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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Aftermath of Corporal Punishment: Perceptions about the administration of discipline from the vantage point of both learners and educators in LSEN schools.

Research Report for a Master of Educational Psychology

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ABSTRACT

With the ideology of apartheid came oppression and punitiveness in the classroom, whereby children were disciplined through the administration of corporal punishment. The advent of democracy initiated the abolishment of corporal punishment in policy, but failed to do so in practice. In spite of the legislation prohibiting the use of corporal punishment, there were still many reports about its use due to there not being efficient alternatives to corporal punishment. This study explored the aftermath of corporal punishment, specifically focused on the perceptions about the administration of discipline from the vantage point of both learners and educators in LSEN schools. A mixed methods approach was used with learners between the ages of 16 and 19 as well as educators who had been employed for over 6 months. The findings suggest that working at a LSEN school is challenging for educators, and that a consistent school structure is lacking. They therefore adapt their methods of discipline to suit the situation, consequently perpetuating the lack of structure. It was also discovered that the learner-educator relationship facilitates discipline. LSEN schools would benefit from revisiting their management style, in order to facilitate the administration of discipline.

Keywords: Discipline, Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, LSEN

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DECLARATION

A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Educational Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

"I declare that this research project is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university"

Bene Katabua

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the focal point of this research. It provides the background of corporal punishment within education in South Africa and how this has influenced current disciplinary methods. From this history, the rationale is provided and the aims of the research are then mentioned. The keywords used throughout this study are clarified before this chapter concludes with an overview of the subsequent chapters.

1.1. Background and Rationale

As Vally, Dolombisa and Porteus (1999) argue, apartheid engineered a racist ideology to fit into all sectors of society, including schools. This is not conducted in an overt and autonomous fashion, but it is seen in the power relations. We get a glipse of it in policies and proxy such as exclusionary admission policies and the language used within the educational context. Although there are anti-racist or anti-discrimination policies in place to protect school-going children from this, society is still plagued by the aftermath of apartheid, and we cannot deny that what happens outside the school gates will impact all that happens within them. With this ideology came oppression and punitiveness in the classroom, with the children being disciplined through the administration of corporal punishment (Erasmus, 2009). With the advent of democracy, corporal punishment was abolished in policy, but appears to remain in practice.

As recent as 23 March 2012, News 24 reported that 4 educators in Kwa-Zulu Natal had been arrested in connection with severely beating a pupil, despite corporal punishment being illegal in South Africa (News24, 2012). According to this article, Senzo Mchunu (Kwa-Zulu Natal Education MEC) is well aware that the administration of corporal punishment is continued. Situations such as these are a cause for concern, as corporal punishment is not only illegal, but also commonly misused which leads to possible brutality. This article states that the pupil had severely lost sensation in his testicle as a result of the punishment (News24, 2012). This poses the question as to what the school system is left with in terms of discipline, in the aftermath of corporal punishment.

South Africa has historically relied on corporal punishment as its primary discipline method, in order to control the learners in the classroom (Erasmus, 2009; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). It has been almost two decades since the abolition of corporal punishment, but research shows that this is still prevalent in schools (Morrell, 2001b). The continued use of corporal

punishment in schools suggests that educators still find it necessary to maintain a sense of order and control in the clssroom, regardless of its abolition. In response to the abolition, the Department of Education (2000) released *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* in order to equip educators with the skills to discipline their learners without having to use punitive measures. In spite of this, it seems that educators still struggle with disciplining their learners (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010).

Of the research pertaining to discipline, one finds that the majority focus on the effects of certain discipline methods (such as physical punishment) as opposed to exploring the topic as a whole (Gershoff, 2002; Morrell, 2001b; National Association of School Psychologists, 2002; Smith, 2006). Granted, it is necessary to uncover the effects of various discipline methods in order to better equip parents and educators, but not much emphasis has been placed on the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions which people hold towards discipline. By exploring their perceptions on this topic, one is better equipped to understand the reality of what takes place inside the classroom and how behaviour is managed. This would be beneficial to school governing bodies, as well as policy-makers in terms of making decisions regarding discipline. The current study may also influence parents to think critically about their discipline methods. The research gap suggests that it is the authors and their referenced experts who are most knowledgeable in regard to discipline, rather than probing into the minds of individuals who administer and receive discipline on a day-to-day basis. This study shifted the focus onto learners and educators, who shared their perceptions regarding discipline, thus allowing for an exploration into the topic.

Despite the high prevalence of people living with disabilities in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2005), very little information is available as to how these disabilities are perceived in society. The Department of Education (2010) mentions in the *White Paper Six* several disabilities and difficulties that LSEN (learners with special educational needs) schools are faced with. LSEN schools tend to have a variety of barriers to learning, and this becomes more difficult when material and resources are unavailable. There appears to be a lack of research conducted in the Sub-Saharan African context which focuses specifically on disabilities and difficulties experienced by the youth. Research in this particular field of interest would be of immense use to those in the domain of education to supplement the Department of Basic Education's *White Paper Six* (2010) in order to give a clearer understanding of this population. This study had a particular interest in looking at discipline because the research available fails to shed light on the issue of disciplining children and

young adults with special needs. It has been noted that people with learning difficulties are perceived to exhibit more behavioural problems (Dwyer, 1997; Han, 2011). This would suggest that LSEN schools would therefore have more behavioural problems than mainstream schools (Dwyer, 1997). It would be of use for those working in education to have context-specific information available in order to help better understand those with learning difficulties. This study not only adds to the body of literature available, but also sheds light on South African perspectives.

There are no set definitions as to what discipline is, and this causes inconsistencies when it comes to discipline in the household and at school (Cicognani, 2004; Morrell, 2001a & Smith 2006). This causes the potential for a child to be brought up using a certain kind of discipline method, and once another is administered at school, the child starts to misbehave. This study investigated what discipline means to both educators and learners whilst probing into whether or not discipline and punishment may have overlapping goals. Another area of interest was to question whether or not the home discipline mirrors the school discipline, and to query which the learners find to be the most effective.

The results from this study contribute to the body of research in the area of discipline in LSEN schools which is lacking in the South African context. Knowledge of the perceptions held about discipline may prompt schools to critique their current operations pertaining to discipline and classroom management, and take responsibility for the safety of both educators and learners in schools. It is also hoped that through both a qualitative and quantitative lens, this study will bring to light rich information about the perceptions held towards the administration of discipline, and what it means to educators and learners.

The aim of this study was therefore to fulfil the task of thoroughly exploring the administration of discipline from the vantage point of the learner as well as that of the educator. Those in the field of education, as well as those with a general interest in education would benefit from the findings as it sheds light on the perceptions of those directly involved in discipline, which is lacking in research. This study is valuable to Sub-Saharan countries in particular, as research regarding discipline and LSEN has been neglected in our specific context. Therefore, the findings from this study would be applicable to many schools in South Africa which share commonalities with the schools chosen for this study. It is hoped that the results inspire critique of the way schools are managed, so as to ease behaviour management within classrooms.

1.2. Aims

The intention of this study was to explore the perceptions about the administration of discipline from the vantage point of both learners and educators in LSEN schools using perspectives drawn from educators and learners. In conjunction with exploring perspectives; a secondary aim was to investigate the meanings of discipline from the participants. A comparison is made between private and public schools on the basis of not only perceptions of discipline at the respective schools, but also what they expect from their learners in terms of behaviour, and the methods used. Exploration into their lives sheds light into the educational domain; prompting training programs to equip educators with effective discipline methods to carry over into LSEN schools.

1.3. Research questions

This study explores several facets pertaining to the administration of discipline in LSEN schools. The research questions which propel this exploration forward are as follows:

1) What are the perceptions held by educators and learners in LSEN schools regarding the administration of discipline?
    a. What is the basis of these perceptions?
    b. How beneficial are the approaches currently being employed?
    c. What are the expectations regarding discipline?
2) Can discipline and punishment be separated?
    a. What are the meanings of discipline and punishment?
    b. What are the goals of discipline, and those of punishment?
    c. Which methods of discipline are employed, and what are the advantages and disadvantages of methods?
3) What are the differences and similarities between private and public schools?

1.4. Clarification of terms

The terms expressed below are used throughout the report and are supported and discussed in the literature review. For the sake of clarity, the researcher finds it necessary to briefly state her understanding of these terms, so as to better understand the remainder of the report.

1.4.1. Discipline

'Discipline' is a term that is far-reaching and its definition varies in terms of context and operation. Using discipline in a school creates a sense of order and regulation within the

school walls, and the learners should partake of this and apply it to their own lives. Keeping this in mind, discipline has often been used in a punitive and top-down method to instil order, and this was often maintained through the use of corporal punishment. Due to this, discipline is often seen as synonymous with punishment (Cicognani, 2004).

For the purposes of this study, discipline is considered in terms of pedagogy in the South African context, through disciplining learners. The role of discipline in pedagogy is to mould young minds into a practice of respecting themselves and others; and to carry themselves by the standards of society through self-discipline and self-control (Hlatshwayo, 1992; Porteus, Vally, & Ruth, 2001; Rice, 1987). Hence, the goals of discipline would be to internalise this and develop self-discipline to behave appropriately. It is in this light that the researcher uses the term discipline throughout the study.

1.4.2. Punishment

As mentioned above, punishment and discipline are often used interchangeably both in definition and in practice. Discipline is used to mould one's character, as punishment is applied when unwanted behaviour is to be diminished (Miltenberger, 2008). Punishment would therefore be the reaction to the misbehaviour in order for it to never be repeated again.

Having democracy promoted throughout the country, a sense of democracy is also to be promoted within the school grounds. The educators therefore should not be taking an authoritative stance when disciplining the learners, as this is a contradiction to the democratic stance that the nation assumes (Davidowitz, 2007). However, it has been documented several times that educators struggle to discipline their learners and use punishment instead to correct behaviour (Agbenyega, 2006; Cicognani, 2004; Morrell, 2001b).

1.4.3. LSEN

Exclusion based on race or ability has been shunned, creating opportunity for new educational policies that benefit all learners. Inclusive education promotes the ideology of equality; that all learners have the right to education no matter what their difficulties may be (Department of Basic Education, 2010). This includes learners who have learning difficulties and need more specialised support, due to barriers which have impacted on their ability to learn. These are learners with special educational needs, or rather, LSEN. For this study, the LSEN sample stem from schools that are specialised for learners who are experiencing learning difficulties.

1.5. Overview of Chapters

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduces the reader to the topic of this study. It offers a brief discussion the history of discipline within schools in South Africa, and why it is of importance to explore this field. This chapter presents the problem, rationale and aims of this particular study. It also clarifies the most frequently used terms, in order to remain consistent and well-understood.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of relevant literature is presented in this chapter. This serves to discuss research pertaining to the administration of discipline in LSEN schools. It focuses on issues such as corporal punishment, school discipline and their policies, and LSEN schools. It also reviews theoretical approaches used to approach this study.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

This chapter presents the research methodology used to carry out this study. It reviews the research design used, and details how the participants were selected for the study. It also provides information on the role that the researcher had on the participants as well as the information selected, before discussing the ethical considerations.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES

This chapter discusses the findings from the data analysis. It investigates what these themes mean for LSEN and for education in South Africa as a whole. Literature is used to compare the findings in this study, thus providing a more controlled and holistic picture of how discipline is administered.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the research are summarised in order to conclude the study. The conclusions drawn from the research will be used to forward recommendations about the administration of discipline in LSEN schools. The limitations of the study are then discussed, which will work towards motivating future research in this field.

CHAPTER II – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Given the lack of research on perceptions about the administration of discipline from educators and learners in LSEN schools; this literature review discusses certain factors which are relevant to this topic in the Sub-Saharan context.

With an educational past plagued by corporal punishment in South Africa, one cannot disregard the aftermath that corporal punishment has left on discipline in education today. Cicognani (2004) noted that these two concepts are often seen as synonymous, which would be a possible explanation as to why it has been challenging for educators to move past corporal punishment as a form of discipline. For the purposes of this study however, it is important to note the distinction between these two concepts and their goals, as reported earlier. Several definitions are termed and discussed in order to see how they relate to one another, and to get a better understanding of what it is that this study is exploring. It is essential to clarify what each means theoretically, and then through the study, explore what it means to the educators and the learners, pertaining to their specific contexts.

The issue of corporal punishment is one that has been widely discussed, mainly through the analysis of the effects and the alternatives provided. Corporal punishment was viewed as an effective method of discipline during apartheid, and because of its abusive nature and the international trends in discipline, this was banned (Department of Basic Education, 2000). The abolition of corporal punishment would lead to the assumption that educators would therefore find different ways in which to discipline their learners, and this has shown to be more difficult than expected (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). This poses the question as to why it has been so challenging for the educators to adapt to the change. This study explored this question, through the perceptions of both the learners and the educators. This inability to effectively discipline learners is discussed by looking at some of the alternative methods to corporal punishment.

It has been noted that learners who have learning difficulties are more prone to exhibit "difficult" behaviour (Department of Basic Education, 2010; Han, 2011). This often has to do with their barriers to learning, and so it is necessary for educators in LSEN schools to have a good understanding of the learners and their difficulties, so as not to punish them for something which may be somewhat out of their control. Han (2011) mentioned that

disadvantaged (lower economic status, disabilities, etc.) students are more prone to be victims of corporal punishment. This may be due to their behaviours which educators find abnormal, and therefore become frustrated and lash out. The participants in this study are from LSEN schools. As such, it is useful to look at the literature pertaining to LSEN schools and discipline.

There are a couple of perspectives which one could use to look at discipline. For the purposes of this study, the perspectives of interest are the behaviourist theory, and the social constructonist theory. These theories shed insight into the possibilities which could explain the discipline used at the schools, as well as the perceptions behind them. In line with the idea that there are several ways in which to explore discipline (as in this study, using two vantage points); the theoretical frameworks were used in order to holistically look at the topic of discipline whilst trying to explore the perceptions behind it.

2.2. Discipline versus Punishment

South Africa, having such a strong undertone of authoritarianism from the apartheid regime, widely used corporal punishment as a means of discipline before the democratisation of the country. Because of this, discipline and punishment are often misunderstood to have the same meaning and function. For the purposes of this study, it is important to distinguish the two, as they are not used synonymously in this report.

