

TEACHERS' CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISMS IN TEACHING LEARNERS  
WHO EXHIBIT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE  
OMAHEKE REGION

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The study explored specific actions of school learners in classes which teachers would refer to as disruptive behaviour. It also covered the teachers' daily responses to such behaviour. A quantitative, descriptive survey design was employed to collect and analyse data to this effect. School teachers in both private and government primary schools in the Omaheke educational region (Namibia) comprised the target population of the study. A total of two hundred and ninety (290) teachers from sixteen (16) schools, systematically selected by means of a random sampling technique, participated in the study. Data were collected by means of a structured questionnaire; furthermore, percentage frequency distribution was employed to analyse the greater part of the participants' responses and compare information from the different participants. The study found untimely talking and laughing, disrespect and hyperactivity in- and outside classes to be the most frequent form of disruptive behaviour that teachers at participating schools faced daily. Managing learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour in overcrowded classes, lack of curriculum support and limited specialised training were also found as some of the most serious challenges for teachers. The study generally recommends the provision of in-service training to teachers for capacity building in managing disruptive behaviour. Specifically, it recommends strategies that are effective in managing class disruptions. These include teachers giving clearly defined class rules to enable learners to know and understand the kind of behaviour that is expected from them. The use of positive reinforcers, like praising acceptable behaviour was found to be effective and thus highly recommended to teachers.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Jeckonia Thomas, and my mother, Elizabeth Shivute. I treasure their support, understanding, encouragement and inspiration that enabled me to pursue and realise my dreams.

They indeed instilled good values in me.

**DECLARATIONS**

I, Simon Kalitheni Thomas, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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**Simon K Thomas**

**Date**

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## **List of abbreviation/Acronyms**

UNESCO – United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

MoEAC- Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

EMIS-Education Management Information System

UNAM-University of Namibia

MoEAC-Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

NNSSF-The Namibia's National Safe Schools Framework

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the study**

Disruptive behaviour in schools is a cause of concern in Namibian schools. Teachers are of the view that problems related to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are some of the major obstacles that they face on a daily basis (Namibia National Teachers Union, 2008). Some of the disruptive behaviour problems include incidences of bullying, aggressiveness, vandalism, violation of school rules, walking out of classes without permission and incomplete homework (Akawa, 2013). In addition, the Namibia Global School-based Health Namibia (2013) indicates that more than 44.6% of teachers in Namibian schools have experienced behaviour problems, such as bullying, teasing, insulting, threatening, hitting, kicking or punching at school as a result of learners with behaviour problems. These problems make it difficult, if not impossible, for teachers to manage their classes effectively.

Learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour demonstrate negative actions in a variety of settings, which lead to poor performance and undesirable behaviour in the class or school setting (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). As a result, the current state of education for learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour is in dire need of reform (Kauffman & Landrum, 2000).

It is a complex matter for teachers to address the behaviour problems of learners in schools. Researchers, such as Maggin, Wehby, Partin and Robertson (2011), found that learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour in schools are usually not identified early. Their behaviour are often misrepresented and may not receive appropriate intervention. Oliver and Reschly (2010) argue that learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour are likely to be present in all schools, and teachers must be ready to support such learners in their classes.

Kauffman (2007) asserts that there are, however, those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in the regular education settings who may not have been identified. Furthermore, the placement of these learners has been a matter of concern and controversy in the context of general education settings.

In the United States of America, for example, learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are identified, and specific programmes are designed to support them (USA Department of Education, 2002). In Africa, on the contrary, most countries, including Namibia, do not have specific programmes for learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour; only Kenya and Zimbabwe have programmes for such learners (Gathua, Muthee & Murugami, 2015).

In Namibia, teachers applied corporal punishment to handle disruptive behaviour in schools until it was outlawed in the early nineties (Ministry of Education, 2001). In April 1991, the Namibian Supreme Court ruled that corporal punishment inflicted on learners in Namibian schools was unlawful because it constituted an invasion of their dignity and, thus, should be abolished (Court Reporter, 1991). In the absence of corporal punishment, teachers in Namibia have to find alternative means of handling learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in- and outside class.

