

**EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE  
FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT**

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of the policy on “*Discipline from Within*” in selected secondary schools in the Oshana region of Namibia. A qualitative comparative case study was used to compare how the “*Discipline from Within*” policy was implemented in two best disciplined secondary schools and two poorly disciplined secondary schools in Oshana region. The population comprised of all secondary schools in the Oshana region. A purposeful sampling strategy was employed to obtain the sample. The sample consisted of 4 secondary schools, and the following sub-samples participated in the study: 4 principals, 4 teachers, 1 inspector of education, and 16 learners. Semi-structured interviews and observations were used as data collection instruments. The study revealed that attempts have been made to implement the policy on discipline from within in the sampled secondary schools in Oshana region. However, data obtained in this study suggests that though the majority of participants have had access to the policy on discipline from within, most of the interviewees do not understand the content and perhaps the context of the policy.

The study found out that the policy is outdated and need to be revised. This finding has profound implications as it affects the level of awareness, attitudes, knowledge, practice and trust with which teachers and principals can confidently implement the policy. This study argues that access alone is not sufficient for implementers to adequately implement a policy. Thus it is important to take note that implementers require a sufficient level of understanding and knowledge to adequately implement any given policy. In relation to these fundamental findings and other observations made in this study the last sub-section of chapter 5 provides recommendations necessary for practice and future studies. Particularly, a study to be carried out to investigate to what extent the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture can help schools to effectively implement the policy on *Discipline from Within*.

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- All principals who authorised me to conduct my research in their respective schools.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely husband, Mr. Martin Antonio, and my gorgeous three children: Shatimwene, Ndailikana, and Kalapuse.

## **Declarations**

I, Mirjam K. Antonio, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part of thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher Education.

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Mirjam K. Antonio

Date

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## **List of acronyms**

<b>LRCs</b>	-	Learners Representative Councils
<b>MOE</b>	-	Ministry of Education
<b>MOEAC</b>	-	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
<b>MGE CW</b>	-	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
<b>NIED</b>	-	National Institute of Educational Development

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In order to resolve learners' discipline problems and ensure efficient functioning of schools, schools require reasonable disciplinary policies and procedures. These policies are designed by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. One of these policies is *Discipline from within, an alternative to corporal punishment*. This study evaluated the policy implementation on discipline from within in selected secondary schools in Oshana region of Namibia. This chapter describes the orientation of the study, the statement of the problem, and the research questions. The chapter further presents the significance of the study, study limitations and definitions of terms.

### **1.2 Orientation of the study**

Globally, many secondary schools experience ineffective discipline. Nakpodia (2010) refers to discipline as a systematic instruction given to a learner. Discipline can also be defined as a method of modelling character and of teaching self-control and acceptable behaviour (Departments of education & Child Services, 2007). It relies on constructive, corrective, rights-based educative practices. Learners' indiscipline seems to be ubiquitous in the 21st century in many secondary schools word-wide. This situation has been a major concern to schools, teachers and communities (Nakpodia, 2010). According to Temitayo, Nayaya and Jalingo (2012), disciplinary problems dominate both large and small schools in towns and villages. For instance, most learners continue to disobey school rules and regulations with impunity, with little or

no respect for their teachers and even the school administration. Research shows that some learners may even curse in front of their teachers (Temitayo, et al., 2012).

Prior to Namibian independence in 1990 and soon after independence, the maintenance of discipline in schools involved punitive, destructive and negative physical disciplinary measures such as beating and caning of learners (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1992). In some cases misbehaving learners were sent out of classrooms and had to do extra homework as punishment (Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997). Some critics have always regarded these forms of punishment as cruel and inhuman, which led to child abuse.

Thus after independence, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports legally banned the use of corporal punishment in Namibian schools. According to Hubbard & Coomer (2010), stakeholders in education received the ban with mixed feelings, while some stakeholders argued that the ban of corporal punishment in schools was a crusade against parents and teachers, others reasoned that it was a necessary step towards a non-violent society. Legal researchers indicated that the ban would neither erode parental authority nor question the need for discipline in schools (Gender Research Advocacy project, 2010). The Ministry of Education and Culture insisted that the ban of corporal punishment in Namibian schools was threefold. Firstly, it was meant to reduce physical abuse, moral decay, aggression, and antisocial behaviours among school learners countrywide. The second reason for the ban of corporal punishment in schools was to improve learners' mental health, teacher-learner relations and learners' academic achievements. Third, the Ministry of Education and Culture argued that

abolishing corporal punishment in schools could reduce gender and child based abuse (Gender Research Advocacy Project, 2010).

After the Supreme Court's ruling in 1991, the Ministry of Education and Culture published in 1993 *Discipline from Within* and *Discipline With Care*, two manuals that were to guide principals, teachers, learners, parents and communities on *alternatives to corporal punishment* (Hubbard & Coomer, 2010). Specifically whereas *Discipline from Within: Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, covered the causes and measures to manage learners' misbehaviours; *Discipline with Care* provided non-violent, assertive and non-confrontational disciplinary strategies in school environments (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993; Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997).

To support *Discipline from within*, the Ministry of Education and Culture subsequently designed the *Namibian Educational Code of Conducts for Schools* (Ministry of Education, 1993). Kamupingene (2002) explains that the aims of the *Namibian Educational Code of Conduct* were to: (a) *help principals to effectively manage discipline in their schools; and (b) set the context and provide the framework for the development and the implementation of national and school level discipline policies.*

The Ministry of Education ensured that principals in consultation with staff, learners, parents and school boards would fairly implement the code of conduct in a culturally sensitive and diverse school environment (Ministry of Education, 1993). The *Namibian Educational Code of Conducts for Schools* stipulates numerous rights and responsibilities for principals, teachers, learners, parents, school boards, and Learners Representative Councils (LRC) necessary to achieve the aims of the discipline policy.

**(a) Roles and responsibilities of school principals.**

Principals should assist teachers and parents to:

- (i) resolve learner-behaviour problems,
- (ii) keep proper records,
- (iii) engage various stakeholders to develop and implement preventive school discipline programmes, and
- (iv) use appropriate disciplinary action to maintain organisational standards necessary for optimum goal attainment.

**(b) Roles and responsibilities of teachers.**

Teachers should establish

- (i) a culture of appropriate behaviour,
- (ii) communicate with learners and parents if learners' behaviour is not appropriate, and
- (iii) promptly report to school authority continuing learner misbehaviour that may result in suspension or expulsion.

**(c) Roles and responsibilities of learners.**

Learners are responsible for:

- (i) behaving in a manner that does not interfere with the rights of others,
- (ii) abiding by expectations, rules and regulations established by the school,
- (iii) attending school daily and on time, and
- (iv) adhering to the principles of respect, responsibility, integrity, productivity and performance.

**(d) Roles and responsibilities of parents.**

Parents were urged to:

- (i) be involved in school affairs,
- (ii) create childrearing environments that promote children's physical, social and academic growth and development, and
- (iii) decide the type of punishment to give to their children.

**(e) Roles and responsibilities school boards.**

School Boards were encouraged to assist the school leadership to:

- (i) communicate the national code of conduct to all stakeholders and personnel, and
- (ii) monitor and evaluate the effective implementation of school expectations, rules and regulations.

**(f) Roles and responsibilities of Learners Representative Council (LRCs).**

LRCs were regarded as a bridge between the school administration and learners and were thus mandated to:

- (i) create a good understanding between fellow learners and the school administration,
- (ii) discipline, scare and report other misbehaving learners,
- (iii) provide peer-guidance and counselling to fellow learners,
- (iv) respect other learners so that they can earn the same from the learners they serve (Kiprop, 2012).

Kiprop (2012) indicates that to successfully achieve the objectives of the school requires that all members of the school strictly carry out their assigned roles and

responsibilities. Thus for years all stakeholders in education have strived to carry out their roles and responsibilities (Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997).

Despite the Ministry of Education and Culture's efforts to design the discipline policy for schools, numerous challenges continue to hinder its implementation. First, concerns have been raised that the discipline policy does not specify measures to apply to different kinds of disruptive behaviours in the school environment. The generic nature of the policy has thus created a dilemma among most secondary school teachers on how to handle some unconventional classroom misbehaviours (Republic of Namibia, 2001). Second, evidence shows that though most teachers in Namibia may have a copy of the discipline policy, the majority lack knowledge of the contents of the policy document. Third, numerous ministerial reports indicate that many learners in schools across the country do not respect teachers. Teachers claim that learners disrespect them mainly because of abolishment of physical punishment. Some learners support teachers' claims (Directorate of Education, 2012).

Fourth, most teachers have complained that although they are aware of alternative disciplinary measures, such measures are not only time consuming and but ineffective. In support of teachers' claims Maphosa and Shumba's (2010) analysis of the disciplinary policy, came to a conclusion that schools go through the processes of preparing and sitting for a hearing, laying specific charges, calling witnesses, providing proof of an alleged misbehaviour and launching an appeal depending on the outcome of the hearing. Similarly, it has also emerged that learners' behavioural codes of conduct that most secondary schools drew to regulate routine discipline problems are ineffective because they lack clarity, and not well understood by staff and parents,



vary across the country and are inconsistently applied (Republic of Namibia, 2001; Directorate of Education, 2012).

The policy may be available in the teachers' files but the teachers do not have an idea about how to implement the policy. Nonetheless, schools are mandated to draw up their own direct action plans to strengthen discipline in their schools. The action plan should be drawn from the general rules of conduct from the Ministry of Education.

The learners' behavioural code of conduct needs to set out the disciplinary action that will be taken against learners who have made malicious accusations against school staff and it need to acknowledge the school' legal duties and safeguarding learners with educational needs. In fact, codes may vary due to different circumstances in which the misconducts are conducted (Republic of Namibia, 2001).

In fact, teachers generally feel disempowered in their ability to institute discipline in schools. The form of punishment teachers mostly use as part of managing misdemeanours varied from isolating learners, suspension, manual work like cleaning toilets, push-ups, cleaning the yard detention and kneeling down. When the school can no longer manage learners' discipline, suspension and expulsion are recommended (Department of Education, 2012). It is very difficult for example to expel a learner from school. There should be first justifications for the expulsion to be substantiated and a final decision lies with the Ministry of Education, not with the school after many long and winding meetings and hearings. But it is always a concern as to whether suspension and expulsion of learners from school really serve the desired purpose of

curbing learners' indiscipline. The question remains: are these measures deterrent enough?

Moreover, teachers need to be aware before trying to discipline the learners that there are three variables in every discipline situation: the teacher, the problem learner and the rest of the learners. The only variable a teacher can control is he or herself. If the teacher is out of control, the whole situation is out of control.

Namibia Institute of Educational Development (NIED)(2012) shows that the cases of learners' indiscipline are on the increase in Namibian schools. According to Zimba, Auala & Scott (1997), in Namibia it has been recognised that misbehaviour displayed in a large number of schools inhibited the occurrence of optimal teaching and learning. Many secondary schools in Namibia are struggling with disciplinary problems, and they are blaming it as the cause of high failure rate in schools (Ministry of Basic Education & Culture, 1992). During the *National teachers Conference on Education* in 2010, it was noted that "the elephant in the kraal was actually lack of discipline. Our education system is victim to the lack of discipline. The situation is very disturbing. It is a social evil that is retarding the attainment of learning outcomes in our education system", the Director of Education in the Oshikoto region warned (Hubbard & Coomer, 2010). According to Kisting (2015), out of 54 learners in grade 12 at Cornelius Goreseb High School in Khorixas, last year only four learners passed. This makes Cornelius Goreseb as one of the poorest performing schools in the country.

It was indicated that this school is facing the biggest obstacle which is discipline among learners and is regarded as a serious challenge. Learners at this school are so

disruptive during classes that teachers constantly have their hands full trying to deal with the situation. They are not in control of their classes and some of them gave up because of the behaviour of the learners (Kisting, 2015). In fact, teachers at this school have indicated that it has become a culture since corporal punishment was abolished.

Uupindi (2012) indicated that secondary schools have been facing serious disciplinary problems since Namibia attained its independence. The common disciplinary problems in secondary schools include the defiance of school authority, class disruption, truancy, the use of profanity and the dress code variations. Some of the factors contributing to the indiscipline of learners in secondary schools include lack of parental involvement, peer pressure, subsistence abuse, poor classroom organisation, home environment of learners, as well as the inadequate punishment rules for misdemeanours.

Other examples of indiscipline in secondary schools are late coming to school, homework not done, teachers not honouring their lessons and they come late for classes or they come to classes unprepared and they leave the classes early. This indiscipline of learners sometimes leads to the drop out of learners from schools. According to the Ministry of Education (2012), one of the reasons for the drop out of learners from schools nationally is indiscipline. The statistics shows that the total of 565 learners country-wide has dropped out of school due to indiscipline. Many people have been asking questions as to why learners behave so badly nowadays compared to the past (Sinalumbu, 2013). A lack of learners discipline in schools can seriously obstruct the teaching and learning process and make the whole education unsuccessful. This shows that this has contributed to the high failure rate. It is also making it difficult

for the teachers to teach effectively as they spend most of their time dealing with disciplinary cases.

Uupindi (2012) has indicated that lack of discipline among learners is one of the causes of poor performance of learners in both grades 10 and 12 in our secondary schools. According to the report from NIED (2012), there are some schools in the Oshana region with the high rate of disciplinary problems versus poor academic performances compared to other regions. The escalation of learners' indiscipline cases in secondary schools suggests failure by schools and teachers to institute adequate alternative disciplinary measures, after corporal punishment was outlawed in Namibian schools. In many secondary schools nationwide, learners seem to be uncontrollable. Many secondary schools are failing to implement the policy effectively. Some secondary schools in the Oshana region are implementing it effectively. Such cases of learner indiscipline have impacted negatively on the quality of teaching and learning in some secondary schools.

However, there are small numbers of secondary schools in Namibia that are doing so well in implementing the policy on discipline from within, and they are performing exceptionally well (NIED, 2012). For example, we have secondary schools like St. Boniface in the Kavango West Region, Erundu in the Oshana Region, Kanisianum in the Omusati Region, Gabriel Taapopi in the Oshana Region, Juuso Shikongo High School, and Oshigambo High Schools in the Oshikoto Region (NIED, 2012). Yet, it is believed that the success of the best performing schools is due to their policy of hard work, commitment, dedication and discipline. If the learners are not disciplined, they cannot do well. Moreover, a school that deserves to be applauded is the St. Boniface

College. St. Boniface College is a private catholic boarding school about 30 km east of Rundu in the Kavango West region. The school has proven to be the best not only in the Kavango region but the whole Namibia with excellent academic record, and it has a good standing in terms of good discipline.