Ruffin (2009) put together a report for disciplining young children in which she details the difference between punishment and discipline. It is of interest that she notes "Children who have been spanked feel that they have paid for their misbehaviour and are free to misbehave again. In other words, spanking frees the child from feelings of remorse which are needed to prevent future misbehaviour" (Ruffin, 2009 p. 2). Here she shares the ineffective nature that physical punishment has, as it contradicts the purpose of disciplining the child. The purpose of her writings would not appear to be defining what these mean, but rather offering feasible suggestions as to how these two can be executed effectively. By fleshing out this difference in such a practical way, she makes her writing accessible to many educators and parents who are in need of assistance regarding this. In a more scientific setting however, it is necessary to understand what these terms actually represent, as Gershoff (2002), Holden (2002) and Smith (2006) do.

Gershoff (2002) makes a distinction between corporal punishment and physical abuse, as not many states in the United States of America (USA) have done this. In order to operationalise

corporal punishment, Gershoff (2002) had to set it against physical abuse as she sees physical abuse as a result of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment in this regard is therefore a sort of physical punishment that does not result in physical injury. A problem with this definition is that it focuses on what corporal punishment is not, rather than looking at what corporal punishment actually is. In critiquing Gershoff's (2002) meta-analysis, Holden (2002) suggests that terms such as customary physical punishment, sub-abusive punishment, spanking and slapping would have been better to use rather than corporal punishment. This is in response to Gershoff's (2002) rejection to 'punching, kicking and slapping' to fall under the definition of corporal punishment.

Smith (2006) offers another understanding to this dilemma of definitions. She clarifies the difference between discipline and physical punishment. Corporal punishment here is highlighted by the "force used to cause pain, but not injury" (p. 115). This is seen as power-assertive because the negative consequence usually is not followed by any explanation or justification (Holden, 2002). The aim of this is to correct the child's behaviour, or to control the child. In stark comparison to Gershoff (2002), this definition creates its own meaning rather than distinguish it from another form of punishment. In terms of discipline, Smith (2006) notes that it is "the guidance of children's moral, emotional and physical development" (p. 115). The expected outcome from disciplining a child would be that they could assume responsibility for themselves, and understand boundaries. This is seen as an inductive method of discipline, as the child is made to understand logical reasoning behind why certain behaviours are unacceptable (Holden, 2002).

What is seen here is that the importance of semantics. The words used in these articles are the same, but they have different meanings and assumptions. As several researchers have argued, there are too many inconsistencies about the definitions of corporal punishment and discipline (Agbenyega, 2006; Cicognani, 2004; Holden, 2002; Morrell, 2001a; Smith, 2006). This problem of semantics raises concern because if there cannot be a standard definition used by all, then we cannot assume that one person's understanding of corporal punishment is the same as the next. This may start to explain why it is that some may understand corporal punishment and discipline to share meaning. Given the lack of South African research in this field, these definitions are mostly from the United States of America. For the purposes of this study, the definitions used by Smith (2006) are accepted when discussing corporal punishment and discipline, as it supports the clarifcation of terms detailed in the introduction.

2.3. Corporal Punishment

2.3.1. History of Corporal Punishment in South Africa

In the pre-1994 era, corporal punishment was seen as the sole means used to discipline learners in school, as well as children in homes (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Morrell, 2001b). During apartheid, the school systems which were available to learners were the Bantu Education system or Christian National Education; which were both supporters of the adult (educator) seen as the figure of authority and the learner as a passive being (Department of Basic Education, 2000). This emphasis on authority and power from someone superior mirrored the apartheid regime.

This ideology of oppression was apparent in black schools, with "unquestioning conformity, rote learning, autocratic teaching, authoritarian management styles, syllabi replete with racism and sexism, and antiquated forms of assessment and evaluation" (Vally, Dolombisa, & Porteus, 1999, p. 83). This quote clearly indicates the level at which oppression infiltrated the school system, be it overtly. This was how the learners were controlled, which then spilled over into corporal punishment if they misbehaved. However, Rice (1987) notes that this was not only the case in black schools but in white schools as well. She found that combinations of both verbal and corporal punishment were frequently used in order to control the learners at school, and that this created fear in them. Educationalists of that time saw discipline as the main goal, and still legalised corporal punishment even though there was no scientific evidence supporting its use. Many researchers had already questioned punishment and discipline over the decades, so it was not a new phenomenon (Rice, 1987). This shows that although there was information about the effects that this punishment has on learners, educators continued to revert to corporal punishment as a means to discipline and control their pupils in the classroom.

Educators generally felt that physical punishment was necessary for disciplining children, and that severe punishment should be used to "maintain discipline, educate children, to please certain Gods, or to expel evil spirits" (Rice, 1987, p. 1). What Rice (1987) notes here is the justification behind corporal punishment. Following some practices from Puritans, schools adopted this method of physically punishing the learners with the belief that we as humans are innately evil and that it is therefore necessary to 'beat the devil out of us'. Religion is often used to legitimise the practice of corporal punishment, with many people citing biblical scriptures such as Proverbs 29:15 "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to

himself bringeth his mother to shame"; Proverbs 29:17 "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul; Proverbs 26:3 "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass and a rod for the fool's back"; or Proverbs 15:20 "Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die" (King James Version Bible). These are a few of the commonly cited bible verses which advocate the use of corporal punishment (Agbenyega, 2006; Hlatshwayo, 1992; Rice, 1987).

These scriptures highlight that correction through 'the rod' is the best option for the child, as it will shape him well. This Judeo-Christian view was taken quite literally in the classroom, used even by educators who knew that corporal punishment would not necessarily discipline the learner (Rice, 1987). It would appear that since there was little scientific support for this method of discipline, it was necessary for schools to make use of other ways to justify corporal punishment. However, the advent of democracy came with a paradigm shift, with children's rights coming into focus. This placed school management into question, with the focus now being on the learner and not solely on the educator.

2.3.2. Banning Corporal Punishment

Once the resistance to apartheid started to grow, organisations began to campaign against the (abusive) use of corporal punishment in the classroom. This campaign is known as Education Without Fear, an operation created by students and parents against the act of whipping children (Department of Education, 2000). With these changes, as the resistance grew, democratisation came into play. With democracy came an installation of human rights which seeks to protect people from differing forms of harm, abuse, and exploitation; of which included the abolition of corporal punishment.

The reasons behind the abolition of corporal punishment were influenced by international changes concerning children's rights which were applicable to the South African context (Department of Basic Education, 2010). The Department of Basic Education (2000) briefly mentions the legislation which led to the abolition of corporal punishment in South Africa. The table below provides a detailed illustration of the legislature which impacted this transformation:

Table 1: Legislation protecting children

Date of commencement	Legislature	Article/ Section	Article/Section stipulates
2 September 1990	Convention under the Rights of the Child	3	Best interests of the child should be at the fore when making decisions concerning them.
		4	Need to assess social services, legal, health and education systems to be sure that children's rights are respected
		19	Right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, both mentally and physically
		28	Discipline in school should respect children's dignity
		37	No one can punish a child in a cruel and inhumane way
16 April 1996	National Education Policy	3	No person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any institution of education
6 November 1996	South African School's Act	10	No person shall administer corporal punishment to a learner, if this happens, the perpetrator has committed an offense
4 February 1997	South African Constitution	10	All people have a right to their inherent human dignity
		12 (1)	Right to freedom and security
		12 (1)(c)	Right to be free from all violence
		12 (1)(c)	Right not to be tortured
		12 (1)(c)	Right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhumane or degrading way
		12 (2)	Right to bodily and psychological integrity
		24	Right to an environment that's not harmful to health and well-being
		28 (d)	Right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse and degradation
26 November 1999	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child)	4	All should be done for the best interests of the child
		11 (6)	Discipline from the school or the parents should regard humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the child

As can be seen in the table above, there are rights and legislation (which protect these rights) that have been created for the welfare of the people of South Africa. For the purposes of this study, we focus mainly on those of the child. A child is anyone under the age of 18 (South African Constitution, 1996). Within the school, the child's rights need to be respected and upheld, if these are infringed upon, the perpetrator is then liable to a sentence, if found convicted (South African Schools Act, 1996). The table above shows that the government

acknowledges the vulnerability of the child, and have therefore implemented laws in order to protect them from harm. It is therefore vital for the schooling situation to reinforce this, by placing the child's best interest above others, as stipulated in several of these Government publications (African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; Convention under the Rights of the Child, 1989; South African Schools Act, 1996).

The South African Constitution (1996) is the Supreme law by which all residents have to follow. According to this legislation, our human rights protect us from violence, maltreatment and torture. It also stipulates that we have a right to an environment which is not harmful to our health (physical and mental) or well-being. This has direct ramifications on how the classroom is managed. The ill-discipline shown by learners is sometimes extreme, which makes for a difficult classroom situation, and educators would sometimes control this by using torture and other punitive measures (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). With the new constitution, educators were disallowed from the use of these measures, making classroom management unfamiliar.

2.3.3. Effects of Corporal Punishment

It has been noted that during apartheid, corporal punishment was the primary means of discipline, and it is evident that the two have become synonymous (Cicognani, 2004; Erasmus, 2009). For the most part, discipline has been about control, which is very similar to that of corporal punishment. Educators found that corporal punishment brings about immediate control and power over the class (Cicognani, 2004; Gershoff, 2002; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). This would give the educators the space in which to conduct lessons in an ordered and "disciplined" atmosphere. It is here, in their goals, where the uses of disciplinary measures may become blurred with those of corporal punishment. This section focuses on the effects that corporal punishment has on the child, as well as on the educator-learner relationship.

When researching the effects of corporal punishment, a meta-analytic approach by Gershoff (2002) was seen as one which is thorough and well-researched. Parke (2002) argues that the sample used in the study were majority White, middle-class males. This does not reflect the population in South Africa, but it is useful to use the results of the study to see how it may have relevance to the South African population. Gershoff's (2002) study claims to look at both the desirable and undesirable effects of parental corporal punishment on the child, although the majority of the study is about the negative effects of corporal punishment. Of

these effects are: immediate compliance, moral internalisation, quality of relationship with parent, mental health, aggression, criminal and antisocial behaviour, abuse of own child or spouse, and victim of abuse by own parent. Some of these effects are more obvious than the rest, and for this purpose, only some of these are be discussed and paralleled with other research.

With regards to immediate compliance, corporal punishment is seen to be an act which is very fast to administer, and generates an immediate (fearful) response from the child in line with what is expected of them from the parent. This control of the child has been mentioned by several authors as motivation as to why educators still use corporal punishment in the classroom (Cicognani, 2004; Mamatey, 2010; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Morrell, 2001b). This need for control can be linked with authoritarian values, which encourages the adult to control the passive child and the child to in turn respect the adult (Cicognani, 2004). This may be one of the influences as to why corporal punishment was so popular before the democratisation of South Africa.

Gershoff (2002) mentions moral internalisation as another effect of corporal punishment. This pertains to internalising values of society, so as to use them to guide decisions and behaviour (Smith, 2006). Parents inflict physical pain on their children in order to teach them a lesson, but as mentioned above, corporal punishment serves mostly to receive immediate compliance rather than internalisation. Smith (2006) argues that punitive measures do not promote moral internalisation. Gershoff's (2002) meta-analysis shows that corporal punishment actually lessons the chances of moral internalisation. This is because the children may learn to avoid getting hit rather than learn why their behaviour is wrong. In this sense, it would appear that corporal punishment does not produce disciplined children, but rather, it produces devious children.

Gershoff (2002) picks up on the mis-education that may be learnt by the children. She discussed that there is a chance that children who have been disciplined using corporal punishment may grow to become aggressive and continue such mannerisms with their spouses or partners. In Tanzania it is noted that there was a definite rise in aggression due to corporal punishment because this is the way that the learners had learnt to cope with conflict (Feinstein & Mwahombela, 2010). This is problematic as it teaches them maladaptive ways in which to deal with issues. It has been found that corporal punishment is not the solution for dangerous and disruptive behaviour (National Association of School Psychologists, 2002).

They suggest that corporal punishment may actually incite such behaviour. This shows a dilemma in the understanding of corporal punishment, and what the causes are. The question this poses is whether the violence precedes the corporal punishment, or if it's the corporal punishment which precedes the violence. As Rice (1987 p. 33) suggests, "violence breeds violence".

The relationship between the parent and the child may be ruptured due to corporal punishment. With regards to this effect, it would depend on the perspective taken. It has been noted that the tense relationship which arises from corporal punishment may cause friction between the child and the parent, but in some societies, it may be preferred for there to be a great distance between the parent and the child, for example, authoritarian family structures (Danso, Hunsberger, & Pratt, 1997; Wilcox, 1998). This can be applied in the school setting whereby many still adopt the notion that the educator is the expert, and the child – the passive learner (Cicognani, 2004). Researchers are in agreement that the strain between the parents due to corporal punishment may affect other attachments in life, as well as the incitement of fear and anxiety in the child (Gershoff, 2002; Smith 2006). These do not promote mental health, and may impact the child's development tremendously.

The majority of articles on the effects of corporal punishment have had a strong incline towards discussing the negative effects of corporal punishment. Against the masses of negativity, Baumrind (1996) and Mamatey (2010) look at the possibility of positive outcomes from corporal punishment. Using spanking with reasoning may positively send the message to the child about correct behaviour. This internalisation occurs because the child has been spoken to about why they are receiving the punishment, so that they may see it as a logical consequence for misbehaviour. Baumrind (1996) argues that the perception held by the child mediates how the punishment is received. It is these perceptions which are of importance in this study. In conjunction with Baumrind's (1996) article as well as the topic of this research, perceptions are seen as vital to the understanding of experiences.

As can be seen, there is vast amount of research conducted which looks at the effects of corporal punishment. However, not many researchers delve deeper into discipline methods such as corporal punishment and look at the perceptions which may mediate these effects. Corporal punishment is of importance to this study because for a long time, it has been the sole method of discipline in this country. However, it is not the onus of the study to look at the effects of corporal punishment, but rather to explore the perceptions held about discipline.

There is not much research to this effect, but there are studies which look at the perceptions towards corporal punishment, which is often used as a method of discipline.