Despite being outlawed over 28 years ago, corporal punishment still finds a place among many education stakeholders who still believe in its value. They argue that corporal punishment leads to successful education. Namibia's *National Safe Schools Framework Part B: Practical Guide for Building Safe Schools* (2018) reports that teachers believe that corporal punishment is necessary to produce disciplined learners who perform well academically. Proponents for corporal punishment consider it to be 'best for the child' and a means of ensuring respect for elders.

On the contrary, corporal punishment does not assist learners to understand what was wrong with their behaviour nor help them to believe in their ability to act differently (Court Reporter, 1991). It only causes physical injury, distrust and low self-confidence, all of which can lead to further misbehaviour. Physical punishment instils fear, anger and shame, all of which obstruct learning. Employing a positive approach when disciplining brings many rewards, but can be challenging for teachers. Schools should, therefore, support the teachers in practicing positive discipline; this includes providing training, materials and a consistent commitment to banning corporal punishment (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2018).

Based on the researcher's life experience as both a learner and teacher, it has been found that many teachers appear to be experiencing substantial difficulty in coping with learners with behaviour problems in class. In many instances, they do not know how to assist these learners. Teachers often experience themselves as being disempowered and lacking the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge to understand and assist learners who exhibit behaviour problems (Musti-Rao & Haydon, 2011).

Meeting the needs of all learners and the realisation of the full potential of learners with and without special educational needs are key components of the vision of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia. The sector policy on inclusive education aims to provide education to the needs of all learners, including learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour, and it is crucial that every school, including its management and teachers, take responsibility for teaching every learner (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2013). If these goals could be achieved, barriers to learning would essentially be removed. Reinke et al. (2014) argue that the retesting or validity checking of known methods of teaching those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour should be investigated through academic research to improve the academic output of these

learners. Kamenye (2020) reveals that most teachers have limited skills suited to manage learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour in classes, and the current strategies being employed should be investigated to ensure that the situation in the classes is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

It is against this background that the researcher investigated both the challenges and coping mechanisms that teachers employed in their regular education classes when teaching in order to meet the needs of learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Disruptive manners in the class are intolerable and stress-provoking to teachers. They compel teachers to spend most of their time and energy managing classes.

Elsewhere, misdemeanours of learners have an adverse effect on teaching and learning. They, for instance, retard the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching, impede the learning of other learners, result in lower academic achievement and increase delinquent behaviour (Reinke et al., 2014). It is thus important and necessary to explore the nature and magnitude of the challenges that teachers face when dealing with disruptive learners in Namibia.

## **1.3. Research questions**

To gain a full understanding of the challenges and coping mechanisms teachers employ to manage learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in schools, the following research questions guided the study.

1.3.1. What kinds of learner behaviour are considered as disruptive in the class settings?

1.3.2. What challenges do teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in their regular classes daily?

1.3.3. What coping mechanisms do teachers employ in managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour?

#### **1.4. Significance of the study**

The study findings will bring more insights regarding the specific challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in the selected primary schools. The results will benefit teachers by providing ways in which to respond to such learners. This will also assist in improving learners' academic achievements.

Furthermore, the study will ensure that learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are all given a chance to succeed, participate and learn in their learning environments with others. Additionally, the findings of the study can also be employed by tertiary institutions to train teachers to be ready to handle learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. In addition, the coping mechanisms will also inform stakeholders and curriculum developers to consider these types of learners when developing curricula and teaching practices that can benefit learners who behave in disruptive ways.

#### **1.5. Limitations of the study**

The research study was limited to primary schools in the Omaheke region of Namibia. The participants in the study included teachers only. Some of the teachers in the selected schools were reluctant to complete the questionnaire due to time constraints. In addition, based on the research methodology employed, it was very difficult to assess the level of honesty with which the participants would answer the questions as responses were limited. Therefore, participants were assured that the data collected would be treated confidentially, and no names were utilised in order to protect the identity of the participants.

Furthermore, this study was limited to the Omaheke region. Namibia is a unique, developing country and it would be difficult to generalise the findings to other parts of the world where learning conditions are different.

## 1.6. Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in selected primary schools in the Omaheke region. Other schools and teachers could have employed better strategies, but they were not part of the sample due to the sampling strategy employed.

