

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT
MODEL FOR LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS**

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A thesis submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities University of
the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates a relatively under-researched area of behaviour support, namely the value and effectiveness of the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model (Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2009; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012) within the context of South African classrooms. Within this study, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological framework (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 1979, 1986, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris 1998; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) is used as a conceptual tool to understand behavioural and behaviour support challenges, specifically within selected Limpopo Foundation Phase (FP) classrooms. Given that behavioural challenges contribute to learner exclusion in schools, the thesis also draws on inclusion imperatives (DoE 2001, 2005, 2014) that support learners' full and successful participation within schools. Following its shift from a focus on deficit and control towards a developmental approach of behaviour management, PBS was selected for its particular value within South Africa's history of corporal punishment, as well as the country's contextual factors of poverty and teacher (pre and in-service) under-preparedness in the area of behaviour support.

The research participants for this study comprised a purposive sample of Wits School of Education FP Limpopo in-service teachers, who each participated in the inclusion module taught in year four of their undergraduate degree. The study employed a mixed-methods research design and an analysis of various data sources, namely survey questionnaires, focus group interviews, module evaluations, open-ended questionnaires, as well as classroom observations in Limpopo schools and interviews with teachers of the classes that were observed. Overall, the research findings have provided evidence to support the effectiveness of the PBS model for Limpopo FP classrooms, and in doing so, have provided useful new information for the application of the model more broadly within the South African context. The PBS model was found to be valuable and effective in helping the Limpopo teachers better understand and better manage behavioural challenges in their classrooms. Findings show that respondents believe that their ability to manage behavioural challenges were inadequate before they were exposed to the PBS model. The respondents indicated that their initial limited linear view of learners and learner behaviour support had changed. As a result of an increased awareness of various ecosystemic factors related to behaviour and behaviour support, findings revealed that respondents developed a broader, more holistic understanding of learner behaviour and behaviour support management in the context of the classroom. The PBS

strategies that were employed in Limpopo classrooms were however not without their challenges.

The findings reveal opportunities for further research into PBS within South Africa at a school-wide level. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that incorporate PBS as part of teacher in-service and pre-service education will provide valuable data on the growing field of PBS within South Africa.

KEY WORDS

Inclusion, Bio-ecological, Teacher Education, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), Limpopo Foundation Phase Teacher

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Veronica Melody Moodley

29th day of August in the year 2016

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS ARISING FROM THIS RESEARCH

- Moodley, V. (2012). An Investigation into the Feasibility of the Positive Behaviour Support Model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R–3): Preliminary Findings. Presentation at the International SAALED Conference, University of the Witwatersrand, Gauteng, South Africa.
- Moodley, V. (2013-2014) Understanding Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in Schools: An Ecosystemic Lense on Systemic Support for Learners. A Life Skills Video for the University of Limpopo. University of the Witwatersrand, Gauteng, South Africa.
- Moodley, V. (2014). Understanding Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in Schools: An Ecosystemic Lense on Systemic Support for Learners. Supporting Paper for the Life Skills Video for the University of Limpopo. University of the Witwatersrand, Gauteng, South Africa.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BEd	Bachelor of Education
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DSM	Diagnostic Statistical Manual
EU PPSP	European Union Primary Education Policy Support Programme
FP	Foundation Phase
HE	Higher Education
HOD	Head of Department
IE	Inclusive Education
PBS	Positive Behaviour Support
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SBST	School Based Support Team
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
TE	Teaching Experience
UL	University of Limpopo
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand
WSoE	Wits School of Education

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the Study

This study forms part of the National European Union-funded Primary Education Policy Support Programme (EU PPSP) entitled *Strengthening Foundation Phase Teacher Education*. The EU PPSP was launched in 2010, and the University of the Witwatersrand School of Education (WSoE) formed a part of it. WSoE's involvement in this project was to partner with the University of Limpopo (UL) and assist them in their development of a Foundation Phase (FP)¹ teacher education programme. The WSoE and UL partnership therefore had far-reaching implications for tertiary teacher education support initiatives in the province of Limpopo.

In 2009, the Limpopo Department of Education had funded 210 FP teachers to further their initial teacher education by doing a four year teaching degree at WSoE. This bold step by the Limpopo Education Department illustrated the department's resolve to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the FP at its primary schools. This cohort of funded teachers completed their fourth and final year of participation in the WSoE Bachelor of Education (BEd) undergraduate programme in 2012/2013.² Upon their return to their schools, these teachers were to use the skills and knowledge they had acquired to fulfil various roles. These included that of classroom teacher, as well as being part of the management teams at schools. There was also a possibility that the Limpopo Education Department would place some of these teachers within district offices in the province to offer district-based support to primary schools. As a result, these teachers could be positioned in key leadership and managerial roles that had the potential to positively impact delivery of teaching and learning across the province.

The Limpopo cohort of teachers at WSoE comprised teachers as well as Head of Department FP teachers with several years of teaching experience in the FP classroom. For the purposes of this study, they were deemed to be well-positioned to be partners in the development of an undergraduate module in the area of behaviour support. The UL and WSoE have made significant headway in the conceptualisation of the teacher educator programme in the areas of both FP Numeracy and Literacy. There appeared, however, to be a gap in the area of Life

¹ The Foundation phase consists of learners in grades R (reception year) up to grade 3. Generally, learners in this phase of schooling are age of 6 in reception year and 9 years old by the time they reach grade 3, on condition that they are not repeating a grade.

² For teachers who had outstanding credits to complete, their studies within the BEd undergraduate programme was completed in 2013.

Skills.³ This study was seen as an important opportunity to support the FP teacher educator programme in the development of a Life Skills module, which would focus on behaviour support in the classroom as part of the Bachelor of Education undergraduate offering within the UL. In relation to the UL and WSoE partnership, this cohort of teachers was considered to be best positioned to offer insights in the building of new knowledge that focused on education development and support in Limpopo.

1.2 The Nature of the Problem: Why Positive Behaviour Support?

According to Reinke, Splett, Robeson and Offutt (2009), challenging, disruptive and aggressive behaviours are the most common reasons for office discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsions in schools. Challenging behaviour results in a 'loss of instruction time in the classroom, frustration for children and families, and [the] considerable societal burden associated with antisocial acts, including delinquency and harm to others' (Reinke et al., 2009, p. 33). It is evident that one of the major difficulties facing teachers globally is behavioural difficulties in the classroom, and within the South African context, behavioural challenges of learners continue to be a major problem in schools at both primary and secondary school levels (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011; Reinke et al, 2009; Naong, 2007; Papatheodorou, 2005; Chung & Nolan, 1998).

Difficulties in managing learner behavioural challenges became increasingly evident during the Limpopo in-service teachers WSoE teaching experience (TE) practicums.⁴ TE tutors⁵ observed that the teachers were experiencing difficulty managing challenging behaviours in the classroom. A few anecdotal remarks from tutor observations were that the teachers were observed pinching learners on their cheeks during TE sessions, that they were rude and abrupt to the learners and physically handled learners in attempts to instil discipline during their TE lessons. The Inclusive Education (IE) teaching team⁶ engaged in various discussions to find

³ Life Skills forms part of the South African school curriculum and it is concerned with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners. See also section 1.5.3 for further details regarding the Life Skills curriculum.

⁴ Practical lessons in classrooms that were held twice a year, every year over the four year period of the Bachelor of Education degree. The Limpopo teachers would teach planned lessons in a particular grade over a three to four week period in a particular school.

⁵ TE tutors included lecturing staff members of the Wits school of Education that taught on the various courses in the Bachelor of Education degree. TE tutors were responsible for observing Limpopo teachers in their planned teaching within the classroom. TE tutors offered mentoring support and guidance to the Limpopo teachers.

⁶ Inclusive Education team members comprised academic teaching staff at the Wits school of Education who taught inclusion modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. An Inclusion module was taught in year four of the Bachelor of Education undergraduate degree.

relevant ways to better support teachers in the managing of challenging behaviours. These discussions yielded the idea to use the year four undergraduate inclusion module to teach behaviour support for inclusive classrooms. As a team, we acknowledged that behavioural challenges continue to be one of the factors that impact on learner participation and academic success (DoE, 2011; Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011). Considering that behavioural challenges contribute to learner exclusion in schools, the understanding and relevant support of inclusive practices for behavioural challenges was an appropriate aspect for an Inclusive Education module.

In investigating various behaviour support strategies that build inclusive classroom practices, authors within the South African context have begun to cite the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model as useful for the management of challenging behaviours in learners (Pienaar & Raymond, 2013; Western Cape Education Department, 2007). In their book, *Making Inclusive Education Work in Classrooms*, which is an academic handbook aimed at supporting in-service and pre-service teachers in understanding more fully the possibilities within inclusive education practice, editors Christo Pienaar and Eileen Raymond dedicate two chapters to the PBS model for behaviour support. The Western Cape Education Department (2007) also advocates for the PBS model as foundational to the support of learners who present challenging behaviours. In their in-service teacher guide to understanding and managing learner behaviour within the school context, the Western Cape Education Department cites the need for the comprehensive development of a culture of positive behaviour in schools. Pienaar and Raymond, as well as the Western Cape Education Department, advocate positive behaviour support as a necessary shift from a focus on deficit and control towards a developmental and restorative approach of behaviour management.

Internationally, the Positive Behaviour Support model has been found to ‘effectively support teachers’ efforts to address young children’s challenging behaviour and to build their social and emotional competence’ (Benedict, Horner & Squires, 2007, p 191). There is however a dearth of research in the South African context to provide the evidence base to support the use of PBS in this country. My research investigates this knowledge gap. PBS has therefore been investigated in this study in terms of its potential to offer an effective and meaningful behaviour support model to FP teachers in South African classrooms, more specifically within the province of Limpopo.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model in Limpopo FP classrooms. To achieve this, the study sought to determine the Limpopo FP teachers' perceptions of behavioural difficulties as experienced in their classroom practice. The study further sought to determine how effective and appropriate teachers found PBS in the identification and support of learners with behavioural difficulties within a selection of Limpopo FP classrooms.

1.4 Key Issues Investigated

In determining the effectiveness of the PBS model in the FP classrooms in Limpopo, the following key questions were considered:

1. What factors do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviours in their classroom?
2. What types of learner behaviours do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers consider challenging and what are their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in their classroom?
3. How effective do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice?

1.5 Rationale for the Significance of the Study

The general climate of undisciplined behaviour and reluctance to accept authority is often seen to result in the disempowerment of teachers and the disturbance and interruption of the teaching and learning in the classroom (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011). Prinsloo and Gasa emphasise that teachers are not adequately supported to address behaviour challenges and state:

teachers should have the [...] skills to observe and assess undesirable behaviour and the ability to design suitable strategies to prevent and alter misbehaviour (p. 495)

According to Gable, Quinn, Rutherford, Howell and Hoffman (2000), given the lack of focused teacher education in the area of behaviour support management at pre-service levels, when pre-service teachers qualify and enter the profession, they increasingly need to rely on stand-alone strategies for addressing classroom misbehaviour, such as clear rules and expectations, as well as being physically close to their learners and praising and encouraging positive behaviours.

Many teachers, either independently or with the support of their colleagues, are thereby able to find a few successful ad-hoc solutions to some learners' behavioural difficulties. However, for some teachers, these strategies fail to produce the desired outcome of holistic learner support, and may actually exacerbate an already difficult situation (Papatheodorou, 2005). Given national and international concern about the increase in learner challenging behaviours within schools, there is a need for comprehensive behaviour support initiatives that can assist school administrators and teachers to manage behaviour in the classrooms.

This study also takes into account that interventions which are developed in response to a single child's disruptive behaviour without the systematic reduction of the risk of other children within the classroom from developing similar patterns of behavioural difficulties, unfortunately fails to address the needs of all children in the classroom (Gilliam, 2005; Raver & Knitzer, 2002). In addition, given that ecological and systemic factors impact and affect learner behaviour and learner behaviour management, this study considered it imperative to view the understanding of behaviour and behaviour support from an ecosystemic perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1986, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). As a model of behaviour support, PBS takes into account the ecology of the learner, the problem behaviour and the context of the system in which behaviour support is provided (McIntosh, Filter, Bennet, Ryan and Sugai, 2010). The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model was considered to be relevant for the context of the South African classroom. The tiered approach of PBS makes it a good fit with the tiered South African Screening, Identification and Assessment (SIAS) (DoE, 2014) tool that the education department requires teachers to use in their support of learners for inclusive education.

I have not found much research in South Africa that investigates PBS within this country's context. This study is therefore a pioneer study to offer some insights into the value and effectiveness of the PBS model for South African FP classrooms. The findings of this study have the potential to offer a contribution to pre-service teacher education. The results of the research will therefore be communicated to the UL for consideration of their inclusion of the PBS model of behaviour support in their undergraduate FP Bachelor of Education programme.

1.5.1 Brief Historical Background to Teacher Education in South Africa

A brief historical background to teacher education within South Africa is necessary to alert the reader to the challenges facing teacher education in this context. During the late 1990s, South Africa's tertiary education came under significant scrutiny, following the systemic damage inflicted by the apartheid regime. The decision to bring about institutional mergers affected most universities and technikons in the country, as well as all colleges of education. These mergers included a closure of 100 teacher education colleges and teacher education was taken over by the education faculties of no more than 25 higher education institutions across the country. According to the Limpopo Leader (2006), the closure of teaching colleges in Limpopo severely diminished the supply of primary school teachers, with no new such teachers qualifying since 1999. Prior to 1994, students did not need a matriculation exemption certificate to participate in primary school teacher education studies, but in the current university-based entrance system, matric exemption is required for university entrance. In addition, the loss of the 100% student bursaries that were available pre-1994 has resulted in a dramatic drop in student recruitment to the teaching profession. Consequently, there has been a significant undersupply of teachers into the foundation and primary phases, particularly in rural areas, which has been 'catastrophic in a country still struggling with problems of basic literacy and numeracy among an unacceptably high percentage of its people' (Limpopo Leader, 2006, p. 9).

Under-funding of faculties of education within the country's universities has exacerbated the problem. Teacher education (whether initial or continuing) was in the late 1990s to mid 2000s located in the lowest funding grid. The Limpopo Leader (2006) explains that this has forced education faculties into competition for student intakes. In a press release (DHET, 2012) the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Minister, Blade Nzimande, announced that the department was to re-open three former teacher education colleges in 2013, as South Africa intended to produce more and better teachers. The minister announced that an amount of R450 million for the 2012/13 to 2013/14 funding cycle had been allocated to expand university capacity for teacher education, and that this would continue in the next funding cycle. The minister noted that particular attention was being paid to the development of FP teachers, especially African language mother-tongue speakers. Learning in their mother tongue helps cognitive development and improves learners' comprehension, which impacts the end of year results positively. The reopening of teachers' education colleges and the shortage of classrooms in Limpopo schools remained high on the agenda and an amount of R499 million had been allocated to the country's universities for teaching development grants to help improve graduate

outputs, and a further R194 million for foundation programmes to improve the success rates of students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds (DHET, 2012). This information is deemed useful and relevant when considering the important role the Limpopo Department of Education has played in improving the qualifications of its teachers in 2009. As has been established, this involved the funding of 210 FP teachers to further their initial teacher education by doing a four year teaching degree at WSoE.

1.5.2 Geographical and Education context of the Province of Limpopo

Geographically, the province of Limpopo straddles the Tropic of Capricorn and comprises the former Northern Transvaal and Venda, Gazankulu and Lebowa. These areas became the province of Limpopo in 1994 after South Africa's first democratic elections. Limpopo has three international borders: Botswana to the west, Zimbabwe to the north and Mozambique to the east, while it borders the provinces of Mpumalanga, Gauteng and North West in the south (Figure 2). The province covers 116 824 square kms, or 9.6% of the total surface area of South Africa. It has the fourth largest population in the country, and is considered to be a poor province with approximately 87% of its people living in rural areas and 23% of households having no access to piped water (Southafrica.info, 2012).

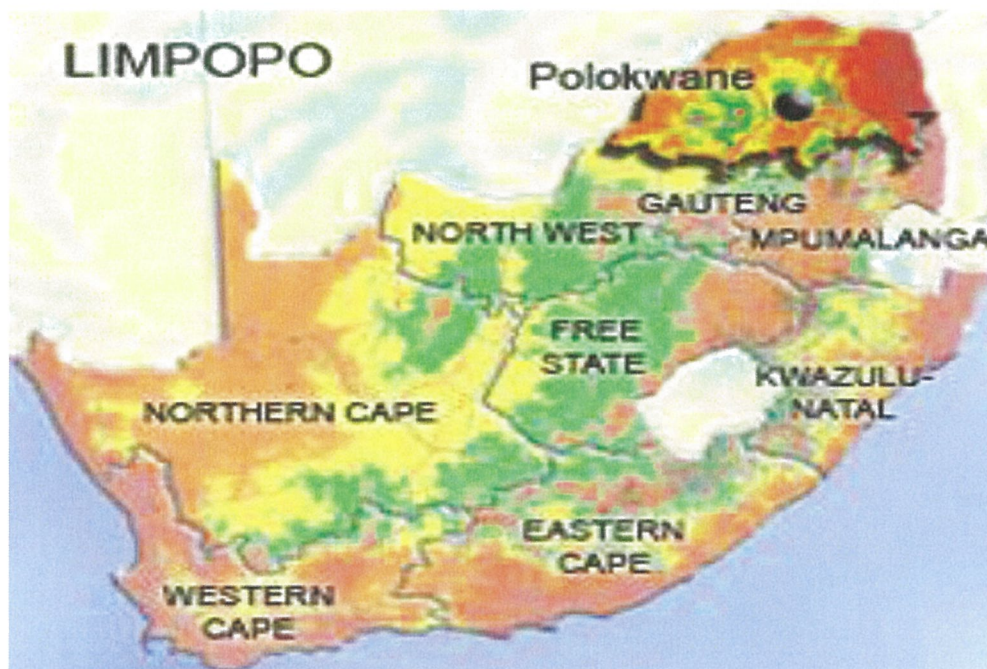


Figure 1: Province of Limpopo within South Africa

Source: South African Tourism Services Association



Figure 2: Province of Limpopo and Surrounding Borders

Source: South African Tourism Services Association

The provinces' schools are reported to be inadequately resourced, which leads to high dropout levels in schools, unemployment, alienation, and a psychology of defiance (Mashau, Steyn, van der Walt & Wolhuter, 2008). Statistics South Africa (2015) records Limpopo to have poor educational outcomes due to a variety of factors including a poor education base in the initial years of schooling, with learners performing well below average on annual national assessments in grades 3 and 6. In addition, there is a lack of early identification of poor learner performance in the foundation phase, which would allow enough time for learners to catch up and repeat a grade before reaching the senior primary phase of schooling (grade 4-7). The resultantly entrenched learning gaps are difficult to rectify at that late stage. Poverty also plays a significant role in the educational outcomes in Limpopo. Here, contextual factors such as the study and work environments within the learners' homes which impact on their ability to do homework and have a supportive learning environment, play a role. Poorly educated parents/caregivers and the impact of orphanhood and child-headed households also continue to play a significant role. Learners in Limpopo are recorded to be significantly more likely to live without both their biological parents or only one biological parent, than are learners in any other province in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2015).

The province is however not without support for learners, and there are several policies and programmes to support learner development within the schooling system. For example, for the period 2012-2013, Stats SA (2015, p. 27) records that at least 90% of learners benefitted from a school nutrition programme. This resulted in a decline in the percentage of learners attending school who reported living in households where children 17 years or younger experienced hunger. In addition, social child support grants for children aged '5 years and older who attend school increased from 5.3% to 50, 2 % between 2003-2013'. This, together with the school fee exemption⁷ policy has also contributed to the overall increase in the number of learners within the province to be attending school (Stats SA, 2015, p. 27).

Some of the most recent educational challenges that have beleaguered the province include the challenge to accommodate displaced learners following violent protests in the province which left 24 schools being set alight, 19 of which were burnt to the ground (News 24, 2016). In addition the province has also had several schools closed for weeks at a time following protests about the unsafe and unacceptable infrastructure at schools (Paterson, 2016) Paterson, an attorney whose core focus is on the right to basic education records in her 21 April 2016 article that:

We cannot expect to see results when learners are taught in dilapidated classrooms crawling with snakes and other reptiles, with insufficient furniture and sharing textbooks. We cannot expect to see results when learners fear or avoid going to the toilet in schools. Learners are not receiving the quality of education to which they are constitutionally entitled, and it is time for the Department to act.

In 2011 Limpopo provincial treasury crisis was said to have resulted in the provincial education department not having the budget to order textbooks for schools (Daily Maverick, 2012). Following the resolution of the budgetary issues in March and April of 2012, the Limpopo education department then experienced severe challenges in management and planning that further delayed the delivery of textbooks for grades 1 to 3 and for grade 10s. Schools only received their textbooks 7 months after the expected date following a court order which compelled the delivery of books in June 2012. In 2016, the Limpopo education budget allocation was 27, 2 billion rand which was a 7% increase from the previous fiscal year. The allocation was the largest allocation to any department within the province and signalled the

⁷ Exemption means the total, partial or conditional exemption of parents who are unable to pay school fees from the payment of such fees.

provincial government's commitment to education as a tool to address poverty in Limpopo (Limpopo Provincial Treasury, 2016).

There are concerns however that commitments made by the Department have not yet been translated into action and that financial management within the country needs to be addressed urgently. The 2016 budget sadly does not adequately address the backlog of infrastructure challenges of schools which have been damaged by storms or have had roofs blown off by wind, or broken windows and cracked floors that still need to be repaired. This is in addition to a shortage of almost 41 000 toilets, of which 34 000 are pit latrines that need replacing, as well as a shortage of 6000 classrooms and additional 4 600 grade R classrooms (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The 2016 budget may not sufficiently address the serious infrastructure failures in Limpopo schools. The budget plan in place also seeks to develop and improve special schools, for hearing and visually impaired learners in the province. This incorporates a strategy to upskill 300 teachers to be able to teach learners with special needs, 200 of whom will receive professional development in the use of Braille and sign language. While the scope of this study is not broad enough to investigate these important issues, they are presented here to provide the reader with a contextual frame of reference in relation to education and education provision within the province of Limpopo.

1.5.3 The Positioning of the Teaching of Positive Behaviour within the Life Skills Curriculum

In order to redress the segregated education of the different races and provinces prior to 1994, the South African government introduced Outcomes-Based Education in 1997. The implementation was reviewed in 2000 and led to the first curriculum revision: *National Curriculum Statement*. A further review was conducted, and this resulted in the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* (RNCS) followed by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) (DBE, 2011).

One of the purposes of the CAPS is to equip learners, 'irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country' (DBE, 2011, p. 4). The CAPS is based on the principles of inclusive education and is aimed at social transformation. Within the CAPS, the Life Skills learning area forms part of the 2012 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for all schools. The Life Skills learning area is deemed central to the holistic development of South African learners as it is

concerned with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners. This is well illustrated by the fact that the study area Personal and Social Well-Being within the Life Skills curriculum is aimed at helping learners to make responsible decisions about their well-being. The Life Skills curriculum, therefore, is a vehicle that focuses on the development of learners' skills in managing and dealing with issues of safety, violence, as well as their rights and responsibilities.

The PBS model of behaviour support offers an integrated universal model which complements the South African Life Skills curriculum in the teaching of appropriate behaviours that instil self-respect and respect for others. Within the Personal and Social Well-Being component of Life Skills, 'learners will learn to exercise their constitutional rights and responsibilities, to respect the rights of others and to show tolerance for cultural and religious diversity in order to contribute to a democratic society' (DBE, 2011, p. 5). Within this core teaching area in the FP, PBS is considered an appropriate place to position the teaching of positive behaviour in the classroom context. In light of the EU PPSP project, the EU offered funding for this research as it considered the rationale for the significance of behaviour support within the Life Skills curriculum to be appropriate.

1.6 The Positive Behaviour Support Model within an Ecosystemic Framework

The research is positioned within the wider context of inclusive education, the national and international demands within the field of education, and behaviour support guides the study (DoE, 2000; 2001; 2005; 2014; UNESCO 1994). The framework of the ecological systems theory is used to conceptualise the support of learners who present with behavioural challenges. Within this ecosystemic theory, there is significant emphasis on the interactions that occur in the face-to-face, long-term relationships within the microsystems of the home, school, classroom and community. Such relationships are seen as important in shaping lasting aspects of learning and development. These interrelated elements of social systems are used to understand the causes of challenging behaviour and are also used as a framework within which support can be offered to learners who present with behavioural challenges.

Using ecosystemic theory as the foundation, the PBS model is explored as an alternative to behaviour support strategies and practices that employ punitive measures of behaviour management. PBS is a proactive and preventive approach to reducing challenging behaviour in

schools. It is a tiered model of support that moves towards the development of school customs and mores that are based on non-violence and towards those strategies and practices that promote positive self-discipline. Schools implementing the model seek to create environments that engender pro-social behaviour in efforts to deter challenging behaviours before they occur. The model therefore does not aim to increase punitive measures, but instead develops effective interventions and mediations for challenging behaviours to ensure that positive social and academic development can happen (Sherrod, Getch, & Ziomek-Daigle, 2009). On an international level, the approaches and models of behaviour support that have been found to be increasingly effective are those associated with PBS, with multi-levelled or tiered intervention processes (Muscott, Mann, Benjamin & Gately, 2004).

The tiered model of the PBS also complements South African schools' Screening, Assessment Identification and Support (SIAS) policy (DBE, 2014), which is the legislative framework for the 'standardisation of procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in school' (DBE, 2014, p. 9). The principle of support within the SIAS document is based on the view that the learner must be understood within his or her environmental context, and consideration must be given to the extent to which the learners' home and school context are 'impacting on his or her accessing education, remaining enrolled and achieving to his or her optimum potential' (DBE, 2014, p 9). The SIAS policy asserts that learner challenges which result from causes such as disability, psychosocial and contextual conditions should be addressed to ensure that every learner is supported to learn and develop optimally. The policy rates the level of the identified support that is required as either a low, moderate or high level of provision, based on the frequency, scope, availability and cost of the additional support required. Within the PBS model, levels of support for challenging behaviours are linked to primary, secondary and tertiary level supports based on the severity of the presenting behavioural challenge. These levels of support are further offered at a school-wide, classroom-wide and at an individualised learner support level (Disability Services, 2013). Whilst PBS origins are in the west, it embraces the call for decolonised education. The PBS model therefore is a good fit with South Africa's legislation within the SIAS policy with regard to holistic and tiered support that considers the contextual and systemic factors that impact on learner challenging behaviour. The PBS tiered interventions and support at the classroom level is the focus within this study, given that the research participants were classroom practitioners within their schools.

1.7 Research Design

The Mixed Method Research (MMR) design used within this study is an explanatory sequential MMR design (Creswell, 2013). This includes both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation, which involve collecting quantitative data first and then collecting qualitative data, to help explain the quantitative results.

Empirical data were collected in the first phase of the research and the research tools included survey questionnaires and open-ended questionnaires, as well as course evaluations. Secondary qualitative data were collected in the form of focus group interviews, classroom observations, as well as interviews with the teachers of the Limpopo classes who were observed. Data were analysed using both statistical as well as qualitative methods. The statistical computerised package SPSS was used for the analysis of the quantitative data. Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model of content thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Using both these forms of analysis, the following data sets emerged from the administered research tools:

- Survey questionnaires provided biographical data as well as information related to the types of behavioural difficulties the Limpopo in-service FP teachers perceived as problematic, as well as their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in the classroom
- Module evaluation feedback forms related to the Inclusion PBS module taught provided data related to the PBS programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties
- Open-ended questionnaires highlighted the perceptions of Limpopo in-service FP teachers regarding the inclusion of learners with behavioural difficulties
- Focus group interviews provided data linked to three aspects of the research: factors that were considered to be attributing factors to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms, perceptions of the in-service FP teachers abilities to manage these in the classroom, as well as considerations of the PBS programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties
- Observation data from the class visits in Limpopo schools provided observed data in relation to the use of PBS in the Limpopo classrooms

- Teacher interviews following the class visits provided data specific to the schools within which the observations took place, thereby providing a contextual lens for the factors leading to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms and the effectiveness of the use of PBS within the classroom context.

1.8 Positionality of the Researcher: Journey towards a study in Behaviour Support

I am an educational psychologist whose career began with a four year FP teaching diploma at the Springfield College of Education in KwaZulu Natal in 1994. During my subsequent six years in the teaching profession, I was regularly called upon to ‘handle the naughty learners’. My experience up to then had taught me that learners thrive when shown compassion and support, and I often struggled to understand the hurtful ways the label ‘naughty learners’ was used by my teacher colleagues. Those formative years in the teaching profession alerted me to the need for more effective support measures to both learners and teachers in relation to behaviour management. My passion for behaviour support continued when, in 2000, I joined the district office of the Gauteng Education Department psychological services as one of the education specialists, responsible for approximately 400 schools within the district. I was often called on to participate in committees that managed learner disciplinary matters, which regularly involved a learner being called to a hearing to be expelled. The challenge was that the call for support to schools came too late in the disciplinary process for meaningful support to be offered to the learner or teachers. It became increasingly evident to me that the frustrations of teachers, parents and learners in relation to poor behaviour support management was widespread. Workshop offerings in academic support, learning-area-specific support, and assessment issues were common, while limited guidance was offered to teachers in the area of behaviour support.

With the advent of *Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE, 2001), together with *Education White Paper 5: Early Childhood Education: Meeting the Challenge of Early Childhood Development in South Africa* (DoE, 2001), there was a call by teachers within the district where I worked for workshops that focused on the emotional and behavioural support of learners. These workshops were then included as part of the workshops that were offered to School Based Support Teams (SBST). These in-service workshops included understanding barriers to learning from an ecosystemic perspective, basic counselling skills, as well as guidelines to alternatives to corporal

punishment. While the efforts were perhaps noble, the once-off workshop support sessions of six to eight hours, with limited monitoring for success rates or follow through rates, were far from satisfactory. Professional development behaviour support workshops that extended over a few days, were limited to teacher support for special schools such as the Schools of Industry⁸ and a select few high schools that were experiencing high rates of expulsions of learners. The workshops focused on strategies of restorative justice and family group conferencing that were aimed to assist teachers and school managers with support to individual learners rather than at a school-wide or classroom wide behaviour support. During my tenure at the education district offices, holistic and comprehensive behaviour support strategies were not part of the professional development offering to schools neither at primary or secondary schools.

In my capacity as a psychologist in private practice (2006-2014), I was also faced with many parents who required counselling and support for their children following bullying, suspension or expulsion from school. The lament of parents as well as learners were often linked to inadequate support from the school management and from the classroom teachers. The primary school learners that I had supported often signalled feelings of rejection, and victimisation following behavioural infractions. The call from their parents, was for schools to be more proactive rather than reactive. For the most part their parents were ready to accept their own role and that of their child in relation to the behavioural challenges. They were also seeking to find some common ground with the school to work in collaboration with the school to support their child. It became increasingly evident to me that there were significant challenges in relation to families' experiences of behavioural support within the schools. The various teaching pressures of the staff including school management pressures also often contributed to a perceived lack of support on the part of the parents.

When I (in 2009) joined the Inclusive Education teaching team at the Wits School of Education, the opportunity to teach a module on behaviour support was both exciting and a welcome chance to create new knowledge in the area of behaviour support within the South African school context. Considering that behavioural challenges contribute to learner exclusion in schools, the understanding and relevant support of inclusive practices for behavioural challenges was a logical and appropriate aspect for an Inclusive Education module. This study

⁸ In South Africa, learners who present with severe behaviour challenges, as well as those who are in need of care and support due to a lack of parental/ guardian care, can be referred to a School of Industry in terms of the Child Care Act (Act 74 of 1983).

began in 2012 with my lecturing of the Inclusive Education module to the fourth year Limpopo cohort of Limpopo in-service teachers; the study has its roots at the start of my working career in 1994, where my interest in behaviour support began. The opportunity to explore PBS as a holistic and comprehensive behaviour support tool in the South African context, was both intriguing and appealing given my own FP behaviour support classroom experiences, my participation in behaviour support professional development workshops at a district level and my private practice psychological support work in behaviour support.

When conducting this research, I was mindful of my roles, which included that of researcher, lecturer on the PBS Inclusion module, interviewer in the focus group interviews and individual teacher interviews, as well as the observer in the classroom observations. All of these contributed to my becoming an integral part of the research process. I was also acutely aware that my intimate involvement would without doubt impact the research questions, data collection, collation and analysis processes within the research. A discussion of the 'ways in which my personal experiences, my roles within the research as well as [of how] my own values might influence matters' (Denscombe, 2010, p 303) is discussed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 5) as well as within the discussion and analysis Chapters 7 and 8.

The potential biases related to my roles were also explicitly addressed within all seminar and paper presentations that have emanated from this study thus far. Consensual research was considered possible within this research context because opportunities were created for my own roles (lecturer, researcher and examiner) and that of the research participants to be understood and accepted, and by not assuming that there was equality with regard to the researcher and research participants involved. This created opportunities to address the 'researcher/research participants' binary roles, and renegotiate power relations, responsibilities and hierarchy within the constraints and contexts of the research endeavour' (Brookfield, 2011, p. 222).

1.9 Thesis Overview

1.9.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

In Chapter 1, I provide the background and context within which the study has been conducted. I provide a brief introduction to the situational and geographical context of the province of Limpopo. I also identify the knowledge gap that exists within the South African context in relation to behaviour support and use this to locate my study within the wider context of PBS

that exists within the international education sector. I presented the research questions that guided my investigation. In addition, I provide a synopsis of the data I collected to answer the research questions as well as the research methods I used to analyse the data. My roles and positionality in relation to the research have been provided to signal the journey that has led up to the culmination of a study in behaviour support. I have also alerted the reader to the complex roles that I played in relation to the research.

1.9.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Chapter 2 provides an overview of inclusive education policy imperatives, both globally and within the South African context, while establishing its relevance to behaviour support issues. The philosophy underpinning inclusive behaviour support practices is then used to provide a precursor to the review of the various theoretical lenses with which learner behaviour has been viewed in the school context. I use these lenses to show that the manner in which behaviour is conceptualised and understood has a significant bearing on the way in which behaviour is supported in the classroom.

Three contemporary discourses, namely the medical model discourse, the behavioural model discourse, and the ecosystemic discourse, are employed when attempting to understand behaviour and behaviour support. Each discourse provides a different orientation to how behaviour is conceptualised, as well as a different set of viewpoints on how professionals might meaningfully understand and work with learners with challenging behaviours.

A description of the medical and behavioural model discourses, together with the challenges its conceptualisation poses, leads to a discussion that favours the ecosystemic approach to understanding emotional and behavioural difficulties in schools. The ecosystemic model conceptualises behaviour problems at school within an analysis of the interactional patterns observable within social systems. It is based on the view that human behaviour is developed and maintained through interactional processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). The ecosystemic model therefore underpins the theoretical framework of this study.

1.9.3 Chapter 3: Factors that Contribute to Behavioural Challenges within the South African Context

Chapter 3 presents a discussion on the nature and extent of behavioural difficulties within the South African context. Of particular significance here is the serious impact of poverty on South

African learners. The country's record of corporal punishment is also scrutinised to reveal how issues of negative discipline and punishment impact behaviour at schools. With the legal move away from corporal punishment, the imperative for South African teachers to implement alternate discipline strategies is highlighted. The gap related to teacher pre-service education in the area of systemic behaviour support is shown within the South African context, and an argument is made for continued professional development at the in-service level for teachers which is not purely on curriculum issues and curriculum change matters, but includes matters related to behaviour support which include emotional, social and academic support of all learners. In considering some of the common practices of behaviour support and behaviour management tools used within schools, an argument is strengthened for a systemic model of behaviour support.

1.9.4 Chapter 4: The Positive Behaviour Support Model (PBS) for Inclusive Classrooms

Following on, Chapter 4 is a critical examination of the Positive Behaviour Support Model (PBS) and its potential to be a feasible systemic model of behaviour support. The theoretical underpinnings of the model are investigated, as well as its practicable application. International studies related to the use of this model are interrogated to illustrate its possible value within the South African context, and more specifically, the Limpopo province. The review of literature highlights that I have not found much research which explores the effectiveness of this model in South African primary schools. This thesis is therefore a pioneering study related to the effectiveness of the PBS model in the South African context and more specifically within the province of Limpopo FP classrooms.

1.9.5 Chapter 5: Mixed Methods Research Design

Chapter 5 of the thesis outlines the research methodology and techniques used in this study. A case is made for the use of the Mixed Methods Research design based on the consideration of the value of this method in best meeting the practical needs and demands of the research enquiry. The roles of the purposefully-selected population and volunteer participants are highlighted. The various research instruments are discussed, together with issues related to the credibility and fidelity of the research findings. The chapter also highlights the ethical issues related to the study, as well as the challenges and measures taken to manage those challenges.

1.9.6 Chapter 6: Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of the Data

The presentation, discussion and analysis of the data that emerged from the study spans two chapters, and is foregrounded in the literature related to inclusion and inclusive practice for learners who present with behaviour challenges. Chapter 6 presents the data and analysis that corresponds with the first research question within this study: What factors do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviours in their classroom? The various factors that the research respondents consider as contributing to learner challenging behaviour are explored. The theoretical framework, as outlined by Bronfenbrenner's nested system of the bio-ecological model, is used to contextualise the discussion of the attributed factors in relation to the micro, meso, exo and macro systems (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 1979, 1986, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). In addition, the teachers' ability to manage such behaviours are reported on and discussed. The various support programmes available within Limpopo schools that have been identified by the respondents are also included.

1.9.7 Chapter 7: Application of the Positive Behaviour Support Strategies

Chapter 7 continues with the presentation, examination and analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question 2: What types of learner behaviours do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers consider challenging and what are their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in their classroom? As well as Research Question 3: How effective do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice? The discussion and analysis draw links with the literature on teacher preparedness, teacher education and support, as well as on PBS as a behaviour support tool within the ecosystemic theoretical framework.

1.9.8 Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

The thesis concludes with Chapter 8, and draws a summary of the key findings of the research. Overall, the finding has been that the Limpopo in-service teachers find the PBS model to be an effective tool for understanding possible factors contributing to challenging behaviours. The results also show that respondents find the PBS strategies for behaviour support useful for classroom practice. Limitations of the research are detailed, and the call by the respondents for further professional development in the area of behaviour support is conveyed. Recommendations for further study include research linked to school-wide behaviour support.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This introductory chapter has outlined the main aims and objectives of the research and has provided a contextual background to the study. The background information includes the WSoE partnership within the EU PPSP, as well as its relationship with the UL within this EU-funded project. Geographic information about the province of Limpopo together with statistics related to the supply and demand for teachers and the state of schooling in Limpopo has been provided to emphasise the importance of teacher education initiatives in the region. The valuable contribution of the Limpopo in-service cohort of teachers that studied at WSoE forms the sample for this study, which focuses on the PBS model of behaviour support. The need for a comprehensive behaviour support model has been highlighted within this introductory chapter as a much-needed tool to support teachers at pre-service levels to become better equipped to identify and manage behavioural challenges when they enter the teaching profession in the FP within Limpopo's primary schools.

The chapter also provided an overview of the theoretical and conceptual framework within which the study is positioned. The overview of the research design and thesis chapters provides an outline of the thesis and how it is presented. My position and roles, which led to the study, are presented together with my observations and acknowledgements regarding the multiple guises I have assumed within the research. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis chapters.

In the next chapter, I provide a discussion of how behaviour and behaviour support is defined and understood within various discourses. The discussion is situated within the broader ideas of inclusive education at both national and international levels.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter provides a discussion of how this study is located within literature in the field of behaviour and behaviour support. The discussion is guided by Silverman's (2000) view of the purpose and role of theory. Silverman maintains that theory provides the principles for understanding the relationship between the factors of a complex phenomenon and how they produce their effects. Theory is therefore helpful in identifying the key issues within a study, in revealing the nature of the object and providing the language with which to describe various facets of the study. Guided by this understanding of theory, the aim of this study, which was to investigate the value of the PBS model of behaviour support within the South African context, was established.

First, a link is established between behaviour support within the inclusion framework of national and international imperatives that support inclusion of all learners within the schooling system. Thereafter, a discussion of the various discourses within contemporary literature that assist in the defining, conceptualising and understanding of behaviour and behaviour support is provided. The ecosystemic model of conceptualising learner support is used as the core theoretical framework for this study. This, together with a detailed outline of the PBS model of behaviour support, is to advocate for a tiered behaviour support model within schools and classrooms in South Africa.

2.1 An Introduction to Inclusive Education in South Africa and Internationally

With the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, there emerged a significant emphasis on the values of equity, social justice and non-discrimination. There continues to be national and international pressure on schools and education departments to find new ways of enabling teachers to support learners with difficulties so as to allow them to be included in mainstream classrooms with their peers. The philosophy of inclusion has as a result become central to the educational policies in both developed and developing countries. Inclusive education has emerged as an important aspect of international discussion about how best to respond to learners who experience difficulties in school (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht, 1999; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). In South Africa, there is an imperative for education providers to work towards a system of education that is responsive to the various and diverse needs of its learners. This call emanates from the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994), which affirms the commitment to education for all. The UNESCO (1994) proclamation

emphasised that regular schools with an inclusive orientation were the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all. South Africa participates enthusiastically in this growing international and local discourse on inclusive practices. The promulgation of *Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE, 2001) speaks to South Africa's response to the call for an inclusive education system. Inclusive education is described as being concerned with the development of an inclusive and humane society. *White Paper 6* defines such a progressive system of education as one that makes determined efforts to develop learners' strengths and to provide opportunities for learners to actively and critically engage in the processes of learning within their school environments. Within *White Paper 6*, inclusive education practices are considered critical and imperative for educational transformation within the inclusive education agenda.

A substantial requirement for inclusive practice then, is what Walton (2011, p. 241) describes as the 'process of increasing access and participation and reducing exclusionary pressures in all aspects of school life'. Included in this emancipatory process of access and participation is the need for the identification and adjustment or modification of all attitudes, behaviours, teaching environments, teaching methodologies, and curricula that do not meet the needs of all learners. Within this model of inclusive education then, it is considered the child's right to belong to the local mainstream school system and the planned restructuring of that system must be engaged to ensure that policies of equal opportunity are practiced. Ntombela and Raymond (2013) describe such a focused emphasis on an inclusive education system as being rooted in the international human rights movement, the aim of which is to apply democratic principles and social justice constructs to shape schools and the school experiences of all learners.

The philosophy underpinning inclusive education, as articulated in *White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001) is the notion that every child can learn. However, the values and beliefs of this philosophy, according to Engelbrecht and Green (2007), pose a significant challenge to teachers and school communities. This challenge is to critically reflect upon, assess and develop values and beliefs as well as new instructional, learning and assessment practices that complement inclusive practice. Such dramatic systemic change within the school will demand the involvement of all the stakeholders within the system: the staff, school governing bodies, relevant support services, parents and children. The need for adequate support services to provide education has resultantly become a constitutional imperative in South Africa and abroad. Hargreaves (1994) acknowledges that there is no denying that the teacher is the ultimate key to educational change.

He emphasises that 'it is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get' (p. 1). In order then for inclusion to be effective, the school personnel who are most responsible for its success must be responsive to the demands of educating learners by practicing values, beliefs, pedagogical applications, as well as assessment practices that support the needs of diverse learners within their classrooms. Such support will also necessitate a further look at how professionals in education and other support sectors view challenging behaviour and how such views articulate into practices of support.

2.2 Towards a Definition of Behavioural Challenges

The term 'challenging behaviour' is commonly used to describe the behaviour of adults as well as children and is defined by Emerson (1994, p. 4) as behaviour of such an intensity and frequency that the physical safety of the individual or others is likely to be in serious peril. Chung and Nolan (1998, p. 251) purport that other characteristics of challenging behaviour include:

irrationally violent or destructive acts against property, self or others. It also includes objectionable personal habits such as spitting, smearing, self-induced vomiting, pica, continuous eating and drinking, inappropriate swearing or sexual behaviour [...] they may scream or make disturbing noises and exhibit verbally abusive behaviour.

In addition, the terms 'aggressive', 'deviant', 'violent', 'unruly', 'rude', 'abrupt', 'vulgar' and 'unmanageable behaviour' have become common descriptors of challenging behaviour in the nineteenth and twentieth century (Emerson, 1994). Such descriptors seem understandable within the context of lay discussion. Emerson emphasises that both the definition and causation of challenging behaviour are unclear and that potential for an overlap in understanding causation can be expected. Given that definitions of behavioural difficulties are not clear and precise, positivists such as Kauffman (1989) caution that the number of children identified as exhibiting behavioural difficulties cannot be determined accurately or reliably. Whilst post-positivist critical realists emphasise that we cannot have precise and clearly-delineated knowledge. Critical realists such as Ferber (2006) contest that all observation is fallible and has error and that all theory is revisable. If one is to subscribe to the notion that perception and observation are not infallible, our constructions of what constitutes behavioural challenges must also be considered imperfect. To reiterate, critical realists are critical of our ability to know reality with certainty as demanded by positivist philosophy. This is further supported by post-

positivists (Sayer, 2000), who reject the idea that any individual can see the world perfectly as it really is. It is rather accepted that we are all biased and therefore all of our observations are affected. According to Quershi (1994), the difficulty in providing a definition for challenging behaviour is a result of the term 'challenging behaviour' being socially constructed. Different people, or groups of people, have different ideas about what is meant by 'challenging'. Objectivity is not the characteristic of an individual, but rather it is inherently a social phenomenon. If we are to adopt the notion that knowledge evolves, it becomes reasonable to expect that there can be no singular standard definition for behaviour difficulties.

The impossibility of settling on a universal definition to this broad term becomes clearer when one considers Links's (1983) review of 16 major community surveys in Canada, the results of which indicate that few definitive conclusions could be drawn due to the fact that each of the surveys differed in terms of definitions used for behaviour difficulties. In a similar vein, Kavale, Forness, and Alper (1986), after reviewing a collection of 31 journals representing special education, psychology and medicine over a 20 year period (1963-1983), found nearly fifty different ways of defining behavioural difficulties. In addition to the wide array of definitions, Upton and Cooper (1990) found that there is also a great deal of inconsistency amongst professionals from different disciplines, who tend to use different terms for similar conditions or similar terms for different conditions. While there is evidently no standard or universal definition of behavioural difficulties, some commonalities are shared in various definitions. These include what Soles, Bloom, Heath and Karagiannakis, (2008) refer to as behaviour that goes to an extreme, behaviours or emotions that are outside societal norms, and behaviours or emotions that negatively affect a child's educational functioning.

The preceding discussion evidences the varying array of challenges related to a consistent definition of behavioural difficulties. Given these challenges, this study does not seek to provide a definitive description or definition of behavioural difficulties, but instead follows Wood and Lakin's (1982) suggestion. They suggest that any definition used to refer to children's behavioural challenges should include elements that are helpful, first to understanding both the organisational context and the goals of the educational settings, and secondly in informing intervention and support to learners. These elements include, *inter alia*:

- a) who or what is perceived to be the focus of the problem,
- b) how the behaviour is described and by whom (how and by whom is the behaviour operationalised),
- c) the setting in which the behaviour occurs, and

d) whether the definition used informs planning for intervention and programme evaluation.

These elements are necessary as they take into account the crucial importance of all those involved in the support of learners within the school to clarify their understanding of challenging behaviours and provide an operational definition that can form the basis of support in light of the behavioural challenge posed. This shifts the emphasis from an inside-out dichotomy, which emphasises mere aetiology and causes of behaviour problems, to an interactionist and ecosystemic approach, which emphasises the impact of dynamic interactions within and between different systems and the ways they affect behaviour.

2.3 An Ecosystemic Approach to Understanding Behavioural Difficulties in Schools

An ecosystemic approach to understanding behavioural difficulties in schools conceptualises them within an analysis of the interactional patterns observable within social systems. When attempting to understand behaviour and behavioural challenges, it is essential to grasp how a learner's needs are affected by and in turn have an impact on the ecological contexts of family, school, community and society (Trussell, 2008; Sayeski & Brown, 2011).

Ecological theory employs the view that human behaviour is developed and maintained through interactional processes. The framework for the ecological systems theory described in this chapter is based on the work by Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1979, 1986, 1992), Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994), Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998, 2006). In human ecology, the person-environment context represents the entirety of relationships and interactions among individuals and their environments. Within this model, there is significant emphasis on the interactions that occur in face-to-face long-term relationships, as such relationships are regarded to be important in shaping lasting aspects of learning and development. These proximal interactions (such as the interaction between parent and child, teacher and learner, or a child and his/her best friend) are affected by person-related factors as well as the social contexts within which they occur. These person-process and contexts change over time due to children's maturation as well as changes in the social contexts themselves and changes related to learning and development (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield & Karnik, 2009). Within ecological theory, then, aspects of time and timing play an equally significant role as the aspects of person-process and context. This is relevant to the development of individuals through varied activities and interactions that they may engage in within the microsystems within which they are situated. For example, teacher professional development activities that may be engaged in will support the teacher's growth and development in their school microsystem teaching roles over the course of time.

As other social ecologists do, Bandura (1977, 1986), argues that it is important to consider the mutual and reciprocal effects of the applicable personal, environmental and behavioural factors when seeking to understand personal behavioural patterns. Within these systems, the person variables (e.g. learners' thoughts and feelings, age, ethnicity language, religion, gender, family structure, socio-economic status, etc.), interact reciprocally with the environmental variables (such as the social and physical factors alongside which the behaviour occurs) as well as with the behavioural variables (behaviours/events that are antecedents to or which follow the challenging behaviours). The reciprocal interactions amongst and between these variables impact and affect learner behaviour. PBS Functional behavioural assessments (discussed later in Chapter 4), supports the investigation of these interacting variables, the analysis thereof leads to behavioural intervention plans to support the reduction of negative aspects that act as antecedents to challenging behaviours (Sugai & Horner, 2009; Muscott et al., 2004).

Bronfenbrenner suggests that it is helpful to consider the environment or social contexts as a 'set of nested structures, each contained inside the next like a set of Russian dolls', and therefore interrelated (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 in Frederickson & Cline, 2002, p. 10). These nested contexts or environmental systems include the *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *exosystem*, *macrosystem* and the *chronosystem* (depicted by the arrow) as illustrated in Figure 3.

Bronfenbrenner's Nested Systems

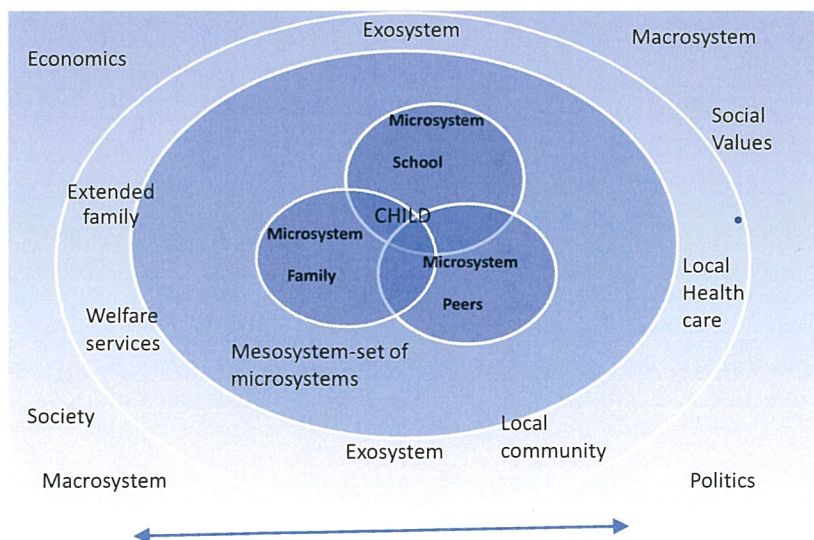


Figure 3: Bronfenbrenner's Nested Systems. Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1999; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006

The *microsystems* are systems or relationships in which children are closely involved in proximal interactions (within the home, school, and amongst peers). The roles, relationships and patterns of daily activity within the microsystem shape aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The *mesosystem* is the relationship that develops and exists between the *microsystems* that continuously interact with one another, and in turn modify each other. The family or school, for example, can impact and influence how children relate in their peer interactions. The *exosystem* refers to one or more environments (health services, the media, parents' workplace, etc.) in which the child is not directly involved, but which nevertheless may influence and impact those with which the child has proximal interactions. The *macrosystem* refers to the 'attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies inherent in the systems of a particular society and culture' which may have an impact on the other nested systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 12). Developmental time frames affect the interactions between the systems and also influence the child's individual development. This is referred to as the *chronosystem*. The *chronosystem* includes socio-historical conditions. A key component of Bronfenbrenner's model is that learners are active participants in their learning and development: the learner's perception of his contexts is influenced by the way he responds to his human and physical contexts and is central to how he engages with them at any given time in his development.

There is little argument that the contexts children experience in early childhood are influential in shaping their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Corroborating Bronfenbrenner's theory, Perkins and McLaughlin (2015) identify predictive risk factors, first within the family, which include poor parenting skills, parental substance abuse and poor mental health, negative or unsupportive parent-child relationship, single-parent homes, teenage pregnancies, and child abuse and/or neglect. Secondly, the quality of environmental interactions a child has, with his/her parent, teachers, peers, and friends can create potential risk or protective factors. Finally, the global environment (such as poverty, neighbourhood characteristics, and home-school relationship) has an undeniable bearing. It is evident that behavioural challenges not only impact and affect the learner who is non-compliant, but impacts the teacher and peers alike (Perkins & McLaughlin, 2015). Several of the predictive risk factors indicated here have also been highlighted previously (section 1.5.1-1.5.2) to be prevalent in Limpopo. An understanding then of behaviour and behavioural challenges from an ecosystemic perspective within Limpopo FP classrooms was considered essential for this study.

Although these predictive microsystem risk factors are well-established, literature also highlights the value of high-quality instructional techniques, which can serve as a protective factor and reduce the social behavioural gaps learners may experience when they come to the classroom. Such techniques include the creation of a classroom climate where learners feel safe and supported and motivated by the interactions they have with their teachers and peers (Wentzel, Russel & Looney, 2010). Such inclusive behaviour support strategies are present in the PBS model (appendix L) and the exploration of PBS in Limpopo schools to enhance protective factors within the classroom, further motivated its use in this study.

The ecosystemic approach has progressed significantly through some conceptual shifts that have occurred in the past 40 years. Of particular interest are the first- and second-level shifts observed by Amatea and Sherrard (1994). The first-level shift relates to the move from understanding the individual with a psycho-medical lens towards understanding the individual within the context of the various relationships and support networks in which he/she might operate and function. The resultant challenge for support professionals is to assess and seek to understand the individual, taking into account the context of the psyche in relation to the influence of the connections and interconnections the individual's relationships have on his/her behaviour. This epistemological stance positions the observer (such as the teacher or other professionals) on the outside of the system, and is predisposed towards investigations about difficulties, problems and challenges which provide lineal explanations when describing and understanding the individual. It is described as an epistemology that has:

a positivist, or logical empiricist orientation that assumes that truth is (and can be) completely represented by observable phenomena and scientifically verified facts, that human systems exist as an objective reality independent of the observer, and that the observer (the mental health counsellor) can know how the system should function without participating in it, can determine the degree of pathology of the system (via diagnosis) without changing anything in the system's functioning by means of his or her observation, and can return the system to its desired state by taking the proper corrective actions. (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994, p. 11)

From this standpoint, support professionals formulate hypotheses and assumptions as to the interactions within the ecosystem, and determine what is problematic with and within these interactions. Key questions include, '*Who did what? To whom? Where? When? and Why?*' in order to determine who and what are to be responsible for the problem (e.g., members within a family, a classroom practice, a group of friends, etc.). The hypothesis is that, having found out what in the system caused the problem, the support professional can set in motion a process for

correcting the problem within the system. Interventions by the support professional strive to correct the perceived defect in the system by encouraging members in the ecosystem to think and act in ways that the professional deems to be more helpful in correcting or solving the challenges within the system (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994). The challenge here is that the helping professional is not considered an integral part of the system, and remains an observer in the process of effecting change rather than a participant in that process.