Thus, in most cases effective discipline is needed in schools for the good academic achievement. When there is effective discipline in a school, effective teaching and learning can take place. Learners' social behaviour can be moulded positively when teachers see themselves as role models for learners and proficiently create deliberate interactions in classrooms in such a way it nurtures satisfaction than frustration. The question remains: How are the few secondary schools getting it right to implement discipline from within while the majority of other schools are failing to effectively implementing the policy?

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

This study was prompted by the intensification of cases of learners' indiscipline in many secondary schools in Namibia. Since the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools, discipline problems are on the rise in many secondary schools today, despite the implementation of the policy on *Discipline from Within* (NIED, 2012). According to Uupindi (2012), secondary schools have been facing serious disciplinary problems since Namibia attained its independence. In some schools, classrooms are chaotic these days. There are some classes that one really dread to enter. Maphosa & Shumba (2010) indicated that apart from teachers fearing for their own safety, they may also see that teaching under the prevailing circumstance is an absolute waste of time. Many people have been asking questions as to why learners behave so badly nowadays compared to

the past (Sinalumbu, 2013). Many people also believe that the learners's misbehaviour in most cases contributed to the high failure rate. It is also making it difficult for the teachers to teach effectively as they spend most of their time dealing with disciplinary cases.

Uupindi (2012) has indicated that lack of discipline among learners is one of the causes of poor performance of learners in both grade 10 and 12 in our secondary schools. Alarming, more than twenty years after the pivotal court ruling that outlawed the use of corporal punishment and that the Ministry of Education & Culture publishes a manual on alternatives to corporal punishment, many schools have failed to popularise a better way of disciplining learners (Hubbard & Coomer, 2010).

Besides, our educational leaders at the Ministry of Education seem to be quiet on the issue and leave it to the schools to deal with it alone. For example, nothing on how to deal with disciplinary cases was discussed during the *National Conference on Education* (2011) and nothing was stated in the *Ministry of Education strategic plan 2012-2017* (Republic of Namibia, 2011).

Hence, it is believed that there is still a need for discussion as to: how children can effectively be disciplined and taught the moral values that make them good citizens of Namibia. What can parents do to improve the behaviour of their children so that teachers in schools can have learners who already have a high level of self-discipline?

Nevertheless, a few numbers of secondary schools in the Oshana Region are effectively implementing the policy of discipline from within and they are doing it so

well, while the majority of secondary schools are failing to effectively implement the policy, and as a result they are experiencing difficulty in handling discipline (NIED, 2012). Gabriel Taapopi Secondary School is one of the secondary schools in the Oshana Region that is well-disciplined and has been performing so well over the years. It is ranked at 17<sup>th</sup> position among all the top secondary schools countrywide (Ministry of Education, 2015) and was ranked number one in the Oshana region. The school has over the years managed to remain one of the top-performing secondary schools in the country, receiving numerous accolades and awards.

The question remains how are the few secondary schools getting it right to implement discipline from within while the majority of other schools are failing to effectively implementing the policy?

There was much work to be done since in some schools the situation has reached alarming proportions. Therefore, there was a need to find out how the policy on discipline from within is implemented in selected secondary schools in the Oshana Region.

## **1.4 Research questions**

The study aimed at answering the following research questions:

1. What measures have the schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
2. What challenges do the schools face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What strategies do the schools use to overcome the challenges experienced when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study may add more depth on existing body of knowledge on how to manage school discipline effectively and how secondary schools can effectively implement the policy on discipline from within. People that might benefit from this study can be educational policy makers and education agencies, principals, teachers and the community at large.

In fact, the results of this study may guide school principals and teachers to identify alternative disciplinary measures they can use to mitigate disciplinary problems in their schools. It might also serve the teachers' operational ways of how to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within in their respective schools in order to address disciplinary problems. This study may inform educational policy makers the effectiveness of the policy, possible problems and solutions. Educational policy makers and education agencies might also benefit from this study by finding out whether the policy on discipline is being effectively implemented or not and it may help them to plan appropriate monitoring or interventions by targeting schools problem-some patterns.

## **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The study had the following limitations:

The presence of the researcher at schools during observation may have affected learners' behaviour. Therefore, learners were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in the study and the researcher operated as a non-participant observer. One principal of one of the selected school refused to be interviewed due to heavy schedules. This has forced the researcher to give the interview guide to the principal as a questionnaire.



## **1.7 Summary**

This chapter focused on the study orientation that provides the background to the research problem at hand. It further stated the problem statement, research questions, the significance of the study, and the limitations of the study. The next chapter presents the review of the literatures.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on relevant literature, which was reviewed for the present study. The chapter consists of five subsections including this introduction. The next subsection describes the theory that informs the present study. The third subsection presents the role of discipline in schools. The rest of the literature review focuses on the research questions: What measures have the schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within? What challenges secondary schools face in implementing the policy on discipline from within? Then what strategies secondary have schools use to overcome the challenges when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework.**

This study was informed by Lee and Marlene Canter's Assertive Discipline Theory designed and popularised in the mid-970s (Porter 2007). It was born from an attempt to answer the practical problems that they encountered in their own teaching and later in classrooms of teachers that they have consulted (Porter 2007). The Assertive Discipline Theory is a systematic behaviour management formulated to put elementary and secondary school teachers in charge of their classes. Lee and Marlene Canter believe that there are four discipline competencies that all teachers need to master to handle problem behaviours successfully. These competencies include: identifying appropriate behaviours that form the basis for classroom rules, systematically setting limits for inappropriate behaviour, and working cooperatively with parents and principals (Charles, 2005). This theory is based on a combination of teachers and

learners' rights. Teachers have the right to establish a classroom structure and routine that provide the optimal learning environment in light of their own educational needs. Nevertheless, teachers have the right to determine and request appropriate behaviour from the learners which meet their needs and encourage the positive social and educational development of the children. Indeed, they have the right to ask for help from parents, principal etc. when they need assistance with a child.

Besides, learners have the right to have a teacher who is in a position to and help them limit their inappropriate, self-disruptive behaviour, have a teacher who is in the position to and provide support for appropriate behaviour, and choose how to behave and know the consequences that will follow (Charles, 2005). Besides, the researcher understand that learners may have rights, but their right should be limited and controlled. Thus where their right end is where teachers' right should begin. Assertive Discipline Theory upholds that assertive discipline teaches learners to accept the consequences of their actions.

The basic idea of assertive discipline is the reinforcement of appropriate behaviour (Bechuke & Debeila, 2012). Good behaviours should be reinforced in learners so that they can develop an idea of self-discipline. Assertive Discipline Theory assumes that to bring learners to be aware of their responsibility to make their own decisions about their learning and behaviour in the classroom may help them to make informed decisions about their conducts. It theorises that learners must have a choice and that if, for example, they help choose their curriculum and decide on the rules in the classroom, they might have ownership of their learning, has pride in their participation, might have higher self-esteem and may exhibit greater levels of self-confidence and

high levels of recognition (Bechuke & Debeila, 2012). But, teachers always need to be present to guide them and bring the best out of them.

According to Porter (2007), assertive discipline theory also assumes that the basic need of personal competence is an inner drive that is self-initiating and is unrelated to the need for extrinsic rewards of praise or grades. When dealing with discipline problems, teachers should have two goals: first to stop the unwanted or challenging behaviour; second and more importantly, to teach learners how to control their own behaviour.

In order for assertive discipline to work effectively, the entire school need to adopt the model for use in all its classrooms. Charles (2005) states that teachers can develop a specific behaviour plan based on the school model consisting of a few simple yet specific rules along with the rewards for following the rules and consequences of breaking them. Besides, teachers' offcourse can develop behaviour plans but they have to involve the learners for them to also own the plan, as they are the one to follow it. This plan should be displayed in the classroom and also be shared with parents.

This theory helped the researcher to understand the study in a way that it emphasises on discipline from within and inner drive.

### **2.3 Defining discipline**

This study adopted Kamupingene's (2002) definition of discipline who regards discipline as the practice of changing children' behaviour so that they accept and subject themselves to acceptable school norms. The definition above suggests that the act of disciplining requires continuous practice with the ultimate aim of changing a

child's unacceptable behaviour to desirable behaviours, which conforms to societal norms. Also the definition indicates that disciplined children should accept the type of discipline to practice in order for their misbehaviour to change to that which conforms to their societal norms.

Hubbard and Coomer (2010) believe that discipline and mainly self-discipline is one of the most important factors towards learners' success in school. Research indicates that teaching and learning can effectively take place only in a well-disciplined environment (Van Wyk & Pelsner, 2014).

## **2.4 The role of discipline in schools**

Discipline plays many roles in a human being's life and including school going children. In the school environment, discipline helps learners to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, providing them an opportunity to grow and excel in a conducive teaching and learning environment. Firm and consistent discipline teaches children the difference between right and wrong. But children do not need discipline beaten into them. In Namibia, we have cases of indiscipline in our schools that are on the increase on a day-to-day basis and this has informed us that the discipline policy has not been effectively implemented. This perhaps implies that the discipline policy might not have been effectively implemented perhaps due to inadequate resources, lack of commitment and training of school leaders and teachers. Learners' indiscipline is a major concern to educators, parents and the entire society.

According to Teminayo, Nayaya and Luckman (2013), disruptive behaviour is a big concern to schools and parents as well as to learners themselves, whose education may

adversely be affected. Government reports have shown that schools are doing too little to discipline their learners. Parents have also been blamed for the lack of discipline among most learners in schools (Republic of Namibia, 2011). Therefore disruptive behaviour cannot be ignored and schools must tailor a well understood sound behaviour and discipline policy, then home and the schools had to work together to achieve good discipline. The question that arises is that what methods schools are doing to try and remedy the situation, and how the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture helping the schools to effectively implement the discipline policy?

Principals and their entire staff as well as Learners Representative Councils have a responsibility in schools to mould and account for the behaviour of learners to meet the expectations of the society. In secondary schools, the situation is worse because the learners are adolescents and now become aware of their rights such as privacy, freedom of opinion and expression, and protection (Teminayo, Nayaya & Luckman, 2013). This is truly evident in our schools whereby learners are freely to report teachers to the principal, and even to the Inspector of Education even they practically know that they are at fault.

Indiscipline cases that have become a major concern in secondary schools include sneaking out of school, fighting, drug abuse, truancy, coming late to school, making noise during classes and disrespect of teachers. When these take place, then schools supposed to apply their school discipline policy to bring about discipline. Schools discipline policy is mainly used to regulate all aspects of behaviour. It is not only supposed to prohibit misbehaviour but rather to provide for a prohibition of specific negative occurrences, assist learners to become

followers and to encourage positive behaviour (Van Wyk & Pelser, 2014). One wonders if all the schools have appropriate discipline policy.

## **2.5 Why do disciplinary problems exist?**

There are many causes of disciplinary problems experienced in most schools in Namibia (Ministry of Education & Culture (1992). Studies suggest four categories of the causes of disciplinary problems in Namibia's school system: (a) teacher-related causes, (b) learner-associated causes, (c) school organisational induced causes, and (d) home related factors. For instance, reports show that teacher-related causes include unprepared teachers, and teachers' inability to properly manage their classrooms during classroom sessions. Some Ministry of Education reports have suggested that many teachers in schools in Namibia do not prepare for their lessons, while some teachers are absent from duty, leaving learners unsupervised. This implies that the actions of teachers might contribute to disciplinary problems experienced in most schools in Namibia (Ministry of Education & Culture, 1992).

Regarding learner-associated factors research studies report that the most common causes of disciplinary problems in schools in Namibia include learners' negative attitudes towards learning, lack of respect for school authorities as well as bad attitudes of learners towards school activities. Additionally, lack of academic success among some learners has also been found to cause disciplinary problems in the classroom situation. For example, evidence shows that learners with low academic success tend to disrupt the whole class so that other learners can also perform poorly as themselves. Additionally, attention seeking behaviour has also been reported to contribute to disciplinary problems in schools (Nakale, 2014).

On the other hand, overcrowded classrooms as a school organisational factor is frequently cited as the main cause of most disciplinary problems in the majority of schools in Namibia. In their study Zimba, Auala and Scott (1997) found that most learners believed that most misbehaviour in Namibian schools occur more frequently in overcrowded classrooms. This is true as the teacher-learner ratio stipulated in the Education Act in many Namibian schools is far from the reality.

According to Zimba, Auala and Scott (1997) home related factors that contribute to disciplinary problems in Namibian schools include poverty, poor home supervision, unhappy parents, alcohol and drug abuse and violence in the society. Thus the same study concluded that some learners misbehave either because they are raised to behave in ways contrary to school norms or learners mimic home and community violence in their classrooms. Recently Nakale (2014) revealed that hungry, overprotected and single-parent headed children are always stressed resulting in indisciplined learners. However, this is not always the case as you may find learners that are coming from single-headed families, not bringing food at school but they are well behaved, and they use the mentioned factors as motivation to study and improve the status quo.

The Gender Research Advocacy Project (2010) argued that lack of moral internalisation might contribute to learners' indiscipline in most Namibian schools. Moral internalisation occurs when learners imitate socially acceptable or unacceptable values and attitudes of society either through intrinsic or extrinsic influences external and use them. For example, how learners react to stealing largely depends on their internalised concepts of morality, reward and punishment. Against these data, Gender



Research Advocacy Project (2010) researchers thus concluded that corporal punishment does not teach children the reasons for good behaviour. The question that arises is ‘how are teachers handling disciplinary problems in their schools?’ The next section discusses strategies scanned from literature that teachers may use to mitigate disciplinary problems in schools.

## **2.6 What are secondary schools need to do to implement the policy on discipline?**

The main purpose of school is to provide learners with a strong educational foundation from which they can build successful independent lives (Kelly, 2015). However, classroom disruptions may hinder learners’ academic success and thus reduce learners’ chances of decent future lifestyle. Therefore, for schools to meet their educational mandate they should maintain an acceptable level of discipline, which is necessary for conducive teaching and learning process to take place. Research shows that teachers can use numerous strategies to effectively maintain discipline in their schools and classrooms (Educational Management and Development, 2010; Nakale, 2014; Kelly, 2015).

