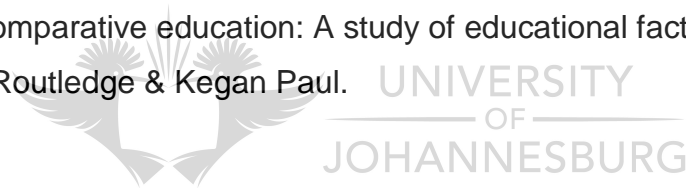
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APPENDIX A

Transcription of interviews



INTERVIEW PROCESS

INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

PARTICIPANT: 1

Key S.P = Researcher (interviewer)

Key PR = Principal

S.P: For records, my name is Simon, I'm currently doing a Masters programme with the University of Johannesburg, I'm with the Principal of a Secondary School, and I'm conducting a research on the topic: The role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools.

Thank you Mr P. for awarding me this opportunity to take you through the questions of the interview.

PR: Oh you are welcome Mr Chanza (Laughing).

S.P: How can the school governing body collaborate with school management in curbing ill-discipline?

PR: Mmh.... The s, oh ja, the school governing body can see to it that the code of conduct is followed fully and what the School Management will present to the school governing body as an act of ill-discipline from the side of the learners should be taken seriously and dealt with immediately. This will help to nip a bad practice in its budding stage. We can rotate as school governing body members

to monitor late coming, absenteeism and honouring of periods. I'm sure this can help to curb ill-discipline.

S.P= Are there any acts of ill-discipline that you have experienced in recent times?

PR= Ja, not that much, you sometimes find learners sitting behind toilet buildings during times when teaching and learning is taking place, and you see that is a very bad practice, such actions by learners are not tolerated. You have to take them to task, find out from the subject teacher why they are outside- if they did not write or submit activities, one has to give them a tongue lashing, and in case the behaviour persists the parents are involved.

S.P= What are your role as principal and member of the school governing body in enhancing good conduct in the school?

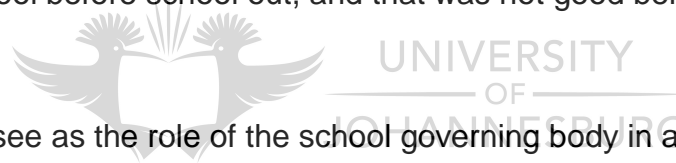
PR= Oh well, my role is quite huge- huge in a sense that I must be an example of good conduct, setting a good conduct is key in an institution of teaching and learning, it must begin with me- do you think when I always arrive late to school or fight with every teacher or learner in the school- can that make a normal school? No! To enhance good conduct means working together with every stakeholder in the school- your RCL, SMT, SGB, and teacher bodies. I have to work hand in glove with them to see to it that learners observe our school hours- I mean our starting times, breaks as well as knock-off times, do learners put on their school uniforms which is part of good conduct. I must see to it that the code of conduct is fully followed and observed, with learners conducting themselves good during teaching and learning, you are sure of a good performance.

S.P= What changes in your school can be attributed to the school governing body?

PR= Emm... I have seen they brought some changes in the school, 1, they have erected a multipurpose centre where we hold our assembly, meetings with learners, etc, it provides shelter from the rain and they have now started erecting the school gate and the gate keeper's "waghuis", so to put it (laughing) right.

S.P= Are you suggesting to me Mr Principal, that which you have mentioned above may have assisted in bringing good conduct?

PR= Oh yes, they really does, we had chaos in the past when we wanted to address learners because we had no organised place to talk to them, but since the hall was built we can easily send a word in all classes that there is a meeting at the hall, teachers are able to control the learners, and those learners who misbehave are easily sported and taken care of, about the new gate being built it replaces the old one that was broken, some learners were taking advantage of sneaking out of the school before school out, and that was not good behaviour.



S.P= What do you see as the role of the school governing body in assisting your school to improve its image and results?

PR= Eem...the school governing body here in the school monitors late coming in the beginning of the year, they talk with educators, in the beginning of each year, and thank them for results and encourage them to work even harder in the current year so that results may be good for the year. The school governing body encourages educators to go an extra-mile by giving them incentives, the school governing body eem, what does it do, it supports study camps by personally getting involved in cooking, eem, they cook, yes, they provide security for the learners who are attending and provide money for food, so they are supportive.

S.P= Tell me Sir, what does the school governing body exactly do to monitor late coming?

PR= Okay, as I have mentioned earlier on, they come in the beginning of the year to talk with learners, during their talk-shows they oh! We give each learner a copy of the code of conduct and patiently go through each specific rule that has to do with school hours or late coming as stated in the code of conduct. When coming to monitoring late coming the school governing body will at certain intervals visit the school and assist at mending the school gate, and personally talk to offenders, reminding them about the code of conduct in respect to late coming and encourage them to come on time and early to school, this helps because it completely reduces or rather let me say it stops acts and habits of late coming. The school governing body is really hands on when coming to teaching and learning matters, ja.