2.4. School Discipline

2.4.1. Rise of indiscipline

Several researchers have documented that with the abolition of corporal punishment came the rise of indiscipline in schools (Cicognani, 2004; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011; Masekoameng, 2010). Learners' apparent lack of discipline takes up a lot of teaching time and causes great disruption in the classroom, which in turn makes it difficult for the educator to carry out their role and dissipate knowledge onto the learners (Porteus, Vally, & Tamar, 2001). Due to this, high levels of indiscipline would typically result in schools losing their educational standards and clout (Agbenyega, 2006; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011). Taking all of this information into consideration, one can see how important it is to explore this indiscipline and what it may mean for learners, and the schooling environment as whole.

The commonly cited forms of indiscipline at school are bullying, talking rudely to the educator, substance abuse, viewing pornography, littering, vandalism, truancy and tardiness (Maphosa & Mammen, 2011; Masekoameng, 2010). These acts not only interrupt the process of learning in the class, but also undermine the educator, who is supposed to be 'in control' of the classroom. Educators are in need of resources to help them discipline their class, and the lack of discipline has thus created a lack of educator morale (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011; Masekoameng, 2010). However, interestingly enough, these educators who feel powerless at the hand of these learners also feel that they have the capability to provide guidance to the disruptive learners. This suggests that although the educators cite their unhappiness due to indiscipline (many stating that they would leave the teaching profession had they received another offer), many of them still feel as though they have it within them to render helpful services to the very same group that cause them to feel unhappy.

In support of the above, Erasmus (2009) and Maphosa and Shumba (2010) note that this sense of helplessness by the educators is mainly due to their inability to effectively discipline learners once corporal punishment was abolished. They struggle to realise the effects of other practices such as time-outs and therefore revert back to corporal punishment. It would appear that this shift in policy is heavily lagging in practice. This is of concern, as there are many

discipline problems, particularly in secondary schools of which educators feel incapable of handling without severe measures (Masekoameng, 2010).

2.4.2. Educator's perceptions to banning of corporal punishment

For this section, African studies will be highlighted as these are more easily applicable to the South African context than those outside of Africa. This is not to say that all African countries share the same perspectives, but that there may be similarities due to the colonisation practices and the role of authority. Differing countries have their set of laws regarding corporal punishment, and differences are pointed out when and if necessary.

Botswana is one of the countries which do not prohibit the application of corporal punishment in schools (Global Initiative to End All Corporate Punishment of Children, 2012). However, despite the legality of corporal punishment, educators do not always enforce it (Tafa, 2002). Corporal punishment in Botswana is not seen as a traditional way of disciplining learners but more as a coping mechanism. Tafa (2002) interviewed new educators to understand their perceptions as this gave insight into the transition between training and practical application. It was found that the educator's main concern for classroom management was that of control. When educators felt as though a learner was acting inappropriately and other disciplinary methods such as talking failed, caning them would be the method of choice.

The theme of disempowerment is evident in several studies which question the banning of corporal punishment in South Africa (Cicognani, 2004; Erasmus, 2009; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Naong, 2007). It would appear that the use of corporal punishment gave educators an advantage over the learners because they could physically control the classroom. Now with the abolition of corporal punishment, the educators have been forced to seek other ways in which to control the classroom, which they find inefficient. The study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) is of particular interest as they explore the disciplinary capabilities which educators have after the banning of corporal punishment.

Older educators are of the belief that indiscipline escalated after the abolition of corporal punishment, and this could possibly be the result of the learners knowing their rights (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). The participants in this study display a conflict of emotion in that they support the rights that children have, but are frustrated by them as well. These educators argue that children are abusing their rights, therefore making the learning

atmosphere very difficult because teaching is not taking place as it should. Masekoameng (2010) goes so far as to note that educators perceive learners to have too many rights, which not only disrupts the classroom but also complicates the principal's role; while pertaining to how the school is operated. So whilst acknowledging children rights, educators feel that it's at the expense of their own.

A similar expression of frustration was met by Cicognani (2004) and Naong (2007). They found that although some educators may have not administered any corporal punishment after the ban, many felt that it would benefit them if it were reinstated. These educators understood that it may not necessarily elicit compliance, but it was not a time-consuming method and it gave immediate results, which in some cases is what was preferred. Educators felt helpless as there was not enough support and resources to help them manage with their classrooms.

There appears to be a widespread problem of indiscipline, which leads to educators feeling helpless. They may find that corporal punishment is their coping mechanism, even though there are alternatives to corporal punishment. The next section looks at these alternatives, and applies it to South Africa today.

2.4.3. Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

In support of the abolition of corporal punishment, The Department of Basic Education (2000) laid out several alternatives to help educators discipline their learners effectively without having to use punitive methods. This report stresses the importance of mutual respect between the educator and the learner, as this would create a good learning culture. The alternatives brought forward are suggestions provided for educators which detail the misconduct and the appropriate disciplinary measure to use. It highlights that there are several different levels of intervention. These are presented in the table below:

Table 2: Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

Type of misconduct	Disciplinary measure
Inside the classroom	Verbal warning Community service Demerits Additional work Detention (in which their time is used constructively)
Breaking School Rules (carried out by higher authority)	Same as above, in addition to: Disciplinary talk with the learner Talks with the learner's guardians Written warnings Signing contract with learner who agrees to improve Daily report to be signed by all educators Performing duties to improve the school environment
*Serious misconduct or violation of school rules (carried out by principal or referred to outside agency)	Same as above, in addition to: Written warning expressing possible suspension Referral to counsellor or social worker Community service once permission is granted by provincial education department

*If principal legitimately suspects that learner is in possession of drugs, weapons, stolen goods, or pornographic material - a search on the child's property is allowed, provided that the searcher is of the same sex.

These suggestions intend to employ disciplinary measures which move away from the punitive system. It is believed that these proactive measures will work better so that the children understand their misdoings, and understand that they have consequences as well.

The transformation from corporal punishment to alternative disciplinary measures however does not prove to be an easy transition. Several researchers have noted the frustration felt by educators since the banning of corporal punishment (Cicognani, 2004; Han, 2011 & Morrell, 2001a). Even though educators are equipped with alternatives to use instead of corporal punishment, they still struggle to maintain a healthy learning environment in the classroom. They complain that these methods take too much time out of their schedules (Lwo & Yuan, 2011). This reiterates the educator's dependence on the timely manner in which corporal punishment was administered, as well as its fast effect. The *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* should consider the oversized classes and the various natures to which learners

may misbehave. It is not always the ideal situation for the educator to follow the set alternatives mentioned above.

Apart from this document, the alternatives provided to educators mostly have to do with the school as a system rather than practically looking at alternative to corporal punishment (Allie, 2001; Hlatshwayo, 1992; Maphosa & Mammen, 2011). Recommendations are more inclined towards internal management of the school, and team work within the group of educators. By doing this, not only does it provide support but it also creates a space for them to share their experiences pertaining to this obvious sense of helplessness, which may possibly help to lessen their reliance on physical punishment. An example would be to hire educational psychologists as staff (Allie, 2001). As these professionals have received training and have insight on what is best for the learner, they would be able to serve as leaders for the educators. This way, instead of alienating themselves in an office, they would be more involved in the day-to-day schooling activities, and more proactive by providing workshops and so forth. An issue with this suggestion, however, would be the feasibility of hiring these professionals in schools. In addition, it would place educational psychologists in a difficult position as they would have to serve the child while being constrained by the school rules and bureaucracy. This illustrates the complexities of implementing feasible ways in which educators can alleviate corporal punishment and make use of effective ways to discipline their learners.

2.5. Learners with Special Educational Needs in Africa

The emergence of democracy in 1994 did not only bring about educational change with regards to corporal punishment, but also that of children with disabilities. This was reinforced through the publication of the *White Paper Six* (Department of Basic Education, 2010) which thoroughly explores the issue of educating learners with learning difficulties (Yssel, Oswald, Eloff, & Swart, 2007). In order to avoid pathologising, these children will be addressed as having learning difficulties rather than disabilities. This is because their barriers to learning are not all-encompassing of who they are, rather they are issues with which they are confronted on a daily basis.

There is a shift towards seeing learning difficulties as extrinsic rather than being intrinsic. The Department of Basic Education (2010) in the *White Paper Six* specifies that they are moving away from the medical model, and rather seeing learning difficulties as arising in the child's environment. This model therefore gives responsibility to those who are actively

present in a child's environment to be cognisant of how they deal with the child. Having moved away from the medical model, this document fails to define what a learning difficulty is, and rather explores what barriers to learning are. Barriers refer to that which prevents access to learning and development. The causes to these barriers are: disability; language and communication; lack of parental recognition and involvement; socioeconomic factors; and attitudes. These are seen to be the barriers most relevant in the South African context. This document is thorough on the approaches in dealing with barriers to learning, and the various methods to work around children's learning difficulties.

It is in the *White Paper Six* that one would expect to find a context-specific definition of learning difficulties as it pertains to South Africa, however this was not achieved. Americans' initially coined the term "learning disability" which is gradually becoming more accepted as "learning difficulty", and it is yet to develop a unanimous meaning and understanding in Africa (Abosi, 2007). Due to this, this study adapted the definition commonly used, set by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD):

"'Learning disabilities' is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g., sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance), or environmental influences e.g., cultural differences, insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors), it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences." (1991:1).

This definition encapsulates what learning difficulties are, whilst including their presumed aetiology. This is different from the approach taken by the Department of Basic Education (2010) which makes a point of focusing on the context of an individual. In the South African context, with the multitude of cultures, one cannot take a purely medical stance on this issue without being ethnocentric. For this reason, this study adapted both approaches to understand learning difficulties as barriers to learning which manifests through failed cognitive and scholastic trials (as mentioned above by the NJCLD).

It is evident that there is progression in the field of Inclusive Education in South Africa (Pillay & Di Terlizzi, 2009; Yssel et al., 2007). This interest leans more towards educational practice, rather than exploring learning difficulties and what that means to South Africans.

Abosi (2007) brings to light that much of the understanding on learning difficulties in Africa is influenced by Western ideas. It is therefore necessary for more research to be carried out in this context, for there to be a consensus about what learning difficulties in South Africa pertain to, and what it may mean for South Africans in general. Abosi (2007) does however make some interesting points about the education system – educators' education, that is. It is noted that educators are not adequately trained in this field, which may lead to frustration when educating in LSEN schools.

Learning difficulties are a very real issue in classrooms, and for this reason, it is necessary for there to be relevant information pertaining to this. It is beneficial for educators to have more material and training with which to work with. There is a need for growth in this field which focuses on LSEN schools and learners within the South African context.

2.5.1. Discipline in LSEN schools

There is an element of complexity when it comes to disciplining learners with special needs. This is because it is not solely between the educator and the learner, but here the parents play a vital role (Department of Basic Education, 2010; Dwyer, 1997; Yssel et al., 2007). The home and school are so closely linked – the educator in the classroom stands for the parent in the home, thus both have duties to uphold with regards to upholding this expectation (Agbenyega, 2006). As this is a vulnerable set of learners, it is most beneficial for the parents to play an active role in School Governing Bodies, as well as in the creation and implementation of codes of conduct. This way, they are cognisant of the disciplinary methods in school, and this may also influence the way the child is disciplined at home. It creates consistency.

A study in Ghana questions how inclusive education is affected by corporal punishment (Agbenyega, 2006). Three main reasons which promote the continued use of corporal punishment were found; being that it motivates learning, it is imperative to forming moral values in society and that it is supported by biblical texts. These reasons have all previously cited, and shown that this form of punishment does not breed these outcomes, yet in most parts of this continent the administration of corporal punishment is based on the antiquated ideology that it facilitates the learning process in the classroom. Agbenyega (2006) notes that corporal punishment undermines constructivist views on learning and teaching, for instance when learners ask a question or challenge an idea they are understood as being rude and are

therefore punished for this. From this, it makes sense that "schools cannot be inclusive if they adopt oppressive pedagogies and aversive class control measures" (Agbenyega, 2006 p. 120).

Although learners in LSEN schools may be more vulnerable than those in mainstream schools, this does not mean that their behaviour is exempt from being addressed. Schools need to still develop codes of conduct, and school rules with adverse consequences in order for the child to learn to distinguish between correct and incorrect behaviour (Dwyer, 1997). Schools are supposed to mirror the way that society operates so that when the child leaves, they are able to assimilate with ease (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). With this said, although behaviour problems may be a manifestation of the learning difficulty, it is still necessary for the educator to attempt to stop the misbehaviour from reoccuring. The issue lies in the fact that many schools in South Africa (both mainstream and LSEN) have a mix of learners with their particular learning difficulties. For this reason, it is helpful to develop Individual Education Plans (IEP), especially in LSEN schools with smaller numbers of learners per class (Dwyer, 1997). This will help the educators discipline the learners with respect to their particular situations, making the discipline process learner-centred.

2.6. Theoretical Framework

This section refers to the theoretical orientation which this study supports. When the data is interpreted, it is through the lenses of behaviourism, and constructivism that the issue of perceptions about the administration of discipline is looked at. It is believed that the combination of these frameworks allows the researcher to pick up on specific themes and discourses used to support the theories. A brief explanation of the relevance of these specific frameworks will now be made clear.

2.6.1. Behaviourism

Skinner's behaviour modification theory focuses on the consequences of behaviours, depending on the reinforcement or punishment received thereafter (Miltenberger, 2008). Behaviourism has been widely used in the United States of America, with educators facilitating learning through reinforcements and punishment (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). The same can be said for South African education through analysis of the above presented information on how classrooms are managed. One of the tenets from the behaviourist theory is outcomes based education (OBE) as it is focused on the outcomes that the learners produce (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002).

As this theory places such emphasis on behaviour, there is little room for promoting independent thinking, which is necessary for effective discipline (Ruffin, 2009). Looking at this, behaviourism appears to be too much of a simplistic theory for human beings. In spite of this, Kohn (1999) mentions that although learners see through the incentives offered them, they continue to work because educators and learners generally obtain satisfaction from observable behaviour (as cited in Erasmus, 2009).