Similarly, the choice of the Omaheke region was based on convenience and ease of access for the researcher to information and research sites. This does not mean, however, that other regions could not have offered richer information regarding the research problem of this study.

## 1.7. Definition of terms

The terms that have been employed throughout this study are explained below.

**Inclusive education:** “Inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, communities and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modification in content, approaches, structures and strategies, within a common vision which covers all children of appropriate age range and a conviction that is the responsibility of the regular system”(UNESCO Ministry of Education Arts and Culture, 2013).

**Disruptive behaviour:** McCown et al. (1996) posit that disruptive behaviour in the class can be defined as any action by a learner that disrupts learning and teaching in the class. In this study, the term refers to undesirable behaviour on the part of a learner, verbal or nonverbal, which disrupts the process of learning and teaching. Disruptive behaviour can also be characterised as any behaviour that hampers the ability of teachers to teach or learners to learn. A disruptive learner manages to grab a teacher’s attention and prevents the teacher from giving the other learners attention. Thus, it is behaviour that distracts a teacher and the other learners from the teaching-learning process.

**Disruptive learner:** This refers to a learner who is perceived as uncooperative and does things that prevent him- or herself and other learners in class from learning. Hence, a disruptive learner in this study refers to a learner who continuously disrupts the teaching and learning process.

**Inclusion:** Knouwds and Swart (2010) define inclusion as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion.” The term is, furthermore, understood as a process of acting in order to address the wide diversity of needs of all learners (Knouwds & Swart, 2010).

Ainscow and Miles (2008) propose five ways of thinking about inclusion: inclusion concerned with disability and special education needs; as a response to disciplinary exclusions; as being about all groups’ vulnerable to exclusion; as the promotion of a school for all; as Education for All. In this study, inclusion will thus be understood as all adaptations made to ensure that learners with behaviour difficulties are included in class activities.

**Corporal punishment:** In one of its guidelines published in *Namibia’s National Safe Schools Framework PART B: Practical Guide for Building Safe Schools*, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC) defines corporal punishment as punishment by employing physical force, usually inflicted by a person of authority, with the intention of causing physical pain for disciplinary purposes. In recent years, however, the definition has been broadened to include verbal and/or emotional violence (Ministry of Education Arts and Culture, 2018).

**Coping mechanisms:** Coping mechanisms in this research study refer to strategies that teachers employ to combat disruptive behaviour in their classes.

**Challenges:** The term challenges, as employed in this study, refers to difficulties that teachers experience in their regular classes when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

## **1.8. Conclusion**

The researcher provided a background to the study. This was to make the readers aware of the problem under investigation.

The statement of the problem and the significance and limitations of the study were presented.

Furthermore, definitions of key concepts were provided to make the study more understandable.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents reviewed literature of approaches to Inclusive Education (IE). It also discusses the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

Other factors that are discussed are the definition of disruptive behaviour, types of disruptive behaviour in classes and the challenges faced by teachers when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Finally, it looks at the coping strategies that teachers employ to manage such learners.

#### **2.2. Inclusive Education**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines inclusive education as the process of addressing and responding to the diversity of the needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and management strategies, with a common vision aimed at serving all children of an appropriate age range. Included in the philosophy is a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (UNESCO, 2008).

In accordance with inclusive education principles, learners with any difficulty or special needs are to participate in learning in the same class situation as those who are not experiencing barriers to learning and development (UNESCO, 2008). Inclusive education is thus that aspect of an education system that responds to the diverse needs of all learners in order to remove all barriers to learning. This implies the acceptance of each person for what he or she is, despite people looking different, having different needs and different ways of living, believing and

thinking (Nel, Engelbrecht, & Tlale, 2014). Consequently, it is imperative for schools in Namibia to provide an environment in which all learners, including those prone to causing and engaging in disruptive behaviour, can be accommodated.

Furthermore, it is understood that an inclusive education system creates opportunities for participation and collaboration. According to Winter and Paul O'raw (2007), the provision of inclusive education requires persistent efforts, attentiveness and continuous monitoring and evaluating in order to create a participatory school setting. Similarly, UNESCO (2008) characterises inclusive classes as those in which all learners, irrespective of their capacities and challenges, participate actively in activities in a spirit of collaboration.