S.P= What are your views on parental involvement in school governance and education as a whole?

PR= Here I think I can say parents do not shun their responsibility when it comes to school governance, they allow themselves to be elected into school governance, emm, they come or attend parents meetings, eem , they come to school when it is a day for book viewing, eem,... what else, when parents are invited to school to solve their children issues, they come, they only need to be invited well in advance so that they can obtain permission from their employers, not only that, they still feel that the department is not oh! Ja... the department is not acting to their favour by abolishing corporal punishment, whenever we call them to solve their children issues, they conclude by saying "this is a small issue, which can be solved by two or three lashes (laughing)

S.P= What is your take on the parents' understanding of the learners code of conduct?

PR= Their understanding? Ja... I think they have less or little understanding, why do I say that? When you invite them to solve their children's brush with schools rules, they will insist on beating the hell out of them. They sometimes do not

understand the idea of signing late coming forms or any forms related to learner's misconduct, however we have a duty to teach and advise them on such school matters, I think they are getting there, is a matter of time.

S.P= How does the school governing body support your school?

PR= Oh! they do many things here, they formulate all policies, they do fundraising, ja, fundraising, by coming to monitor late coming, by performing their assigned duties, eh assigned by the department, drawing up of budget, and they conduct interviews if there are vacant posts, employ the additional educators in critical subjects matters, like physics and maths, they repair damaged furniture.

S.P= You have mentioned formulation of policies, which are the policies you are referring to?

PR= Yes, the very same code of conduct for learners forms part of what they do, admission policy, financial policy, nutrition policy, ja... we have a government sponsored nutrition programme going on in the school, still on policies they draw school grounds policies, exam policy, sports policy, eem.. a lot of them.

S.P= Is the adoption of the code of conduct for secondary school learners a paradigm shift in the education system, if yes in which manner?

PR= Oh ja, it should be yes, as long as it does not violate the constitution, it helps in bringing order here in the school, when it is formulated by all stakeholders therefore, it is not bias but take into consideration interest of all parties in the school.

S.P= According to your opinion do you see the code of conduct for learners assisting your school in any way?

PR= Certainly yes! It has helped a great deal, all learners are now aware that there is a code of conduct that govern their stay in the school, actual every year when we issue final academic reports a copy of the conduct is attached to the report of each learner, no learner in the school here is not bounded by the code of conduct, fighting among learners is now a thing of the past, why, all learners are aware what the code of conduct says about bullying, fighting or any misconduct thereof, it really helping.

S.P= Discuss the importance of the adoption of the code of conduct to secondary school learners.

PR= Oh ja, it brings to the attention of each learner issues of good behaviour, no learner will be ignorant of what is expected of them, the fact that it is adopted in the presence of all stakeholders including the parents will give the learners no room for excuse when they appear before the disciplinary committee due to violation of the code of conduct because it has been adopted by all the stakeholders.

SP= In which way can the school governing body ensure that the code of conduct is effective to schools?

PR= Oh well, to make it effective, structures put in the school...structures that are there, the prefects, RCL's, SGB, the representative from educators, non educators and teachers who are daily working with the learners should without any reluctances report to the school governing body any misconduct that is contrary to the code of conduct so that the school governing body can exercise their powers to ensure the effectiveness of the code of conduct in the school, Oh!

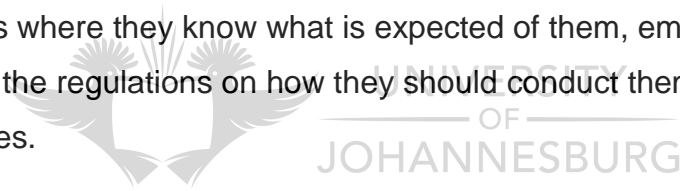
here again a learner whose behaviour warrants expulsion the school governing body should do so and without hesitation or fear or favour.

S.P= Mr principal does your school governing body expel learners?

PR= Not at all!, what I mean is this they can recommend to the HOD in case there is a learner whose behaviour can pose a danger to other learners or the school as a whole.

SP= Briefly explain the word “Code of conduct for learners at secondary schools.

PR= Ah! I think it has to do with policy that has been drawn up involving all stakeholders that how learners should behave themselves in order to live within the boundaries where they know what is expected of them, emm... that is also has to do with the regulations on how they should conduct themselves in the school premises.



SP= Where all stakeholders involved in the formulation and adoption of the learners code of conduct at your school?

PR= Absolutely yes! The following took part, emm....the RCL, SMT, educator representatives, and as you know the school governing body at the helm of everything.

SP= Back to the first question: As a member representing the school governing body what can be your role in enhancing good discipline?