Foremost, within the context of the positive behavioural support approach schools need to adopt a paradigm shift, which entails a move away from the traditional deficit and control approach towards a more developmental and recuperative approach of disciplining learners (Educational Management & Development, 2010). Advocates of the developmental and recuperative approach suggest that the approach prepares learners to be responsible citizens, helps learners to build relationships with their fellow learners and teachers and provides learners with life-long opportunities for a positive social well-being. In the context of the developmental and recuperative

approach research proposes several measures to deal with disciplinary problems in schools and classrooms:

#### **2.6.1 Increase parental involvement**

Parents play a major role in their children's social and academic upbringing. However, questions could be raised whether parents in Namibia, especially in the Oshana region, have had adequate opportunities to take part in the social and academic affairs of their children. Evidence from the Republic of Namibia (2011) suggests that whatever the current situation is regarding the status of parental involvement in their children's school life, it is necessary that schools introduce a policy which requires teachers to contact parents continuously throughout the year. It is believed that increased regular parental involvement can help both parents and teachers to know, understand and solve learner related disciplinary problems immediately once identified.

#### **2.6.2 Develop and enforce a school-wide discipline plan**

School-wide discipline plans provide specific guidelines and actions teachers and administrators should undertake once learners misbehave (Charles & Center, 2005). Reports show that though most schools have developed discipline plans to guide their disciplinary actions, many teachers and administrators are not aware that such plans exist (Kelly, 2015; Charles & Centre, 2015). This anomaly suggests that many teachers and administrators in Namibia lack knowledge of their school's disciplinary action plans, which has resulted in the non-implementation of such plans. School improvement researchers have thus argued that school administrators should not only develop, but also make known and enforce the implementation of the school-wide

discipline plans. School administrators may use posters, hallway and foyer displays and staff meetings to disseminate school-wide discipline plans.

### **2.6.3 Encourage discipline in schools through democratic leadership**

Principals and their school management committees are the custodians of school rules and regulations (Kamupingene, 2002). It is thus expected that headmasters and school management committees should provide democratic leadership grounded in the theoretical principles of the developmental and recuperative approach adopted in this study. In the process of implementing democratic leadership principles, it is however, important that school authorities apply the rules and regulations of the school in a consistent manner. Research states that when and if school authorities democratically and consistently apply disciplinary plans, teachers may follow the practices of their leaders. But if school authorities are undemocratic and inconsistent in how they apply school rules and regulations, there is a likelihood that teachers may also lax on maintaining discipline, which may result in a possible increase in classroom learners' misbehaviours (Educational Management and Development, 2010).

### **2.6.4 Maintain high learners' academic and behaviour expectations**

Kelly (2015) indicates that schools that promote high social and scholastic success also actively encourage positive self-esteem, resulting in the likelihood of reducing emotional and behavioural disturbances among learners. Therefore, it is important that school leaders, guidance counsellors and teachers promote and maintain high expectations for both academic achievements and good behaviours of their learners. School practitioners may express school expectations through positive messages of

encouragement and support to help all children succeed (Charles & Senter, 2005; Ouma, Simatwa & Serem, 2013).

#### **2.6.5 Teach learners the consequences of their actions**

Learners spend most of their week days in school under the guidance of teachers. Thus research evidence suggests that the school environment may have a greater influence on learners' behaviours. Based on these assumptions data from school improvement studies promote the idea that teachers should not just wait for learners to misbehave and thereafter punish offending learners. Rather the school system should ensure that all learners are taught and informed about the consequences for their positive and negative behaviours (Charles & Centee, 2005). For instance, learners should be taught the reasons for protecting property and the likely consequences associated with their misbehaviours (Nakale, 2014).

Charles and Senter (2005) indicates that discipline plans should be explained in a sequence of six steps:

- (a) explain why rules are needed, (b) teach the specific rules, (c) check for understanding, (d) explain how you will reward learners who follow rules, (e) explain why there are corrective actions for breaking the rules, (f) teach the corrective actions and how they are applied, and (g) check again for understanding.*

Although the two researchers have agreed with the sequence of how to teach discipline plans in schools, one wonders whether Namibian schools especially in Oshana region follow these guidelines.

#### **2.6.6 Use restraint measures to control unwanted disciplinary problems**

As stated above in this section deficit and control approach measures are outdated and ineffective means to achieve the principles of discipline from within. Namibia is a democratic country, so should the school system be. For instance, teachers are advised to isolate learners who show aggressive behaviour, but should be immediately re-introduced to the mainstream classroom situation once such learners have calmed down. Nakale (2014) suggests that learners could temporarily be denied certain privileges or stopped from participating in the extra-mural activities. However, research argues that restraint measures can be effective if they are applied to punish the misbehaviour and not the learner. Evidence have also found that restraint strategies might be successful if they match the offence and are accompanied with adequate psycho-social support that leads towards good behaviour (Lowery, 2014; Nakale, 2014; Sprague, 2014; Kelly, 2015).

#### **2.6.7 Promote self-discipline among learners**

According to Bear (2013), the best measure to reduce indiscipline in schools is to develop self-discipline. Self-discipline is responsible behaviour that is motivated primarily by intrinsic factors, not solely by the anticipation of external rewards or fear of punishment. Strategies for developing self-discipline are commonly part of evidence-based programmes for character education, social and emotional learning done by providing multiple opportunities for learners to apply skills of moral problem-solving and responsible behaviour. Such opportunities would include class meetings, cooperative learning, sports and other extra-curricular activities and other classroom and school-wide problems are addressed (Bear, 2013).

### **2.6.8 Establish teacher-parent coalitions for behaviour management**

Nakale (2014) indicates that discipline cannot be left alone in the hands of teachers. Therefore it is the responsibility of parents to instil good morals and values at an early stage in the lives of their own children. This includes respect, tolerance, sharing and humility. Indeed, schools have increased parental involvement whereby they have instituted a policy in which teachers are required to contact parents periodically throughout the year. In addition, schools should also form teacher-parent coalitions aimed at developing new forms of dialogue for misbehaviour management. However, it is not clear whether such cases exist where schools form teacher-parent coalition and whether it could work out effectively. In their study Zimba, Auala and Scott (1997) suggested that schools may introduce school-community projects as a strategy to reduce children's ability to access weapons, alcohol and other dangerous weapons that could be used to commit violence in schools.

### **2.6.9 Involve Learners' Representative Council members in school discipline management**

Learners' Representative Councils (LRCs) play a key role in maintaining discipline in secondary schools. LRCs assist principals and teachers to ensure that learners adhere to the code of conduct, and promote orderly teaching and learning in schools (Ministry of Basic Education & Culture, 1992). Additionally, LRCs have power to discipline, care and report other misbehaving learners, and can provide peer guidance and counselling to fellow learners (Department of Education, 2012). It is clear that LRCs have wide-ranging responsibilities associated to the management of schools. Against this evidence, it is therefore important that LRCs play a more significant role in maintaining discipline in their respective schools in Namibia.

#### **2.6.10 Train parents in contemporary parenting skills**

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGE CW) (2015) in Namibia believes that parents with good parenting skills have the potential to instil desired life skills in their children. The MGE CW therefore has suggested that given the complex nature of parenting in the 21st century parents may need training in contemporary parental skills including strategies to nurture children's self-esteem, setting personal goals, strategies for self-control, spending valuable time with children, being a good role model to children, answering difficult questions from children, motivating children and listen skills for young children.

### **2.7 Summary**

This chapter reviewed relevant of literature. It focused on the theories on learners' discipline, definition of discipline, outline why do discipline problems exist, and measures that would help to effectively implement the discipline policy. The next chapter presents the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology used to find answers to the research questions. It includes the participants and data collection procedures. It emphasizes on the research design, population and sampling technique and sample size, instrument development, pilot study, research procedures as well as data analysis and research ethics.

Methodology is a plan or a structure that researchers use during investigation in order to facilitate the collection of the most valid and possible answers to research questions (Creswell, 2012).

#### **3.2 Research design**

This study adopted a qualitative approach using a qualitative comparative case study design to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the disciplinary policy within and across contexts of secondary schools in Oshana region in Namibia. The study was set to evaluate the similarities and differences in terms of how the disciplinary policy is being implemented across two cases. Thus in this study a comparative case study design was used mainly to compare the policy implementation on discipline from within in selected secondary schools in Oshana region.

#### **3.3 Population of the study**

According to Best and Kahn (2006, p.13), a population is a group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The



population of the present study consisted of sixteen secondary schools in the Oshana region.

### **3.4 Sampling technique and sample size**

In qualitative studies, researchers select a small portion from the total population to participate in the study. Patton (2003) describes a sample as a portion or a subset of the research population selected to participate in a study, and sampling as a process of selecting a group of participants for a study. The sample for this study was selected using a stratified purposeful sampling technique. Four criteria were used to select schools and participants that took part in the present study. First, only secondary schools in Oshana region participated in this study. Second, only four secondary schools were selected and participated in the present study. Third, of the four selected secondary schools, two were classified best disciplined schools; whereas the other were categorised as poorly disciplined secondary schools. These secondary schools were given pseudonym names. The four selected secondary schools were classified *school A, school B, school C, and school D*.

In total twenty-four participants took part in this study including four principals, four disciplinary committee members. Additionally, one Inspector of Education was selected to participate in the study. Moreover, four focus groups of learners consisting of four LRC members in each group participated in this study.

The four learners in focus group discussions were selected according to their portfolios as LRCs in school. Thus only head girls, head boys and LRC members responsible for

academic affairs and community development were selected to participate in focus group as they worked closely with other learners.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

Case studies use document reviews, interviews, and observations during the course of research (Robert, 2012). Two research instruments were used to collect data in this study, namely semi-structured interviews and observations.

#### **3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Based on the research design discussed above, semi-structured were used to collect data for this study. Semi-interviews were used because they had the potential to provide more complete and accurate information from research participants (Creswell, 2014). Further, semi-structured interviews were used because they had a high level of validity by allowing participants to provide detailed and in-depth information on research questions. Also semi-structured interviews allowed participants to speak for themselves with little direction from the interviewer (Creswell, 2014). An interview guide comprising of thirteen open-ended questions was used to collect data for the present study. The interview guide was divided into four categories based on research questions including participants' biographical data (see Appendices A, B, C)

#### **3.5.2 Focus group (interviews) discussions**

A focus group creates an accepting environment that puts participants at ease. In this study focus group discussions were used for three reasons. First, the researcher used focus groups because they were relatively easy to set up. Second, focus group discussions allowed learners to thoughtfully answer questions and add meanings in

their own words. Third, the dynamic nature of focus groups provided useful information that could not be obtained from individual-based data collection strategies. To improve the validity of information collected through focus groups learners were encouraged and given equal chances to take part in discussions. Four focus groups consisting four LRCs from each selected secondary school participated in this study (see Appendix D).

### **3.5.3 Observations**

Observations involved watching selected participants in this study to understand their interactions and behaviours in a natural environment. Thus the strategy was used because it allowed the researcher to observe participants in their natural setting (Creswell, 2014). In other words, the researcher used an observation checklist to collect data where and as events occurred, allowing the researcher to directly see what people were doing rather than what participants said (see Appendices E & F).

## **3.6 Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted at one secondary school in Khomas region. Data collected from the pilot study were not used in the present study. The pilot study helped the researcher to ensure that interviews guides were comprehensive and adequate to answer research questions.

Based on the results of the pilot study unclear questions were identified and modified. For example, question 2 under strategies schools use to overcome challenges when implementing discipline from within policy (Appendix A), which initially read: *“How do schools overcome the challenges they are facing when implementing the discipline*

*policy?” was revised to: “How does your school overcome the challenges you face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?”*

### **3.7 Data collection procedures**

Data collection commenced immediately after the Permanent Secretary, the Director of Education in Oshana region (Appendices F and G), and the four principals of selected secondary schools granted permission to conduct this study. Before data were collected the researcher explained the purpose of the study to all research participants.

#### **3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Focus groups were given the consent forms to take to their parents to sign to allow them to partake in the study. The consents from the principals, disciplinary committee members, and the inspector of education were asked verbally. Principals, disciplinary committee members, and the inspector of education were interviewed individually during their free time that they have agreed with the researcher while the focus groups of LRCs were interviewed in their groups. With the permission of the respondents, a voice recorder was used to record the interviews. Before each interview session commences, the researcher introduced herself to the participants, explaining the reasons for the interview and read the instructions on the interview guide that the questions that would be asked have no right or wrong answers; and that they were encouraged to feel free to answer the questions according to your experience, understanding and knowledge; and all the responses would be treated with absolute confidentiality and that their names would not be mentioned in the final report (Appendices A-D). The researcher then commenced with the interviews. Every time the researcher posed a question, the researcher paused to give time to the respondents

to think of the response. Their responses were recorded and the key ideas were noted down to serve as a backup in case the voice recorder failed to record. Each interview took about approximately 25 minutes. Due to the sensitivity of the recorder and to avoid disruptions, the interviews were conducted indoor.

### **3.7.2 Observations**

The researcher observed as a non-participant observer. This means that the researcher focused on her role as an observer and did not partake in what the participants were doing. Observations were conducted during school hours from 08h00 to 13h00. At each school, the researcher observed twice. The researcher walked around the school to observe how the principals, the disciplinary committee members and the LRCs were handling disciplinary cases and challenges they were facing when implementing the policy. The researcher observed and took written notes at the selected secondary schools.

## **3.8 Data analysis**

According to Best & Kahn (2006), data analysis is the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them. Creswell (2012) indicates that three things occur during data analysis: data are organised, data are reduced through summarisation and categorisation, and patterns and themes in the data are identified and linked.

In this study, the data were analysed by means of content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic examination of written or recorded communication in order to break

down, identify and analyse the presence or relations of words, concepts or common themes (Creswell, 2012).

Content analysis has advantages. The advantages include: it allows the researcher to reduce large amounts of unstructured content, describe the characteristics of the content, identify and present the important aspects of the content. It also allows closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationships.