In the second-level shift, attention has changed from viewing the 'designated system from the outside as an *objective* observer to acknowledging one's position inside the designated system as a *participant-observer*' (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994, p. 6). This second crucial shift focuses on the participant-observer lens of the ecosystemic model and is useful in understanding classrooms, schools and families by viewing them as systems in themselves and in interaction with and within the broader social contexts. Increasingly, efforts are being made to understand how children's learning and development are shaped by their social contexts. This shift includes an understanding that there are layers or levels of interacting systems resulting in change, growth and development (such as physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural factors). What happens in one system affects and is affected by other systems. In addition, the second shift understands relationships among causes as reciprocal and multifaceted. Such a multidimensional model is useful in describing learning and development, as well as the complex causal processes involved in many other kinds of change, including behavioural change. The role of the teacher and other support professionals within the system are considered integral to the context of understanding and support to effect behavioural changes.

This second shift challenges support professionals, including teachers, to situate themselves as insiders within the system, and not as mere observers. Tyler and Jones (2002) suggest that this allows for a much more complex analysis and understanding of the individual within his/her life world. The following questions, then, in addition to the who, what, why, when questions of the simple analysis, become invaluable in determining a more detailed understanding of the behavioural challenges that learners present with:

- How do you (the teacher) usually respond to the behaviour, and what is the usual result?
- What is your current explanation of why the learner behaves this way?
- What possible alternative explanations might there be for this behaviour?

- Based on one of these possible alternatives, how could you respond differently from the way you have previously? What might you actually say or do differently?
- What was the result of your reframing? Was it successful? If so, what were the changes that took place? If not, how might you use this result to inform your next reframing? (2002, p. 29)

From this epistemological lens, the support professional provides an account of the impact their observations, understanding and articulations have both on themselves and on the human systems with which they are involved. As an insider, the observer then moves towards ecological inquiry as well as circular explanations when describing and understanding the individual.

Upton and Cooper (1990) also highlight some of the key features of the two shifts in the ecosystemic approach and establish how these epistemological lenses help to build understanding school behaviour difficulties. These key features include the notion that the problem behaviour in the classroom is not seen as originating from within the individual (medical model view) who displays the behaviour, but is a product of social interaction (behavioural model view). These interactional patterns may be interpreted in simple or complex ways. The simple analysis is limited to present situations, and will define a learner's negative behaviour in terms of the interactions which immediately surround this behaviour. This simple analysis then relates to the epistemological lens that has its roots in the first-level shift within the ecosystemic framework.

A complex analysis, which links to the second-level shift, takes into account factors in the wider ecosystem and explores purposes which the present behaviour might serve in other related ecosystems. Such an analysis may relate challenging behaviour in the classroom to interactional patterns in the learner's family. It may also relate to the interactional patterns of classroom teaching practices and of the curriculum content matter. For example, lessons that do not stimulate learning, or which render the learner thoroughly bored or thoroughly confused during classes, can result in that learner presenting with challenging behaviour in the classroom. A further relational analysis includes Visser and Stokes's (2003) explanation, that important variables that affect the defining of behavioural difficulties are teachers' attitudes, perceptions, feelings and degrees of tolerance. The teachers' definition and interpretation of learners' behaviour within their setting are of significance to the study of behavioural difficulties.

According to Papatheodorou, 'behaviour that has an effect on the learner's own and other learners' well-being and on the teaching and learning processes should receive due attention to eliminate future difficulties' (2005, p 13). The ecosystemic view incorporates a much broader contextual look at behavioural challenges and is not limited to the somewhat narrow definition of challenging behaviour by Chung and Nolan (1998), a discussion of which can be found in in section 2.2.

Upton and Cooper (1990) explain that the cause of any instance of problem behaviour can be seen as part of a cyclical chain of actions and reactions between participants within a system. Each event in the interactional chain is both a cause of ensuing events and the effect of preceding ones. Learner classroom behaviour that is defined as 'problematic' can be seen as goal directed, and, from the learner's viewpoint, is understandable, rational, and necessary. What appears problematic to the teacher may well be the solution to a problem for the learner, for a subsystem in the classroom or school, or in the learner's family. Often, attempts to directly oppose goal-directed behaviour are met with resistance and can encourage the problematic situation to continue. The repeated use of failed solutions in this way is often characteristic of difficult systemic problems.

Whitt and Danforth (2010) poignantly emphasise that the metaphors and narratives teachers use to describe learner behaviour create a naming of the situation, and as such, shape and frame the lenses through which the behaviour is problematised and understood. This description and framing can be understood as the 'power that identifies a person, labels their intent and categorizes their behaviour' (Whitt & Danforth, 2010, p. 149). In addition, Whitt and Danforth emphasise that by steering away from the 'within the child' or medical narrative in the framing of difficult and challenging behaviour, the teacher's power of address can be removed from observer and reporter status, and teachers can 'reclaim their agency, point of view and professional role through understanding how the power of address is an integral part of what teachers do every day' (2010, p. 147).

An essential component of the process is to involve the teachers in seeking perspectives on the situation other than his/her own, particularly those of the learners involved. Teachers must also be constantly alert to positive changes, however apparently insignificant, which occur in the classroom ecosystem, whether or not they appear to be related to the problem situation. Such minor changes may give rise to previously unexplored solutions. The use of empathy by teachers would also add to the reflexive quality of the ecosystemic approach with regard to

teacher behaviour, as it encourages teachers to continuously monitor the experience of schooling from the standpoint of the learner.

Prior to the ecosystemic view of understanding behaviour and behavioural challenges, other points of view or theoretical frameworks that were used to define behavioural challenges included the psychoeducational model or medical model, and the behavioural model. These models were markedly different in orientation to the ecosystemic view, and did not consider the interrelatedness of the various factors to the extent that the ecosystemic view does. The ecosystemic view considers a range of factors to be relevant and meaningful to a holistic understanding of behavioural challenges.

2.4. Medical Model Discourse in Understanding Behavioural Difficulties

Underpinning the international move towards inclusion is a determined reconstruction of the notions of ability and disability as well as notions of normality and abnormality. Engelbrecht & Green (2007), assert that historically, disability has been predominantly construed as a disease or sickness that emanated from medical or physical causes affecting a marginal group of individuals. Within this paradigm, exists the psycho-educational model which Papatheodorou (2005) describes as being based on the principles of biogenetic and psychodynamic theories. Terms commonly used within this discourse include 'mental illness', 'maladjustment' and 'serious emotional difficulties'. The underlying assumption of this discourse is that the problem resides within the individual in the soma (body) (biogenetic theory) or in the psyche (psychodynamic theory), or in both the psyche and soma. Papatheodorou (2005) explains that within this paradigm, behavioural challenges are attributed to learners' biological or genetic predispositions. Psychodynamic interpretations of behaviour are deemed to be the result of displayed visible signs of unconscious or internal conflicts within the child that result from the child's social, cultural or family life experiences.

Within this medical model discourse, the emphasis is on the pathology or sickness of the person and on treatments to correct the problem that is believed to exist within the individual. Within education, this medical discourse translates to assumptions that there is an identifiable group of learners (such as those who present with behaviour difficulties) with special needs, and that these learners should be taught separately or at least differently from others to cater for differences within their innate (medical, biological, psychological) nature. Such a model of understanding learners becomes problematic when considering that its implications for support

would generally comprise a specialised ‘treatment’ of this group of learners, which would of necessity include psychological intervention or medication, or both. The model has been criticised for being too narrowly focused in terms of aetiology (Emerson, 1994), which has led to the need for professional support of learners being closely associated with psychiatric support for presenting behavioural challenges. The criticism of this model is also levelled at its lack of consideration for the possible role environmental factors play in the development of psychiatric challenges. Emerson explains that within such a discourse, the ‘environment may be seen as only playing a supporting role in the development of psychiatric disorders and the importance of environmental factors, are therefore, diminished’ (Emerson 1994, p. 12). The limited consideration of the role of environmental factors is considered to be a severe limitation in the understanding and in the subsequent support of learners who present with challenging behaviours within the classroom.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) for Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR, 2003) identifies several behavioural difficulties and provides criteria for, amongst others, the diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity, Conduct Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. A strong criticism of strict adherence to the DSM criteria in diagnosing behavioural difficulties is linked to the medical model within which the diagnosis is couched. The argument against such a model is that as a result of the influence of the medical and psychological alliance, the identification of a deficiency in a learner suggests some conclusion about the individual’s worth. This is due to what Bailey (2010) highlights as the danger of the DSM criteria of diagnosis, which takes social- produced dysfunctions and translates them into the language of individualised medical deficit, thereby pathologising children’s behaviours. Of particular significance here within the schooling system is that when views of normality and abnormality strengthen discourses of who does and does not belong, such diagnoses create very limited opportunities for inclusive education practices (Slee & Allan, 2001; Graham, 2006)

Although the labelling of individuals may be criticised as a possible negative outcome of the medical model discourse, it nevertheless has some merit worth considering. If, for example, the label brings the likelihood of additional resources, then medical professionals, parents and teachers are likely to feel that the advantages of the use of the label outweigh the disadvantages (Emerson, 1994). A diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, for instance, paves the way for parents to consider various treatment options, including the use of medication. Remedial support, dietary changes, occupational therapy and psychological support following

a diagnosis are also seen as viable support options. The medical discourse is also attractive because it offers reassurance that no one is to blame, with solutions to the behavioural challenge lying solely in the drugs to control the underlying biological or genetic causes and the resultant 'labels of forgiveness' seem compelling (Macloed & Nunn, 2004, p. 174). The challenge however remains that with such abdication of blame, there may also be the unanticipated challenge of no individual/s or collective (teachers, parents, and learners) taking responsibility for the support of the learner within the classroom and school context outside of a reliance on medication.

2.5 Behavioural Model Discourse

Distinct from the medical model discourse, the behavioural model is not concerned with inner mental processes, but rather emphasises observable behaviour and how that behaviour is learned (Evans, Harden, & Thomas, 2004; Kauffman 1989). While the behavioural model retains a focus on the individual, the source of the problem is not seen as being within the child's biological or genetic make-up, but is considered to be outside of the child, in the environment in which the child finds him/herself (Kauffman, 1999; Bronson, 2000). Behaviour challenges are construed then in terms of the child's learning and less in terms of internal psychological states (Papatheodorou, 2005). The behavioural discourse does not however disregard the individual's thoughts and emotions; rather it considers these to be a result of environmental factors or events (Kauffman, 1999).

This model has its roots in operant behaviourism and, within this model, social learning theory and social cognitive learning theory are among the most popular approaches for explaining the behaviour of individuals (Tittle, Antonaccio, & Botchkovar, 2012). These are based on the premise that human behaviour is a result of socialisation or learning from others rather than solely as a consequence of inherent traits or genetics. Such theories also claim generalised justifications and rationalisations to apply to 'all types of behaviours amongst all people in all circumstances' (Tittle et al., 2012, p. 863). Within this model, challenging behaviour is viewed as being dominated by its consequences and the environmental occurrences of reward and punishment. Both the theories of social learning and social cognitive theory demonstrate that people discover behaviours through vicarious learning. This implies that children do not need to be directly engaged in a behaviour to learn or model it. Within this theory,

differential reinforcement (instrumental learning through a schedule of rewards and punishments) and imitation (learning through observation and modelling of

others' behaviour and its positive or negative consequences) are the principal learning mechanisms. (Tittle et al., 2012, p. 864)

Through interactions with others, children learn to assess various behaviours as good or bad. The continuation of negative behaviour or acceptable behaviour is related to previous and existing rewards or punishments for the behaviour, as well as the rewards and punishments of alternative behaviour. Hartinger-Saunders and Rine (2011) explain that these differential associations characterise the systems (family, peers, school, etc.) that influence an individual's main sources of reinforcement and punishment. By observing a behaviour (negative or positive), a child could learn that behaviour, and later behave in the same way. Children witnessing domestic violence are believed to be prone to display behaviours such as aggression, 'separation anxiety, lower self-esteem, lower self-respect, and lower social competence' as compared to other children (Abbassi & Asilinia, 2010, p. 21). They may also suffer more from 'anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress symptoms and develop temperamental challenges' (p. 21). It is possible to infer then that family relationships, environmental issues, and observational learning conditions work together and influence the likelihood of aggressive and challenging behaviour responses in children. The application of social learning theory is deemed useful in this study, particularly because it extends the focus beyond the individual (bio-genetic) by including the interrelationships between family, peer groups, teachers, and other significant social influences (meso-level) (Hartinger-Saunders & Rine, 2011).

The focus within this discourse is on the symptomatic behaviour and not on the individual, and is therefore less stigmatising (Bronson, 2000). The model asserts that individuals have learned to behave in inappropriate ways, and it thereby highlights the educational responsibility to teach more socially acceptable and personally satisfying behaviours (Papatheodorou, 2005). This model is considered valuable as it offers a structured and academic approach to dealing with a variety of behavioural challenges. It offers explicit methodology that teachers can implement, which includes increasing positive behaviour and setting clear limits and consequences for unwanted or negative behaviour (McCullough Chavis, 2011; Scott & Dadds, 2009).

Brauer and Tittle (2012) maintain that while empirical research amassed over several decades has validated the core tenets of social learning theory, a potential weakness is a possible lack of evidence regarding differential reinforcement. The argument here is that there are not enough longitudinal studies which show a link between reinforcement behaviour and later deviant behaviour. In addition, it is argued that tests of social learning theory, while not without merits, have produced inconsistent results in relation to differential reinforcement (Rebblon, 2006).

Other concerns relate to the applicability of the theory across cultures. McCullough Chavis (2011, p. 479) indicates that in some cultural groups, the particular models within social learning theory are neither recommended or valued, due to their association with 'White, middle class' approaches that remain 'incompatible' with many other cultural groups. The author contends that despite its important theoretical contributions, research into the effectiveness of the model rarely addresses cultural and multicultural issues. This is a crucial critique, given the ethical responsibility for those in the helping professions to understand culture and its function in human behaviour and society. The National Association of Social Workers, (1996) stresses that it is imperative that helping professionals (including but not limited to social workers, counsellors, sociologists, psychologists, teachers, and behaviourists), practise from a culturally focused perspective. The acquisition therefore of knowledge and skills related to various cultures, values systems, 'beliefs, practices, and worldviews of individuals and families who come from different and varied cultural backgrounds' needs to become mandatory and standard practice for all those in supporting roles for learners who present with behavioural difficulties (McCullough Chavis, 2011, p. 479).

While commending that schools have been encouraged to adopt behaviourist approaches that include positive or assertive discipline strategies, Wright (2009) contends that the shift has unfortunately resulted in teachers and support personnel being weighed down. Teachers devote significant time and effort to

completing tick boxes, behaviour modification plans, report cards or monitoring numbers of incidents of 'good and bad' behaviour, there is little time left to step back and consider what the child may be attempting to communicate in terms of his or her distress, fear or anxiety. (p. 283)

2.6 Conclusion: The Argument Justifying a Case for the use of the Ecosystemic Model to Understand Behavioural Challenges

Both the medical model and behavioural model discourses appear inadequate to fully articulate a comprehensive understanding of challenging behaviour. The medical model focuses on internal psychological states. This, together with its strong reliance on diagnosis and medical interventions to treat what is considered pathological, inherited or genetic causes of behavioural problems, causes the medical model to fall short in that it does not account for any other factors that may impact behavioural challenges. The behavioural model and its related social learning theory extends beyond the focus of biogenetics and views challenging behaviour as learned behaviour, often being dominated by consequences and environmental incidences of reward

and punishment. While this discourse is less stigmatising and provides opportunities for explicit methods that teachers can use to increase positive behaviour and set clear limits for negative behaviour, the model is considered Eurocentric, with an emphasis on white middle class values that may be significantly different from those of other cultural groups. Neither the behavioural nor the medical model takes into consideration what the learner's behaviour may be attempting to communicate or what purpose the challenging behaviour may serve for that learner. These models' understanding of the behaviour as well as of the subsequent treatment, be it medication or the meting out of negative consequences, does not seem to sufficiently address behaviour challenges nor their holistic management within the classroom.

Papatheodorou (2005) explains that children's behaviour can be regarded as a purposeful form of communication, and the child's capacity to choose appropriate behaviour is influenced by their developmental ability, temperament, interactions, life experiences and environmental factors. As children enter the formal schooling environment, behavioural challenges are those that are often seen as 'behaviour that is out of place; the behaviour is not disruptive by itself, but becomes disruptive at certain times and in certain places' (p. 17). A narrow focus on only the psychological, social or medical factors can provide a skewed understanding of behaviour and its support. Through embracing a bioecological framework of understanding challenging behaviour in learner development, a learner's individual characteristics, together with other factors such as those within the system of the school and classroom (the classroom pedagogical issues, teacher-learner relationships and power relations, family, socio-economic and socio-cultural issues, etc.) become important and relevant to deepening the understanding of learners who present with challenging behaviours. A grasp of how these factors interrelate and how they affect learners can be used to assist in providing a rich and meaningful understanding in the identification and support of behavioural challenges within the school system. Such an understanding does not seek to label or lay blame with the individual learner, but rather observes the interplay of ecological systems, inclusive of the observer, as part of the process in developing a holistic understanding of the learner. The person-process-context-time model of Bronfenbrenner's theory, which allows for a significant shift from an inside-out dichotomy regarding aetiology of behaviour problems towards an understanding of the impact of the dynamic interactions in a child's life world, forms the core theoretical framework for contextualising behaviour and behaviour support within this study.

Within the South African context, with its wide array of cultural, religious, racial and economic differences, it is essential to understand how a learner's needs are affected by and in turn have an impact on the ecological contexts of family, school, community and society. Stofile and Raymond (2013, p. 29) observe that since the late 1990s, there has been a necessary shift in South Africa from an exclusive focus on within the learner deficiencies towards a more comprehensive ecosystemic approach. The ecosystemic approach recognises that cultures are continually undergoing change (Tudge et al., 2009), and that cultural realities within the person-process-context-time model are an essential part of a holistic understanding of the learner. The learner is considered an active change agent within the life world in which he finds himself wherein he/she takes co-ownership and responsibility for positive behavioural change. The emphasis of the model is on the proximal processes as instruments of developmental shifts, and embodies a move from a perspective which values limited definitions and causes of behaviour problems, to a holistic approach and a grasp of the dynamic relations within and between various systems and of how these impact upon and affect behaviour. Tudge et al. (2009, p. 202) explain that these processes provide the depth and breadth of insight into the interconnections between various aspects of the learner's 'context (culture or social class, for example) or some aspect of the individual (e.g., gender) and an outcome of interest' (such as behavioural challenges and behavioural changes).

CHAPTER 3: FACTORS ATTRIBUTED TO BEHAVIOURAL CHALLENGES WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

Within South African education, as in other parts of the world, behavioural difficulties are considered to be one of the most important problems facing teachers (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011). The Department of Education (2001) uses the term ‘challenging behaviour’ to describe various behavioural problems or difficulties which form part of the South African school scene. These include: lying, stealing, truancy, fighting, and use of addictive substances, rape, arson and vandalism. The behaviour challenges that interfere more frequently with the classroom routine include, among others, attention seeking and disruptive behaviour, inadequate attention or attention deficit, aggression, stubbornness, negativity (a refusal to work and cooperate with others), depression, anxiety, a lack of motivation, disinterest, talking out of turn and disturbance of other learners (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011).

Causative factors contributing to behavioural difficulties in South African schools are considered to be inextricably linked to the issues of poverty, high density housing, organised crime, exposure to violence, a breakdown within family and community structure, incompetent parenting, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011; De Wet, 2003; Dawes & Donald, 1994). Other contributing factors include HIV/AIDS, educational neglect, school organisation and curriculum issues, as well as intrinsic factors such as visual and hearing impairments and epilepsy. Further links to the socio-economic challenge of poverty are those conditions that negatively affect a learner’s social and emotional well-being. These conditions include sexual and substance abuse, which also lead to trauma and emotional distress (DoE 1997).

3.2 The Impact of Poverty on Learner Behaviour

This research has followed the basic premise of Artiles, Kozleski and Waitoller (2011), who state that within inclusive education, there is a commitment to education of all learners, regardless of differences in aptitude and culture, gender, language, class or ethnicity. It must be noted however that while this premise may represent the ideal, that varying local realities impede or enable the fulfilment of the ideals of inclusive education (Walton, 2015). Poverty, for example, is a reality that adversely impacts learner participation in education. In South Africa, poverty has been shown to be a common contributory factor for the exclusion of learners from attending schools (Wiseman, 2011). Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model is relevant here,

given its capacity to take into account the various indicators of poverty its impact within the schooling context (Maarman, 2009). Behavioural difficulties are closely linked to socioeconomic status (SES), and this is corroborated by the fact that there is a strong correlation between schools with high percentages of learners with low SES and high levels of challenging behaviours (Baker, Kamphaus, Horne, & Windsor, 2006; Warren Bohanon-Edmonson, Turnbull, Sailor, Wickham, Griggs, & Beech, 2006).

International research on the impact of poverty suggests that one of the most important school-level variables associated with behavioural difficulties is the socioeconomic status (SES) of learners attending the school (Wiley, Siperstein, Forness, & Brigham, 2010). Poverty is deemed to be associated with a general pervasiveness of psychiatric disorders in children and youth. This correlation is increasingly challenging as a result of the differing effects of poverty when concomitantly linked to its duration, depth, timing, persistence, and larger community context (Wiley et al., 2010, p. 452). Schools with higher percentages of low SES learners have been found to have significantly higher percentages of learners who exhibit moderate to high levels of challenging behaviour (Baker et al., 2006; Warren, Edmonson, Griggs, Lassen, McCart, & Turnbull, 2003). These findings are relevant to the South African context, and specifically that of learners within the province of Limpopo. The local realities of the socio-economic challenges of poverty and unemployment, the impact of HIV/AIDS and resultant child-headed families are factors that extensively and negatively impact learner preparedness for schooling (Mashau et al., 2008). The poor socioeconomic environments in which learners may live and participate in school life can pose a challenge and a threat to their growth and development. The basic requirements for learners to succeed are, first, to have their physiological needs for food and shelter met. In addition, they require a sense of security and belonging in a family, school and community (Maslow 1954). Economic factors related to poverty and the associated risks increase school dropout rates, thereby resulting in learners being excluded from education (Meny-Gibert & Russell, 2012).

Maarman (2009) postulates that Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1979) is suitable for analysing the experiences of learners from poor socioeconomic backgrounds. The model recognises the multifaceted manifestations and impacts of poverty, which are apparent in South Africa. As is the case with other developing countries, communities in South Africa affected by poverty have difficulty meeting learners' basic needs. Stofile, Linden and Maarman (2011)

provide a comprehensive explication of the various factors that characterise economically challenged communities. These include illness, disability, poor educational outcomes, malnutrition, unaccommodating and unsafe environments, communication and language deficiencies, inadequate social standing and negative expectations of the future. Maarman's (2009) related assertion has a significant bearing on the particular context of the province of Limpopo. As cited in the introductory chapter, he states that poverty in this province is a significant challenge, and that approximately 87% of its people live in rural areas, and 23% of households have no access to piped water. Within Limpopo primary schools, Statistics South Africa recorded that in 2015, more than a third (41, 6%) of FP learners were multi-dimensionally deprived within the school learning environment. This deprivation spanned areas of access to facilities and basic services critical for effective teaching and learning (such as running piped water and sanitation facilities), overcrowded classrooms, participation in sporting activities, financial involvement of parents in contributing towards the running of the school (school governing body SGB-funded posts). With fewer SGB posts, learner-classroom ratios remain high, negatively affecting teaching and learning (Statistics South Africa, 2015, p. 81).

Sayed (2003) explains that while there is no uniform way of defining poverty, some common features can be highlighted. These include a deprivation of basic needs including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and access to information. Another common feature of poverty is the lack of power, control and opportunities. Poor people, to varying degrees, lack these basic requirements for supporting themselves adequately, and as a result experience feelings of hopelessness. An additional common feature of poverty, according to Sayed (2003), is the marginalisation of the poor through existing social structures, which prohibits their potential to take part in and impact political, municipal and civic society. Sayed's assessment of the role of poverty is pertinent to the province of Limpopo as the province's schools are inadequately resourced, which in turn leads to high school dropout levels, unemployment, alienation, and a psychology of defiance (Mashau et al., 2008).

Porteus (2005) draws links between physical poverty and factors such as parents/caregivers being unable to meet the cost of schooling, which includes paying for school uniforms, school shoes, school fees, etc., or the need for the child to contribute to the wellbeing of the family. Social isolation, which often accompanies poverty, results in a lack of or limited access to social support structures and social services. In addition, such isolation characterises child-headed

families and single parent/guardian families, where there may be little support from extended families. Psychological disempowerment and despair result from being unable to translate the wish or desire (for schooling and education) into reality due to the challenges that result from poverty (Stofile et al., 2011). This psychological disempowerment, explains Stofile et al., extends to bureaucratic challenges linked to gaining access to schools, retrieval of birth certificates and grants etc. The systemic and interactive influences of the physical, social and psychological poverty factors create a synergism of disempowerment in poor families that affects school attendance.

Nduna and Jewkes (2012) observe that research from South Africa shows that young people experience considerable emotional distress resulting from poverty and parental loss, much of which is linked to HIV. The issue of HIV/AIDS, and its link to socio-economic decline, is well documented. HIV infection levels are at epidemic levels in South Africa (Ntombela & Raymond, 2013). The total number of persons living with HIV in South Africa increased from an estimated 4,02 million in 2002 to 6,19 million by 2015 (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The quality of life of many South Africans is adversely affected, given the daily occurrence of learners losing their lives or the lives of one or both of their parents to the virus. The associated impact on the economic security of the family, as well as the phenomenon of child-headed families, adds significant strain to affected individuals. Following death, siblings are often separated, the availability of resources diminish, and children often find themselves isolated from relatives, financially insecure and unable to afford schooling. Nduna and Jewkes (2012) have observed that a consequence of parental death is often stigmatisation, humiliation and disgrace, which can lead to bullying. In addition, access to basic needs such as food and school dropout is often diminished. Such conditions cause significant distress in the child and can result in learners exhibiting emotional and behavioural challenges, including hostility and aggression (Stofile et al., 2011).

The 2013-2014 statistics of non-attendance at school show that out of a total of 11.2 million children aged 7-17 years within South Africa, 283,000 were reported as not attending school in 2013 (Statistics South Africa, 2014). These figures are alarming if one considers access to education to be a fundamental socio-economic right that provides the basis for life-long learning and the building blocks for economic growth and development. Some of the main reasons for children of school-going age not attending school are linked to financial limitations.

These include being unable to afford the cost of schooling, or children having childminding responsibilities or needing to work in a family business or elsewhere to support the household (Meny-Gibert & Russell, 2012). In addition, the perceived failure of the education system is also linked to perceptions by parents, guardians and children themselves that education is a useless endeavour with subsequent increased poor performance and exam failure by learners. School dropout due to illness, disability and teenage pregnancy are also prevalent factors (Statistics South Africa, 2014). It is possible therefore that children from low SES backgrounds, those with lower levels of parental education, as well as those who have lost one or both of their parents, are likely to drop out of school, or progress at a slower rate than their more advantaged peers.

Furthermore, Chibba and Luiz (2011) alert us to the interconnectedness between poverty, inequality and unemployment, and provide empirical evidence to support the claim that poverty coincides with inequality unemployment in several studies worldwide. The overarching issues that define the nature of poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa include the continued legacy of apartheid in economics, business, socio-economics, sociology, land tenure and urban-rural livelihood issues. Fundamental challenges within this legacy is the imposing political, economic and management dimension linked to tackling these problems in the post-apartheid era. A significant part of the inequality that exists is undeniably a result of exclusion from education (Pellicer, Ranchod, Sarr, & Wegner, 2011). As a result of this legacy historically disadvantaged groups are often precluded from reaching higher levels of education, which in turn produces an inadequate supply of highly-educated workers in the labour force (Chibba & Luiz, 2011).

There is no doubt then that the school has a vital role to play in the development and building of resilience in learners. Schools can fulfil this role by encouraging learners to participate in activities that develop skills to counterweigh, support or strengthen their response against stress linked to the challenges experienced as a result of poverty. When describing the crucial role of education within the context of poverty issues, Hoffman (2006) explains that education should aim to enhance learners' capability by strengthening the influences of teaching, learning and human development. More specifically, Hoffman (2006) advises that education should be aimed at enhancing learners' ability to think critically and creatively, to solve problems, to make informed decisions, to cope with and manage new situations, and learn effective ways of communicating. Education should include the development of social skills that encourage

appropriate ways of dealing with stress, anger and frustration and other emotional challenges that could lead to behavioural difficulties. In communities where poverty is rife, teachers can also contribute to meeting the basic security and learning needs of the children by providing supportive learning activities and material in safe learning environments.

Poverty and other factors linked to low socio-economic status have been identified here as a major factor contributing to learner exclusion and learner challenging behaviours. Another major contributing factor within the South African school context is that of corporal punishment. The discussion to follow highlights the historical use of corporal punishment in this country. The harmful effects of the use of corporal punishment are elaborated on, together with the reasons for its widespread continued use despite the deleterious effects.

3.3 The Role of Corporal Punishment

Within the South African context, apartheid ideologies remain rooted in many schools, and the way discipline is regulated varies from school to school (Dixon, 2011). Factors related to discipline and punishment are interwoven with the issue of corporal punishment, and the abolishment of corporal punishment remains a contentious issue in South African schools (Naong, 2007). Naong explains that the introduction of apartheid and Bantu Education in the 1950s involved the compulsorily segregated education for black children in South Africa, and that the system was significantly authoritarian. In African schools, corporal punishment was administered to both male and female learners, whereas in white English-speaking schools, this practice was mostly limited to the male learners. Schools that provided education for Afrikaans speakers were 'tough, and the rod was not spared' (Naong, 2007, p. 283). Prior to the laws and regulations outlawing corporal punishment in schools, and before the curriculum policy changes and adaptations in 1996, teacher-centred approaches to education placed the teacher as figure of power and authority, and this position was extended and maintained through the use of corporal punishment. Compliance was demanded and passivity encouraged among the majority of learners (Govender & Sookrajh, 2014). The authoritarian nature of schooling, interwoven with patriarchal values and behaviours, easily provided a context in which patterns of violence and aggression against children occurred without much question or argument (Mncube & Harber, 2013).

The Department of Education (2005, p. 2) defines corporal punishment as clear-cut actions by teachers that are inclusive of:

hitting with a hand or an object (such as a cane, belt, whip, shoe or ruler) slapping, kicking, shaking, burning, pinching or pulling hair; forcing someone to stand in an uncomfortable and undignified position; denying or restricting someone's use of the toilet; denying meals, drink, heat and shelter as a form of punishment; forcing someone to do excessive exercise.

While some teachers have substituted corporal punishment with other degrading or humiliating punishments such as verbal abuse, ridicule, isolation, or ignoring learners, these behaviours and actions by teachers are also not condoned.

Several legislative initiatives from the South African Constitutional Court have advanced the move to ensure a culture of protection for children, and these initiatives highlight the need to recognise children's rights to dignity and physical safety. These include the National Education Policy Act (1996), the South African Schools Act (1996), the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act 33 of 1997, and the Child Care Act 74 of 1983 (Soneson, 2005a; DoE, 2005). With the transition to democracy, several South African Laws were instituted to prohibit the use of all forms of corporal punishment. The provision in the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) section 28(1) (d) aims to protect children from neglect, maltreatment, abuse and degradation. Section 12(1) (e) provides for the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way, and section 10, asserts that everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected (Soneson, 2005b). Specific legislation that is relevant to behaviour management within schools includes but is not limited to the following: Section 12 of the Bill of Rights, as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) states that every person has the right to freedom and security. In addition, section 24 refers to every person's right to an environment that is not harmful to a person's health or well-being. Within the Bill of Rights, it is considered that disciplinary measures with reference to corporal punishment; are regarded as being of poor judgement when they are extreme, unwarranted and administered in an irresponsible or manner, when they cause physical or psychological pain and damage, and when there is no reasonable logic for the punishment meted out or when it is not age-appropriate. The Bill of Rights further states that positive discipline should be encouraged and supported, that self-discipline should be promoted and that exemplary, commendable and praiseworthy actions should be established through the regulation of behaviour (Soneson,2005a; Soneson 2005b).

With specific reference to the role of the school, the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) places the responsibility of ensuring that discipline is maintained within schools on school governing bodies and teachers. The Code for Educators, as drawn up by the South African Council of Educators (SACE), positions the responsibility on educators to safeguard the security and the best interests of learners first and foremost at all times. An educator is required to take the same measure of care with respect to learners as would be taken by a reasonable caring parent. While the South African Schools Act (1996) specifies that no person may administer corporal punishment to a learner at school, research reveals that the use of corporal punishment has, for a variety of reasons, not declined in schools in South Africa (Payet & Franchi, 2008; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Harber & Mncube, 2011).

The Department of Education admonishes that strategies based on degradation, humiliation and the withdrawal of self-respect are not effective alternatives to corporal punishment, asserting that learners who are stripped of their 'self-respect and self-esteem become violent, others become sad and withdrawn' (2005, p. 2). Further, they state that the consequences of corporal punishment include learners suffering from bruises and cuts, broken bones, damage to teeth and jaws, as well as internal injuries, and strongly advocate against such physical forms of punishment. Owen (2005) reports on a meta-analysis that provides a detailed preview of the effects of corporal punishment. While the meta-analysis was related to parental infliction of corporal punishment, the findings are relevant in highlighting the potential negative and harmful consequences of such practices. The report found that the use of corporal punishment is a contributory factor in children perceiving that violence and aggression is an acceptable way to resolve conflict and a powerful tool to reduce unwanted behaviour. The meta-analysis also revealed that the only positive outcome of corporal punishment was learners' increased immediate compliance. The negative outcomes however were significant and included the following:

decreased moral internalization, increased child aggression, increased child delinquent and antisocial behaviour, decreased quality of relationship between parent and child, decreased child mental health, increased risk of being a victim of physical abuse, increased adult aggression, increased adult criminal and antisocial behaviour, decreased adult mental health, and increased risk of abusing own child or spouse. (Owen 2005, p. 87)

On the international front, at least 20 countries worldwide have embraced legislation to prohibit the corporal punishment of children. A number of countries have outlawed corporal punishment of children specifically within schools and other institutions. The international movement to

invalidate the ethos and culture of corporal punishment is based on a growing understanding that children have rights that must be protected, and on the increasing evidence arising from various fields, including the medical, educational and psychological fields, illustrating the adverse effects of corporal punishment and that it is an ineffectual method of discipline (Soneson, 2005b). Despite the overwhelming evidence to support the disuse of corporal punishment, Rajdev (2012) relates that corporal punishment in both public as well as private schools is greatly entrenched as a common instrument with which to punish learners. Rajdev further contends that in India and China alike, teachers are revered and feared to such an extent that their level of authority is rarely challenged. Most children therefore prefer to remain silent and become afraid to speak out for fear that they may face additional negative consequences. Despite vigorous efforts to eliminate corporal punishment, it is still legal and remains a socially accepted form of violence against children in many parts of the world. Soneson (2005b) argues that this is due to the perceived inferior status of children in society, and to children's lack of authority in society. This perceived lesser status of children has prevented an absolute prohibition of corporal punishment in many countries around the world, including South Africa.

Naong (2007) provides some reasons for why, despite legislative prohibitions, some teachers choose to continue with corporal punishment and even risk charges of misconduct, disciplinary hearings and being fired from the profession. Some arguments by South African teachers for their continued use of corporal punishment include the notions that corporal punishment instils discipline and respect, that it encourages learners to work hard, that it maintains the power dynamic between learner and teacher, and restores a culture of learning in schools (Naong, 2007). In addition, teachers quote religious beliefs as reasons for their strict adherence to corporal punishment. Continued use of corporal punishment is justified by reference to the bible and a staunch Christian ethos of keeping the child on the straight and narrow path (Vohito, 2011). South African teachers also feel ill-equipped to deal successfully with classroom discipline and teachers maintain that there are no viable alternatives to disciplining of learners other than through the use of corporal punishment (Soneson, 2005a; Naong, 2007).

The legal movement that advocates for the prohibition of the use of corporal punishment have also been met with challenges. A case in point is the 2007 parliamentary discussions of the Children's Act Amendment 41 clause 139 regarding the proposal to outlaw corporal punishment (including the suggestion that parents would no longer be allowed to hit their own children in the privacy of their homes) (Collins, 2013). This particular section of the policy was

met with widespread protest by religious and political groups alike. Due to the overwhelming consensus against the inclusion of this section in the Act, it was removed. This example highlights the complex belief in much of South African society that discipline of children without the use of violence is outlandish and unreasonable. Despite all the evidence, both the public and politicians seem to believe that corporal punishment is not a form of violence, that it is essential for social rule, and that its elimination would lead to increased misconduct and criminality (Collins, 2013). This illustrates strong support for the belief that without violence there could be no discipline.

In this context, what becomes apparent is that discipline is often equated with punishment. Although discipline constitutes an important element of schooling, its objective is that a learner develops a personal sense of responsibility for his/her behaviour (Du Plessis & Looock, 2006; Erasmus, 2009). A significant difference between discipline and punishment is that punishment aims to manage and control a learner's behaviour, while discipline is seen to be developmental with the aim of helping learners to better understand their own actions and behaviour, to help them become resourceful in taking the initiative and being responsible for their choices while respecting themselves and others (Attig, 2006). Punishment, on the other hand is commonly concerned with an action or penalty that is imposed upon a person for breaking a rule/s or for showing improper conduct, and the objective is to control or stop unwanted behaviours through negative means. Punishment therefore serves as a powerful tool used by an authority figure to remove unwanted cognitive or affective behaviours in order to instil compliance and correction (Singh, 2008). Negative types of punishment include all types of corporal punishment as well as negative verbal reprimands and disapproval. Authors Attig (2006), Singh (2008), and Erasmus (2009) confirm that these negative forms of discipline offer only humiliation and discouragement to the recipient. While punishment may fulfil a short-term goal of preventing misbehaviour, it interferes with the accomplishment of the long-term goal of the development of self-control in the learner. The argument is that negative discipline does not present the learner with any opportunities to learn new ways of behaving. Furthermore, it does not support the learner to find alternative cognitive, emotional or lifestyle behaviours and conduct tools that would help him/her to conduct himself/herself in an appropriate manner in relation to his/her social situation at a particular time (Squelch 2000).

Effectively managing behavioural difficulties continues to be a complex problem in schools. Internationally, researchers have found that general approaches to challenging behaviours are

very often unsuccessful and may actually exacerbate these behaviours (Sherrod et al., 2009). As stated previously, commonly used reactionary solutions such as suspensions and expulsions appear to be inadequate in resolving or diminishing the problem. There continues to be a need for the restructuring of discipline systems towards more effective discipline and support strategies that will provide learners with a safe environment and encourage learning (Muscott et al., 2004; Sugai & Homer, 2009).

3.4 Common Classroom Behaviour Management Strategies within the South African Context

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (84 of 1996) governs the disciplinary practices in local schools. The Act dictates that ‘no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner’ (Republic of South Africa, 1996c, p. 8). Despite the legal prohibition, it is often the case that due to cultural, religious and or traditional beliefs, as well exasperation amidst a lack of alternative strategies, the use of corporal punishment is still prevalent in many South African Schools (Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014; Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson & Pillay, 2000; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). In an attempt to support teachers in finding alternative, proactive measures to prevent the escalation of challenging behaviours in school, the South African government embarked on a national campaign concerning discipline in schools in the year 2000. The campaign culminated with a teachers’ guide, which included the recommendations that emerged from the campaign. The National Education Department then published and distributed this guide titled *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, The Learning Experience: A Practical Guide for Educators*, to all schools nationally (DoE 2000).

The strategies within the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (ATCP) guide highlights the value of effective communication, respect and positive educational interactions between teachers and learners. The recommended disciplinary strategies to manage challenging behaviour include verbal threats, detention, demerits, community work and menial physical tasks (Moyo et al., 2014). The ATCP booklet however did not receive very positive responses and one media outlet reported that the guide was not helpful in dealing with discipline issues, arguing that the theories and strategies embedded in the booklet were not practically viable in the classroom (Marais & Meier, 2010). There is also evidence that many schools do not use the recommended ATCP, and in some schools it is incorrectly practiced, and therefore ineffective. In addition, the practical application of the ATCP has been cited by teachers to be ineffective, inadequate, and a trivial attempt by the DoE to support the management of behavioural

challenges in schools (Moyo et al., 2014). Common practices or strategies used by teachers as deterrents to challenging behaviour include, among others, asking learners to kneel on the floor, do menial tasks like picking up papers, asking learners to leave the classroom, and contacting parents to come to the school. All of these often prove ineffective and time consuming for teachers (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010).

It has been contended that despite the ATCP, challenging behaviour in schools has not decreased but continues to escalate (Moyo et al., 2014; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). Despite the ATCP advocating developmental and constructive discipline, peace, tolerance, cohesion, respect and responsibility, it has not been effective in South African schools (Moyo et al., 2014). The aim of the ATCP, to protect learners from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation have therefore sadly not been realised.

Negative, punitive discipline is often the result of desperate attempts to manage challenging behaviour. According to Bear (2012), in the absence of viable alternative strategies, schools rely increasingly on harsh negative discipline strategies such as suspension for even minor misconduct. Within the South African context, suspension and expulsion are possible disciplinary practices within the framework of the South African Schools Act (RSA 1996c) as well as within the ATCP (DoE 2000). Olley, Cohn, and Cowan (2010) emphasise that exclusive reliance on negative discipline measures is ineffective and is often counterproductive, as it denies learners vital learning time and undermines the overall climate of the school. According to Sharkey and Fenning (2012), suspension does not minimise behaviour challenges, nor does it instil or improve desired behaviours, rather it has been found to be strongly associated with increased misbehaviour, dropout rates, and a lack of academic achievement. In addition, Noguera (2003) contends that schools that suspend a large number of learners or use suspension frequently are often preoccupied with control and discipline, and that there is limited opportunity and time spent on addressing the issues that impact teaching and learning.

Bear (2012) however does argue that in some cases, suspension does act as a deterrent to negative behaviour. Bear suggests that suspensions can be useful in serving as a legal sanction. Moreover, when suspension is considered as rational and judicious by peers, and when learners are socially engaged in school (with peers and teachers), it also serves as an influential social sanction. In support of a fair process related to learners who are facing school expulsion, SASA

make the following provisions mandatory requirements for the South African schools code of conduct:

[it] must contain provisions of due process safe-guarding the interests of the learner and any other party involved in disciplinary proceedings. The code of conduct must also provide for support measures or structures for counselling a learner involved in disciplinary proceedings. (RSA, 1996c, p 8)

Such provisions assist in advocating for fair and reasonable sanctions. Bear (2012), emphasises that it becomes necessary for schools to create a balance between the aversive disciplinary measures such as suspensions, and positive disciplinary measures which are characterised by caring and supportive relations among teachers and learners. The argument is strengthened by Olley et al. (2010), who maintain that schools that build supportive and caring environments, coupled with high learner expectations of academic engagement and success, create opportunities for intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth, and reduce learner behaviour problems while increasing learner academic achievements. This is because caring environments aid the teaching and reinforcing of positive behaviours and self-discipline. In addition, when teachers are carefully engaged in determining the function of behaviour and effecting appropriate and meaningful consequences in a caring environment (Olley et al., 2010), the result is increased access to instruction and opportunities for learners to reach educational goals. This supplements the learners' development of a sense of belonging, connectedness and significance. An added advantage of this is that positive discipline is concerned with the long-term benefits that come from the use of effective communication skills, problem-solving skills, social interest (belonging), and self-reliance (Gfroerer, Nelson & Kern, 2013). Mihalas, Morse, Allsopp, and McHatton (2008) link the theoretical models of attachment theory, Bandura's social learning theory, and Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological development to help elucidate the value of positive teacher-learner relationships. These support the contention that teachers who attend to the atmosphere and climate of their classroom appear to foster more positive learner perceptions about their levels of caring for learners, ultimately facilitating increased outcomes for learners. Cothran, Kulinna and Garrahy (2003) have also asserted that learners who perceive the relationship with their teacher as one of care and respect, pay attention to the teachers' classroom management and classroom rules because the communication strategies the teacher uses are perceived as exhibitions of care. The PBS model encompasses these aims of creating safe and supportive learning environments designed to meet the social/emotional needs of learners, and will be the focus of discussion within the next chapter.

3.5 Conclusion

In Chapter 2, there has been a look at the various frameworks that considers the different perspectives within which behaviour can be defined and understood. An argument was made for the use of ecosystemic theory to support a holistic understanding of learners' behaviour and behaviour support. In Chapter 3, the various contextual factors within the South African context were highlighted to provide an overview of the complexities which impact a learner within the schooling system. Chapter 4 tackles the issue of positive discipline support that takes into consideration the ecosystemic factors within the school environment and PBS is presented as a behaviour support tool to support South African schools in the management of behavioural challenges.

CHAPTER 4: THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MODEL (PBS) FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

There is a persistent need for strategies and practices that extend beyond punitive measures, which aid the development of school customs and mores that are based on non-violence and that promote positive self-discipline. The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model is one such approach and has been characterised by Sherrod et al. (2009) as a proactive and preventive method to reduce challenging behaviour in schools. Sherrod et al. explain that schools that chose to implement the model aim to create environments that engender pro-social behaviour, thereby deterring challenging behaviours before they occur. A result of this determined effort to enhance positive social and academic development is a decrease in punitive measures, and the development of more effective interventions for challenging behaviours.

Although I have not been able to find much research on the value of PBS in the South African context, on an international level, the approaches and models of behaviour support that have been found to be effective are those associated with multi-levelled or tiered intervention processes such as those of PBS (Muscott et al., 2004). In addition, Gore, McGill, Toogood, Allen, Hughes, Baker, Hastings, Noone and Denne (2013) highlight that systematic meta-analysis reviews of single case studies as well as small group studies and randomised trials have reported significant reductions in challenging behaviours following PBS interventions. Inclusive Directions (2016/2017) also describes research related to the effectiveness of PBS spanning several decades with evidence to support its use in adults, young children, people with developmental or intellectual disabilities, as well as children who present with emotional and behavioural difficulties and people with acquired brain injury who display behavioural challenges.

Of particular value within the model is its focus on systemic support and systemic change in the creation of a positive school climate. PBS is based on the scientific assumption that human behaviour, while affected by a complex mix of biological, societal, and learning factors, can change as a result of the actions of others in a supportive, care-giving role and is for people from all cultures, ages, and levels of competence (Dunlap, Sailor, Horner, & Sugai, 2009 p. 4). PBS differs from social learning theory in that the functional account of challenging behaviour that takes cognisance of the various antecedents of behavioural challenge is a fundamental component of PBS. Functional assessments, together with systems analysis, are used to help

formulate the wider context in which the challenging behaviour operates and is maintained. This may, where necessary, include learner self-management support, psycho-educational assessments and/or therapeutic interventions with caregivers (MacDonald & McGill, 2013). With regard to its application therefore, PBS commits to a combination of behavioural, cognitive, biophysical, social, developmental, and environmental psychology.

Sugai & Simonsen (2012) identify the following fundamental features of PBS:

- Learner-centred outcomes that serve as the basis for selection, data collection and intervention evaluations. These outcomes are (a) academic and social, (b) individual and small group related, and (c) are judged on their educational and social value and importance.
- A departure from packaged or manualised interventions towards practices that are organised to support learners across the school a) school-wide, b) within classroom and non-classroom settings and c) with individual learner support.
- The establishment of a continuum of behaviour support practices and systems. This includes screening of the contexts within which challenging behaviours occur, ongoing monitoring of progress, team-based decision making that involves all the relevant stakeholders including care givers and professional staff, explicit monitoring of the reliability of supports that have been implemented.
- Continuous professional development for school staff, monitoring of the various phases of implementation and system-based supports (such as policies, leadership support and funding support).
- The effective, efficient, and relevant use of data or information to guide decision making. The data is used to (a) clarify the need and level of priority (b) match the need with appropriate interventions and supports, (c) evaluate the research base in the selection of the appropriate intervention, (d) determine learner responsiveness and the outcome of the impact, (e) determine the fidelity of the intervention, (f) determine the social and ecological validity, and (g) implement and adjust the intervention and support for efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012, pp. 2-3).

There is an emphasis within PBS on systems change and on the sociology of behaviour that focuses on organisational and cultural systems within which support is provided. The emphasis on person-centred planning and team-based decision making is of significant value as it extends behaviour support over and above the mere management of events in the immediate life space

of the learner. Instead, PBS incorporates a recognition that staffing patterns, cultural expectations, physical conditions of the school and classroom, and school organisational policy are also likely to affect the success of behaviour support (Dunlap et al., 2009). Here, consideration is given to the fact that decisions made by administrators are as important to successful behaviour support as decisions made by those in immediate contact with an individual. This comprehensive emphasis on the systems needed to nurture and sustain effective interventions distinguishes PBS from many other intervention approaches.

4.1 Historical Development of the PBS Model

The Handbook on Positive Behaviour Support describes PBS as:

a broad approach for organizing the physical, social, educational, biomedical, and logistical supports needed to achieve basic lifestyle goals while reducing challenging behaviours that pose barriers to these goals. (Dunlap et al., 2009 p. 3)

The emphasis within PBS is on an evidenced-based framework of support, which in turn places importance on the approach of the support (which is evidence-based), rather than on curriculum, intervention, or practice. The support aims to improve the use and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve both academic and behavioural developmental outcomes for all learners (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). The concept of the continuum of support within the PBS framework relates to the significance with which the evidence- or research-based behavioural practices are organised within a multi-tiered system of support (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Highlighted within this tiered framework of support is the mutual benefit of the relationship between academic and social behaviour and learner success.

PBS emerged in the 1980s and has undergone significant growth in the past 25 years (Gore et al., 2013; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). With its conceptual and empirical underpinning in applied behavioural analysis, PBS combines behavioural theory, behaviour analysis, positive behaviour supports, and prevention and implementation science, and aims to advance how schools select, organise, implement, and evaluate behavioural practices in meeting the needs of all learners (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The development of PBS initially began as an alternative to prevailing behaviour management strategies used with individuals with severe disabilities in specialised settings. There was growing concern in the mid-1980s over the ‘use of aversive and stigmatizing punishment procedures that were commonly implemented with the intention of suppressing serious challenging behaviours, such as aggression and self-injury’ (Sailor,

Dunlap, Sugai, & Horner, 2009, p. 51). According to Sugai and Simonson (2012), a demand emerged in the 1980s for more progressive means for the selection, implementation, and documentation of effective behavioural interventions for learners with behavioural challenges. In response to this, the University of Oregon directed research studies and projects that focused on the prevention of behavioural challenges through research-based practices, databased decision-making, school-wide support systems, as well as explicit social skills instruction. This was not done in isolation but together with a focus on school-team-based implementation and school staff professional development for the purposes of reaching desired learner outcomes (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Given their research in the area of behaviour support, the University of Oregon obtained a grant in the 1990s that was legislated by the Individuals with Disability Amendment Act of 1997 (IDEA, 1997) to establish a national Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS).⁹ The centre is today known as the National Technical Assistance (NTA) Centre on PBIS and has been in existence now for almost two decades. The key responsibility of the Centre is to research, demonstrate, and disseminate ‘evidence-based, prevention-oriented practices and systems that promote positive and effective classroom and school social cultures’ (Sugai, Horner & Algozinne, 2010, p. 1).

PBS has emerged as an effective alternative intervention support to learners with severe disabilities, and has become a fundamental part of the approach of many schools throughout the United States due to the recognition of the compatibility of PBS with the needs of all young children with challenging behaviours (Sailor et al., 2009). In addition, PBS has pioneered a response to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA 1997), which emphasises that the relationship between behaviour and learning must not only be considered, but must also be acted upon. Dunlap et al. (2009, p. 10) elucidate this contribution as follows:

The PBS approach consisted of functional behavioural assessments and the assessment based selection of antecedent manipulations, teaching strategies, and a rearrangement of reinforcement contingencies to emphasize the use of positive events and the reduction or removal of aversive consequences. These elements were based on applied behavioural analysis (ABA) research conducted

⁹ Information regarding the collection and shared resources of the PBS practices and systems is available at www.pbis.org.

in the 1970s and 1980s but assembled in a manner that emphasized ecological and social validity, lifestyle outcomes, and a pervasive respect for individual dignity.

Applied behaviour analysis undergirds how PBS is defined and practiced as a functional model of understanding challenging behaviours. The related assessment and intervention processes are also grounded in the use of applied behaviour analysis (Inclusive Directions 2016/2017). While PBS has its roots in applied behaviour analysis, it has been extended further in that the approach requires a great deal of flexibility, and emphasises use of contextual factors in understanding behavioural challenges and behaviour support. This includes an analysis of the micro and macro interventions that seek to implement principles and strategies for behaviour change at multiple levels within various systems (Gore et al., 2013). The approach therefore avoids clinical decision making that may be based on personal opinions or circumstances. Instead, decision making regarding behavioural assessment, intervention and support is based on the research literature related to challenging behaviour, as well the information and data related to the contexts and environmental situatedness of the person being supported. The values on which PBS is founded, the overarching theory and evidence base as well as the specific processes that support the use of PBS are recorded in Figure 4.

VALUES OF PBS	1. Prevention and reduction of challenging behaviour occurs within the context of increased quality of life, inclusion, participation, and the defence and support of valued social roles. 2. Constructional approaches to intervention design build stakeholder skills and opportunities and eschew aversive and restrictive practices. 3. Stakeholder participation informs, implements and validates assessment and intervention practices.
THEORY AND EVIDENCE BASE	4. An understanding that challenging behaviour develops to serve important functions for people. 5. The primary use of applied behaviour analysis to assess and support behaviour change. 6. The secondary use of other complementary, evidence-based approaches to support behaviour change at multiple levels of a system
PROCESS OF PBS	7. A data-driven approach to decision making at every stage. 8. Functional assessment to inform function-based intervention 9. Multicomponent interventions to change behaviour (proactively) and manage behaviour (reactively). 10. Implementation support, monitoring and evaluation of interventions over the long term.

Figure 4: Values, Theory and Processes of PBS

Source: Gore et al., 2013, p 16.

4.2 The Ecosystemic Focus of PBS

The theoretical description of PBS that takes into account its ecological focus is ‘functional contextualism’, which highlights the importance of the ecology of both the specific problem behaviour as well as the environments within which behaviour support is provided (McIntosh et al., 2010). In view of this, PBS focuses on the construction of ecosystems that promote desired behaviours and minimise the development of challenging behaviours (Dunlap et al., 2009). It is therefore significantly different from previous models of behaviour modification, which relied heavily on the use of specific, sometimes aversive, intervention techniques without a clear or detailed understanding of the contextual factors underpinning the individual’s behaviour (Gore et al., 2013). Within PBS practices, there is an outright rejection of methods that may involve the deliberate or conscious infliction of pain, limitation of freedom, or any unnecessary constraints and restrictions on learners who present with challenging behaviours (Singer & Wang, 2009).

PBS acknowledges that challenging behaviours are a representation of a learner’s best attempt to exert influence and control over his/her life. Challenging behaviour should be primarily understood as behaviour that is learned, and it should be taken into account that such behaviour develops and is maintained within (a) the context of an individual’s abilities and needs (including their physical and mental health) as well as (b) being influenced by the social and physical environment(s) within which the behaviour occurs (Gore et al., 2013). Behaviour has an impact on the environment, and the environment prompts certain behavioural actions. Thus, the function of behaviour may be conceptualised as the product of interaction between the environmental context and the behaviour.

In light of this conceptualisation, it can be argued that challenging behaviour occurs within specific contexts. The most effective way to determine what the function of the learner’s behaviour is, is to seek to identify the circumstances within which the behaviour occurs. The frequency and intensity of the behaviour within the specific context also yields meaningful data that helps to determine the function the behaviour seeks to serve in that context. Literature suggests that challenging behaviour is often maintained by social consequences of the behaviour and that such behaviour relates to ongoing interactions with significant others in the learner’s life context (e.g. teachers, peers, family members, etc.) (MacDonald & McGill, 2013; Gore et al., 2013). Taking into account the risk factors in learners’ childhood experiences as described by Perkins and McLaughlin (2015 in section 2.3) together with the prevalence of the

same within the province of Limpopo, (such as that of poverty, child headed families, single parent homes, parental substance abuse, child abuse and neglect-highlighted in sections 1.5.1-1.5.2), it is possible that any behaviour support model that does not take into account both the predictive risk factors and protective factors, can be considered wholly inadequate for the contextual influences present within the province of Limpopo. It is largely the PBS ecological focus on contextual functionalism that makes it a valuable tool for its exploration of value and effectiveness within the province of Limpopo.