According to behaviourism, punishment should decrease unwanted behaviour, and rewards encourage good behaviour (Erasmus, 2009). Through this theory, the learners' behaviour is investigated by looking at the reinforcements and punishment they receive for their behaviours in class. This gives a clearer sense of the reward systems used in class, if any. It would also be useful to discover the way in which educator's behaviours are reinforced. This could be through learners' appraisals, through their work, through their submissiveness, etc. This is an area to discover, in order to look at the motives behind the participants' behaviour.

2.6.2. Constructivism

The meaning-making element of the perceptions was seen through the lens of the constructivism. This theory places emphasis on the social aspect of how we create meaning and learn, through our sociocultural and historical processes (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, Tindall, 1994; Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Here, it is taken into account that knowledge is never static, people construct, deconstruct and reconstruct their worlds through their language and social interactions.

Within the classroom, this approach is implemented in LSEN schools through educators who use real-life experiences and who teach new concepts from previous learning (Steele, 2005). Therefore, in terms of discipline the same logic would be used in that the learner would have to be taught what good behaviour is through real-life experiences and learning from previous behaviour. With the goal of disciplining a learner being self-discipline, this theory would promote the idea of logical consequences for misbehaviour. It would be more of a challenge to realise this vision in an LSEN school as more support and guidance would be necessary for this internalisation to take place (Steele, 2005).

This particular framework is of interest in order to better understand how the participants construct themselves within discipline in their schools, as well as how they understand the possible dynamics played between themselves and those in authority. It also provides the

opportunity to understand how the educators apply this in their classrooms through the ways in which they speak about discipline.

CHAPTER III - METHODS

3.1. Introduction

Chapter II detailed the research conducted which is relevant to this study; it also shed some light on the theoretical approaches applied. The sourced information has guided the direction that the study gravitates towards, and is used to supplement the remainder of the report. Chapter III details how the research was conducted before exploring the paradigm and research design. This includes the philosophy used when conducting the research and how this was translated into practice. The method used to gather the data shall then be discussed, before the chapter ends with ethical considerations.

3.2. Methodology

A mixed methods approach gave the participants an opportunity to be open about their experiences and ideals through the design of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires which gave practical insight about the administration of discipline. This study discovered rich meanings from the interactions and understanding which were expressed in the interviews. Using thematic analysis to analyse the transcription brings about a detailed understanding of the participants' views pertaining to discipline, with an analysis of the percentages to generalise the information (Banister et al., 1994; Potter & Wiggins, 2008).

3.3. Research Design

3.3.1. Paradigm

In keeping the study's aims in mind, the interpretive phenomenological paradigm was used. "A paradigm is the patterning of the thinking of a person; it is the principal example among examples, an exemplar or model to follow according to which design actions are taken" (Groenewald, 2004, p. 6). This philosophy was chosen as it delves into the lived experiences of individuals and how they make sense of these experiences (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). This paradigm highlights the sociocultural and historical processes used when we try to understand experiences. Understanding is mediated by some form of experiential knowledge, which opens up the opportunity for even more learning to occur. This is how meaning-making takes place, through the lens of experiences.

Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2008) share that one of the fundamental underpinnings of this paradigm is that experience is subjective. What we experience is not necessarily reflective of

reality, but it is indeed our subjective reality as we are the agents who connect the dots and make meaning of our worlds, it is our lived experience. Rich information was discovered about the participants and their lived experiences pertaining to the administration of discipline. It was also possible to connect different aspects of their experiences which partake in their meaning making. It should be noted that the researcher too has her own lived experiences which inevitably influenced the study.

Qualitative research allows the researcher to gain a detailed understanding of the participants' life, as well as how the participants choose to share this whilst quantitative research looks into how frequent the perceptions are, in order to understand the generalisability of the results (Banister, et al., 1994; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Through this method of research, the information gathered allowed for interpretation as well as an exploration of their themes, in order to have a clearer understanding of their perspectives and where they possibly arose from. These claims are supported or refuted by looking at how applicable it is in terms of numbers.

This method was used to integrate or combine findings as opposed to mixing the methods. By combining both approaches, the study was sound as both internal and external validity were accounted for (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). The advantage to using a quantitative method is that the researcher uses precise and reliable measures to avoid the study from attaining data that aren't relevant to the research question, thus making it internally valid. It does however have low external validity as it is not always so easily applied into different contexts of everyday lives, which is what the qualitative design ensures. The combination makes for effective researching, as the qualitative data supported or refuted the quantitative data. Therefore, priority was given to the qualitative design and its applicability and generalisability will be evaluated using the quantitative design.

It should be noted that although these two approaches have the possibility to complement one another, they can also contradict each other, which could create an issue as they may result in different findings when analysing similar situations. In spite of this, the researcher found that such results were still useful, and were called into question in order to better understand the participants.

3.4. Data Collection

In order to answer the research questions, this study made use of semi-structured interviews which were supplemented by questionnaires. Through semi-structured interviews, the participants explored the topic and brought to light areas in which they perceive disparities, inconsistencies and difficulties. This particular method allowed for the researcher to facilitate while generating information (Banister et al., 1994; Willing & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). This way, the researcher prepared a set of questions which guided the direction of the interview and when a novel thought was expressed it was explored without deviating from the core problem of the study. The questionnaires required the participants to answer in the format of forced-choice responses, which allowed for an analysis of the percentages of perceptions which can be generalised (Haslam & McGarty, 2007).

3.4.1. Context of Study

Choice of schools

The participants selected for this study are learners and educators from two LSEN schools in the North-West region of Johannesburg. The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions about the administration of discipline from the vantage point of learners and educators in LSEN schools, and these schools were selected to carry out that aim. This sample is of interest as it has been noted that learners who experience learning difficulties have particularly challenging behaviour problems (Dwyer, 1997). These two schools are in close proximity to the researcher's place of residence, making them the most convenient to access. These schools are often recommended to parents whose children are leaving primary school and are in need of a LSEN school, even though they both have foundation schools which they use a pool for applicants.

For the purpose of this research, the schools shall not be named and will be referred to as School A and School B. The schools selected were a public school (School A) and a private school (School B). School A is an ex-model C school, situated in a middle-class residential area. This school has good facilities and resources for their learners and educators, as well as adequate extra-curricular activities. All races are well-represented in the school, with the majority of the educators being White Afrikaans women. School B is also situated in a middle-class residential area, but that of a lower socio-economic status than School A. This school caters for learners who are from disadvantaged backgrounds and the majority of them

are Black, which is also a reflection of the educators. There are not many sports or extra-curricular activities available to the learners in this school, and only recently a library was made available to them. The support (in terms of therapists and psychologists) is not as much as School A, but, they are a Non-Profit Organisation and depend heavily on external funding. Both schools have a code of conduct.

3.4.2. Participants

Both School A and School B have similar learners, but different resources and strategies for discipline. A total of twelve participants volunteered to be interviewed, with three educators and learners from each school. Of the six educators interviewed, five were female and one male. This group comprised of three white South Africans and three black Zimbabwean educators. Two of the educators have diplomas, one has a degree and a diploma in microbiology, another has a post-graduate degree in education and a diploma in journalism, the remaining two educators have degrees in education with one of them specialising in special needs. Five of these educators have had five to ten years of experience as an educator, with one of them having more than ten years' worth of experience. All these educators are Christian and have worked in the school for several years. From this, it can be noted that the educators have varying educational backgrounds, and only one of them was trained specifically for special needs. It is also useful to note that they have been educators for over 5 years, giving them a wealth of experience from which to draw their perceptions.

The learner sample for the interviews comprised of four males and two females, all of which are South African. This group comprised of five black learners and one white learner. Three of these learners were in Grade 9, one of them in Grade 11 and the remaining two were in Grade 12. Of this group, four identified themselves as Christian and two of them stated that they have no religious affiliation.

Following from this, several more learners and educators were approached with questionnaires asking them similar questions. There were a total of 28 learners and 11 educators who filled in the questionnaires. Therefore, 34 learners and 17 educators participated in the study, making it a total of 51 participants.

It was hoped that more schools would be contacted to partake but due to time constraints and the level of special needs in schools, this could not be done. For this reason, the

questionnaires were then distributed in the same schools to learners and educators who fit the criteria and who had not been interviewed.

Choice and criteria

It is expected that after one has spent several years in a particular kind of school, they will have a better understanding of the discipline procedures. This kind of learner or educator was seen as a good candidate for the study as they shared their lived experiences concerning the administration of discipline. The participants selected for this study were teenagers between the ages of 16 and 19 years, as well as educators who had been working for more than 6 months at the particular school. At this age, they brought about some thoughts regarding independence, as well as discipline in the home. This study had an interest in these particular participants as the information they share brought about certain themes, which stem from their years of experience, and can later be addressed and then added to the body of literature on disciplining LSEN.

The participants were obtained through purposive sampling, with learners who do not have severe barriers to learning, but rather struggle with specific learning difficulties. The participants had to fulfil certain criteria to be selected for the study; these were as follows for educators:

a) Employed at the school for over 6 months
b) Has a teaching qualification
c) From Sub-Saharan Africa
d) Able to communicate in English

The criteria for the learners were as follows:

a) Between the ages of 16 and 19
b) Enrolled in the school for over a year
c) From Sub-Saharan Africa
d) Able to communicate in English

These particular requirements were necessary to better understand the school's discipline as well as perceptions surrounding this. It is useful to have participants from Sub-Saharan Africa so that the research remains relevant to this population, which is inclusive of South Africans.

These criteria allow for the research to focus on a specific group of individuals who shared their perceptions towards the administration of discipline in LSEN schools.

3.4.3. Instruments

Two sets of instruments were used to conduct this study; namely semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The contents from both instruments were created by the author, and intended to answer the research questions. Several questions were already prepared for the interviews, and the individual interactions brought about several more questions to explore. Learners and educators were given different questionnaires, according to their relativity. The items on the questionnaire were very similar to those in the interview, querying into their perspectives using statements. These statements required one of two responses, being "agree" or "disagree" with which the participants had to mark with a tick.

3.4.4. Procedure

An ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand in order to carry out the study. A certificate granting permission to research in these schools was then obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education, as the participants are young adults from this region.

In order to maintain anonymity of the participants as well as the schools, pseudonyms are used throughout the report so that they remain unidentifiable. This protects the participants' identities, and motivated them to be more honest and forthcoming in the interviews. Written consent was obtained from the principals of the schools before the study was carried out. The principals each received a principal's information sheet (Appendix A) providing information about the study. They then signed the consent form (Appendix B), permitting the research to be conducted on their property and with their staff and learners. Once consent was obtained, educators were informed of the study through the school (gatekeepers approached the educators in the presence of the researcher), as well as their rights to confidentiality and anonymity. Once educators had accepted, they were given a participant's information sheet (Appendix C) explaining the research and interviews as well as written consent for participation and audio recording (Appendix D and E) to sign before the research is carried out.

Learners (without severe learning difficulties) were then approached through the help of the gatekeepers and were made aware of this study through the participant information sheet

(Appendix C) and informed consent was granted to those interested through consent forms (Appendix D and E). Their anonymity remains secure in that the gatekeepers cannot keep track of which of the learners they suggested accepted to partake in the research, and the role they played. As these learners are special needs, the consent was both verbal and written in order to ascertain that they are fully aware of the research they are participating in. Being over the age of 16, they do not require parental consent. Therefore, their informed assent was sufficient.

Questionnaires were then distributed and interviews conducted on school property, so as to alleviate any possible transport problems that the participants may have. The educators and learners were asked what times would be most suitable for them, so as not to interrupt their teaching and learning schedules. Interviews took place in a quiet private room, to maintain confidentiality and to give the participants a safe space in which to share their perceptions towards the administration of discipline. The learners' questionnaires (Appendix G) were handed out to the gatekeeper in School A as the school preferred this method due to some difficult parents, and in School B the researcher herself administered the questionnaires. As these are LSEN schools, the learners' questionnaires were also verbally administered. The educators' questionnaires (Appendix G) were left for educators to collect, fill in and deposit back. As not many of the educators in School B met the criteria, very few questionnaires were returned.

At the start of the interview process, the participants were handed their information and consent sheets, and reminded of the study and its purposes. They were made to understand the meaning of informed consent, including the consent to be audio-recorded and consequently signed it once they had accepted (Appendix D). Their right to terminate the interview was made known to them, and none of participants chose this option. The interview participants were then asked to fill in a demographics form (Appendix F or G). Once the participants showed that they were ready to proceed, the researcher handed them a demographics sheet (Appendix F and G). Once all forms had been completed, the researcher began with the interview questions (Appendix H).

The participants who filled in the questionnaires were also made to understand the purpose of the study as well as informed consent, they subsequently decided to sign declaring that they were cognisant of the study and were willing to take part (Appendix C and D). They then

proceeded to answer the questionnaire (Appendix I or J). As these children have some learning difficulties, the researcher read the questions out to them, as an aid.

The researcher made sure to be transparent about her research and explained to each participant that although the material would be used in this research report, no identifying details would be made known. Not only did this establish a sense of rapport, but it also encouraged honesty. The interviews were conducted verbally, so as to make it seem natural and conversational. The researcher also made sure to remain empathic and sensitive. It was expected that in a comfortable setting, the participants would have space and freedom to thoroughly discuss their perceptions towards discipline.

3.4.5. Role of Researcher

The position as interviewer has several effects on the data collection process as well as the analysis. It is therefore necessary to reflect on these so as to be aware of them during the interactions as well as during the analysis of the data (Banister et al., 1994). Being in the position of interviewer seemed to have brought about power dynamics in the interviews with the learners. They saw the researcher as figure of authority who was trying to gain information from them. It was therefore necessary to remind them of the purpose of my study, and reassure them that their identities are protected, and that the discussion in the room is confidential. Once rapport was established and trust was gained, the power dynamics appeared to have diminished. With time, the participants opened up comfortably.

The researcher's demographics (age, race, gender and culture) may have been an issue during the interactions with both educators and learners. It is possible that they may have felt as though they may not have been able to relate, as the participants and researcher differed in culture and age and in some cases gender. In spite of this, the environment was comfortable enough for the participants not to find any demographics as a barrier to the interview process. As mentioned above, it was hoped that once trust was gained, the interview and questionnaire process progressed with minimal issues.