Winter and Paul O'raw (2007) and UNESCO (2008) agree on the need for both participation and collaboration, although the ways in which to go about this is not always a matter of agreement. Some research has questioned the effectiveness of implementing inclusive educational principles by merely grouping learners with distinct differences together. Ferguson (2008) concludes that both learners with and without challenges experience barriers to group work, while Kimmel and Volet (2012) report that bringing people together in cross-cultural groups did not in itself foster tolerance or collaboration.

Many researchers laud inclusive education for its capacity to develop new approaches and resources, not necessarily material resources, but resources developed through diversifying teaching and learning and resources resulting from teachers' improved pedagogical skills and broader understanding of diversity (Engelbrecht, Hugo, Nel, & Swanepoel, 2013). The notion of improved teaching abilities is echoed by Reichow, Boyd and Barton (2016) who conclude that an inclusive class needs to employ multi-sensory communication, as well as multiple teaching strategies, in order to keep the learners engaged.

Despite all the awareness and policy-making regarding inclusive education, there has, however, not been much progress in practice. Johansson (2014) notes that, although inclusive education policies have been crafted by many governments, establishing inclusive practices on the ground has proven to be more difficult. This is echoed by Ferguson (2008), who concludes that the difficult part is the practice of inclusive education rather than the policy making. Consequently, the importance of inclusive education in practice theory, as well as in practice, has never been greater in Namibia and elsewhere.

The Ministry of Education (2013) has developed a sector policy on inclusive education that all children, regardless of their challenges, learning difficulties or impairments, should receive education together in the least restrictive environment. “Inclusive education can be seen as a process of strengthening the capacity of an education system to reach out to all learners. It is, therefore, an overall principle that should guide all educational policies and practices, starting from the belief that education is a fundamental human right and the foundation for a more just society” (Ministry of Education, 2013).

In Namibia, there are segregated schools which are known as special schools providing education to learners with disabilities in separated environments designed or employed to respond to a particular, or variety of, impairment/s. In addition, there are also inclusive schools around the country that are providing education particularly for learners with special needs. As was mentioned previously, the Ministry of Education (2013) has developed a sector policy on inclusive education that paves the way for all children in Namibia to learn and participate fully in the education system, particularly in the commonly-known ‘mainstream schools’. This policy is also in line with that of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities, namely that every person with certain difficulties has the right to be educated without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. Moreover, international movements, such as the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2008), led to the development of inclusive education, advocating that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional and other conditions.

The policy then aims for every school (including its management and every teacher) to take responsibility for educating every learner and ensure that learning is indeed taking place. The emphasis is placed on consultation, collaboration, communication and the well-defined roles and responsibilities of every stakeholder. Lastly, the government has developed eight strategies for achieving the objectives of the Sector Policy on Inclusive Education (Ministry of Education, 2013).

### **2.3. Theoretical framework**

A theoretical framework holds or supports the theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists.

This research problem is supported by the Social Learning Theory, the work of Bandura (1989). It will be explained below.

#### **Social Learning Theory**

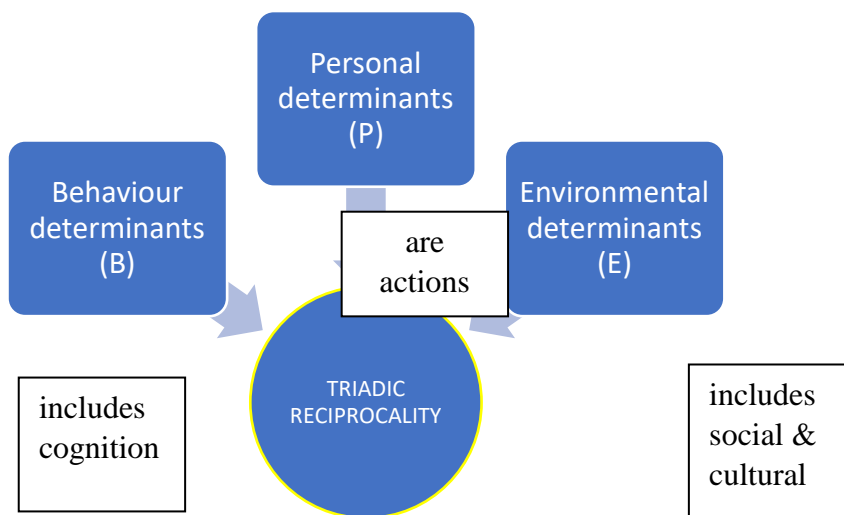
This study is informed theoretically by the work of Bandura (1989), the founder of the social learning theory. Bandura views human behaviour as a result of reciprocal influences, a situation he calls 'reciprocal determinism' (Bryain, 2014). The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in the fact that, when teachers are fully aware of, and versed in, the dynamics of social values, reciprocity and influence, they can understand the root causes of disruptive class