This analysis involves comparing and categorising data to draw meanings from it. Categories should reflect the purpose of the research. The researcher analysed the data by grouping and categorising the data according to themes and patterns. The number of categories was guided by how often a category is mentioned by participants, and the uniqueness of the category. A theme is defined as an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations (Kawulich, 2010). As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole. Themes used were derived from the data collected, guided by the research questions. The researcher then interpreted the data to draw meanings and conclusions from it and to create evidence and build arguments.

### **3.9 Research ethics**

There are several ethical issues that were addressed during and after the research had been conducted. Sture (2010) states that the researcher has an obligation to respects the rights, needs, values and the desires of the informants. With regard to these ethical issues the following were adhered to in this study:

### **3.9.1 Ethical clearance**

Ethical clearance certificate from the University of Namibia was granted to the researcher (Appendix H). The researcher used the ethical clearance to apply for the permission to carry out the study from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture.

### **3.9.2 Permission**

Permission to carry out the study was obtained from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture (Appendix F). Permission to conduct the study in four selected secondary schools in the Oshana region was also obtained from the director of education of the Oshana region (Appendix G).

### **3.9.3 Informed consent**

This is a process in which a participant accords to participate in a research project after being informed of its procedures and benefits (Sture, 2010). The researcher introduced herself and informed the participants about the purpose of the study that it was for educational purposes only, when it should be conducted and the instruments used to collect data. Further, the typical roles of the participants were explained to them, and in line with this, the researcher obtained their informed consent by using a verbal direct consent. Direct consent is the agreement that is obtained directly from the person to be involved in the study (Sture, 2010). The letter of consent was also sent to parents of learners who participated in the study as focus groups to allow them to participate in the study as they were minors (Appendix I). Parents were requested to sign the letters and return them back to the researcher.

#### **3.9.4 Voluntary participation**

Participants were informed that their participation in this study was absolutely voluntary. No one was forced to participate. The researcher made it clear to the participants that they could withdraw any time and that they could decide not to answer any specific question.

#### **3.9.5 Harm and risks**

In this research study, the researcher guaranteed that no participants were put in a situation where they might be harmed physically or psychologically as a result of their participation. If the participants decided not to participate there was no any harm or negative consequences against them. During data collection the researcher first asked permission from the participants to voice record the interviews.

#### **3.9.6 Confidentiality and anonymity**

To ensure confidentiality, the researcher made it clear that the participants' names would not be used, nor would information be presented in a way that would reveals their identity in any way. Confidentiality and anonymity was also maintained in a way that the information obtained was kept confidential and the information collected was presented using pseudo names.

#### **3.9.7 Honesty and trust**

Adhering strictly to all the ethical guidelines that serve as standards about the honesty and trustworthiness of the data collected (Sture, 2010), the recordings were stored and kept safe by locked them away in the filing cabinet at home that can only be accessed by the researcher. The data could be kept for at least five years until there was no



reasonable possibility that the researcher could be required to defend the study conducted. After five years, the recordings could then be physically destroyed by burning them down completely.

### **3.9.8 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is the corresponding term used in qualitative research as a measure of the quality of research (Sture, 2010). It is the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. Moreover, the researcher maintained trustworthiness by use multiple methods of data collections such as observation and interviews to confirm emerging findings. Peer researchers were also conducted to assist with the interpretation of the data. To test reliability, categories of the frequently occurring data were identified and checked. Interviews were unbiased and care was taken not to ask leading questions.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter outlined the methodology adopted for this study including the research design, population, sampling technique and sample size of the study, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical issues considered in the present study. The next chapter presents the resultsof the study, discussions and interprets the presented data based on the research questions of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The main aim of this study was to evaluate the implementation of the discipline from within policy in four secondary schools in Oshana region in Namibia. To achieve the main of the study, three research questions were developed and administered, namely

1. What measures have schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
2. What challenges do the schools face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What strategies do the schools use to overcome the challenges experienced in implementing the policy on discipline from within?

To address the above questions the present study adopted qualitative research design. A total of twenty-four participants from four secondary schools were selected through a stratified purposeful sampling technique and provided answers to the three research questions. Semi-structured interviews, observations and focus groups discussions were used to collect data on each research questions. Once collected data were subjected to content analysis to determine common themes. Through the process of comparing and categorising data were broken down into themes according to research questions.

Thus this chapter presents the results and discusses the findings of the present study according to the three identified research questions. The next section presents the results of participants' biographical data.

## **4.2. Participants' biographical data**

### **4.2.1 School profile**

Four secondary schools with grades 8-12 participated in the present study. For confidentiality reasons the four secondary schools were named school A, B, C and D.

### **4.2.2 Biographical data of participants**

The data below illustrates the biographical data (age, gender, work experience, highest academic/professional qualification) of the all participants who took part in the present study. The biological data is illustrated in the table on the next page.

**Table 4.2.2.1: All participants' biographical data.**

Age group	Count
10 – 20	15
20 – 30	1
31 – 40	3
41 – 50	4
51 and above	1
Total	24
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	15
Female	9
Total	24
<b>Experience (in terms of number of years in schools/in service)</b>	
0 – 12 months	4
1 – 6 years	19
5 - 10 years	1
Total	24
<b>Highest academic/professional qualification</b>	
Grade 10	4
Grade 12	11
Post-graduate diploma	2
Degree honours	6
Master degrees	1
Total	24

Table 4.2.2.1 above shows that most of the participants were between 10-15 years old, followed those who were 41-50, and 31-40 years old. A single participant was 20-30 years, while one other participant was more than 51 years old. Moreover, the table above illustrates that while there were more males (15) in this study only about nine were female participants. Also it is evident from table 4.2.2.1 that while the majority of participants had 19 years of work experience, a minority of participants had 1-6 years of work experience. Only one had 5-10 years of work experience.

The table also illustrates that most the participants in this study had grade 12 followed by those who had Honours degrees and grade 10. Few participants had a Post-graduate diploma, and only participant had a Master's degree. The data in table 4.2.2.1 shows that the majority of participants in the present study were young school going males. Moreover, the data in the table seem to indicate that the majority of employed research participants had 1-6 years of work experience. Lastly, the table also shows that the majority of participants that took part in this study had grade 10 – 12 certificates and few had undergraduate to graduate degrees.

### **4.3 Principals' interviews**

Principals were included in this study since they were regarded primary stakeholders from whom the researcher would obtain first-hand information regarding the implementation of policy on discipline from within. Thus four principals representing the four selected secondary schools participated in semi-structured interviews for this study. In accordance with ethical issues discussed in 3.9.6, all principals in the study were allocated pseudo names, namely Principal A, Principal B, Principal C, and Principal D.

Five questions were used to obtain responses from principals (see Appendix A).

#### **Question 1: Do you have a policy regarding discipline in your school? If yes how effective is it?**

Principals were asked this question to determine whether they had copies of the policy on discipline from within their schools.

In response, all principals responded that they had copies of the policy on discipline from within in their schools. When asked whether the policy was effective in guiding their school personnel to mitigate disciplinary problems all principals indicated that *“the policy is effective as it is helping principals and teachers to discipline learners at schools.”* Principals also stated that the policy *“is helping schools to take different types of action as stipulated in the school’s code of conduct”* (principal B).

It is evident from principals’ responses that most secondary schools in Namibia might have copies of the policy on discipline from within in their schools. The findings also show that principals that participated in this study were satisfied with the positive effects the policy has had on improving discipline in their respective schools. However, what is not clear is whether teachers are aware and have copies of the policy from within and their level of knowledge of the principles of the policy.

This finding, however, contradicts some government reports that have shown that even with the presence of the policy on discipline in schools, teachers are finding it difficult to discipline their learners (Republic of Namibia, 2011) (see 2.4).

### **Question 2: How do the schools implement this policy?**

Principals were asked this question to understand how their schools are implementing the policy on discipline from within. Principals A, D and E replied that schools are implementing the policy through disciplinary committees that were established to promote good behaviours in the school environment. For instance, Principal A commented as follows:

*“Well, my school is implementing the disciplinary policy through disciplinary committee which was established at the beginning to address the misbehaviours of learners” (Principal A).*

In response to the same question Principal B expressed a slightly different approach and stated as follows:

*“The school implements the discipline policy by indicating the rules to the learners and encourage learners to be responsible, promote positive behaviours, and apply positive reinforcement” (Participant B).*

This finding appear to suggest that schools either via their disciplinary committees or by the direct involvement of principals are working hard to resolve students’ misbehaviour within the framework of the existing policy on discipline from within. The finding therefore confirms the literature reviewed in this study regarding the role of principals in the implementation process of the policy of discipline from within in their school environments.

Teminayo, Nayaya and Luckman (2013), for instance, indicated that principals and their entire staff have a responsibility in schools to mould and account for the behaviours of learners to meet the expectations of society (see 2.4).

### **Question 3: What measures have schools put in place to effectively address disciplinary issues at schools?**

Principals were asked this question to find out what strategies they had put in place to mitigate the numerous disciplinary problems they were experiencing in their schools. In response to this question, the researcher recorded various divergent responses. First, the majority of the principals stated that *“Schools have set up disciplinary committees to tackle disciplinary issues at schools.”* Second, all principals in this study indicated

that they “*always involve parents who come to school for hearings, or who just come for discussions on issues related to their children’s behaviours.*”

Third and specifically, Principal D responded that:

*“The school adopted two measures. For instance, all teachers counsel learners with minor problems. Teachers-counsellors, on the other hand, counsel learners with serious and major disciplinary problems.”*

Fourth, about half of principals interviewed in this study indicated that they use manual work to punish their learners as illustrated in the following comment:

*“We punish learners directly by giving them light work such as weeding, cleaning the school ground, or picking up papers”* (Principals C).

Fifth, Principal C provided two measures used to mitigate learners’ misbehaviours and explained as follows:

*“Teachers provide and discuss school rules with all learners and parents. Also our school usually hold separate meetings for boys and girls to address specific disciplinary issues”* (Principal C).

These findings indicate that principals interviewed in this study are using various strategies to respond to disciplinary problems experienced in their schools. The findings are supported by Charles and Senter (2005), who in their study found that principals may use a variety of measures to mitigate disciplinary problems in they encounter in their schools. For example, Charles and Senter (2005) supports the idea that learners need to be taught about the discipline policy so that they understand specific rules, and reasons such rules are required including available possible corrective actions for identified learner misbehaviours.



The findings of this study also find support in Sprague's (2015) work who argued that schools need disciplinary committees, which should mitigate the problems of learners' misbehaviours.

**Question 4: How effective are these measures?**

Principals in this study were asked to explain whether the strategies discussed under question 3 above were successful in producing the intended results of reducing disciplinary problems in their respective schools.

The researcher obtained three responses to this question presented as follows:

*"Yes, I can say that some measures are effective"* (Participant A).

*"Well, some measures have been very effective although not hundred percent"* (Participant C).

*"You know it has not been easy, but I can tell you that some of the disciplinary challenges have drastically been reduced"* (Participant D).

It is evident from the responses above that all principals interviewed in this study agreed that their measures used to mitigate disciplinary problems have not only been implemented successfully, but also the strategies have reduced the frequency of disciplinary problems in their schools.

One explanation for this purported success expressed by principals, might be that those staff members responsible for implementing the discipline policy clearly understand the context in which the policy has to be implemented. Another explanation could be that perhaps schools that took part in this study have adopted a multi-pronged approach

to discipline mitigation, and thus decided that various community stakeholders should cooperate with school authorities to achieve good discipline (Republic of Namibia, 2011).

**Question 5: What assistance do schools receive from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in terms of implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The researcher asked to find out the type of assistance, if any, schools received from policymakers aimed at helping teachers to successfully implement the discipline policy.

The researcher recorded multiple responses from the principles who took part in this study. For instance, the majority of principals responded that their schools did not receive assistance from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, as the discipline of learners and policy implementation is regarded as the business of schools. One of the principals remarked as follows:

*“Believe it or not, my school has not received any form of support from the highest education authority in this country. We are trying on our own because everybody regards the problem of discipline as the business of the school”*  
(Participant C).

Principals further revealed that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has not given us guidelines on how the policy on discipline from within should be implemented, may be because the policy states the roles of all stakeholders involved in dealing with learners’ discipline.

Responding to the same question, Principal A, for example, responded that:

*“We refer learners with major behavioural problems to the regional school counsellor for counselling. Regional school counsellors in return depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour would then refer the learners to the Ministry of Education for expulsion”.*

Principal A further explained it with a sense of disappointment that “the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has never uphold the cases of most learners who were recommended for expulsion. The principal retorted:

*“Most cases of learners who were recommended for expulsion schools were forced back on us by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture apparently because the head office did not approve of the proposed expulsion”* (Principal A).

The findings of this study show that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture particularly at macro level has abandoned schools to implement the discipline from within policy by themselves. While this approach avoids the micro managing and meddling of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in school affairs, one cannot help but wonder whether school authorities alone have the capacity to deal with serious learners’ misbehaviours. The findings also show that principals are frustrated by the lack of the support from education authorities, and especially with regard to how senior education officials treat the issue of learners with severe misconducts.

Principals seem to imply that expulsion is one strategy that could be used to stop negative behaviours among learners. But as Van Wyk and Pelser (2014) indicated the refusal by senior education officials to endorse principals’ recommendations to expel serious offenders does not encourage positive behaviours among learners (see 2.3).

**Question 2: What challenges do the schools face when implementing the policy?**

Three sub-questions were designed to answer research question 2 (see **Appendix A**).

Overall the researcher asked this question to solicit responses from research participants regarding challenges they faced as they implemented the discipline policy.

**Question 2.1: What challenges do teachers and school management face as they implement disciplinary measures in the school environment?**

Most principals interviewed in this study indicated that lack of parental support, ineffectiveness of the school, too many disciplinary cases and lack of teacher commitment were the main challenges schools experience in their attempt to curb disciplinary problems in the school environment. Also principals complained that Inspectors of Education undermined their authority. Principals narrated their challenges as follows:

*“One of the challenges is that parents are not supportive, as in most cases they were not coming to attend disciplinary hearings, or sometimes when they come they were covering the children”* (Principal A).

*“The school board is not effective as members for most of the time do not turn up for meetings, discussions or case hearings”* (Principal B).