3.5. Data Analysis

3.5.1. Thematic Analysis

When used as an analytic method in qualitative research, thematic analysis has shown to produce organised, rich details from research data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is done by

identifying themes, analysing them and then reporting the patterns. This method can be used within several different paradigms and theoretical frameworks, as it looks at the themes within the data corpus as well as the themes within particular sets, and even data items (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, when exploring the perceptions held towards the administration of discipline, the researcher made use of the thematic analysis in order to categorise the main themes across the interviews. The findings are structured in such a way that the main themes are the prevalent perceptions and experiences from the participants which are relevant to the research questions..

3.6. Ethical considerations

The participants chosen for this study range from young adults to older adults. Having read the participant sheet (Appendix C) that informs the participants about the research, they critically evaluated whether or not they chose to participate. They then provided informed consent (Appendix D) and participate in the study. The learners who had trouble reading were read to, in order to make sure that there is complete disclosure about the purposes of the research. The nature of this study did require the use of learners who have learning difficulties, as well as the possible disclosure of very difficult experiences. The educators could have shared information which points to their inability to cope with disciplinary problems in school. Having said this, there are several ethical considerations to be reviewed. To remain ethically sound, the following procedures were followed:

- A letter of consent from the principals to conduct this study was obtained. This ensured that these schools gave permission for the study to be conducted on their learners, although it would not reflect on their marks.

- The participants for the interviews (all over the age of 16) were handed two consent forms. Respectively, having signed the forms and given verbal consent; they gave consent for the audio recording of the interview and for their participation. The participants who filled out the questionnaires also signed their consent, acknowledging that they are aware of the research and choose to participate.

- The participants were told that they can refuse to continue and let the interview be discarded their participation if they felt the need to.

- The learners would be contained after the interviews if any sensitive information was brought to light. These learners would have also been referred to school counsellors,

social workers, or school psychologists if necessary. This was contingent upon whether such a situation occurred, and this measure was rendered unnecessary.

- If educators had brought to light that they could not cope with the discipline problems in school, they would have been offered to attend to attend a workshop which could support them in this. This too did not appear to be the case.
- Confidentiality was respected at all times. Anonymity is secured in that neither the names of the schools, nor the names of the participants are made known.
- Participating schools will have access to the final report.

CHAPTER IV – FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter attention is given to the analyses of the findings from this study. This section is pertinent to the report, as it illustrates the perceptions from the vantage point of the participants. Their experiences and perceptions about the administration of discipline in their respective schools will be discussed, whilst remaining vigilant of the research questions.. This chapter shares the findings from the research and discusses the themes in relation to the research questions. As discussed earlier, discipline, and more specifically corporal punishment is widely researched, but this particular group of participants rarely have the opportunity to be heard and have their realities explored. This chapter therefore aims to explore the participants' perceptions about the administration of discipline in their schools.

4.2. Findings and Discussion

The findings discussed are an amalgamation from both the interviews and the questionnaires. The most pertinent themes are discussed in order to answer the research questions. The discussion allows for a thorough exploration of the perceptions towards the administration of discipline, fulfilling the aim of the study. An investigation of what these themes mean for LSEN as well as for education is South Africa is also discussed. Qualitative findings are documented in Table 3, and these are complemented by the relevant quantitative findings in Table 4. The items from the questionnaire were grouped into and an average of their frequencies can be found in Table 4, along with their percentages.

Table 3: Prevalent themes extracted from interviews of educators' and learners' responses

DOMINANT THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Learner - educator relationship facilitates disciplines	• Understanding the barriers to learning impacts behaviour • Democratic versus authoritarian learning approaches • Being an LSEN educator is a challenge • Educators are expected to act in *loco parentis*
Schools adapt different discipline methods	• Corporal punishment would work if it were structured and controlled • Having a sense of control over learners is important • Consistency and structure are important • Colleagues are a great source of support
Behaviour warrants consequence	• Learners tend to abuse their rights • Several understandings as to what discipline entails • Many discipline methods are ineffective

Table 4: Prevalent themes resulting from questionnaires of educators' and learners' responses

PREVALENT THEMES	EDUCATORS		LEARNERS	
	Percentage	Average Frequency	Percentage	Average Frequency
Learner-educator relationships facilitates discipline	18.2%	2	71.4%	20
Punitive methods work when used to administer discipline	45.3%	5	21.4%	6
Discipline is a problem in the school	68.2%	8	60.7%	17
Democratic approaches to learning are effective	69.1%	8	64.3%	18
Parents are involved	90.9%	10	57.1%	16
Being an LSEN educator is a challenge	27.3%	3	53.6%	15
Creating a support system at school is beneficial	100%	11	82.1%	23
Educators are equipped with effective disciplinary tools	84%	9	51.8%	14
Banning corporal punishment is not appreciated	43.2%	5	28.6%	8

An analysis of the findings brought to light several important themes. The themes that are discussed, however, use quotes from the interviews as well as percentages from several themes in the questionnaire (Appendix I and Appendix J). These themes are grouped according to their relevance and only appropriate quotes and percentages are used to supplement the findings. The discussion is guided by the research questions and the relevant themes are explored.

4.2.1. Educator – learner relationship facilitates discipline

Working in LSEN school

Each of the participants had the opportunity to share with the researcher their perceptions and experiences regarding the administration of discipline in their schools. In the interviews it was clear that the participants seem to be on different footing regarding the administration of discipline, as well as classroom management. However, data from the interviews indicate that the majority of educators as well as some of the learners collectively agree that teaching at an LSEN school is a challenge, especially when it comes to behaviour. It would appear that the participants see this problem as quite distinct from behaviour problems in mainstream schools. Most of the interviewed participants noted that they had previously learnt or studied in mainstream education, and would therefore use their experiences to make inferences about the working in a LSEN school.

Contradictory to the above finding, Table 4 indicates that only 27.3% of the educators found that teaching at an LSEN school is challenging, even though 68.2% of them shared that discipline is a problem at the school. This is interesting to note, because it gives an idea of the educator's perception about discipline as well as their ability to handle the discipline in the school. This suggests that although some of the educators find that working in a LSEN school is challenging, it is possible that they feel confident in their ability to work through the challenge. It is evident that turn-over in School A is low, as the staff members have been there for several years. This calls to question as to what it is that is keeping the educators in an environment which they find challenging.

Understanding that barriers to learning impacts behaviour

Educators cited that the learning difficulties (such as attention, etc.) make it difficult for them in class. This is not to say that the educators want the learners to remain seated and quiet throughout the day, but just that their barriers to learning make it particularly difficult for them. This finding was shared by Han (2011), who shared that principals with a higher number of LSEN (or special education learners) found that they had more problem behaviour at their schools than principals with fewer LSEN. Both the learners and their educators saw this work as challenging, but one educator in particular, Mrs Roberta, found it to be a positive challenge

"Yes I am very happy. You know what, my husband wants me to go to a private school but the thing is; there are different things there. This is a challenge every single day. EVERY day. So I enjoy it. So I won't go. I am happy where I am"

For her, it would appear that the challenge is motivating, which is surprising considering that there appears to be a direct correlation between teacher morale and learner discipline (Naong, 2007). What is striking about this particular interview is that Mrs Roberta is one of the youngest educators at her school, and she is the Grade 11 head. Masekoameng (2010) documents the difficulties that young educators have in secondary schools, particularly female educators. According to the questionnaire items, a number of the educators (45.5%) stated that female educators have a harder time than males, and with her overseeing the seniors, one would expect some difficulty on her part. Nonetheless, she appears to be confident in what it is that she does, and she attributes this to structure and predictability,

"That is why we have a discipline procedure in place and I follow them. They know. It's behind my door, they know. Late for class, is one warning. Second time, the parents will be called in. Third time will be detention. I write it down, I have an observation book. Parents will be smsed and contacted. And then detention. With these structures they know"

It has been documented that students with difficulties, such as those in LSEN schools, have a right to know the school rules and the school is responsible for teaching the learners the code of conduct (Dwyer, 1997). This is something that has proven to work for her, as she can remind them when they misbehave. Considering, however, that they are LSEN, one would expect that it may be difficult for them to learn these school rules, as they do have learning difficulties. It would therefore be necessary to remind them of what the school rules are, which would require a certain level of patience and understanding.

Mrs Farai's experience at her LSEN school is quite different, as she shares,

"Yes, yes, yes. I've realised that mostly with the learners that I have encountered, the problem's that they just look down on an educator because you are female. And I think that with male educators they are respectful, they follow instructions, they finish their tasks. Unlike with female teachers, they kind of tease you. When you get in class, they look at you differently. They start commenting about the way you talk, the way you walk, the way you dress. You know, all those kind of funny comments"

Here, she shares her experiences as a female educator, with the learners showing her little respect. Her sex is therefore made quite salient in that the learners react to her appearance rather than reacting to her as an educator. Here, Mrs Farai goes further than to comment on the challenge of educating LSEN, but shares the challenge of doing so as a female educator. She shared that she found it particularly difficult when she had initially started teaching there, and that only when she started to develop relationships with the learners, did they start to behave. This supports the finding that the learner-educator relationship plays a vital role in determining how learners behave in class (Mokhele, 2006).

Tshabalala, one of the learners makes an interesting point when discussing barriers to learning and how they affect LSEN,

"…some people are vulnerable to a… to a lot of things especially when you have a learning barrier or a difficulty because you don't know what's good for you. I think that you would be vulnerable to anything because you think…okay you will do this thing, and then…I think, you wouldn't know the consequences properly as such because you have that learning barrier and thinking is something else to you. And what I'm saying is that, uhm a person that can differentiate right and wrong, uhm, is not easily lead to something coz, isn't it, they will look at the consequences first, not afterwards? I think some people with learning barriers…they, they look at things after something has already happened. That's how they learn from it. They just…instead of analysing the situation, coz their thinking is….that's what I think."

What Tshabalala argues here is that because of their learning difficulties, LSEN are vulnerable. He suggests that they have difficulty in understanding right from wrong, and they struggle to understand the consequences to their behaviour. Using his logic, educators would have a very hard time disciplining learners, considering that discipline aims to mould the learners to carry themselves appropriately in society through self-discipline and self-control (Bekker, 2007; Porteus, Vally, & Tamar, 2001; Rice, 1987). However, what Tshabalala is suggesting here is that it is a difficult feat for these learners to develop a sense of self-control and self-discipline. Bekker (2007) also found that her participants perceived that facilitating self-directed behaviour and self-discipline in a LSEN school was very challenging and rarely successful. Mrs Nyasha shared that she had initially expected to be met with a group of learners who would feel privileged to be in a school that caters to their particular needs, and therefore would take responsibility of their behaviour. As Maphosa and Shumba (2010) share, for a learner to develop self-discipline and self-control, they need to realise that they

are in sole control of their behaviour. This realisation cannot happen in a classroom where the educator aggressively takes the reins and the learner feels powerless. Considering Tshabalala's argument, as well as the educators' concerns about how hard it is to be at an LSEN school, there appears to be a sense of helplessness and disempowerment from both learners and educators.

Democratic versus authoritarian learning approaches

Kgomotso, one of the learners, justified his misbehaviour at school by explaining that he just loves to interact, hence why he continuously speaks in class and challenges his educators. In more authoritarian classrooms, challenging educators is seen in a negative light, as the learners are expected to sit and absorb information without being participants in the learning process (Wilcox, 1998). Keeping this in mind, it would appear that he approaches education in a more democratic way through constructing meaning and challenging them, which has not been received well by his educators. This implies that within these schools, it is possible that there is more of an authoritarian system, as he feels stifled and frequently gets into trouble for questioning in class. Tafa (2002) suggests that such authoritarianism is characteristic of schools in countries with a colonial past. This is important to note, because although the advent of democracy happened over a decade ago, it would appear that colonialist strategies remain in our society.

Table 4 illustrates that 69.1% of educators as well as 64.3% of learners agree that a more democratic approach to learning is preferred. In spite of this, its application in the classroom appears to be non-existent. Cicognani (2004) also made a note of how the aftermath of corporal punishment had left the stain of authoritarianism in classrooms. This illustrates how deeply entrenched this approach to learning is within our school systems. Although structure is necessary, it appears that educators struggle to know how to express boundaries without being authoritative. As mentioned above, it is clear that the intention is to be more democratic, but they might not be adequately equipped to adequately fulfil this desire.

Kgomotso also shared that he should not be expected to sit still in class, which is a notion that several of the educators shared. He admits that he has a reputation to start trouble and will argue with his educators a lot, which leads to him needing to be disciplined. Despite his numerous suspensions and hearings, he is still registered at their school. What this brings to light is the battle that educators face with teenagers in general - the power struggle. Kgomotso speaks of himself as though he is an equal to the educators, which is what

democratisation would assume. Nevertheless, this behaviour has landed him in several hearings, as the educators do not share his mentality and preferred style of learning.

Noni, another learner, shares how she feels in the classroom and how that affects her,

"Ja, it's like, I am talkative even at home, I am talkative. So, teachers don't understand. I am the person who likes to ask and wants to know more. They find it disturbing if I ask something".

Unlike many of the learners who were interviewed, Noni does not feel as though she has personal relationships with any of the educators. She therefore feels misunderstood, and hence gets in trouble. This is very similar to Kgomotso, who feels that he cannot express his thoughts and question others' thoughts in class, even though we claim to have left behind authoritarian values. It was assumed that with the democratisation of the country, classrooms would also share the same value, but it is evident that this is not the case (Cicognani, 2004). Tee, on the other hand, comments on her great relationship with her educators, as they understand her and take time to listen to her. The questionnaire items indicate that 60.7% of the learners stated that they would make sure to behave in class when they like an educator. This illustrates how important it is for educators to make the effort to form secure relationships with their learners in order for them to alleviate some of the discipline problems at school, but only 18.2% of the educators see it in this way, as shown in Table 4. Several studies have looked into this and found that educators' morale drops when behaviour problems increase (Masekoameng, 2010; Naong, 2007). This further argues how important the learner-educator relationship is, not only for the learners but also for the educators. Not having this kind of a relationship seems to pose a challenge for learning to easily be facilitated, and this needs to be recognised (Mokhele, 2006).

As previously mentioned, it would appear that the translation of democracy into the classroom proves to be seriously lagging behind. Mokhele (2006) explains that educators should not be blamed for continuing to make use of authoritarian principles in the classroom as this is how many of them were trained. This is a valid point, looking at the participants who are trying to make a more democratic approach work within an authoritarian system. Many of these educators are unsure about how to create these structures and keep them in place, while ensuring that they are seen as an authority in the classroom without having to be authoritative (Mokhele, 2006).