The ecological systems focus within PBS considers the school as a microsystem within the broader system of the family, community and wider society. The school is a locus of proximal relationships that impact and influence how the collective actions within the school contribute to how the school is characterised (OSEP, 2004). From this perspective, the individual learners, teachers and parents are considered the primary context for systems change. While individuals within schools engage in behaviours, and organisations such as schools consist of a group of individuals, systems are what is needed to support the collective use of best practices by individuals within the school system (Sugai & Horner 2009). PBS therefore gives priority to the development of systems that assist in the adoption of processes and practices that fit in with and supplement the continuous efforts of school reform and development practices.

As a systems approach, PBS takes into account the various role players within the school and family system, and considers multiple areas of support as vital (McIntosh et al., 2010). The practice of PBS therefore compels stakeholders (learners, families/caregivers and professional support persons) to participate as valued behaviour change agents as well as persons for whom quality of life enhancements may form a part of the assessment and intervention process (Gore et al., 2013). The participation of stakeholders ensures that the behavioural support and intervention targets are carefully selected and achievable within the learner's life contexts. In addition, since the behaviour and wellbeing of other stakeholders is also intricately linked to how challenging behaviour is developed and is maintained for the learner, stakeholder participation is considered imperative for delivery of durable changes within the learner's life world contexts.

By involving stakeholder participation and contributions within the development of the PBS support plan, ecological support strategies are more accurately aimed at removing the

‘mismatches that may be found between the learners’ needs and characteristics and their physical, interpersonal and service environments’ (LaVigna & Willis, 2012, p. 186). Such personalisation of both the assessment and support arrangements steers clear of an exclusive focus on antecedent-behaviour-consequence contingency relationships, but rather considers a multi-element, non-linear approach to understanding and support of challenging behaviour (Gore et al., 2013). The ecological determinants of PBS therefore enable inherently creative and innovative approaches to providing behavioural support and development within the school contexts.

4.3 Implementation of the Positive Behaviour Support Model

As a tiered prevention model, PBS promotes a combination of strategies to address behavioural, cognitive and affective functions of learners’ behaviour, and advocates the development of positive behavioural interventions and supports that tap each of these areas (Centre for Effective Collaboration and Practice, 1998). The tiered model offers a continuum of behaviour support and can be implemented across three levels within the school setting. These tiers include School-Wide Behaviour Support, Classroom-Wide Behaviour Support and Individual Learner Support. A brief description of the various support levels are given in the Figure 5 that follows. For the purpose of this study however, positive behaviour support strategies that could be practiced within the context of the individual teacher’s classroom were given the most attention as the respondents were classroom practitioners. Positive behaviour support interventions and strategies within tier two and tier three were feasible for the sample in this study.

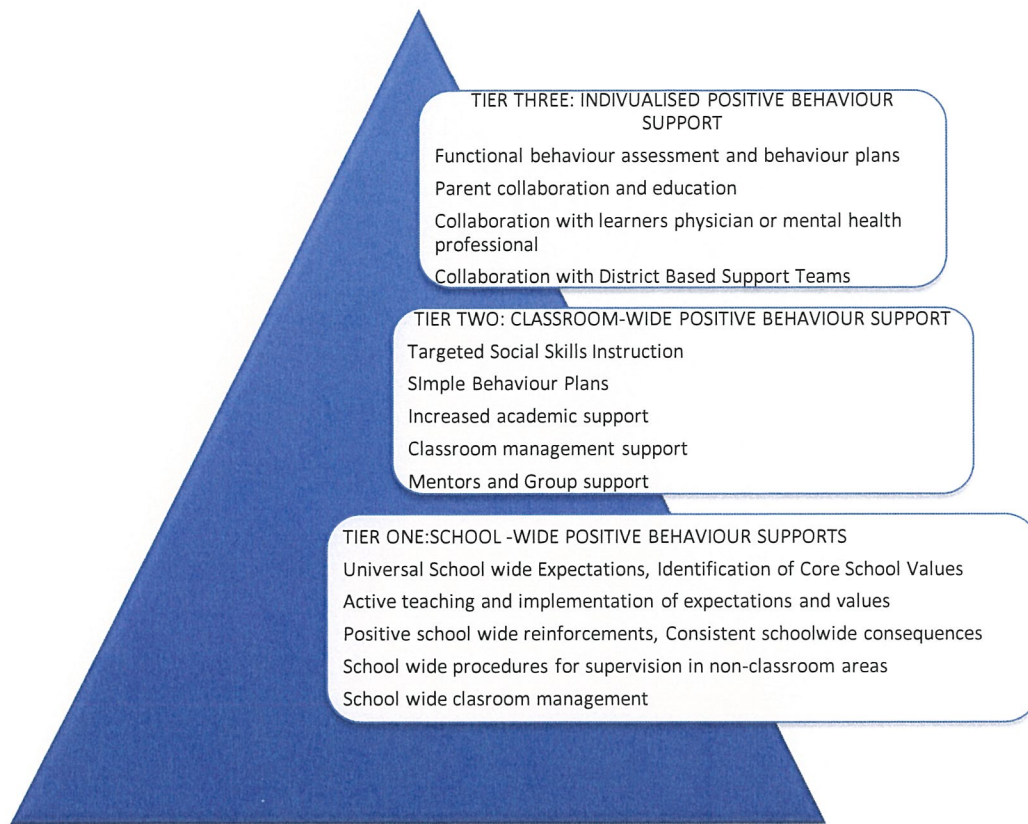


Figure 5: PBS Tiered Intervention and Support

Source: adapted from OSEP (2004)

4.3.1 PBS Tier One Implementation

At the primary tier (Tier 1) of intervention and support, strategies are directed to all learners in the school. At this school-wide level, the PBS model of support includes approaches that use reinforcement through explicit teaching of appropriate behaviour, and acknowledging expected behaviours while consistently applying clear consequences for inappropriate behaviours across the school (Sherrod et al., 2009). At this tier, PBS integrates behaviour practices, behavioural data and ecosystems information to achieve the behavioural outcomes valued by the school (McIntosh et al., 2010). School discipline strategies and practices are developed, adjusted and then tailored to suit the context of a particular school, including the school's culture, strengths and the needs of its learner population. School personnel assess and adjust behaviour support interventions based on data or information, such as the number of office discipline referrals and suspensions, as well as data regarding the perceptions of school climate and learner academic achievement (Sugai & Horner, 2009). To ensure that interventions and supports are effective in addressing the schools contextual objectives, collecting data before and throughout

implementation of interventions is central to the PBS model. Behaviour support practices are therefore informed by the data and assessed in light of outcomes defined by the relevant stakeholders, including learners, parents/caregivers, teachers, and community partners (McIntosh et al., 2010). Sherrod et al. (2009) report that this has resulted in documented changes in both learners and staff personnel in relation to how positive behaviour is supported.

Throughout the implementation of all the tiers of the PBS model, teachers are considered to be an essential part of the learners' systemic support. This is because teachers function within the learners' micro and mesosystems through their interaction within the learners in the classroom and in their interactions with the learners' peers, family members and community. The teacher, when considering various environmental factors that may negatively impact learners' behaviour, seeks to reduce or eliminate these within the classroom. There are several ways identified by Lewis, Jones, Horner and Sugai (2010) that teachers within the classroom microsystem can be instrumental in reducing the occurrence of challenging behaviour. These include:

- The active teaching of proactive social skills and a determined move away from a dependence on punitive disciplinary methods,
- Increasing their understanding and accommodation of differences with regard to the learners social and academic needs,
- Working towards the development and promotion of adequate, consistent home-school collaboration and support.
- Maintaining consistency in the establishment of clear rules and routines to support learner behaviour and learning progress. (Lewis et al., 2010)

4.3.2 PBS Tier Two Implementation

At Tier 2 (PBS tiers shown in Figure 5), prevention and support strategies are developed with a focus on the various systems within the school. These include the classroom settings, non-classroom settings (such as hallways and playgrounds), individual learner systems or groups of learners who present with unique challenges, and school wide-systems (those that apply to all learners in all settings). Strategies are coordinated to support each system, and data are collected to determine the effectiveness of practices within each system (McIntosh et al., 2010; Dunlap, Sugai & Horner 2009; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Targeted interventions at Tier 2 include those recorded below. These intervention records also provide a database of information to measure its effectiveness in the reduction of challenging behaviours.

Tier 2 targeted interventions:

- Modification of procedures and/or increased supervision in non-classroom settings (e.g. assembly hall, corridors, playground etc.).
- Increased classroom management support.
- Check in-Check out procedures for learners.
- Targeted instruction in social skills and alternative replacement behaviours.
- School-based mentors.
- Simple behaviour plans that are function based.
- Simple Behaviour Contracts.
- Simple home/school behaviour plans that are function based.
- Newcomers Orientation.
- Increased academic support.
- Alternatives to suspension. (Alberta Education, 2008; Michigan Department of Education, 2010)

Implementation at all levels, and more specifically at this classroom-wide level, as well as at the Tier 3 level (individualised support as shown in Figure 5) requires a focus on learners' strengths and a proactive approach to development and use of social skills instruction (Lewis et al., 2010). To do this, teachers should take into consideration the strengths or protective factors as well as the risk factors related to the learners' environment and use the identified assets to build positive learning and social behaviours. Lewis et al. (2010) place significant emphasis on the value of the learner's communications skills, openness to learning, his/her frustration tolerance, psycho-social level of maturity, social skills, relationships, and learning styles as possible sources of valuable information to the teacher when planning and implementing social skill instruction. Similarly, the involvement of parents in collaborative diagnostic efforts are useful at this tier as they provide valuable information regarding the learner (e.g. physical development, health information, ability to accept rules and routines, attitudes towards learning) the learner's home and family background (e.g. relationships between the learner and his/her siblings and caregivers, social development as well as play habits) (Simonsen, Sugai & Negron, 2008). The teacher, in collaboration with the family, can then identify the strengths and needs the learner brings to the school environment and plan support accordingly. It is this systemic support that Dunlap et al. (2009), as well as Sugai & Horner, (2006) consider to be an imperative and an integral part of the PBS model.

4.3.3 Tier Three Implementation: Functional Behavioural Assessments (FBA) and Behaviour Support Plans (BSP)

Tier 3 of PBS interventions and support incorporates a variety of targeted approaches that concentrate on providing support to individual learners who need interventions based on challenging behaviours they present, and who also need these interventions implemented across various settings to be effective in reducing individual challenging behaviours (Lewis et al., 2010). Tier 3 intervention is considered necessary when behavioural difficulty is chronic/frequent, dangerous, highly disruptive, impeding learning or resulting in social and educational exclusion (Dunlap et al., 2009; Sugai & Horner 2006). Tier 3 therefore provides individualised and intensive behaviour support plans for those learners in need of further support in resolving severe behavioural challenges that have not been met by either Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions. Tertiary interventions include a process of functional behaviour assessments (FBA), which is a method for identifying the variables that trigger (antecedents), sustain and reinforce challenging behaviour (Lewis et al., 2010). Teachers need to therefore be reflective in thinking about their classroom practice, in reviewing their teaching methods, learning activities, and their learning and assessment outcomes in order to identify possible challenges that negatively impact learner behaviour. Sugai, Horner and Sprague (1999) have observed that in giving careful consideration to the purpose or function that the challenging behaviour serves (e.g. avoiding classwork that is too difficult or not challenging enough), teachers can adjust their classroom practice to ensure that work is relevant, pitched at the appropriate level for learners, and that positive behaviours are reinforced.

The FBA involves an examination of how the learner interacts with their environment and attempts to determine specifically where, when, and why problems arise. It includes an assessment of the learner's strengths and interests. It is therefore both a strength- and asset-based assessment (Bouwer, 2011; OSEP, 2004). The FBA therefore necessitates a collaborative team of learners, teacher(s), learners' parent/s, the learner where appropriate, persons who may know the learner well (this may include positive peer influences or members of the learner's extended family), relevant support staff (psychologist, speech/occupational therapist, medical doctor/school nurse, etc.), administrators (the department head, principal, etc.), and relevant district support personnel (Lewis et al., 2010; OSEP, 2004).

Following the FBA, a behaviour support plan (BSP) is designed by the collaborative team based upon the information gathered. OSEP (2004) explain that the BSP is implemented and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the interventions. The intervention plan is then

modified where necessary to ensure that maximum support is offered to the learner. BSP plans typically include components that incorporate individualised strategies in the areas of prevention of challenging behaviours, instruction in replacement behaviours, systems of individualised positive reinforcement, planned consequences aimed at reducing reinforcement of challenging behaviour, emergency interventions (if appropriate), as well as home/school collaborations (OSEP, 2004; Dunlap et al., 2009).

Recognising, respecting and accommodating the learner's family's varying ability to be active partners in the process, as well as creating a context for family participation by addressing family priorities and goals for the learner, is a crucial part of both the FBA and BSP. Of additional value is that the PBS model can be used to establish and guide the development of instructional environments that empower learners to learn and enable teachers to deliver effective instruction to all learners in the classroom and in the school (Michigan Department of Education, 2010; OSEP, 2004).

4.4 Value and Effectiveness of the PBS Model

In its approach to behaviour support, the PBS model places an emphasis on values of respect for the learner, relevant and meaningful learner outcomes, dignity and self-respect, normalisation as opposed to stigmatisation, as well as inclusion, person-centred planning and collaborative stakeholder participation (Johnston, Foxx, Jacobson, Green, & Mulick, 2006). Given this emphasis, the application of the PBS model is considered to be a valuable and successful alternative to the reactive and punishment-oriented approaches historically used by many schools. The use of the model also results in increased opportunities for teachers to devote more time to their teaching as opposed to managing learners' behaviour (Warren et al., 2006). McIntosh et al. (2010, p. 10) report that the use of extensive research has been key to the success of PBS systems in reducing discipline problems and promoting a positive school climate with existing school resources. With increased exposure and familiarity, it can be argued that more schools will experience the benefits of using PBS strategies and become increasingly proactive in establishing school environments that are more conducive to learning (Warren et al., 2006).

PBS is recorded to have been used widely in primary and secondary school settings in the UK, USA and Australia (Hemmeter, Fox, Jack & Broyles, 2007). PBS has been implemented effectively in overseas schools, supporting teachers' efforts to address young children's challenging behaviour and to build their social and emotional competence (Benedict et al.,

2007, p. 191). The Michigan Department of Education (2010) highlights the value of the implementation of PBS and reports that it is a useful tool in attending to the behavioural needs of all learners, with supported, evidence-based strategies. This affords a school the opportunity to create the “right fit” for them, so that practices are relevant and appropriate to their specific context and are sustainable over time (Michigan Department of Education 2010). The behaviour support practices are easy to implement and do not have to overwhelm staff, given the limited time and resources that schools generally experience, and this assists in creating a positive school climate. The result is increased instructional time in the classroom and fewer behavioural challenges.

Kelm and McIntosh (2012) indicate several studies that have documented the value of PBS in schools (McIntosh, Bennett & Price, 2011; Hallinan, 2008; Montalvo, Mansfield, & Miller, 2007; Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005, Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010). Findings from these studies have shown decreased levels of challenging behaviours, increased academic achievement, increased learner perceptions of safety within schools, as well as increased levels of teacher efficacy to manage challenging behaviours. In a study by LaVigna and Willis (2012, p. 194), the following has been recorded regarding the efficacy of PBS:

PBS appears to be effective for the most severe problems (as well as less severe problems), for high-rate behaviour (as well as low-rate behaviour), and for behaviour problems exhibited by people who live in institutional settings (as well as for people who live in the community). Further, it appears to be a cost-effective approach that can be widely taught and disseminated to all people working in the field, including direct service workers.

Despite a large body of evidence in support of the value and effectiveness of PBS, there are also some concerns. A critique by Johnston et al. (2006) posits that within the published studies of PBS, some evaluations have reasonable designs and longitudinal methods of evaluations. Their criticism is that the evaluations of PBS interventions are often more descriptive than experimental, which makes them less objective. It is therefore challenging to determine the critical features and effects of interventions within the PBS model. These authors add, that while the PBS movement is not without its merits, the model has been driven more by ‘ideological and marketing interests than by research findings and professional considerations’ (Johnston et al., 2006, p. 69).

In rebuttal however, McIntosh et al. (2010, p. 9) assert that there is sufficient evidence that the use of PBS produces ‘measurable and durable reductions in disruptive behaviours across school settings as well as lasting implementation of empirically supported practices by school

personnel'. They further argue that as a result of an increasing research base, it has emerged that PBS meets the three criteria for being considered as an evidence-based practice. Evidence-based practices are deemed to have met the following criteria:

- (a) multiple randomized controlled trials, (b) completed by different researchers (including research teams that did not develop the intervention), and (c) showing significant effects on a range of important student outcomes'.
- (McIntosh et al., 2010, p. 9)

Systematic evaluations have also shown a significant relationship between the implementation of school-wide strategies and reduction in challenging behaviours in specific settings within the school, such as playgrounds and classrooms. Research also reveals reductions in suspensions as well as perceptions of improved school safety and perceptions of improved academic behaviour. Other findings report a significant increase in appropriate social behaviour with concomitant decreases in aggressive social behaviour (McIntosh et al., 2010).

As is the case with any growing practice, there is a need for continued and rigorous research. There is consensus among researchers that continued attention should be dedicated to understanding and improving the interaction between schools implementing PBS efforts and the wider systems in which they operate. Supportive engagements need to be encouraged by school districts, education national offices, social service agencies and community stakeholders. This interaction will be critical to increasing the likelihood that PBS efforts will be sustainable in the long term (McIntosh et al., 2010; LaVigna & Willis, 2012). These authors state that although evidence for the link between PBS efforts and improved academic performance already exists, more extensive research examining this relationship is needed in order to motivate the need for PBS to become a priority in schools.

4.5 Challenges Related to Implementation of the PBS Model in Relation to Teacher Education

Despite significant accounts of the effectiveness and value of the PBS model in schools (Warren et al., 2006), given the many responsibilities of teachers nowadays, there is nothing to guarantee that they will embrace the use of the model. Even with appropriate guidance, individual teachers can still meet with challenges implementing and sustaining effective practices. It is contended that 'the priority of a particular practice depends on its perceived value to implementers, recipients, and stakeholders in achieving important outcomes' (McIntosh et al., 2010, p. 12). High-priority practices drive efforts to persevere, and diminished priority often signals a lack of determination to forge ahead with implementation. In light of the wide range

of initiatives competing for priority in school systems, it is understandable that initiatives can fail once priority shifts to other practices (McIntosh et al., 2010).

A further concern is that the education of teachers in the use of the PBS model may require instruction in a broad range of aspects, including 'systems theory, psychology, human development, and education, as well as the values embedded in the social constructs of, full inclusion, person and family centred planning, and self-determination' (Johnston et al., 2006, p. 56). The challenge is that because PBS is usually offered in non-academic settings to individuals with varied backgrounds, the scope needs to be restricted in breadth and depth. While this study is arguing for PBS to be included as a pre-service education module, the critique of Johnston et al. (2006) remains a valid one. Even at pre-service education levels, an integration of the education curriculum will be necessary to incorporate the wide range of areas to be covered in equipping teachers with the use of the PBS model. It will therefore necessitate that strong cohesion and integration of courses become essential, and this will involve the equitable prioritisation of behaviour support alongside curriculum and pedagogy.

Literature on pre-service teacher education does not place significant emphasis on behaviour support, but rather focuses on content knowledge and pedagogy. It is however imperative that teacher education programmes incorporate effective strategies of general pedagogical development together with specific classroom management techniques. Shulman (1986) explains that teacher education should function to teach prospective teachers how to use ideas and theories in their classroom practice and should also help them investigate and discover how those ideas and theories affect those who attempt to engage them.

A further issue of concern raised within the PBS discussion is the challenge of cultural competencies of the teachers, which comes into play when they are required to incorporate multi-cultural competencies into the PBS model. Utley, Kozleski, Smith & Draper (2002), explain that this involves teachers having the capacity to respond to the unique needs of populations whose cultures are different from their own. It will become necessary then in pre-service education for issues of cultural sensitivity to be highlighted and interrogated. Within the context of the introduction of the PBS model at WSoE as part of the four year teacher education degree, it needed to be acknowledged that there were significant differences of culture and context between Limpopo and USA, Australia and New Zealand, where PBS is commonly used. In addition, challenges with regard to parent-teacher collaboration, overcrowded classrooms, lack of access to basic facilities such as running water and toilets

could impact the implementation of the strategies of the PBS model within the Limpopo context.

4.6. The WSoE PBS Inclusive Education Module

The PBS behaviour Support Model was introduced within the Inclusive Education module at WSoE in 2012. The selection and sequencing of the content of the module was impacted by the contextual factors related to the number of weeks per hour available for the module within the university calendar (course outline can be found in appendix K). Given that the Limpopo teachers were attending the module in their fourth and final year of their Bachelor of Education qualification, they had already been introduced to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model, to the psychology of education including child development, FP classroom pedagogy, and the principles of inclusion. The teachers were therefore exposed to the integration of the curriculum to facilitate the incorporation of a wide range of curricula areas and this was considered necessary to equip teachers to apply the PBS model classroom strategies (for example reflective thinking, and classroom management). The PBS Inclusion module also drew upon previously-acquired knowledge and practice as the teachers had been involved in at least two Teaching Experience practicum opportunities per year over their previous three years at WSoE. This created opportunities for the teachers to experience first hand the cultural and contextual differences between Gauteng schools and Limpopo schools.

The learning and teaching content of the module included the following:

- An interrogation of behaviour management strategies through the structures, processes and culture of schooling, considering who benefits from the current arrangements,
- Critically engaging with the language of Inclusion and difference/the other,
- Opportunities for Behaviour Support for all: Exploration of the Positive Behaviour Support Model,
- Opportunities for Creating Inclusive schools and classrooms characterised by co-operation, collaboration, abundance of success and understanding of differences.

As the module was being studied at a fourth year level, the outcomes included the following:

- To demonstrate insight in to the theory, research and policies of inclusive education. A review of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model formed part of the introductory lectures to the module. Content here included the identification and interrogation of exclusionary pressures in schools in relation to behaviour support.

- A second outcome was for teachers to identify and respond to school classroom cultures and practices which exclude, devalue or marginalise learners, and so promote access, participation and belonging in school curricular activities. Content areas here included Differentiation between Discipline and Punishment; PBS support (Classroom Behaviour Support, High Intensity Functional Behavioural Assessment Supports and School-Wide Supports).
- Teachers were also expected to implement inclusive positive behaviour support strategies in the South African Classroom, and
- Demonstrate academic skills such as logical argument and critical engagements with academic texts.

Various reading materials were selected to support the teaching of the module, together with additional resources which included a resource booklet: *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Classrooms* (Alberta Education 2008). Excerpts from the booklet can be found in Appendix L. The module evaluation formed part of the research data for this study and will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Important to note in the teaching of the module is that PBS as a model was not introduced to a specific school, but rather to teachers who were from different schools and occupied different positions within their schools (teachers and heads of departments). The content knowledge provided the overview of the underpinnings of PBS as whole, however the learning content focused predominately on PBS practices within the tiered model that could be implemented by teachers in their roles as classroom practitioners. At the end of the module, teachers were not expected to implement the entire PBS model with fidelity across an entire school. The tiered approach of PBS was relevant in that it is a good fit with the tiered South African Screening, Identification and Assessment policy framework (SIAS) (DoE, 2014) tool that the DoE requires teachers to use in their support of learners for inclusive education. The SIAS processes outlined in the policy are designed to assist teachers to assess the level and extent of support learners need in order to strengthen and improve their participation in the classroom. The policy acknowledges that challenges in learning emanate from a wide range of factors, including those within the learner's classroom, school, family and community environments. By providing guidelines and protocols that are to be followed when supporting learners' needs, the policy identifies the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders (teachers, education administration, district office personnel, parents and learners). The policy includes low levels, moderate levels and high levels of support for learners who present with behaviour and social skills challenges. The use of the PBS model alongside the SIAS policy framework document

can be a valuable resource support tool and mechanism to offer tiered support to learners who present with challenging behaviours in the classroom.

4.7 Conclusion

While it must be acknowledged that behaviour support strategies cannot merely be borrowed *ad hoc* from other countries in the hope of a ‘fix it’ approach within our South African context, the PBS model is considered in this study as valuable in relation to the key components that it targets, as well as in relation to behaviour support in school contexts and its emphasis on the role of the person-context interrelatedness. It is ‘purposefully focused on the model of environments that encourage desired behaviours and reduce the expansion and support of difficult behaviours’ (Dunlap et al., 2009, p. 4). The focus on the person-process-context-time model, as outlined by the ecosystemic theory highlighted previously, is considered integral to behaviour support within the South African context.

With the prominent focus on Early Childhood Development and the rollout of Education White Papers 5 and 6, there continues to be a determined focus within the National Education Department to enhance support in South Africa’s primary schools (DoE, 2001, 2001). There is an increasing demand for early intervention efforts that focus on young children who are at risk of developing patterns of behavioural difficulties in school (Benedict et al., 2007). Steps to meet this need must take into consideration systemic factors including large class sizes, heavy teacher workloads, poverty and lack of resources and parental involvement/non-involvement etc. Supporting children who are considered to have behavioural difficulties within mainstream settings requires engagement with behaviour management and support policies from an inclusive perspective (Evans et al., 2004).

CHAPTER 5: MIXED METHOD RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the research process, its design and methodology. It includes a case for the specific methodological choices made within this research, along with an explanation of the process chosen to generate and analyse data in relation to the research questions. The chapter concludes with a delineation of the technical and ethical issues that arose within the research, as well as a discussion of the theoretical challenges and how they were managed.

5.2 Mixed Methods Research

This research includes both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation. Empirical data were gathered through questionnaires administered to teachers, and through course evaluation and classroom observations at school sites within the province of Limpopo. Data was analysed using both statistical as well as qualitative methods.

Given that this research includes both qualitative and quantitative methods, the mixed methods research (MMR) was considered a valuable research design. MMR gives a researcher the opportunity to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods within the same study. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) assert that these methods could be better termed exploratory and confirmatory research respectively, and argue for their compatibility rather than their polarisation. In their discussion of contemporary issues in the field of mixed methods research, Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2011) consider the Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner definition of MMR to be the most comprehensive:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which the researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. (Johnson et al., 2007, p 123)

MMR is a research paradigm that has a distinct set of ideas and practices different from purist research paradigms of (post)positivism and constructivism/interpretivism (Denscombe, 2008). The basic assumption guiding the positivist and post-positivist paradigm is that reality may to some degree be logically known and causal relationships may be legitimately claimed through deductive logic and quantitative methods. In contrast, within the perspective of a constructivist and interpretivist paradigm, reality is considered to be socially constructed and understood from

a variety of subjective points of view. Within this paradigm, the social context is understood using inductive logic and qualitative methods (Gray, 2013; Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher & Perez-Prado, 2003).

Both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms embody distinct views of reality and modes of enquiry. Thus there are understandable challenges, debates and contestations regarding the appropriateness of integration, combination or tandem use of these two seemingly incompatible philosophical paradigms (Cohen, Morrison & Manion, 2011). Despite the contestations however, MMR has emerged as the third major research paradigm (Denscombe, 2008; Cohen et al., 2011). The two major positions of mixed methods proponents are the dialectic and pragmatic positions within MMR (Rocco et al., 2003). While these positions separate the MMR paradigm from other research paradigms, there are some aspects of MMR over which there is a 'relative lack of consistency or agreement' (Denscombe, 2008, p. 271). This tension is dealt with by Denscombe, who highlights that when 'subjected to detailed examination, inherent variations and inconsistencies also exist in other research paradigms' (2008, p. 271). It therefore, according to Denscombe, becomes necessary within any research paradigm to

accommodate a level of variation and inconsistency in its ideas and practices—treating them not as some kind of aberration or short-term problem that needs to be resolved but as an ongoing and inherent feature of the paradigm itself. (2008, p. 271)

The aim of such a resolve of accommodation despite existing tensions is to meet the need for a 'notion of paradigm that can be sufficiently flexible, permeable, and multi-layered to reflect the reality of social research in the 21st century' (Denscombe, 2008, p. 271). Increased interest in mixed methods research augurs well for thriving and continued dialogue surrounding mixed methods approaches, continuing the movement of the field (Creswell & Garrett, 2008).

For the purposes of making an argument for including both qualitative and quantitative methods used in a single study, I will outline both the pragmatic and dialectic positions within this research paradigm to provide a reasonable justification for the use of MMR within this study. Within the pragmatic position of MMR, there is a call for using 'whatever philosophical and/or methodological approach works for the particular research problem under study' (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 5). Gray (2013) emphasises that from this pragmatic position:

research paradigms are considered both valuable in their independent, separate forms and value is also found in combining or mixing methods in a particular research. Hence, pragmatism views the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study not only as legitimate, but in some cases necessary. (p. 28)

Denscombe (2008) states that within the pragmatic position, the decisions regarding research design and research implementation are made based on the consideration of the ability of the chosen methods to best meet the practical needs and demands of the research enquiry. He goes on to argue that '[m]ixing may occur in a particular study if the researcher decides it will help make the data collection and analysis more accurate or the inferences more useful' (2008, p. 274). A further motivation for using MMR is that, as a methodology, it seeks to evaluate the research in terms of whether it has enabled the researcher to find out what he or she wants to know, irrespective of whether the data and methodologies are qualitative or quantitative. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 23) explain that such a pragmatic approach is in no way a 'sloppy, anything goes, unprincipled approach', but rather it has its own 'standards of rigour' and these are a result of the fact that 'the research must answer the research question by delivering useful answers to the question put by the research'.

The use of MMR from a dialectical position sets up an integration of the post-positivist and constructivist paradigm to provide a synergy and fuller understanding of the research, thus strengthening the research (Rocco et al., 2003). Researchers using the dialectical paradigm within MMR consider the use of mixed methods to be an ethical antecedent to representing 'the various interests, voices, and perspectives prevalent in the research' (2003, p. 21). Within this position, strong emphasis is placed on continued sensitivity and awareness of what is 'gained through explicitly drawing on the two paradigms' different understandings of reality, knowledge, and the place of values in research' (Rocco et al., 2003, p. 21). From the dialectic position, MMR is also valued as essential in the 'uncovering of information and perspectives, increasing corroboration of the data and rendering less biased and more accurate conclusions' (Reams & Twale, 2008, p. 133).

For the purposes of this research, both the pragmatic and dialectic positions within MMR provide a compelling rationale for the use of MMR. This research seeks to answer both the 'what' (numerical and qualitative data) and 'how or why' (qualitative) types of research questions' (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 25). MMR as a research paradigm is therefore considered invaluable as this study sought not only to find out 'what' behaviours Limpopo FP teachers considered to be the predominant behavioural difficulties in their classrooms (numerical and qualitative data), it further sought to uncover 'what' their perceptions were regarding the management of behavioural challenges in their classrooms (qualitative data). The study also sought to determine what the FP teachers considered to be the factors contributing to learner

challenging behaviour (qualitative data). In addition, the study sought to determine if the Limpopo FP teachers found the PBS model helpful, and sought to answer 'how' and 'why' Limpopo teachers found the PBS model an appropriate and effective tool in the identification and support of learners with behavioural difficulties (qualitative data).

For this study therefore, MMR afforded the possibility to select the best techniques available to answer the research questions and allowed for the exploration of the research questions to the greatest possible depth and breadth.

5.3 Research Design

The MMR design used within this study is an explanatory sequential design (Creswell, 2013). This consists of collecting quantitative data first and then collecting qualitative data to help explain the quantitative results. The explanatory sequential design is one of the most popular research designs in educational research as the quantitative data and its results provide a general view of the research problem. Further analysis through qualitative data collection extends the general picture that emerges from the quantitative analysis (Creswell, 2013). Within this research, both the qualitative and quantitative data were gathered but not integrated in answering each particular research question. Cohen et al., (2011) explain that within such a design, quantitative data answers one question and qualitative data answers another question/s, even though both types of research questions are included in the same research. According to Creswell (2013), this type of design has the advantage of having the quantitative and qualitative parts clearly identified, which is useful for those reading the study as well as for those designing and conducting the study. A further advantage is that the design encapsulates the best of both quantitative and qualitative data 'to obtain quantitative results from a population in the first phase and then refine and elaborate on these findings through an in depth qualitative exploration in the second phase' (Creswell, 2013, p. 543). Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) identify this as a complementary framework for mixing methods as it involves seeking elaboration, enhancement and clarification of results from one method with the results of another method.

Within this research, the quantitative data were collected in the first phase through the use of survey questionnaires and this data provided answers to the Research Question 2: What types of learner behaviours do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers consider challenging and what are their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in their classroom?

Further qualitative data was then collected in the form of focus group interviews, classroom observations, as well as interviews with the teachers of the classes that were observed. The qualitative data provided answers to Research Questions 1 and 3.

1. What factors do the Limpopo FP teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviour in their classrooms?
3. How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice?

In addition, quantitative data from the module evaluation forms was used to augment and supplement the data related to Research Question 3. The research questions clarify the boundaries of the study and provided a framework for conducting the study. They gave rise to the type of data that was eventually collected and also aided in ‘organising the research and giving it relevance, direction, and coherence’, thereby ensuring a focused course of investigation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006, p 478).

5.4 Purposively Selected Population and Volunteer Participants

The research participants for this study were fourth year WSoE BEd FP Limpopo in-service teachers. These (210) teachers had undertaken the four year Bachelor of Education degree at Wits as part of the Limpopo Department of Education’s improvement plan for its teachers. In effect, these were qualified teachers who had been funded by the Limpopo Education Department to study at Wits to improve their qualification. These 210 teachers therefore formed the purposively-selected population for the study. Purposive selection involves the choosing of individuals or groups of individuals based on specific criteria associated with answering a study’s research question. In addition, purposive selection is a technique in which ‘particular settings, persons, or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be obtained as well from other choices’ (Teddlie & Yu, 2007, p. 77).

As indicated in the introductory chapter, the Limpopo cohort of teachers at WSoE were teachers as well as FP Head of Department teachers, with several years of teaching experience in the FP classroom. For the purposes of this study, these teachers’ practical knowledge in the field of teaching, as well their understanding of the specific contextual factors within the Limpopo schools made them well equipped to be partners in the development of an undergraduate module in the area of behaviour support to be considered for use by UL. This study sought to investigate the PBS model for its potential to offer much-needed support to FP teachers within South African schools, and specifically the province of Limpopo FP classrooms. It aimed to

support in-service teacher education initiatives within UL, and as such the research participants are a purposively selected population who have contributed to the generation of meaningful and specific data for the purposes of meeting the goal of the research outcomes.

Out of the purposively selected population, not all of the teachers participated in all areas of the study. Respondents were informed about the study and were told that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences. Respondents elected to be part of the study at various points in the data collection phases, and this was their prerogative. The option to allow the teachers to determine their own degree of participation, as opposed to sampling from the selected population, was considered necessary due to the fact that this sample of teachers were part of various other research initiatives within Wits University (e.g. in Genrich, 2015). It was hoped that as a result there would be higher levels of commitment and engagement from those who participated. It was felt that without this autonomy, research fatigue among the selected population could have resulted in low response rates and high levels of attrition.

5.5 Data Collection

The mixed method design of data collection consists of two distinct phases, the quantitative followed by the qualitative phase of data collection. Punch (2009) explains that when employing this design, the researcher first collects and analyses the quantitative (numeric) data. The qualitative (text) data are collected and analysed thereafter, and help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results obtained. The qualitative phase therefore builds on the quantitative phase of data collection. Punch contends that the rationale for this approach is that the 'quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem' (2009, p. 200). The qualitative data and their analysis 'refine and explain the statistical results by exploring the participants' views in more depth' (Punch, 2009, p. 200).

Figure 6 provides a summary of the data collection process in the sequence in which it occurred. It further provides a synopsis of the research tools and research participants. The research tools can be viewed in the appendices (A-E)

DATA	DATA SETS	RESEARCH TOOL	No. of volunteer respondents from the purposively selected population
Quantitative data Reconnaissance Phase	Survey questionnaires provided biographical data as well as information related to the types of behavioural difficulties the Limpopo FP teachers perceived as problematic as well as their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in the classroom.	Survey Questionnaire administered February 2012 (appendix A)	Eighty two (82) 4 th year B.Ed in-service teachers from Limpopo
Quantitative data Course evaluation following design and presentation of a 5 week Inclusive Education module using the principles of PBS	Module evaluation feedback forms related to the Inclusion PBS module provided data related to the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties.	Module evaluated in October 2012 by means of course evaluation forms, which included open and closed questions. (appendix B)	Ninety One (91) 4 th year B. Ed in-service teachers from Limpopo
Qualitative Data	Open-ended questionnaires highlighted the perceptions of Limpopo FP teachers regarding the inclusion of learners with behavioural difficulties.	Open ended Questions administered February 2013 Written responses to open ended questions (appendix C)	Seventy Nine (79) 4 th year B. Ed in-service teachers from Limpopo
Qualitative Data	Focus group interviews provided data linked to three aspects of the research: Factors that were considered to contribute to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms, perceptions of the FP teachers' abilities to manage these in the classroom, as well as considerations of the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties.	Focus group interviews conducted in February-April 2013 Further module evaluation through eleven (11) semi-structured focus group interviews (appendix D)	One Hundred and forty four (144) 4 th year B.Ed in-service teachers from Limpopo from a total of 11 focus group interviews
Qualitative Data	Observation data from the class visit in Limpopo schools provided data in relation to the use of PBS in the Limpopo classrooms. Teacher interviews following the class visits provided data specific to the classrooms within which the observations took place, thereby providing a contextual lens in relation to contributing factors to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms and the effectiveness of the use of PBS within the classroom context.	Classroom observations and semi structured teacher interviews in Limpopo schools during November 2013 (appendix E)	Four class visits (4) to In-service Limpopo teachers who attended the B Ed Inclusive Education module taught in 2012 Four Interviews with the same teachers of the observed classes

Figure 6: Summary of Data Collection, Data sets, Research tools, and Research participants

During the data collection phases, teachers from within the selected sample commented that despite having a keen interest in the study and what it sought to achieve, they had little time to participate, given the demands of their university study requirements. To overcome this challenge, the survey questionnaires were administered during lunch hour slots, module evaluations during class lecture times and focus group interviews were also scheduled during free periods on the time-table. Despite these efforts, many teachers reported that there was insufficient time to participate as they were busy with assignments, research etc. in the library during the times of data collection.

A total of 82 participants volunteered for their responses on the questionnaires to be used in the study, and 91 participants volunteered for their responses on the module evaluations to be used. Early in February 2013, a second questionnaire was administered. A total of 79 respondents participated in the open-ended questionnaire.

With regard to the focus group interviews, 144 teachers from within the purposively selected population volunteered to participate, and 11 focus group interviews were conducted. For the classroom observations, teachers self-selected themselves and their classrooms. During a lunch hour meeting, teachers were provided with information about this final phase of data collection. Teachers who selected themselves to participate therein recorded their contact details, the contact details of their school principal, as well as the physical address and district within which their school was situated. Five schools from this list were chosen by the researcher on the basis of convenience in terms of distance of travelling between the schools. The Limpopo Education Department was contacted by the researcher to obtain permission for the school visits. Following approval by the Limpopo Education Department (appendix G), the school principals were contacted by the researcher and invited to participate. Out of the five schools, all consented to participate though one school could not be reached on the day of the school visit due to logistical challenges finding the school.

5.6 Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this research were survey questionnaires, module evaluations, open-ended questionnaires, focus group interviews as well as classroom observations and teacher interviews at the Limpopo schools. Each of these instruments will be discussed below.

5.6.1 Survey Questionnaire

The data collection began with a survey questionnaire (Appendix A) of the Limpopo FP teachers' perceptions of behavioural difficulties experienced in their classroom practice and their perceptions of how equipped they felt to manage these difficulties.

The survey was used to gather initial data during the reconnaissance phase. Surveys are considered quick, cost effective and valuable tools to administer to entire populations or a sample population to gain a description of the attitudes, behaviours, and opinions of the population in relation to a research area (Creswell & Garrett, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2013). The survey was used at the beginning of the study to describe trends in the data collected rather than offer rigorous explanations (Creswell & Garrett, 2008). The survey was deemed useful and valuable in obtaining attitudes and opinions of the 2012 fourth year Limpopo cohort of teachers in relation to behaviour and behaviour support issues. The information from the survey, together with the additional data from the other research tools would 'yield detailed information reported in the voices of participants and contextualized in the settings in which they provide experiences and the meanings of their experiences' (Creswell & Garrett, 2008, p. 322).

The survey questionnaire was group administered, and the researcher was present to distribute and collect the research instrument, thereby reducing the turnaround time for completion and return of the survey (Denscombe, 2010). Typically, survey questionnaires should undergo a pilot phase (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Within this research, this did not occur as there was no similar sample population within which to pilot the instrument. Effort was taken to ensure that the items in the questionnaire were 'clear and unambiguous' and that the questions were appropriate to the respondents (Mouton & Babbie, 2001, p. 236). The items were structured such that they were succinct, and respondents could 'read an item quickly, understand its intent and select or provide and answer without difficulty' (p. 236). In addition, the process of group administration afforded the opportunity for the researcher to be present during the completion of the survey and respondents were invited to ask questions about any item on the instrument on which they felt further clarity was needed. Teachers were therefore able to draw on the researcher's personal knowledge about the context of the research (Denscombe, 2013). The

survey questionnaires were distributed during lunch time meetings of Limpopo teachers over a period of three days in one of the lecture halls on the Wits campus. The distribution spread over three days due to the fact that some teachers arrived a day or two after the administration of the survey questionnaire and requested to complete the survey as they felt strongly they wanted to be part of the process but were not available during the lunch hour in which it was previously administered. The interest by the teachers prompted the allocation of two further lunch hour sessions to complete the survey. Teachers completed the forms anonymously and returned them by placing them in a box within the venue where the meetings were held.

The survey questionnaire included a section for demographic information. The biographical data collected from the surveys provided information regarding age and gender as well as the number of years of teaching experience of each of the 82 participants. The gender and years of experience was deemed important information to determine possible trends among male and female participants, as well as possible trends among those who had more years of experience in relation to others.

Likert scales within the survey questionnaire were used to determine respondents' perceptions of behaviour challenges and how equipped they felt to manage them. Surveys are considered to be excellent tools to measure perceptions, attitudes and orientations within a population (Mouton & Babbie, 2001). The Likert scales within the survey questionnaire were adapted from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997). The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire which measures hyperactivity and conduct challenges. The subtests include an emotional symptoms scale, conduct problems scale, hyperactivity scale, peer problems scale and a pro-social scale (Goodman, 1999, Goodman, 1997). The SDQ Scales are available without copyright or charge at the SDQ website (www.sdqinfo.com) and do not require any specialised skills to administer. Three versions of the SDQ exist, which are the parent/teacher version for ages 4-10, the self-report version for ages 11-17; and the parent/teacher form for ages 11-17.

For the purposes of this study, the parent/teacher version for ages 4-10 was adapted as the focus of the study was linked to behaviour support for learners from grade R-3 (ages approximately 6-9). The adapted SDQ questionnaire presented respondents with a list of 21 learner behaviours. Respondents could indicate on a scale which of these behaviours they found least problematic, and which they found most problematic in Limpopo classrooms. The scale prompted respondents to indicate whether they found each of the 21 behaviours to be 'not a

problem at all', 'a very small problem', 'a slightly bigger problem' or 'a very big problem'. Respondents were then asked to indicate how well equipped they felt to manage these 21 behaviours. The parameters afforded respondents the opportunity to indicate whether they felt 'not at all equipped', 'very little equipped', 'adequately equipped' or 'very well equipped' to manage the listed behaviours. The learner behavioural challenges that were chosen to be included in the scale were those that the literature in the field considers to be common behavioural challenges within the South African context (Marais & Meier, 2010; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011). These included three categories of behavioural challenges, namely: Inattention/Distractibility/Hyperactive (descriptors here included easily distracted, concentration wanders, restless, cannot sit still), Bullying or Violent behaviour (descriptors included bullies others, fights with other children, hurts other children, cruel to others) and Defiance (descriptors included argues with teacher, does not answer when spoken to directly, refusal to comply with teacher's requests).

The section that followed, the Likert scales, consisted of closed and open-ended questions which prompted respondents to describe what they considered to be a behaviour support programme and to identify and describe any behaviour support programmes available within the schools in Limpopo. In cases where respondents indicated 'YES, a behaviour support programme is available' in the school in which they taught, a response to a subsequent question was prompted. This contingency question prompted respondents to indicate whether such behaviour support programmes were effectively used, ineffectively used or not used at all. This section of the survey questionnaire was useful in determining what, if any, behaviour support programmes were present in Limpopo primary schools and to determine how effective the respondents considered them to be. The information was also valuable in helping to gauge the respondents' understanding of what comprised a behaviour support programme and their impression of its effectiveness. Responses would also reveal whether any of the identified programmes bore any similarities or were wholly different to the PBS model of behaviour support.

A limitation of surveys is that there is a lack of flexibility, due to the questions being pre-set. Because responses cannot be probed and extended, the responses are quite restrained (Braun & Clarke, 2013). There was no room within the questionnaire for respondents to include any other possible behavioural challenges that were omitted from the questionnaire. It was also possible that respondents would not understand the listed behaviours, or recognise certain behaviours as problematic.

Given these challenges, the survey questionnaire was used in the reconnaissance phase of the research to provide a breadth of data in relation to perception and practice type questions. Depth of data was later collected through the use of open-ended questions, focus group interviews, as well as classroom observations and follow-up interviews with teachers from the observed classes. As such, the further research instruments provided opportunities for probing and extending responses, which could not be achieved in the questionnaire, thereby affording the opportunity to overcome some of the challenges related to limitation of survey questionnaires. The focus group interview questions were also broad, open-ended questions and therefore afforded room for respondents to share any other behavioural challenges that may have been omitted from the questionnaire or that perhaps were not considered problematic.

5.6.2 Module Evaluations

Following the survey questionnaire, an Inclusive Education module was developed using the principles of the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model and its applications to the school environment. The module was taught in the second semester (October-November) of 2012 in the sample cohort's fourth year of study. Evaluation of modules taught are a routine expectation of the university and are completed by students voluntarily. A module evaluation form was developed (Appendix B) and was used to determine whether participants found the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) model and its applications to the school environment a useful tool for the identification and support of learners with behavioural difficulties. Given that it is hoped that ultimately the teaching aspect of the PBS model will be of interest to the UL in relation to its envisaged FP BEd programme, the module evaluation sought to gauge the value that respondents gained from various aspects of the module. The evaluation tool was therefore closely linked to the aspects of content of the module, theoretical underpinnings, levels of accessibility and readability of the literature and readings used during the module as well as the practical application of the behaviour support strategies taught during the module.

The respondents were requested to indicate which aspects of the module they found most useful and least useful. Respondents were also required to indicate if they would put into practice any of the support strategies they were introduced to during the module and which strategies these would be. This was particularly important to assess whether or not the strategies were deemed practicably viable for classroom practice and would relate directly to the effectiveness of strategies within the PBS model. The respondents were further requested to indicate what

additional information they would have liked to receive in the module. This was deemed necessary to assist in ascertaining whether there was a particular aspect of behaviour support that needed greater elaboration or information that was not provided that respondents felt was necessary. This would then assist in re-evaluating the module content and making the necessary adjustments to ensure that necessary theoretical and practical applications which were previously omitted would be included. This would then form part of the recommendations made to the UL in relation to the UL BEd programme.

On a rating scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was very poor and 5 very good, respondents were also requested to rate the following: theoretical underpinnings of the module taught, the practical application scenarios used during the module teaching, and the level of reader accessibility of the resource pack material. This was deemed essential to evaluate the links made by respondents between the theory and the practice of PBS; to evaluate the level of accessibility of the reading materials (reader friendly, easy to understand), as well as the usefulness of the application scenarios (practicability within the classroom).

5.6.3 Open-Ended Questionnaire

The volunteer participants for both the open-ended questionnaire and for the focus group interviews were from the Limpopo cohort of teachers who had not yet completed the BEd degree at the end of 2012 and were completing courses that had credit/s outstanding. These teachers were expected to have completed their outstanding credits by June 2013. The open-ended questionnaire was group administered during a free period in the timetable. This type of questionnaire was chosen as information gathered from the responses was 'more likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondents' (Denscombe, 2010, p. 165). Like the other research instruments, the questionnaire was not piloted due to the absence of a similar sample group. The questions asked in the questionnaire were precise, unambiguous and considered vital for the research. Given that the questionnaire was group-administered however, the researcher was present to answer any questions and to offer clarity where requested by the respondents.

Considering Denscombe's (2010), suggestion that it is good practice to keep questionnaires as short as possible, the open-ended questionnaire comprised a total of four questions (Appendix C). The first two questions were linked to behaviour support expectations from a parent/guardian perspective. These required respondents to list and explain all the things that

they as a parent/guardian would expect a teacher to do if their child were to misbehave in school. The second question required respondents to list and explain all the things they thought would be inappropriate teacher responses to managing challenging behaviour if and when it was exhibited by their child. These two questions were considered valuable in providing an alternative lens to the respondents on behaviour support (a parent/guardian perspective), different from that of a teacher (which was required by respondents in the survey questionnaire and focus group interviews) and a university student (which was required from respondents in the module evaluations and focus group interviews).

Questions three and four related to the UL FP teacher education degree, and required respondents to provide some key focus areas from within the Wits BEd Programme that they thought would be valuable to be included in the UL FP degree, specifically within the area of behaviour support in relation to Life Skills as a subject. As indicated in Chapter 1, the WSoE and the UL partnership had implications for tertiary teacher education support initiatives in the province of Limpopo. This study was considered valuable for its potential contribution to the UL FP teacher educator programme in the development of a Life Skills module which would focus on behaviour support in the classroom.

5.6.4 Focus Group Interviews

Following the module evaluations and open-ended questionnaire, focus group interviews were conducted. In a mixed method research design, interviews are often used after a survey to flesh out views and information on the topic surveyed. It is viewed as a useful tool to access people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality (Punch, 2009). The hallmark of focus groups is their use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group (Punch, 2009).

A further advantage is that a group context has the potential to stimulate people to make explicit their views, perceptions, motives and reasons. While a challenge related to focus group interviews is that they often do not yield numerical, quantifiable data, they nevertheless provide greater coverage and of depth of issues than an individual survey. Furthermore, data from focus groups are considered useful in the triangulation of information from questionnaires and observations (Morgan, 1988).

This research utilised the most frequently used type of interview for qualitative research, which is semi-structured interviews (Denscombe, 2010). Although the researcher had a list of

questions to guide the interviews, the semi-structure afforded the opportunity and scope for the respondents to raise issues that the researcher had not anticipated. The guiding questions (Appendix D) assisted me to keep the target questions in mind, while affording a level of flexibility to provide respondents with the opportunity to discuss aspects that they regarded as important to them that may have not been expected or predicted by the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

A total of eleven focus group interviews were conducted, with between 5-7 participants in each focus group. The interviews were conducted for approximately one hour per focus group over the period February-May 2013. This was done during a time of day that was convenient for the group.

Focus group interviews are not without their challenges. Fontana and Frey (1994) identify the challenges that may arise as a result of group culture and dynamics to achieving balance in the group interaction. In addition, there is also the reality that respondents may feel pressurised to provide what they may consider to be socially acceptable responses. To overcome this challenge, I took on the roles of moderator and facilitator, and less that of an interviewer (Punch, 2009). I sought to facilitate and moderate the group interactions by creating opportunities for each member of the group to participate, thereby facilitating individual responses of all members within the group while exploring with the group the links that emerged from the topics within the discussions. The advantage of such discussions is that it provides direct evidence about similarities and differences in participants' opinions and experiences (Mouton, 2003). By following up on unanticipated issues and asking spontaneous questions, the group dynamics and interactions created a shaping and reshaping of the opinions as the participants reflected on, added to, and shared their similar and/or dissimilar experiences, while providing personal insights and reasons for them (Cohen, Manion, Morrison & Morrison, 2007). This assisted in overcoming potential power relation issues as each member's participation was valued and encouraged within the group.

In order to capture the range and diversity of participants' responses in their own words, the interviews were audio recorded on hand held voice recording devices and later transcribed. The audio recordings were downloaded onto a computer and replayed for purposes of transcribing the dialogues. The transcriptions were typed and the audio recordings were played again following the transcriptions to determine the accuracy of the typed transcriptions. An attempt was made to take field notes during the interviews, however this had to be stopped as it limited

the freedom of the discussion as respondents tended to wait for me to complete the note/s and wait for my attention before proceeding to talk freely again. In addition, some members of the group expressed concern about what I was writing, and it emerged that they were concerned I may have been writing their names. Therefore, to maintain a positive rapport, avoid distrust and to ensure that respondents were assured of their anonymity, the process of taking field notes was relinquished.

5.6.5 Limpopo Classroom Site Observations and Interviews with Teachers at the Sites

During November 2013, observations and interviews were conducted in the classrooms of four volunteer participants within four schools in Limpopo. These volunteer participants were from the cohort of Limpopo teachers that completed their Wits BEd degree in June 2013. Each classroom observation lasted approximately one hour. This length of observation was considered sufficient for the purposes of this particular data collection as the aim was to get a gist of the potential use of some of the PBS tools and strategies related to classroom behaviour support. Only practices that could be reasonably observed within an hour of observation were included in the observation schedule (Appendix E).

Observations are a useful research tool for witnessing the physical setting of the classroom as well as the interactions that take place within the setting (formal interactions, informal interactions, planned and unplanned as well as verbal and non-verbal interactions) (Cohen et al., 2007). Observations afforded the opportunity to gather data from the naturally occurring social situation of the school classroom. Observations are considered to have a unique strength in that they have the 'potential to yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 396). It is often the case that what people say they do differs from what is actually practiced in situ; observations are therefore useful in providing a reality check as opposed to relying on second-hand accounts.

Data from observations is further considered to demonstrate strong ecological validity, given that it is context specific and context sensitive. Observations afforded the opportunity to understand the contextual use of the PBS model. They further enabled my stance to be open ended and inductive, and for me to move beyond perception based data (i.e. opinions of respondents in interviews) and to access personal knowledge (to see things that might otherwise be unnoticed or ignored), and to observe things that participants may not freely talk about in interview situations (Mouton & Babbie, 2001; Cohen et al., 2011). In the case of this research,

non-participant observation was used, with me as the observer. My identity as a researcher was openly acknowledged. Trust was established between the respondents and I, as there was a history of engagement and interaction during their studies at Wits prior to my visiting the school. The respondents were therefore comfortable in my presence and the rapport yielded the advantage of gaining informed consent from the research participants (Denscombe, 2010). Informed consent was also sought and gained from the parents of the learners and the learners within the classrooms chosen for the observations.

Although observations can be a powerful research tool, their use is not without challenges. The most significant of these is the possibility that the researcher's perception of the context or situation may be influenced by various factors, and that this bias may impact the reliability of the data collected (Denscombe, 2010). The first challenge noted was that all the participant teachers offered me a space at their table to sit. As this position was at the front of the class, my presence was visible to all the learners. I was conscious that this may have impacted the learners' participation in the lesson as they often looked to see my reactions during the progress of the lesson. In three of the four classes, there was no unobtrusive space in the class where I could have requested to sit (e.g. at the back of the class). In the fourth classroom, the teacher's desk was situated at the back of the class. While this was somewhat less obtrusive, learners still, understandably, were curious and glanced back to look at me during the lesson. In all of the classrooms however, the teachers' relaxed attitude served as encouragement for the learners to relax with a 'guest' in the class and it seemed within the first 5-10 minutes that the learners were more comfortable and less distracted by my presence.

A further challenge to attempts at unobtrusiveness is that researchers do not observe and record events they witness in a 'mechanical and straightforward fashion' (Denscombe, 2010, p. 198). Factors related to 'selective memory' and 'selective perception' can lead the researcher to highlight some observed information and reject other information, depending on the researcher's 'familiarity, past experiences and current physical and emotional state' (p. 198). The suggestion to use an observation schedule to provide a framework for observation has been useful in countering the researcher bias challenge (Cohen et al., 2011; Denscombe, 2010; Henning, 2004). An observation schedule has the advantage of enabling the researcher to be alert to the same activities and look out for the same things across the contextual settings being observed.