PR= Eem, discipline is one of the most fundamental facets of teaching and learning, I've been a teacher for a very large part of my life, I've seen so many kids falling along the way side of their schooling career as a results of lack of discipline, so when you talk discipline you are right at the core of the science of teaching, right as members representing the school governing body our role to enhance discipline is seen when all stakeholders in the school, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and learners embraces the code of conduct. Good discipline can be enhanced when every policy available in the school is followed. When coming to teachers and learners we have a zero tolerance concerning issues of tuition, is a question of time on task, teachers must teach and learners must learn and this can bring about good conduct, and lastly parents has to support every activity that the school presents to improve good conduct.

SP= I would like to take this opportunity and thank you for awarding your time to conduct this interview

PR= Oh! thank you, it was my pleasure (laughing).



PARTICIPANT: 2

Key= S.P =Interviewer (Researcher)

Key= M = Educator component

SP= My name is Simon Chanza, I'm doing a Masters programme at the University of Johannesburg, I'm with Mr M, a teacher component of the school governing body in the school. Hi and good morning

M= Good morning Sir

S.P= As a teacher component in the school governing body, what can be your role in enhancing good conduct in the school?

M= Emm... I think emm, as school governing body to enhance good conduct in the school, one has to look in the roles of the school governing body and one role of the school governing body is that one of drawing the code of conduct for learners.

SP= Thank you- but what happens after the code of conduct is drawn up?

M= The school governing body has to ensure that every learner abides with the code of conduct, failing to do that will be a misconduct.

SP= How can the school governing body as a body responsible for the school collaborate with school management in curbing ill discipline?

M= Thank you Sir, like I have said in the first question, the school governing body's duty is to draw up policies for the school including the learners code of conduct and then after that then the school governing body has to meet with the SMT so as to ensure that the SMT implement the policies drawn by the school governing body, which include the code conduct for learners.

SP= Thank you very much for that response, with the question of curbing ill-discipline how does the school governing body assist?

M= Well, curbing ill-discipline is one fundamental duty of the school governing body, learners who show signs of ill-discipline has to be brought to book and use the same code of conduct to discipline them how?, you have to use the bodies available in the school- your RCL, disciplinary committee before you can invite parents.



SP= What changes can be attributed to the school governing body in the school?

M= Okay, thank you, eh, like what has happened the members of the school governing body, especially the parent component, they use to come to the school on regular basis, eh, they were just looking on how the learners behave, sometimes they will talk to the learners about good behaviour and so on, if maybe need be they will sometimes call parents of the learner to come to the school so that they make it a point that the bad behaviour of the learner is stopped.

SP= How is the behaviour of learners after the school governing body has spoken to them?

M= Oh yes, their behaviour improves a great deal, actually it helps the school when the school governing body members regularly visit the school.

SP= What are your views on parental involvement in school governance and education as a whole?

M= Ja, we are from a situation whereby what was taking place, the activities that was taking place at school was different to the activities that are usually taking place at home, so once parents are involved in school governance and education as a whole, that difference that was there, I think would come to an end that is, there would be that integration between the home education and the school education.

SP= But, why do you say parents are much involved in school governance?

M= Okay – they are involved because if you invite them to school they do come, but you must inform them in time- they are involved because they take part when elected in school governing body, during book viewing they also come to check the books.

SP= Is the adoption of the code of conduct for secondary school learners a paradigm shift in the education system, if yes in which manner?

M= Ja, I think yes it is because before that ...eeh, the code of conduct was not taken serious at schools because most teachers were excising corporal punishment, now that corporal punishment is abolished, so it means that if a school follows this processes of adopting a code of conduct for learners , its one way of avoiding corporal punishment.

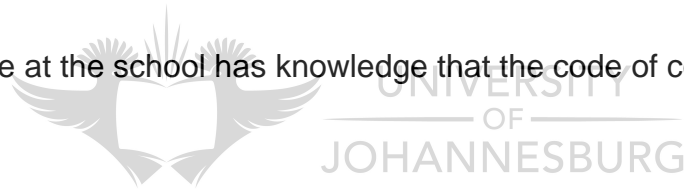
SP= The question of corporal punishment, do you think parents are happy about its abolishment?

M= No, not that much happy, they always complain when you call or invite them in case their children has misbehaved – they say the code of conduct brought so much freedom that makes learners misbehave.

SP= Discuss the importance of the adoption of the code of conduct to secondary school learners?

M= Ja, you see the code of conduct it acts as a vehicle for the safety of everybody in the school, it protect the teachers, it protect the learners and at the same time, it specify the way in which the learners are expected to conduct themselves in school in classes and in the premises of the school.

SP= Does everyone at the school has knowledge that the code of conduct is there to protect them?



M= Yes, ja because when there are learner misconducts everybody, the Representative council of learners, the school governing body, the school management team and teacher's representatives, they would like to refer to the code of conduct, well it means they know.

SP= How do you support the school as the school governing body?