Mrs Nyasha notes the inconsistency within the classroom, not only with discipline but also with regards to teaching,

"*But I discovered that teaching here has…you know it's got its own structure. As much as we've got a structure on paper…coz when you prep, you prep a certain way and that's the way it's supposed to be and administered. We fix it to be like that. When you get into class, the structure is totally different. You get in and whilst you thought you had an introduction of five minutes, you could have and introduction of 20 minutes coz, you know you're still trying to ensure that the kids have understood you and you know, part of the time you've tried to settle the kids coz they'll be one or two who still insist on getting up or looking for a pen and things like that. So you can't talk about a proper structure, system or a way of teaching. It's now becoming more of an individualistic thing, you learn your learners, you know who they are, so each class that you go into, you almost know how you're going to impart your lesson. But the way you impart it in one classroom is different from another. Yuh, so it also depends on the educator coz you know these kids respond differently to different educators"*

Mrs Nyasha clearly illustrates how difficult the transition is from the authoritarian style of teaching to a more democratic style. She shares that she has her expectations of how her teaching day will be carried out, but she has to remain very flexible due to the unpredictability of the classes. She finds that this is the main reason as to why there is little to no structure, because the learners have different needs, and with it being a LSEN school, individualised education is expected. However, in practice it would appear to be difficult to accomplish such a democratic way of educating a class.

2.2.1.3. Educators are expected to act in *loco parentis*

The emphasis being placed on the learner-educator relationship possibly stems from the role that educators have to play. While interviewing Mr Tinashe, he made an interesting point about the role he plays to his learners, as their parent

I: And does that make you as a teacher have to wear the parental cap when in class as well as the teacher cap?

P: I think it is part of our job description, like as an educator. You are acting parentis loco so you have to wear that parental cap, when you are, when the kids are here, you are practically their parent. So yes, we always do that, that is part of our job description, yuh,"

Mr Tinashe makes an interesting point when he mentions that acting in *loco parentis* is a part of his job description. Table 4 indicates that 57.1% of learners and 90.9% of educators find that parents are involved in the learners' academic life, whereas the interviews state the opposite. What may explain such a huge discrepancy may be that the interviews failed to document exactly what kind of involvement the parents participated in, whereas the interviews did. Erasmus (2010) also makes a point, about educators having to bear parental responsibilities during school hours. Not only are they responsible for teaching these learners and disciplining them, they also take on a parenting role with the learners. He takes it upon himself to do so, as he sees it as part of his job description.

4.2.2. Behaviour warrants consequence

Several understandings as to what discipline entails

The educators and some of the learners were disciplined using corporal punishment, but they cannot make use of this familiar method as it is now outlawed. It would appear that in their particular contexts, punishment and discipline were seen as the same entity, given the way that it was administered (Cicognani, 2004; Morrel, 2001a). There are many blurred lines when making a distinction between punishment and discipline in this sense, as the punishment is used to discipline the learner. Hence, some of the participants struggled to see the difference between the two, as Cicognani (2004) also observed. Mrs Nyasha shares that when she was punished, the pain inflicted made her realise that she should never do it again. She finds that her corporal punishment, being hit on the hand with a blackboard eraser, was beneficial in that sense,

> *"I know if you did things wrong in class your teacher would maybe hit you on the fingers with a duster and the pain inflicted would make you realise that "I never want to do this again, it ends here now". Such things helped. I can't…I still fail to understand where the abuse comes. I guess there are individuals who take corporal punishment a bit too far and based on their own experiences they end up abusing kids"*

Baumrind (1996) and Mametey (2010) support this claim, that when pain is administered it sends the child a message about their behaviour being wrong, and that it should be avoided. What seemed to have happened here is that Mrs Nyasha internalised this, as it made sense to her. Baumrind (1996) specified that the child's perception is imperative to how the punishment is understood, and as can be seen with Mrs Nyasha, she saw it in a positive light. It is interesting that she notes how ones background can and does affect the way that discipline is administered. The aim of being hit like that is to inflict pain, and that pain would make the behaviour stop, which is what happened with her. When asked the definition of discipline, she equated it to punishment. Here it is clear what effect her childhood punishment has on her understanding of discipline.

Almost half (45.3%) of the educators indicated that punitive methods work to administer discipline. This further goes to show how enmeshed punishment and discipline are within the school context. When asked about her view on discipline, Mrs du Plessis also shared that she understood it to encompass physical punishment as well such as a 'slash' or having to sit on

the floor. The goal would be for the learners to understand that society has rules, and that there are consequences for breaking them. What we see again here is the blur between discipline (teaching them about consequences) and punishment (slash). Her goal would be for them to internalise the discipline so that they know that there are consequences to their behaviour, but the way that this is done can also be through inflicting pain, as it was done with Mrs Nyasha. Since this is no longer permitted, she shares her observations about what has replaced corporal punishment,

"You know, when we teach years ago, we started off with classes of 20/18. It was quite nice. Then we had rules that if they write a test and they get lower than 12 out of 20 then you have things like one slash or up to 8 or something like that. That was just there to help them study. Then what, of course, what happened people get cross and they just hit. If the child knows that he was warned before then he will get one slash because you can't abuse him, its fine. But if he thinks, it wasn't right for him to get that punishment then he's gonna get in trouble. But now we cannot do it but then the verbal abuse happens which is even worse because then they start shouting 'no you can't what, what, what, what'"

She makes the suggestion that verbal abuse has replaced physical abuse, which was quite a novel thought in the research, as the researcher had not expected that to come from the interviews. This supports the notion that educators feel so out of control in the classroom without corporal punishment that they now replace one form of abuse with another (Erasmus, 2009; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). Mrs du Plessis stays away from such, as she finds that it is a losing battle to engage in conflict with a teenage learner. What she tends to do in heated situations is that she would ask the learners to leave the classroom and return once they have calmed down. In other situations, she makes sure to collaborate with the parents as to what discipline measures are being used so that discipline at home and at school is similar. Her methods are well-developed, as she even considers what discipline the parents use at home. It is clear from this that her intention is to leave the learner with a lasting effect of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable.

When Tshabalala was asked what discipline meant to him, he saw it as putting things in order and using procedures to punish. Here again we see the duality of the meaning of discipline, to incorporate punishment. However, when explaining what punishment means to him, it is exclusive of discipline. Tshabalala is supportive of corporal punishment, as he feels that its abolishment has failed his generation because nothing motivates them to work harder, or to

avoid disappointment. This supports the research conducted which suggests that the rise of indiscipline rose due to the abolition of corporal punishment (Maphosa & Mammen, 2011; Masekoameng, 2010).

As previously mentioned, there are several different explanations as to what discipline or punishment entails, as well as what the goals are (Cicognani, 2004, Gershoff, 2002; Smith, 2006). It would appear that the child's behaviour often warrants the consequence, be it punishment or discipline. One of the learners, Tee, shares her experience of punishment as a child, and how this has affected her today,

You know like, ah, when you young, you pick up things. You check which thing is correct. So I think now if you tell people to "stop this or that", they will think who are you to tell me. Also it's a bit too late to do that, because you should have done that when you were a child. Like me when I was I think in Grade 6, I used to be naughty, disrespecting my parents but then my mother, she used to punish me, I thought that she hated me, but now I am strong because of my mother. She always said to me "you look out for yourself. In the future I may not be there for you, but you just need to know that some things you cannot do. And you should always work hard for your education".

This excerpt illustrates the moral lesson that Tee learnt from being punished. She was being punished in order to put an end to a certain behaviour, which satisfies the definition. However, her mother went further than this by explaining why she is being punished. This suggests that although punishment and discipline are fundamentally different, it is possible that they may rear similar outcomes. Tee makes another interesting point, stating that these are things that should be done while a child is still young. Yet in reality, educators find themselves spending several hours punishing learners, because this was not adequately done when they were younger. Not only does this stress the lack of parenting, but also the added pressure on educators.

The majority of the participants appear to have difficulty in separating discipline from punishment, as they are often seen to share common goals (Cicognani, 2004). This is something that is evident in much of the research which indicates that there are many inconsistencies in how punishment and discipline are construed (Agbenyega, 2006; Cicognani, 2004; Gershoff, 2002; Holden, 2002; Morrel, 2001a). What perplexes this further is the continued use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary method, both inside and outside the household. Many of the educators and learners who were disciplined using this method

fail to distinguish between the two, due to their upbringing. Hence the difficulty in establishing and implementing alternatives to corporal punishment that are effective.

Discipline methods are ineffective

One of the main themes was that educators generally have to adapt their discipline methods according to the child and the misdemeanour, as not all methods are successful. The *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* however is a tool that can be used as a guide to help the educators maintain a consistent structure throughout the school, which is clearly something that these schools could use. Mrs Roberta spoke about having structure through what the school has provided them with, whereas Mr Tinashe found that the school's structure is lacking. The researcher was expecting to hear about the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* but not a single educator cited this document. It has been evidenced that educators are in need of more practical resources to help them discipline their learners, as they feel hopeless and disempowered due to the indiscipline (Maphosa & Mammen, 2011; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Masekoameng, 2010). The majority of the interviewed educators find that the government are not supportive of their causes, but they don't necessary use the tools and resources that are in place for them. Perhaps this is because they feel confident in their ability to discipline the learners, as supported in the quantitative finding that 84% of the educators agreeing to this. What this suggests is that although the school structures which are in place for the educators are not often effective, they adapt their own methods of discipline which work for them.

Just over half of the learners (51.8%) find that their educators are adequately equipped with disciplinary tools. This is shocking, as it suggests that approximately half of the learners measure their educators to be inadequate when it comes to discipline, whereas the teachers themselves find that they are effective. This contradiction may be due to many of the learners perceiving that discipline is a problem in their school (60.7%), and perhaps questioning the teacher's role in this indiscipline.

When asked, Kgomotso spoke about being self-disciplined. This is something that rarely ever came up in the interviews with the participants. As the first-born in his family, he feels a sense of responsibility and finds it important to have self-discipline in order to carry himself appropriately. The lack of self-discipline is a problem that educators cited in Erasmus' (2009) study, as they struggle to facilitate self-discipline with their learners. Although Kgomotso states that he is disciplined, he admits that often at school he misbehaves as a way to entertain

himself, and he is more disciplined when he is at home. Many of the learners in interviews share the sentiment that discipline at home overpowers discipline at school, hence the effectiveness of calling parents in to the school as a disciplinary practice. Several educators boasted in interviews about how rapidly a threat to make a phone call can change a learner's behaviour. It is clear from this the impact that parental involvement can have if it is incorporated in the school system.

Learners abusing their rights

Questions about the learner's discipline made it clear that the most common problems at school were around talking rudely to the educators, bunking classes, not doing homework, and smoking. Several participants attributed the misbehaviour not only to their learning difficulties or their upbringing, but also because the learner's abuse their rights in the sense that they know what their rights are but fail to acknowledge their responsibilities as learners and children. Kgomotso complained that his generation should not even have rights anymore because they no longer have any limits to their behaviour. There is a concern amongst the participants about how much the learners are protected due to them abusing their rights.

There is a vast quantity of legislation protecting children from corporal punishment, many of them stemming from the *South African Constitution*, and despite this, many of the participants are for the reinstitution of corporal punishment, even if only used as a last option. It goes as far as some learners themselves stating that they should not have the rights that they do because they are overly protected. This is of interest, as these rights are in place for the best interest of these learners, but not all participants see it in this light. Ms Farai in particular shared about the learners' rights,

I: I think things have changed because when I was at school, we used to respect people in authority. Whether a teacher or anyone who's in authority at that moment. You just have to respect and take orders you don't even question. But today things have changed a little bit because of, uh, I might say it's because of these things like human rights…like, children have been given so much rights that they THINK they are in control of things. Also I think it's because of, uh…technology and the way things are just changing at the moment.

Ms Farai expresses her concern here about learners abusing their rights. She compares the way in which she conducted herself as a learner and the way learners conduct themselves now, and basis the difference on the fact that the learners have been given too many rights.

One of the interview questions directed to the learners was about their rights, and many of them cited their right to education and that educators cannot deny this, implying that no matter how poorly they behave, they should not be sent from the classroom as that impinges on their right to education. This is problematic, however, as educators spend a lot of time disciplining learners, and therefore those learners are impinging their classmates right to education. From this, it is evident that rights have not been adequately communicated, in such a way to give the learners the responsibility to uphold rights. Ms Farai elaborates further on the rights on learners, as well as those of educators,

I: The thing is they don't even know what are rights. They think…what I think is that kids these days, they know that they have rights, they think that they DON'T they don't have to respect adults.

B: What about educators rights? Do you feel like educators have rights or are they easily taken advantage…?

I: They are a bit. Like I feel like learners have more rights than the educators.

From this, it is suggested that Ms Farai feels inadequate and hopeless as an educator, because the learners don't respect her and she feels as though the education system protects the learners more than they do the educators. This is important to know, because it illustrates the complexity of an educator perceiving herself as of lower importance than the learner, and expected to take an authoritative role. This may further explain the reason as to why educators tend to lean towards authoritarian teaching, so as to gain respect from the learners.

It is not only the educators who made a note of the abuse of rights, but also a learner. Tee shares,

I: We have the right to be educated...Okay our rights are fair, neh, but sometimes it's like they OVER...like children over teachers, like why?

Here we see the learner's perception about rights being abused, which is similar to that of an adult. She shares the opinion that children's rights supersede that of educators, and elaborates on this point,

I: What about educators' rights? What rights do they have?

P: They do but I don't know them. What I know....The rights of the educators are not like children's. It's like, in this country it's like, the focus is on children more than older people. It's like all the children have more rights than older people, but I understand why children have more rights. Most children get abused, but you won't find a teacher getting abused...Okay fine, teachers do get abused but most don't like, say it out because of...maybe if me, I'm disturbing the class, the teacher gets angry...okay fine, a man gets angry in the house, he gets angry coz his wife didn't clean something, you see, that's emotional abuse. Ja.