In this research, an observation schedule (Appendix E) was used to gather data related to key aspects taught in the Inclusive Education PBS module in 2012. The observation schedule was adapted from the PBS observation tool that is available without copyright at the Centre for Effective Collaboration and Practice (CECP) on their website (<http://cecp.air.org/resources>). The definition and operationalisation of the behaviours that count as good evidence of behaviour support practice within the observation tool were the same as those to which teachers were exposed to as part of the Inclusive Education PBS module. What follows is a selection of the exemplars (examples of good practice/ teacher with-it-ness exemplars) and non-exemplars (examples of poor teacher practice/teacher with-it-ness non-exemplars) from the observation schedule (Appendix E) in relation to the areas of observation within the classroom.

The first area of observation was classroom climate management. Please see Appendix E for the exemplars and non- exemplars related to the aspect of classroom management. An example here was: *the teacher makes positive and affirming statements*. A non-exemplar was: *teacher seldom smiles at learners or speaks in a personal way to learners*. The second area of observation was lesson planning, which included lesson delivery/presentation, lesson management and time management. An exemplar here of lesson presentation/delivery was: *the teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities and presentation techniques*.

Learner engagement and learner management formed the third observation area. Non-exemplars of learner engagement included: *the teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either learners are not engaged in any type of learner-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised*. Classroom routines including organisational, academic and social routines were the fourth observation area. An exemplar here was: *The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organisational routines to facilitate the movement of learners, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedule*.

The final item on the observation schedule included rules and rubrics used to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to learners. A non-exemplar here was: *there are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, there are no posted rubrics for learner behaviour or work products*

Due to the fact that observation schedules have the tendency to decontextualise what they record, it was essential to also collect information about the relevant background (Denscombe, 2010). Together with the use of the observation schedule, contextual factors were recorded to collect information about relevant background matters such as class size, space available in the class for teacher movement, whether the class was a print-rich environment, etc. These observation notes enhanced understanding of the data that were collected.

Following the classroom observation, individual interviews were held with the class teacher for each of the four classes. These interviews were arranged either during the lunch break or during the teacher's free period. The interviews were semi-structured and were approximately 30-40 minutes in duration. The four interviewees were the teachers of the classroom that was observed. Two interviews took place in the teachers' classrooms during a tea break and lunch break. The other two interviews were held during the teachers' free periods in the staff room. The interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the respondents. The audio recordings were downloaded onto a computer and replayed for purposes of transcribing the dialogues.

The aim of the interviews was to provide the interviewer and interviewees with the opportunity to discuss their interpretations of the one hour observed period and to express how they regarded the practical application of the PBS model from their own points of view. The interview questions were therefore built on issues covered in the observation schedule in order to increase their salience and relevance (Cohen et al., 2011). The questions encouraged participants to comment on how they felt their lessons unfolded in relation to the key observed areas. The semi-structured interview format ensured that the interviews remained conversational and situational. In this sense, the interviews were not merely concerned with collecting data about the lived situations, rather they afforded the opportunity for knowledge to be constructed between the participants, thereby generating the data (Cohen et al., 2007). The result of such an exchange considers the human interaction central to knowledge production and emphasises the social situatedness of the research data (Kvale, 1996).

The semi-structured format further allowed for logical gaps in the data to be anticipated and closed by means of following up on an idea or topic, probing for further information, or asking respondents to specify or provide examples (Kvale, 1996). In addition, the use of the interview guide (Appendix D) further served to increase the comprehensiveness of the data and aimed at making the data collection somewhat consistent for each respondent (Cohen et al., 2007).

Cicourel (1964) reminds us however that the features of an interview situation, while unavoidable, may prove to be problematic. Cicourel emphasises that within the interview process, as is the case with everyday life, it is not possible to bring every aspect of the encounter within rational control. First, the issue of building trust, the social distance between the interviewee and interviewer and the issue of interviewer control can hinder a feeling of connectedness and impact personal egos within the interview process. Given the established relationship between myself and the respondents during our various interactions during their studies at Wits, the interviews were not hindered by poor rapport or feelings of disconnectedness or distrust. The respondents were also fully aware of the research aims and were willing to participate freely. There appeared to me to be a strong sense of interest from the respondents in relation to the potential links of the study to the UL BEd programme, and a commitment to openly sharing their experiences. The challenges therefore of respondents adopting avoidance tactics or holding back or not stating fully what was in their power to state was also largely overcome due the respondents' willingness to be very honest. This was evident given that all of the respondents were quite willing to say what was not working well in classroom practice in relation to the PBS model with reference to the observations made in the classroom.

While challenges have been noted here as being largely absent, I was also aware that the potential for respondents experiencing these were ever present, and that my own bias might also have prevented me from seeing this. In managing this challenge, Kitwood's suggestion is to incorporate within the interview process, as well as within the interpretation and analysis processes, a strong acknowledgement that the interview is considered as a 'medium for enacting or displaying people's knowledge of cultural forms' (Kitwood, 1971 in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 350). In light of this, I endeavoured to remain conscious that the interview is a social encounter and not merely a neutral exchange of information. This awareness included a consideration that the interviews were framed by the cultural repertoires of all the participants, by how participants make sense of their social world, each other and myself as the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007). To manage the potential bias, I took into account the features of role-playing, stereotyping, perceptions and understanding. By taking this into account, I acknowledged that 'no matter how hard the interviewer may try to be systematic and objective, the constraints of everyday life continue to be part of the interpersonal interactions that they imitate' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 350). It was imperative to take this into account because in the social world, people are affected by the process of being studied and 'the relationship between the researcher and social

phenomena is interactive' (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013, p. 8). I was therefore acutely aware of the possibility of respondents feeling some pressure to provide socially acceptable responses or feeling the need to impress the researcher. Ritchie et al., (2013) propose the use of empathic neutrality by the researcher. I found this useful as it created a space for me to recognise and accept that as the researcher I could not be neutral or provide a purely objective account of the findings. In acknowledging this limitation, the use of reflexivity proved a valuable tool to make my assumptions, biases and values transparent in the interactions with the respondents. I discuss this further in the section on the positionality of the researcher and reflexive practice (5.7.4) as well as in the section on ethical considerations (section 5.8.1)

5.7 Data Analysis

The data from the survey questionnaire and module evaluations were statistically analysed to describe trends about responses to questions. This was done using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The qualitative data (from the focus group interviews, open-ended questionnaires, classroom observations and individual teacher interviews) were analysed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model of content thematic analysis.

5.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The data from the survey questionnaires, as well as the module evaluation forms, were statistically analysed. Numerical analysis was performed using the SPSS software. This involved the use of non-parametric data, i.e. nominal data (such as male/female, teacher/head of department) and ordinal data (such as ordering of the rating scales) from the module evaluation forms as well as items the survey questionnaires. Steps towards validation of the data included the process of checking the data to ensure no mistakes were introduced during the manual entry of the data. This was done by inspecting the data files and checking these against the raw data sources.

Statistical formulae were applied within the SPSS package to carry out computation that provided descriptive statistics. Frequency statistics were used to determine whether responses tended to cluster around one or two or more categories on the rating scale. Mode calculations considered which categories on the rating scale were most frequent. Paired samples *t* tests were conducted to evaluate which behaviours Limpopo teachers found to be more problematic in the classroom and to evaluate which behaviours they felt equipped to manage in the classroom. The standardised effect size as well as means and standard deviations were calculated. Responses related to behaviour support programmes were coded as either Yes (a response was

given indicating a support programme is in place) or No (either the absence of an answer or a written response indicating no support programme is in place, or the respondent is not aware of one). Descriptions regarding what respondents considered to be a behaviour support programme or what programme is currently in place were coded as follows: 1 = Parent, teacher and child collaboration, 2 = behaviour modification, and 3 = equipping teachers with strategies to deal effectively. These statistics were then used to describe and present the data.

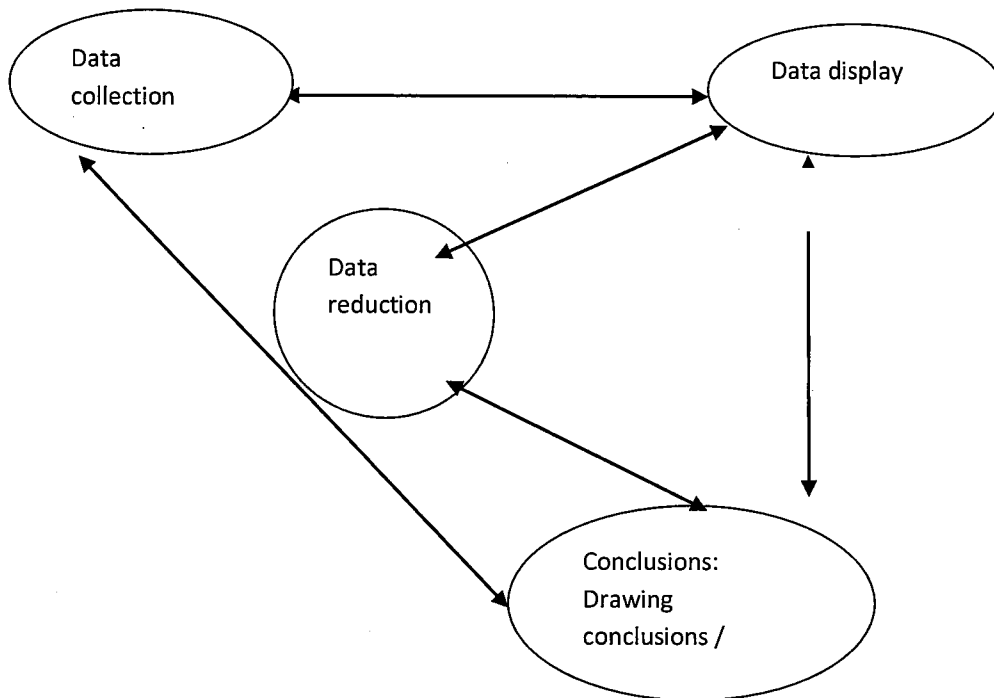
Denscombe asserts that the value of descriptive statistics is that it provides a 'straightforward yet rigorous way of organising the data, summarising the findings, displaying the evidence, describing the profile of findings and exploring connections between parts of the data' (2010, p. 241). This is an important strength of quantitative analysis because interpretations and findings are based on measured quantities and not on mere impressions; these quantities can 'in principle be checked by others for authenticity', providing a solid foundation for both the description and analysis of the data (2010, p. 241). An added advantage of quantitative analysis is that 'large volumes of quantitative data can be analysed relatively quickly' allowing for the subsequent swift examination of the results. Researchers are however advised against data overload and technicism, which entails 'a blinkered focus on the technical aspects' of analysis at the expense of the real purpose of the research (Denscombe, 2010, p. 269).

To counter technicism and data overload, tables and charts were used to provide a concise and meaningful way of organising the quantitative data and communicating the findings which included vital information such as a title for the tables/charts as well as information about the units being presented. The aim of this was to 'present enough information without drowning the reader' (Denscombe, 2010, p. 260). Visual clues and relevant presentations were provided to help the reader to interpret the tables and charts. Bar charts, line graphs and pie charts were used for these purposes.

5.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves 'organising, accounting for and explaining the data. It involves making sense of the data in terms of the participant's definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 461). The qualitative analysis undertaken in this research is based on Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model of content thematic analysis. The analysis has three main components, which are directed at 'tracing out lawful and stable relationships among social phenomena, based on regularities and sequences that link these phenomena' (Punch, 2009, p. 174).

Figure 7: Components of Data Analysis Interactive Model



Source: Adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994

Within this model, three concurrent streams are seen to be interacting throughout the data analysis, namely data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions. The three components are viewed as interwoven throughout the analysis. Punch (2009) provides an outline and overview of these streams and maintains that data reduction, as with the other two streams, occurs throughout the analysis and is not separate from the analysis. In the early stages of analysis in this study, data reduction occurred through editing, segmenting and summarising the data. The data obtained from the focus group interviews was organised by interview group. This grouping of the data from each of the focus group interviews enabled themes, patterns and similarities to be seen at a glance. Whilst this is considered to be a useful way to summarise similar responses, it risks the ‘integrity and coherence of the individual participant being lost to the collective summary’ (Cohen, Manion, Morrison & Morrison, 2007, p. 467). To overcome this challenge, there was a deliberate focus on individual responses, signalled by quoting responses in the discussion of the analysis. The use of direct phrases of the respondents was valuable in that they were more ‘illuminative and direct than the researcher’s own words’ (p. 467).

With regard to the data from the observations as well as the individual interviews, each classroom observation and teacher interview was looked at as a data set before moving on to

the next participant's observation and interview responses. Participants' responses given in interviews were aligned with the data from the classroom observations. Thereafter, the issues emerging from the data were drawn together across all four observations and four interviews to consider 'themes, shared responses, patterns of responses, agreement and disagreement, to compare the issues that each observation and interview raised' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 467). This assisted in preserving the integrity of the individual responses and enabled a whole picture of the interviews and observations across participants to take shape.

Coding was then used to find themes and patterns in the data sets and across data sets. The data sets included data from the module evaluations, data from the open-ended questionnaires, data from the focus group interviews as well as classroom observations and teacher interviews. Since analysis through coding can be done within and across the data sets, 'enabling chains, networks and matrices to be developed', coding is considered to be a means of data reduction (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 470). The objective of data reduction was to decrease the data without the substantial loss of information (Punch, 2009).

The construction of categories involves creating themes within the analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that categories can be based on criterion such as acts, behaviour, meanings, nature of participation, relationships, settings, or activities (in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 480). Coupled with the process of categorisation is the process of assigning items to more than one category to maintain the richness of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this research, both codes and nodes were used. Codes served as a label for overarching themes, and nodes served as subset categories into which different broad codes were collected. Nodes/subsets therefore served to show the interconnectedness of the data. Codes and nodes allowed for the capturing of both the complexity and comprehensiveness of the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) advise that the 'coding labels should bear sufficient resemblance to the original data so that the researcher can know by looking at the codes, what the original piece of datum concerned' (in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 480). Such typological analysis is described as a classification process. Creating typologies includes a deliberate assembling of all the data on 'how a participant/s addresses a particular issue, what strategies are employed, disaggregation and separation of the variations between the ranges of instances of strategies; and classification of these into sets and subsets; presenting them to the reader in an ordered named and numbered way' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 473). Coding therefore enables the researcher to discover patterns and broad areas of discussion. Following this process, re-examination of the data to discover intentions, function and consequences of the emerging discussions further assist in data classification and analysis.

Presentation of data relates to the display of data in a way that ‘organises, compresses and assembles information’ to aid its analysis (Punch, 2009, p. 175). Displays used in this research analysis included charts, diagrams and tables. Displays were considered useful in facilitating the organisation and summation of the data, and they also assisted in revealing what stage the analysis had reached and formed the basis for further analysis. The reduction and display of data also assisted in drawing conclusions about the data. Punch emphasises that although the drawing of conclusions logically follows the reduction and display of data, it also takes place concurrently with them.

In the latter stages of the analysis, data reduction occurred through drawing conclusions, as well as conceptualising and explaining the data. Strategies for testing and confirming findings began with those aimed at ensuring the basic quality of the data, and then moved to those that check findings by ‘examining exceptions to early patterns’ and conclude with strategies that take a ‘sceptical, demanding approach to emerging explanations’ (Punch, 2009, p. 347). This included looking for and reporting on ‘confirming and disconfirming evidence’ and ‘theory generation to account for the evidence’ emerging from the data in relation to the research questions (p. 347). Sets of evidence from each of the data sets were therefore considered and compared to each other to find patterns and to draw links for confirming/disconfirming evidence that emerged. In addition, by seeking alternative explanations and the differences within the discourse, it was also possible to rule out opposing interpretations and ‘arrive at a fair reading of what [was] actually taking place in the discourse in its social context’ (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 390-391). Contextual realities of classroom practice as well as reported practice of PBS strategies provided an understanding of the social contexts as well as of the various discourses within the data sets, enabling a more fair-minded interpretation of the data.

Incorporating the ideas of Miles and Huberman (1994), the descriptive codes (in CAPITAL LETTERS) and nodes or subsets (*in italicised font*) linked to the analysis and discussion of the research findings are included here. The coding of the data assisted in detecting which codes occurred most commonly (frequent themes) and which codes occurred together (patterns in the data). The theoretical underpinning of the study, i.e. Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological theory, provided a stimulus for the emerging codes. Codes were therefore linked to the various ecosystemic factors, to categorise the data and to show their relevance to the research questions. Descriptive codes were used to categorise the data and included microsystem factors (home/family, school, peers and community) as well as mesosystem factors (interactions

between the microsystems) and macrosystem factors (e.g. poverty) in relation to the first descriptive code. The second descriptive code and subset draw from the PBS model and include the literature links to the various PBS strategies used within the behaviour support model. The third subset draws from both the theoretical frameworks of Bronfenbrenner and inclusion matters, and provides an overarching indication of the themes that emerge within the descriptive code. The three descriptive codes that emerged from the qualitative data were:

- **ATTRIBUTIONS TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS** (Figure 8): This descriptive code includes teachers' perceptions of why learners present with challenging behaviour (causes/meanings attributed to challenging behaviour). *(see Figure 8 for the subsets within this descriptive code.)*
- **APPLICATION OF PBS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR** (Figure 9). This descriptive code is linked to the specific PBS tools used by respondents to manage challenging behaviour. *(see Figure 9 for subsets within this descriptive code.)*
- **PBS AS AN EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MODEL** (Figure 10). This descriptive code served to draw information regarding the value and effectiveness of the PBS model for Limpopo FP classrooms. *(see Figure 10 for the subsets within this descriptive code.)*

Figure 8 is a representation of the descriptive code **ATTRIBUTIONS TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS** and the corresponding subsets.

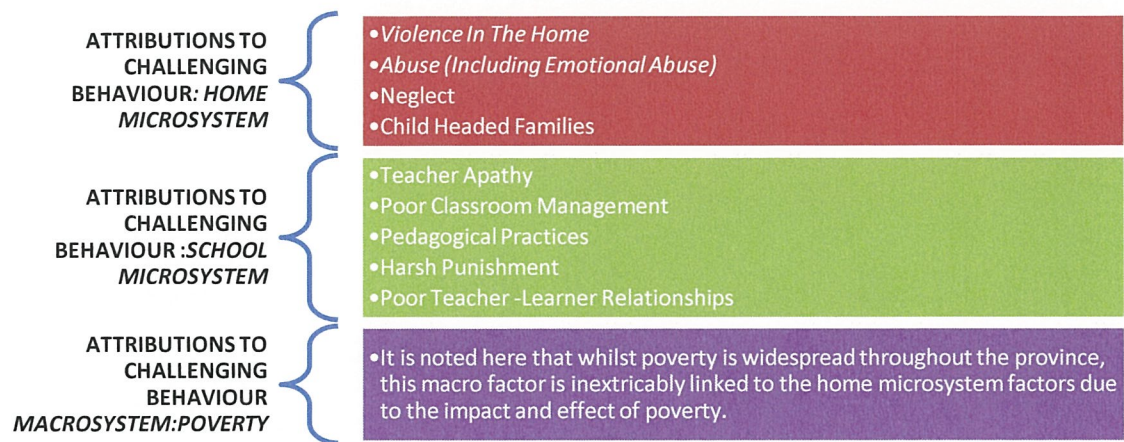


Figure 8: Factors attributed to Challenging Behaviour

Figure 9 is a representation of the descriptive code APPLICATION OF PBS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS and the corresponding subsets.

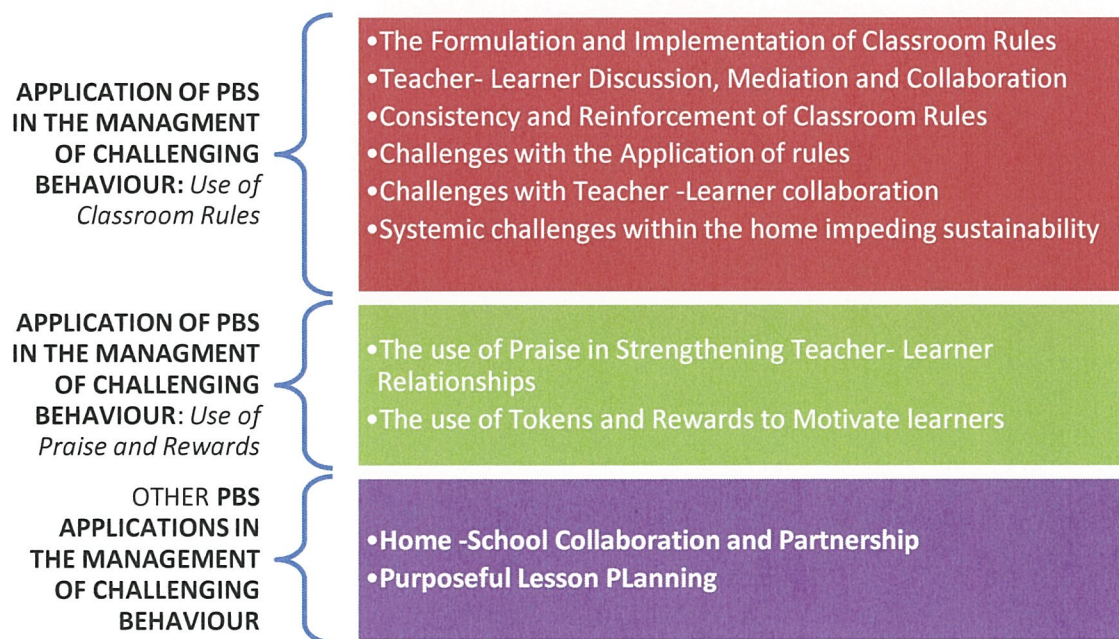


Figure 9: Application of PBS Strategies in the Classroom

Figure 10 is a representation of the descriptive code PBS AS AN EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MODEL FOR LIMPOPO FP CLASSROOMS and the corresponding subsets.

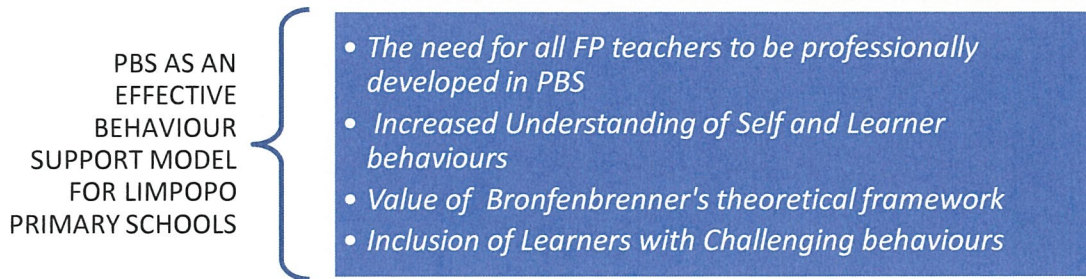


Figure 10: Effectiveness of the PBS Model in the Classroom

5.7.3 Addressing Issues of Credibility

Within qualitative data analysis, researchers are cautioned against the positivist ‘need for research to demonstrate concurrent, predictive, convergent, criterion related, internal and external validity’ (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 134). The argument is that it is not possible within qualitative research for the researcher to ‘prove absolutely that they have got it right’, and consequently the ‘preferred term to use related to verification of research is the term credibility’ (Denscombe, 2010, p. 299). According to Kitto, Chesters and Grbich (2008), credibility refers to whether the findings of the research are well presented and meaningful in relation to the research questions. The relevance or utility of the findings are what can be used to determine the quality or trustworthiness of the study.

Additionally, the issue of fidelity is considered useful in attempts to establish credibility of research, because it ‘requires the researcher to be as honest as possible to the self-reporting of the research’ (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 134). Validity in qualitative research that is based on both understanding and fidelity relates to the following: descriptive validity (factual accuracy of the account that is neither made up nor distorted). Within this research, I used the actual words of the participants’ from the group and individual interviews as much as possible and this assisted in the promotion of descriptive as well as interpretative validity. I did however need to change the grammar of what was being said but did not alter the meaning. Given that the participants’ home language was not English, I did this to ensure that I did not show a disfavour to the teachers’ words if I put their verbatim words next to my closely edited written words. The interpretation of the results included opinions and views of the respondents. These were coded

carefully to avoid data overload but still retain the essence of the respondents' contributions (Cohen et al., 2007).

The research further considered patterns in the data of individuals and groups (group analysis); it considered the spatial explanations of the classroom and school contexts (ecological analysis) as well as the norms and practices (cultural analysis) within the school and home in relation to responses to challenging behaviour within these contexts. Wider issues such as factors within the communities at large and their perceived impact on understanding and managing learner behaviour were also considered. In light of this, issues of ecological and cultural validity were deemed to have received necessary attention.

5.7.4 The Positionality of the Researcher and Reflexive Practice

Continuing a consideration of the issues of credibility and dependability, particular attention was paid to reflexivity within the research process. This was considered an essential component given the researcher's position within the study as highlighted in Chapter 1. Within qualitative research the researcher is part of the world being researched and complete objectivity is therefore not possible as the researcher is often very closely bound up with the research instruments (Kitto et al., 2008). Reflexive practice includes an open acknowledgement of the complex influences among researchers, the research topic and research participants on the research results. In this study, this compelled me to 'explore ways in which my personal experiences, my roles within the research as well as my own values might influence matters' (Denscombe, 2010, p. 303). I was therefore critically conscious that my roles of researcher, lecturer on the Inclusion module of the PBS principles, interviewer in the focus group interviews and individual teacher interviews, as well as the observer in the classroom observations, played a role in me becoming an integral part of the data collection. I was also acutely aware that the numerous roles played by myself within the research, would inevitably impact the research questions, data collection, collation and analysis processes within the research. In addition, the relationship with the research participants within the various roles that I played would also impact the research relationship. While it is broadly acknowledged and accepted that subjectivity is part of qualitative research (Kitto et al., 2008; Denscombe, 2010), I was very aware of my own preconceptions and expectations, as well as of my cultural and academic background, which is different from that of the research participants, that these could have coloured and impacted my perceptions, prejudices and expectations.

To counter this, I attempted throughout the research to openly discuss my position and invite discussion with the research participants regarding how they might perceive my roles. A concern that emerged during such engagements was the participants' perception that my role may impact their positions within their schools. For example, during the initial stages of the research process, when they were being invited to participate, some participants requested to be advised if I would be recommending them for position at district levels within their school circuits on their return to schools following completion of the WSoE degree. I clarified my role as that of researcher and lecturer, and someone who has no influence whatsoever on promotions or recommendations for their promotions within the education teaching system. This helped open up the dialogue in relation to power relations, and specifically my lack of power regarding matters related to their roles within the schools.

I was also careful to check back with participants within the focus group interviews as well as during the observations and interviews, to ensure I had understood their inputs accurately. I did this by asking probing and clarifying questions (such as -tell me more; and -what do you mean when you say...). The creation of such opportunities afforded a chance for open dialogue on matters of power relations within the research context. I revisit the issue of power relations in the ethics section of this chapter (section 5.8) as it is pertinent within the ethics context of the study.

5.7.5 Addressing Issues of Dependability

Although complete reliability is not possible within qualitative research, Denscombe suggests that a way to counter this is to defer to using the term 'dependability'. This refers to the researcher's demonstration that the research reflects 'procedures and decisions that other researchers can see and evaluate in terms of how far they constitute reputable procedures and reasonable decisions' (2010, p 300). These checks on dependability include:

an explicit account of the methods, analysis and decision-making and the provision of a reflexive account of procedures and methods, showing the reader in as much detail as possible the lines of enquiry that led to particular conclusions. (Seale, Gobo, Gubruim & Silverman, 1999, in Denscombe, 2010, p. 300)

An explicit account of the methods of data collection and processes of data analysis is detailed within this chapter. In addition, reflective monitoring played a significant role throughout all the stages of data analysis. This included questioning the assumptions, feelings, beliefs, and actions within a particular situation and 'giving active, persistent, and careful consideration of

any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Bjorn & Boulous, 2011, p. 285). These strategies included: checking for researcher effects and triangulating across data sources and methods. This involved weighing the evidence and deciding which kinds of data were most trustworthy by looking at outliers or following up on surprises that emerged, and checking out rival explanations by getting feedback from participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

While generalisability was neither aimed for nor possible, the lack of it was not considered to diminish the findings in relation to the purposes of the study undertaken. The research is considered to be relevant to a particular context, namely the province of Limpopo and to a particular group of participants within that province.

Triangulation refers to the use of two or more methods of data collection in a study (Cohen et al., 2011). Within this study, the use of mixed methods is considered a strength in that it enables the triangulation of data. The results of the MMR are considered valuable in providing a wider view of the 'complexities of human behaviour and of the situations in which human beings interact' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 141). Both the qualitative and quantitative research methods served as 'filters through which the environment is selectively experienced' (p. 141). The MMR served therefore to assist in obviating some of the researcher bias that may have resulted from a reliance on one method of data collection and from a single method of data analysis.

5.8 Ethical Considerations

For the purposes of this study, ethical clearance was obtained from the WSoE (ethical clearance number 2012ECE013 (Appendix F)). Permission was also sought and obtained from the Limpopo Department of Education (Appendix G). For the purposes of facilitating a clear understanding of the research aims of the study, the research participants were informed of the research objectives and the research processes both verbally and in writing. Informed written consent was obtained from the participants prior their participation in the study. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would not incur any penalties should they choose not to participate. They were informed that they could withdraw their participation at any time in the study. Anonymity was guaranteed in relation to the survey questionnaires, module evaluations, and open-ended questionnaires, classroom observations and individual teacher interviews. Anonymity could however not be guaranteed in the focus group interviews as the identities of the participants within the groups were known to each other. The latter was also the case for the two participants in School 1 observations and

interviews as they were known to each other. Participants were assured that no identifying data would be used in the publishing of findings of the research and that confidentiality with regard to the respondents' personal identities would be maintained throughout the study (for Information Sheet and Consent Form see Appendices H and I).

Raw data collected during the study and data amassed during the data collation and data analysis was held in a secure drawer and those records that were converted to electronic records were stored under password protection in computer files. The data will be destroyed 5 years after publication of the results.

5.8.1 Addressing Ethical Matters Related to Power Relationships

It is necessary to once again highlight the issue of power relations in light of my role within the research process. As stated earlier in this chapter, within this research I was responsible for the data collection and analysis throughout the study (inclusive of survey questionnaires, teaching the Inclusion module of the PBS principles, evaluation of the module, focus group interviews and individual teacher interviews, as well as the classroom observations). This research relationship has compelled me to think more carefully about relationships within research and to be reflexive in a way that I may not have otherwise been. My various roles within the research highlighted the fraught position of the researcher, as well as the issue of power relations (Moje, 2000).

Critical reflection and reflective monitoring was a valuable tool in addressing and bringing to the surface the notion that power is omnipresent in human interactions (Brookfield, 2011). One of the core purposes of critical reflection and reflective monitoring within this research was the externalising and investigating of power relations because it compelled me as the researcher to acknowledge the considerable power I have exercised during this research project (which included public acknowledgment of possible perceived positions of power in my roles as lecturer, assessor, interviewer, etc.) and this assisted in paving the way to engage participants in deconstructing that power and also afforded me the opportunity to engage in a critical analysis of my own source of authority (Brookfield, 2011). In articulating what such acknowledgement entails, Brookfield explains that it 'involves us becoming alert to and publicly admitting oppressive dimensions of our practice, that students, colleagues and professional literature have helped us to see' (2011, p. 222). In this regard, I endeavoured to ensure that the research participants were fully aware of my reflections and considerations

regarding the roles I played. This issue was engaged with and openly discussed with the participants at various points within the research. This included a verbal articulation from me acknowledging my own awareness that my roles may impact the way participants choose to respond to and participate within the research. I further openly acknowledged my awareness of the pressure participants may feel to participate in the research, given my various roles and explicitly confirmed that no participant would be victimised, unfairly treated, or have their assessment marks jeopardised in any way, and that participation was voluntary.

Opportunities were also provided for participants to ask questions and make comments for further discussion in relation to this matter. This enabled us to address the 'researcher/research participants' binary roles, and renegotiate power relations, responsibilities and hierarchy within the constraints and contexts of the research endeavour' (Brookfield, 2011, p. 222). One of my journal entries reproduced below reflects some of my personal consternation in relation to power:

Today I find myself wary of the teachers' expectations, I fear perhaps that they are expecting more of me than I can possibly provide for them through this research. One teacher after the focus group interview today asked if I could make sure that all the principals at the schools of participating teachers be made aware of the role of school management in behaviour support. I could sense the participants' distress at the possible lack of management buy-in. I felt irrelevant in my work as researcher in that all I could say in return was that the research results would be communicated to the Department of Education in Limpopo. The participant had expected so much more from the research process it would seem. (25 February 2013)

When made aware of the powerful role that the participants considered me to be in, I had to examine my power, power which I wanted to transform, deny or dismiss in my engagement with the participants. I had learned that without careful exploration with the participants of what would be achieved and gained through the research, that it was possible for power differences to go unchecked (Moje, 2000). Critical reflection was also useful in helping me to become less uncomfortable with the idea that informed consent or agreeing to collaborate in the research process does not cause power differentials to disappear. Accepting that power differentials do exist and being conscious of the necessity to openly discuss these with the research participants created a platform for demystifying them.

The creation of opportunities for critical engagement and critical reflection was done at various intervals, including at the point of invitation to the participants, at the meetings where survey questionnaires were distributed, at the start of the first Inclusion module lecture, at the point of request for module evaluations, as well as before and after the focus group interviews and before and after the classroom observations and individual interviews with the teachers of these classes. An example of such a discussion occurred during the completion of the evaluation forms at the end of the PBS module. Some teachers asked if it was compulsory to complete the evaluations. I addressed the question by advising them regarding university policy to keep a record of evaluations of all courses taught within the university for the purposes of assessing and strengthening courses as well as for the identification of good teaching practice. While this was a university requirement, I assured them that they could choose to allow their responses to be used within the research study or not. I invited them to pick their option within the module evaluation form for informed consent and reiterated that there would be no penalty for those who chose for the responses not to be used for research purposes. This was considered a vital part of the research process, taking cognisance of the fact that for 'participants to have meaningful roles there needed to be a recognition that differences in power, knowledge and truth claims should be constantly addressed and negotiated' (Brookfield, 2011, p. 223).

The potential biases related to my roles were also explicitly addressed within all seminar and paper presentations that have emanated from this study thus far. Consensual research was possible within this research context because opportunities were created for my own roles and those of the research participants to be understood and accepted. Of additional value was the persistent steps taken to remind all of us that we could not assume that there was equality across all researcher and research participants.

5.9 Conclusion

The chapter has included a comprehensive discussion related to the research strategy, the methods employed during the research, the processes involved in the collection of the data, as well as the data analysis procedures. Issues linked to the challenges and ethical dimensions of the research are also recorded and reported on.

The chapter that follows will present the data emanating from the research, and this will be followed by a discussion and analysis of the data that has been presented.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA RELATED TO BEHAVIOURAL CHALLENGES WITHIN LIMPOPO SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

The data that emerged from this research will be presented in this chapter. As was established in the previous chapter, the merging of data according to data sets assisted in data reduction which forms an essential component of the data analysis (Punch, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The presentation of data will be integrated with a discussion and analysis of the data to draw together findings and conclusions. For the purposes of discussion and analysis, Chapter 6 will firstly present the data and the discussion and analysis thereof in relation to survey questionnaires which answer Research Question 2: What types of learner behaviours do the Limpopo Foundation Phase teachers consider challenging and what are their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in their classroom? The data from the survey questionnaires provides with it the biographical data of the respondents which helps contextualise the discussion in relation to Research Question 2. Thereafter the presentation, discussion and analysis will move on to Research Question 1: What factors do the Limpopo FP teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviour in their classrooms?

The theoretical framework as outlined by Bronfenbrenner's nested system of the bio-ecological model will be used to contextualise the discussion of the attributed factors in relation to the micro, meso, exo and macro systems (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 1979, 1986, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris 1998). Links between first- and second-level shifts in the Limpopo FP teachers' lenses of understanding behaviour challenges will be a central focus. This focus will emphasise the respondents' move from a linear cause and effect/medical model understanding (first level) of behavioural challenges (Slee & Allan, 2001; Whitt & Danforth, 2010), towards an ecosystemic view (second-level understanding). The ecosystemic lens is further used to draw on the data that reflects the FP teachers' awareness and reflexive thinking of their own part (second-level shift) in the systemic support of learners who present with behavioural challenges (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994).

Chapter 7 will include a presentation, discussion and analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question 3: How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice? The discussion and analysis will establish links with the literature on teacher preparedness, teacher education and support as well as the literature on PBS as a behaviour support tool within the ecosystemic theoretical framework.

6.1 Data Sets

The various data sets that emerged from this research were:

- Survey questionnaires provided biographical data as well as information related to the types of behavioural difficulties the Limpopo FP teachers perceived as problematic as well as their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in the classroom.
- Module evaluation feedback forms related to the Inclusion PBS module provided data related to the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties.
- Open-ended questionnaires highlighted the perceptions of Limpopo FP teachers regarding the inclusion of learners with behavioural difficulties.
- Focus group interviews provided data linked to three aspects of the research: Factors that were considered to contribute to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms, perceptions of the FP teachers' abilities to manage these in the classroom, as well as considerations of the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties.
- Observation data from the class visit in Limpopo schools provided data in relation to the use of PBS in the Limpopo classrooms.
- Teacher interviews following the class visits provided data specific to the classrooms within which the observations took place, thereby providing a contextual lens in relation to contributing factors to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms and the effectiveness of the use of PBS within the classroom context.

Each data set will be presented, discussed and analysed within this chapter and the following chapter. The survey questionnaires provided biographical data as well as information related to the types of behavioural difficulties which the Limpopo FP teachers perceived as problematic. The data obtained from the questionnaires also reflect their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in the classroom. Responses from the evaluation feedback forms related to the Inclusion PBS module provided data related to the PBS programme as an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners with behavioural difficulties. Responses from the open-ended questionnaires highlighted the perceptions of Limpopo FP teachers regarding the inclusion of learners with behavioural difficulties. The data from the focus group interviews provided information relevant to three aspects of the research: Factors that were considered to contribute to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms included perceptions of the FP teachers' abilities to manage these in the classroom, as well as considerations of the PBS programme as an appropriate and effective tool. The observation data from the class visits in Limpopo schools provided data in relation to the practical applications of PBS in Limpopo

classrooms. In addition, the responses from teacher interviews following the class visits provided data specific to the classrooms within which the observations took place, thereby providing a contextual lens in relation to factors that contribute to challenging behaviour in the Limpopo FP classrooms and the effectiveness of the use of PBS within the classroom context.

6.2 Presentation and Discussion of Data from the Survey Questionnaires

6.2.1 Demographics of the Respondents

The data that emerged from the survey questionnaires provided demographic information regarding the respondents' age, gender, years of experience and position within their schools. Participants who completed the survey questionnaire consisted of 67 Limpopo in-service teachers, all of whom were 30 years of age or older (100% of the population). Participants were mainly females, $n = 65$ (97%), versus males $n = 2$ (3%), and no males reported as being heads of department. 58 (89.2%) of females reported as being educators, and only 7 (10.8%) reported as being heads of department. Overall, 60 (89.6%) of participants are seen as educators, while 7 (10.4%) are heads of the department of the FP.

Those who reported as being heads of department all had 16+ years of teaching. As a whole, 46 (68.7%) reported as having 16+ years of teaching in a Limpopo Primary School, while 7 (10.4%) reported as having 11-15 years of experience, and lastly 14 (20.9%) reported having 6-10 years of experience teaching. These differences are illustrated in Figure 11.

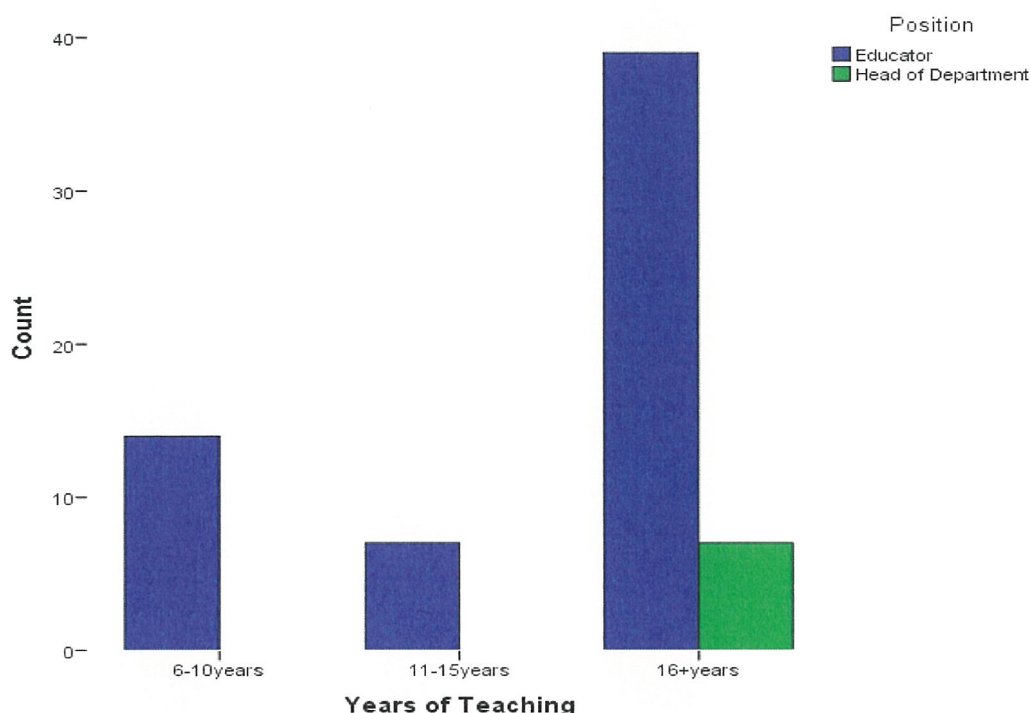


Figure 11: Participants years of Teaching Experience

6.2.2 Challenging Behaviours in Limpopo Classrooms

Data from the survey questionnaires also provided quantitative information regarding the behaviours that were considered challenging as well as the respondents' perception of their ability to manage these behaviours. Challenging behaviours from survey questionnaires were grouped into the following categories for ease of reference and coding purposes: Conduct Challenges (*Conduct*), Inattention/Distractibility/Hyperactive (*Inattention*), Bullying or violent behaviour (*Bullying*), and Defiance (*Defiance*). For Inattention/Distractibility/Hyperactive, descriptors included: easily distracted, concentration wanders, restless, cannot sit still. For Bullying or Violent behaviour, descriptors included: bullies others, fights with other children, hurts other children, cruel to others, and Defiance descriptors included: argues with teacher, does not answer when spoken to directly, refusal to comply with teachers requests.

Paired samples *t* tests were conducted to evaluate which behaviours Limpopo teachers found to be more problematic in the classroom. Results indicate that the mean problematic behaviour conduct ($M = 2.48$, SD , .60) was significantly lower than the mean for bullying ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .77$), $p = .01$. The standardised effect size index, d , was -.31. The mean problematic behaviour conduct ($M = 2.48$, SD , .60) was significantly higher than the mean for defiance ($M = 2.14$, $SD = .80$), $p = .001$. The standardised effect size index, d , was .59. The mean problematic behaviour

Inattention ($M = 2.49$, SD , .51) was significantly higher than the mean for defiance ($M = 2.14$, $SD = .80$), $p = .001$. The standardised effect size index, d , was .48. The mean problematic behaviour bullying ($M = 2.66$, SD , .77) was significantly higher than the mean for defiance ($M = 2.14$, $SD = .80$), $p = .001$. The standardised effect size index, d , was .87. See Figure 12 for all means and standard deviations for challenging behaviours.

Behaviour	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Conduct	2.48	.60
Inattention	2.49	.51
Bullying	2.66	.77
Defiance	2.14	.80

Figure 12: Means and Standard Deviations for Challenging Behaviours

Bullying was observed to have the highest mean rating for challenging behaviours in the classroom, followed by inattention, conduct, and lastly defiance.

6.2.3 Perceptions of Ability to Manage Challenging Behaviours

With data from the survey questionnaires, the perceptions of respondents' ability to manage the behaviours were grouped in the same way as challenging behaviour categories were coded. These were: Conduct Challenges (*Conduct*), Inattention/Distractibility/Hyperactive (*Inattention*), Bullying or Violent Behaviour (*Bullying*), and Defiance (*Defiance*). Descriptors remained the same as for those of Challenging Behaviours as outlined earlier (in section 6.3). Inattention/Distractibility/Hyperactive (descriptors here included easily distracted, concentration wanders, restless, cannot sit still.), Bullying or Violent Behaviour descriptors included: bullies others, fights with other children, hurts other children, cruel to others, and descriptors for Defiance included argues with teacher, does not answer when spoken to directly, refusal to comply with teachers requests. Paired samples t tests were conducted to evaluate which behaviours teachers felt equipped to manage in the classroom. Results indicate that the mean behaviour conduct ($M = 2.59$, SD , .74) was significantly lower than the mean for bullying ($M = 2.69$, $SD = .82$), $p = .05$. The standardised effect size index, d , was -.23. The mean behaviour defiance ($M = 2.47$, SD , .87) was also significantly lower than the mean for bullying ($M = 2.69$, $SD = .82$), $p = .004$. The standardised effect size index, d , was .35. See Figure 13 for all means and standard deviations.

Behaviour	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Conduct	2.59	.74
Inattention	2.57	.68
Bullying	2.69	.82
Defiance	2.47	.87

Figure 13: Means and Standard Deviations for How Well Teachers Felt They Were Equipped to Address Challenging Behaviours

Teachers felt most equipped to handle bullying behaviour in the classroom, followed by conduct behaviours, inattention, and lastly defiance.

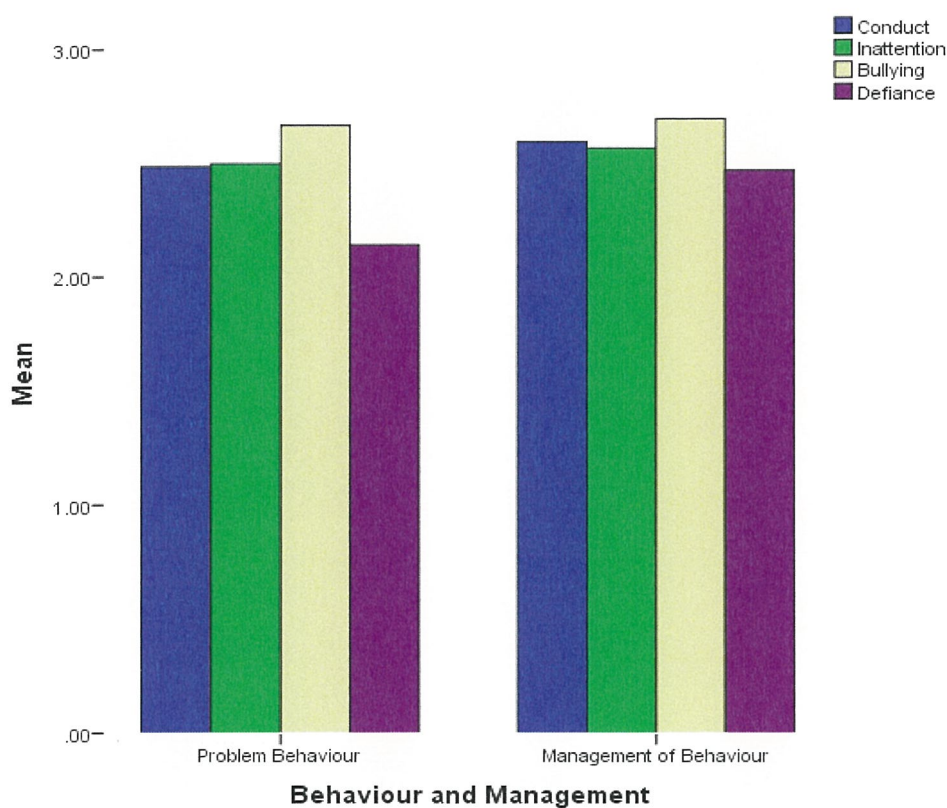


Figure 14: Challenging Behaviours and How Well Teachers Felt Equipped to Handle Those Behaviours.

As indicated in Figure 14, it appears that bullying was rated as being the most problematic in the classroom, and likewise, bullying was the behaviour teachers felt most equipped to address. Conversely, defiance was seen as being the least problematic behaviour in classroom, however it was also the behaviour teacher felt least equipped to handle. This was confirmed within the focus group interviews. Behaviours linked to defiance were reported within the focus group

interviews by the majority of respondents to be minimal, given the limited communication between the teacher and learners. An example of this was from the following excerpt: '*...our children are not used to talking to us, they are used to listening to us*' (FG11R6). Conduct and inattention were seen as equally problematic in the classroom, and as behaviours the respondents felt well equipped to handle.

Within all the focus group interviews there was general admission from respondents that prior to their participation in the WSoE PBS Inclusion module, they were accustomed to using behaviour management strategies that they in hindsight considered largely inappropriate (section 6.3.7- Behaviour challenges attributed to teachers' ignorance of appropriate teaching strategies). These common behaviour management strategies (such as corporal punishment) were considered by respondents as possible reasons for why the learners misbehaved in class (section 6.3.5 -The effects of corporal punishment and other punitive disciplinary practices on learner behaviour).

6.2.4 Support Programmes in Limpopo Schools

The type of support programmes within Limpopo schools have also provided some insight into what is reported to be available as behaviour support mechanisms. Sections in the survey questionnaire related to the behaviour support programmes in Limpopo and the effectiveness of the programme were combined due to a low number of responses. These sections were coded and analysed as follows:

Responses were coded as either Yes (a response was given indicating a support programme being in place) or No (either the absence of an answer or a written response indicating no support programme is in place, or the respondent was not aware of one). Based on this, 36 (53.7%) indicated that Yes a support programme was in place, while 31 (46.3%) indicated No a programme is not in place. These are indicated in Figure 15. None of the respondents contributed a response to the questions regarding the effectiveness of the support programme that they had recorded to be in place.

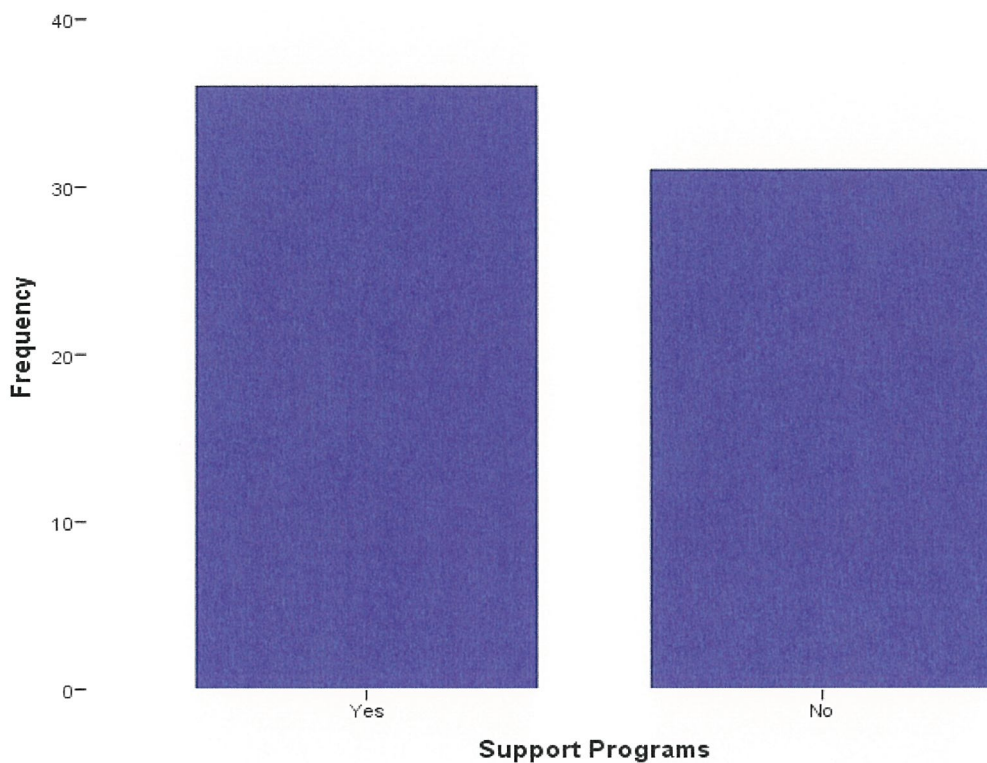


Figure 15: The Frequency Count of Support Programme in Limpopo Primary Schools

Following this, regarding descriptions of what participants considered to be a behaviour support programme or what the programme is that is currently in place, responses were coded as follows:

- 1 = Parent teacher and child collaborative work
- 2 = Behaviour modification work
- 3 = Equip teachers with strategies to deal effectively

Results as indicated (Figure 16) that 12 (33.3%) describe a parent, teacher, and child collaborative work as being in place, 10 (27.8%) describe a behaviour modification (or one-on-one) behaviour support, and lastly 14 (38.9%) indicate that equipping teachers with strategies to deal effectively with the behaviours were not present in schools and would be an effective behaviour support programme that should be put in place at schools. The necessity to equip teachers would support the need to provide them with ‘the skills to observe and assess undesirable behaviour and the ability to design suitable strategies to prevent and alter misbehaviour’ (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2011, p. 495).

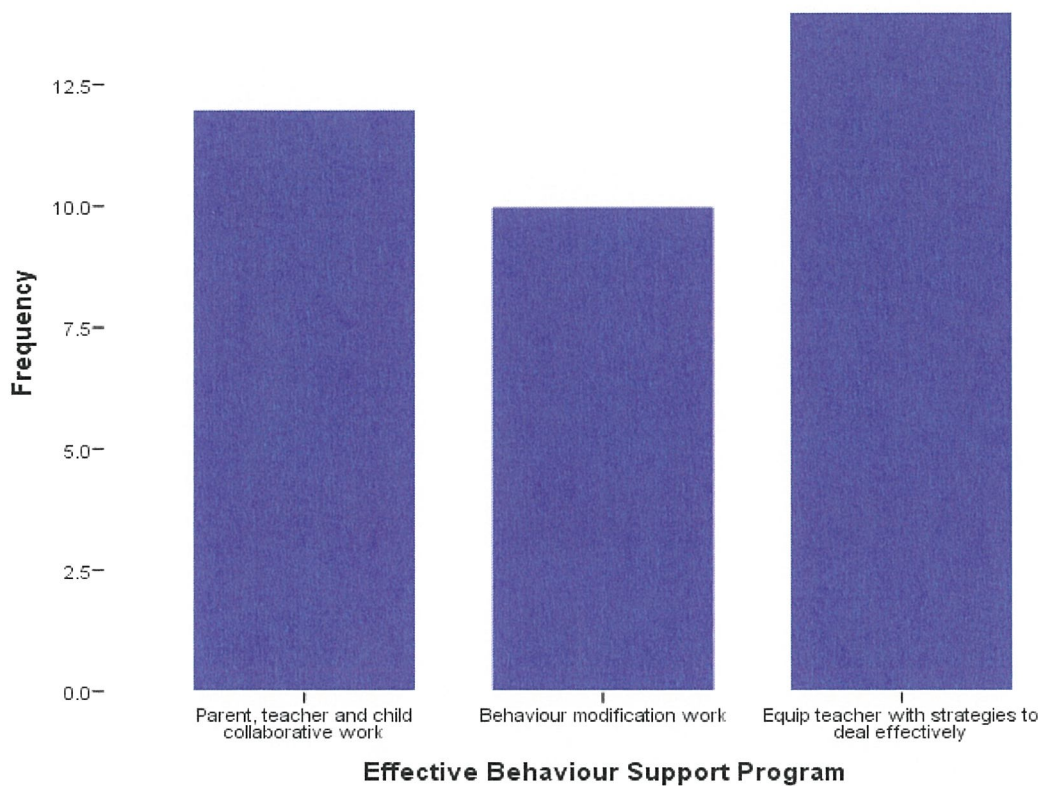


Figure 16: Support Programmes (1 and 2 identified as being in place, 3 identified as needing to be put in place) in Limpopo Primary Schools

6.3 Presentation, Discussion and Analysis of Data related to Factors Contributing to Learner Challenging Behaviours

Several factors were highlighted within the focus group interviews as contributing to learner challenging behaviours. These included factors within the home, school and community as well as interpersonal factors specific to the learner-teacher relationships. Within the home and wider community contexts, it was expressed that learned behaviour following exposure to violence and abuse was a significant contributing factor to negative learner behaviours in the classroom. Issues of neglect and child-headed families as a result of death of parents or parents being away from home due to work obligations were also reported to be significant contributors to learner misbehaviour in the classroom (section 6.3.1-6.3.3). The discussion in Chapter 2 related to Bronfenbrenner's nested systems highlights the significance and impact one system such as the school or family has on another system within the context of the child's life world, and is essential for the discussion in this chapter. A brief recap therefore follows.