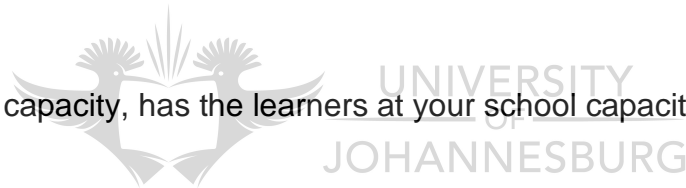
M= Okay there are a number of things the school governing body can do to support the school, number 1 may be by seeing to it that all policies of the school including the learners code of conduct, safety policy, and many other policies are available in the school, number 2, should timeously collaborate with the SMT to see to it that these policies are implemented to the last letter and at the same time, they should sit down and make the analysis on the difficulty in the

implementation of such policies and come up with strategies that can help to implement the policies effectively, and thirdly the school governing body also need to ensure that there is quality learning and teaching in the school, and this cannot be there if the policies are not there.

SP= In which way can the school governing body ensure that the code of conduct is effective to schools?

M= Mmh...like I've said, it is collaborating with all stakeholders in the school, the teachers and learners and then all these bodies can make sure that everybody in these stakeholders understands the code of conduct and then this code of conduct, eem, people need to be capacitated on it in and then helping the teachers, the SMT, the principal, especially where there are some challenges in implementing the policies at the school.

SP= Talking about capacity, has the learners at your school capacitated on the code of conduct?



M= Certainly yes, at the beginning of the year we go through each and every point that is in the code of conduct with the learners, and at the end of the year when we dispatch final school reports we attach a copy of the code of conduct to every learner so that even the parents can see them as well. I think learners are well capacitated on the code of conduct... eem, the school admission letters for new learners contain the code of conduct, no one is left out, you see.

SP= Explain the word "Code of conduct for learners at secondary schools"

M= Mmh... it denotes that way in which learners should conduct themselves in schools, including how they should attend, the attendance of learners, how they should behave, around the premises of the school and how should be the

relationship between the learners as well as the different stakeholders in the school including the fellow learner, educator, parents and the outside community.

SP= Thank you Mr M for your contributions

M= It's my pleasure, thank you.



PARTICIPANT: 3

KEY= SP =RESEARCHER

KEY= L = PARENT MEMBER 1

SP= Good afternoon Mr L, I'm Simon Chanza, and currently busy with a Master's degree at the University of Johannesburg, The topic of my research is: The role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learners code of conduct in secondary schools. Take note that the interview I will be conducting with you will be confidential in all respect.

L= Yes, thank you.



SP= What can be your role in enhancing good conduct in the school?

L= The role played by the school governing body is very big indeed because the school governing body is there to ensure that school policies including the code of conduct is followed by learners and this needs more knowledge and understanding on our part as governors but we are always found wanting - further more learners who are violent or misbehaving are therefore called to order by using the code of conduct- how? First of all we warn them verbally, if they continue, we use the learner's body (Representative Council of Learners) or disciplinary committee available in the school.

SP= Thanks, after you have used the bodies you have mentioned available in the school, how is the learner conduct?

L= Emm... their conduct changes a great deal because they would not want to see a situation whereby their parents are invited to school as a result of misbehaviour.

SP= How can the school governing body collaborate with management to curb ill-discipline?

L= (Clearing his throat) The school management team and the school governing body ought to work side by side so as to make schools functional. They need to work collaboratively at number of things in the school- like in addressing late coming or and violent behaviour eem, we can build this school if we work together with the school management team which sometimes took decisions alone . The learner's code of conduct is very important if the school has to be in good working order.

SP= Are you suggesting that school management makes decisions in your absence?

L= They do but not in all situations, and I don't want to state instances here, but sometimes there will be a school trip, and learners misbehave in the process and we will not be called to sit in such cases.

SP= If such incidents has taken place how then do you resolve them?

L= During our special meetings with management some of us will raise that, and apologies will be made thereof, that such cases were referred to the code of conduct.

SP= Do you have learners who behave violently at your school?

L= Em, I think all schools or rather most schools experience some form of violent behaviour from learners in one way or another- yes we sometimes see learners behaving bad- because I work in the school yard, I witness these behaviours – then the code of conduct is applied to help and save the situation- it is really assisting.

SP= What do you see as the role of the school governing body in assisting the school to improve its image and results?

L= The school governing body need to be open when dealing with the School management team and vice versa - when both bodies are open to each other in terms of fostering good discipline- both learners and teachers coming early to school, teaching and learning is conducted maximum, then the results will be good, and the image of the school will be good and healthy, ja..., teachers need not fight with learners but teach them, and learners must do their work.

SP= Mr L, do teachers fight with learners?

L= Okay, I don't mean fighting in the true sense of the word – but when learners do not do or submit work, educators become frustrated and or angry, our code of conduct does not allow fighting in the school. Teachers are parents as well, when the children do not do as they are taught they become frustrated as well, no they don't fight (laughing).

SP= What are your views in parental involvement in school governance and education as a whole?