behaviour, and employ informed and effective strategies to address the challenges that such behaviour poses.

Such informed strategies include, among others, encouraging observation and modelling behaviour from fellow learners and other people in the learners' immediate social surroundings. Bandura's social learning theory stresses the importance of observational learning, imitation and modelling. Additionally, in the social learning perspective, behaviour is learned, at least in a basic form, before it is performed, and this is usually done in a controlled environment.

The social learning theory posits that there is continuous interaction between behaviour and individual influences which include cognition and the environment, in what is referred to as the reciprocal causation model. Bandura does not suggest that the three factors in the triadic model of reciprocity are always equal in importance. The influence of behaviour on a learner or the environment depends on which factor is strongest at any particular moment, even though each pillar remains a critical component of the model, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, below.

**Figure 1: Bandura's Triadic Reciprocity**



When a teacher applies Bandura's social learning theory, she or he might present a lesson to the class and have the learners reflect on what the teacher has taught them (the teacher's role represents an environmental influence on cognition). The reflection by learners marks the point at which individual influences become determinants of the learning process and its outcomes. This also includes instances when learners, who do not understand a point, ask a clarifying question.

The conduct of the teacher or other learners (good or bad) during the learning process may also affect the way in which others learn. In other words, learners may imitate the good or bad behaviour of those around them, determining what and how much they learn. This demonstrates the behaviour pillar of the theory, which posits that people can learn by observing a model.

The researcher has chosen Bandura's social learning theory for this study because both the theory and this study are rooted in human behaviour (disruptive or not) and the ways in which it affects learning as this theory holds that learners can learn new information and behaviour by watching other learners. Through observational learning, most human behaviour is learned through modelling: from observing others, one forms an idea of the way in which new behaviour is performed; on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action, in this case, disruptive behaviour. This theoretical model's pillar of behaviour determinants offers a source of potential information to support an understanding of why, in line with the research questions of this study, class disruption occurs and its strategies to combat them.

#### **2.4. Defining disruptive behaviour**

Ghazi, Shahzada, Tariq and Khan (2013) define disruptive behaviour as behaviour that is unacceptable to the teacher during teaching and learning. Furthermore, disruptive behaviour is behaviour that occurs when a child has difficulty controlling his or her actions. Examples of

disruptive behaviour include temper tantrums, interrupting others, impulsiveness with little regard for safety or consequences, aggressiveness or other socially inappropriate acts. Similarly, the Namibia Educational Code of Conduct for Schools (1990) defines disruptive behaviour as behaviour that involves engaging in disorderly or disruptive conduct on college premises or at college-sponsored activities which interferes with the activities of others; this includes studying, teaching, learning and school administration.

Furthermore, according to McCown et al., (1996) disruptive behaviour in the class can be defined as any action by a learner that disrupts learning and teaching in the class. Several researchers have defined disruptive behaviour as that presented by an emotionally and behaviourally disturbed child, a socially maladjusted child, a socio-emotionally deviant child, a child with challenging behaviour and a behaviourally deviant child (Bornman & Rose, 2010; Clough et al., 2005; Nel et al., 2014).