Bronfenbrenner's Nested Systems

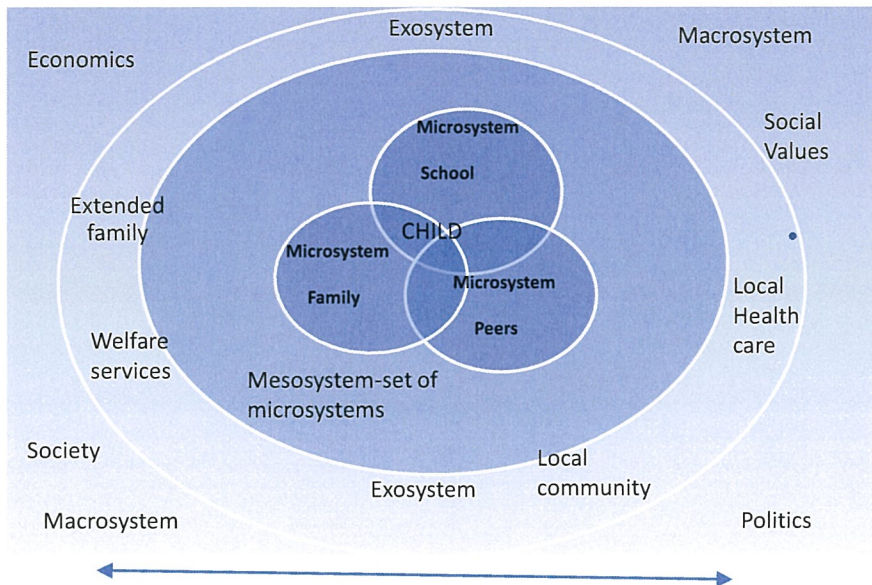


Figure 17: Bronfenbrenner's Nested Systems.

Source based on Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1999; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006

In relation to teachers' conceptions of the possible causes of learners' challenging behaviour within the classroom, several factors were highlighted. These have been presented next, with links to Bronfenbrenner's system theory model. The respondents attributed causes of learners challenging behaviour to the following systemic factors highlighted in Figure 18.

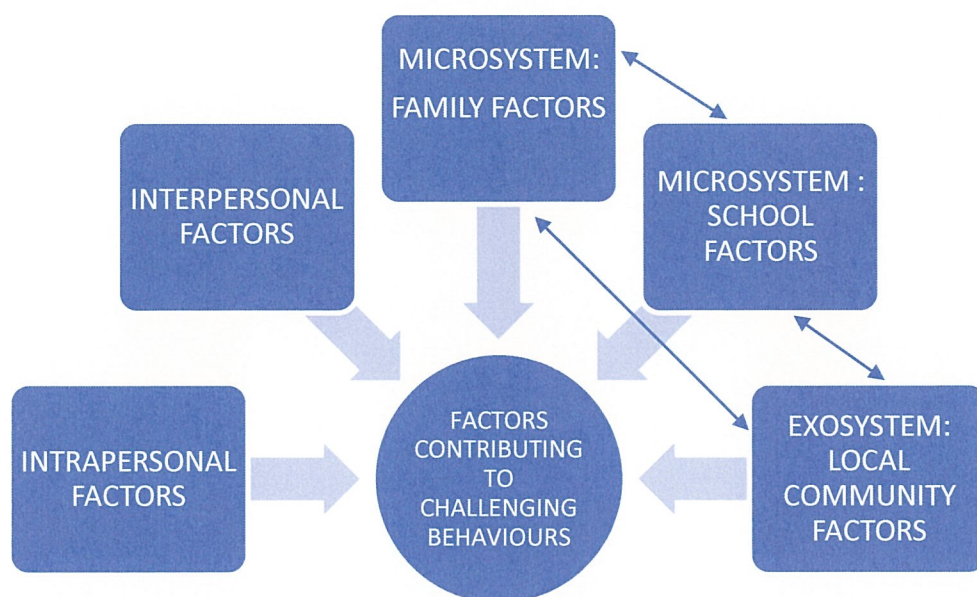


Figure 18: Factors Contributing to Challenging Behaviours

MICRO SYSTEM: FAMILY FACTORS	MICRO SYSTEM: SCHOOL FACTORS	MACRO SYSTEM: COMMUNITY FACTORS
•Poverty •Child-headed families •Migrant parent workers •Physical and emotional abuse by caregivers •Poor discipline practices within the home •Parent/caregiver illiteracy or lack of support for schooling	•Use of corporal punishment •Poor school-home collaboration •Mismatch between home and school discipline expectations •Teacher frustration •Teacher lack of knowledge of suitable teaching strategies	•Poverty •Negative role models •Lack of community resources: no libraries or sporting facilities •Prevalence of alcohol and substance abuse •Violence and theft •High rates of unemployment

Figure 19: Identified Micro and Macro System factors

Within ecosystemic theory, there is considerable overlap and interconnectedness between systems, and this is evident in Figure 18, where factors within the home, school and community are inextricably linked and contribute simultaneously to learner challenging behaviour. The *microsystems* are the systems or proximal relationships within home, school, and amongst peers that shape aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The family/home and school microsystems therefore impact

how learners relate to their caregivers, their teachers as well as to their peers within the context of the school and community. Developmental time frames affect the interaction between the systems and influence the learners' individual development. Issues of abuse, poverty, child-headed families and other sociohistorical conditions influence the learners' development over time (chronosystem). 'Attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies inherent in the systems of a particular society and culture' further impact all of the nested systems and dynamics within the systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 12). In this research, it was evident that the interplay of various factors within the systems contributed to learner challenging behaviours and the greatest contributing factors identified by respondents in all of the data sets were factors that were within the school microsystem (section 6.3.4.) These included teacher apathy, poor classroom management, as well as a lack of knowledge and practice of good teaching methods (sections 6.3.6-6.3.8). Punitive and harsh punishment of learners, together with negative teacher-learner relationships were also considered by respondents to be the cause of challenging behaviour amongst learners (sections 6.3.5 and 6.3.8).

Factors within the home microsystem also featured prominently within the various data sets and these included neglect, violence and abuse and the negative impact of the learners' responsibilities within their child-headed families (sections 6.3.1-6.3.3). The interplay of all these disadvantageous factors, together with the added macrosystem issue of poverty, were the sum of the systemic factors that respondents identified as factors contributing to behavioural challenges within the Limpopo FP classrooms.

Respondents within all of the focus groups also highlighted the above school/and family factors to be key factors that contribute to the aetiology of learner challenging behaviours. Whilst the macro and exosystemic factors are external to the learners, respondents highlighted that they often blamed the child for the challenging behaviours that they presented with in the classroom. This is unpacked in greater detail in the sections that follow.

6.3.1 Violence Contributing to Learned Aggressive Behaviour

The most direct impact on behaviour amongst learners emanates from within microsystems which comprise individuals and groups of individuals within the immediate setting of the home and school, with whom learners engage in proximal or close interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1986, 1992). The analysis of the microsystems that warrant an assessment for risk factors for aggression, bullying behaviour and conduct challenges take into consideration parent-child relationships and inter-parental/guardian violence within family structures (Hong

& Espelage, 2012). UNICEF (2010) conducted a large-scale study about child discipline within the home. Evidence from a range of more than 30 low- and middle-income countries across the world revealed that ‘on average 75% of children experienced violent discipline, with 17% experiencing severe physical punishment (being hit or slapped on the face, head or ears or being hit over and over with an implement)’ (UNICEF, 2010, p. xv). Within this study the respondents commonly across all focus groups as well as within the school interviews, expressed concern regarding the learners exposure to violence and aggression within the context of the home.

Within the focus group interviews, the large majority of respondents drew strong links between learners’ aggressive/violent and bullying behaviour and their experiences within the home. Learners were reported to be ‘...*always fighting...always threatening others...*’ (FG3R1) and ‘...*always hitting other children*’ (FG3R1). This response was a common thread across all focus groups. Respondents felt that much of the behaviour was learned due to the fact that violence, aggression, as well as physical and emotional abuse were prevalent within their homes. Literature maintains that children observe behaviour and those children who witness domestic violence and experience harsh and violent punishment themselves are often prone to displays of the same types of behaviour in different settings (Tittle et al., 2012). Human behaviour can therefore be considered to be a result of learning from others within the process of socialisation, rather than solely a consequence of a genetic predisposition to aggressive behaviour. By linking the presenting challenging behaviours to learned responses as opposed to learners’ possible genetic predisposition to aggression, respondents were able to view learners’ behaviours outside of the medical model view and consider social learning as relevant. Social learning theory emphasises the potential for children to learn both negative and positive behaviours through observation and role modelling (Monks, Smith, Naylor, Barter, Ireland & Coyne, 2009). The results from this study show that teachers see there is a link in that children may learn to accept bullying and aggression as legitimate and appropriate ways to interact with their peers through their observations of violence (Hong & Espelage, 2012).

The majority of respondents within and across the focus groups remarked on this learned pattern of behaviour. Common themes in relation to learned patterns of violence and aggression are recorded in the following excerpt: ‘*He is imitating and showing how he or she is living when they are at home*’ (FG4R3). Learners imitate what they see within the context of the home, they imitate learned patterns of behaviour and the relational interactions that are commonly practiced. The imitation provides a window to the teacher on what behaviour patterns the learners may be exposed to on a regular basis. The repeated and consistent exposure

to unhealthy parent/caregiver interactions, dialogue and conflict resolution patterns, suggest to learners that such behaviour is expected and should be accepted. For example: *'...at home the father and mother are always fighting...then when the child comes to school he also fights with other learners and maybe he thinks it is okay to fight'* (FG6R2). Respondents suggested that adult examples of negative behaviour within the home possibly afforded learners the permission to behave in a similar manner in the classroom. Learners model the learned behaviour because they may deem it to be acceptable behaviour (*it is okay to fight*) and that it is was possibly the most reasonable and appropriate way to respond. For example: *'...they will copy...they will think that fighting's the best way for them...'* (FG7R5). Learners fighting with others was therefore deemed to be an obvious behavioural response in that respondents emphasised that learners will copy the behaviours given their repeated exposure to it. *'...if the child is exposed to family violence...obviously when she comes across a problem then to her fighting is a solution to get what she wants'* (FG3R1). Fighting was considered to be a learner's *obvious* (modelling of learned behaviour) solution to problems. The function of the behaviour was therefore a means to an end (*to get what she wants*). Respondents' awareness here of the reason for the challenging behaviour signals an understanding that challenging behaviour develops to serve important functions for learners (Gore et al., 2013).

In effect, the respondents believed that learners were learning that violence and aggressive behaviour was an acceptable and appropriate tool to deal with their own anger and that violence and aggression were reasonable tools to use to ensure they get what they want, when they want it. According to the Evaluation of the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2015), exposure to violence including physical punishment causes children's levels of aggression to increase. The initiative reports that this may be because aggression is an involuntary response to experiencing physical punishment, that children imitate their parents' behaviour and that children learn that violence is a suitable method of gaining what they want. Literature attests to the significance of these factors related to parental/guardian microsystems, which include negative adult influences that have been found to be linked to bullying offenders (Georgiou, 2009; Holt & Espelage, 2007). Respondents' reflections such as: *'...if a child is coming from a family where there are fights at home, the child automatically is going to fight with others...'* (FG10R1), concur with the literature in the field of learned behaviour (Tittle et al., 2012; Mihalas et al., 2008).

Furthermore, strong links have been found between negative family interactions, child maltreatment, and bullying behaviour (Yodprang, Kuning & McNeil, 2009). In another study,

Bauer, Herrenkohl, Lozano, Rivara, Hill and Hawkins (2006) examined the relationship between exposure to intimate partner violence in the home and childhood behaviours. The results indicated that children who witness violence in the home are at an added risk of becoming victims of bullying within the school microsystem. It is significant then that bullying behaviour, including fighting with other children, was recorded as a considerable challenge in Limpopo schools. The uncensored and unrestrained outburst and fighting, whether verbal, physical or both, reflected possible patterns of parent/caregiver behaviour which learners emulate, copy and repeated or practiced: *'If the parents are fighting in front of the children, the children are likely to copy that and practise it with other children at schools'* (FG7R5). The *copy* and *practice* of the learned negative behaviour patterns by learners on other learners often results in bullying and violence amongst the learners: *'...if his mother is beaten by his father, he also tries to beat others in the class...'* (FG4R5). The behaviour is imitated and tried out on other learners (*copied and practiced*). If the behaviour is tried and found to work and have a functional value (*achieve the goal/get what they want*), then the behaviours may be deemed an *obvious solution* and are therefore repeated time and time again. This concurs with literature that confirms that displays of increased aggression and lower social competence can become common practice due to the observational learning conditions within family relationships (Abbassi & Asilinia, 2012; Dorr & Kovaric, 1980). The respondents considered that family relationships and dynamics within the home therefore have a considerable impact on how the child may relate in his/her peer interactions within the school environment. These proximal long term relationships are therefore considered significant in shaping lasting characteristics of learning and development (Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

6.3.2 The Impact of Abuse and Neglect on Learner Behaviour

Whilst violence within the home was reported to be a significant contributor to learned aggressive classroom behaviour; the impact of parental/caregiver abuse and neglect also received substantial consideration as a contributor to challenging behaviours prevalent in the Limpopo classrooms. Literature shows links between the quality of child-caregiver relationships and developmental outcomes (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall, 2015; Bowlby, 2012). The literature places great importance on the quality of the early and continuing relationships children have with caregivers that can positively or negatively affect children's

social, emotional, and school related functioning and adjustment. The impacts of these proximal relationships are considered to continue to have an influence on a child's psychosocial functioning throughout the primary school years and even later.

The majority of respondents within the focus groups and across all focus groups, commonly reported that abuse (physical and/or sexual, abuse) and neglect (due to absent parents, lack of care and support and child headed families) resulted in learners presenting with challenging behaviours. Examples of this can be found in the following excerpts: *'..... when the child is abused at home it can be physical abuse or sexual abuseit can make the child to change his behaviour'* (FG9R4) and *'....if the child is being ill –treated.... their behaviour can change...'* (FG9R6) The *changed* behaviour, was that learners became unusually quiet, withdrawn or aggressive. Learners also did not disclose the abuse they were experiencing. For example: *'...they keep quiet, they don't want to expose what's happening....which affects their learning...'* (FG11R2). Attention difficulties were largely attributed to learners being distracted by the various challenges they are faced with, for example: *'..... it's not that they don't want to concentrate in class, there are things that they are dealing with....'* (FG5R1). The *things they are dealing with*, were in reference to the challenges related to abuse. The respondents considered that quiet withdrawal impacts learners' ability to concentrate in class thereby negatively impacting their potential to learn at school. The impact of abuse as identified by the majority of respondents within this study concurs with the discussion on the Behavioural Model Discourse (in section 2.4) which also highlighted that children witnessing domestic violence and abuse are considered to be inclined to display behaviours such as aggression (including hostility antagonistic behaviour and violence), as well as 'separation anxiety, lower self-esteem, lower self-respect, and lower social competence' as compared to other children. In addition, they may also experience 'anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress symptoms and develop temperamental challenges' all of which impact the learners' ability to concentrate in class and hamper effective learning (Abbassi & Asilinia, 2010, p. 21).

Furthermore, there is evidence to support the claim that inadequate care or a lack of care by responsible adults within the home creates a vacuum of emotional connectedness, often resulting in learners acting out in order to gain attention from the teacher (Abbassi & Asilinia, 2010). Attention seeking behaviour was also consistent with findings in this study. Respondents' examples of acting out (misbehaviour) as attention seeking behaviour was reported mostly as follows: *'...no one is taking care of the child... that child was misbehaving in order to get attention'* (FG11R2). Inattention and restlessness were also considered by the

majority of respondents to be the by-products of a lack of care and attention within the home: *‘...the child is restless in the class.... I realised that the mother of that boy is not always with him....so I realised that the child has a lot of things on her mind’* (FG3R2). The results of this research then point to the fact that respondents were becoming aware of the impact violence, abuse and neglect have on learners in their classrooms. The psychological consequences of what learners were exposed to within the context of their homes significantly impacted their behaviour within the classroom.

6.3.3 The Impact of Child-Headed Families on Learner Behaviour

Challenging behaviour was further attributed to the burden learners felt when they were responsible for management of their households. The challenge of child-headed families was considered to be a common phenomenon within the communities in Limpopo: *‘...in our communities there are no parents... children lead families...’* (FG10R6). The devastation following the loss of parents, together with the added responsibility of then having to take care of their siblings created immense strain on the learners, resulting in behavioural challenges (Fleisch, Shindler & Perry, 2010). For example: *‘...when a child is orphaned...that child has to take responsibility of taking care of her siblings...it might be one of the problems that can change their behaviour’* (FG9R1). Whilst it is unclear to what extent foundation phase learners are likely to head up households, it did seem that the challenge does exist. The adult responsibilities that the child had to bear significantly impacted their ability to give attention to school work. As a result, the task of completing classwork and/or homework becomes a challenge for the learner. The secondary results of prolonged absenteeism and/or truancy then result in increased failure rates and ultimately increase dropout rates of learners from child-headed families. In this regard, Fleisch et al. (2010) confirm that the children who are the heads or acting heads of the household are the most at risk to being out of school, and that their likelihood of being ‘out of school is 10% more than a child who has their mother or father as the head of the household’ (Fleisch et al., 2010, p. 6). Furthermore, literature confirms that learners whose survival needs are paramount, whose role models to teach appropriate social skills are absent, may lack the skills necessary for schooling success, which then places them at high risk for underachievement and/or exclusion from successful participation in school and/or completion of schooling (Mihalas et al., 2008). Given that emotional and social neglect have a substantial impact on learner behaviour, Mihalas et al. (2008) observe that the extent to which learners perceive support from others in their proximal relationships appears to be an

important indicator of both internalising and externalising behaviour challenges; learners who perceive less social support engage in increased levels of challenging behaviours.

Within this study, the factors within the home microsystem that have been widely identified by respondents as contributing to behaviour challenges are learner exposure to violence, abuse, neglect and the challenge of child-headed families. These factors were reported to impact on learners' ability to participate in their lessons and were also largely linked to challenges with inattention and absenteeism.

6.3.4 Factors within the School that Contribute to Behavioural Challenges

Respondents within this study also identified several factors within the school microsystem that they considered to be contributing factors to challenging behaviour in their Limpopo classrooms. A major factor identified by the respondents was their use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool within their classrooms. The impact of this punitive measure, together with their limited knowledge of alternative discipline strategies, decreased opportunities in the classroom for positive and healthy learner-teacher relationships. Another factor is the vast majority of respondents' acknowledgment of their inadequate teaching skills and ineffective classroom management competencies. There is also the related issue of teacher apathy that served as a further contributor to their unwillingness to improve their skills and make the necessary adjustments in their teaching practices that would have served to improve teaching and learning. The discussion that follows will examine and explore these school microsystem factors and their impact on learner behaviour.

6.3.5 The Effects of Corporal Punishment and Other Punitive Disciplinary Practices on Learner Behaviour

Literature related to the detrimental impact of corporal punishment is well established (Moyo et al., 2014; Harley et al., 2000; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). There is evidence from medical, psychological and educational specialists documenting the deleterious effects of corporal punishment and its failure as an effective method of discipline (Soneson, 2005b). Despite this, corporal punishment continues to be deeply entrenched in various countries, including South Africa, and is considered to be a customary and socially-accepted tool to discipline learners (Rajdev, 2012). This study offers no contradiction to the reports of the widespread use of corporal punishment. The evidence of this study augments the swell of acknowledgement in relation to the negative and harmful effects of corporal punishment. Section 3.3 highlights the

discussion of South Africa's historical context of punishment and power within schools and the impact of corporal punishment to learner development and to teaching and learning. Of significance here is that within the South African context, apartheid ideologies are still rooted in many schools and what is considered normal or the way discipline and punishment in schools are regulated differs from school to school (Dixon, 2011). Issues related to discipline and corporal punishment have strong links to the apartheid era and Bantu Education. In the 1950s, Bantu Education became compulsory for black children in South Africa. The system was 'highly authoritarian' and 'the rod was not spared' (Naong, 2007, p. 283).

With South African's long history of corporal punishment, it was not surprising that the vast majority of respondents within this research unreservedly admitted to the use of corporal punishment within their schools: '*...there is no way you can teach them without beating them...*' (FG2R1), '*... the whole school is using corporal punishment...*' (FG2R5), '*...teachers at home [Limpopo classrooms] ... they are still beating children*' (FG1R3), and '*...those who are misbehaving, they always sjambok them with a stick...*' (FG6R1). The use of corporal punishment was reported without exception to be both pervasive and acceptable within the schools in Limpopo. The norm of beating learners was considered by the majority of respondents to be embedded in the teaching process and that teaching could not take place without the use of corporal punishment ('*no way you can teach without beating*'). A study by Naong (2007) has also found that teachers maintain that 'children would neither show them respect nor develop the discipline to work hard unless they were beaten or threatened with being beaten' (p. 283). The unrestrained admission to the use of corporal punishment suggests that the majority of respondents were at ease with its practice and did not find this worrying or concerning. This is in line with Rajdev's (2012, p. 166) assertion that corporal punishment in 'both government as well as private schools is deeply ingrained as a tool to discipline children and as a normal action'. Most respondents considered corporal punishment a norm by highlighting the prevalence ('*the whole school*') of the use of corporal punishment with examples of such punishment as explicit as '*still beating them*' and '*sjambok them with a stick*'. Despite the ease with which corporal punishment was talked about and reported to be administered, most respondents within this study were however cognisant that the practice of corporal punishment was problematic. Respondents' comments in relation to this included the following: '*The problem is that we as teachers are still using corporal punishment*' (FG1R2), and '*Corporal punishment is not okay*' (FG5R1). Respondents were evidently aware of the challenges linked to their use of corporal punishment and considered it to be a '*problem*' that

teachers were *'still using'* such a measure to discipline learners. The respondents acknowledged that corporal punishment should no longer be used. There was also a clear understanding among the respondents that corporal is a major factor that contributed to behavioural challenges in the classroom: *'...Many of these things (behaviour problems) are the effects of corporal punishment'* (FG11R3).

6.3.6 Reasons for the Continued Use of Corporal Punishment

Given this acknowledgment by respondents that the use of corporal punishment is unsatisfactory, the argument presented by respondents for its continued use despite the negative outcomes of the practice is of particular interest to this study. Reasons for this included the majority of respondents' reported ignorance of alternative discipline support strategies, as well as reports of teacher apathy and frustrations.

Respondents widely reported that they had lacked knowledge of alternative discipline strategies that could encourage and support positive behaviour: *'...we don't have other strategies...'* (FG10R1). The lack of knowledge of appropriate alternative disciplinary strategies is not an uncommon claim. Literature emphasises that generally South African teachers feel ill-equipped to deal successfully with classroom discipline and the plea of teachers for viable alternatives to disciplining of learners is a widespread one (Naong, 2007). This finding has been confirmed in this research for schools within the province of Limpopo.

A further reason cited by respondents for the continued use of corporal punishment was ignorance and apathy on the part of some of the teachers in relation to the statutory regulations governing the use of corporal punishment: *'...the teacher is not even aware he is contradicting the constitution'* (FG8R3), and *'...at home (Limpopo), most teachers don't read the SASA (South African Schools Act) document...'* (FG1R3). Teachers seemingly do not pay much attention to the rules and policies governing their profession. There was a reported ambivalence and apathy related to the expected code of conduct. A possible reason for this was suggested to be that: *'...they (teachers) don't enjoy teaching those learners (learners who present with challenging behaviour), they don't enjoy being in class'* (FG1R1).

Besides the dissatisfaction that teachers experienced with dealing with learners who present with challenging behaviour, teachers also reported feeling dissatisfied with teaching as a whole (*'don't enjoy being in class'*). The dissatisfaction often resulted in anger and beating of the learners: *'...I took a stick and started to hit that child because of the anger I had...'* (FG10R5).

Overcrowded classes were a common factor for teacher dissatisfaction: *'I didn't blame some of the teachers who are beating children even though it was wrong... because of the overcrowded class. They are frustrated those teachers. They don't know what to do'* (FG1R4) and *'...how can I work with this overcrowded class! I cannot even manage....'* (FG11R4). The exasperation and distress due to overcrowding was significant. The issue of teacher frustration and apathy is not peculiar to the respondents within this study, and has previously been well documented as prevalent within South African schools, and is evidently a persistent factor. Teachers are 'generally unhappy, demoralised and exhausted' (Naong, 2007, p. 291). Naong reports that common reasons for this current state of teaching are, among others, apathy due to learner discipline, a declining morale, a lack of support, teachers feeling demoralised, and stress as a result of workload (2007). There are persistent concerns about low motivation within the teaching sector. Bennell & Akyeampong (2007, p. 6) explain further that

while the precise reasons vary from country to country, education stakeholder respondents, school managers and teachers themselves all agree that the primary school teachers tend to be dissatisfied with their jobs and are poorly motivated and very sizeable proportions of primary school teachers have low levels of job satisfaction.

In addition, research points out that teachers' resistance to investing time and money in their professional development and growth is one of the reasons they choose to stick to old practices, experiences, materials and habits instead of trying new things (Nouhi & Razmjoo, 2015). The general apathy towards improving their own skills within the teaching profession keeps teachers behind in their knowledge and skills, which in turn impacts negatively on classroom practice. The interplay of these factors contribute to the continued use of corporal punishment in the classroom which includes beating learners out of anger and frustration. Such practices within the classroom and school microsystems were understood by the majority of respondents to be significant barriers to the creation of healthy caring teacher-learner relationships: *'...that (corporal punishment) breaks the relationship between us and the children...'* (FG11R1).

Significant consideration was reported to be given to the impact of corporal punishment within the context of the school system and its impact on the learner, and on teaching and learning. *'As a teacher, before coming to Wits I thought that if the child is doing that (misbehaving), maybe he is trying to be naughty ... I think if we as teacher can understand our children, then we can make it... if we can completely avoid corporal punishment, I think we are going to make it'* (FG11R1). The respondents were therefore no longer viewing corporal punishment in a linear cause-and-effect manner, where the assumption about the effectiveness of corporal

punishment was that the problem was within the learner (individual deficit view) and could only be corrected by beating that learner. Respondents were instead beginning to use recursive thinking by making observations regarding the mutuality of influences through the interaction of the various systems within the life of the learner (ecosystemic view). In addition, respondents gave attention to their own frustrations within the education system and openly acknowledged that their professional frustrations negatively impacts behaviour support of learners in the classroom. The focus of the causes of behavioural challenges had therefore moved from a focus on the individual learner to the interactive processes within which the learner operates (Naong, 2007). This shift was an important and valuable second-level shift in understanding the interrelated factors that impact learners' behaviours in the classrooms. Respondents' understandings of how the systems within which they themselves were in, was considered as an integral part that contributed to challenges in the system of support and this emerged in their articulation of the various factors that contributed to learner challenging behaviours.

6.3.7. Behaviour Challenges Attributed to the Teachers' Ignorance of Appropriate Teaching Strategies

A further factor that the majority of respondents considered a contributing to learner challenging behaviour was their own classroom practices. Examples of such practices identified by most respondents are inadequate consideration for learner developmental issues as well as lack of or inadequate lesson preparation, and the use of inappropriate teaching strategies. Respondents reflected on and questioned their own effectiveness as teachers with regard to classroom management, teaching practices and pedagogical insights. Issues here included:

- insufficient learner participation in the lessons being taught,
- dull/uninteresting or boring lesson presentations by the teacher,
- inadequate or unclear teacher instructions,
- poor classroom management, and
- lack of differentiation in the activities used in class.

Respondents' comments in relation to the possibility that poor classroom practices serve as contributing factors towards learner misbehaviour are included here: '*...as teachers, we need to be blamed ... because we do not actively involve them in the lessons*' (FG10R5). As well as: '*...the way the teacher is presenting the lesson, it may be uninteresting to the children*' (FG8R1), and '*...the classroom management can contribute to the behaviour of the children*'

(FG3R1), *'...maybe the instructions given are not clear, then some children are going to make a noise, they are going to interrupt to get clarity and avoid confusion'* (FG4R6). Furthermore: *'...giving children an activity that is above their level can cause misbehaviour in the classroom'* (FG10R3). These excerpts are expressive of the respondents' consideration of their own inadequacies in presenting lessons that ensure active and effective learner participation. Pitching lessons or activities at a level too high or too low contributes to learner frustration, which in turn contributes to learner misbehaviour. Lessons that are boring and uninteresting as well as poor classroom management with ill-defined and confusing work instructions have been identified by respondent as their own shortcomings as teachers (*'we need to be blamed'*).

Teaching in the FP as in any other phase within the schooling system requires intensive education in the pedagogies relevant to that age and stage of learning and respondents in this study seemed acutely aware of their own inadequate education and development. This evaluation by the respondents is a legitimate one. FP Grade 3 level Systemic Evaluations conducted by the Department of Education in 2007 revealed inequalities in the provision of FP education and that this was possibly related to the fact that many teachers who teach in the FP have not been educated and professionally developed to specialise in FP pedagogy (DoE, 2008). Within the Limpopo province, the fact that the Limpopo Education Department saw fit to develop their FP teachers through a second FP teaching qualification at WSoE bears testimony to their awareness of the lack of adequate teacher education.

A survey conducted in 2004 reports that less than half of all teachers in the FP had been educated to teach in that specific phase (ELRC, 2005). This survey is relevant to the Limpopo FP teachers, given the mature age of the respondents. Green, Parker, Deacon and Hall, (2011) explain that until the mid-1990s, universities within South Africa were heavily focused on developing high school teachers. The education of primary school teachers was relegated to the *'rationalised – and in many instances poorer quality – provincial colleges of education'* (2011, p.111). As recently as 15 years ago, in 2001, *'good quality FP teachers began to be trained on a more consistent basis'*, following the concentration of all teacher education provision within the university sector (Green et al., 2011, p. 111). The respondents within this study are themselves thinking about their capacity to teach, and they remain true to themselves in their assessment that they are under-prepared and inadequately educated to successfully use FP pedagogies in their classrooms: *'Our teachers are not aware of some of the different teaching strategies that they can apply...they don't use these strategies we learned here (at WSoE)'* (FG1R4).

Links can be drawn here to Bronfenbrenner's model in that each of the aspects of poor teaching practices impact individual learners; the classroom and the school are microsystems in the immediate environment or context of teaching. Studies that have looked at the impact of teacher development in relation to teachers' beliefs and behaviour suggest that pre-service education may be inadequately preparing teachers for classroom practice (Lunenberg, Korthagen & Swennen, 2007). As highlighted previously in section 2.6., the notion that teachers are not adequately developed to address behaviour challenges has been emphasised.

6.3.8 Unhealthy Teacher Interpersonal Factors Contributing to Learner Challenging Behaviour

Literature attests to the lack of adequate sustained relationships with caring and concerned role models or mentors within the home and school microsystems negatively impacting learner development (Olley et al., 2010). Respondents within this research considered that harsh and insensitive behaviour by teachers towards learners contributed to challenging behaviour. The link between healthy teacher-learner relationships was recognised by most respondents as necessary in learner behaviour support and that victimisation and labelling/name calling and harsh communication towards the learners had negative impacts on learners' behaviour in the classroom. Over 90% of respondents in the open-ended questionnaire claimed that besides corporal punishment, all other forms of ridicule of learners, including vulgarity towards learners, and all forms of public humiliation and embarrassment of learners as well as labelling or name calling, were teacher exclusionary practices. These were reported as inappropriate responses to the management of challenging learner behaviour. A sample of these commonly reported excerpts are included here:

'...If my child were to misbehave at school, I would be upset if the teacher would punish him using corporal punishment. I would be upset if the teacher would use language that is not acceptable....or mock my child (respondent 3), as well as

'...I would be upset if the teacher ignores him....leaves him outside,.... call him names, allow other children to laugh at him.....take him to the staffroom to be seen by all teachers.... mock him.... put him in front to be seen by all children' (respondent 5). Within the focus group interviews, the vast majority of respondents further confirmed what they considered to be examples of unhealthy interpersonal behaviour towards learners. These included shouting, victimisation and isolating of learners for extended periods of time: '...at times, we as teachers,

we are victimising the children' (FG5R2), and *'...we usually shout at the child not knowing the problem or the cause of the problem'* (FG2R2), *'...we were just taking that child to sit outside'* (FG4R3). It was evident that punitive measures of isolation for extended periods of time, screaming and shouting at learners, and an unwillingness to understanding ecosystemic factors, all hampered learner-teacher rapport and created an unhealthy and unsafe space for learners within the classroom. Ridicule and labelling were common practice which in turn resulted in learners becoming resentful to the teachers and acting out in rebellion against such treatment. Owen (2005) highlights that punishments which include victimisation, humiliation, degradation and violence are harmful to the child. Such measures serve to violate the child's self-respect and self-esteem and are associated with increased aggression and violence, delinquency, antisocial behaviour and decreased mental health.

A study by Demaray and Malecki (2002) found that learner perceptions of emotional support provided by teachers were the greatest predictor of learners' social skills and academic competence. Mihalas et al. (2008 p. 9) point to the literature that supports the positive impact that caring learner-teacher relationships can have on learners. Learners may become more focused, attentive and less distracted. In contrast, learners who feel ignored and uncared for may become easily bored, unhappy and angry in class (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005; Pianta & Stullman, 2004). The vast array of literature and theories supporting the positive impact of healthy teacher-learner relationships is considered significant in this discussion as it offers support to the importance of healthy and developmental teacher-learner relationships.

The majority of respondents within this research were clearly aware of the deleterious impact of ineffective and unhealthy teacher-learner relationships. Several respondents highlighted various factors that obstructed the building healthy teacher-learner relationships: *'...the only thing that breaks the relationship between us and the children is how we handle the situations when we are being challenged by their behaviours'* (FG11R1). The breaking of relationships as opposed to building and strengthening of them was considered by respondents to be due to their own ignorance of behaviour support skills and poor management skills. Improving on their own ability to teach effectively rather than undermine learner's ability or willingness to learn was also seen as essential: *'...if we don't undermine our children's mind..... we will make it...'* (FG11R6), as well as *'...we should change our attitude and look at our ignorance as teachers...'* (FG11R1).

It would seem then that given the predominance of the respondents' focus on teacher-learner interactions and classroom-related factors as opposed to learner intrapersonal factors that the respondents were generally more inclined to steer away from the medical model lens of viewing behaviour and behaviour challenges. Respondents' redirection away from the tendency to pathologise within the medical frame of reference signals a deeper understanding of systemic factors that include themselves as possible contributors to learner behavioural challenges. Such an understanding takes into consideration the various proximal relationships and supportive networks that the learner might be exposed to (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994). The comments by the respondents suggest a deeper understanding: that they see themselves as not merely objective observers but participant observers within the system. This shift suggests that the respondents view themselves within the microsystem of the school and in interaction with and within the broader social contexts the learner finds himself/herself, and this shift allows for a more complex understanding of the learner and the reciprocal multifaceted relationships within the classroom (Tyler & Jones, 2002). Such a deepened understanding of their own roles and their impact within the teaching and learning environment is useful and it creates a catalyst for moving forward in their future teaching and learning endeavours.

6.3.9 Conclusion of Factors Contributing to Learner Challenging Behaviours

This chapter has provided a discussion of the prevalent behavioural challenges in Limpopo FP classrooms. The factors contributing to such behaviours have been discussed in conjunction with Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory and related literature in the field of behavioural antecedents. The chapter has therefore responded to Research Question 1: What factors do the Limpopo FP teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviours in their classroom? Systemic issues of violence, abuse, neglect, child-headed families, and corporal punishment were explored. Unhealthy teacher-learner interpersonal factors, together with teacher apathy, teacher frustrations and teachers' ignorance of appropriate alternative strategies were discussed in relation to teacher-related systemic factors contributing to learner challenging behaviours. Respondents' understanding of behavioural challenges from both a medical model perspective as well as an ecosystemic one were highlighted, with particular attention paid to the fact that respondents were reflexive about their own practices and saw themselves as contributors to the behavioural challenges that they experienced in the classrooms. Respondents saw themselves as impacting and affecting the school microsystem and were thereby considering the integral role they played in contributing to learner challenging behaviour.

The next chapter provides a discussion and analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question 3: How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice? The discussion and analysis will draw links between this study's findings and the literature on teacher preparedness, teacher development and support as well as the literature on PBS as a behaviour support tool within the ecosystemic theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 7: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA RELATED TO THE APPLICATION OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT STRATEGIES

All the data sets have once again been amalgamated to provide a discussion and analysis of respondents' application of the strategies of the PBS model in the classroom. A look at the use of the various PBS strategies will provide a response to Research Question 3: How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice? Module evaluations following the PBS module, which was taught in Oct-Nov 2012, recorded that 100% of respondents would put into practice the behaviour support strategies they learned. 12% indicated they would use ALL the strategies in their classroom practices. Of the strategies taught, positive reinforcement including praise, token economy and rewards were recorded by 32% of the respondents as a specific strategy they would use in their classroom practice. 14% of respondents recorded that classroom organisation including use of classroom rules would be used. 16% of respondents indicated that they would use school-family partnership and building of positive classroom relationships in their classrooms, and 8% of respondents recorded that the strategy of lesson differentiation would be used in the classroom practices.

7.1 Reported Use of PBS Strategies in the Classroom

Following participation in the PBS Inclusion module at WSoE, respondents across all the focus groups reported using a variety of strategies in their interaction with the learners in their classrooms during the in-service teaching period in January 2013. Responses from the focus group interviews as well as classroom observations and individual teacher interviews provided yielded information pertinent to Research Question 3: How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice? The discussion and analysis will draw links to respondents' views on teacher preparedness, teacher development and support as well as PBS as a behaviour support tool within the ecosystemic theoretical framework.

There were several favourable responses within the focus group interviews in relation to the effectiveness of PBS strategies in addressing and supporting management of behavioural challenges. In general, the respondents did find the PBS model an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners who present with behavioural difficulties. Comments such as: *'...this course work has been so very real to us because we been given strategies on how to*

deal with misbehaviour here in class' (FG10R1) and *'I did not know much about the strategies in the module, so I've learned a lot'* (FG6R1) reveal the significance and relevance with which the respondents perceived the behaviour support strategies that they were exposed to. Other remarks such as: *'...actually these strategies are working...'* (FG3R1) and *'...I believe these strategies can work...'* (FG2R5), as well as *'...they are effective'* (FG4R2) indicate that the respondents found value in the practical application of the strategies in that they were effective in managing challenging behaviour in classrooms.

It was also evident that respondents felt that the strategies would not falter in their applicability and usefulness, and expressed confidence about their usefulness even in their future classroom applications. An example of such a comment was: *'...if we go back and apply them, it will work, it will work'* (FG3R1). Similar comments were prevalent across all focus groups, which highlights a positive response by the majority of respondents towards the use of these strategies. A strongly-expressed belief in its value in the classroom (*'working'*, *'can work'*, *'effective'*) as well as an optimistic anticipation of its working in the classroom (*'it will work'*) signal the high value the majority of respondents placed on the PBS model for the management of challenging behaviour.

While emphasising the effectiveness of PBS strategies, the respondents were also very aware of the need to ensure consistency and perseverance in their application of the strategies within their classrooms. There was a keen sense of the need to follow the procedures in the application process for the strategies to be effective. This was expressed as follows: *'...as long as we follow the procedure and attend to it each and every day, our kids will change and become effective learners in the classroom'* (FG4R2) and *'...if they are followed in a correct procedure, they are effective'* (FG2R5). There would seem then to have been an acknowledgment of the need for greater thought and effort to ensure effective application of the strategies. The necessity for follow-through of the procedures for effective operational classroom application was highlighted as an imperative for success. There was also a very strong sense among the respondents that while the procedure followed in the application of the strategies was very important, a high premium was also placed on the need for continued practice of the strategies to ensure success *'...these strategies can work if we just practise it and have a positive attitude and practise it some more'* (FG2R5). Respondents also reported that the application and value in the use of the strategies did require a fair amount of time for effective application. This aspect emerged in responses such as *'...it takes time. It's not just a matter of a day, it takes time...'* (FG3R1). It is evident that then that there was a realistic evaluation of how the strategies needed

to be implemented, the level of dedication and commitment that was needed to ensure consistency (*practice it...and more practice it some more*' FG2R5) in its application; as well as realistic assessment that it was not a quick fix method but one that would need a fair amount of time and effort to ensure effectiveness (*'it takes time'* FG3R1).

The discussion that follows will highlight specific PBS behaviour support strategies respondents made use of in their classroom practice. This will include reported practice during their in-service teaching in Limpopo schools (January 2013) and observed practices (during the classroom observations in Limpopo in November 2013). The discussion and analysis will seek to provide further evidence for how effective respondents considered these PBS strategies for management and support of learners who present with challenging behaviours in their classrooms.

7.1.1 Classroom Rules

Literature highlights that research on the value of classroom rules spans more than forty years and that classroom rules, both organisational rules and instructional rules, form one of the basic behavioural strategies in classroom management (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009). Respondents across all focus groups reported that the use of classroom rules was one of the strategies they had used effectively in their classrooms in Limpopo following their participation in the Inclusion module at Wits.

7.1.2 Teacher-Learner Discussion, Mediation and Collaboration in the Formulation and Use of Classroom Rules

Feedback from the respondents during the focus group interviews (conducted in February-April 2013) in relation to the management of behavioural challenges through the use of classroom rules was positive. The respondents' reflections in the focus groups centred on learners' understanding of the rules, collaboration with learners in the formulation of classroom rules, consistency in the teaching and application of the rules, and the reinforcement of the classroom rules for greater efficacy.

The majority of respondents from across focus groups expressed the importance of mediation of the rules during classroom time. Discussion time for learners to engage with what the rules mean, why rules were important and how rules were to be practiced was considered imperative. Respondents' comments in relation to mediation included the following: *'...understanding the rules and talking about the rules in the class is important'* (FG1R3), and *'...we read all the*

rules, and we talk about them' (FG1R2), *'...you talk about them before you start a lesson'* (FG2R1). These comments highlighted the interactive nature and the vital role that classroom discussions played during communications about the rules. The value and importance of the discussions was reported to be that learners then understood what was expected and it was easier for them to follow-through on the rules they had set together with the teacher. The following comment encapsulates the value of the discussions with learners in relation to the classroom rules: *'we make the classroom rules with the whole class, discussing with them ... then those children everyday will know what is expected of them...it is not so hard then for the children'* (FG5R1). Where previously it may have been thought that learners were just *naughty*, there was now a shift in understanding learner behaviour in relation to the learners understanding of the classroom rules *'...as a teacher I must understand that it's not that they are naughty, it's that it's just that they have to be taught about the ground rules of the class'* (FG3R2). This response makes explicit what the role of the teacher is with regard to learner challenging behaviour. It includes an understanding of the child and the responsibility of the teacher to explicitly teach appropriate forms of behaviour. The development of social skills that encourage appropriate ways of dealing with stress, anger and frustration and other emotional challenges is considered to be essential in helping *'learners think critically and creatively, solve problems, make informed decisions, cope with and manage new situations, and communicate effectively'* (Hoffman, 2006, p. 3).

This shift is considered quite significant, in that the respondents began to consider the systemic factors that contribute to learner behavioural challenges. In this particular excerpt, the respondent (FG3R2) reflected on herself and her understanding of the learner behaviour and considered that perhaps other systemic factors such as a lack of exposure and understanding of the rules was the predicator of the challenging behaviour that the learner presents with. Such a deepened understanding by the teacher created a catalyst for changed behaviour for learners within the classroom: *'...they sit down, they start talking politely, they were not shouting at one another...'* (FG2R2). The actual teaching of the rules and collaborative discussion of them with the learners reportedly impacted learner behaviour positively. Learners were no longer shouting at each other but were instead engaging in polite conversation.

A reported recognition of the vital role learners play in the development of the classroom rules was further evident when one respondent indicated *'...I have noticed that if we discuss the classroom rules with the children...they are able to follow these things'* (FG11R6). Another respondent said: *'I write the rules, they come up with their own rules. I tell them what I want,*

then they tell me what they want' (FG1R1). The outcome of the teacher-learner collaboration therefore created increased opportunities for fostering dialogue amongst the learners as well as fostering communication with the teacher. The impact of such collaboration on the teacher as well as the learners is evident in the following poignant comment:

Okay, here we are in the classroom. I ask, what do we think we can do in the class, to make the classroom a more conducive place to learn? So the children will come up with the ideas, and then you write them on the board, then okay, after writing them, we read them. ...giving the children the responsibility. Remember, you sit with them, you sit, down with them, and ask them. (FG7R1).

The partnership forged with the learners demonstrated in the use of the plural pronouns ('...what do we think we can do...sit down with them...ask them...') reflects a sharing of custodianship of the classroom space, which affords the learners the opportunity to meaningfully contribute to a building a safe space for classroom teaching and learning (which is referred to in the excerpt as '*a more conducive place*'). The space is one where teacher and learners can sit together and co-create ('*you sit with them*'). The benefits of the collaboration and partnership results in the learners taking ownership and responsibility for their behaviour as indicated in the notion that the '*children come up*' with the ideas, thereby taking ownership of the process and product of the discussions. The ownership was reported to be possible because the teacher afforded the learners an opportunity to participate ('*ask them*') and collaborate in the rule making process. The active participation by the learners in collaboration with the teacher then impacts the learners' adherence to the rules, for example: '*...if the children in the class make a noise, you say, let's look at our classroom rules*' (FG7R3). The joint formulation of the rules were reported to allow for joint ownership of the rules.

When learners participate in the creation of rules and procedures as opposed to having them imposed onto them, they not only become more aware of the classroom rules and procedures, they own the expectations that are set, and this strengthens adherence to appropriate conduct and establishes learner responsibility for group learning (Horton, 2014). The adherence to the rules helps preserve the integrity of the joint decision making process.

7.1.3 Consistency and Reinforcement of the Classroom Rules

There was also expression of the value found in relation to using the rules with consistency, repetition and regular reinforcement throughout the school day. Reinforcing and reminding learners of the rules was considered a valuable part of the routine of the school day. Some comments about this included: ‘...go over the rules every day, tell them the do’s and don’ts before you start the day’ (FG5R3), and ‘we read those rules when we come to class in the morning’ (FG1R2) ‘...every day we’ll read the rules’ (FG7R1). The reasons for the repetition and reinforcement was ‘...so that children can know the rules...so that we can alert them...’ (FG7R1). The respondents seemed to have developed a sharpened understanding that regularly reminding learners about the rules impacted learner adherence to the rules. Drawing learners’ attention to key rules throughout the day reportedly served as a useful reminder of expected behaviour, thereby encouraging learner adherence. Literature in the area of classroom management reinforces the need for classroom rules to be taught routinely, systematically and situationally with the teacher modelling the expected behaviours (Burden, 2006; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008). The aspect of using the rules situationally can be seen in the following comment: ‘I like to use classroom rules before going on with my teaching ... if the child misbehaves then I say, “Oh but we agreed with that rule together”’ (FG3R4). Reminders and repetition were recorded by respondents to take place during different times of the day and as commonly as ‘every day’, ‘first thing in the morning’, ‘before the start of the day’, or ‘before a lesson’. Reinke, Herman, and Stormont (2013) attest to the value of reminders and reinforcement of the classroom rules and affirm that the posting of classroom rules, combined with teacher- or learner-directed reference to them during the course of the day serves to increase learner awareness as well as learner application and follow through of the rules.

In addition, the consistent use of agreed-upon rules by all staff, including management, would serve to signal to the learners the unified identity of the school in relation to expected behaviours. One respondent added that school-wide reminders about the rules by management staff during assembly times would be useful. The respondent commented as follows: ‘...but I also think the whole management should stress the rules while learners are assembled in the hall...’ (FG1R2). The corporate reminders within large group settings during assembly periods as well as the small group settings of the classrooms would add emphasis to the importance of the rules, encouraging greater buy-in from the teachers as well as learners. School-wide expectations, and identification with core school values assist in supporting the active teaching and implementation of those expectations and values (OSEP, 2004; Sugai & Horner, 2009).

7.1.4 Challenges Reported with the Application of Classroom Rules

The formulation and practical application of classroom rules is not without challenges. Challenges were reported by respondents in relation to teacher-learner collaboration during the formulation of the rules, as well as in relation to techniques for the formulation of classroom rules. This became evident during the teaching of the section on classroom rules (during the Inclusion module taught in 2012). Furthermore, challenges were reported by respondents in relation to the systemic challenges of home-school collaboration in relation to sustained effect and impact of classroom and school rules. Each of these aspects will be discussed in detail in the section that follows.

7.1.4.1 Challenges with Teacher- Learner collaboration

Although the respondents were very clear about the need for discussions and collaborative understanding of the rules, they also expressed that such dialogue between learner and teacher was not always easy to achieve. It was evident that communication between learners and teachers needed to be practised in the classrooms to support learners to become more comfortable to make contributions to class discussions. One respondent indicated: *'...we have to work and work at it'* (FG11R3), and another added: *'...our children are not used to talking to us'* (FG11R6). A further comment was that the teachers had previously seldom engaged learners in discussion: *'...we just tell them, we didn't engage them in making those rules...then we blame the kids'* (FG8R4). There was recognition by this particular respondent that the practice of authoritative classroom management was not producing the best results as learners were continuing to be blamed for not following through on teacher-made and teacher-imposed rules. A critical element in this comment is that the teacher realises her role in placing blame on the learners for poor behaviour, and the teacher accurately reflects that this blame is misplaced given the teacher's own lack of collaboration with the learners in setting up the rules for appropriate classroom behaviour. There arose an awareness of the need for partnership and effective communication with the learners, with the aim of building healthy classroom relationships. The willingness by the teachers to start building the relationships that would encourage learner participation was significant as respondents were quite clear that without discussions about the rules, learner buy-in was not possible and co-operation would be hindered.

The practice of *telling* learners is also linked to issues of authority and power in the classroom, where teachers are revered as the knowledgeable other not to be questioned or engaged with in discussion. Power in the classroom refers to the teacher's capacity to influence learners to stay on task, minimising off task or disruptive behaviours (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). While the 'exertion of power is a natural part of the teaching process', such power, particularly coercive power (which rests on the learners' awareness that the teacher can punish them) also has the potential to produce either negative or positive outcomes (Pytlak & Houser, 2014, p. 289). Yet again, teachers were reflexive about their previous practices and were beginning to see that the need for changed behaviour began with themselves before there could be evidence of positive changes in behaviour in the learners. Teachers were giving consideration to the use of referent power (which refers to learners' admiration and positive view of the teacher). Referent power is considered as a more constructive use of influence within the classroom (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). A typical example of respondents' consideration of the value of positive relationship with the learners is evident in the following excerpt: '*let them be our friends and let us be their friends, being free in class and engaging them in everything*' (FG11R3).

7.1.4.2 Challenges in Formulating Positively Worded Rules

The purpose of classroom rules is to prompt learners towards expected behaviour and away from challenging behaviour. Explicit and clear instruction of what learners 'should be' doing is often necessary. Part of the focus in relation to teaching classroom rules was on the formulation of the rules in collaboration with learners and the use of positively worded rules to prompt expected action in the learners. Literature highlights the need for use of both 'do' and 'don't' rule requests, as these serve to increase the rate at which learners comply with requests. While explicit rules indicating what not to do is considered important (Gable et al, 2009), literature highlights the need for positive-worded rules to show what behaviours learners should be engaged in (Reinke et al., 2013). Given the diversity of learner populations and the complex nature of rules and expectations, it can be expected that each source of non-compliant behaviour may necessitate a different intervention. Some interventions may need to point the learner to rules that are positively stated and other interventions may need to point the learner to the rules that are negatively stated.

During my reflections at the time of teaching the section on classroom rules as a behaviour support strategy, I recorded a section in my journal which I have reproduced below. This reflection evolved following the request for the Limpopo FP teachers to role play in small

groups the formulation of two to three positively-worded examples of possible rules that could be used in the classroom. Examples such as 'don't run in the corridors' and 'don't shout out answers' were common examples provided by the respondents of rules frequently used in schools.

The teachers seem to have experienced a great deal of difficulty when asked to change negative worded rules into a positive worded rule. It seems that they were almost stuck in the negative and didn't know how to move or make the shift in their articulation or practice of the theory related to this. It seemed as if don't.....don't...don't...was the only verb they were stuck on. Could it be that they had not encountered or been exposed to positive behaviour framings at all? Or perhaps they had not done the readings in preparation for the lecture?
(Journal entry 31 August 2012)

Positive reformulation of the negative action rules seemed to be a significant challenge in the role play during the module presentation. Discussions around expectations of what the appropriate replacement behaviour would be for running in the corridors, for example, or what the alternative to learners shouting out of answers was, seemed to also be a difficult bridge to cross for the Limpopo FP teachers. I also reflected that given the challenges with positive reframing of rules, that:

...teachers who were able to formulate rules positively where those who said they remembered how their mentor teacher used rules such as 'use your indoor voices' and 'walk quietly with hands at your sides' They had seen its value and application in practicum sessions at Gauteng schools....I am glad we had role played that segment as without doing so could have meant that there would remain a big gap in the teachers understanding of framing of rules. (Journal entry 31 August 2012).

Exposure to good practice examples had had a positive result by allowing the teachers to see how the theory could be incorporated into practice. Warm and supportive relationships with teachers are needed for either type (negative and positive statements) of rule request as it is the relationship that the learner has with the teacher that increases the learner's motivation to adhere to classroom rules and live up to teacher expectations, thus stimulating their learning efforts (Lee & Bierman, 2015)

7.1.4.3 Systemic Challenges within the Home that Impede Sustainability of Classroom Rules.

During the focus group interviews, two respondents expressed the limitations related to the impact that rules sometimes had in their classroom practice: *'It works for a while, but tomorrow it is another thing, he (the learner) will do another thing'* (FG1R1). Within the same focus group, another respondent added that while there was agreement about the need for rules in the classroom, *'Around ten, eleven, or twelve o'clock the rules will be gone'* (FG1R2), which suggests that there may be limitations to the effectiveness of the strategy in relation to its sustained impact. Both responses serve to signal challenges related to the sustained use of rules within the classroom. This has been countered to some extent by several of the other comments that highlighted the need for practice, reinforcement and more practice of the rules (section 7.1.3). None the less, the added dimension here points to the many behavioural challenges that frustrate teachers (*'another thing and another thing'*).

Literature suggests that there may be more than one factor that can be attributed to poor follow-through and limited compliance. Learner's noncompliance with classroom rules can for example be significantly heightened by the teacher's failure to impose sanctions for rule violation, which can render classroom rules ineffective. Learners are more likely to follow classroom rules if they believe that teachers are fully aware of compliant as well as noncompliant behaviours and if they are able to consistently enforce rewards for rule-abiding behaviour and interventions to address repeated violations (Reinke et al., 2013). If there is no reinforcement of the rules equally for all learners on a consistent basis, the challenge of noncompliance becomes a very real one. The time and effort needed to practice and reinforce the rules could also impact the sustained efforts of the teacher. A preoccupation with completion of the syllabus and other demands of the school day may impact teachers' levels of consistency in recognising and praising positive behaviour or sanctioning poor behaviour. Such inconsistencies negatively impact the value the learners place on the rules and may encourage limited use of the rules or even haphazard use of the rules (Reinke et al., 2013). A consistent effort to practice and reinforce the rules is a challenge in itself. Unless teachers are willing to persevere in this regard, the use of classroom rules can emerge to be yet another unproductive strategy.