L= It means parents who are having children here at school should put it upon their shoulders to visit the school, but some do not come or care, they must come to check their children's work and attendance, that will help them become more involved in the education – it is therefore every parents' responsibility to support and get involved in with the education of their children. Parents must work with the school principal and sometimes phone to get what is happening at school in respect to teaching and learning. Parents must not send children to school and leave everything to the teachers; they ought to get involved, when there are sporting activities they must support, get involved, emm... ja.

SP= How then can you say to parents who send children to school and leave everything to teachers?

L= No – this is a bad thing, not good at all, there are parents who des that, there suppose to be a good working relationship between parents and the school, is bad very bad for parents to leave everything to educators – when parents and teachers have the child at heart results can be very good. To answer your question no parents must leave everything to teachers – there should be a partnership, they must get involved, they must own their children's education, and education is a process where people are involved, the parent, teacher and child at the centre.

SP= How does the school governing body support the school?

L= It means that, as members of the school governing body, we need to positively support the school – can I make an example about these broken windows, the school governing body has to come out with plan and fix them by taking from the school coffers or fundraise from parents. We support the school by getting involved when there are school study camps, our support is about bringing order in the school. Any disorder in the school affects the culture of teaching and learning, as the school governing body we need to be hands on and be supportive to the school.

SP= You have mentioned that disorder affects the culture of teaching, can you expand on that?

L= Mr Chanza, for a long time there school did not have a shelter for holding assembly and meetings with the learners, during rainy days there always arises disorderly patterns at the school – it was a bit tough teachers to contain the situation, even the code of conduct could not be effectively applied, now that a hall or shelter has been built, whether is raining or not children attend assembly, teaching is not disturbed when there are grades meetings, and order is always maintained.

SP= Is the adoption of the code of conduct for secondary school learners a paradigm shift in the education system, if yes in which manner?

L= Ja, I see it as a big shift, and is helping our children, if the code of conduct is well applied concerning behaviour, learners will pass at the end of the year, and again where there is no code of conduct things get out of hand, can you imagine a house without rules – what about a school then, yes it is a paradigm shift towards a better education for our children.

SP= Discuss the importance of the adoption of the code of conduct to secondary school learners.

L= It means the code of conduct is important because it helps in bringing about discipline in the school. Children in secondary schools are no longer in primary grades; they need a tough hand so the code of conduct can assist all stakeholders at a school to give order. The code of conduct is important because it talks about times or school hours, times when the school starts and knock-off times so the code of conduct therefore gives direction to that regard. Our school starts at 7:30 and this is stated in the code of conduct and everyone is expected

not to violate the school hours. The code of conduct is important however as school governors we don't have more information about it because when there are issues of learner misconduct we sometimes fail take the right decision in line with the offence, but I think if it was not there or available in the school here there will be disorder.

SP= Is late coming a challenge at the school?

L= Emm, not always, but there are still those who do not obey the code of conduct, they miss the starting time, as school governing body we refer and remind them that the code of conduct on school hours still exist and when times progresses they are up early – yes the code of conduct helps a lot – Oh in May and June because it is cold we have a challenge, but we always encourage every learner to observe school hours and respect the code of conduct.

SP= In which way can the school governing body ensure that the code of conduct is effective to schools?

L= It means we can we can see that it works if we as the school governing body when we visit the school we find all learners in classes – teaching and learning in progress, then it will be an indication that it works. It will be effective when we visit the school, we find the school functioning in a good condition and there is harmony between management, teachers and learners, but if we visit the school and find learners loitering outside, it means the code of conduct is not working and effective – then it will mean we have to sit down again and make other strategies, if learners will arrive to school at 9am instead of 7:30, it means the code of conduct is not effective (laughing) I don't mean that they come at 9am (laughing again). If the code of conduct works all learners will be on the stipulated time and before the school gates are locked.

SP= If the code of conduct is effectively followed why then close school gates?

L= Oh, we lock the gate so as to maintain order in the school, our school is in rural areas, there are cattle's and goats that always temper with our food garden and flowers, apart from that those who enter the school need to be controlled for the sake of safety and security, but only a few still arrive late, and to such we give warnings.

SP= Explain the word "Code of conduct" for secondary school learners.

L= I think code of conduct suggest that there must be order in the school, in terms of good conduct, and no one must do as he pleases, the code of conduct means that order and proper teaching and learning in the school must take place.

SP= Thank you for the precious time you have given me

L= Thank you too



PARTICIPANT: 4

KEY: SP= RESEARCHER

KEY: M= CHAIRPERSON OF SGB

SP= I'm Simon Chanza, doing a Masters degree with the University of Johannesburg. I'm conducting an interview with the chairperson of the school governing body Mrs M, on: The role of the school governing in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools.

Good afternoon Ma'am

M= Good afternoon Sir.



SP= As parents representing the school governing body, what can be your role in enhancing good conduct in the school?