Moreover, Conroy and Brown (2006) state that the classifications of behaviour are mostly categorised in terms of their severity, characteristics or frequency. Additionally, the behaviour manifestations of learners with behaviour difficulties occur along two different dimensions namely, acting out behaviour (externalised) and that of a child (his or her emotions) (internalised) (Clough, Garner, Pardeck, & Yuen, 2005). Some learners may, however, exhibit both internalised and externalised behaviour problems. This study focuses on externalised behaviour which is commonly known as disruptive behaviour that poses challenges to teachers in schools and disrupt lessons.

## **2.5. Types of disruptive behaviour in classes**

Numerous studies on disruptive behaviour in the class have been undertaken all over the world. An increase in the prevalence of disruptive behaviour has not only been noted in Namibian

schools but in the international arena as well. It has drawn the attention of many researchers, such as Akawa (2013) and Shilongo (2002) in Namibia, Landsberg et al. (2014) in South Africa, Sullivan et al. (2014) in Australia, Kourkoutas et al. (2018) in the United State of America and Ghazi et al. (2013) in Pakistan. In Namibia, disruptive behaviour has been described as actions that disturb teachers and learners during the teaching and learning process (Shilongo, 2002). Mwamwenda (2004) states that there are various forms of disruptive behaviour that take place in primary school classes on a daily basis, and if not addressed properly, they can become serious disciplinary problems.

Akawa (2013) describes disruptive behaviour as aggression, physical attacks on teachers and other learners, bullying, making noise, not paying attention, annoying others and rudeness. These often have a negative impact on the learning environment. Disruptive learner behaviour interferes with teachers' ability to conduct their classes and prevents optimal teaching and learning feedback (Landsberg et al., 2014). Furthermore, disruptive behaviour puts teachers under emotional strain, leaving them with a sense of powerlessness and forcing them to redirect time and energy from teaching activities in order to address issues of class discipline (Landsberg et al., 2014; Shilongo, 2002).

In a study conducted by Shilongo (2002), teachers in Namibia indicated that the most frequently occurring types of unwanted behaviour in the classes were learners talking out of turn, moving around, shouting, not doing homework, using abusive language, banging their heels on the floor, singing, stamping, fighting, teasing, bullying and obstructing other learners from paying attention in class. Similarly, in other studies, Sullivan, Conway, Johnson and Owens (2014) and Landsberg et al. (2014) in South Africa observe that the most prevalent unproductive learner

behaviour can be regarded as talking out of turn, blaming others, back chatting, avoiding doing schoolwork and disengaging from class activities.

The Namibia's National Safe Schools Framework Part B: Practical Guide for Building Safe Schools (2018) listed some of the forms of disruptive behaviour common in schools; these are violence, bullying, vandalisms, suicide and carrying sharp objects like knives. Another example of disruptive behaviour is forcing someone into sexual activities. Murnen and Smolak (2000) state that the majority of the children had experienced peer sexual harassment, boys and girls in about equal amounts. In addition, it is often assumed that all learners with problematic sexual behaviour have been sexually abused.

Furthermore, Ulrika (2017) conducted a study on types of disruptive behaviour in classes in Sweden. The main purpose of the study was to investigate the types of disruptive behaviour. It adopted a qualitative approach and collected data by means of focus group interviews in different mainstream schools. The findings of the research study include hyperactivity, noise, aggressive and disrespectful behaviour, disturbances in the class, excessive shyness and reluctance to answer questions or when spoken to, as well as non-participation in classwork.

Furthermore, Kourkoutas, Stavrou and Plexousakis (2018) studied types of disruptive behaviour in classes as experienced by teachers in the United Kingdom. A purposive sample of 15 teachers teaching in regular education was interviewed by semi-structured questions. Teachers indicated the following types of disruptive behaviour from different perspectives: difficulty establishing and maintaining appropriate peer and adult relationships, adhering to established rules of conduct, arguing with adults, losing temper, attaining age-expected academic skills and completing school.

Moreover, Rehman Ghazi et al. (2013) studied the types and causes of learners' disruptive behaviour in the class at secondary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The purpose of the study was to investigate the types and causes of learners' disruptive behaviour in the class at the secondary level as perceived by teachers in secondary schools. The research study was descriptive. All the secondary school teachers of twenty-five (25) districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa constituted the population of the study, and the sample of eight (8) districts was selected by means of multistage, random sampling. A sample of 500 secondary school teachers was selected from 213 sampled schools. The research study found entering the class while shouting, chatting with one another during teaching, refusing adults' requests and sleeping to be major incidences of disruptive behaviour in classes.