Tee makes a point about the emotional abuse that educators undergo at school. This is an important point to make, as emphasis is often placed on the well-being of the child and not that of the educator. Having a learner recognise this suggests that it is something common that happens in schools. If this is the case, it would make it difficult to establish a secure relationship with the learners. It would also make it difficult to discipline the learners, for fear of infringing on their rights. This goes to show how little comprehension there is on rights of both the learner and the educator in the classroom. With so much confusion, one may begin to understand how the definitions of discipline and punishment have become enmeshed.

4.2.3. Schools adapt different discipline methods

Having a sense of control over the learners is of importance

This last research question is an exploration of the differences and similarities between the two schools selected in this study. The comparison between School A and School B brought to light some enthralling revelations, some of which were unexpected. In looking at the school's management of discipline, it is evident that there is more leeway in the private school as it is easier to expel learners and get them suspended than in government schools (Allie, 2001; Lekalakala, 2007). Mrs Nyasha shares that the learners make the distinction between the way that the schools are managed, and justify the misbehaviour at School B by saying that they are paying the educators' school fees so the educators should be the ones to succumb to the learners' wishes. Noni supports this claim, as she has heard her classmates instructing the educator not to do any work,

I: We are tired, we don't wanna write, we pay for the school fees, so don't teach us today

With this attitude, there appears to be a definite power-play between the educators and the learners. When looking at the interviews and the questionnaires, it was mainly participants from School B who were of the opinion that the school lacks consistency and structure. It is

different in School A, as they have to report and justify and their actions to several different bodies (Allie, 2001). With such thorough investigations underway, they focus more on being rid of the issue rather than being rid of the learner. Also, this means that there are specific disciplinary measures that have to be followed, as there are many more procedures to follow than there are in private schools.

One of the main findings was that the state of relationships facilitates the administration of discipline, as well as the perception of discipline. Many (71.4%) of the learners truly appreciated that their educators made time to speak to them individually. However, in considering the practicality of that approach, it may become tiresome and time-consuming to have one-on-ones with every child in the class, as this would take away from their teaching time. Porteus, Vally and Tamar (2001) document how time-consuming indiscipline can be, therefore lowering the standards of the teaching at the school. Cicognani (2004) and Naong (2007) found that educators prefer to use corporal punishment as it is produces quick results and they can resume their teaching. This appears to be the case for some of the learners in the study who find that educators spend far too much time trying to manage discipline. This is something that perturbed Gift, who shared his frustration about their absence in class,

"P: It's tough for the teachers. It's tough…for them ma'am.

I: And in the classroom, does it affect the classroom at all?

P: Ya it does…Maybe you doing maths, and the parents…maybe one child…the parent's in the office...maybe they want to speak with the teacher. The teacher has to go. And on behalf of us learners, our concentration gets lost. Because maybe we were high and now we go back to the same thing. When ma'am comes back again, we do the same thing that we did instead of moving forward"

With the educators already spending so much of their time outside of class, it calls to wonder how much time they realistically have to cultivate relationships with each of their learners. Gift made it very clear that he did not appreciate the way that discipline was handled in his school, as he finds that the educators are too lenient when it comes to discipline. He finds that at times a learner can get mixed messages while being disciplined,

"P: Us we are supposed to respect them before they are to respect us. That's where the problem is. In order to do that, I think…to stop playing with the teacher to talk with them and

laugh with them. That takes advantage, the next day the teacher they talk to the child the next thing they are fighting. That's where the problem is.

I: So you think the teachers must just stay strict?

P: Ya, must stop joking too... maybe joke sometimes not like every time"

What Gift is showing here is that it is not only the educators that have expectations, but the learners too. He expects his educators to be stricter and to have control over the classroom so that the learners can learn. Gift adopts a much more traditional view on learning, as compared to Tee and Kgomotso who prefer to learn in a democratic way. His frustration about not having his educator in class is a valid point, especially considering that their standard of practice drops due to the unpredictability of their days and their teaching time. He longs for the structure and the boundaries, which are something that the authoritarian style offer, hence advocating that the educators gain better control over the learners.

The educators at School B are more in support of corporal punishment than those in School A. Given the different schooling environment, with the learners' indiscipline at School B, it would seem that there is a stronger sense of helplessness there. Tee mentions her confusion about what discipline is, because of the way in which it is spoken about at school,

Because like every time during line-up, it's like, "this school discipline, this and this," so then I think "is discipline about doing bad things or what?". Like in this school if one does something, we are ALL punished. That's something I don't like. If someone does something, they should pay for their own things. Like sir, if he is angry he will just shout at everyone. Some of the kids here, maybe their parents shout at them, then they come to line up and they just shouting and some of them are like "Aah, here is the man who likes to shout"

Tee here shows how in School B, their Head of Discipline tends to shout at them in the morning to the point where he is just reduced to the man who likes to shout. However, as Ms Farai notes, School B tends to expel their learners, whereas School A appears to conduct more suspensions and hearings. These measures appear to be a way to control the discipline in the school, as well as a way to control the learners. By shouting threats in assembly, the Head of Discipline may think that he is instilling fear and controlling the learners, but the reality is that in spite of their expulsions, the learners and educators still perceive that discipline is a major problem at the school.

When collecting information for the questionnaires, the researcher realised that most of the educators at School B have neither teaching degrees nor diplomas and every one of the qualified educators were from Zimbabwe. There is also a very high turn-over at School B, as Tee shared in the interview. This is different from School A, which boasts of a qualified staff, with very little turn-over. This suggests that the difficulty in managing the learners may have to do with their level of training and years of experience at a LSEN school, as they may not be equipped with the correct tools to manage a classroom full of learners with special educational needs. It would appear that level of training and years of experience plays a significant role on the educators' ability to effectively and positively discipline the learners (Cicognani, 2004; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010).

Colleagues are a great source of support

Despite their differences in views concerning corporal punishment, both schools find that their staff members are very supportive. Bekker (2007) makes a note of how vital the LSU (learning support unit) is in the management of an LSEN school, as they support both the staff and the learners. Most of the educators stated that they seek help from colleagues when disciplining learners and the questionnaires suggest that their LSU are also very helpful. This is different from the interviews, which suggest that the LSU at School A is mainly for their primary school, whereas the one at School B are split between both the high school and the primary school. The discrepancy can be accounted for by acknowledging that the interviews were more in-depth than the questionnaires, therefore they were able to share more of the intricacies qualitatively. Mrs van Niekerk, from School A shares,

So it could get rough and that was the roughest position I was in, at school but usually when the kids get, they can lose their temper when they get abit aggressive or something…and I don't want to be in that position I'll just step back and let someone call my HOD because he also said that he'll be here anytime when I need the help… but I know some kids can easily lose their temper so you need to keep them calm

What we see here is how important it is to have that support system within the school. Mrs van Niekerk is able to realise when she cannot neutralise a situation, and calls on her HOD for help. However, it would be beneficial to think about the message that this sends to the learners about their educator's competency. Although 100% of educators find it beneficial to have a support structure, it is also important that educators do not give the impression that they are incapable of disciplining their learners.

Consistency and structure are of importance

As mentioned previously, Mrs Roberta from School A made a note of how she implements the structure in her classroom. This is not something that is similar across schools, as Mrs Nyasha from School B shares that there is little structure. During the interviews, it sounded as though Mrs Roberta, with her rules in place, confidently and effectively instilled discipline within her classroom, more so than Mrs Nyasha. This goes to show the effect that creating rules and abiding to them may have on learners.

Both the schools have similar methods that they employ when disciplining their learners. For instance, the use of the comment book and the observation book has the same function. This is what they initially use in order to document the behaviour in question and what was done about it. Both schools also find it beneficial to send the learner outside when they are misbehaving, and if need be then sending them to the head of discipline. At School A, the educators find that it makes sense if the child's punishment fits the crime for the misbehaviour, and at School B this is done through manual labour. Suspension is used in both schools, with few participants advocating for its use, as they prefer withdrawing privileges from them or calling in their parents. The inconsistencies of their uses of disciplinary methods are a worrying issue, as it lacks boundaries and can be confusing for the learners. It is also very telling of the Department of Education's implementation and monitoring of the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. Managing the structure within LSEN school would benefit both the learners and the educators, and this would create a better understanding of consequences to behaviour.

Given the variability of an educator's day-to-day life, it makes sense why the issue of control came up in some of the interviews. Maphosa and Shumba (2010) found that educators struggled to control their learners after corporal punishment was banned, even with the introduction of *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. This is something that Mrs Farai and others shared, as they found that learners abuse their rights, which make them hard to control. Kay made an interesting point in his interview, stating that it's mostly the educators' time which is lost when they are being disciplined, because they will continue to misbehave. He complains that he had been trying to get expelled from his school for several years now, through smoking, bunking, etc. and he has not even managed to get suspended. Whereas Kgomotso, has been suspended twice for challenging his educators. Here we see again how the school seems to struggle with consistency in their structure and process, advocating for

them to revisit their policy and standards of practice. The management of the classroom is an issue that stirred up several different points of view, especially considering the learners' barriers to learning.

Corporal punishment would work if it were structured and controlled

The type of corporal punishment administered onto the educators varied, from small smacks on the hands of girls to hidings for boys. There are several different ways in which people understand punishment and discipline, this study was not exempt from this. To be more specific, there are different ways in which the participants seemed to construe the meaning of corporal punishment. Both Mr Tinashe and Gift understand corporal punishment as manual labour. Mr Tinashe shared,

The problem is the definition of corporal punishment, because for me, what seems like a good way of disciplining a child, can be misconstrued to be corporal punishment.

When asked to elaborate on this, he shared,

I would say things like community service, helping with the garden, helping around the school, picking up papers, cleaning the toilets. The same thing they do at homes, like sweeping their bedrooms. It's not punishing them as such, it's teaching them to be responsible citizens. So cleaning the toilets, sweeping the classes, mopping the classes, some gardening, picking up litter and all that. As long as it's not physical. So at the end of the day it doesn't feel like you are punishing-punishing, but they are doing something for their own good

What is seen here is quite a novel understanding of corporal punishment, whereby one makes use of the body (corporal) and it is only done in order to punish a learner. It draws away from the more collected understanding that it "is a way of inflicting pain to stop their undesirable behaviour", as Mrs Farai and several others understand it (Gershoff, 2002; Holden, 2002). Mr Tinashe shares the logic behind this, as it not only alleviates the misbehaviour but it also teaches the learner responsibility as they are taking care of their school. This is very similar to Cicognani's (2004) findings, with educators suggesting manual labour and community service as alternatives to corporal punishment.

Contrary to the above, Mrs van der Merwe does not see the benefit of having corporal punishment reinstated. Although when she was in school she was hit on the hand, and she

links the abolition of corporal punishment to the loss of respect for educators, she does not find that corporal punishment would help increase the level of discipline in schools. Kgomotso and Kay are completely against corporal punishment, as being physically punished does not alleviate indiscipline but it can aggravate it for them, which is documented by Rice (1987). Only 21.4% of the learners found that such punitive methods work, which supports Kgomotso and Kay's dislike for such. These boys mentioned that they prefer being spoken and having a privilege being withdrawn. This links to what Mrs du Plessis mentioned about not engaging in conflict with teenagers, as it rarely results in anything productive.

CHAPTER V – IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter concludes the research report by summarising the main findings and arguments iterated above. It will then look at the limitations that the researcher was presented with during the study and its analysis. In consideration of the limitations, a few recommendations will be suggested for future researchers to consider.

5.2. Implications of study

The data suggests that educators struggle to balance between authoritarian and democratic classrooms. This would account for the varying and unstructured methods of discipline employed in the schools. It was also found that the learners seem to appreciate behaviourist methods such as praise and withdrawals as ways of discipline. There was also a definite appreciation for more democratic approaches to teaching and discipline. This has an implication for schools, in that the staff may be unaware as to what works well for their learners and how to implement this. The educators appear to have a good basis of discipline through their workshops, but applying it into their classrooms has proven to be difficult. Schools should revisit the way in which they administer discipline in order to alleviate behaviour problems.

There were inconsistencies as to what discipline and punishment mean for the participants. Keeping this in mind, one understands how it is possible for schools to have so many different and inconsistent ways of discipline. In training the educators, school management should define with them what these mean, so that there is a sense of consistency in the school. Internalisation and self-discipline are some of the goals of discipline, and not many of the participants spoke about this, as they are more focused on instant changes in behaviour which may be short-lived. However, as the educators are expected to act as parents to the learners, they could therefore also facilitate the development of self-discipline in the learners. Despite the fact that very few mentioned this, many of the participants advocate for a good learner-educator relationship, which has proven to facilitate good behaviour, and may also create the possibility for the learners to think about the consequences to their behaviour and modify it as such.

5.3. Conclusion

The main focus of this study was to look at the perceptions towards the administration of corporal punishment in LSEN schools. In addition to this, the researcher aimed to explore whether or not punishment and discipline could be separated, as well as what some of the differences were between private schools and public schools. It is hoped that the findings from the researcher inspire readers to make pro-active decisions about the administration of discipline in LSEN schools.

It would appear that the majority of participants find that the administration of discipline in their schools is unstructured and lacks consistency. However, a few educators have managed to create consistency and structure within their own classrooms which has helped to create a greater sense of discipline. For the others however, a range of different methods are used which rarely produce any long-term effects.

The interviews suggest that the majority of participants attribute indiscipline to barriers to learning, problems at home, and abuse of rights. This is why the educators are so adamant about creating boundaries and having a consistent and predictable disciplinary process, but they appear to be stuck in their authoritarian ways. Although this is not achieved all-round, there are some disciplinary methods which appear to be successful, such as withdrawal of privileges and calling in parents. Albeit that the learners react well to these methods, there appears to be a lack of self-discipline and internalisation of societal rules and values. The lack of internalisation is a problem, as it suggests that discipline has not taken place. Discipline, as a life-long virtue, is something that is necessary for these learners in order to assimilate and succeed in society.

Participants agree that a good learner-educator relationship alleviates discipline problems, as the child feels that they are understood. The learners indicated that when they like an educator, than tend to behave better in that class. From the educators' vantage point, however, learners liking them do not impact on their behaviour in class. The educators would benefit from spending more time forming relationships with the learners in order to realise that their behaviour can improve, as many of them are not cognisant of this.