M= Thank you Mr Chanza, as parents representing the school governing body, I find it very important that when we visit the school to check the attendance of our children, that first and foremost they keep with the school starting times, after we have checked the morning attendance we continue with management alongside us to check if learners get into classes, are they conducting themselves in a manner required by the code of conduct and are they positive towards what they are taught by teachers? – We also check and monitor those as per our role who might cause havoc within the school, this is basically our role in enhancing good conduct. Again we assist at checking if learners put on their school uniform, because school uniform is what distinguishes them from non-scholars and strangers.

SP= Talking about bringing order and good conduct, do learners conduct improves after your visits?

M= Absolutely yes, they do improve because we are strict when coming to learner behaviour and the code of conduct assist us as well on that regard.

SP= How can the school governing body collaborate with management in curbing ill-discipline?

M= Thank you Mr Chanza, what I perceive as chairperson of the school governing body, is that it is important that we sit around with school management and check how learners conduct or behave themselves. The management should explain or rather give a report on how learners conduct themselves and as school governing body members we also have to give our opinion, in other words we need to find a common ground about learner conduct and behaviour, about progress concerning teaching and learning in the school and this is how we work with management of the school, this relationship between ourselves and management has enable learners to fair well and we would like to improve this relationship because to me it has not reached the level I would want.

SP= What can you say about your relationship with management?

M= There isn't much that I can say, but I wish it can improve, because there are areas where I feel we should have been consulted, like some learners who continue to misbehave at the school, because it is our duty as school governing body to see to it that as we have adopted the code of conduct it needs to work.

SP= Do you have learners who are not behaving well?

M= Ok, learners are clever you know if we are not strong enough as school governing body they can take an advantage, there are small pockets of misbehaviour but the provision of the code of conduct has enable us to deal with such behaviour, they are generally behaving good to answer your question but we have not reached the 100% we have targeted.

SP= What do you see as the role of the school governing body in assisting your school to improve its image and results?

M= Thank you so much, as parents and school governing body of the school we need to check the performance of the learners in the first term, second term as well as the third term. If learners are not performing we need to strengthen our support to learners and call upon or remind parents to monitor and assist, if learners pass the school's image is boosted and parents from neighbouring villages will not hesitate in bringing their children to the – oh our school and we encourage our teachers to give themselves more at teaching and assisting the learners pass when the year comes to an end.

SP= Chairperson, are your teachers not giving themselves up to their best when coming to teaching?

M= Thank you, teachers do sacrifice and do more but what I mean is this, they need to extra more in giving learners information so as to pass not to neglect their duties, sometimes when learners do not perform teachers got fed-up then our duty is to encourage them as well, teachers are human beings you know.

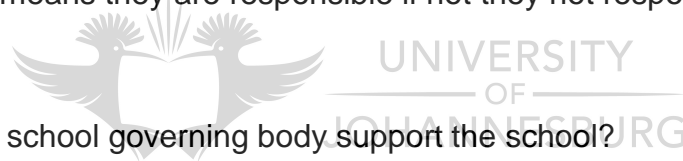
SP= What are your views on the parental involvement in school governance and education as a whole?

M= Thank you, my opinion is this, it is our duties as school governing body and duties of all parents who has elected us to run the school to be involved. Parents

are expected to check if their children are doing their homework, to me that is how parents are to involve themselves. Parents must guard against piling children with lot of work that will stop them from doing homework and other school related work, if a parent does that, in my opinion he is not involved in educating the nation. I see parents very much involved because when we call meetings they do attend, during parents meetings we also encourage them not to shun their responsibilities to teachers.

SP= How do parents shun their responsibilities to teachers?

M= Eem... If they do not support their children with school work it means they are doing their work, parents are suppose to work together with teachers, help their children with homework and other activities stated in the code of conduct. Parents, teachers and learners form the learning process possible. If parents do their part that means they are responsible if not they not responsible.



SP= How does the school governing body support the school?

M= Thank you, that we were able to draw and adopt the learners code of conduct that was one big support. We support the school in many instances, we support both teachers and learners. We have built many school related structures, the hall, a kitchen for nutrition programme the government is providing. We have meetings with the deputy and principal and with departments to check progress of learner's education, the school is non-existing if the education department is not taken on board. We support the school by doing fundraisings so as to repair furniture and other school items so as to create order we don't like disorder you know.

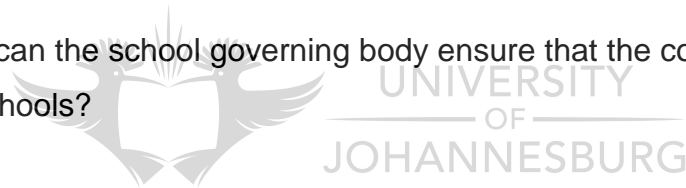
SP= You have mentioned order and disorder, do you sometimes experience disorder in the school?

M= Eem, not always, but in case there is disorder, we use the code of conduct to bring order.

SP= Is the adoption of the code of conduct for secondary school learners a paradigm shift in the education system, if yes in which manner?