A literature review by Levin and Nolan (1996) notes that common, day-to-day disruptive behaviour that poses a challenge to teachers constitutes verbal interruptions (e.g., talking out of turn, name-calling, humming and calling out), off-task behaviour (e.g., daydreaming, fidgeting, doodling, tardiness and inattention), physical movement that, whether intended or not, is bound to disrupt (e.g., wandering about, visiting other learners, passing notes, sitting on the desk and throwing objects around the class) and disrespect (e.g., verbal aggression, teasing, punching, neglecting academic work, refusing to follow directions and assault). These common forms of disruptive behaviour are called surface behaviour because they are usually not the result of deep-seated personal problems.

In closing the review of disruptive behaviour, based on Rayment (2006), it needs to be said that more serious disruptive behaviour, such as conflict degenerating into physical violence, is by far the most challenging form of misbehaviour to deal with. It is often a subset of revenge-seeking, and one in five boys will resort to violent, physical conflict. Fighting exists among learners as the

best way to resolve their conflict situations among themselves. According to Rayment (2006), boys regard peers who do not fight as softies.

## **2.5.The challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour**

Various studies (Dussault, 2018; Miller & Cunningham, 2003; Gateru, 2010; Mukangu, 2008; UNISON Survey, 2016; Ross, 2013; Semali & Vumilia, 2016) have been conducted regarding the challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Some of the challenges identified include high enrolment rates, understaffing and overcrowded classes, as well as the lack of teacher training, modern teaching materials and support from school administrators.

Ross (2013) investigated the challenges teachers' faced when teaching learners with behaviour disorders at selected schools in Massachusetts in the United States. The researcher followed a qualitative research approach. The findings of the research indicated that the challenges teachers faced most often when teaching learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour were high enrolment rates, overcrowded classes and a lack of training for teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, Udoba (2014) conducted a study on challenges faced by teachers when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour in Tanzania. The study adopted a qualitative approach that employed a descriptive research design. Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and observations. The findings of the study show that large class sizes, as well as the lack of modern teaching materials and additional support services from school administrators were some of the challenges they faced when teaching these learners.

In line with the above, Gateru (2010) studied the resources and pedagogical constraints of teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour in the Maradaka Division, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive design, with a sample population of 30 teachers. Her findings indicate that, apart from pedagogical constraints, teachers experienced challenges, such as a lack of specialised equipment, teaching-learning resources, curriculum design, recreational facilities and understaffing.

UNESCO (2005) researched the challenges regarding the implementation of free primary education in Kenya. The study findings show that some of the challenges teachers faced included the lack of specialised training in handling the education of learners with special needs and limited teaching-learning resources, as well as the absence of recreational facilities. Further aspects were understaffed schools, as well as over-enrolment and congested classes in public primary schools.

Furthermore, Mukangu's (2008) findings indicate that, apart from pedagogical constraints, teachers experienced challenges, such as a lack of specialised equipment, teaching-learning resources, recreational facilities and understaffing. It is important to note that all categories of disabilities also comprised learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. This truth requires the teachers to be well-equipped with those skills and knowledge needed for handling all learners, regardless of their disability in the general education class. Many teachers were not trained in special needs education and, as such, they lacked the skills and knowledge to teach and manage learners with different learning needs or disabilities. Notably, the school curriculum was meant for general education and, therefore, not suitable for learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. Consequently, teachers who are responsible for curriculum implementation should adapt the

curriculum and various teaching methods to accommodate those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour (Semali & Vumilia, 2016).

On a different note, Dussault (2018) reveals some other challenges that teachers experienced when dealing with disruptive behaviour. These were a lack of teamwork, empathy and support between learners, as well as teachers wearing too many different hats at the same time, no time to deal with bodily functions, teachers being made accountable for more than they should, not enough time to plan, excessive paperwork for data collection, keeping up with the expectations of school administration and applying a prescribed curriculum to all types of learners.