During the interviews with the teachers, it seemed that the use of rules was perceived as limited in effect because of limited collaboration with the school and the learners' home systems. Both the teachers from School 1 reflected on the incongruence between the rules of the classroom

and those practiced within the home. For example ‘...*there is an inconsistency between the rules at home and the rules at school*’ (School 1 Teacher 1). The learners from within School 1 were reported to come predominantly from the Place of Safety (child protective housing facility) in the area where large groups of children were reported to be cared for by one or two persons. Discipline challenges were reported to be rife, given the emotional and psycho-social challenges the learners had experienced in their young lives. Both teachers from School 1 lamented that there was a lack of reinforcement of classroom rules within the home microsystem. Teacher 1 at School 1 (T1S1) attributed this to the inconsistency between what is allowed to happen at home and what is allowed to happen at school. Teacher 1 reported the following: ‘...*there is inconsistency between the rules at home and the rules at school, because at home there is no-one watching the children and saying this and this...*’ (T1S1) The second teacher in School 1 reported in the interview that ‘*when I make the rules with the children, some of them don’t understand, they don’t have parents to teach them.*’ (T2S2) Both these comments highlights the teachers’ frustration in relation to home-school partnerships for the teaching and reinforcement of the classroom rules. The comments also point to the perceived limited involvement of care givers towards learners (‘*no-one is watching them*’, ‘*they don’t have parents*’- T1S1).

7.2 The Use of Praise and Rewards in Limpopo FP Classrooms

Together with classroom rules, respondents indicated that they used praise and rewards, including tokens, as part of their repertoire of skills to support positive behaviour in learners. Several definitions of praise are available and general consensus among the definitions include that ‘praise is an expression of approval’, and a ‘form of reinforcement, intended to increase the probability or frequency of the behaviour it follows’ (Howell, Caldarella, Korth & Young, 2014).

It was evident from the responses in the focus groups that the use of praise and rewards had not been prominent prior to exposure to the PBS model. One respondent (FG10R1) highlighted that praise was a ‘different way’ of treating learners and that it inculcated in the teacher as well as learners a change in attitude towards those learners who were perceived to present with challenging behaviour. For this respondent, the use of praise was sometimes a trial strategy to see if there could be some change in learner behaviours. Praise was also used as an alternative to derogatory remarks. An example of how praise was used is encapsulated in the comment that follows. ‘*Let us just try to treat him in a different way and when he writes or draws, let us*

*just praise him, let us just say good work and let's see if he can change and let us just not call him names like big ears...*¹⁰ (FG10R1). The attention the respondent placed on a different approach as possibly leading to a different outcome suggests the consideration of the need to look at alternative ways of engaging with learners through offering of praise. It is also evident from this excerpt that the praise given was not necessarily earned by the learner. Stirling (2014) cautions against the use of indiscriminate or artificial praise, stating that 'insincere praise or verbal rewards [...] can have an undermining effect as they convey a message of lack of competence' (p. 14). It may be possible that praise was tried in this instance as an alternative to previously tried and failed strategies: '*...just try and treat him in a different way*'. The different way perhaps was one that communicated recognition for effort and minimised hurtful comments to the learner. The attempt to use the strategy to '*see if he can change*' signals that the teacher was open and willing to consider other options to behaviour support with a hope that a changed attitude towards the learner may well positively impact the learner's behaviour in the classroom. This respondent's (FG10R1) comment indicates the teacher's acknowledgment of her role in the systemic support of the learners and how changing one aspect of the classroom microsystem (the use praise instead of derogatory comments) may indeed impact and effect change in another aspect of the classroom microsystem (learner behaviour). The respondent (FG10R1), further reported that the effort of using praise caused a positive change in the learners behaviour. She reported the following:

....the very same day, he drew a picture, I said Good. I even stamped it and gave him a sticker for good work. Then from that day, that boy was so happy, he said ma'am now I'm taking this to show my mom and dad, they will be so happy. Every day thereafter when he writes he made sure he tried hard, so that he could receive praise....he was no longer even hitting the other children...'

Other respondents indicated that using praise was effective in changing learner behaviour. '*...I believe some of the strategies are effective ... if you give them the praises... they just keep quiet and listen to you...other children become much more helpful*' (FG3R2), and '*...Praising children...I see it working very well...*' (Teacher Interview School 3 Teacher 4). Increased learner attention, and increased learners' courtesy to each other and to the teacher became evident following the use of praise in this teachers' classroom. This was reported to increase

¹⁰ The context of this incident that the teacher was reporting on in this interview was that the learner (grade 3) had disclosed to her that the reason he was misbehaving was because he was always being teased and called 'big ears'. He reported that he was tired of the teasing and that was why he was hitting the learners in the class and not doing his classwork.

opportunities for teaching and learning and enhanced cooperation and comradery amongst the learners, which creates a supportive learning environment (Olley et al., 2010).

7.2.1 The Use of Praise in Strengthening Teacher- Learner Relationships

Praising learners for behaviours that they are able to control (e.g. for paying attention, for trying hard, for picking up after themselves, for attempting an answer, etc.) increases the likelihood of intrinsic motivation and achievement (Howell et al., 2014). This use of praise being viewed positively by learners and teachers is consistent with findings in related literature. Burnett & Mandel (2010) report that primary school learners had positive reactions to teachers' use of verbal praise, and that teachers' verbal praise made them feel good. Another study by Marchant & Anderson (2012) reports that teachers believed praise improved relationships and motivated learners to learn.

Within the focus group interviews, the use of praise was also considered to change behaviour at an intrinsic level. There were also indications from the respondents that praise positively impacted learners self-esteem, was instrumental in building self-confidence and making learners' classroom experiences happy. *'...it's valuable.children see themselves as valuable and having self-worth, and they are confident with that. The children became happy and appreciate it'* (FG7R1). The teachers saw praise as instrumental in instilling self-confidence, learner pride, and a positive self-image.

Within the lessons that were observed in the Limpopo FP classrooms, there was strong evidence that teachers made good use of praise during their lessons. Teacher 3 in School 2, for example, was observed to be warm and affirming towards the learners. She offered praise and encouragement to them that was both genuine and thoughtful. Her discriminate use of praise created a positive classroom environment and motivated learners to participate fully in the lesson. Within School 3, Teacher 4 gave nods of recognition and gentle pats accompanied by the phrase 'well done' following learner participation in the lesson. Such praise and reward for participation offered encouragement and motivation to the learners to continue to give their best.

The use of praise in the form of praise notes to the home was also reported to have had positive results. Teacher 2 from School 1 reported in the interview that *'...one strategy was giving cards to children to take home to the parents, saying Thank you for the good behaviour we see in*

your child. There is some feedback; where the child says; the mother says thank you' (School 1 Teacher 2). Praise in this instance created the opportunity for forging relationships between the school and the home. Parents have an opportunity to see the value that the teacher sees in the child's behaviour and appreciate the commendation. This is consistent with findings of Pillet-Shore (2012), who reports that parents view teachers' praise of the child as a compliment to themselves as parents. The strategy of praise notes from the school to the parents may also have the added effect of parents praising the child within the family microsystem and potentially within the wider family system. Such use of praise further reinforces learners' positive behaviour and builds learners' self-esteem both within the school and family microsystems. Research by Howell et al., (2014) reveals that praise notes help improve classroom behaviour, relationships and home-school communication.

7.2.2 The Use of Tokens and Rewards to Motivate Learners

Another extrinsic form of motivation is the use of tokens and rewards which are used by teachers to recognise and reward desirable activities or outcomes (Byron & Khazanchi, 2012). The Limpopo respondents recorded both in the focus group interviews and in the classroom interviews that the use of rewards had a positive impact on learner behaviour. School 1 Teacher 1 remarked '*...I do use the tokens ... I find it valuable*'. The rewards used by the teachers varied. These included giving learners stars, stickers, fruit, pencils, and cards to take home for good behaviour. In addition, assembly recognitions and principal recognitions were cited as being used in the schools. The value that teachers attributed to the use of rewards included that they motivated children to do better and learners cared more about their work. '*I used tokens as one of the strategies to motivate the child ... I realise that they (the learners) start to care more about their work*' (FG9R3), '*...they appreciate it*' (School 1 Teacher 1). Whilst this aspect of using tokens was not observed in Teacher 1's class, it was seen to be in practice in School 2 Teacher 3's classroom (appendix J) where the teacher used stars on learner foreheads to celebrate learners who were sharing easily and working cooperatively. The result was that other learners in the class (school 2 teacher 2) were observed to be following the example and also started to participate more actively in the activity. During the focus group interview it was reported that rewards were used for a variety of reasons, including affirming learners for paying attention, participating in class, behaving well (not running around the class). For example, '*...the teacher will put stars on the board, the stars will be given for those who behave...*' (FG6R1), '*I give gold stickers to those who are participating...*' (FG2R2), '*...small stars on their foreheads for*

those who are doing good things' (FG7R3), and *'...the child will wear the crown for the whole day...it is motivating the children'* (FG5R4).

The use of these rewards assisted in building positive relationships between the learners and the teachers. The simple practice of calling the learners by their names was also considered a valuable reward to learners and is evident in these statements by respondents: *'I think just knowing the children's' name is important*' (FG9R3), *'So just calling children by their names...works much better...it is better than saying "hey you" or "you there"....'* (FG7R3), *'You know, learners feel impressed when they are being called by their names'* (FG6R2), and *'I also called them by names, and I realized that they're happy about that.... They say even the teacher knows me...and then they were happy'* (FG6R4). Using learners' names has been reported to strengthen a learner's identity in the class and cement a positive relationship between the learner and teacher as it makes the learners feel recognised and known by the teacher. Learners who perceive the relationship with their teacher to be one of care and respect pay greater attention because the communication strategies the teacher uses are perceived as exhibitions of care (Cothran et al., 2003).

7.3 Collaboration and Partnership between the School and the Home

The strategy of home-school partnerships was further highlighted by respondents as one that was used to encourage and support positive behaviour in learners. The importance of the role of parents in relation to home-school partnerships has also been recognised in legislation and policies, including the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and *Education White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001). There is strong documented evidence to support the possible benefits to learners, parents and teachers of parental partnership and collaboration with schools (Westergard, 2013; Yssel, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff & Swart, 2007).

Within this study, collaborative partnerships were considered useful for healthy relationships between the home and school. This was reported across all of the focus group interviews as well as during the teacher interviews. These partnerships were also reported to be considered vital in ensuring a united base of support for the learners that facilitated helpful joint parent-teacher efforts related to learner support. Respondents reported that *'we learnt that it's very important to consult with the parents whenever you encounter a problem'* (FG9R1), and *'...having a good relationship with the parents is important so that we can discuss the problems that the children are facing at school with the parents and then we can work hand in hand with*

the parents' (FG9R4). Another respondent (respondent 1, focus group 6) indicated the value they had found in collaborating with parents to support learner behaviour. The respondent described the details as follows: *'I've also tried that strategy of school-family partnership. In my class, there was a problematic child, I discussed the problem with the parents.... we came to an agreement that at home they will do this and this with the child, and in school I will do this and this with the child'* (FG6R1).

Benefits of family involvement include 'higher academic achievement, increased support of teachers and schools from parents, improved behaviour, and increased likelihood of enrolling in postsecondary education programmes' (Reinke et al., 2009, p. 36). The partnerships were reported (FG6R1, FG9R4 and FG9R1) to be valuable in creating a continuation of the support from the school to the home and from the home to the school. The agreement between the parent and the teacher was also considered beneficial as there was parent buy-in to continue with the support at home. From an ecological perspective, the supportive collaborative relationship between the home and school microsystems are indicative of what Mampane and Bouwer (2011) describe as the development of protective factors that support the child's learning and development. Pirchio, Passiatore, Tritrini and Taeschner (2013) also emphasise the importance of parental involvement in a child's schooling as it is associated with positive outcomes of fewer behavioural problems and better social conduct.

Literature supports that parents be integral partners in developing inclusive school systems where there is shared responsibility for decision making and outcomes of learning (Yssel et al., 2007). From an ecological perspective, the mesosystem created by the links between the learners' proximal socialising contexts (of school and home microsystems) can facilitate the learners' development. This is achieved by 'enhancing continuity between both these microsystems in providing a coherent educational environment' which impact the learners' experience in both the home and school environments (Pirchio et al., 2013, p. 145). The process of encouraging collaboration was seen by teachers to be their role, as they realised that the school needed to be more welcoming and inviting of parent support and parent involvement. One respondent said: *'...we observe that ... it is not that they (parents) are ignorant of their children's education, the only thing is that, they (parents) fear and they don't know that it is their right to come to school and ask about their children's progress'* (FG11R3). It is evident from this remark that the teacher was now more aware of the power position they held within the community and that parents' lack of awareness of their potential roles within the schools possibly deterred them from becoming more involved. Another respondent remarked that

efforts to engender collaboration needed to be both from the teacher and the parent, and that where the parent had difficulty, the teacher could be the person to initiate the collaboration. An example of this was from Respondent 5 in Focus Group 11: *'If you are networking with the parents and if you find that the parents they can't afford something and you make some arrangement that you give some help for the children...then they will also try, they will also come back to you and they will also try to support you because you are trying to help'* (FG5R11). Evident in this excerpt is a significant connection between social class and the effectiveness of parents/caregivers in dealing with teachers, and this connection is powerfully rooted in cultural capital (Reay, 2004). The strategy of initiating collaboration with parents is valuable particularly where parents may play a passive role or lack the power to freely engage in the process of collaboration (Freeman, 2010). The efforts by respondents (FG5R11, FG6R1, FG9R4 and FG9R1) were reported to be valued by the parents and in turn motivated parents to participate more willingly and freely in learner support issues. The teachers reported taking responsibility to promote cooperation and effective dialogue with parents, resulting in mutual commitments from both teachers and parents. Trust is considered to be an essential factor in building collaborative relationships and activating cultural capital (Freeman, 2010; Day, 2013). Parents trust teachers more when they seem involved, when they reach out, when there are frequent communications (both formal and informal and both positive and negative) (Day, 2013). The communication and efforts at collaboration help parents feel validation and connection and build trust.

Early intervention was also considered by respondents to be a key element in building a support network between the home and school. They reflected that putting into place a collaborative resource of support systems for the learner was expected to have the desired result of learner success by the end of the year: *'....as teachers we have to immediately in the first term notice the child who is having some problems and try to find out what is the cause of the problem... meet with the parent... we can still help this child to make it at the end of the year'* (FG11R2). Literature supports that parents be viewed as valuable resources that the school can draw on by initiating helpful cooperation. They need to be valued and treated as equal partners in cooperation with the teachers (Westergard, 2013).

At times, the partnership between the parent and the teacher was reported to need added effort on the part of the teacher, and occasionally included home visits by the teachers. This is reflected in this example: *'I think the other strategy which can help for parents who are far to reach, as a teacher I have their phone numbers, I can call to talk to them... Can I come to*

visit? ... and then, by going to the child's place, and being with the parents ... I can also see the background of the child, which will help...' (FG7R6). Getting to know the learners better in the context of their home would provide the teacher with valuable insights that may otherwise have been missed. An understanding of the learners' strengths and challenges within the home microsystem would also create a deeper understanding of the potential reasons for learner challenges that are surfacing at school (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). Respondent 6 from Focus Group 11 carefully summarised her commitment in this role as follows: *'So from now on I think I'm going to inquire ... to investigate what's happening...to intervene, by talking to their parents ...as teachers we have to make sure that we take the risk because it's for the benefit of the child'*. The benefit of possible support for the learner was here considered paramount, despite the potential risks. Bergeron and Deslandes (2011, p. 49) explain that a teacher's positive attitude towards learners, together with their 'professional capacity to identify learning needs and to provide parents with guidance on how to support learners using their didactic and pedagogic knowledge' is instrumental in forging a way forward to establish positive relationships with parents.

7.3.1 Challenges and the Way Forward in Building Home-School Partnerships

Literature points to the variety of pressures at both school and family levels that influence home-school partnerships (Westergard & Galloway, 2010; Westergard, 2013). Pressures within the home could include parental disillusionment, parental illiteracy, and parental fear of rejection. The interplay of these mesosystemic factors pose considerable risk to the establishment and development and growth of home-school partnerships. The risks factor reported to in the excerpt of a respondent (FG11R6) relates to cultural differences, perceived privacy breaches, as well as poverty and illiteracy challenges: *'So from now on I think I'm going to inquire ... to investigate what's happening...to intervene, by talking to their parents ... as teachers we have to make sure that we take the risk because it's for the benefit of the child'*. One respondent described the risk of being accused of invading the privacy of the parent as follows: *'the experience of the parent partnership is sometimes very much difficult because as people we differ culturally... for these young ones, their mothers are still school going students, if you try to find out what is going on, then the mother will be very angry with you, saying that...you break my privacy'* (FG11R3). Teenage pregnancy (e.g. *'their mothers are still school going students'*) and its related challenges were reported to hamper healthy home-school partnerships, given its association with issues of perceived stigma. This, coupled with the

parent's fear of humiliation and or victimisation, was reported to produce a context that limited the potential for building a trusting and supportive collaboration with the parent.

Ignorance of school-related matters were also reported in the focus group interviews to be a significant challenge. Respondents considered that lack of parental/caregiver understanding of school and school-related matters impacted negatively on home-school communications (also reported by Teacher 1 School 1 in section 7.5.4). Examples of this from the focus group interviews are as follows: *'and the other reason is that you find that the child is staying with a very old lady, who doesn't even understand anything regarding the school things'* (FG11R3). Also *'they (some parents) don't know how to read or write... they don't know the value of education..'* (FG1R1). The context of Limpopo in relation to poorly educated parents/caregivers and the impact of orphanhood and child-headed households has been discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.5.2). Literature supports the notion that parent-teacher relationships can consider the expertise present within the two microsystems as valuable, supportive and protective factors in enhancing learner classroom support (Reinke et al., 2009). Consideration can be given to the teacher being the expert in the classroom in relation to curriculum and pedagogical matters, and the parent should be viewed as an expert in their child's personality, how their child engages emotionally and socially outside of school, and the things that their child struggles with. Because academic achievement involves attention to academic, social and emotional development, both types of expertise are needed (Day, 2013). The result is a mutual benefit of each of the microsystems as parents and teachers (equal partners which have different strengths in relation to support of the learner) depend on and value one another and as learners depend on a strong partnership so that they can have the best possible opportunities in their schooling careers.

Despite the challenges that were prevalent in developing and promoting positive home-school partnerships, the motivation to support learners and seek ways of promoting partnerships were reported to outweigh the risks. A respondent from Focus Group 11 expressed social responsibility in the face of potential risk as follows: *'I see that as a school you have to take responsibility of educating the parents about good child rearing practice to ensure consistency between what the school expects and what is practiced in the family...'* (FG 10R6). The same respondent promoted parents' education and participation: *'...You must involve them, engage with them... give them the opportunity to raise their voices...'*. Yssel et al. (2007) argue that to build collaborative partnerships, school management and teachers need to be proactive in fostering trust and respect in the building of effective communication with parents. This is

further supported by additional literature which suggests that school personnel welcome parental cooperation and recognise their responsibility to develop and grow the necessary competence in the school system by creating opportunities for parental cooperation through routine and regular meetings, as well as competence-building activities (Westergard, 2013). Respondents evidently gave careful consideration to the strengths or protective factors as well as the risk factors related to the learners' home and family microsystems, with a view to identifying opportunities for growth and development within those contexts.

7.4 Purposeful Lesson Planning

Careful and thoughtful planning and preparation of lessons was another PBS strategy the respondents found to be valuable in supporting positive behaviour in learners. They emphasised the various ways in which they had engaged with lesson planning and activity planning to support the different learning needs of learners. Respondents were drawing also on the context of their holistic educational development within the BEd programme at WITS which incorporated curriculum support issues and lesson planning. The results following the use of curriculum differentiation as well as activity differentiation were reported to be favourable. Responses included: *'I tried differentiation.....I have seen it working...'* (FG6R1). Respondents were enthusiastic when they discovered that differentiation is an appropriate way to address different learning paces as well as different ability levels: *'...because learners are not developing at the same pace...now I can see that I can just group my children according to their abilities...'* (FG9R1). Curriculum differentiation also afforded teachers the opportunity to take into consideration the different styles of presenting lessons in an effort to accommodate tactile and kinaesthetic learning opportunities more appropriately in the lesson: *'They are many learning styles, some learn by doing...especially Foundation Phase learners'* (FG10R2). The strategy was found to be useful for accommodating all learners in the lesson: *'...I think with differentiation strategies we can accommodate every learner in the classroom'* (FG9R6). One of the significant purposes of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (DoE, 2010) is inclusivity, which requires that teachers engage in curriculum differentiation to extend and support the different aspects of the curriculum, including the lesson content and how the content is presented to the learners. 'Differentiation of content', we are told, 'requires that learning material be adapted and presented at varying degrees of complexity. Such differentiation is required to provide access to learning and to ensure that all learners experience success' (Wuim & Louw, 2015, p. 31). The respondents' purposeful planning which takes into consideration

the essential element of curriculum differentiation echoes a strong understanding of the rationale and practice of differentiation. Their efforts are reported to be working well in the excerpts presented here. Careful lesson plans were also a strength identified in the classroom observation in the Limpopo schools (appendix J).

Together with accommodating all learners productively in the lesson, there was the added dimension reported of the PBS strategy of differentiated support tasks which were made available to learners after they had completed their classwork that were found to be useful in curbing challenging behaviour: *'...it will keep them from making noise so that they can know if I finish this one ... I go to the red box and I complete that other work'* (FG9R6), and *'...I used to prepare many many activities...so that when they finish early, I give them work to do...'* (FG6R5). Taking into account the assessment outcomes of the lesson, literature supports the use of varied activities that are aimed at 'facilitating the various levels of advancement in the cognitive domain (for example, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation' (Wuim & Louw, 2015, p. 36). Learners were thus meaningfully engaged in tasks that held their attention, which in turn created further opportunities for on task behaviour and meaningful learner participation.

Respondents reflected on their increased awareness of the need to research the subject content of the lesson and to ensure that the level the lesson was pitched at was not below or above the learners' levels of comprehension. This increased awareness assisted respondents to plan lessons more effectively, such that there was more appropriate use of the time spent on the lessons and the related activities. The following comment highlights this aspect: *'Now we know how to keep them busy, being fully prepared, going to research and giving them the information that is needed and that is at their level and again not giving them something that is boring or that is too challenging'* (FG10R1). Respondents reported to be more *'fully prepared'* and this was reported to enhance their ability to support productive learning (*'we know how to keep them busy'*) at levels that were appropriate for the different ability levels of the learners (*'not too boring or too challenging'*): *'...so we must give them the work that is at their level'* (FG10R1). Learners were reported to participate fully and enjoy the tasks set out for them: *'...and because they enjoy the work...they become happy...'* (FG6R1). Literature on classroom pedagogical practices encourages the use of 'high quality teaching based on a sound knowledge and understanding of each child's needs' (Prain, Cox, Deed, Dorman, Edwards, Farrelly, Keeffe, Lovejoy, Mow, Sellings, Waldrip & Yager, 2013, p. 656). This, coupled with the teachers' high expectations of every learner illustrates that the 'teacher shapes teaching around

the way learners learn, thereby taking great care to nurture the unique talents of every learner' (p. 656). It was evident in the classroom observations that teachers did plan differentiated task activities which allowed for meaningful and full learner participation. The lessons observed during the school visits to Limpopo were interesting and held learners' attention given the use of various apparatus including pictures and charts. Observation records (appendix J) provide supporting evidence for this. Contextual factors related to the schools within which the observations took place are provided in 7.5.2 and 7.5.3

Teacher with-it-ness exemplars ('with-it-ness' exemplars explained in section 5.6.5) of Purposeful Lesson Planning and Lesson Presentation were observed during the Limpopo school visits. Within all four classroom observations (appendix J), all four teachers had a well-written plan for the lesson that was being presented. There were clear indications of the teacher designing well-organised lessons using elements of lesson design that were appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to learners' needs. Records of the classroom observations are presented here. In School 1 Teacher 1, Observation Record included '*Activities for different groups with varied content levels. Apparatus available, worksheet activities and workbook activities differentiated*'. It was similar in the School 1 Teacher 2 Observation Record: '*Lesson is well detailed. Teacher has all the necessary teaching aids on hand. Learning objectives are clear and well-articulated in the lesson plan*'. Teacher 3 from School 2 indicated in the interview that she used and would continue to use the Wits organisational planning format for lesson planning. She indicated that it was very useful as it was afforded the opportunity for sufficient details that supported her lesson preparation and lesson presentation very well.

With regard to lesson presentation/lesson delivery, the teacher with-it-ness exemplars (appendix E) of the use of effective communication skills, organisation of an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selection of appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques were evident in all four of the classroom observations. In School 2 Teacher 3, the teacher made use of '*word picture association to assist delivery. All apparatus (glue, scissors, crayons) are available for cut and match activity*'. In School 1 Teacher 1, it was observed that while there was '*some talk and chalk was evident, this was relevant for content sharing, there were also small group activities, with relevant and meaningfully used teaching aids (pictures and counters)*'. In School 3 with Teacher 4 the observation revealed the following: '*Effective communication, clear and articulate with code switching where necessary. Charts*

and pictures available during presentation. Different pictures for same type of food (e.g. meat-chicken, sheep/lamb, cow/beef) were also used.

The PBS teacher with-it-ness exemplars of purposeful planning of the lessons also provided a firm foundational grounding through which the observed lessons were managed. PBS teacher with-it-ness exemplars for lesson management include that the teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that learners can understand (Appendix E). For the lesson management component of PBS, the observation in School 3 with Teacher 4 is presented here: *‘Class activity conducted in which rows of learners formed a team to offer responses – activity was fun for learners who responded well to the competition to achieve points for correct answers for their groups. Self-correction by learners following teachers probing was encouraged enhancing the learning potential of the activity’*. The class activity provided appropriate levels of learner-managed learning, which also facilitated cooperative group work among the learners. The teacher also used different sources of information to teach the lesson showing a good understanding of differentiated tools necessary to support lesson presentation. It was also evident that in School 1 with Teacher 2, that the teacher used *‘Question and answer technique effectively used to draw out information from learners and deepen understanding. Probing was effectively used to encourage meaningful debate and prediction’*. The regular checks for understanding during lessons and mid-course corrections were observed as intentional teacher efforts to support learner understanding of content matter.

The practice of differentiation is supported in literature to produce more effective learning because it acknowledges and addresses individual differences. Differentiation that occurs across the ‘dimensions of content (what learners should know and be able to do, and the materials that will support them in their learning); processes (the activities that help learners make sense of their learning); and products (the range of evidence learners provide of their learning)’ works towards motivating learners to improve and excel (Prain et al., 2013, p. 663). It was evident from the observations recorded here that differentiation was practiced in the classroom effectively. There were however some instances during the observation that this was not as evident. Within the classroom observation of School 1 Teacher 1, it was observed that while activities were available for completion of classroom tasks, some learners did need further instructions and coaching in following through on independent work. Learners within Teacher 1’s classroom had some difficulty completing the supplementary tasks due to the

limited instructions provided of what was needed. It was evident therefore that despite carefully planned differentiated lesson activities, instructional support regarding what is needed once tasks are completed are essential to ensure learners are meaningfully occupied. Additional tasks to follow work completion were absent in Teacher 1's class, which did result in learners waiting for instructions on what to do next. It is possible that with continued support the teacher could improve in the area of lesson management, thereby supporting positive learner behaviour more meaningfully. For a full record of the classroom observations, see Appendix J.

Within the focus group interviews, respondents also reported that the differentiation of tasks created opportunities for success for learners who previously may have been frustrated in class and performing poorly: *'...and she (the learner) feels that she's able like, just like others, she can do the work...she's also intelligent...'* (FG6R4). The impact of achieving success in the classroom was reported to also boost learner self-confidence: *'...so the children see themselves as valuable and have self-worth, and they are confident...'* (FG7R2). The successes the learner attained were reported to motivate the teacher to continue to use the strategy of differentiation in the classroom. The respondents became aware of the positive impact lesson differentiation had on both the learner and on themselves as teachers: *'...Yes, because when trying this strategy, I find that most of the learners ...they're on track... I myself started to learn there's a change'* (FG6R4).

7.5 Use of PBS: Further Reported and Observed Intervention within the Limpopo Classroom

Data from the class visits in Limpopo schools which were followed by interviews with the teachers provided valuable information related to the effectiveness of the PBS model within the Limpopo FP classroom. The classroom observations provided the opportunity to see the practical application and implementation of various aspects of the PBS model. The teachers reflected during the interviews and provided an indication of how well or poorly PBS fitted into the strategy of behaviour support that they used in the classrooms.

7.5.1 Observed Classroom PBS Practices

Overall, the classroom observations revealed a general use and application of the following PBS principles: positive classroom and climate management, relevant lesson and time management, organised lesson designs, meaningful lesson presentations meaningful use of

organisational rules, appropriate management of learner conflict/disruptions, as well as appropriate use of social rules and routines (see appendix J for a summary of the classroom observations in the schools).

7.5.2 Classroom Observations: School 1: Classroom 1 and 2

Within School 1, two classroom visits took place. It was noted that the school was sufficiently resourced with classrooms, flushing toilets for teachers and learners, an administrative block, staff room and a sufficient number of teachers to meet the demand of grade teaching. There was also evidence of print-rich classroom environments. There was no evidence of overcrowded classrooms and there was sufficient furniture for the learners in the classrooms. The classroom size was big enough for grouping of learners as opposed to lines of desks. The school management team were welcoming and provided background information about the learners, which also emerged in the interviews. The school principal expressed strong support for his teachers and openly commended their efforts.

In general, it was evident that both teachers effectively used many of the PBS principles in their classroom practice. Teacher 2 revealed during the interview that she had previously been at an ex-Model C school. She attested to practicing many of the strategies that she had seen work at her previous school. This was evident in her observed classroom practice and the ease with which many of the PBS components flowed during her lesson.

7.5.3 Classroom Observations: School 2 and 3: Classroom 3 and 4

Both Schools 2 and 3 were rural schools. School 2 in particular had the challenge of overcrowding, with 60+ learners in any given class. Teachers who were on maternity leave were not substituted with relief teachers, and often the current teachers then took care of more than one class at a time. The toilet system in School 2 comprised a pit system with a reported case of one learner having drowned in one of the toilets earlier in the year.

School 3 was also a rural school and was considered by the teachers within that school to be 'deep rural', with the nearest town several hundred kilometres away. The travelling time between Schools 2 and 3 was approximately 3 hours, on predominantly unpaved road. School 3 did not struggle with overcrowding, with an average of 28-35 learners in a class. There was also sufficient numbers of brick classrooms to cater for the number of learners in the school. A

summary of the observations within School 2 and School 3 in relation to the use of the PBS model within the classrooms observed appears in Appendix J.

Within these two schools, follow-through in relation to PBS teacher with-it-ness exemplars were evident. Despite the overcrowding of the classroom in School 2, there was still sufficient evidence of observed effective classroom management and lesson delivery. Behaviour management was effective, despite the challenge of very little space for the teacher to move around. The use of support from peers (team leaders) aided the teacher greatly in effective classroom support and management. While during the observation of the lesson overcrowding did not appear to hamper the use of PBS application, the teacher did comment during the interview that she felt strongly that the class size negatively hampered behaviour support.

7.5.4 Teachers' Attributions of Causes of Challenging Behaviours from the Observed Classrooms

With regard to what the teachers considered to be the causes of challenging behaviours within their classrooms, commonly reported factors exist within the microsystem of the home/family, and social factors and social skills are reported to be the greatest challenges. These were not different from those reported by teachers within the focus group interviews following the PBS module. The observed teachers however provided greater context to the social challenges and in particular the teachers from School 1 highlighted challenges of the learners who lived in Places of Safety.¹¹ The observed teachers considered the context of the places of safety to be a contributing factor to learners' learned helplessness and lack of a sense of responsibility.

An example of this is a response from the School 1 Teacher 1:

There are children who don't have homes, who are staying in a place of safety, they don't have the experience of staying in a family. I realize that most of the problems is because they are not in homes but in place of safety....there everything is done for them; food is cooked and they go and just play. They don't know how to be responsible, even to take their books because in the place of safety everything is done for them. They don't know how to even take water to wash their bowls after they eat the food here (feeding scheme provided the school).

Social skills were also highlighted as contributing to challenging behaviour. School 1 Teacher 2 remarked:

¹¹ Places of Safety include childrens' homes for abandoned and orphaned children as well as for children in the care of the state due to inadequate caregiver support.

I think mostly they (learners in places of safety) lack values of respecting...taking care of apparatus. They even use scissors in a bad way (inappropriate way that could hurt others). When we do practical work, I engage them all, but the apparatus use is a mess, because they still lack respecting others.

The same teacher also reported a deeper sense of understanding in relation to learners' self-care and care of others. This was reported to be due to the harsh and violent experiences that some of the children had. This was evident in the following comment: *'In my class I have children who have been raped by adult and now stay in the place of safety. They have never been hugged or kissed by a parent figure. They have never known love from a parent'* (School 1 Teacher 2).

The lack of basic safety, care and support was further echoed by the teacher in School 2: *'You find this girl is just staying alone and you ask yourself, what's really happening at night'* (School 2 Teacher 3).

Factors relating to the poor socio-economic status of learners and their families were also a common theme. *'There is this young girl just staying with children (child-headed family), she was most quiet, never utter a word and often absent. She will just be at the corner biting her nails. She won't even say she that she doesn't have food'* (School 1 Teacher 1).

With regard to school microsystem challenges, poor parent teacher collaboration and parental support was a common reported theme. School 1 Teacher 1 reported that *'Even if you call the parents, they won't come, then when you meet the parents in the streets, she is nice and clean, yet the child is always not clean. The child's clothes is not in a good condition and that child is always embarrassed and is alone most of the time'*.

Overcrowded classrooms and a lack of resources were also highlighted. A teacher in School 2, which had in excess of 60 learners in a class reflected as follows: *'We are trying, but you see in this class there is 60 children, so it is very hard. You can't even walk here and go to the child that is not behaving, you just stand in the front and can't do anything'* (School 2 Teacher 3). Other issues were linked to a lack of resources. *'We don't even have materials, we are using our own finance to buy. So the children must share and there is not enough sometimes and then they fight'* (School 3 Teacher 4).

7.5.5 PBS Strategies within the Observed Classrooms

The PBS strategies that were reported by the teachers to have been most effective included the use of praise/rewards/tokens. Efforts towards greater parent-teacher collaboration were also highlighted, together with the use of classroom rules. This can be observed in the teachers' comments below. In addition, the appropriate use of silence as well as positive regard for the learners and the appropriate use of affection were also significant strategies that were reported to be assisting in getting learners to attend as well as build positive relationships with the teacher. An example of the effectiveness found in the use of silence in the classroom is reflected in the excerpt below:

'I used this thing of just being quiet, I never thought it will work. I just go in, see them making a noise and I just say, stand up, fold your arms, and close your mouth. And you can see they are just surprised, I am talking soft not shouting and soon they all become surprised and just do it, I just say fold your arms, close your mouth, and yes this thing is working! One by one they become quiet. We are used to shouting and saying KEEP QUIET!!! But they don't stop. Hey, but this thing it works (laughing). It was the first time I saw being soft can calm children down. (School 1 Teacher 1)

Positive regard, affection and emotional support of learners were also reported to be strong contributing factors to building learners' self-esteem and sense of belonging in the classroom. This in turn reportedly encouraged positive behaviour practices from the learners.

The responses below highlight the moving stories that one teacher tells of the value of emotional connectedness within the classroom.

Just to give them (learners) hugs or a kiss on the head, just to praise them. ...you see it is working and they feel comfortable and share what is happening. (School 1 Teacher 2)

That child from Zimbabwe told me he wants me to be his mum. I asked him why, he said he has never been hugged before. So you see, just showing some love is a very big thing for that child. (School 1 Teacher 2)

7.6 PBS Module: Effective for Learner Behaviour Support

In ascertaining the value and effectiveness of the PBS model for Limpopo FP classrooms, consideration was also given to the respondents' feedback on the Inclusion module within which PBS was taught. The module was EDUC 4081 and was taught in Semester 2 of 2012. A discussion of the module has been provided in section 4.6. The course outline for the module can be seen in appendix K.

7.6.1 Responses for the Module Evaluation Forms Regarding the PBS module

Figure 20 shows that the majority of respondents (94%) indicated that the following aspects taught in the module were the amongst the most useful:

- The differences between Discipline and Punishment
- Understanding the child and the child's behaviour within the context of the home, school and environment (ecosystemic framework).
- Alternatives to Corporal punishment which included Classroom wide support including how to formulate and integrate classroom rules, differentiated teaching, teacher preparedness and functional behavioural assessments.
- Strategies for building school and parent/family partnerships.

8% of respondents included that issues related to bullying and ADHD were most valuable.

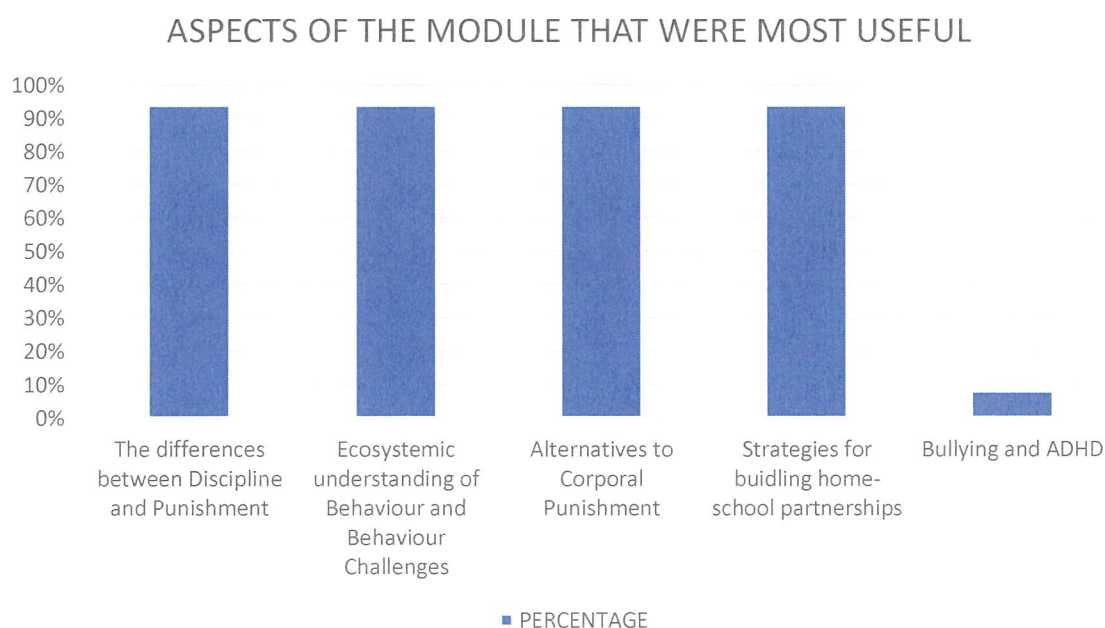


Figure 20: Aspects of the Module that Respondents Found to be Most Useful

7.6.2 Aspects of the Module that Were Found to be Least Useful

Figure 21 shows that 60% of respondents indicated that there was no aspect that they found to be without value and indicated NONE as their response. 32% of respondents did not indicate a response (coded as NR – No Response). Although bullying had received the highest mean rating in the survey questionnaire (discussed in section 6.3) for challenging behaviours, 6% of respondents in the module evaluation indicated that the instruction related to bullying was the least useful. Respondents had indicated that they found an overlap of information on the aspect of bullying as they had covered it in other courses. 2% of respondents indicated that issues related to School Wide Behaviour Support were the least useful. Given that the respondents were at different schools and would practically not implement the PBS at a school wide level, but would implement at the level of their classroom practice, this response was not surprising.

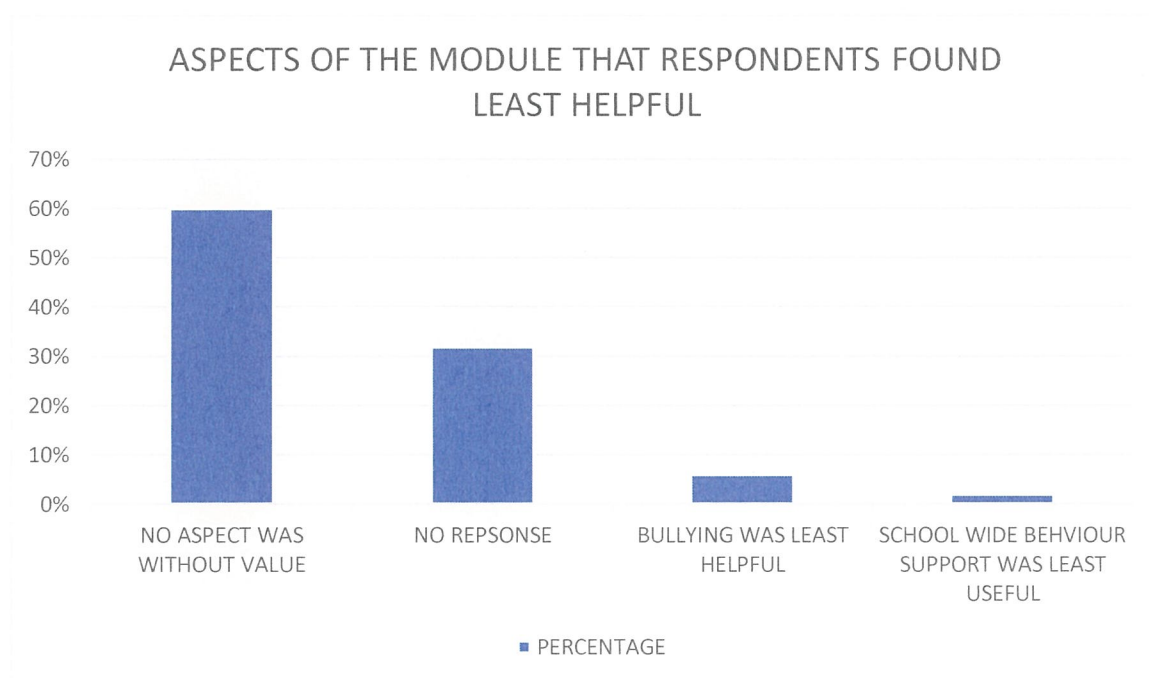


Figure 21: Aspect of the Module that were Found to be Least Useful

7.6.3 Practical Application of the Behaviour Support Strategies

Respondents were requested to indicate if they would put into practice any of the behaviour support strategies in their teaching and if YES, to indicate which strategies they would use. All of the respondents indicated YES to the first part of this question (would put into practice any of the behaviour support strategies in their teaching). In addition, respondents highlighted the following strategies as those that they would use in their classroom practice in Figure 22.

Application of Strategies

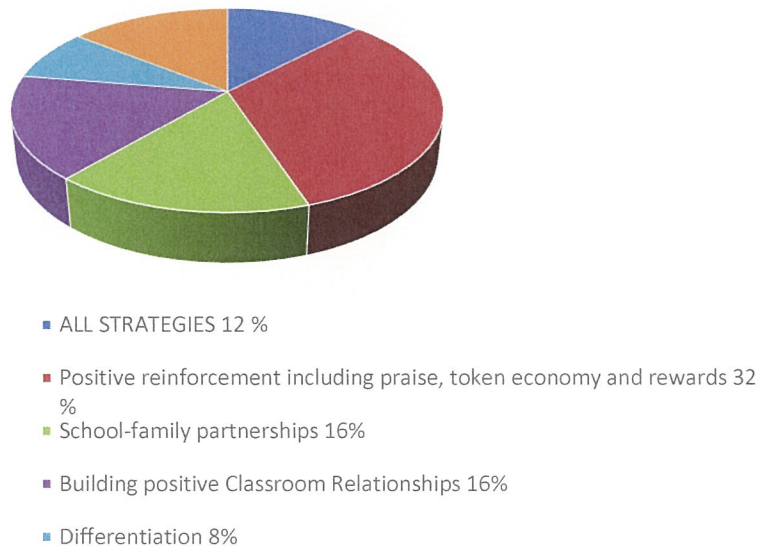


Figure 22: Respondents Indication of which PBS Strategies They Would Use in the Classroom

Discussions regarding the findings in relation to the reported use of PBS strategies (section 7.1-7.5) have supported the data presented here. Data from the focus group interviews as well as classroom observations and teacher interviews support that the research participants have applied the strategies in the Figure 22.

7.6.4 Respondents' Rating of What Additional Information They Would Have Liked to Receive in the Module Taught

As indicated in Figure 23, close to 46% of respondents did not provide a response to this question (coded as NR – No Response). 29% indicated that no additional information was required. 11% indicated that more information about how to deal with learning difficulties/disabilities was required. 6% indicated they wanted more information on children dealing with HIV, death, and/or abuse issues (social-emotional issues). 7% of respondents wanted more information on how to get other teachers and/or principal/school management/policy makers buy-in.

The spread of responses show the need for support in the management of challenges related to learning as well as social emotional challenges. While PBS offers some support with regard to psycho-socio aspects and classroom practice, specialised support in counselling related to grief

and bereavement as well as management of learning challenges such as ADHD or dyslexia were not part of the module.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT RESPONDENTS WOULD HAVE LIKED TO RECEIVE IN THE MODULE

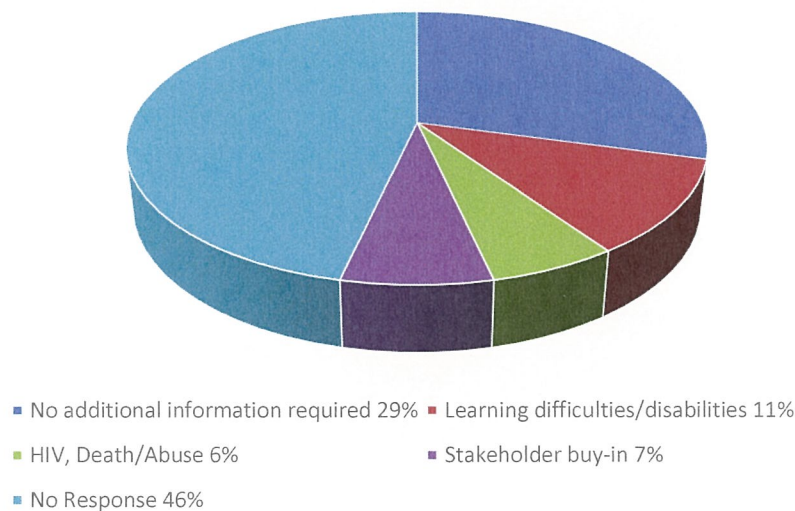


Figure 23: Additional Information that Respondents Would Have Liked to Have Received in the Module

7.6.5 Respondents' rating of the Reading and Resource Material pack

In relation to how accessible respondents found the reading material and resource pack (see Figure 24), 19% of respondents did not provide a response to this question (coded as NR – No Response). 39% of respondents gave a rating of GOOD – provided theoretical underpinnings as well as effective and practical suggestions in behaviour support). A further 39% of respondents gave a rating of SATISFACTORY – reader-friendly with meaningful information). Whilst 3% gave a rating of UNSATISFACTORY – too much technical jargon and/or difficult to read). The ratings indicate that the majority of respondents found the reading material accessible and meaningful (ratings of Good and Satisfactory). Excerpts from the resource pack can be seen in appendix L.

READING RESOURCE PACK RATINGS

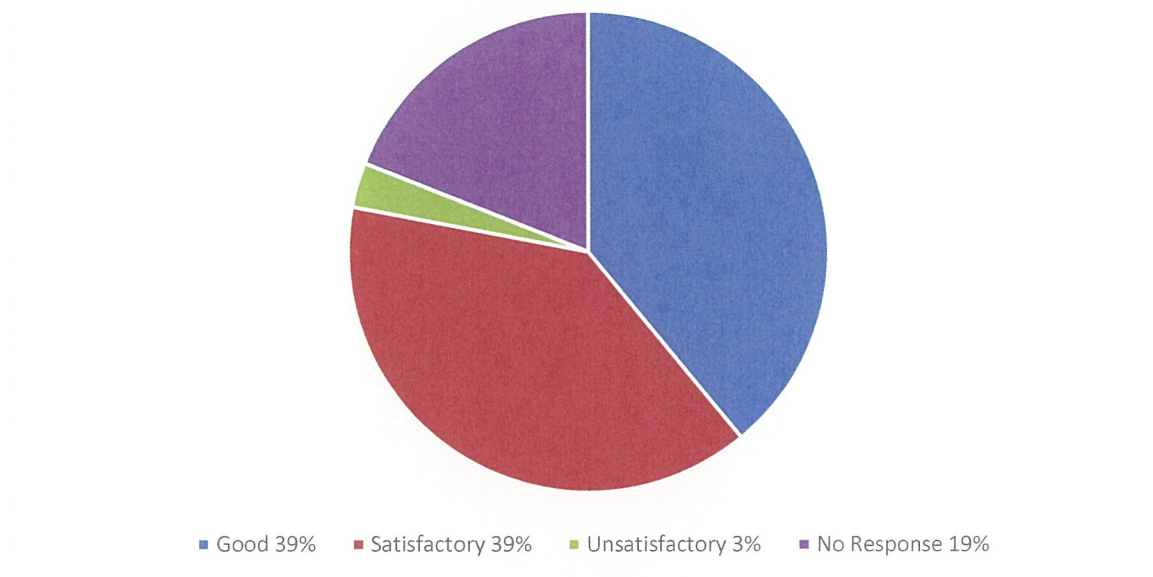


Figure 24: Respondents Rating of the Reading and Resource Material Pack

7.6.6 The need for all Foundation Phase Teachers to be Professionally Developed in PBS

Additional data from the focus group interviews and school interviews supported the call by the majority of respondents for an extension of the PBS information to their colleagues in Limpopo. Research participants also shared how the education in PBS had impacted their personal reflections about their role in supporting positive behaviour amongst learners. A reflexive look at their own understanding of the causes of behaviour challenges were also reported to have been confronted as they reported to have become more fully aware of systemic factors which included teacher factors that impact learner negative behaviour.

There was a common expression amongst all four teachers in the school interviews for the need to develop other FP teachers who were not part of the Wits PBS Inclusion module. The teachers also expressed a desire to be able to share their knowledge with colleagues in their schools. Comments included: School 1 Teacher 1: *‘I am doing all these good things that I have learned, but there is a teacher next door who does not know these good strategies. How will she know?’* This lament was not an isolated one. School 2 Teacher 3 expressed the following concern: *‘What about the other teachers, they must benefit. I like the things from Wits. It taught us a lot. But we are keeping it in our own classrooms. It is a waste for us to be the excellent teachers alone’*. While the teachers reported that the PBS strategies were *good* and useful for *excellence*

in teaching, the limitation they expressed was that only a few teachers had been exposed to it. Respondents reported that interest continued to be shown by their colleagues within the schools, who wanted to know what the research participant teachers were doing differently in their classrooms. The impact of the respondents' strategies of behaviour support were reported to be creating an awareness among other teachers that there was a different, better way to support learners who present with behavioural challenges. There were however limited opportunities for these strategies to be shared with colleagues. School 1 Teacher 1 remarked: *'You see the teacher looks past your classroom and you can see they are so surprised to see children standing so well and lining up, but there is no time to share the strategies. Only those teachers who went to Wits will benefit'*. This need to *share the strategies* so that all FP teachers within the province of Limpopo can benefit was also emphasised during the focus group interviews: *'...as long as we can teach our colleagues about these, I think it will be effective'*. (FG4R3). The PBS model is designed for whole school implementation and the implementation at whole school level would address the need for other teachers to also be professionally developed in the use of the model. This study has acknowledged that PBS was only looked at in relation to classroom-wide support (see section 4.6).

Some respondents considered it an injustice and blamed the Department of Education for not making professional development in the area of behaviour support available to all teachers. Early teacher education courses was also considered inadequate to address learner behaviour challenges: *'...so I think also the department is failing us because they (departmental officials) know very well that we been trained long ago with those old strategies...'* and *'let the department train those teachers (those who did not attend at Wits), have workshop....about discipline strategies'* (FG10R1).

Having been exposed to positive behaviour support strategies, respondents reflected that their pre-service teacher education (*'trained long ago with these old strategies'*) was inadequate. Literature alerts us that teachers' previous experiences as learners, together with their pre-service education, is significant in shaping their conceptions and expectations about teaching learners and that the beliefs they establish may become difficult to eradicate without proper in-service support (Woodcock, 2013). Research further suggests that teachers' belief in the effectiveness of PBS, as classroom practitioners, serves as a protective factor against job stress in schools and that it provides an indication of teachers' sense of professional effectiveness and preparedness (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012). Within my research, respondents reported that they did not experience such levels of effectiveness in managing challenging behaviours prior to

attending WSoE. They considered that their initial teacher education to be old and ineffective in meeting the demands of the classroom: *'...our understanding before was not that much. It was less, in terms of knowing the different strategies.... but after going through this model (PBS).....we have a better knowledge....we can use different strategies, not the same ones of punishing the child.....that wasn't good (punishing the child)'* (FG10R3). The effectiveness of PBS strategies has also been observed in other studies, specifically Nelson (1996), Ross and Horner 2006; and Kelm and McIntosh (2011). Within these studies, classrooms in which teachers have used PBS reported 'significantly higher perceptions' of feeling more 'prepared to engage students in learning and effectively teach and respond to students of varying abilities', compared to schools that did not practice PBS (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012, p. 146). The implication is that PBS is related 'not only to positive student outcomes, but to positive teacher outcomes' (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012, p. 143). The use of the PBS strategies supported positive behaviour which resulted in teachers needing to spend less time engaging in disciplining learners, therefore teachers had more time to spend on classroom teaching.

The teachers also reported that the Limpopo Department of Education did not provide professional development workshops regarding the management of behavioural challenges: *'The department is lacking. We need these workshops... show us how to manage these challenges and have some refresher courses...'* (School 2 Teacher 3). The urgent need for ongoing development in the area of behaviour support was expressed as follows: *'Sometimes you feel like you have reached the end of the road'* (School 1 Teacher 1), and *'It is hard, sometimes I feel like crying ... you can't carry on like nothing is happening'* (School 2 Teacher 3). It was evident that the Limpopo education department was offering professional development and support in other areas such as the teaching of Maths and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education, 2010). There was however a dearth of professional development in relation to behavioural issues: *'Let us not only be trained in Maths. Once in a while there can be workshops to say let us talk about this problem (behaviour problems)'* (School 2 Teacher 3), *'There was never a workshop on how we can help children...only for Maths and CAPS'* (School 1 Teacher 2). While those who had been exposed to the Inclusion PBS module at Wits had gained valuable insights in behaviour support strategies, the call for their colleagues to receive similar support was a critical one: *'...our teachers are not aware of some different strategies that they can apply...'* (FG1R3), and *'...my plea is that what you are doing today...if it is possible, do it frequently'* (School 3 Teacher 4). The findings within this research confirm those of Prinsloo and Gasa (2011) and Gable et al.

(2000) in relation to the issue of inadequate teacher development in the area of behaviour support.

7.6.7 Respondents Increased Understanding of the Factors Contributing to Learners Challenging Behaviours

Respondents across focus groups as well as within the teacher interviews indicated that they had developed a deeper understanding of the possible reasons for challenging behaviour that learners present with in their classrooms. Together with the new insights gained about possible ecosystemic challenges that impact behaviour, the respondents also reflected on changed practices and that they were motivated after participation in the PBS module. These changes were linked to their own attitudes towards learners within their classrooms.

Respondents reported to have become aware that systemic factors within the learners' homes impact learner behaviour as well as systemic factors within the classroom, including teaching style and classroom management. Some responses that highlight these new understandings are reflected here: FG1R1: *'...children they don't just misbehave. There is something behind it'* and FG4R1: *'it was not that ... the child was a spoilt brat ... there was a motive behind (the behaviour)'*, as well as FG5R1: *'...it's not that they don't want to concentrate in class, there are things that they deal with that makes them...not to listen...'*. These remarks suggest that the respondents now consider broader issues as potential challenges, and they have moved away from seeing challenges as learner specific or as a result of learner genetic make-up. The shift from biological causes to systemic challenges is a valuable one as it prompts the respondents to consider a variety of possible causes and impacting factors, and this shifts the blame away from the learner. Such exploration affords the respondent the opportunity to consider alternative strategies to manage the behaviour more holistically, including strategies that consider the teachers' own role in the perpetuation of challenging behaviour among learners: FG2R1: *'there is a problem ... maybe it is my classroom management...'* and FG3R1: *'...with me I realised that at times you don't have to shout, ...I realised that I need to change to the way I was reacting to that child's behaviour...'* as well as FG10R2: *'...after learning this module I got to understand that children need to be supported'*.