M= Thank you, the code of conduct for our learners has brought much change because some learners that were giving us challenges in terms of behaviour are now towing the line. I further see that the code of conduct has given us the school governing body much relief because before that we did not have anything to refer to in terms of discipline and misconduct. Parents, teachers and learners understands it as well, is like a set of rules that governs the school, and a school without rules is no school at all. The learner's code of conduct binds everyone.

SP= In which way can the school governing body ensure that the code of conduct is effective to schools?



M= As parents, I think I have mentioned this before, oh ja....that we visit the school on regular basis and we observe everything that happens in the school. If learners come early before the school starts it means the code of conduct is effective, our school starts at 7:30am and most learners not all learners are always within the school premises before 7:30 and at 7:40 we lock the gates. I see the code of conduct as effective if during school hours learners are in classes. I further think we as school governance need more workshop or capacity on the working and effectiveness of the code of conduct.

SP= Who must give you the workshops or capacity on the code of conduct?

M= I think the department of education and those with interest in education, your non-governmental organisation because there are lot of changes in education.

SP= Chairperson, you said gates are locked in the school, why locking gates if code of conduct is effectively applied?

M= This is a rural school, domestic animals sometimes stray our school premises, and for the safety of every member of the school we need to have the gate locked, actually the gate is locked for control purposes, sometimes 2 or 3 learners might arrive after the school has started, this is where we come in as school governing body.

SP= Briefly explain the word:” Code of conduct” for learners at secondary school

M= Thank you, without the code of conduct, rules or regulations no school can function. A code of conduct is a set of rules that brings about order in a learning environment. Code of conduct means learners must adhere to school uniform, there are many secondary schools in this area so the code of conduct stipulates the type of uniform children must wear. Boys in many instances do not put on school uniform as stated in the code of conduct, but we are encouraging them to comply.

SP= This was an interview with the chairperson for the school chosen, I would like to take this moment and appreciate Mrs M, for giving me this time to interview her.

M= Thanks.

PARTICIPANT: 5

KEY= SP= RESEARCHER

KEY=N= SGB (LEARNER COMPONENT)

SP= Good morning, I'm Simon Chanza currently doing a Masters degree at the University of Johannesburg. The topic of my research is: The role of the school governing body in the adoption of the learner's code of conduct in secondary schools. Let me assure you that the questions I will ask you during this interview will be confidential and not revealed to others.

N= Morning.

SP= As member representing the school governing body, what can be your roles in enhancing good conduct in the school?

N= As a learner myself it is sometimes difficult to enhance good conduct, should I say discipline in the school, not all learners are happy that I'm in the school governing body, some would verbally call us names especially those who will be on the wrong side of the school rules, back to your question we organise meetings as the school governing body, we are called as learners whereby the code of conduct is read and explained to us – issues of late coming, fighting, wearing of school uniform are discussed at the beginning of the year and the school governing body as time progresses regularly visit the school and by that good discipline at school or should I say good conduct is maintained.

SP= Do you find it difficult to enhance good conduct in the school?

N= Not at all, my fellow learners has few challenges when coming to conduct, only a few of the male learners still has discipline problems, but general speaking we are conducting ourselves fair as a school in a rural area (laughing).

SP= Are you suggesting that rural secondary schools behave better that urban schools?

N= Eem, I have not done studies on that, but I think us in rural areas are not much exposed to the fast life that learners in towns are exposed to, but as a learner in this school we still conduct ourselves fair and we can improve as well.

SP= How can the school governing body collaborate with school management in curbing ill-discipline?



N= We the school governing body always hold meetings to deal with ill-discipline in the school, but there are few occasions where we meet because most learners are behaving fair, because the school governing body is very firm when coming to learner ill-discipline, the learner's code of conduct is strictly followed.

SP= In cases where learners are ill-disciplined what is the reaction of the school governing body?

N= As I have mentioned above, the school governing body is strict when coming to ill-discipline, in case of learner misconduct, the matter is discussed within the school yard, if a solution is not reached then parents of the affected learner is invited to the school.

SP= What changes in the school can be attributed to the school governing body?

N= I have seen many changes in the school, that the code of conduct was drawn and adopted that is change on its own. We had problems of learner control during meetings when we had no hall, the school governing body has built a hall, now learners who go out of hand are easily sported and taken care of. The hall has helped a lot you know, now the school governing body is erecting a school gate.

SP= You have mentioned that a hall was erected and that has brought order, can you tell me how?

N= Alright, in the past we use to hold student meetings under trees... eem... it was chaotic because there was no control, but when the school governing body has built that hall there was order, and we can now easily check who is doing what because we are inside a hall and the code of conduct is there as well to give direction.

SP= What do you see as the role of the school governing in assisting the school to improve its image and results?

N= I think the image and results touches us as learners directly, if we obey school rules oh, I mean the code of conduct, if we do our work and pass well at the end of the year, the image and results I think can be improved.