*“There are too many disciplinary cases to attend to and it is a challenge for teachers to deal with all those cases on time”* (Principal A).

*“Teachers are not committed to maintain good discipline at school. “One teacher may try to maintain order but the next teacher will not care about the learners behaviours”* (Principal D).

*“One of the main challenges here is that Inspectors of Education undermine school authorities. For instance, when the principal suspends a learner, the learner’s parents run to the inspector to report and complain about the suspension. Without proper investigation the Inspector of Education will order the school to reverse the suspension” (Participant C).*

The findings of this study show that principals interviewed in this study face numerous challenges resulting from the behaviours and attitudes of learners, teachers, parents, and education authorities at both regional and national levels. The finding contradicts Kiprop’s (2012) advice that an effective management of discipline in schools requires cooperation between the principal, staff, parents and community at large. The narrative of principals on the use of suspension as a disciplinary and the resulting reaction of education authorities appear to suggest that a serious misunderstanding exists between school and education authorities. The reaction of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and Inspectors of Education finds support in Sprague’s (2014) work, who stated that suspension should not be used as a form of punishment. Sprague (2014) goes on to argue that suspending a learner does not solve a problem as the learner will continue being unruly when the suspension lapses. It is unclear whether the principals interviewed in this study understand the negative implications of suspension of learners and entire school system.

**Question 2.2: What do schools consider to be the biggest challenge when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The researcher asked principals to describe the biggest challenge they face when implementing the policy on discipline from within.

Principals A, B, and D angrily responded that learners were not willing to change. They indicated that some learners would go wild when teachers try to advise them to become better learners. Principal A, for instance recounted as follows:

*“One day one of my teachers decided to advise one of these big boys for an unacceptable behaviour. The boys told the teacher ‘leave me alone, after all you are not my father’”* (Principal A).

Responding to the same question Principal D disappointingly indicated that *“it is difficult today in our schools to bring changes. Learners have their own way of thinking and doing things.”*

The findings of this study corroborate with available literature reviewed for the present study. For instance, Teminayo, Nayaya and Luckman (2013) alluded to the fact indiscipline cases have become a major concern in most secondary schools perhaps because of drug use and abuse among students or may because learners are aware of their rights related to freedom of opinion and expression (see 2.4).

Also there is sufficient evidence from literature in this study that common causes of disciplinary problems in schools in Namibia are learner-associated and include learners’ negative attitudes towards learning, lack of respect for school authorities as well as bad attitudes of learners towards school authorities. Additionally, lack of academic success among some learners has also been found to cause disciplinary problems in the classroom situation. (Nakale, 2014), for example, indicated that attention seeking behaviour also contributes to disciplinary problems in schools.

Principals in this study indicated that their biggest challenge is that learners resist change. However, it is important to mention that perhaps learners do not resist change,

but may be learners are opposed to how principals have introduced change. One may argue that the ethos of discipline from within include a bottom-up approach to decision-making and inclusiveness. It is therefore important that school authorities revisit their approach to how they introduce change in their schools.

**Question 2.3: What challenges have you experienced from parents when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

Parents are primary stakeholders in any school in Namibia. Therefore the researcher asked this question to understand the nature of challenges selected schools encounter with parents as primary stakeholders.

Principals B, C, and D responded that most parents ignore their responsibilities, exonerate themselves and their children from discipline problems experienced in schools.

This result supports Zimba, Auala and Scott's (1997) assertion that home related factors such as poor home supervision and unhappy parents may contribute to disciplinary problems in Namibian schools. Moreover and in support of the findings of the present, Zimba, Auala and Scott's (1997) study concluded that some learners misbehave either because they are raised to behave in ways contrary to school norms or learners mimic home and community violence in their classrooms. Further, the Gender Research Advocacy Project (2010) argued that the lack of moral internalisation might contribute to learners' indiscipline in most Namibian schools. For example, according to the Gender Research Advocacy Project (2010) learners may imitate socially acceptable or unacceptable values and attitudes of society, which might determine how they react to their different situations in their surrounding

environments. Recently Nakale (2014) further revealed that overprotected and single-parent headed children are always stressed resulting in indisciplined learners.

**Question 3: What strategies do you use to overcome your identified challenges?**  
(see Appendix A).

Four questions were designed to answer research question 3.

**Question 3.1: How do schools overcome the challenges they face when implementing the discipline from within policy?**

This question was asked to understand how teachers dealt with the various disciplinary problems they faced in their school environments. The table on the next page provides principals' responses to this question.



**Table 3.1.1: Strategies schools use to overcome the challenges.**

Strategy	Response
1. Parents' meetings	<i>"The school has tried to overcome the challenges by conducting meetings with parents, to discuss the importance of discipline in school" (Principal A).</i>  <i>"We have tried to get parents' contact numbers and call them directly" (Principal B).</i>
2. Stakeholder enforcement of the policy	<i>"The school is overcoming the challenges where the principal, management committee, and the disciplinary committee use power to implement the policy.</i>
3. Use of selected punitive measures	<i>"We try to punish learners by using different methods such as detention, cleaning the toilets, cleaning the school ground and many others".</i>
4. Use of motivational/guest speakers	<i>"We invite motivational speakers to come and talk to the learners and make them understand the benefits of being disciplined".</i>

It is evident from **Table 3.1.1** that schools depend on four main strategies to deal with disciplinary problems.

**Question 3.2: What strategies do the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture use to help schools to effectively address the challenges they face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The majority of principals in this study responded that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture helps schools only when advising teachers on the referral procedures of learners with serious behavioural problems. One the principals commented:

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture only deals with referrals to regional school counsellors for counselling”* (Principals A).

Another principal stated that:

*“Nothing much is coming from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture apart from speeches on the national radios and television, which does not really directly help* (Principal B).

Principal B further suggested rather that:

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture need to formulate a policy on how schools can deal with learners that are misbehaving when finishing school, particularly those that are completing grade 10 and 12”* (Principal B).

**Question 3.3: How do parents assist schools to overcome the challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

In response to this question all principals interviewed in this study responded that parents assist schools to deal discipline problems by *attending disciplinary hearings when invited, advice their children to be better persons and encourage their children to obey school rules.*

**Question 3.4: Which strategies have principals found to work well in schools when addressing the challenges schools face when implementing the discipline policy?**

**Table 3.4.1** presents strategies that principals found effective during the implementation of the policy on discipline from within.

**Table 3.4.1: Strategies that worked well when addressing the challenges schools faced.**

Strategies	Response
1 Teachers-parent consultation meeting	<i>“By calling parents to come to school and discuss the issues with them together with the learners and try to find solution together”</i> (Principal A).
2. Discipline with care	<i>“We try to discipline with care by punishing learners for the wrong doing but not for who they are”</i> (Principal B).
3.Guidanceand counselling	<i>“We guide learners to behave well and make them understand how important discipline is, and refer them for counselling”</i> (Principal C).
4. Team work	<i>“We encourage teachers to work together and help each other to maintain good discipline and try to deal with disciplinary problems together”</i> (Principal D).

The table above highlights four strategies that principals found effective while implementing the policy on discipline from within.

The findings of the study support the idea that there has been a paradigm shift in terms of how schools deal with discipline and punishment. For instance, the findings seem to indicate that schools have adopted the positive behavioural support approach or developmental and recuperative approach to disciplining learners (Educational

Management & Development, 2010). Advocates of the developmental and recuperative approach suggest that the approach prepares learners to be responsible citizens, helps learners to build relationships with their fellow learners and teachers and provides learners with life-long opportunities for a positive social well-being.

**Question 5: Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could effectively be implemented?**

The researcher asked this question to solicit further information that participants might not have mentioned during the interview process.

Principals provided several answers to this last question. For instance Principal B suggested that *“all stakeholders should feel protected by law, as sometimes the regional offices only focus on the rights of the children but not the rights of the institutions”*.

Other principals suggested that the policy itself should be reviewed as it is not too serious on authority and how to exercise of discipline on learners. For instance, Principal C commented thus:

*“The current policy on discipline should be reviewed so that new ideas are introduced. This policy is too lenient on learners that is why they continue to misbehave no matter how much we try to advise them to refrain from their misbehaviours”* (Principal C).

Two of the four principals, namely Principals A and D further responded that in most cases teachers do not have time to discipline learners. Principal D explained the situation as follows:

*“Most teachers do not have time to discipline learners because of their workload, as a result the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture need to come*

*up with another plan on how to handle disciplinary problems and thus reduce teachers' workload. Also teachers need to undergo so that they know how to handle disciplinary problems better” (Principal D).*

However, all participants interviewed in this study indicated that principals need to be empowered with knowledge and skills to be able to take right decisions on how to handle discipline problems in their schools.

#### **4.4 Disciplinary committee members' interviews**

Four disciplinary committee members from four selected secondary schools in the Oshana region were interviewed. Based on the ethical issues considered in this study, the four participants are identified by pseudo names. For instance, the first disciplinary committee member will be identified as DCM-A, while the second will be referred to as DCM-B. The third disciplinary committee member will be addressed as DCM-C, whereas the fourth and the last disciplinary committee member will be identified as DCM-D.

#### **Question 1: What measures have schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?**

Four sub-questions were designed to answer this research question (see Appendix B).

**Question 1.1: Is there a policy regarding discipline at your school? If yes, how effective is it?**

All participants responded that there are policies on discipline at their schools. On whether the policy was effective, DCM-A indicated that *“the policy was not effective, and thus should be amended.”*

However, most participants stated that the policy was effective as illustrated in the following comment:

*“The policy has been very effective as it has helped schools to reduce the indiscipline cases, although not completely”* (DCM-B).

This finding shows that although the level of policy awareness is high among the majority of disciplinary committee members interviewed in this study, it is the effectiveness of the policy that remains the main challenge.

**Question 1.2: How do schools implement the policy?**

The majority of participants indicated that schools have been told that teachers are responsible for implementing the policy on discipline from within. DCM-C, for example, indicated that *“teachers have been told to deal with learners’ misbehaviours and only involve the disciplinary committee in serious and frequent cases”*. This finding suggests that disciplinary committee members recognise that teachers play a pivotal role in the lives of learners and thus should fully be accorded the responsibility of moulding the learners. The finding supports the Educational Management and Development’s (2010) view that school authorities should be encouraged and helped to consistently apply the rules and regulations of the school (see 2.5.3).

**Question 1.3: What measures have schools put in place to effectively address disciplinary issues at schools?**

Participants were asked this question to find out what strategies disciplinary committee members have put in place to effectively address the disciplinary challenges in schools. Disciplinary committee members indicated that they use several measures to discipline learners including profiling, referrals, and physical punishment, and summon parents of offending learners.

DCM-B, for instance, responded that *“the school has a learner-profile sheet on which each learner’s transgressions are recorded.”*

DCM-C revealed that *“we use a referral system through which we refer serious cases to the principal and the disciplinary committee who decide the next steps.”* Participant

DCM-D, on the other hand, emphasised the fact that *“another measure we use is physical punishments. We punish learners for wrong doing. But also we use other forms of punishment such cleaning the classrooms, picking up papers and detentions.”*

DCM-C, moreover alluded to the fact that *“We normally summon parents to school to attend to their children’s misbehaviour. Through this measure we have been able find solutions together to many disciplinary problems.”*

**Question 1.4: How effective are these measures?**

Disciplinary committee members provided various answers to this sub-question.

Most disciplinary committee members in this study replied that the measures outlined in question 1.3 have to somewhat been effective as indicated in the following comments:

*“The measures taken by schools are effective as some learners’ misbehaviours are curbed and at some point learners’ indiscipline has been reduced by 50 %” (DCM-B).*

On the other hand, DCM-A responded that *“the measures are helping to improve the situation although not 100% effective; measures have moderately improved discipline in schools”*.

**Question 1.5: What assistance do schools get from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to help them implement the policy on discipline from within?**

Disciplinary committee members provided various answers to this question as illustrated in the following responses:

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture had tried and is trying to assist but their assistance is ineffective” (DCM-C).*

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture provided some guidelines but not supportive” (DCM-A).*

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture occasionally send motivational speakers to address learners” (DCM-D).*

The findings on questions 1-3 to 1.5 seem to suggest that though schools and the Ministry of Education, are trying to implement several measures to mitigate misbehaviours among learners discipline committee members report that such strategies are not yielding the desired results.

**Question 2: What challenges do the school face when implementing the policy?**

Three questions were designed to answer this question (see **Appendix B**).



**Question 2.1: What challenges do teachers and school management face when implementing the disciplinary measures put in place?**

Disciplinary committee members interviewed in this study provided several challenges including lack of time among teachers to deal with disciplinary cases, less supportive parents, overprotective parents, inadequate cooperation from parents, lack of uniformity in applying discipline measures among teachers, and inadequate feedback to teachers about the outcomes of disciplinary cases. The majority of disciplinary committee members expressed their experiences in the following comments:

*“Teachers do not have time to deal with disciplinary cases as they find it disturbing their teaching time” (DCM-A).*

*“Parents are less supportive to the schools and some parents over-react in support of their children. Also some parents do not communicate with their children to change or stop their undesired behaviours” (DCM-B).*

*“There is no uniformity when it comes to disciplining learners. Sometimes even the teachers that are part of the disciplinary committee are not consistent in how they apply the disciplinary measures to learners. Moreover, there is no feedback is given to teachers from the disciplinary committee about reported cases” (DCM-D).*

**Question 2.2: What do you consider to be the main challenges when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The next **table 2.2.1** indicates the responses of the disciplinary committee members.

### 2.2.1: Main challenges teachers face when implementing the policy on discipline.

Challenges	Responses
1. Inadequate support from Regional Office of Education	<i>“When we suspend learners, they go report us to the inspector, and the inspector requests the school to take the learners back, but such learners continue to affect other learners with their bad behaviours” (DCM-A).</i>
2. Lack of teamwork among teachers	<i>“Team work is a challenge as only few teachers are trying and willing to help when learners are misbehaving” (DCM-B).</i>
3. Unsupportive home environment	<i>“It is very challenging to discipline learners that are coming from homes where there are no rules and regulations” (DCM-C).</i>  <i>“Parents are not supportive and they are covering up for their children’s wrong doings” (DCM-D).</i>

### Question 2.3: What challenges do schools encounter from stakeholders such as parents when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

Most disciplinary committee members responded that parents do not support and always blame teachers for the increase of disciplinary problems in schools. DCM-A made the following scathing criticism of teachers:

*“Teachers are doing nothing about the disciplinary problems in schools. What do they know?”*

Some disciplinary committee members referred indicated that learners are the main source of much of the disciplinary problems in schools, as demonstrated in the following comment:

*“Learners bring strangers and not their parents or guardians when when they misbehave. In most cases the people who accompany the learners are not aware of the child’s disciplinary problem” (DCM-C).*

As stated earlier in this study, this finding supports Zimba, Auala and Scott’s (1997) conclusion that most parents have not taken responsibility to directly address their children’s inappropriate behaviours.