Such deepened understanding of learner needs in the context of the classroom has been reported to prepare the teacher to look more carefully at their own behaviour, their teaching practices, and their use of language and tone of voice, all of which have the potential to support or impede positive behaviour in learners. The reported increased awareness enabled the respondents to

consider more carefully their role within the classroom and in the broader school context, as well as in home-school support partnerships. FG11R6: *'...as a teacher I reassess myself and reassess my behaviour...it means as a teacher I have to change ... so it gave me insight ... to get deeper into knowing why they (learners) were behaving in that way...I think I have a lot to do'*. The responses clearly point to teachers' altered understanding of the extent to which their teaching role impacts learners' lives in and out of the classroom. It is evident from the respondents' articulations captured in this section that there has been a clear situating of themselves as an integral part of the solution in behaviour support (Tyler & Jones, 2002; Visser & Stokes, 2003; Papatheodorou, 2005). The respondents' understanding of their teacher roles, attitudes, use of language etc., and how learners may perceive these and how such perceptions impact learners' behaviour signals the second-level shift in how teachers understand their roles and their impact on the learners in relation to learner patterns of classroom behaviour. Respondents' reflections show an understanding of the various multifaceted and reciprocal factors that exist within the classroom microsystem.

7.6.8 Respondents' Reflections on Improving Behaviour Support Practices

Respondents' willingness to move towards different ways managing behaviour became apparent within the focus groups as well as the open-ended questionnaires and interviews with teachers from the classroom observations. Respondents identified teacher action requirements, school-wide behaviour support actions, teacher professional development and closer collaboration with parents as key imperatives for systemic change for improved learner behaviour support.

Respondents reflected that the teacher actions listed next would improve their management and support of positive behaviour in their classes. These included:

- speaking to learners individually (private discussions and not public humiliation),
- reminding the learner of school/classroom rules and expected behaviour,
- taking time to understand a learner and his/her circumstance before taking action (ecosystemic understanding of the learner and his/her contexts),
- improved classroom management and the use of different teaching strategies in class (pedagogy issues).

The majority of reflections related to school management. Proposed action included: engagement with the school management team and the school governing body e.g.: *'the whole*

management...maybe the principal or an HOD should address the ruleswhile learners are assembled in the hall...' (FG1R2). Respondent 2 and 32 from the open-ended questionnaire responses typified broader group sentiments in relation to wider school support: '*...contact the manager of the school and the parents on how to help the child...*' and '*...the teacher can also ask advice from school management/discipline team who have knowledge about discipline, ask about the child from previous teachers or me as a parent.*' Respondents were pointing to the value of whole-school behaviour support, which has been identified by PBS literature as effective for school-wide behaviour management and support. School-wide behaviour support takes into account the various role players within the school system and therefore considers multiple areas of support as vital, including academic and behaviour targets that are agreed upon and emphasised by learners, parents/caregivers as well as educators and school managers (OSEP, 2004).

7.6.9 Teacher Management of Challenging Behaviours.

Responses from the open-ended questionnaires further elucidated respondents' ideas/suggestions and recommendations for effective behaviour support and behaviour management. The respondents listed/explained all the key factors they thought would be inappropriate teacher responses to managing problem behaviour, as well as all the things they thought a teacher should do to effectively manage behaviour challenges.

7.6.9.1 Identified Inappropriate Behaviour Management Strategies

The majority of respondents (90+ %) indicated they would consider the following (Figure 25) to comprise *inappropriate teacher responses* to behaviour management.

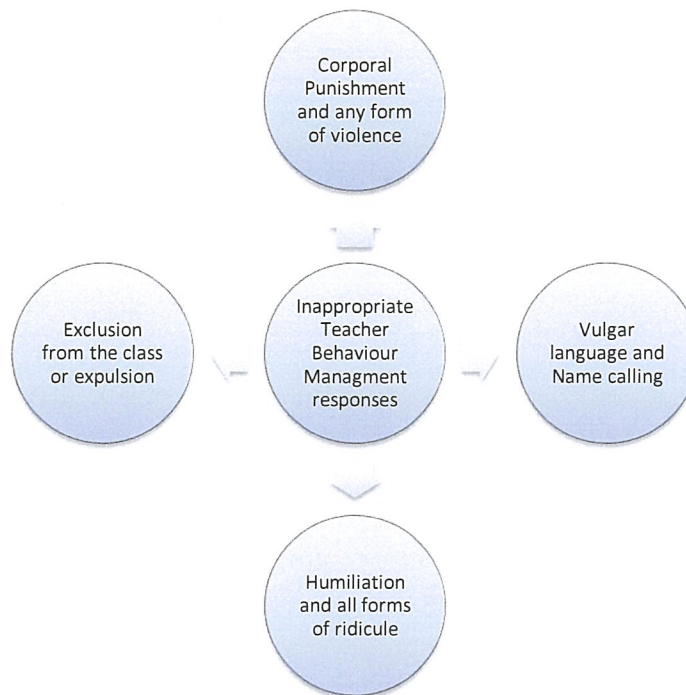


Figure 25: Identified Inappropriate Behaviour Management Responses

Below is a sample of responses related to *inappropriate teacher responses* to managing behavioural challenges.

RESPONDENT 7: I would be upset if corporal punishment is used or if my child is sent out of the classroom or denied to go for lunch break or if a joke is made out of my child's misbehaviour or if my child is ignored or shouted at.

RESPONDENT 2: The teacher must not insult or shout at the child so that the child doesn't become wild (stubborn).

RESPONDENT 8: If my child were to misbehave, I would not like the teacher to treat him badly in front of other learners. I would not like the teacher to apply corporal punishment. I would not be happy if the teacher can keep him in class during or after school.

These responses in the open-ended questionnaire were provided from a parent perspective and evidenced a difference to their own teacher practices in their classrooms (as indicated in the focus group interviews). The responses in the focus group interviews (sections 6.3.4-6.3.8) revealed rather that they were often using many of the identified inappropriate responses (as identified in Figure 25).

7.6.9.2 Identified Appropriate Behaviour Management Strategies

The majority of respondents (90+ %) indicated that they would consider *appropriate teacher responses* to behaviour management to include the following:

1. Parent teacher collaboration – to inform parents and involve them in working towards a solution with the learner and the school.
2. Engagement with the school management team and the school governing body.
3. Speaking to learners individually.
4. Reminding the learner of school/classroom rules and expected behaviour.
5. Taking time to understand learner and his/her circumstance before taking action.
6. Manage his/her class well.
7. Use different teaching strategies in class.

These responses were what they hoped they would do and was not an indication of what they were practicing. This expression of willingness to move towards different ways of responding to behaviour became apparent within the focus groups as well. Respondents identified teacher action requirements, school-wide behaviour support actions, together with teacher professional development and closer collaboration with parents as key imperatives for systemic change and improved learner behaviour support (chapter 6). Respondents largely agreed in the open-ended questionnaire that teacher action items such as speaking to learners individually (private discussions and not public humiliation), reminding the learner of school/classroom rules and expected behaviour, taking time to understand learner and his/her circumstance before taking action (ecosystemic understanding of the learner and his/her contexts), improved classroom management and the use of different teaching strategies in class (pedagogy issues) would improve their management and support of positive behaviour in their classes.

Professional development by the education department in behaviour management support was also considered imperative if teachers were to improve and receive ongoing support in behaviour management.

7.6.10 The Need for Continued Professional Development with regard to Behaviour Support

There was a general sense gleaned from all four teachers who participated in the school-based interviews that it was imperative for those teachers who had not been exposed to the WSoE Inclusion module on PBS to be provided with an opportunity to learn the behaviour support strategies as well. These teachers felt that time needed to be made for professional support and development to allow for the sharing of the strategies that they had been exposed to and that were working well in their classrooms.

Respondents believed that building collaboration and mutual support networks among teachers is imperative. The overarching motivation for professional development in this case would be much-needed development in the area of classroom behaviour support strategies. This can be further seen in the comments below:

As teachers, most of the time we go for workshops. Never being called for some of the emotional and behaviour challenges. Sometimes you feel like you have reached the end of the road. (School 1: Teacher 1)

It is hard, sometimes I feel like crying when I know the children are suffering. You can't carry on like nothing is happening. Let us not only be trained on Maths. Once in a while there should be workshops to talk about behaviour problems. So teachers can share; this is what I done, and this is how it worked, so we can feel like we are not alone. (School 2 Teacher 3)

7.7 Conclusion

The findings, discussion and analysis within this chapter in relation to Research Question 3, has revealed the value that respondents have found in the application of PBS strategies. The strategies have, according to the respondents, provided them with a valuable repertoire of skills to successfully support learners who present with behavioural challenges. Armed with strategies that have been reported by participants to be working within Limpopo FP classrooms, respondents conclude that those teachers who have not had the opportunity to participate in the WSoE Inclusive Education module be afforded opportunities for in-service professional development in behavioural management issues. The plea has been that all teachers should be equipped with the same expertise that the respondents had the privilege to be exposed to. The findings reveal that the respondents have indeed found the PBS model an appropriate and effective tool in the support of learners who present with behavioural challenges.

The next and final chapter will provide a summary and conclusions of the key findings related to this research. Limitations of the study, together with implications for further research, will also be covered.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has sought to investigate the effectiveness of using the Positive Behaviour Support model in the Limpopo FP classrooms. The background and context for the study was provided in Chapter 1. The study investigated the knowledge gap in the field of behaviour support within a selection of Limpopo FP classrooms in South Africa. A case was made for the value of a comprehensive behaviour support model in the South African context. Given the numerous interrelated factors affecting learner behaviour, the PBS model of behaviour support was investigated given its ecosystemic approach to understanding behaviour and behaviour support. The PBS tiered model of behaviour support was taught to fourth year in-service Limpopo teachers who were concluding their final year of study at the University of Witwatersrand School of Education. The module formed part of the 2012 Inclusive Education module within the fourth year Bachelor of Education teacher education programme. The value and effectiveness of the PBS model for the classroom was investigated through various research tools including survey questionnaires, focus group interviews, an open-ended questionnaire, as well as classroom observations and teacher interviews after the observed classes. The summary and conclusions of the main findings in relation to the study's research questions will be provided in this chapter.

The three questions that guided this research were:

1. What factors do the Limpopo FP teachers attribute to learner challenging behaviours in their classroom?
2. What types of learner behaviours do the Limpopo FP teachers consider challenging and what are their perceptions of their abilities to manage these in their classroom?
3. How effective do the Limpopo FP teachers find the PBS model for their classroom practice?

8.1 Overview of Findings

In light of the fact that at the time of this study I did not find much documented research regarding the use of PBS within the South African context, the findings within this study provide the first of their kind. They offer an indication of the value and effectiveness of PBS within South Africa. The findings in this study reveal that the Limpopo FP teachers did indeed find that the PBS model was an effective and useful tool for the understanding and support of learners who present with behavioural challenges in their classrooms. There was strong support for the model, particularly once an understanding of the various factors that contributed to

behavioural challenges had been established. Where previously learners were believed to be just naughty, the ecosystemic understanding of how the learners' home, school, and family contexts impact his/her behaviour were reported to be valuable. Participants reported that the ecosystemic view opened up the channel for them to also consider their own part in the various systems within the school context that led to learner challenging behaviour. Such a realisation reportedly afforded the respondents the opportunity to be reflexive about their role within the system of support and make the necessary classroom practice and attitude adjustments. The Limpopo FP teachers unanimously reported a better and deeper understanding of the contextual contributory factors that impact challenging behaviour in the classroom.

All respondents without exception found that where previously they felt inadequately prepared to manage behavioural challenges, the PBS strategies they were taught were very valuable in addressing behavioural challenges and were a welcomed support for their classroom practices. Common behaviour management practices that respondents admitted to have been using were highlighted within the focus group interviews as being inappropriate and ineffective (sections 6.3.5-6.3.8). These included the use of corporal punishment, negative attitudes by teachers towards learners and towards teaching, as well as prevalent practices of favouritism, victimisation and labelling of learners. These same behaviour management strategies, together with the majority of respondents' reported lack of knowledge of appropriate teaching strategies, challenging contextual factors of overcrowded classrooms and challenging systemic factors related to home-school partnerships were also considered by the majority of respondents as factors that contributed challenging behaviour in class.

Given the value that respondents found in the use of the PBS model support strategies, there was widespread advocacy for other teachers in the province to also undergo such professional development. The issue of needing more time to practise the strategies was raised by a large number of respondents, together with the need for continued professional development in the area of behaviour support for all teachers in Limpopo. The overall feeling of participants was that such knowledge needed to be shared for wider support of learners within their schools and learning communities.

In the sections that follow, a summary of findings for each research question will be provided.

8.2 Summary of Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

8.2.1 Research Question 1: What Factors do the Limpopo Foundation Phase Teachers Attribute to Learner Challenging Behaviours in their classroom?

Within the theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory, behaviour and behaviour support can only be fully understood taking into account the person-environment context that represents the entirety of relationships and interactions among individuals and their environments. The findings of this study (section 6.3) were that the factors perceived by respondents to contribute to learner challenging behaviours in Limpopo FP classrooms were those negative factors within the home, school and immediate communities. It was these proximal interactions, which is highlighted in relevant literature that were found to be relevant in this study as well. These included the interaction between parent and child, teacher and learner, as well as learner and other learners (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The three main microsystem factors contributing to learner challenging behaviour were found to be the following:

- **WITHIN THE HOME MICROSYSTEM** (sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2) – issues of parental violence, abuse and neglect were reported as the main contributors to learner challenging behaviour. Learners' modelling of this learned behaviour was deemed to cause conflict and behaviour challenges within the classrooms.
- **WITHIN THE HOME AND WIDER COMMUNITY MESO SYSTEM** (section 6.3.3) – issues linked to child-headed families and poverty were considered the main contributing factors to learner challenging behaviour. The survival needs of the learners were considered by respondents to be the overriding factor that hindered them from full participation in the class. Attention difficulties due to beleaguered concern for personal and sibling welfare reportedly dominated learners' thoughts, leaving little chance of active participation in lessons. Learner withdrawal, truancy and extended periods of absenteeism and dropping out of school were the results.
- **WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM MICROSYSTEM** (sections 6.3.4-6.3.8) – here issues that were considered to be major factors that contributed to learner challenging behaviour were teacher frustration and teacher apathy. Closely linked to these was teachers' inadequate education and professional development in behaviour support strategies and their widespread use of corporal punishment. Classroom

pedagogical strategies were also a major contributor where respondents felt that they did not plan their lessons well nor did they cater for the differentiated needs of learners during their lesson planning and presentation. These factors were largely interrelated and impeded the building of positive and healthy relationships between the learners and the teachers.

The shift reported by respondents, who initially viewed themselves as outside and apart from the systems that impact learner behavioural challenges, involved them seeing themselves as integral contributors to behaviour challenges, and also as part of the possible solution to the support of learners with behavioural challenges. Reported reflexive introspection by the respondents led to them considering themselves as agents of change within the system and as capable of offering protective support in relation to behavioural challenges when applying PBS strategies of behaviour support in classroom.

Figure 26 below uses Bronfenbrenner's nested systems to provide a pictorial summary of the interrelated factors within the various systems that contribute to learner challenging behaviour. The representation is linked to Bronfenbrenner's suggestion that it is helpful to consider the environment or social contexts as a 'set of nested structures, each contained inside the next like a set of Russian dolls' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 in Frederickson & Cline, 2002, p. 10).

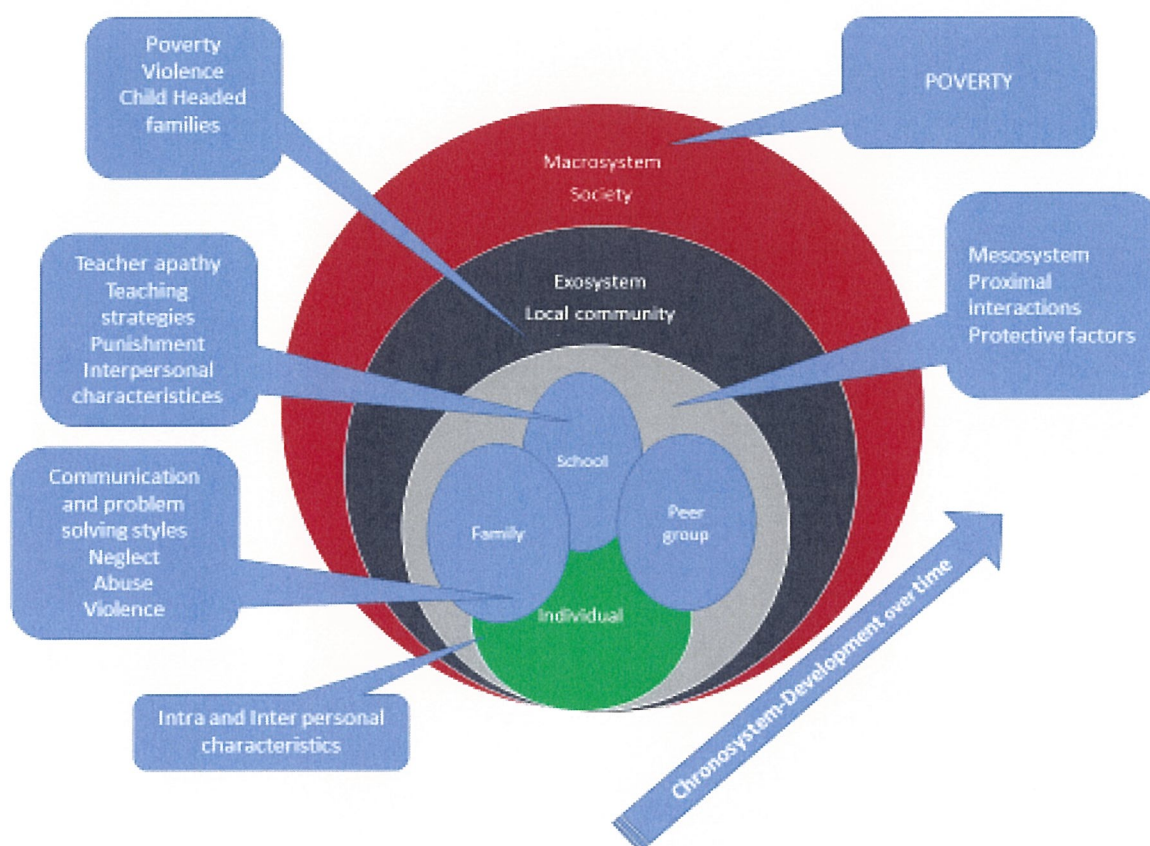


Figure 26: Summary Representation of factors Contributing to Learner Challenging Behaviours

8.2.2 Research Question 2: What Types of Learner Behaviours do the Limpopo Foundation Phase Teachers Consider Challenging and What are Their Perceptions of Their Abilities to Manage These in Their Classroom?

In relation to Research Question 2, bullying was observed to have the highest mean rating for challenging behaviours in the classroom, followed by inattention, conduct, and lastly defiance (section 6.2.2). Teachers felt most equipped to handle bullying behaviour in the classroom, followed by conduct behaviours, inattention, and lastly defiance (section 6.2.3). Respondents considered that before they were exposed to the PBS model, their ability to manage behavioural challenges was inadequate. They lamented their inadequate initial teacher education and the lack of professional development courses in behaviour support and behaviour management (section 6.3.7). Their concern about the inadequacies in their approach was indeed legitimate and is supported by previous findings (DoE, 2008; Green et al., 2011).

Following their participation in the Inclusive Education module, the large majority of respondents felt better-equipped to deal with learner challenging behaviours in the classroom.

The PBS strategies found by the majority of respondents to be most relevant to the management of behavioural challenges are summarised below.

- Classroom rules (chapter 7): The use of classroom rules that were negotiated and co-constructed with learners was found by respondents to be an effective behaviour support tool. During the classroom observations, all four of the classrooms had the classroom rules posted in clear view of the learners. In one classroom, the teacher referred to the rules during the lesson to remind learners of turn-taking as part of the social support of each other during activities. Learners were able to follow-through with the rule with ease and confidence. In the other three classrooms, learners seemed to have internalised the rules and were able to practice them within the lesson without much need for teacher prompting.

As reported in Chapter 7, the formulation and practical application of classroom rules were not without its challenges (section 7.1.4). Challenges were reported by respondents in relation to teacher-learner collaboration during the formulation of the rules, given that effective learner participation was a strategy that was not previously well used. Respondents however were eager to change this and work towards healthier engagement and building of learner trust which would result in communication by learners towards the teacher being less restrained. This was seen in the classroom observations where the practice of the rules were followed through with ease, and teachers supported learners with praise for their follow-through.

Furthermore, challenges in relation to the systemic challenges of home-school collaboration observed by respondents were sustainability and impact of classroom and school rules. One teacher in the classroom interviews attributed a lack of sustainability to the inconsistency between what is allowed to happen at home and what is allowed to happen at school. It was evident that the respondents in the focus group interviews as well as within the classroom interviews were acutely aware that contexts that children experience in early childhood were influential in shaping their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

- Praise and Rewards and Tokens (section 7.2): While the majority of respondents reported that the use of praise was not used extensively prior to their exposure to the PBS model, the use of praise and rewards were considered by the majority of respondents as an effective tool to support learner behaviour in the classrooms. The

impact of praise on building learner self-esteem and confidence was considered useful. As is suggested by supporting studies (Byron & Khazanchi, 2012) the majority of respondents also found that the use of these motivating supports assisted in building positive relationships between the learners and the teachers. Respondents found this PBS strategy invaluable in recognising and rewarding desirable learner behavioural outcomes.

Observations made by the researcher within the Limpopo classrooms confirmed that teachers used praise effectively during their lessons. All four teachers showed warmth towards the learners when they engaged with them. Learners were commended for making an effort when they tried to give an answer in class. Rewards of stickers on learner's foreheads were provided by the teacher to learners for successful sharing during task activities, and for efforts in answering questions related to the lesson. Praise and rewards were seen to be coupled with a friendly and caring teacher presence that encouraged learners to take risks in attempting to answer questions. The use of praise and rewards evidently supported healthy teacher-learner and learner-learner relationships.

- Home-School Collaborations (section 7.3): The majority of respondents found that home-school partnerships were useful for healthy relationships between parent/caregivers and teachers. They were also considered vital to ensure a united base of support for the learners that facilitated joint parent-teacher efforts related to learner behavioural support. Studies by Westergard (2013) and Yssel et al. (2007) reveal the benefits of parental partnerships and collaborations. This was further confirmed in this study. The importance of the role of parents in relation to home-school partnerships is also recognised in legislation and policies including the South African Schools Act (1996) and *Education White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001).

While the value of the PBS strategy of building partnerships was widely recognised, respondents also recognised challenges linked to building effective and supportive partnerships. The findings here were confirmed to be the same as others highlighted within literature (Westergard & Galloway, 2010; Westergard, 2013). Other challenges reported on were linked to parents' work pressures, parental disillusionment, parental illiteracy and parental fear of judgment and rejection (section 7.3.1). Despite the challenges reported by respondents in developing and promoting positive home-school

partnerships, the importance of seeking ways of promoting partnerships was considered to outweigh the risks. Respondents felt that they had a responsibility towards the learners to go the extra mile in making the effort to increase home-school co-operation. This included a recognition of the value of parents having increased opportunities to have their voices heard within the school community. This finding concurs with those of other studies which emphasise that for the development of collaborative partnerships, school management and teachers need to be proactive in fostering trust and respect in the building of effective communication with parents (Westergard, 2013; Yssel et al., 2007).

- Purposeful Lesson Planning (section 7.4): Respondents reported that the strategy of curriculum differentiation created opportunities for careful planning of lessons and lesson task activities. Further, respondents reflected on their increased awareness of the need to research the content of the lesson and to ensure that the level that the lesson is pitched at is not below or above the learners' levels of comprehension. This increased awareness would have developed over their four years at WITS as it related to aspects of their TE activities over the period of the degree. It had assisted respondents to plan lessons more effectively such that there was more appropriate use of the time spent on the lessons and the related activities. The reported effective use of the PBS strategy of differentiation was confirmed during the school visit within the Limpopo province. It was evident in three of the lessons observed that the teachers took care in planning their lessons, and that they made use of selective differentiated activities including workbook and worksheet activities and group work activities that were appropriate to learner needs. Learning objectives were clearly defined and well-articulated in the lesson plan. One of the teachers (Teacher 3 from School 2) from the classroom interviews (section 7.4) expressed that the lesson plan format from Wits afforded her the best organisational planning tool to date. Learners were found to participate and enjoy the tasks set out for them. The findings in support of the strategy of curriculum differentiation correspond with those of Wuim and Louw (2015), who state that differentiation provides access to learning thereby supporting learners' experience of academic success.

To support the findings that emerged from the module evaluations, during the observed classroom practices within the Limpopo FP classrooms, in all four of the classrooms observations there was evidence that teachers were making use of the following PBS strategies:

positive classroom and climate management, relevant lesson and time management, organised lesson designs, meaningful lesson presentations, meaningful use of organisational rules, appropriate management of learner conflict/disruptions, as well as appropriate use of social rules and routines.

The value of PBS found by the participants in this study is congruent with international findings with regard to the value of the PBS model of behaviour support (Johnston et al., 2006; McIntosh et al., 2010). Given its emphasis on the core values of ‘respect for the individual, meaningful outcomes, social validation, dignity, normalization, inclusion, person-centered planning, self-determination, and stakeholder participation’ (Johnston et al., 2006, p. 54). The application of the PBS model within this study was a valuable and successful alternative to the ‘reactive, punishment-oriented approaches historically used by many schools’ (p. 54).

8.2.3 Research Question 3: How Effective do the Limpopo FP Teachers Find the PBS Model for Their Classroom Practice?

In response to this research question, an overall evaluation of the PBS module that was taught as well as teachers’ responses during the focus group interviews and the teacher interviews as well as the practical application during the classroom observations have provided sufficient data to confirm that the Limpopo FP teachers did indeed find the PBS model an effective and an appropriate tool that could be used in the support of learners who present with behavioural challenges in their classrooms (Chapter 7). All respondents indicated on the module evaluation forms that they would use the strategies in their classrooms to assist them in the support of learners with behavioural challenges. The vast majority of respondents (94%) indicated that they had found the following aspects of the PBS module most valuable:

- Understanding the child within the context of the home, school and environment (ecosystemic framework).
- The differences between Discipline and Punishment.
- Alternatives to Corporal punishment which included Classroom-Wide support of how to formulate and integrate classroom rules, differentiated teaching, teacher preparedness and functional behavioural assessments.
- Positive reinforcement strategies including the use of praise, token economy and rewards.

- Strategies for building school and parent/family partnerships.

8.3 Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

In discussing the theoretical findings, I refer to the theoretical framework of my study as articulated in Chapter 2 (2.1 An introduction to Inclusive Education and 2.3 An Ecosystemic Approach to Understanding Behavioural Difficulties in Schools). I begin with the summary of the findings in relation to Bronfenbrenner and then proceed to the findings on inclusion of learners with behavioural challenges.

8.3.1 Findings in relation to Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystemic Theory

One of the major difficulties connected with supporting learners with behavioural challenges that has been highlighted in literature is the way behaviour and behavioural challenges are conceptualised and understood (Sayer, 2000; Ferber, 2006; Papatheodorou, 2005). For teachers to have a holistic understanding of behaviour and behaviour support, it was imperative that this study provided a framework of understanding learner behaviour from within a holistic paradigm. The ecosystemic framework provided the depth and breadth of such conceptualisation. This was evidenced by 94% of respondents within the module evaluations indicating that the ecosystemic framework of understanding behaviour and behaviour support was one of the most valuable aspects of the PBS module.

In addition, the overwhelming majority of respondents within the focus group interviews and across all of the focus groups highlighted how the development in PBS had impacted their personal reflections about their role in supporting positive behaviour among learners. A significant change reported by the majority of respondents regarded their understanding of the causes of behaviour challenges. They reported in great detail how they had become more aware of systemic factors, including their own roles, which contributed to learner negative behaviour. The majority of respondents reported that they had previously believed the cause of the behaviour to be learner driven. They now reported to have become aware that systemic factors within the learners' home impacts learner behaviour as well as systemic factors within the classroom, including teaching style and classroom management.

This increased awareness of the various ecosystemic challenges led to a deepened understanding of learner needs in the context of the classroom and home. The majority of respondents indicated that as a result of the new information, they were obliged to engage in introspection with regard to their own behaviour in their classrooms, their teaching practices,

and their use of language and tone of voice, all of which have the potential to support or impede positive behaviour in learners.

Overall, the respondents indicated that their initial limited linear view of learners and learner behaviour support had changed following their participation in the PBS module at WSoE. As highlighted in Chapter 2, the lineal or first-level view positions the observer (such as the teacher or other professionals) on the outside of the microsystem (school, family, individual learner), and is predisposed towards investigations about difficulties, problems and challenges that provide lineal explanations when describing and understanding the individual (Amatea, & Sherrard, 1994). The shortcoming of this lens is that the teacher is not considered an integral part of the system and remains an observer in the process of effecting change rather than a participant in the process.

Following exposure to the PBS model and its ecosystemic theoretical underpinnings, respondents began to consider themselves as integral to the context of support to effect behavioural changes. This shift included an understanding that there are layers or levels of interacting systems resulting in change, growth and development, and these can be physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural. Respondents within this study recognised that what happens in one system affects and is affected by other systems. This deepened understanding is what the literature refers to as a second-level shift in conceptualising behaviour and behaviour support, which has led to respondents understanding that relationships among causes are reciprocal and multifaceted (Amatea & Sherrard, 1994).

The understanding and use of this theory resulted in the majority of respondents reporting that there was an increased understanding about the magnitude, depth and breadth that their teaching and teacher roles impacted the learners' lives in and out of the classroom. This new knowledge and holistic view of learner support in relation to the PBS support model increased respondents' consideration of their roles within the classroom and in the broader school context, which included home-school support partnerships. The teachers were effective in situating themselves as integral to the context of understanding and supporting effective behavioural change (Tyler & Jones, 2002; Visser & Stokes, 2003; Papatheodorou, 2005). Within this study, it was evident that respondents had moved from understanding the individual within a psycho-medical framework to a second-level understanding which viewed learners within the various relationships and support networks they formed a part of. Literature asserts that individuals develop through the varied activities and interactions that they engage in within their

microsystems (Tudge et al., 2009). Within this study respondents reported shifts in their understanding of behaviour and behaviour support over the period of time of their participation in the Inclusion module.

8.3.2 Findings in relation to the Inclusion of Learners with Behavioural Challenges

Chapter 2 provided an overview of the imperatives of Inclusive Education. As is the case elsewhere, within the South African context, issues of inclusion and inclusive practices continue to be an important aspect of local, national and international discussion about how best to respond to learners who experience difficulties in school (Engelbrecht et al., 1999, p. 19). Embedded in the discussion, research and inclusive practices debate is the call to reduce the number of learners excluded from school for disciplinary reasons (Evans et al., 2004). The imperative to support learners who present with behavioural challenges has emerged in this study as a core outcome. Respondents within this study previously engaged in a variety of exclusionary practices (learners were ‘just left outside’, were ‘shouted at’, ‘beaten’, etc.), and following their participation the PBS inclusion module, they reported that they now reflect on, assess and develop values and beliefs as well as instructional teaching and assessment practices that support inclusion of learners who present with challenging behaviours. Such deep teacher reflection and a move towards inclusionary practices and action is supported by literature as the key to educational change (Hargreaves, 1994; Walton, 2011). The majority of respondents within the study reported using various PBS strategies. Respondents reflected on how their own attitudes to teaching and learners had become more supportive and less exclusionary. This was evident in the observed classroom practices, where respondents were seen to engage to varying degrees with classroom-wide PBS support (section 7.5). This result supports the literature that states that ‘what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get’ (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 1). Respondents were observed to be ‘increasing participation and reducing exclusionary pressures’ in various aspect of classroom practice (Walton, 2011, p. 241). The observations therefore provided evidence to support the use of PBS in South Africa. Where earlier literature in relation to PBS application was absent from the South African context, there is now information that assists in considering this model of behaviour support as useful and relevant to a different context.

8.4 Implications for Professional Development Programmes

The teachers considered that the PBS strategies were good and useful for excellence in teaching, and the limitation was that only a few teachers had been exposed to it. During the teacher interviews at the Limpopo schools, teachers reported that colleagues within their schools had expressed an interest in what the research participant teachers were now doing differently in their classrooms. The impact of the respondents' strategies of behaviour support were creating an awareness amongst other teachers that there was a different, better way to support learners who present with behavioural challenges. The lack of opportunity for these strategies to be shared with their colleagues was highlighted as a challenge. All teacher respondents within the classroom observations reported that it was imperative for teachers within their schools to have an opportunity to learn the principles and practical applications of the PBS model, and thereby learn healthier support mechanisms by which learner challenging behaviours could be addressed. One poignant reflection (previously highlighted in section 7.6) from a teacher interview was when the teacher expressed: '*...it is a waste for us to be the excellent teachers alone*' (School 2 Teacher 3). The idea of increased exposure and familiarity to the PBS model is strongly supported by literature as having the advantage of more teachers within schools and more schools within districts experiencing the benefits of using PBS strategies to 'proactively establish school environments more conducive to learning' (Warren et al., 2006, p. 196). Within South Africa, many teachers were educated under apartheid, and as a result, their practices tend to be rigid and authoritarian (Pithouse, 2004). In order to ensure that inclusive education is embraced and pursued by all teachers, there continues to be a need for professional development and support (Ntombela, 2011).

Shulman (1986) explains that teacher education should function to teach prospective teachers how to use ideas and theories in their classroom practice and should also help them to investigate and discover how those ideas and theories in effect manage those who attempt to engage them. The imperative that teacher education programmes incorporate effective behaviour support strategies together with general pedagogical development and specific classroom behaviour support management techniques has been proven valuable in the findings of this research. The findings provide a compelling argument that the ideas and theoretical underpinnings of the PBS model should form part of the support strategies that prospective teachers are exposed to as part of their pre-service education. A video and supporting paper (An Ecosystemic Lens on Systemic Support for learners) has already been developed for the

UL emanating from this study. It is envisaged that the video will be used by the UL to support their Bachelor of Education undergraduate teacher education programme. In addition, the results of the research will be communicated to the UL so that they consider including the PBS model of behaviour support in their undergraduate FP Bachelor of Education programmes.

8.5 Limitations of the Study

This research deliberately focused on Limpopo FP teachers during their teacher education degree at the WSoE. The research aimed to support in-service teacher professional development initiatives within the UL and as such the research participants were a purposive sample. The PBS model was evaluated for the effectiveness of its use within the specific context of Limpopo. The findings that emerged from the study provide rich data to support a meaningful understanding of the value of PBS that has been found within a specific context. It is however accepted that the specific context would limit the generalisability of the findings to other South African contexts.

The PBS model is a model used predominately in overseas countries as a school wide model of support. For the purposes of this study the model was adapted to focus only on the classroom PBS strategies. The use of the model as a complete three tiered approach was therefore not investigated. Despite having to practise the PBS strategies in isolation from their colleagues (those who did not participate at WSoE), respondents nevertheless willingly tried out the PBS model of support. This can be considered as a sign of the perceived value of the PBS model and the respondents' adaptability to use different forms of learner support in their classrooms. Cultural relevance of the PBS model however was very limited as only four classroom observations were done in a brief one hour time frame. A further limitation during the classroom observations was that I do not speak or read the mother tongue language that was used in the classroom. Even though the teachers translated for me during parts of the lesson where mother tongue was used, my lack of expertise in fully understanding the language left me feeling less competent in my observer role.

My role as the researcher within research process must be acknowledged as a possible limitation to the research because of the complexity of the role of the researcher and the issue of power relations. As indicated the introductory chapter of the thesis, consensual research was considered possible within this context because opportunities were created for my roles and that of the research participants to be understood and accepted, and by not assuming that there

was equality across all researcher and research participant relations (Denscombe, 2010; Brookfield, 2011). Potential biases related to my roles were explicitly addressed through reflexive thinking as well as open communication with the research participants and within all seminar and paper presentations that have emanated from this study thus far.

The possible impact of my various roles (that of researcher, lecturer, interviewer in the focus groups and observer and interviewer at the Limpopo classrooms) within the research is accepted as a limitation, as these roles, whether intentionally or not, would have impacted research questions, data collection, collation and analysis processes within the research. By addressing this issue as I have done in the methodology chapter as well as acknowledging it openly as a possible limitation here, it is hoped that I have made explicit my awareness of the issue and the mechanisms that were adopted to manage it.

A further limitation evolved out of one of the findings of the study. This is highlighted in section 8.4. The majority of respondents expressed strongly that all FP teachers within the province of Limpopo should have the opportunity to participate in professional development on behaviour support and the PBS model. This urgent call by the respondents, while accepted as legitimate, was not possible to address within the scope of this research. Respondents commented on the interest shown by their colleagues at their schools in relation to the good practices they saw being implemented. Concern was expressed by the majority of respondents that there was little opportunity for them to share their expertise with others, given the busy schedules of all the teachers and the heavy workloads.

8.6 Implications for Further Research on PBS in the South African Context

While this study is possibly the first to provide information about the value of PBS within the South African context, and specifically within the province of Limpopo, there are extensive opportunities to conduct further research on the model within the rest of the country. Literature suggests that within this country, teachers may find it harder to adopt new strategies for various contextual reasons. Contextual factors that may impede teacher uptake include teachers' difficulties with lack of appropriate resources, poor learner engagement, and teachers' own poor teacher education as a result of Bantu Education (Chrisholm, 2003; Jansen, 1999). Further studies in various other South African contexts would therefore provide invaluable information with regard to possible generalisability of the value of PBS support in this country's context

Although the findings in this study indicate a pocket of success in relation to the value of PBS, further studies to explore the value of long-term school-based behaviour support with PBS interventions can provide data in relation to whether or not the model achieves success in reduction of behavioural challenges within schools and classrooms in different contextual settings. Various national and international studies argue for the effectiveness of intervention programmes that include coaching and follow-up programmes. The duration of such programmes generates opportunities for collaborations, group inquiry into practice and individual reflections (Showers & Joyce, 1999; Ismat, 1996; Brodie, 2008). Research into long-term use of PBS support programmes in collaboration with school-based support teams across various districts in different provinces may provide further information with regard to teacher uptake of intervention and support programmes in the area of behaviour support.

8.7 Concluding the Thesis

In this chapter, key findings of the study have been highlighted. Findings related to the research questions were linked to the various data sets that emerged from the study. Findings were connected to the theoretical framework that underpinned the study. Overall, the research findings have provided evidence to support the effectiveness of the PBS model for Limpopo FP classrooms and in doing so, have been successful in providing useful information in relation to the use of the PBS model in the South African context. Limitations of the study were recorded and an indication of how they were addressed was provided. Finally, opportunities were identified for further long-term studies that incorporate professional development programmes in behaviour support and reductions in behavioural challenges within the school and district contexts.

The PBS model was found to be valuable and effective in helping the Limpopo FP teachers better understand and better manage behavioural challenges in their classrooms. It is envisaged that when the findings are communicated to the Limpopo Department of Education, it will have an impact in the province for teacher development in the area of behaviour support. The opportunities for exploration of the PBS model within higher education courses for teacher education is possible given the value the FP teachers found in the module taught at Wits. It is hoped that consideration will be given by the UL to the incorporation of PBS strategies into their undergraduate teacher education programmes. This, I would argue, will equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to support positive behaviour in the classrooms.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Appendix B: Module Evaluation

Appendix C: Open-ended Questionnaire

Appendix D: Interview Schedule for Focus Groups

Appendix E: Observation Schedule for Limpopo Foundation Phase Classrooms

Appendix F: Ethical Clearance Certificate

Appendix G: Permission Letter from the Limpopo Department of Education

Appendix H: Participants Information Sheet and Consent Forms

Appendix I: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Forms for Foundation Phase
Classrooms

Appendix J: Summary of Classroom Observations in Limpopo Foundation Phase Classrooms

Appendix K: Inclusive Education Module Course Outline

Appendix L: Excerpts of Resource Booklet

APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

A: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Years of teaching in a Limpopo Primary school
[] 0-5 yrs [] 6-10 yrs, [] 11-15 yrs, [] 16 yrs +
2. Position held at the primary school
[] educator [] head of department [] other (please indicate) _____
3. Gender [] female [] male

B: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Age [] 20-25 [] 26-30 [] 30+
2. Gender [] female [] male

CLASSROOM PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR

C: Please indicate which of the following behaviours you consider problematic in your classroom in Limpopo (please tick the appropriate column)

	Learner behaviour	This is not a problem at all	This is a small problem	This is quite a big problem	This is a very big problem
1	often interrupts or intrudes on others(e.g. butts into conversations or games)				
2	restless, cannot sit still for long				
3	loses temper very easily				
4	fights with other children				
5	lies				
6	steals				
7	easily distracted, concentration wanders				
8	argues with the teacher				
9	swears				
10	plays truant from school				
11	does not listen when spoken to directly				
12	does not give attention to work				
13	refuses to comply with teachers requests				
14	blurts out the answer before the question is completed				
15	bullies other children				
16	does not follow instructions				
17	does not wait his/her turn				
18	uses a weapon that can cause serious harm to others(e.g. a brick, bat, broken bottle)				
19	cruel to others				
20	blames others for mistakes				

21	fails to finish work				
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D: Perceptions of ability to manage these behaviours

How equipped do you feel to address these behaviours. (please tick the appropriate column)

	Learner behaviour	I am not at all equipped to address this type of behaviour	I am slightly equipped to address this type of behaviour	I am adequately equipped to address this behaviour	I am very well equipped to address this type of behaviour
1	often interrupts or intrudes on others(e.g. butts into conversations or games)				
2	restless, cannot sit still for long				
3	loses temper very easily				
4	fights with other children				
5	lies				
6	steals from school or classmates				
7	easily distracted, concentration wanders				
8	argues with the teacher				
9	swears				
10	plays truant from school				
11	does not listen when spoken to directly				
12	does not give attention to work				
13	refuses to comply with teachers requests				
14	blurts out the answer before the question is completed				
15	bullies other children				
16	does not follow instructions				
17	does not wait his/her turn				
18	uses a weapon that can cause serious harm to others(e.g. a brick, bat, broken bottle)				
19	cruel to others				

20	blames others for mistakes						
21	fails to finish work						

F: Behaviour support programs in Limpopo

Please describe what you consider to be a behaviour support program

Are there behaviour support programs at the Limpopo primary school in which you taught:

Yes/No

If yes, please describe what these programs were

If yes, please indicate if the behaviour support program was (please tick the appropriate block)

- ☐ effectively used
- ☐ not effectively used
- ☐ not used at all

Thank you for your time taken in completing this questionnaire

APPENDIX B

MODULE EVALUATION

B Ed 4th Year FOUNDATION PHASE (EDUC 4081)

MODULE EVALUATION

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE
BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MODULE (EDUC 4081)

1. Which aspects of the course did you find **most useful**?

2. Which aspects did you find **least useful**?

3. Do you think you will put into practice any of the behaviour support strategies in your teaching? YES/NO _____.

If YES, which strategies do you think you would use in your classroom practice?

4. What additional input/information would you have liked to receive in this module?

5. On a scale of 1-4, how useful would you say you found the reading pack/resource materials? Circle the rating that you agree with from the list below.

1-Very Unsatisfactory-inadequate and irrelevant

2-Unsatisfactory- too much technical jargon and/or difficult to read

3-Satisfactory- reader friendly with meaningful information

4-Good-provided theoretical underpinnings as well as effective practical suggestions in behaviour support.

6. Can your feedback provided in this evaluation be used for research purposes?

YES _____ NO _____) tick which is applicable.

APPENDIX C
OPEN-ENDED
QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION 1

If your child were to misbehave at school, what would you prefer the teacher not to do?

List/Explain all the things you think would be inappropriate teacher responses to managing challenging behaviour.

QUESTION 2

If your child were to misbehave in school, what would you like the teacher to do?

List/Explain all the things you think a teacher should do to effectively manage challenging behaviour.

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR
FOCUS GROUPS

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Project title: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Foundation Phase Classrooms

Researcher: Veronica Moodley

Guiding questions for focus group interviews

Has your understanding of the reasons for learners challenging behaviour changed after doing the Inclusion module?

What would you say brought about this change in understanding?

What do you now consider to be the reasons for learners' challenging behaviour?

Did you have an opportunity to use any of the behaviour support strategies from the module during Teaching Experience? Please explain/describe.

How effective would you say you found those strategies to be?

APPENDIX E
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE
FOR LIMPOPO PRIMARY
SCHOOLS

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS

Climate Management

The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.

Lesson Planning

The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.

Lesson Presentation

The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques.

Lesson Management

The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.

Time Management

The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.

Student Engagement

The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.

Student Management

The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence and is able to prevent, forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.

Organizational Routines

The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.

Academic Routines

The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.

Social Routines

The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communications and relationships between students.

Rules

The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes.

Rubrics

The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students.

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS

Teacher Exemplars and Non exemplars of Behaviour Support

With-It-Ness Component	Teacher With-It-Ness Exemplar	Teacher With-It-Ness Non exemplar
Climate Management	The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.	The teacher rarely makes positive and affirming statements and seldom smiles or speaks in a personal way to students. Students are rude to each other as well as to the teacher, and low achievement is the norm.
Lesson Planning (Designing)	The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.	The teacher seldom has a written plan for a lesson. Her lesson plan book is filled with page numbers of various textbooks, rather than learning objectives that students need to master as a result of her lessons.
Lesson Presentation (Delivery)	The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques.	The teacher has difficulty delivering a lesson with a beginning, middle, and conclusion. The teacher frequently injects sidebars and off-topic comments into the lesson that distract both him and his students.
Lesson Management	The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.	The teacher is unable to attend to more than one stimulus at a time and is unable to make adjustments to the lesson pace or difficulty during the lesson. The teacher frequently loses the attention of the entire class and is seldom able to re-engage students in a positive way.
Time Management	The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.	The teacher wastes a great deal of time talking about things that are unrelated to lesson objectives, and students are frequently engaged in inappropriate behaviour while the teacher is talking. There is no evidence of organizational routines or timesavers.
Student Engagement	The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities, thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.	The teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either students are not engaged in any type of student-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised.

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS

Student Management	The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence. The teacher is able to prevent, forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.	The teacher makes many negative statements, including comments that reflect her dislike of certain students. Students are often confused about what they should be doing and how they should be doing it, indicating that behavioural expectations have not been taught to them.
Organizational Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.	There are no apparent routines for students during transition times, beginning of the day, or ending of the day. Students appear disorganized and are often asking questions of one another such as, "What do we do now?"
Academic Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.	The teacher makes attempts to engage students in cooperative work, but has never explicitly taught them the social or organizational routines that would help cooperative work go smoothly. Students are talking at the same time, or one individual has taken over the group and is not letting other students have a turn.
Social Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communication and relationships between students.	Student behaviour does not give evidence that they have been taught specific social routines. Observed class discussions often degenerate into shouting and hand waving to get the teacher's attention.
Rules	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes.	There are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, and the teacher seldom reminds students or refers them to principles or values that should guide their behaviour and attitudes.
Rubrics	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students.	There are no posted rubrics for student behaviour or work products. The grades on displayed student work exhibit a haphazard evaluation system.

APPENDIX F
ETHICAL CLEARANCE
CERTIFICATE

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website:
www.wits.ac.za

Student Number:
Protocol Number:
2012ECE013

Date: 26 September 2013

Dear Veronica Moodley

Application for Ethics Clearance: Doctor of Philosophy

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

An investigation into the feasibility of Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that clearance was granted.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Matsie Mabeta".

Matsie Mabeta
Wits School of Education

011 717 3416

CC Supervisor: Elizabeth Walton

APPENDIX G

PERMISSION LETTER FROM
THE LIMPOPO
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

Enquiries: Dr. Makola MC, Tel No: 015 290 9448. E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

PRIVATE BAG X3

WITS

2050

RE: Request for permission to Conduct Research

1. The above bears reference.

The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct a research has been approved-

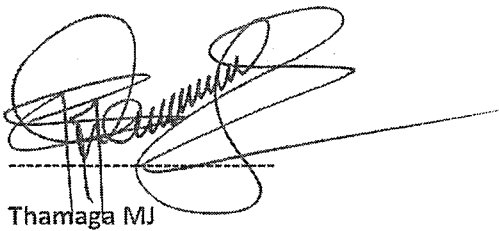
TITLE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MODEL FOR
LIMPOPO'S PRIMARY SCHOOLS (GRADE R-3).

- 2.
3. The following conditions should be considered
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and the schools concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the forth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, the research ethics should be practiced, in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

Page 1 of 2

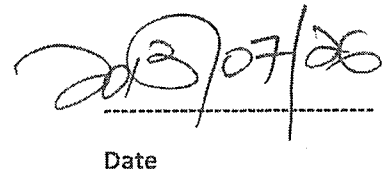
- 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
5. The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Thamaga MJ

Head of Department



Date

APPENDIX H
PARTICIPANTS
INFORMATION SHEET AND
CONSENT FORMS

APPENDIX H: PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION SHEET AND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project title: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Foundation Phase Classrooms

Researcher: Veronica Moodley

Dear Student

I would like to invite you to participate in the following research study outlined below.

The purpose of this study is to determine student needs with regards to their behaviour support of learners in the Foundation phase. The data gathered will be used in the development of a behaviour support module that will be taught to you in the Inclusive Education course in block 4 of the second semester this year. The module will be evaluated at various stages and data from the module evaluation will be used to develop a behaviour support module for the University of Limpopo as part of their teacher training Foundation phase life skills course.

All 4th year Foundation phase students will be completing the attached survey questionnaire which will seek to determine which behavioural challenges you perceive as problematic and your perceptions about your abilities to manage these behavioural challenges. The information gathered will inform the development of the behaviour support module you will be taught in the Inclusive Education course in semester 2, block 2. As part of the Inclusive Education module all students will be completing an assignment, a teaching experience reflective journal (TE journal), writing an examination and a course evaluation after the module.

In 2013, in the final phase of the research data collection phase, focus group interviews with foundation phase teachers (who completed the Inclusion module in 2012) will be conducted in Limpopo and Gauteng.

Should you be willing to participate in this study, you can do so in 4 ways:

1. Allow your responses on the questionnaire to be used for research purposes.
2. Allow your TE journal completed in September 2012, your assignment, exam and course evaluation, to be used for research purposes. Please note that the completion of these tasks form part of your module requirements and are not in any way additional tasks. You are invited to participate in the study by making these completed tasks available for research purposes.
3. By being part of a focus group interview of 5-7 students: one before you start the module in semester 2 and one after you complete the module. The focus group interviews will be arranged to take place at the Wits School of Education at a time that is mutually convenient, and you will be requested to contribute to a discussion by responding to various questions. I will respect

APPENDIX H: PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

your right not to answer any of the questions asked in the focus group discussions, and you will be free to leave the discussion at any time without any negative consequences to yourself. The focus group interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed to ensure accurate data capture.

4. An additional option aspect of participating would be to do an additional focus group interview in 2013. These discussions will be arranged to take place in Limpopo and will be held at a venue and time that is mutually convenient and you will be requested to contribute to a discussion by responding to various questions. I will respect your right not to answer any of the questions asked in the focus group discussions, and you will be free to leave the discussion at any time without any negative consequences to yourself. The focus group interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed to ensure accurate data capture.

Participation is voluntary which means that refusal to participate will involve no penalty (for example, influence your marks). You are free to decide not to participate and to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with myself as the lecturer or with the university.

Please do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study before participating or during the study. I would be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. Anonymity will be maintained as your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way. There are no known risks associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are the information about behaviour support needs and information about the behaviour support module you will be taught.

If you are willing to participate in this research project, I would ask that you please complete and sign the attached consent form and return it by placing it in the box provided.

Regards,
Veronica Moodley

Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za

011 7173004 (office)

0823269041(all hours)

APPENDIX I

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION
SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR FOUNDATION PHASE
CLASSROOMS

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Veronica Moodley. I am a researcher in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am conducting research titled: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo Foundation Phase Classrooms

My research involves observing a sample of teachers who participated in the University of the Witwatersrand Bachelor of Education Program (B Ed 2009-2012). I would like to observe the teachers in their classrooms to view the possible implementation and application of behaviour support strategies that was part of the Inclusive Education module taught in the 4th year of their degree at Wits. The observation will be approximately 1 hour long and the date and time for the classroom observation will be pre-arranged with yourself and the class teacher. I will during the hour long observation use the attached observation schedule to guide my observation. The research will not in any way disrupt the academic program at the school.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because the teacher _____ at your school has participated in the Wits Bed program.

I was wondering whether you would mind if this research could be conducted at your school at a time and date suitable to you and the class teacher to conduct the classroom observation.

Neither the school research participants will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. The privacy of the school and the individual privacy of the participants will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

The research data will be kept confidential and will be stored for safe keeping in a locked drawer. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

**APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS**

Yours sincerely

NAME: Veronica Moodley

ADDRESS 4 Spence Street, Randhart, Alberton

EMAIL: Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 011 7173004/0823269041

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness for your school to participate in the research: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission for observations at _____ School

I agree to have observations done in the class. YES/NO

I know that Veronica Moodley will keep my information confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed. YES/NO

I know that all the data collected during this study will be kept in a secure place will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project. YES/NO

Sign _____ Date _____

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

INFORMATION SHEET LEARNERS

DATE 18 October 2013

Dear Learner

My name is Veronica Moodley. I am a researcher in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am conducting research titled: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

My investigation involves observing you and your teacher in the classroom for a 1 hour period. I will be observing the lesson that will be taught during this time.

I was wondering whether you would mind if I could visit your classroom and observe the class for an hour. You will not need to do anything different from what you normally do in class. I need your help with allowing me to be in the classroom during the lesson to observe the lesson while you are in the class.

Remember, this is not a test, it is not for marks and it is voluntary, which means that you don't have to do it. Also, if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not be using your own name but I will make one up so no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing about the study. Also, all collected information will be stored safely and destroyed between 3-5 years after I have completed my project.

Your parents have also been given an information sheet and consent form, but at the end of the day it is your decision to join us in the study.

I look forward to working with you.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you

SIGNATURE

NAME: Veronica Moodley

ADDRESS 4 Spence Street, Randhart, Alberton

EMAIL: Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 011 7173004/0823269041

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

INFORMATION SHEET PARENTS

DATE 18 October 2013

Dear Parent

My name is Veronica Moodley. I am a researcher in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am conducting research titled: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

My investigation involves observing your child in the classroom for a 1 hour period. I will be observing the lesson that will be taught during that hour.

I was wondering whether you would mind if I could visit your child's classroom and observe for an hour. I would like to observe the teacher in the classroom to view the possible implementation and application of behaviour support strategies that was part of the Inclusive Education module taught in the 4th year of their degree at Wits. Your child will not need to do anything different from how he/she normally participates during lessons. I need your help with allowing me to be in the classroom during the lesson to observe the lesson while your child is in the class.

Your child will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. S/he will be reassured that s/he can withdraw her/his permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and your child will not be paid for this study.

Your child's name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. No real names will be used in the research. His/her individual privacy will be maintained through the use of pseudonyms in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information.
Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

**APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS**

NAME: Veronica Moodley
ADDRESS 4 Spence Street, Randhart, Alberton
EMAIL: Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za
TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 011 7173004/0823269041

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

INFORMATION SHEET TEACHERS

DATE: 18 October 2013

My name is Veronica Moodley. I am a researcher in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am conducting research titled: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

My research involves observing a sample of teachers who participated in the University of the Witwatersrand Bachelor of Education Program (B Ed 2009-2012). I would like to observe the teachers in their classrooms to view the possible implementation and application of behaviour support strategies that was part of the Inclusive Education module taught in the 4th year of their degree at Wits. The observation will be approximately 1 hour long and the date and time for the classroom observation will be pre-arranged. I will during the hour long observation use the attached observation schedule to guide my observation. The research will not in any way disrupt the academic program of the class.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because you were one of the teachers that offered for an observation to be conducted in your classroom whilst you were at Wits University during for the B Ed program. I was wondering whether you would mind if this observation for the research could be conducted at your school at a time and date suitable to you.

Your name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. No real names will be used in the research. Your individual privacy will be maintained through the use of pseudonyms in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study.

Please let me know if you require any further information.
Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

SIGNATURE

NAME: Veronica Moodley
ADDRESS 4 Spence Street, Randhart, Alberton
EMAIL: Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za
TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 011 7173004/0823269041

**APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS**

**APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS**

Learner Consent Form

Please fill in the reply slip below if you agree to participate in my study called: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

My name is: _____

Permission for observations

I agree to be observed in class.