SP= What are your views on the parental involvement in school governance and education as a whole?

N= At a primary school where my younger sister attends, my father is in the school governing body, you can see that some parents are involved and in the school here they are involved when elected, but the problem is that when time progresses some quit and we are then forced to hold by-elections.

SP= What do you think makes them not to end their term?

N= I would not give a direct answer, but I think some are not ready for challenges involved in school governance and maybe issues of incapacity.

SP= Do you think that parents involved in school governance understands issues related to learners code of conduct?

N= I think it depends – it depends on how far that parent has gone to school. A number of parents these days are of young age, they have to understand what school rules or can I say learner's code conduct, but some parents I think they don't understand the code of conduct that is why some do not last long, maybe they need training.

SP= How does the school governing body support the school?



N= I see them coming them coming to school here, sometimes I don't form part because I have to be in class, I think they do lot of things, like meeting with management and discussing issues like, fundraising, learner conduct, learner achievement etc,

SP= Is the adoption of the code of conduct for secondary for secondary schools learners a paradigm shift in the education, if yes in which manner?

N= I don't know about that, but I think to answer you I can say since the code of conduct was adopted is helping us as learners, because we are able to respect each other, we don't fight – yes everyone is safe in the school because eem, there is a code of conduct, ja, I think this is what I can say (laughing).

SP= Can you discuss the importance of the adoption of the code of conduct to secondary school learners?

N= Well although we did not training more training on this, I think it is important because it tells us as learners how we should conduct ourselves in the school, it protects us I think the weak from those big boys (laughing), it is important because there is no longer beating of learners by teachers.

SP= Well, N....do you want to tell me that your teachers are beating you?

N= (Hhayi), No! but they can shout too much to those who don't sometimes submit work, ja they shout.

SP= In which way can the school governing body ensure that the code of conduct is effective to schools?



N= I think they or we have to see to it that all learners has a copy of the code of conduct, and all of us must understand what is the code of conduct – but I'm afraid because those learners who join us in the middle of the year don't get the copies. I think we must see to it that learners love or own, yes own the code of conduct. We must support I think those who are not doing well or break the rules or code of conduct.

SP= Can you briefly explain the word "Code of conduct" for learners in secondary schools?

N= Oh, I thought the questions were finished (giggling), to me the code of conduct means how we have to behave at school, how we dress as learners, it means how we learn and study at school, mmh..., ja.

SP= No more questions now, I want to thank you for your time, I know it has been a long time, thank you so much

N= Welcome.



APPENDIX B

Letter requesting permission to conduct a research

Letter confirming permission to conduct a research



To: Mpumalanga Department of Education

The Circuit Manager (Mr M.M. Nyambi)

Insikazi Circuit

P.O.Box 1

Ka-Bokweni

1245

From: Simon .P. Chanza

072 5679 529 – 013751 5103

Simonchanza@gmail.com

Subject: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT A SCHOOL.

Dear Sir

Herewith I would like to request from the Circuit Manager of the department for permission to conduct an academic research in one of your schools at Ehlanzeni Region, Insikazi Circuit at Siligane Secondary School. I'm employed at your Circuit and currently enrolled with the University of Johannesburg.

The topic of my research is:

**THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN THE ADOPTION OF THE
LEARNERS CODE OF CONDUCT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

The choice of the above topic was motivated by the fact that effective teaching and learning depends upon sound school governance. Traditionally school governance was in the hands of school principals. The locus of control and decisions making powers has been mainly in the school principal with minimum participation from educators, parents and learners

The aim of the research is to establish the parents perceptions on the their role in enhancing good conduct in schools and to see how the School Governing Body can collaborate with School Management in curbing ill-discipline among learners so as to improve learners performance.

I hope my request will reach your favourable consideration

You're sincerely

Simon. P. Chanza



MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Old Elijah Mango Colledge
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KABOKWENI
1245



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INSIKAZI CIRCUIT OFFICE

Litiko Letemfundvo

Umnnyango Wefundo

Departement van Onderwys

Umnnyango Wezemfundo

TO : MR. CHANZA S.P.

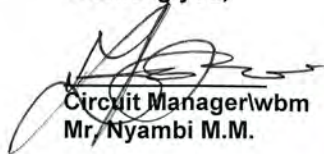
**FROM : THE CIRCUIT MANAGER
MR. NYAMBI M.M.**

DATE : 10/11/2011

**SUBJECT : PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT REASEARCH AT
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

1. Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct a research on the topic:
"THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN THE ADOPTION OF
THE LEARNERS CODE OF CONDUCT AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS"
2. Please note that the agreement shall be arranged by you and individual
secondary school.
3. It must also be noted that the research conducted shall not interfere with
school contact time.
4. I wish you fruitful interaction with schools.

Thanking you,


Circuit Manager/wbm
Mr. Nyambi M.M.



10/11/2011
Date