**Question 3: What strategies do schools use to overcome disciplinary challenges they face?**

Four questions were designed to answer research question 3 (see **Appendix B**).

**Question 3.1: How do schools overcome the challenges they face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The majority of disciplinary committee members responded that they rely on some parents who are willing to work cooperate with schools authorities to tackle school disciplinary problems.

Specifically, DCM-D stated that

*“I cannot remember if there was anything done apart from inviting motivational speakers and police force to come and talk to the learners and teachers” (DCM-D).*

On the other hand, DCM-A responded that *“challenges are referred to the school board for discussion and solutions”*.

**Question 3.2: How do parents assist schools to overcome the challenges they face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

In response to this question some disciplinary committee members interviewed for this study indicated that in rare cases few parents visit schools to attend to their children’s misbehaviours, as illustrated in the statement below:

*“Only few parents are willing to help, and those few parents who regularly visit schools are always concerning about their children’s behaviours or those parents that regularly visited schools are those with children well behaved”*  
(DCM-C).

**Question 3.3: Which strategies have you found working well to overcome the challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The majority of participants responded that they found *“weekly disciplinary hearings”* conducted with parents to be more effective.

DCM-A, for example, indicated that the withdrawal of learners from the hostel was also an effective strategy. The participant further explained that *“learners will always behave well once they are suspended from the hostel as a way to buy to be allowed to return to the hostel once again”*.

**Question 3.4: Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could effectively be implemented?**

The researcher recorded the following responses:

*“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture need to empower schools more and support them fully in order to curb the escalation of disciplinary problems*

*in schools. Also government should urgently formulate an Act on discipline, which should guide schools” (DCM-C).*

*“Principals should be empowered on how to make decisions related to the suspension and expulsions of learners” (DCM-B).*

*“If possible, reshuffle or change disciplinary committee members every term to avoid boredom and favouritism” (DCM-A).*

*“Incorporate members from the Ministry of Safety and Security to deal with the learners that have major disciplinary problems” (DCM-D).*

#### **4.5 Focus groups interviews**

Four focus groups of Learners Representative Councils (LRCs) consisted of four learners from four participating secondary schools. In this study LRCs are identified according to their groups, namely, Focus group A, Focus group B, Focus group C, and Focus group D. Their responses were presented based on the following questions:

**Question 1: What measures do schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?**

Four sub-questions were designed to answer research question 1 (see **Appendix C**).

**Question 1.1: How do you handle learners that are constantly misbehaving at school?**

The majority of participants responded that they always reported learners that constantly misbehave to the principal and teachers, who would then punish or suspend misbehaving from the hostel after confirming the magnitude of the offence. A learner in Focus group B stated that *“we also speak and advice misbehaving learners to stop what their unnecessary behaviours”*. Another learner in Focus group B added and indicated that *“most learners have changed their manners”*. A learner in Focus group

A, however, revealed that “misbehaving learners always would be told to dig a hole as a form of punishment”.

**Question 1.2: What measures have you put in place to implement the policy on discipline from within at your school?**

Most LRCs interviewed in this study responded that they motivated learners to be well behaved and warned them about the consequences of being disciplined. LRCs also proudly stated that every Friday they go from class to class to motivate and advise learners against bad behaviours.

Learners in both Focus groups C and D told the researcher that they sometimes talk to their fellow learners during assembly during which time they also read school rules to the entire learner population. A learner in Focus C, for example, revealed that “*at one of the assembly meetings we distributed the school code of conduct to all learners*”.

Learners in Focus group B stated that their school sometimes detains learners who misbehave. A learner in Focus group B, for instance, acknowledged that “*at one point we detained on a certain Friday afternoon a number of learners who misbehaved throughout the week. We the LRCs supervised those learners*”.

This finding supports Kelly’s (2015) work that first, there is a need to enforce the school-wide discipline plan; and second, that the school-wide discipline plan should be availed and communicated to all school learners to make more effective.

**Question 1.3: Do you think you are doing enough to maintain discipline at your school?**

To respond to this question, Focus group A stated that *“we are not doing enough; at sometime we thought of giving up”*.

However, the majority of LRCs responded that they did a lot this year. LRCs explained that in 2015 indiscipline among learners was high but has improved by 25 % in 2016. The Learners Representative Council members attributed the decline in the number of indiscipline cases to class visits, which they undertook during study sessions in which they advised and encouraged their fellow learners to work hard in their studies.

Focus groups B and D on their side, responded that *“we are doing what we can as we have managed to restrict power from some learners”*. However, a learner in Focus group B while acknowledging the role of LRCs in school affairs complained that their involvement in school discipline has been time consuming and making it difficult to study and complete their school work.

**Question 1.4: What measures have schools put in place to ensure that the policy on discipline from within is effectively implemented?**

Most learners in the four focus groups stated that the establishment of disciplinary committees, the use of motivational speakers, warnings, learner suspensions, and manual work for learners have been successful measures used in the implementation of the policy on discipline from within. The following comments attest to this statement:

*“Disciplinary committees are one of the measures that are being used in schools to implement the policy”* (Focus group A).

*“School principals always warn learners about the consequences of their misbehaviours” (Focus group D).*

*“Schools always invite motivational speakers to address learners and give them tips on how to behave well and being successful” (Focus group C)*

*“Suspension is another measure schools were using to control indiscipline” (Focus group B).*

*“Misbehaving learners are always punished by cleaning the school ground” (Focus group D).*

In addition, most learners indicated that school authorities always summon parents to discuss and plan together with the teachers the way forward.

**Question 2: What challenges do the schools face when implementing the policy?**  
(See Appendix C).

Three questions were designed to answer research question two.

**Question 2.1: What challenges do you experience when maintaining discipline at your school?**

Learner Representative Council members in all focus groups responded that the main challenges they faced include *learners undermine LRCs, learners called LRCs names, and learners insulted LRCs*. One LRC member summarised the focus groups' experiences as follows:

*“We are finding it difficult to deal with our peers because they do not respect us; they sometimes ignore our orders and do not follow our instructions” (Focus group B).*



**Question 2.2: Are principals aware of the challenges you are experiencing, and how do principals dealing with your challenges?**

All focus groups responded that principals are aware of the challenges LRCs face. A learner in Focus group B supported the group's view and commented as follows:

*"Principals always try to intervene by punishing learners that undermine and insult school LRCs"* (Focus group B).

**Question 2.3: What challenges do you think teachers face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

An overwhelming majority of LRCs interviewed in this study revealed various disturbing challenges that teachers face while attempting to implement the policy on discipline from within, as presented in the following comments:

*"Teachers experience all sorts of insults and disrespect from learners"* (Focus group A).

*"Some learners bully young teachers. Learners even invite community members to come to school events and beat up teachers"* (Focus group C).

*"Learners threaten teachers, and sometimes they use death threats"* (Focus group D).

**Question 3: What strategies do the schools use to overcome the challenges?** Five questions were designed to answer research question three: (see Appendix C).

**Question 3.1: What strategies do LRC members use to overcome the challenges you mentioned in Question 2.3 above?**

All LRCs interviewed in this study responded that in most cases, they either ignored or concentrated on their school work rather than focus on the challenges; or they

informed support teachers about the occurrence of specific misbehaviours, or remained calm and maintained good relationships with fellow learners, or tried to live by example. The comments below supports LRCs' assertions:

*"We always inform support teachers responsible for LRCs and these teachers in most cases will talk to the learners and encourage them to respect the LRCs"* (Focus group D).

*"Despite all the insults and disrespects, we try to remain calm and keep up the good relationship with our fellow learners. Also we try to live by example by showing good behaviours to our teachers and other learners"* (Focus groups B).

**Question 3.2: What strategies do schools apply to overcome the challenges they face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

Participants responded that schools use numerous strategies such as suspending, punishing and encouraging learners to behave positively towards teachers and other learners. Participants also indicated that in serious cases of misbehaviours schools may call parents and the police to protect teachers. Parents and the police may also talk to and advise learners to refrain from bad behaviours.

**Question 3.3: What do you think parents should do to make sure that the strategies are effectively implemented?**

The majority of the focus group members responded that parents need to teach their children good behaviours at home, advise their children to go to church more often, be exemplary to their children, teach children good morals and values, and constantly monitor their children's academic progress and behaviours.

**Question 3.4: What do you think the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should do to make sure that the policy on discipline from within is effectively implemented?**

Focus group A replied that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture “*should not be lenient to learners that are misbehaving, and thus should introduce stricter policies that can be used to curb disciplinary problems in schools*”.

Focus group C indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should “*introduce Religious and Moral education back in schools so that learners are taught good morals and religions*”.

Overall all participants replied that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should “*establish more recreational facilities so that learners can take part and become better persons*”.

Additionally, members of all focus groups also suggested that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should “*conduct leadership seminars for teachers, principals, learners, and parents to discuss how different disciplinary problems can be curbed*”.

Moreover, participating LRCs further suggested the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should “*visit schools regularly to evaluate the schools’ situations, and train more Life Skills teachers to assist teachers how to deal with disciplinary problems*”.

**Question 3.5: Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could effectively be implemented?**

The majority of the focus group members suggested that suspension as a mitigating strategy should be strengthened so that learners feel the burden of being suspended. LRC members further suggested that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should *“visit schools to evaluate the status of discipline, and then try to revisit and review the policy on Discipline from Within”*.

Moreover, LRC members also commented that teachers should *“be firm and keep learners under pressure with school work”*. Furthermore, most focus group members opinioned that *“schools should nominate a large number of LRCs to control other learners, and make Life Skills a promotional subject”*.

#### **4.6 Inspector of Education’s interview**

One Inspector of Education in the Oshana education region was interviewed and the responses were presented as follows:

**Question 1: What measures have schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?**

Three questions were designed to answer research question one: (see **Appendix D**).

**Question 1.1: What disciplinary measures are schools currently using to mitigate indiscipline among learners?**

The Inspector of Education responded that measures include verbal warning, written warning, disciplinary hearing, suspension, and expulsion of misbehaving learners.

**Question 1.2: How is the Circuit office assisting schools to implement the policy on discipline from within?**

The Inspector of Education revealed that *“the Circuit office is not directly involved. The office can only assist when consulted, and then provide advice where necessary and in line with the Education Act”*.

**Question 1.3: Which measures have you found to work well when schools are implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

In response to this question, the Inspector of Education stated that *“when correct procedures are followed, then any measures can automatically work; otherwise, parental involvement seems to work well in all schools”*.

**Question 2: What challenges do schools face when implementing the policy of discipline from within?**

Three questions were designed to answer research question two (see Appendix D).

**Question 2.1: What challenges do schools encounter concerning the implementation of discipline from within policy in your circuit?**

The Inspector of Education responded that *“some principals do not adhere to the policy, and parents do not understand the policy”*.

The Inspector of Education further commented on the possible negative consequences of principals not adhering to the policy stipulations as follows:

*“By not adhering to the policy, schools find themselves in complicated situations. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide feedback to schools on time especially on recommendations for expulsion”*  
(Inspector of Education).

**Question 2.2: What do you consider to be the biggest challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The Inspector of Education replied as follows:

*“Parents are not supportive and cooperative with schools. At the same time teachers do not work as a team, it appears only a few are pulling together”.*

**Question 2.3: What challenges does your office encounter when monitoring the effectiveness of policy implementation on discipline from within in schools?**

The Inspector of Education stated that although he frequently monitored the activities of schools in his circuit, schools never provided him with feedback about the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of measures he suggested for implementation.

**Question 3: What strategies do schools use to overcome the challenges identified in sub-question 2.2 above?**

Six questions were designed to answer research question three (see **Appendix D**).

**Question 3.1: Is there an effective monitoring mechanism for the discipline policy by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture? If yes, elaborate.**

The Inspector of Education unconvincingly stated that there must be a monitoring mechanism in place. However, he further explained that at the circuit level,

*“We monitor and report to the high office, but we have not found the monitoring mechanism effective so far”* (Inspector of Education).

**Question 3.2: What do you think schools can do to handle the challenges they encounter when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The Inspector of Education mentioned “*consultation*” and “*stakeholders’ involvement*” as the main strategies that schools could use mitigate the challenges of disciplinary problems. Also the Inspector of Education suggested that “*schools should follow all procedures correctly outlined in the policy document on how to deal with disciplinary problems schools face*”.

**Question 3.3: How would your office help teachers to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?**

The Inspector of Education explained that though the Circuit office has in the past not fully involved in school activities, the office had in past though, achieved a lot with schools. To support what the circuit office has done to help schools, the Inspector of Education stated that:

*“We went to many schools to attend to cases that we reported to the circuit office. Our office has in the past helped teachers to deal with disciplinary cases through school principals’ office. Also we conducted professional development meetings with teachers and advised teachers to always follow procedures to be on the safe side of the law”* (Inspector of Education).

**Question 3.4: What roles do you think parents and the school board should play in making sure that the measures are effectively implemented in schools?**

The Inspector of Education suggested that school authorities should inform parents about rules so as to promote parental involvement in school activities. The Inspector of Education further suggested that parents should be encouraged to talk to their children and invited to school meetings.

In terms of the role of school boards, the Inspector of Education advised that school boards should carefully listen to disciplinary problems and then seek for amicable solutions. The Inspector of Education further advised school boards to take credible decisions which may positively influence the implementation of the policy on discipline.

**Question 3.5: What should be done to ensure there are strict enforceable rules to maintain discipline among learners?**

The Inspector of Education responded that “*school rules should be disseminated to all learners and parents*”. The Inspector of Education believes that “*if parents and learners are aware of the rules, then they will also know the consequences*”. The Inspector of Education further suggested that to be effective, “*school rules should be designed with inputs from parents and teachers*”.