The meaning of discipline varies from participant to participant, with many of them equating it to punishment. Some learners share that they are for corporal punishment, as other methods are ineffective to "people who do not care". Others react badly to corporal punishment and prefer to be spoken to. The participants show that the transition from the authoritarian style of

teaching to a more democratic style is difficult, with many of them misunderstanding what punishment means and what the classroom should ideally be like, almost twenty years into democracy. Several educators understand discipline to incorporate punishment, as they were disciplined through punishment. The questionnaires however indicate that more than half of the educators stated that being punished using corporal punishment in their youth worked. The discrepancy here shows how individual experiences of discipline affect educators all differently.

In looking at the differences between the two schools, it would seem that School B (Private School) has more of a discipline problem than School A (Public School). This may be attributed to the strict principles and practices that government schools have to adhere to, which are then enforced within the school gates, whereas at School B, there is an authoritarian style within the classroom but a more democratic style within the school system and between some learners. This inconsistency has proven to translate into the way that the learners behave, with the educators always feeling like they have to adapt their styles regularly in order to facilitate their learning. School B appears to have a great support system but they struggle to maintain discipline and therefore many of the educators spend time disciplining the learners rather than teaching, and class sizes shrink due to suspensions and expulsions.

The research was conducted and analysed through the behaviourist and constructivist framework. To be more specific, the researcher noticed that discipline in the classroom is controlled through the use of behaviour modification techniques such as withdrawals and at times even inflicting pain. Their perceptions are understood to be created through the construction of their individual world views and experiences, making the data rich. The research looked at real-life experiences and how this translated to the formation of perceptions towards the administration of corporal punishment.

5.4. Limitations

This study was limited to a small number of individuals, given the time constraints on the researcher. Due to this, the questionnaires were only used to supplement the information from the interviews rather than to generalise. In spite of this, the small number of participants allowed for the researcher to gain access to their lived experiences and therefore gain rich data from the study.

There were very few qualified educators in School B, therefore making it challenging to get back questionnaires, as all the qualified educators except for one were participants in the interviews. The questionnaires from their school were filled in by educators who are in training to receive a diploma or degree in education.

With a few of the interviews, the researcher played dual roles as researcher and as therapist as some participants needed to be contained, this did not jeopardise the study as the researcher quickly realised this and proceeded with the interviews.

It is highly likely that many of the discrepancies between the interviews and the questionnaires were due to social desirability, as rapport was not established with the participants who filled in the questionnaires.

5.5. Recommendations

It would be beneficial for schools to revisit their disciplinary strategies and explore a way in which to make the methods accessible to all. This way, it creates the boundaries and consistency which the educators find necessary. This could be simply changing the methods used, or creating an entire new process which specifies the appropriate discipline practice for the misbehaviour. It is also important that the schools monitor this after its implementation, to make sure that it is something that is done throughout the school in unison.

The researcher finds that the educators would benefit from workshops focused on alternatives to corporal punishment and verbal abuse. This should be something that is spread out over several weeks that equips the educators with practical tools that are easy to implement in their classrooms.

Looking at motivation is something that future researchers could benefit from, the researcher found that motivation is something that greatly influences how both the learner's and the educator's modify their behaviour. In looking at the administration of discipline, one could explore what the participants' motivation is for acting the way that they do, and whether or not it is internal or external motivation. In addition from the motivation, looking into whether or not their studies prepared them for LSEN schools would be interesting, as it could inspire learning institutions to have a focus on special needs, and particularly how to manage discipline in LSEN schools.

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APPENDIX A: PRINCIPAL'S INFORMATION SHEET

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

School of Human and Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel: (011) 717-4500 Fax: (011) 717-4559

My name is Bene Katabua, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is that of discipline. I intend to explore the perceptions about discipline from the vantage point of educators and learners. We live in a society where various factors impact our perceptions, as well as our behaviour. The research aims to investigate what these perceptions are, specifically from people in LSEN schools. We would like to invite your staff and learners to participate in this study.

Participation in this research will entail being interviewed by me, at a time and place that is convenient for them, considering their school requirements. The interview will last for approximately sixty minutes. With their permission this interview will be audio-recorded in order to ensure accuracy. Participation is voluntary, and no person will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not participate in the study. All of their responses will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify them would be included in the research report and the possible research publication to follow. The discussion material (tapes and transcripts) will only be seen by my supervisor and I. They may refuse to answer any questions you would prefer not to, and they may choose to withdraw from the study at any point.

Your support in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on perceptions of discipline.

Kind Regards,

Bene Katabua (Researcher), 0845091426 or bene_kat@yahoo.com

Joseph Seabi, (Supervisor), joseph.seabi@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL'S CONSENT FORM

I _____ (initials) consent to permitting Bene Katabua to conduct interviews and distribute questionnaires for her study on perceptions about the administration of discipline. I understand that:

- Participation in this research is voluntary.
- That my educators and learners will not be disadvantaged by their participation, or refusal to participate
- I may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify the school or their participants will be included in the research report or any publication that may arise, and their responses will remain confidential.

Signed _____

Date_____

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



UNIVERSITY
OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

School of Human and Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel: (011) 717-4500 Fax: (011) 717-4559

My name is Bene Katabua, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is that of discipline. I intend to explore the perceptions about the administration of discipline from the vantage point of educators and learners. We live in a society where various factors impact our perceptions, as well as our behaviour. The research aims to investigate what these perceptions are, specifically from people in LSEN (Learners with special educational needs) schools. We would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Participation in this research will entail being interviewed by me/filling in a questionnaire, at a time and place that is convenient for you. The interview will last for approximately sixty minutes. With your permission this interview will be audio-recorded in order to ensure accuracy. The questionnaires will take close to 20 minutes. Participation is voluntary, and no person will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not participate in the study. All of your responses will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify you would be included in the research report and the possible research publication to follow, which you will have access to. The discussion material (tapes, transcripts and questionnaires) will only be seen by my supervisor and I. You may refuse to answer any questions you would prefer not to, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. If interested, please indicate it to the researcher. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on perceptions of discipline.

Kind Regards,

Bene Katabua (Researcher), 0845091426 or bene_kat@yahoo.com

Joseph Seabi (Supervisor), joseph.seabi@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I _____ (initials) consent to participating in an interview/questionnaire (circle one) by Bene Katabua for her study on perceptions about the administration of discipline. I understand that:

- Participation in is voluntary.
- That I may refuse to answer any questions I would prefer not to.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify me will be included in the research report or any publication that may arise, and my responses will remain confidential.

Signed _____

Date_____

APPENDIX E: AUDIO RECORDING CONSENT FORM

I _____ (initials) consent to participating in an interview by Bene Katabua for her study on perceptions towards discipline; and being tape-recorded. I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts will not be seen or heard by any person in this organisation except for the researcher and supervisor, and will only be processed by the researcher.

- All tape recordings will be safely stored away after the research has been completed.
- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts, research report or publications.

Signed _____

Date_____

APPENDIX F: LEARNER DEMOGRAPHICS SHEET

This sheet is solely for the purpose of matching the data with the demographics of the participants. Please refrain from writing your name on this sheet, rather use your initials. Only select *ONE* of the options for each point.

1. Sex of Respondent

Male	**Female**
1	**2**

2. Race

African	White	Coloured	Indian	**Other**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. Nationality:

_____

4. Religion:

_____

5. Grade:

_____

Initials _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX G: EDUCATOR DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

This sheet is solely for the purpose of matching the data with the demographics of the participants. Please refrain from writing your name on this sheet, rather use your initials. Only select *ONE* of the options for each point.

1. Sex of Respondent

Male	Female
1	2

2. Race

African	White	Coloured	Indian	Other
1	2	3	4	5

3. Level of qualification (please tick):

Teaching Diploma	
Teaching diploma and further training	
Teaching degree	
Teaching degree and postgraduate degree	
Teaching degree plus specialisation in special needs	

Other:
_____

4. Length of teaching experience:

_____

5. Nationality:

_____

6. Religion:

_____

Initials _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX H: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Educators

Is there any particular reason you are working in an LSEN school? If so, please elaborate

What had you expected it to be like, working with special needs?

Tell me about what teaching is like in your classroom

What role do you think the children's barriers to learning have on their behaviour?

How do you deal with behaviour problems?

Please tell me about what you feel the role of parents are, with regards to their children's discipline?

What does discipline mean? And what does punishment mean?

What are the most effective methods of discipline you have used?

How familiar are you with the school's code of conduct? What happens at the different levels of misconduct, what are the consequences?

What kind of training did you have to familiarise yourself with the school rules?

Can you tell me about what role the learner support unit has at your school, with regards to discipline?

Are there training programs available at the school to help you with dealing with LSEN learners? Please elaborate.

What are your views on the abolition of corporal punishment and the rise of indiscipline?

Can you tell me a little about how you were disciplined as a child, and whether or not this has affected how you carry out discipline?

With regards to classroom management, what do you think is most important to relay to the learners?

How do you feel that the learners perceive you?

What would be the ideal discipline situation for you in your classroom?

Besides your educational duties as a educator, what else do you do at school?

What do you find to be your most rewarding moments?

Learners

Tell me about what school is like for you

What do you understand by me saying barriers to learning? What do these barriers have to do with behaviour?

How is your relationship with your educators?

Which moments do you find are the best, with your educators?

What is it that makes educators upset, and how do they handle that?

When you do good work in class, what happens?

Can you tell me what you know about the school rules, and the code of conduct? What happens when this is broken?

Do you take part in any after-school activities, if so, how do they make you feel? If not, why not?

When I say discipline, what do you think that means?

How is discipline in your home?

What ways of discipline do you think works best for the person who you are? Do your parents or educators use this method?

Using your imagination, how do you wish the classroom would be like?

Can you tell me about what it's like during break, what are the kinds of things that people get excited about?

What do you do when someone will not listen to you?

Are the educators always around during break time, when they are, what do they do?

What kind of a job would you want when you grow up, and why?

What do you think are educator's responsibilities?

Can you tell me what you know about children's rights? What about educator's rights?

Are guardians and parents very involved at school?

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

Below are some statements. Please tick in the appropriate column whether you agree or disagree

	Statement	**Response**	
		Agree	**Disagree**
1	I work at an LSEN school because I find it rewarding		
2	Children at this school are badly behaved		
3	I am familiar with the document "alternatives to corporal punishment"		
4	Teaching in the classroom has proven to be an easy - medium difficulty task		
5	My learners respect and fear me		
6	Barriers to learning can be overcome		
7	Threatening children with corporal punishment is sometimes the only way to discipline them		
8	The school code of conduct is a document I am very familiar with		
9	Learners no longer respect educators and therefore they don't listen to threats to punishment		
10	The school is supportive when it comes to handling discipline		
11	I have done a good job at disciplining the children when they fear me		
12	It is important for learners to like you, this is how you win them over		
13	Female teachers have more of a hard time disciplining the learners		
14	Pinching children is NOT corporal punishment, it's just a way to scare the children		
15	I have received adequate training from the school about how to deal with discipline		
16	Teachers should discipline learners in a calm and soft way		
17	I feel confident about my ability to discipline the learners		
18	Since corporal punishment was abolished, children no longer respect their teachers		
19	My upbringing has influenced the way that I discipline and teach the learners		
20	Children misbehave a lot more these days than they used to in the past		
21	I find that there is a good support system at the school, with regards to professionals such as psychologists, social workers and counsellors		
22	Methods such as time-out and detention are effective ways to discipline learners		

23	I spend the majority of my time trying to discipline children in class		
24	I believe that my rights as an educator are protected, and that the children will not harm me		
25	Corporal punishment should only be used as a last resort		
26	I have met with the parents of my most ill-disciplined learners		
27	The principal and administration should be the one to deal with discipline issues, while we deal with teaching		
28	The school has thoroughly provided me with resources to use so that I can effectively discipline my learners		
29	If there were workshops of affective discipline, I would volunteer to teach others because I have found a way to control my learners		
30	At school, I was disciplined using corporal punishment, and it worked		
31	Talking to the children when they misbehave produces no results		
32	I believe that the government is taking good care of teachers in LSEN schools by providing us with adequate resources		
33	It would make sense for corporal punishment to be reinstated, but controlled so that the learners are not abused		
34	These learners are much easier to discipline than those in mainstream schools		
35	I feel when you make the children like you, they will reward you with good behaviour		

APPENDIX J: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

Below are some statements. Please tick in the appropriate column whether you agree or disagree

	Statement	**Response**	
		Agree	**Disagree**
1	I really enjoy the school that I am in now		
2	Children in this school behave badly		
3	I know my rights, and teachers can't abuse them		
4	Learning in these classes is easy for me		
5	I am scared of my teachers		
6	I know that I can learn better in this school then another school		
7	When I'm misbehaving and my teachers say that they'll hit me, I will behave		
8	I know the school rules very well		
9	Teachers don't respect us, so we don't have to respect them		
10	I know I can talk to one of the staff members if I have a problem		
11	When the teachers try to discipline us, it can be quite scary		
12	When I like a teacher, I make sure not to be naughty in their class		
13	It's the teachers who are men who must really get respect more then the women		
14	Teachers sometimes do things like pinching us or small smacks when we are naughty		
15	At home, the only way my parents can get me to listen is when they smack me		
16	When teachers talk to us in a soft way when we are naughty, in works		
17	It is important for teachers to discipline us in class		
18	I respect my teachers if they don’t hit me		
19	I know what "barriers to learning" means		
20	Teachers know how to act when they are angry, I like to learn from them		
21	Even though I know the school rules, sometimes I just can't help myself from being naughty		
22	For me, when I get a time-out or detention, I know I will never misbehave like that again		
23	In class, we get shouted at more than we learn		
24	Teachers have rights		
25	Sometimes hitting children in class is the only way to get order		
26	My parents come to school when I am In trouble		
27	The teachers should not be the ones dealing with discipline, it must be the principal		

28	When you hit someone, you are disciplining them		
29	My teachers are my role models		
30	I know what corporal punishment means		
31	I have a good relationship with my teachers		
32	I feel the teachers in this school really know how to discipline the children		
33	Other schools do not have as much discipline problems as our school		
34	Fighting is just a way of protecting yourself or sending a message, it's not a bad thing		
35	When I get upset, I just hit the person because that's the only way they can listen		