YES ☺ NO ☹

I know that Veronica Moodley will keep my information confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.

YES ☺ NO ☹

I know that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any time from the study.

YES ☺ NO ☹

I know that all the data collected during this study will be kept in a safe place and will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES ☺ NO ☹

Sign _____ Date _____

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS

Parent's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to allow your child to participate in my voluntary research project called: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

I, _____ the parent of _____

Permission for observations

I agree that my child may be observed in class.

YES/NO

I know that Veronica Moodley will keep my information confidential and safe and that my child's name and the name of his/her school will not be revealed.

YES/NO

I know that I have the right to withdraw my child from participation in the study at any time

YES/ NO

I know that all the data collected during this study will be kept in a safe place and will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES/NO

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

**APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORMS
FOR LIMPOPO SCHOOLS**

Teacher's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: An investigation into the Positive Behaviour Support model for Limpopo's Primary Schools (Grade R-3)

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission for observations

I agree to be observed in class.

YES/NO

I know that Veronica Moodley will keep my information confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.

YES/NO

I know that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any time from the study

YES/ NO

I know that all the data collected during this study will be kept in a secure place will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES/NO

Sign _____ Date _____

APPENDIX J

SUMMARY OF CLASSROOM
OBSERVATIONS IN
LIMPOPO FOUNDATION
PHASE CLASSROOMS

APPENDIX J (i) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 1

Teacher Exemplars and Non exemplars of Behaviour Support:

SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 1: GRADE 3 Maths (8:30am lesson 1hr observation) Class size approx 40

With-It-Ness Component	Teacher With-It-Ness Exemplar	Comments	Teacher With-It-Ness Non exemplar
Climate Management	The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.	<i>Teacher speaks warmly</i> <i>Desks well set up into groups of 4 learners each</i>	The teacher rarely makes positive and affirming statements and seldom smiles or speaks in a personal way to students. Students are rude to each other as well as to the teacher, and low achievement is the norm.
Lesson Planning (Designing)	The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.	<i>Activities for different groups with varied content levels.</i> <i>Apparatus available, worksheet activities and workbook activities</i>	The teacher seldom has a written plan for a lesson. Her lesson plan book is filled with page numbers of various textbooks, rather than learning objectives that students need to master as a result of her lessons.
Lesson Presentation (Delivery)	The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques.	<i>Some talk and chalk, also small group activities with two groups, relevant teaching aids(pictures and counters)</i>	The teacher has difficulty delivering a lesson with a beginning, middle, and conclusion. The teacher frequently injects sidebars and off-topic comments into the lesson that distract both him and his students.
Lesson Management	The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.	<i>Uses questions to check understanding.</i> <i>Affords learners opportunities to practically show how they work to achieve the answer</i>	The teacher is unable to attend to more than one stimulus at a time and is unable to make adjustments to the lesson pace or difficulty during the lesson. The teacher frequently loses the attention of the entire class and is seldom able to re-engage students in a positive way.
			<i>Has some difficulty here when engaging in group work. Other learners (those at their desks) seem easily distracted and teacher needs to raise her voice (firm but not rude) often to get learners back on task</i>

APPENDIX J (i) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 1

Time Management	The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.	<i>Time used effectively despite learners distractibility at times.</i>	The teacher wastes a great deal of time talking about things that are unrelated to lesson objectives, and students are frequently engaged in inappropriate behaviour while the teacher is talking. There is no evidence of organizational routines or timesavers.	<i>It is possible that learners need further coaching in independent task activity/or supplementary tasks on work completion to hold their attention</i>
Student Engagement	The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities, thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.	<i>Close group work supervision was effective</i>	The teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either students are not engaged in any type of student-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised.	<i>Some learners who finish early are waiting for another task and become disruptive- see comment above</i>
Student Management	The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence. The teacher is able to prevent, forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.	<i>A non-offensive /non-disruptive hum as learners proceeded with their work was evident. Teacher calmly redirects learners who may become distracted</i>	The teacher makes many negative statements, including comments that reflect her dislike of certain students. Students are often confused about what they should be doing and how they should be doing it, indicating that behavioural expectations have not been taught to them.	<i>Behavioural expectations following work completion need to be taught. Activities to support learners after work completion were no evident</i>
Organizational Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.	<i>Students are aware of their group names and respond by going to the carpet when called. Movement to the carpet area is well done without</i>	There are no apparent routines for students during transition times, beginning of the day, or ending of the day. Students appear disorganized and are often asking questions of one another such as, "What do we do now?"	

APPENDIX J (i) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 1

undue disruption to the rest of the class.

Academic Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.	The teacher makes attempts to engage students in cooperative work, but has never explicitly taught them the social or organizational routines that would help cooperative work go smoothly. *Students are talking at the same time, or one individual has taken over the group and is not letting other students have a turn.	*This is true for some groups.
Social Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communication and relationships between students.	Student behaviour does not give evidence that they have been taught specific social routines. *Observed class discussions often degenerate into shouting and hand waving to get the teacher's attention.	*Shouting and waving to get the teachers attention does occur
Rules	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes.	There are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, and the teacher seldom reminds students or refers them to principles or values that should guide their behaviour and attitudes.	
Rubrics	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students.	There are no posted rubrics for student behaviour or work products. The grades on displayed student work exhibit a haphazard evaluation system.	No posted rubrics for student behaviour during group work table activities

APPENDIX J (ii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 2

Teacher Exemplars and Non exemplars of Behaviour Support:

School 1 Classroom 2 Grade 3 English Comprehension (10:30am 1hr observation) Class size approx 40			
With-It-Ness Component	Teacher With-It-Ness Exemplar	Comments	Teacher With-It-Ness Non exemplar
Climate Management	The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.	<i>Friendly atmosphere. Learners engage with ease with one another and with the teacher</i>	The teacher rarely makes positive and affirming statements and seldom smiles or speaks in a personal way to students. Students are rude to each other as well as to the teacher, and low achievement is the norm.
Lesson Planning (Designing)	The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.	<i>Yes, Lesson is well detailed. Teacher has all the necessary teaching aids on hand. Learning objectives are clear and well articulated</i>	The teacher seldom has a written plan for a lesson. Her lesson plan book is filled with page numbers of various textbooks, rather than learning objectives that students need to master as a result of her lessons.
Lesson Presentation (Delivery)	The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques.	<i>Strong classroom presence showing a well planned and executed lesson. Media well used to enhance effectiveness(word chart, pictures, similes etc)</i>	The teacher has difficulty delivering a lesson with a beginning, middle, and conclusion. The teacher frequently injects sidebars and off-topic comments into the lesson that distract both him and his students.
Lesson Management	The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.	<i>Question and answer technique to draw out information from learners and deepen understanding. Probing effectively used to</i>	The teacher is unable to attend to more than one stimulus at a time and is unable to make adjustments to the lesson pace or difficulty during the lesson. The teacher frequently loses the attention of the entire class and is

APPENDIX J (ii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 2

Time Management	The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.	<i>encourage meaningful debate and prediction</i>	seldom able to re-engage students in a positive way.
Student Engagement	The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities, thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.	Yes <i>learners know and follow instructions well. It seems learners are very familiar with group work activities and are able to execute them with ease.</i> <i>Tasks well planned for each group with clear instruction and time frames for completion/delivery</i>	The teacher wastes a great deal of time talking about things that are unrelated to lesson objectives, and students are frequently engaged in inappropriate behaviour while the teacher is talking. There is no evidence of organizational routines or timesavers. The teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either students are not engaged in any type of student-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised.
Student Management	The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence. The teacher is able to prevent, forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.	<i>Very little need for teacher to intervene, learners correct each other in groups and are helpful to each other. Strong sense of interdependence is evident.</i>	The teacher makes many negative statements, including comments that reflect her dislike of certain students. Students are often confused about what they should be doing and how they should be doing it, indicating that behavioural expectations have not been taught to them.

APPENDIX J (ii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 2

Organizational Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.	<i>Learners clearly well aware of expected behaviour and academic expectations for the activity. Book monitors, team leaders take responsibility and teams work effectively</i>	There are no apparent routines for students during transition times, beginning of the day, or ending of the day. Students appear disorganized and are often asking questions of one another such as, "What do we do now?"
Academic Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.	<i>Charts and classroom paraphernalia are well displayed. Learners know where to go to get a reader or additional activity once they have completed a task. The additional tasks are fun and learners look forward to them. The task are also graded in level of difficulty and learners are free to choose a level they think they can achieve success in.</i>	The teacher makes attempts to engage students in cooperative work, but has never explicitly taught them the social or organizational routines that would help cooperative work go smoothly. Students are talking at the same time, or one individual has taken over the group and is not letting other students have a turn.
Social Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communication and relationships between students.	<i>Teacher makes herself available to learners who have their hands raised by walking around between facilitation of tasks.. They sometimes have to wait for teacher and can ask the group leader for</i>	Student behaviour does not give evidence that they have been taught specific social routines. Observed class discussions often degenerate into shouting and hand waving to get the teacher's attention.

APPENDIX J (ii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 1 TEACHER 2

help if they need too. Learners are able to wait patiently and keep themselves busy with other parts of the task while they wait teachers attention. Hands raised signal a call for assistance, this however is done with dignity and patience

Rules	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes. <i>Yes, clearly visible on the walls and many seem already internalised by the learners.</i>	There are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, and the teacher seldom reminds students or refers them to principles or values that should guide their behaviour and attitudes.
Rubrics	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students. <i>Checklist for task completion is visible on the board</i>	There are no posted rubrics for student behaviour or work products. The grades on displayed student work exhibit a haphazard evaluation system.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS from interview: Teacher has come from a previously ex Model C school. She attests to practicing many of the strategies that she has seen work at her previous school. Very strong optimistic attitude with strong sense of social responsibility.

APPENDIX J (iii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 2 TEACHER 3

Teacher Exemplars and Non exemplars of Behaviour Support

School 2 Teacher 3: Grade 1: Vernacular lesson Story telling (9:30 am: 45 min observation) Class size 60

With-It-Ness Component	Teacher With-It-Ness Exemplar	COMMENTS	Teacher With-It-Ness Non exemplar	COMMENTS
Climate Management	The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.	<i>Teacher very warm and affirming. Was acutely aware learners who have special needs and offers encouragement and praise with genuiness and thoughtfulness. Stickers (stars on learners foreheads) were used to encourage participation and reward learners for sharing apparatus</i>	The teacher rarely makes positive and affirming statements and seldom smiles or speaks in a personal way to students. Students are rude to each other as well as to the teacher, and low achievement is the norm.	
Lesson Planning (Designing)	The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.	<i>Follows the lesson plan format from WITS and suggest that it affords her the best organisational planning tool to date. Well detailed</i>	The teacher seldom has a written plan for a lesson. Her lesson plan book is filled with page numbers of various textbooks, rather than learning objectives that students need to master as a result of her lessons.	
Lesson Presentation (Delivery)	The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and	<i>Word picture association to assist delivery. All apparatus (glue, scissors, crayons are available) for cut and match activity.</i>	The teacher has difficulty delivering a lesson with a beginning, middle, and conclusion. The teacher frequently injects sidebars and off-topic comments into the lesson that distract both him and his students.	

APPENDIX J (iii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 2 TEACHER 3

presentation techniques.

Lesson Management	The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.	<i>Very effectively done with questioning, demonstration through learner participation (making of animal sounds). Learners requested to offer each other assistance when needed.</i>	The teacher is unable to attend to more than one stimulus at a time and is unable to make adjustments to the lesson pace or difficulty during the lesson. The teacher frequently loses the attention of the entire class and is seldom able to re-engage students in a positive way.
Time Management	The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.	<i>Despite the large class size, time was well managed. Activities suited learners level and learners shared well together.</i>	The teacher wastes a great deal of time talking about things that are unrelated to lesson objectives, and students are frequently engaged in inappropriate behaviour while the teacher is talking. There is no evidence of organizational routines or timesavers.
Student Engagement	The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities, thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.	<i>Students followed instruction with ease(was in their mother tongue-teacher informed observer as she taught of what she was saying) Warmth and friendliness of teacher was tangible allowing learners to relax, ask questions and follow-through</i>	The teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either students are not engaged in any type of student-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised.
Student Management	The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence. The	<i>Was a class activity and teacher made herself available to learners as best as possible in the very</i>	The teacher makes many negative statements, including comments that reflect her dislike of certain students. Students are often confused about what

School 2 Teacher 3

Page 2 of 4

APPENDIX J (iii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 2 TEACHER 3

teacher is able to prevent, forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.	<i>overcrowded classroom. Learners were carefully seated for peer support and ease of reach for those who she thought would need additional help.</i>	they should be doing and how they should be doing it, indicating that behavioural expectations have not been taught to them.
Organizational Routines The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.	<i>Row leaders handled distribution of materials effectively.</i>	There are no apparent routines for students during transition times, beginning of the day, or ending of the day. Students appear disorganized and are often asking questions of one another such as, "What do we do now?"
Academic Routines The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.	<i>Cut-paste-match activity which allowed for independent work. Chalkboard help given to show 'where to cut/how to stick' for those needing extra support.</i>	The teacher makes attempts to engage students in cooperative work, but has never explicitly taught them the social or organizational routines that would help cooperative work go smoothly. Students are talking at the same time, or one individual has taken over the group and is not letting other students have a turn.
Social Routines The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communication and relationships between students.	<i>Strong supportive classroom tone. Learners seem to follow teachers lead with ease. With such large numbers the potential for disruption is great, class however followed routine of raising hands and waiting turns. Learners who seemed overly restless were attended to</i>	Student behaviour does not give evidence that they have been taught specific social routines. Observed class discussions often degenerate into shouting and hand waving to get the teacher's attention.

APPENDIX J (iii) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 2 TEACHER 3

first.

Rules	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes.	<i>Behaviour rules were posted on the wall (in vernacular), students reminded of them when necessary</i>	There are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, and the teacher seldom reminds students or refers them to principles or values that should guide their behaviour and attitudes.
Rubrics	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students.	<i>Task outline/example was available on the board as a point of reference.</i>	There are no posted rubrics for student behaviour or work products. The grades on displayed student work exhibit a haphazard evaluation system.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT: Teacher translated from the vernacular (mother tongue) to English wherever possible so that I could follow the lesson. Code switching (switching use of language between mother tongue and English) was part of the flow of the lesson and was used for the benefit of the learners as well. .

APPENDIX J (iv) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 3 TEACHER 4

Teacher Exemplars and Non exemplars of Behaviour Support

SCHOOL 3: Life Skills Lesson : Grade 3, 1:30 pm, 30 min observation, 28 learners (deep rural)

With-It-Ness Component	Teacher With-It-Ness Exemplar	COMMENTS	Teacher With-It-Ness Non exemplar	COMMENTS
Climate Management	The teacher creates a positive and productive classroom environment in which all students achieve to their maximum potential.	<i>Warm positive classroom environment. Teacher offers smiles and rewards(pats) and affirmation(good, well done) for learner participation</i>	The teacher rarely makes positive and affirming statements and seldom smiles or speaks in a personal way to students. Students are rude to each other as well as to the teacher, and low achievement is the norm.	
Lesson Planning (Designing)	The teacher designs well-organized lessons using the elements of lesson design that are appropriate to the content and differentiated as appropriate to students' needs.	<i>Lesson plan well detailed showing lesson objectives.</i>	The teacher seldom has a written plan for a lesson. Her lesson plan book is filled with page numbers of various textbooks, rather than learning objectives that students need to master as a result of her lessons.	<i>Differentiation of activities not evident</i>
Lesson Presentation (Delivery)	The teacher uses effective communication skills, organizes an appropriate number and variety of instructional activities, and selects appropriate instructional moves and presentation techniques.	<i>Effective communication, clear and articulate with code switching where necessary. Charts and pictures available during presentation. Different pictures for same type of food(e.g. meat- chicken, sheep/lamb, cow/beef) were also used</i>	The teacher has difficulty delivering a lesson with a beginning, middle, and conclusion. The teacher frequently injects sidebars and off-topic comments into the lesson that distract both him and his students.	

APPENDIX J (iv) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 3 TEACHER 4

Lesson Management	The teacher regularly checks for understanding during lessons and makes mid-course corrections to instruction (fine-tuning content, difficulty, or pace) to ensure that students can understand.	<i>Question and answer technique used, learner participation encouraged to match pictures on the board</i>	The teacher is unable to attend to more than one stimulus at a time and is unable to make adjustments to the lesson pace or difficulty during the lesson. The teacher frequently loses the attention of the entire class and is seldom able to re-engage students in a positive way.
Time Management	The teacher uses allocated learning time productively, thereby maximizing academic learning time for all students and interactive learning time for students at risk.	<i>Time used effectively to achieve outcomes. No unnecessary repetition and moved at a pace the learners could cope with</i>	The teacher wastes a great deal of time talking about things that are unrelated to lesson objectives, and students are frequently engaged in inappropriate behaviour while the teacher is talking. There is no evidence of organizational routines or timesavers.
Student Engagement	The teacher productively engages students in teacher-directed lessons, facilitates cooperative work with other students, and provides appropriate levels of student-managed learning activities, thereby ensuring that all students achieve to their maximum levels.	<i>Class activity in which rows of learners formed a team to offer responses- activity was fun for learners who responded well to the competition to achieve points for correct answers for their groups- self correction following teachers probing the was permitted enhancing the learning potential of the activity</i>	The teacher seems unaware of the large amount of wasted time in her classroom, during which no active instruction is occurring. Either students are not engaged in any type of student-managed learning activity, have not been given directions to begin an activity, are waiting for another task, or are not being supervised.
Student Management	The teacher handles conflict and confrontation with authority, calmness, and confidence. The teacher is able to prevent,		The teacher makes many negative statements, including comments that reflect her dislike of certain students. Students are often <i>Some negative comments emerged that could be construed as making fun of incorrect responses (e.g. 'that's not a very clever answer')</i>

APPENDIX J (iv) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 3 TEACHER 4

	forestall, anticipate, and disarm behavioural problems with students.		confused about what they should be doing and how they should be doing it, indicating that behavioural expectations have not been taught to them.
Organizational Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of organizational routines to facilitate the movement of students, the flow of paper and instructional materials, and the adherence to schedules.	Not evident in lesson observed	There are no apparent routines for students during transition times, beginning of the day, or ending of the day. Students appear disorganized and are often asking questions of one another such as, "What do we do now?"
Academic Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of academic routines that facilitate and motivate high levels of literacy learning.	<i>Word picture associations used</i> <i>Small group activities allowed for discussion and expansion of ideas</i>	The teacher makes attempts to engage students in cooperative work, but has never explicitly taught them the social or organizational routines that would help cooperative work go smoothly. Students are talking at the same time, or one individual has taken over the group and is not letting other students have a turn.
Social Routines	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of social routines to ensure positive and productive interpersonal communication and relationships between students.	<i>Learners work well in teams and are able to take turns and formulate a group decision</i>	Student behaviour does not give evidence that they have been taught specific social routines. Observed class discussions often degenerate into shouting and hand waving to get the teacher's attention.

APPENDIX J (iv) OBSERVATIONS IN LIMPOPO FOUNDATION PHASE CLASSROOMS: SCHOOL 3 TEACHER 4

Rules	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a set of principles to guide students' behaviour and attitudes.	<i>Classroom rules are posted on the wall</i>	There are no behavioural expectations or rubrics posted in the classroom, and the teacher seldom reminds students or refers them to principles or values that should guide their behaviour and attitudes.
Rubrics	The teacher designs, teaches, and implements a variety of performance-based assessment tools (rubrics, checklists, or rating scales) to communicate behavioural, social, and academic expectations to students.	<i>Not evident in observed lesson</i>	There are no posted rubrics for student behaviour or work products. The grades on displayed student work exhibit a haphazard evaluation system.

APPENDIX K
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
MODULE COURSE OUTLINE

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

B.ED: STUDIES IN EDUCATION F (EDUC 4081)

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION Block 3 (20th August 2012- 26th October 2012)

COURSE OUTLINE

FOUNDATION PHASE

Course presenter: Veronica Moodley Room B216 Tel 011 7173004 Veronica.Moodley@wits.ac.za

Consultation times: Mondays 10h30-12h00 and Thursdays: 11h30 – 12h00

Studies F co-ordinator: Mr. Bheki Zungu B262, Tel. 011 717 3084



APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

Duration: Block 4 (22nd August 2012 – 26th October 2012)

Format: 3 lectures per week for 5 weeks

Lecture schedule:

FOUNDATION PHASE	VENUE	DAY	TIME
DIAGONAL A	EXAMS HALL	WEDNESDAY	12:15-13:05
		THURSDAY	14:05-16:00
DIAGONAL B	EXAMS HALL	THURSDAYS	12:15-13:05
		FRIDAY	14:05-16:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines behaviour support as a crucial element of inclusive education practice in the primary school. It focuses on facilitating an understanding of the practical implications of implementing Positive Behaviour Support as part of effective teaching and learning. It includes the following :

- An interrogation of behaviour management strategies through the structures, processes and culture of schooling, considering who benefits from the current arrangements
- Opportunities for behaviour support for all and to all which includes, but is not limited to; the use of Positive Behaviour Support and Social Emotional Learning
- Creating inclusive schools and classrooms characterized by co-operation, collaboration, abundance of success and understanding difference
- Critically engaging with the language of inclusion and difference/ the Other

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE OUTCOMES

After completion of the course, it is expected that students should be able to

- demonstrate some insight into inclusive education, that is, theory, research and policy
- begin to implement inclusive behaviour pedagogies and practices in South African classrooms
- identify and respond appropriately to school and classroom cultures and practices that exclude, devalue or marginalize certain learners, and so promote access, participation and belonging in school curricula and communities
- demonstrate academic skills suited to this level, such as logical argument, engagement with academic texts, academic referencing etc.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

The assessment of the course will be as follows:

- A written assignment requiring application of theory and principles learned during the course = 50%.
- A written, closed book examination also requiring discussion of theory and application of principles learned during the course =50%

ASSIGNMENT QUESTION (Due 8th October 2012 by 2pm-hand in to Pulane in B43)

You are confronted with a newly qualified teacher on TE who is struggling with behaviour management of learners in her class. The teacher was exposed to corporal punishment during her primary and secondary schooling and she believes that the use of corporal punishment is an effective behaviour management tool... She is unaware of alternative behaviour support strategies. The teacher is very surprised that you do not use corporal punishment during your lessons and would like to know why this is so. The teacher is curious about what possible alternatives there could be to corporal punishment

Provide a critical argument against corporal punishment in South African schools and indicate the role corporal punishment plays in excluding learners from full participation in the classroom... Provide a discussion of strategies that could be used as alternatives to corporal punishment. Focus on 3 key classroom strategies that could be used in the classroom. Provide a clear description and critical evaluation of these strategies and indicate why you consider these particular strategies relevant and essential to good classroom behaviour management practice. (100marks)

(Use readings prescribed for week 1 and week 2 on the course outline as well as additional readings available in the library. These additional readings are on reserve and can be requested at the front desk from the box marked Veronica Moodley)

Assignments may be collected from Pulane Tumahole in B43 on 26th October at 14h00

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

Format of Written Responses, referencing and plagiarism

Your assignment

- Should be in the form of a well structured essay
- Should not be more than 2000 words
- Should be typed, using font Times New Roman with font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing
- Needs to be well planned, well argued and well supported by theory, research and evidence of engagement with course material.
- Must use correct academic style and academic conventions i.e. your assignment must contain the appropriate in-text references as well as a complete, alphabetised list of references at the end of the work.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. You must acknowledge all direct quotations and/or paraphrased ideas using the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing format. Failure to reference accurately will be penalised. Footnotes should not be used for referencing or the discussion of ideas.

Due performance requirement

The assignment must be completed and submitted To Pulane Tumahole in B43 on the 8th October 2012 by 14h00. Late submissions of assignments will NOT be accepted more than 3 days (including weekends) after the due date. The maximum mark awarded for these late submissions will be 50%. After these days, assignments not submitted will be awarded a zero mark.

You are also expected to attend all lectures and sign the register.

LECTURE PREPARATION

You are expected to read carefully all of the prescribed readings as provided in the course pack, as well as the policy documents which are available online. It is strongly recommended that you complete additional readings, particularly for your assignment, as they help you to understand the course, construct your own learning material and will prepare you well for examinations and practical use of the material.

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

*PRESCRIBED READING

- All readings provided in the reading pack

*RECOMMENDED READING

- AVAILABLE AT HAROLD HOLMES LIBRARY ON RESERVE (MOODLEY VERONICA BOX)

*USEFUL WEBSITES

www.endcorporalpunishment.org

www.disciplinehelp.com

www.parentingweb.com

www.indigenet.unisa.edu.au/bullying/guide.html

www.caper.com.au/peacepack.htm

www.bullybeware.com

www.endcorporalpunishment.org

*The following guidelines can be obtained free of charge from the Department of Education offices:

- Department of Education, (2000). *Ngizo Ku Shaya Wena!* A series of guidebooks for educators on discipline in school. Pretoria: Government Printer
- Department of Education. (2000). *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, The Learning Experience: A Practical Guide for Educators*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

LECTURE SCHEDULE

DATES	REQUIRED READINGS	LECTURE 1	LECTURE 2
20-24 AUGUST	Naong, M. (2007). The Impact of the Abolition of Corporal Punishment on Teacher Morale: 1994–2004. <i>South African Journal of Education</i> 27(2)283–300 Marais, P. & Meier, C. (2010). Disruptive Behaviour in the Foundation Phase of Schooling. <i>South African Journal of Education</i> (30)41–57.	Orientation to the Course Identifying and Interrogating exclusionary pressures in schools ins relation to behaviour management	Inclusion and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Differentiating between Discipline and Punishment
27-31 AUGUST	Evans, J., Harden, A. & Thomas, J. (2004). What are Effective Strategies to Support Pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) In Mainstream and Primary Schools? Findings from a Systematic Review of Research. <i>Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs</i>, 4(1), 2–16. Gable, A. R., Hester, P. H., Rock, M. L. Hughes, K.G. (2009). Back to Basics: Rules, Praise, Ignoring, and Reprimands Revisited. <i>Intervention in School and Clinic</i>. 44 (195-205) RESOURCE GUIDE PART A	Classroom Behaviour Support	Classroom Behaviour Support
3-21 SEPT	TEACHING EXPEREINCE	NO LECTURES	NO LECTURES
24-28 SEPT	RESEARCH BREAK	NO LECTURES	NO LECTURES

APPENDIX K: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE EDUC 4081 COURSE OUTLINE

1-5 OCT	Crothers, L.M. and Kolbert, J.B. (2008). Tackling a Problematic Behaviour Management Issue: Teachers' Intervention in Childhood Bullying Problems. <i>Intervention in School and Clinic</i>. 43 (132-139) Fabiano, G. and Pelham, W.E. (2003). Improving the Effectiveness of Behavioral Intervention for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders. <i>Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</i>. 11 (122-128).	Behaviour Support: Bullying and Attention Difficulties	Behaviour Support: Bullying and Attention Difficulties
8-12 OCT	Jordan, D. (nd) Functional Behavioral Assessments and Positive Behavioral Interventions. PACER Centre Inc. Minneapolis. RESOURCE GUIDE PART B	High Intensity Supports: Functional Behavioural Assessments	High Intensity Supports: Functional Behavioural Assessments
15-19 OCT	Osher, D., Bear, G. G. Sprague, J.R. and Doyle, W. (2010) How Can we Improve School Discipline? <i>Educational Researcher</i> (39-48)		

APPENDIX L: EXCERPTS OF RESOURCE BOOKLET

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASSROOMS

EXCERPTS FROM RESOURCE BOOKLET

Alberta Education (2008). *Learning and Teaching Resources*. Edmonton, Alberta Education.

APPENDIX L
EXCERPTS OF RESOURCE
BOOKLET

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Fax: 780-422-0576

The primary audience for this document is:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Behavioural consultants	✓
Other school staff	✓



A PDF version of this resource is available on the Alberta Education Web site at <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources.aspx>.

Copies of this resource can be purchased from the Learning Resources Centre. Order online at www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/ or telephone 780-427-2767.

Note: Several Web sites are listed in this resource. These sites are listed as a service only to identify potentially useful ideas for teaching and learning. All Web site addresses were accurate at the time of publication but are subject to change. The responsibility to evaluate these sites rests with the user.

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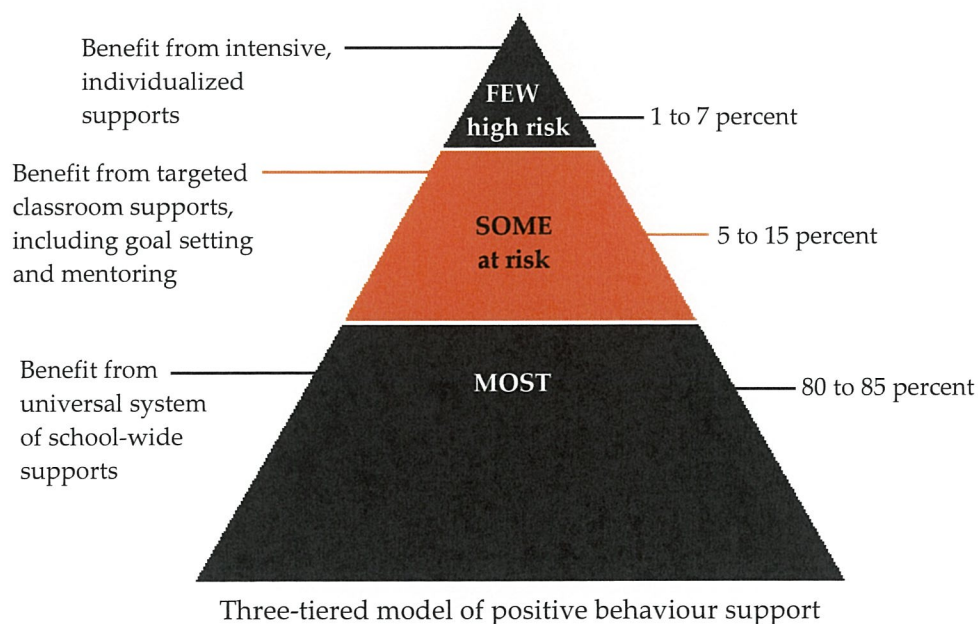
Introduction

Drawing on current research and best practices, this second part of the three-part resource, *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools*, provides information and strategies for systematically teaching, supporting and reinforcing positive behaviour in the classroom.

This proactive approach to classroom management is designed to provide teachers with effective strategies to improve behavioural outcomes in their classrooms. The goal of this approach is to facilitate academic achievement and healthy social development of students in a safe, supportive learning environment.

Behaviour issues in the classroom can interfere with learning, instruction and the overall climate of the classroom. Effective classroom management creates and maintains a predictable learning environment in which students and teachers enjoy positive relationships, students are ready to learn and teachers are able to teach.

The following pyramid model illustrates the behavioural issues in a typical student population. Studies show that 80 to 85 percent of students generally meet the school's behavioural expectations. Another 5 to 15 percent chronically do not meet expectations and are at risk of developing severe behaviour disabilities. One to 7 percent have behaviour disabilities severe enough that they cannot meet behavioural expectations without intensive, individualized interventions.



The three tiers of this model represent a continuum of increasingly intense interventions that correspond to the responsiveness of students.

- All students will benefit from a **universal system** of interventions, and for 80 to 85 percent these supports are sufficient to maintain positive behaviour.
- More **targeted interventions**, such as social skills instruction and behavioural management, will benefit the 5 to 15 percent of students who are at risk of developing serious behaviour problems.
- **Intensive, individualized supports** will benefit the 1 to 7 percent of students who do not respond to universal and/or targeted interventions.

This three-part resource, *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools* is organized around this model. The three sections deal with:

- a **universal** school-wide approach
- a **targeted** classroom management approach
- an **intensive**, individualized approach.

This second part of the resource focuses on the classroom approach. Teachers may also wish to refer to the other two parts of the resource to create a more comprehensive approach to supporting positive behaviour.

Understanding key elements

Research identifies ten key elements of effective classroom management that support positive behaviour. These elements are interrelated and overlapping, and may have differing degrees of importance, depending on the needs, strengths and priorities of a particular classroom.

- ① **Positive relationships** between teachers and individual students, among all students in the classroom, and between teachers and parents
- ② **Classroom organization**, including the physical environment and structures and routines that foster learning and encourage positive behaviour throughout the school day
- ③ **Differentiated instruction** that considers the individual learning needs of students and creates learning situations that match students' current abilities, learning preferences and specific needs, but also stretches their abilities and encourages them to try new ways of learning
- ④ **Classroom behavioural expectations** that are clearly articulated, aligned with school-wide expectations and consistent throughout the school day
- ⑤ **Social skills instruction** that demonstrates and directly teaches specific classroom behavioural expectations
- ⑥ **Positive reinforcement** for individual students and groups of students who demonstrate positive behaviours
- ⑦ **Fair and predictable consequences** for individual students who demonstrate negative behaviours that adversely affect them, others and/or the classroom environment
- ⑧ **Administrative and collegial support** that creates a team approach to positive behaviour supports throughout the school and in each classroom
- ⑨ **Gathering data to understand student behaviour**, and using observation and analysis to identify students' strengths and needs, identify the areas for improved classroom management and measure progress over time
- ⑩ **Targeted supports for students at-risk**, for the small percentage of students who are at risk of developing increasingly challenging behaviours

Positive relationships

“The quality of the teacher–student relationship is the single most important factor to consider when rethinking classroom management.”

– Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan,
Rethinking Classroom Management

Positive relationships are the foundation of any classroom-based approach to positive behaviour supports. They are the key to a safe and caring classroom climate that invites and supports positive behaviour and skilled problem solving. Relationships between teachers and students, among students, and between teachers and parents are all important contributors to the classroom environment.

Teacher–student relationships

The teacher–student relationship, which is extremely important, takes time and trust to build. Both parties must believe they are being treated with dignity and respect, and there must be a balance between the teacher’s role as classroom leader and his or her expression of interest in each student.

Students trust and respect teachers who establish clear behavioural expectations and meaningful goals for learning and behaviour, and who follow up consistently. Students know that their teacher cares about them and their individual needs when:

- learning goals are flexible enough to accommodate differences between and among students
- the teacher makes an effort to understand each student’s individual interests, strengths, needs, learning preferences and personality.

Sample strategies to win over students

- *Meet students at the door at the beginning of every day.*
Teachers can use this strategy to informally engage students individually, ask how they are doing, gauge their emotional state, have a brief conversation and/or just generally make them feel welcome.
- *Demonstrate a personal interest in students.*
Take time in class and in the hallways or on the playground to talk with students about their lives outside of school.

- *Use students' names positively.*
Students of any age generally respond positively when a teacher smiles at them and acknowledges them by name, especially in the hallway or on the playground. This simple action lets students know they matter and are valued as individuals within the school community.
- *Smile, use humour and show enthusiasm.*
Being able to see the lighter side and injecting humour into the day goes a long way toward bringing students on side and diffusing potentially negative interactions. Let students know when you are particularly enjoying the teaching role.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement¹

Stephen Covey (1989) describes noncontingent positive reinforcement as deposits in another person's emotional bank account. Many students, and particularly those with behaviour disabilities, have emotional bank accounts that are close to empty. To help these students feel more connected, teachers need to help them build their emotional bank accounts.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement is unconditional and independent. That is, students do not have to demonstrate specific behaviours in order to earn it.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement can be as simple as smiling at a student at the beginning of class, asking a student who enjoys attention to write key words on the board during a class discussion, or sharing a snack or favourite story as a wrap-up to the week. Ensure that noncontingent reinforcement is appropriate for the student's age, interests and personal preferences.

Noncontingent reinforcement is an essential component of the teacher–student relationship. It forms the foundation for trust and security, and provides bonding and connections that teachers and students need. It helps students learn that demonstrating respect and caring is a natural aspect of human interaction.

Noncontingent reinforcement:

- sets the stage for intrinsic motivation
- forms a foundation of trust
- fosters a sense of security
- creates a comfortable climate
- creates a positive association with the teacher

1. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, pp. 38, 41, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

- increases the probability of cooperation
- models positive actions for students to emulate.

Proximity

Teachers who move around the classroom and teach from various areas and near different students:

- send the message that they are actively involved and aware of all behaviour in the room
- build a sense of connection with students and communicate that the teacher is interested and available
- provide equal access to the teacher for all students
- have more opportunities to prevent negative behaviour and/or quickly deal with problems.

Effective communication²

A number of variables affect how students perceive and respond to a teacher's communication. To effectively communicate expectations and requests to students:

- use polite requests rather than questions; for example, "Please start your work"
- move close to students when giving directions—the optimal distance is approximately one metre
- look students in the eye (considering cultural differences and not insisting on eye contact if it makes the student uncomfortable)
- use a quiet voice
- give students at least 10 seconds to respond before repeating a request or adding a new request
- ask only twice, and then follow through with a correction; the more often a request is made, the less the likelihood of gaining cooperation
- make only one request at a time
- remain calm and unemotional
- make more start requests ("do") than stop requests ("don't"). If the majority of requests are not start requests, consider clarifying behavioural expectations and using stronger prompts
- verbally reinforce students when they demonstrate cooperation. This will increase cooperation in the future.

2. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *The Tough Kid Book: Practical Classroom Management Strategies*, by Ginger Rhode, William R. Jenson and H. Kenton Reavis © 1998, p. 61.

Verbal limits³

When students are not meeting classroom behavioural expectations or following agreed-upon procedures, describe the appropriate behaviour with a neutral body posture and tone of voice, and without using students' names. Verbal limit setting has four basic forms.

1. **Prompt with questioning intonation:** "Everyone has their math book open?" Say this declaratively, as a prompt, not a question. If you ask a question ("Will you open your books?"), you may receive an answer you don't want.
2. **Hint:** "Everything should be off your desks." This statement includes everyone in the room.
3. **"Excuse me":** For example, to respectfully break habits of interrupting, you could say, "Hold on for a minute, Mel. We can't hear you because someone else is speaking."
4. **I-message:** Saying "I need" or "I want" is stronger and more assertive than the other verbal limit-setting techniques. For example, "I need everyone to sit down."

Student-student relationships

Building and fostering relationships among students creates a feeling of community, which can make a difference in the behaviour and learning of each and every student in the class. Students need to learn to:

- recognize the strengths and skills that each individual brings to the classroom
- look for opportunities to build on those skills and support each other in areas of need
- respect and show appreciation for each other, which includes listening to one another and disagreeing in appropriate ways.

Sample strategies to build positive student-student relationships

- *Use flexible grouping.*
Create regular opportunities for students to learn with and from all of the students in the class, rather than just their best friends or the students they feel most comfortable with. This approach fosters a climate of acceptance and openness to the varied strengths, interests and challenges among students in the class. Ensure students have opportunities to work independently, with different partners, in small groups and in larger groups throughout the school day.

3. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, p. 174, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

- *Teach skills for cooperative learning.*
Most students with behaviour and social difficulties find cooperative group work challenging. They need specific instruction about roles, responsibilities and the expected outcomes of group tasks.
 - Teach specific roles such as recorder, timer, reporter.
 - Modify individual students' roles and responsibilities to accommodate their needs and strengths.
 - Directly teach specific formats for different tasks such as how to brainstorm a list of ideas or how to interview a partner.
 - Provide visual or written organizers for each task.
 - Use timers and clocks when there are specific time requirements.
 - Initially assign cooperative work that involves brief and preferred tasks, and then gradually move into longer times and more complex tasks.
- *Teach a vocabulary of appreciation.*
Explicitly discuss, demonstrate and model how to give positive feedback to other students and how to graciously accept compliments and positive comments.

School bonding

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- *Display samples of student work.*
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Teacher–parent relationships

When teachers and parents communicate regularly and work collaboratively, they are more likely to develop a degree of trust. Then, if a behavioural concern arises, they are more inclined to respect and support each other.

Parents are important members of the learning team. Look for ways to involve them in supporting positive classroom behaviour.

Sample strategies to build positive parent–teacher relationships

- *Involve parents and students in learning conferences.*
Many schools are replacing parent–teacher interviews with a conference format that more actively involves both students and parents. In the conference format:
 - the student can contribute to the discussion, and the parent can listen and ask questions and give feedback
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- *Share good news with parents.*
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Classroom behavioural expectations

4

“Clearly stated expectations convey to students what teachers want. In addition, they tend to guide student behaviour and strengthen teacher monitoring.”

– Jeff Sprague and Annemieke Golly, *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools*

Teaching classroom behavioural expectations begins on the first day of the school year. These expectations, framed in positive language, apply to all activities at all times.

Three to five classroom behavioural expectations are sufficient at any grade level. They should be posted in a conspicuous place in the classroom and reviewed regularly. Specific expectations may vary slightly from class to class but should align with school-wide expectations.

Clear classroom behavioural expectations:

- provide students with a sense of security
- contribute to a positive climate
- increase academic learning time
- reduce classroom stress
- enable students to monitor themselves
- enable teachers to facilitate and support positive behaviour
- support good communication with parents and other school staff, including substitute teachers.

Although *rules* and *expectations* are often viewed as interchangeable terms, *expectation* has a more positive connotation. The implication is that expectations are tools for helping as opposed to enforcing, and involve commitment rather than compliance. Expectations tell students, “We believe this is how you can be.”

Respond consistently to students who meet behavioural expectations and be flexible when students do not meet them, keeping in mind their individual needs and the context of the behaviour. Most students who do not meet expectations benefit from feedback and opportunities to correct their behaviour. For example, “We walk, not run, in this classroom. Return to your desk, please, and walk quietly to the coat rack.”

Some students who do not meet expectations have not yet learned the skills they need to do so. They need additional coaching and practice. For example, “Inside voices are quiet so they don’t interfere with other people’s learning. Please turn to your desk partner and practise what a ‘quiet voice’ sounds and feels like. I’ll do it first, you listen and then you try it.”

A few students may challenge the classroom expectations. These students require individualized approaches that may or may not include negative consequences.

Example of expectations for an elementary classroom

In this classroom:

1. We follow the teacher’s directions.
2. We stay in our work areas.
3. We keep hands and feet to ourselves.
4. We speak kindly to others.

Teach expectations

Take time during the first weeks of school to frequently review classroom expectations and ensure that students understand them. For example, create a triple T-chart, identify one of the expectations and brainstorm with students what meeting that expectation looks like, sounds like and feels like.

Listening while others are speaking

Looks like	Sounds like	Feels like
- eyes are on the speaker - mouths are closed - hands are still	only one voice talking	- the speaker feels like what he or she is saying is important - both the speaker and the audience are respected

Younger students can learn about behavioural expectations by drawing pictures of appropriate behaviour, presenting them to the class and then posting the pictures as friendly reminders.

Develop activity procedures⁴

Activity procedures are detailed written statements of what will occur each time a certain type of activity takes place in the classroom. For example, the social skills used in cooperative groups are quite different from those used to listen to a guest speaker.

Teaching specific activity procedures:

- maintains consistent positive behaviour
- provides students with a sense of security
- reminds the teacher and students about what to do
- provides a focus for setting limits
- prompts self-direction and less dependence on the teacher
- increases the time available for learning.

Consider these types of questions when developing activity procedures.

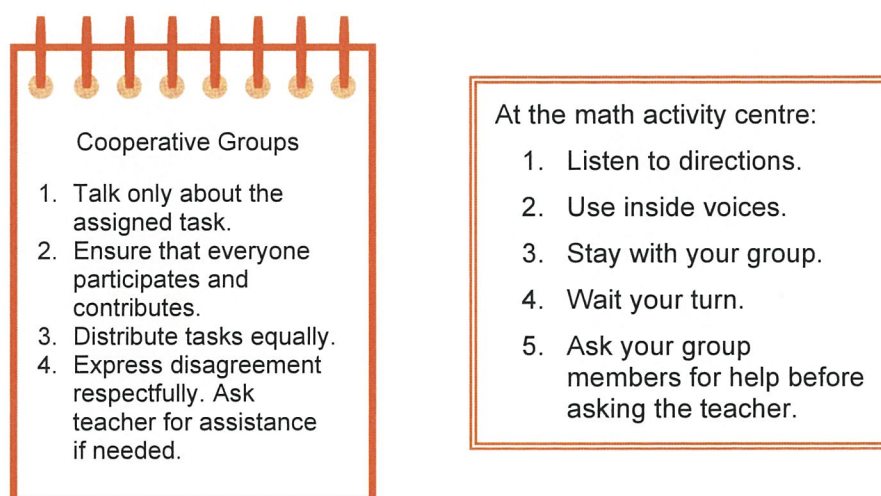
1. How will students work?
 - ☐ whole groups
 - ☐ small groups
 - ☐ partners
 - ☐ individually
2. How will they communicate?
 - ☐ show of hands
 - ☐ in writing
 - ☐ talk with partner
 - ☐ one at a time in group
3. How will they ask for help?
 - ☐ raise hand
 - ☐ use signal card
 - ☐ ask other students
4. Where will they work?
 - ☐ at their desk
 - ☐ at partner's desk
 - ☐ at table
 - ☐ moving around
5. How long will they have?

4. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, pp. 112, 113, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

6. What materials will they use? Where are materials stored? How will they be distributed and cleaned up?
7. What should they do when they are finished?
 - ☐ begin the next task
 - ☐ read silently
 - ☐ select an activity
 - ☐ visit quietly with partner

Create cueing systems

Use visual cues to reinforce activity procedures for different classroom contexts. The examples below show a flip chart⁵ that lists expectations for certain tasks in a senior high classroom and a list of expectations for working at a math activity centre in an elementary classroom.



Establish general cues that can be used across the subject areas. For example, a set of three coloured cards can be posted on the board and can be moved around to indicate expectations for a certain activity. A red card could signal “No talking,” a blue card could indicate it is time to “Talk to partner or group about activity” and a green card could stand for “Free talking” during such activities as art or indoor recess.

5. Adapted from *Discipline in the Secondary Classroom: A Positive Approach to Behavior Management* (2nd edition) (p. 122) by Randall S. Sprick; copyright © 2006, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Positive relationships

“The quality of the teacher–student relationship is the single most important factor to consider when rethinking classroom management.”

– Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan,
Rethinking Classroom Management

Positive relationships are the foundation of any classroom-based approach to positive behaviour supports. They are the key to a safe and caring classroom climate that invites and supports positive behaviour and skilled problem solving. Relationships between teachers and students, among students, and between teachers and parents are all important contributors to the classroom environment.

Teacher–student relationships

The teacher–student relationship, which is extremely important, takes time and trust to build. Both parties must believe they are being treated with dignity and respect, and there must be a balance between the teacher’s role as classroom leader and his or her expression of interest in each student.

Students trust and respect teachers who establish clear behavioural expectations and meaningful goals for learning and behaviour, and who follow up consistently. Students know that their teacher cares about them and their individual needs when:

- learning goals are flexible enough to accommodate differences between and among students
- the teacher makes an effort to understand each student’s individual interests, strengths, needs, learning preferences and personality.

Sample strategies to win over students

- *Meet students at the door at the beginning of every day.*
Teachers can use this strategy to informally engage students individually, ask how they are doing, gauge their emotional state, have a brief conversation and/or just generally make them feel welcome.
- *Demonstrate a personal interest in students.*
Take time in class and in the hallways or on the playground to talk with students about their lives outside of school.

- *Use students' names positively.*
Students of any age generally respond positively when a teacher smiles at them and acknowledges them by name, especially in the hallway or on the playground. This simple action lets students know they matter and are valued as individuals within the school community.
- *Smile, use humour and show enthusiasm.*
Being able to see the lighter side and injecting humour into the day goes a long way toward bringing students on side and diffusing potentially negative interactions. Let students know when you are particularly enjoying the teaching role.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement¹

Stephen Covey (1989) describes noncontingent positive reinforcement as deposits in another person's emotional bank account. Many students, and particularly those with behaviour disabilities, have emotional bank accounts that are close to empty. To help these students feel more connected, teachers need to help them build their emotional bank accounts.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement is unconditional and independent. That is, students do not have to demonstrate specific behaviours in order to earn it.

Noncontingent positive reinforcement can be as simple as smiling at a student at the beginning of class, asking a student who enjoys attention to write key words on the board during a class discussion, or sharing a snack or favourite story as a wrap-up to the week. Ensure that noncontingent reinforcement is appropriate for the student's age, interests and personal preferences.

Noncontingent reinforcement is an essential component of the teacher–student relationship. It forms the foundation for trust and security, and provides bonding and connections that teachers and students need. It helps students learn that demonstrating respect and caring is a natural aspect of human interaction.

Noncontingent reinforcement:

- sets the stage for intrinsic motivation
- forms a foundation of trust
- fosters a sense of security
- creates a comfortable climate
- creates a positive association with the teacher

1. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, pp. 38, 41, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

- increases the probability of cooperation
- models positive actions for students to emulate.

Proximity

Teachers who move around the classroom and teach from various areas and near different students:

- send the message that they are actively involved and aware of all behaviour in the room
- build a sense of connection with students and communicate that the teacher is interested and available
- provide equal access to the teacher for all students
- have more opportunities to prevent negative behaviour and/or quickly deal with problems.

Effective communication²

A number of variables affect how students perceive and respond to a teacher's communication. To effectively communicate expectations and requests to students:

- use polite requests rather than questions; for example, "Please start your work"
- move close to students when giving directions—the optimal distance is approximately one metre
- look students in the eye (considering cultural differences and not insisting on eye contact if it makes the student uncomfortable)
- use a quiet voice
- give students at least 10 seconds to respond before repeating a request or adding a new request
- ask only twice, and then follow through with a correction; the more often a request is made, the less the likelihood of gaining cooperation
- make only one request at a time
- remain calm and unemotional
- make more start requests ("do") than stop requests ("don't"). If the majority of requests are not start requests, consider clarifying behavioural expectations and using stronger prompts
- verbally reinforce students when they demonstrate cooperation. This will increase cooperation in the future.

2. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *The Tough Kid Book: Practical Classroom Management Strategies*, by Ginger Rhode, William R. Jenson and H. Kenton Reavis © 1998, p. 61.

Verbal limits³

When students are not meeting classroom behavioural expectations or following agreed-upon procedures, describe the appropriate behaviour with a neutral body posture and tone of voice, and without using students' names. Verbal limit setting has four basic forms.

1. **Prompt with questioning intonation:** "Everyone has their math book open?" Say this declaratively, as a prompt, not a question. If you ask a question ("Will you open your books?"), you may receive an answer you don't want.
2. **Hint:** "Everything should be off your desks." This statement includes everyone in the room.
3. **"Excuse me":** For example, to respectfully break habits of interrupting, you could say, "Hold on for a minute, Mel. We can't hear you because someone else is speaking."
4. **I-message:** Saying "I need" or "I want" is stronger and more assertive than the other verbal limit-setting techniques. For example, "I need everyone to sit down."

Student-student relationships

Building and fostering relationships among students creates a feeling of community, which can make a difference in the behaviour and learning of each and every student in the class. Students need to learn to:

- recognize the strengths and skills that each individual brings to the classroom
- look for opportunities to build on those skills and support each other in areas of need
- respect and show appreciation for each other, which includes listening to one another and disagreeing in appropriate ways.

Sample strategies to build positive student-student relationships

- *Use flexible grouping.*
Create regular opportunities for students to learn with and from all of the students in the class, rather than just their best friends or the students they feel most comfortable with. This approach fosters a climate of acceptance and openness to the varied strengths, interests and challenges among students in the class. Ensure students have opportunities to work independently, with different partners, in small groups and in larger groups throughout the school day.

3. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, p. 174, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

- *Teach skills for cooperative learning.*
Most students with behaviour and social difficulties find cooperative group work challenging. They need specific instruction about roles, responsibilities and the expected outcomes of group tasks.
 - Teach specific roles such as recorder, timer, reporter.
 - Modify individual students' roles and responsibilities to accommodate their needs and strengths.
 - Directly teach specific formats for different tasks such as how to brainstorm a list of ideas or how to interview a partner.
 - Provide visual or written organizers for each task.
 - Use timers and clocks when there are specific time requirements.
 - Initially assign cooperative work that involves brief and preferred tasks, and then gradually move into longer times and more complex tasks.
- *Teach a vocabulary of appreciation.*
Explicitly discuss, demonstrate and model how to give positive feedback to other students and how to graciously accept compliments and positive comments.

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Gathering data to understand student behaviour

“Always assume that a motivation for a particular behaviour is positive but expressed in a negative way.”

– Richard L. Curwin and Allen N. Mendler,
Discipline with Dignity

To effectively support students, school staff must understand the reasons why students behave as they do. This understanding helps them devise plans to support students as they develop new and more positive behaviours.

In many instances, students engage in negative behaviour to obtain something they want or to avoid something they don't want. Each behaviour serves a function, but the functions are different for different students. For example, one student may hit others in order to be left alone, another student hits to get possession of an object (such as a soccer ball) or to gain power, and a third student hits to get attention.

Collecting data about the functions of problem behaviours and the frequency of these behaviours provides classroom teachers with the information they need to:

- decide which behaviour supports and strategies will be most effective in their classroom
- measure the success of the supports they choose.

A common method of identifying the functions of behaviour is ABC Recording.

A for Antecedent

Record anything that came before the identified behaviour.

- **Who** was involved in the situation? For example, “The teacher asked Bill to do the work,” “Another student (Sally) stood in front of Bill in the line,” “The teacher stepped out of the room just before Bill stood up on his desk and yelled.”
- **What** happened just before the challenging behaviour? This can include:
 - *tasks*, such as having to stand in line, participate in a group activity, do a specific worksheet, write a test
 - *consequences and reactions to other behaviours*, such as receiving additional attention or a reprimand

- *social interactions*, such as playing an active game, talking with another person or being involved in a conflict with another student
 - *transitions*, such as changing from one task to another or dealing with changes in the regular routine
 - *home and community-related factors*, such as changes in the family dynamics (e.g., death, divorce, a new person living in the home, a sibling leaving home), conflict within the family or changes in extracurricular activities (e.g., no longer being able to use the computer or being cut from the community soccer team)
 - *health factors*, such as illness or effects of medication.
- **When** did the behaviour occur? Include the time and date.
 - **Where** did the behaviour occur and what was the environment like? For example, the student was at circle; in his or her seat; in the hall, bathroom, gym or outside. What was the noise level, activity, structure, proximity to others?

B for Behaviour

Record the specific behaviour that occurred in a way that provides accurate and useful information. Include the student's words and actions. Use specific descriptions. Instead of saying the student was "emotional," report specific actions such as crying or screaming. Instead of saying a student was "verbally or physically aggressive," report in detail what was said or done.

Report on the intensity and duration of the behaviour. For example, "Sally screamed very loudly (8 on a scale from 1 to 10) for 12 minutes," "Bill hit Sam so hard that he left a bruise."

C for Consequences

Describe the consequences (what happened to the student following the negative behaviour).

Consequences provided by school staff can include attention, praise and tangible rewards, or reprimands, saying no, requiring the student to repeat the task or sending the student for timeout. Record as well cases where there were no consequences; that is, school staff said or did nothing in response to the behaviour.

Consequences can also include what others said or did. For example, another student may have moved out of the way, given the student the object he or she was asking for or yelled at the student. It is useful to know about the emotional reactions of other students and adults in the area; for example, laughter, crying or showing fear.

Another type of consequence has to do with tasks and activities. For example, “The student avoided doing the activity requested of him or her, got to choose to do another activity or was required to do a specific task.”



See *Tool 3: ABC Chart* for a sample tool for recording data from behaviour observations.

After you have collected and analyzed all the data, choose a specific behaviour to focus on and make it into a goal. This goal identifies the target that will be accepted as evidence of success. Then create an action plan that states:

- three or more steps toward achieving the goal
- the resources required, including people, time and material items such as reinforcers
- checkpoints for monitoring progress.

Explain the plan to students and their parents and, if possible, engage students by asking them to help plan how the goal can be achieved.

As the individual goal-setting plan is being implemented, monitor frequently to determine the effectiveness of the intervention and identify opportunities to celebrate successes. For example, if a class goal is to increase the number of students arriving on time, remind students by drawing a clock with the start time on the board. Keep records of arrival times and celebrate when the goal is reached. As students internalize the behaviour, increase the time lines from a day to a week to a month, with corresponding celebrations.

If the goal is not reached, discuss the reasons why. For more information on individual goal-setting plans, see pages 61 to 67.



For more information on other strategies for gathering data, see *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools: An intensive individualized approach*, pages 73 to 78.