**Question 3.6: Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could effectively be implemented?**

The Inspector of Education unsure about a specific recommendation suggested that any intervention the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture decides to introduce might help to effectively implement the discipline in schools. In what seems to be an after-thought, the Inspector of Education suggested that the findings of research studies may help to curb indiscipline in schools secondary among learner.



## **4.7 Results from observations**

Initially, the researcher had planned to conduct three observations in each selected secondary school. However, due to time constraints the researcher managed only to conduct two observations in each of the three selected secondary schools. Thus the results contained in this section were obtained and recorded from the two observations in each of the three sampled secondary schools. The results are presented chronologically, namely first, the researcher present School A results, followed by Schools B, school C, and then the school D findings.

### **4.7.1 School A**

The researcher's observations in School A revealed that teachers used various strategies to discipline their learners. First, teachers reprimanded misbehaving learners, while at the same time reminded learners about the importance of knowing and obeying school rules.

Second, the researcher also observed that teachers chased away learners who came late for classes after morning break.

Third, the researcher sat in a disciplinary hearing for the problematic learners that the principal of School A chaired. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss on how to invite parents to come to school, how to reprimand absent learners once they return for classes, and inform LRC members of their responsibilities.

Fourth, my observations revealed four measures School A uses to effectively implement the policy on *Discipline from Within*, including the *establishment of the*

*disciplinary committee, display of school rules in the school foyer, distribution of school rules to each learner, and chasing away late comers from attending classes.*

Moreover, the researcher witnessed some of challenges that School A is faced with. For example, the researcher noticed that learners have negative attitudes towards their teachers and the school itself. Also the researcher witnessed that parents do not seem to be committed to support the school. Furthermore, the researcher observed School A used a hostel to accommodate and control learners who were writing external examinations.

#### **4.7.2 School B**

My observations in School B discovered that the principal and teachers use suspension, light forms of punishment, oral reprimands, and summons of learners' parents as the main strategies to control indiscipline among learners. The observations revealed that light forms of punishment used in School B included cleaning classrooms, toilets, and detention on Fridays.

Also the researcher observed that the principal in School B always met with the disciplinary committee every Monday to discuss and plan the week's activities.

My observations further revealed that School B faces numerous challenges in its attempt to implement the policy on *Discipline from Within*. For instance, my observations found that the outside environment has a very negative impact on learners' behaviour. The researcher discovered that School B is surrounded with alcohol shops, and that some parents overprotected their children, which might have

resulted in spoilt learners. Also the researcher found that some teachers in School B have developed an “I don’t care” attitude towards problematic learners.

#### **4.7.3 School C**

My observations in School C revealed that teachers use punishment, cleaning of classrooms, detention, cleaning toilets, and cutting grass around the school premises as the main forms maintaining discipline. The researcher also found that School C tends to summon parents of learners who have committed serious offences.

In addition, I found that School B distributed school rules to all learners, involved parents in school meetings, invited motivational speakers, and counselled unruly learners as some of the main strategies to maintain discipline.

My observations also revealed some challenges School C is faced with, including lack of parental support, delayed regional education office response on learners’ expulsion applications and learner abuse of teachers

#### **4.7.4 School D**

The researcher observed that School D used punishment (picking papers, cleaning classrooms), oral reprimand and paying of fines to maintain discipline in school. In addition, my observations found that School D also used disciplinary committee to solve learners’ misbehaviours.

The present study also observed that School D distributed the school code of conduct to the learners, summoned parents to discuss disciplinary problems of their children,

and conducted disciplinary hearings every Monday for disciplinary problems recorded the previous week.

The researcher also observed that School D experienced challenges of parents who were less committed to the academic well being of their children, including learners who showed signs of coming from broken home environments. Furthermore, the study observed LRC members visiting and motivating fellow learners from class to class.

## **4.8 Discussions from the interviews**

### **4.8.1 Findings on the measures the schools put in place to effectively implements the policy on discipline from within**

Discussions from the participated respondents were summarised as follow:

Based on the presented responses from the participants (principals and disciplinary committee members), schools have come up with measures that help them to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within. Some of the measures include the establishment of disciplinary committee, promote positive behaviours, calling parents, do counselling, and give light punishments such as detention, cleaning school ground, etc. According to the participants, some measures were effectively working to a certain extent, although they are not hundred percent effective. This is because some of the measures are too light and learners do not feel them.

Based on the responses from the focus groups presented, it seems that Learners Representative Councils in schools are also playing a major role in implementing the policy on discipline from within. As other participants, they also came up with various

measures that help them to implement the policy. Measures are verbal warnings, principal and disciplinary committees' referrals. According to the participants' responses, some of the measures appear to be working although not fully effective. However, schools also put up measures such as the establishment of the disciplinary committees, bringing in national speakers, punishment and suspension.

Based on the responses from the Inspector of Education presented, it appears that Circuit offices are not directly involved as they understand that it is the sole responsibility of schools to implement the policy, and come up with rightful measures. But when consulted, they can give guidance and advice where possible. However, the Inspector indicated possible measures schools can use such as verbal warning, written warning, disciplinary hearing, suspension, and expulsion.

#### **4.8.2 Findings on the challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within**

Based on the participants (principals) responses, it was indicated that schools are facing numerous challenges that are prohibiting schools to effectively implementing the policy on discipline from within. Challenges according to the participants are parents not supportive neither committed to their children's education and wellbeing. Principals also indicated that sometimes schools came up with too many schools rules that at the end they cannot control and implement, and teachers are not committed and they are showing a don't care attitudes.

According to the participants' responses, learners are having too many rights and they are not willing to change, or they don't see the importance of being disciplined.

Based on the principals' responses, it seems like school boards in many schools are not effective. However, it appears that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is not fully supporting the schools to effectively implement the policy on *Discipline from Within*.

Based on the participants' responses, it appears that schools and teachers in particular are experiencing many challenges when they are trying to deal with disciplinary cases at schools. Challenges mentioned are parents not supportive, no time to discipline learners as teachers are busy with teaching to complete their syllabuses on time, and at the same time they must attend to the indiscipline of learners.

However, as mentioned by the participants, some of the biggest challenges include lack of teamwork among teachers, and the learners' home environments. It seems that teachers are really struggling when it comes to deal with learners misbehaviours.

Based on the responses from the participants, it appears that the schools are facing numerous challenges when implementing the policy on *Discipline from Within*. Challenges disclosed are principals and teachers not understand the policies well and they end up going on the wrong side of them, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture not providing feedback to schools on time, parents not supportive, and lack of teamwork among the teachers. Moreover, it gives the idea that the Inspector of Education offices are also experiencing some challenges particularly of insufficiency feedback provided to them from schools.

#### **4.8.3 Findings on strategies have the schools used to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within**

Based on the participants' responses, it appears that most of the schools are using parent consultation method as the main strategy to overcome many challenges they are facing. It also gives the idea that the disciplinary committees at schools are doing a lot in terms of implementing the policy on discipline from within at schools. One could conclude that in many schools, punishment of learners is the common weapon applied to overcome the challenges faced.

However, a quite number of challenges were stated by the principals, but no strategies to overcome them were mentioned. This implied that schools are having quite a number of challenges without being solve and they are suffering in silence. Therefore one could also conclude that these unsolved challenges could be one of the contributing factors as to why we have the intensification of disciplinary problems in secondary schools.

Based on the participants' responses, it appears that schools have come up with strategies to overcome the challenges they face. Strategies are embracing calling and regularly informing parents to come to schools to discuss the challenges they are facing, and try to come up with solutions together.

Major challenges are being referred to the school boards so that they can be dealt with effectively. However, it appears that teachers are urging parents to bring up their children well and teach them desirable behaviours that are acceptable in schools and in society at large.

Based on the participants' responses, it seems that disciplinary hearings, suspension of learners from hostel, regularly calling parents, inviting motivational speakers, and punish learners to clean toilets, classrooms, removing the grass have been working well to overcome challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within, although not 100% effective.

Moreover, participants have made some recommendations on how the policy on discipline from within could be effectively implemented. Recommendations are empowering of school principals to take major decisions particularly on suspension and expulsion, Education Act on discipline which need to be urgently formulated to guide schools to effectively implement the policy, more stakeholders outside the education sector need to be involved to help curbing the escalation of disciplinary cases in secondary schools.

Based on the participants' responses, it gives the impression that there are no clear mechanisms from the "high offices" on how to help schools to overcome the challenges. However, the participant believed that schools can overcome the challenges by consulting and involving other stakeholders and try to follow procedures correctly.

Besides, the inspection office assists schools to implement the policy and overcome the challenges by conducting professional development meetings with teachers and guide them on how to go about it.



Therefore, the participant suggested that parents and school boards need to play a major role to curb the challenges school face. Parents should be informed about the schools rules and take the parental role seriously and attend parent meetings at all times. School boards can help by always listen to problems and try to come up with valuable solutions.

#### **4.9 Discussions from the observations**

Based on the observation done, it seems that principals and teachers are committed to curb disciplinary problems in schools. They are trying to apply various measures to effectively implement the policy on *Discipline from Within*. Measures applied by schools include the establishment of the disciplinary committees that deal with the disciplinary problems, verbal reprimand, suspension and calling in parents, light punishments, counselling, calling in motivational speakers, and conducting disciplinary hearings with the learners.

Furthermore, it seems that schools are faced with numerous challenges when implementing the policy on *Discipline from Within*. Some of the challenges observed include the don't care attitudes from learners and teachers, lack of commitment from parents, home environment that are not conducive, regional education offices not responding on time, and teachers become victims of learners.

#### **4.10 Summary**

This chapter presented the results and discussions of data that were collected from various categories of participants selected for this study. Overall, the results revealed that schools use various measures to effectively implement the policy on *Discipline*

*from Within*. Among others the study found that teachers and principals selected in this study used established disciplinary committees, promoted positive behaviours, parental engagement, learner counselling and manual work as the main measures of maintaining discipline in their schools. Further, the study also revealed teachers used learner profile sheets, verbal and written warnings, suspensions and then expulsions as other forms of dealing with indiscipline in their schools.

Also it emerged in this chapter that schools are experiencing various challenges when implementing the policy on *Discipline from Within*. The study also found non-supportive parents, lack of teacher commitment, unruly learners, and the ineffectiveness of school boards as the main challenges all four selected secondary schools experience. Other challenges included inadequate time to deal with disciplinary cases, inadequate feedback and lack of support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. The study further found that principals and teachers lack understanding of the policy of discipline from within, and that there was no teamwork among teachers at schools.

Moreover, the study found that schools used various strategies to overcome the identified challenges. For instance, parental consultations, use of disciplinary committees, school board engagement, learner suspensions and use of motivational speakers were found to be most common strategies used in selected schools to mitigate the negative effects of learners' indiscipline.

Further, the study revealed that teachers and principals also used strategies such as punishment, ignoring problematic learners, stakeholders' involvement, and verbal

reprimand, strengthening school boards, and conducting professional development meetings to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within.

The next chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the present study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented the results and discussions of the findings of the present study. The present study was set to evaluate the policy on discipline from within in four selected secondary schools in Oshana region. The study developed three broad questions, which were used to solicit data from teachers, principal and learner representative council members from four sampled secondary schools in Oshana region. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations were used to collect data for this study. Collected data were analysed by means of content and thematic analyses. This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the collected data according to the three broad research questions developed for the present study. The chapter further provides the conclusions and recommendations for practice and further study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the findings**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What measures have the schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
2. What challenges do schools face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?

3. What strategies do the schools use to overcome the challenges experienced in implementing the policy on discipline from within?

#### **5.2.1 What measures have schools put in place to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?**

The researcher asked this question to determine the course of action secondary schools teachers and principals including other primary stakeholders have used to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within.

The study found that secondary schools designed various measures, which they used to help them to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within. For example, the present study found that schools established of disciplinary committees to deal with the disciplinary problems, promoted positive behaviours among learners, engaged parents, initiated counselling sessions for learners serious disciplinary problems, used give light manual work such cleaning classrooms, toilets, and other physical challenging exercises as forms of punishments as opposed to corporal punishment. The present study also established that secondary school teachers had designed learner profile sheets, and were using verbal reprimands including written warnings, motivational speakers, disciplinary hearings, suspension and expulsion as supplementary forms of punishing misbehaving learners.

### **5.2.2 What challenges do schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

This question was asked to mainly document the type of challenges teachers and principals including other primary stakeholders were experiencing when implementing the policy on discipline from within.

An analysis of narrative responses across semi-structured interviewed, focus group discussions and observations established a common pattern among the majority of research participants in this study. For instance, the study established that secondary schools experience various challenges when implementing the policy on discipline from within. Among others, the study recorded that schools' challenges included non-supportive parents, lack of teachers' commitment, too many unruly learners and ineffective school boards. Moreover, the study identified secondary challenges including inadequate time to deal with disciplinary cases, inadequate feedback and lack of support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Further, the study found that both principals and their teachers had insufficient understanding of the policy on discipline from within. The present study discovered that there was lack of teamwork among teachers in the selected secondary schools.

Furthermore, the present study established that an "I don't care" attitude among some learners and teachers was prevalent across the four secondary schools selected in this study. The study identified other challenges such as lack of commitment from parents, uncondusive home environment, communication delays between schools and the regional education office and learner abuse of and threats to novice teachers.

### **5.2.3 What strategies have the schools use to overcome the challenges when implementing the policy on discipline from within?**

The aim of this question was to determine what strategies teachers and principals including primary stakeholders were using to minimise the negative effects of learners' indiscipline while implementing the policy on discipline from within.

Participants in the present study revealed that they were using numerous strategies to overcome the challenges of learners' indiscipline in their schools. The study found that schools relied on strategies such as parental consultations, strengthening of disciplinary committees, school board referrals, learner suspensions, use of motivational speakers, learner punishment, ignoring problematic learners, stakeholders' involvement, empowerment of school boards, and professional development meetings for teachers to maintain and control indisciplined learners.

## **5.3 Conclusions**

The study concluded that the policy on *Discipline from Within* is outdated and need to be revised. However, the study established that secondary schools designed various measures, which they used to help them to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within. For example, the present study found that schools established of disciplinary committees to deal with the disciplinary problems, promoted positive behaviours among learners, engaged parents, initiated counselling sessions for learners serious disciplinary problems, used give light manual work such cleaning classrooms, toilets, and other physical challenging exercises as forms of punishments as opposed to corporal punishment. The present study also established that secondary school teachers had designed learner profile sheets, and were using verbal reprimands

including written warnings, motivational speakers, disciplinary hearings, suspension and expulsion as supplementary forms of punishing misbehaving learners.

The study established various challenges secondary schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within. Among others, the study recorded that schools' challenges included non-supportive parents, lack of teachers' commitment, too many unruly learners and ineffective school boards. Moreover, the study identified secondary challenges including inadequate time to deal with disciplinary cases, inadequate feedback and lack of support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Further, the study found that both principals and their teachers had insufficient understanding of the policy on discipline from within. The present study discovered that there was lack of teamwork among teachers in the selected secondary schools.

Moreover, the study established numerous strategies schools used to overcome the challenges of learners' indiscipline in their schools. The study found that schools relied on strategies such as parental consultations, strengthening of disciplinary committees, school board referrals, learner suspensions, use of motivational speakers, learner punishment, ignoring problematic learners, stakeholders' involvement, empowerment of school boards, and professional development meetings for teachers to maintain and control indisciplined learners. The study concludes that attempts have been made to implement the policy on discipline from within in the sampled secondary schools in Oshana region. However, data obtained in this study suggests that though the majority of participants have had access to the policy on discipline from within, most of the interviewees do not understand the content and perhaps the context of the policy.



This finding has profound implications as it affects the level of awareness, attitudes, knowledge, practice and trust with which teachers and principals can confidently implement the policy. This study argues that access alone is not sufficient for implementers to adequately implement a policy. Thus it is important to take note that implementers require a sufficient level of understanding and knowledge to adequately implement any given policy. In relation to this fundamental finding and other observations made in this study the following sub-sections provide recommendations necessary for practice and future studies.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the present study, the following recommendations for improvement are made:

- 5.4.1** Schools together with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should come up with common strategies that all schools need to apply to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within.
- 5.4.2** The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should relook at the Education Act do amendments to give schools more power in terms of suspension and expulsion of learners that are giving schools serious disciplinary problems despite of various interventions made.
- 5.4.3** The policy itself is outdated, and it needs to be reviewed as the disciplinary cases have become more occurring compared to those years when the policy was formulated.
- 5.4.4** Schools need to come up with ways on how to increase parental and community involvement to control the learners' behaviours.

- 5.4.5** The MOEAC should involve other stakeholders to assist in the learners' discipline as discipline is not just the responsibility of the schools, as Nakale (2014) indicated that discipline cannot be left alone in the hand of teachers and there are various factors that outside the schools that are contributing to the indiscipline of the learners.
- 5.4.6** Schools should be given a mandate to evaluate and conduct a proper investigation as to whether the policy is appropriate or not.

## **5.5 Recommendations for further research studies**

The following are the areas for possible future research studies:

- 5.5.1** A study to be carried out to investigate to what extent the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture can help schools to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within.
- 5.5.2** An investigation on how the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should procure parents' inputs when formulating important policies pertaining to their children school discipline.
- 5.5.3** An investigation on how schools can involve parents and the community at large when dealing with disciplinary problems in secondary schools.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Principals' interviews**

#### **EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

#### ***Interview guide***

##### **Instructions**

The questions that will be asked have no right or wrong answer. You are encouraged to feel free to answer the questions according to your experience, understanding and knowledge. All the responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality and your name will not be mentioned in the final report.

##### ***Interview: Principals***

##### **Biographical data**

1. What is the name of your school?
2. What is your gender?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your highest academic qualification?
5. What is your highest professional qualification?
6. How long have you been a principal at this school?

**Measures schools put in place to implement the policy on Discipline from Within.**

1. Do you have a policy regarding discipline at your school? If yes, how effective is it?
2. How does your school implement this policy?
3. What measures does your school put in place to effectively address disciplinary issues at the school?
4. How effective are these measures?
5. Does the school get any assistance from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in terms of policy implementation of Discipline from Within?  
If yes, what assistance does your school received?

**Challenges schools are facing in implementing the policy on Discipline from within.**

1. What challenges do teachers and school management face in implementing the disciplinary measures put in place?
2. What do you consider to be the biggest challenges in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What challenges do the school get from stakeholders such as parents when implementing the policy on discipline from within?



**Strategies schools use to overcome the challenges in implementing**

**Discipline from within policy.**

1. How does your school overcome the challenges you face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
2. What strategies do the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture use to help your school to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
3. How do parents assist schools to overcome the challenges your school face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
4. Which strategies have you found to work well in your school when implementing the policy on discipline from within?
5. Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could be effectively implemented?

## **Appendix B: Disciplinary Committee Members' interviews**

### **EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

#### ***Interview guide***

##### **Instructions**

The questions that will be asked have no right or wrong answer. You are encouraged to feel free to answer the questions according to your experience, understanding and knowledge. All the responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality and your name will not be mentioned in the final report.

##### ***Interview: Disciplinary committee member***

##### **Biographical data**

1. What is the name of your school?
2. What is your gender?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your highest academic qualification?
5. What is your highest professional qualification?
6. How long have you been a disciplinary committee member at this school?
7. What is your position in the disciplinary committee you serve?

**Measures schools put in place to implement the policy on Discipline from Within.**

1. Is there a policy regarding discipline at your school? If yes, how effective is it?
2. How does your school implement this policy?
3. What measures does your school put in place to effectively address disciplinary issues at the school?
4. How effective are these measures?
5. Does the school get any assistance from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in terms of policy implementation of Discipline from Within?  
If yes, what assistance does your school received?

**Challenges schools are facing in implementing the policy on Discipline from within.**

1. What challenges do teachers and school management face in implementing the disciplinary measures put in place?
2. What do you consider to be the biggest challenges in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What challenges do the school get from stakeholders such as parents when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

**Strategies schools use to overcome the challenges in implementing**

**Discipline from Within policy.**

1. How does your school overcome the challenges you face in implementing the policy discipline from within?
2. What strategies do the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture use to help your school to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
3. How do parents assist schools to overcome the challenges your school face in implementing the policy on discipline from within?
4. Which strategies have you found to work well in your school when implementing the policy on discipline from within?
5. Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could be effectively implemented?

## **Appendix C: Inspector of Education's interview**

### **EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

#### ***Interview guide***

##### **Instructions**

The questions that will be asked have no right or wrong answer. You are encouraged to feel free to answer the questions according to your experience, understanding and knowledge. All the responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality and your name will not be mentioned in the final report.

#### ***Interview: inspector of education***

##### **Biographical data**

1. What is the name of your circuit?
2. What is your gender?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your highest academic qualification?
5. What is your highest professional qualification?
6. How long have you been an inspector of education at this circuit?

7. How many schools are there in your circuit?

**Measures schools put in place to implement the policy on Discipline from**

**Within.**

1. What disciplinary measures are currently within the parameters of the Ministry of education, Arts & Culture schools can use?
2. How is your office assisting schools to implement the policy on discipline from within?
3. Which measures have you found to work well when implementing the policy on discipline from within in schools?

**Challenges schools are facing in implementing the policy on Discipline from within.**

1. What challenges do schools encounter concerning the implementation of discipline from within in your inspection circuit?
2. What do you consider to be the biggest challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What challenges does your office encounter when monitoring the effective implementation of the policy on discipline from within in schools?

**Strategies schools use to overcome the challenges in implementing**

**Discipline from Within policy.**

1. Is there an effective monitoring mechanism for this policy on discipline from within by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture? If yes, elaborate more.
2. What do you think schools can do to handle the challenges they have encountered when implementing the policy on discipline from within?
3. What strategies have your office used in resolving challenges schools face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?
4. How would your office help teachers to effectively implement the policy on discipline from within?
5. What roles do you think parents and the school board should play in making sure that the measures are effectively implemented in schools?
6. What should be done to ensure there are strict enforceable rules to instil and maintain discipline among learners?
7. Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could be effectively implemented?

## **Appendix D: Focus groups' interviews**

### **EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

#### ***Interview guide***

##### **Instructions**

The questions that will be asked have no right or wrong answer. You are encouraged to feel free to answer the questions according to your experience, understanding and knowledge. All the responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality and your name will not be mentioned in the final report.

#### ***Interview: focus' groups***

##### **Biographical data**

1. What are your positions in the Learners Representative council?
2. For how long have you been serving in the LRCs?
3. Briefly tell me about your school, location, performance, and the current state of discipline at your school.



**Measures schools put in place to implement the policy on Discipline from Within.**

1. How do you handle learners that are constantly misbehaving at school?
2. What measures do you put in place to address to implement the policy on discipline from within at your school?
3. Do you think you are doing enough to maintain discipline? What are you doing to maintain learners discipline at your school?
4. What measures do the school put in place to ensure that the policy on discipline from within is effectively implemented?

**Challenges schools are facing in implementing the policy on Discipline from within.**

1. What challenges do you experience when maintaining discipline at your school?
2. Is your principal aware of the challenges that you are experiencing? If yes, what is the principal doing about it?
3. What challenges do you think teachers face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

**Strategies schools use to overcome the challenges in implementing Discipline from Within policy.**

1. What strategies do you use to overcome the challenges you have mentioned?
2. What strategies do your school use to overcome the challenges the school face when implementing the policy on discipline from within?

3. What do you think parents should do to make sure that the strategies are effectively implemented?
4. What do you think the Ministry of Education should do something to make sure that the policy on discipline from within is effectively implemented?
5. Any other suggestions on how the policy on discipline from within could be effectively implemented?

## **Appendix E: Observation guide**

### **EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA**

#### ***Observation guide***

**The following aspects will be observed:**

How teachers discipline learners?	
How the principal discipline learners?	
Challenges school face when implementing the policy on discipline from within	
Measures schools use to effectively	

implement the policy on discipline from within	
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## Appendix F: Permission letter from the Permanent Secretary



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: (061) 2933210  
Fax: (061) 2933222  
Enquiries: Dr. J. L. Kahikuzana  
Email: [www@education.gov.na](mailto:www@education.gov.na)  
Ref: 11/P

Lucker Street, Govt. Office Park  
P/Bay 13186  
WINDHÖEK  
18 August 2015

Mirjam Antonio  
P.O Box 20854  
Windhoek

Dear Ms. Antonio

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY FOR MASTER'S DEGREE OF EDUCATION IN THE OSHANA REGION. RESEARCH STUDY- "EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA", 02- 25 SEPTEMBER 2015.**

Kindly be informed that permission to conduct research study for your Master's Degree in Oshana at schools resorting under the Directorate: Education, Arts and Culture is herewith granted. You are further requested to present the letter of approval to the regional directorate and engage with the Inspectors of Education of the selected schools just to ensure that research ethics are adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery is avoided.

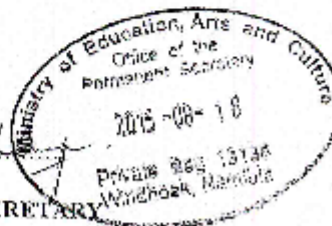
Furthermore, we humbly request of you to share your research finds with the regional and head office. You may contact Mr. C. Muchila at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for provision of summary of your research findings.

I wish the best in conduction of your research and am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Sanet L. Steenkamp

PERMANENT SECRETARY



Date: 18/8/15

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Permanent Secretary.

## Appendix G: permission letter from the Director of Oshana region



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

### OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS and CULTURE  
*Aspiring to Excellence in Education for All*

Tel: 065 - 229800

Fax: 065 - 229833

E-mail: 77aipanda@gmail.com

Enquiry: Immanuel S Aipanda

Ref 13/1

Private Bag 5518

Oshakati, Namibia

Ms Mirjam Antonio

P O Box 20854

Windhoek

Dear Ms Antonio

#### Permission to conduct research at the above schools

We are pleased to inform you that permission is herewith granted to you to conduct research at the following schools as per your request. Schools are: Gabriel Taapopi SSS, Mweshipandeka SSS, Oshakati SSS and Iipumbu SSS. The period for the research is scheduled between 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015. We are relieved to note your undertaking that measures will be taken to avoid interruptions of normal school proceedings.

Further condition is that the participation in the research is voluntarily. We wish you the best in conducting your research. By copy of this letter principals of schools are informed of your intention. We hereby plead with them to accord you the necessary support you may require.

When calling at schools please present this letter and the one from the Permanent Secretary to principals.


Yours sincerely

*M. Shinyemba* 03-09-15

**Mrs Dulle N Shinyemba**  
Regional Director



## Appendix H: Ethical Clearance Certificate

**UNAM**  
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

**STUDENT ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FOE/37/2015      Date: 9 July 2015**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

**Title of Project:** EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON DISCIPLINE FROM WITHIN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE OSHANA REGION OF NAMIBIA  
**Nature/Level of Project:** Masters

**Principal Researcher:** M. K. Antonio

**Student Number :** 200838181

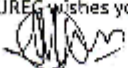
**Host Department & Faculty:** Faculty of Education

**Supervisor(s) :** Dr. J. Mushaondja (Main) Prof. R. Auala (Co)

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
  - (i). withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
  - (ii). request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

  
Prof. I. Mapaura  
UNAM Research Coordinator  
ON BEHALF OF UREC

## **Appendix I: learners' consent form**

04 September 2015

To: Parents/Guardians

From: M.K. Antonio, MED, Faculty of Education

University of Namibia

Dear Parents/Guardians

### **Request to interview your child**

I am a student at the University of Namibia doing a Master Degree in Education. I am currently evaluating policy implementation on discipline from within in selected secondary schools in the Oshana region of Namibia.

I am hereby requesting for the participation of your child in an interview between 08 – 25 September 2015 to provide me with information regarding the implementation of the policy on discipline at his/her school. Please note that the research is purely academic and the information obtained will be treated strictly confidential. No name or personal details will be mentioned in the research.

I will be very grateful for your consideration.

Mirjam K. Antonio (Mrs)

Please complete this to indicate that you allow your child to partake in an interview.



I ----- the mother/father/guardian of -----  
----- in grade ----- hereby allowing him/her to partake in an interview.

Signature: -----  
Date: -----