According to a new Ofsted report (2014), teachers were working hard to maintain high standards of behaviour in classes, but in too many cases were not being supported appropriately by school administrators. Teachers need to be backed by the school management, but regrettably, too many school leaders have not taught for years and have lost touch with the day-to-day realities of the class situation.

In conclusion, the class environment is one of the challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The class environment comprises several aspects that may at times be observable. It is conceived to compose a range of educational concepts that include physical setting, the psychological environment that is created through social interactions, as well as several instructional procedures that are related to teacher characteristics and behaviour (Miller & Cunningham, 2003).

## **2.6. Coping mechanisms or strategies that teachers employ when managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour**

An inclusive educational strategy implies careful consideration of the unique needs of each learner in order to provide effective educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2008). Most children

who present with inappropriate behaviour are not always aware of their actions as they were either born with conditions that predispose them to misbehaviour or they have acquired their behaviour patterns socially (UNESCO, 2008). Teachers find it difficult to control learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in order for them to work as productive members of a class. These learners often lack impulse control and may have a difficult time handling social interactions with other learners effectively. This can result in the disruption of class activities, and affect academic outcomes.

A large number of scholars (Alberto & Troutman, 2010; Benner et al., 2013; Bond, 2017b; Cole, 2013; Elam, 2016; Farley & Cook, n.d.; Gateru, 2010; Kamenye, 2020; Ngundo, 2007; Polloway et al., 2008; Raby, 2012; Salend, 2008; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008; Sun & Shek, 2010; Vaughn & Lancelotta, 1990; Bambara, Nonnermacher & Kern, 2009) carried out research that focused on strategies that teachers employ when managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Some of these strategies are management behaviour, emotional assessment, behaviour modifications and the utilisation of behaviour tools.

First of all, Raby (2012) notes that class management strategies include authoritarian sanctions of increasing severity in response to repeated rule infringements. Such escalating consequences are often referred to as step systems. Steps typically involve an escalation of punitive responses, such as giving a warning or reminder, in- and out-of-class time-out, referral to a principal, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and permanent exclusion from school. On the contrary, some of the strategies listed by Raby (2012) would violate the Namibian Education Code of Conduct (1990) that forbids out-of-class or time-out punitive strategies. The Namibian Education Act 16 (2001) states that no child should be sent out of the class as this violates the child's right to education. This principle is supported by one of the Namibian Goals for

Education for All, listed as “Access,” which respects the right of all individuals to have access to quality education (MoEAC, 2003). Teachers typically find themselves in a dilemma over whether to abide by the Act, and spend much time trying to maintain order; conversely, they deviate from the Act and complete the cognitive targets, while perhaps causing emotional harm to learners by leaving them unfulfilled or unable to learn.

Teachers normally end up taking a cautious approach by adhering to official rules and guidelines in order to maintain their professional integrity, safeguard their careers and protect themselves from potential legal ramifications that may arise from violating the laws and regulations. In many schools, teachers also sign a Corporal Punishment Agreement Form by which they agree not to engage in corporal punishment. Consequently, teachers rarely ever employ physically punitive or out-of-class measures.

Without the option of utilising punitive measures, teachers resort to other tactics and strategies. These include isolating problematic learners (i.e. by seating arrangement), strong verbal reprimanding, referral to principals or Life Skills teachers, and sometimes parental involvement (Raby, 2012; Sun & Shek, 2010). These strategies are not consistently, or always, effective; however, they do result in a reduction in the number of class disruptions that teachers have to address.

Bond (2017) conducted a study on the practices and experiences of teachers teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The purpose of the study was to identify strategies and practices employed by experienced teachers to inform stakeholders of teaching practices that may benefit learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The researcher employed a qualitative method that consisted of semi-structured interviews to collect data. A total of six experienced teachers were purposively sampled as participants who lived in Baltimore in the Maryland area.

The study found that management behaviour, emotional assessment and positive relationships between learners and teachers were the most effective strategies for teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, Elam (2016) conducted a research study on equipping teachers to meet the needs of learners with behaviour disorders in the United States. The purpose of the study was to identify teachers' descriptions of effective, instructional strategies they employ when faced with behaviour disorders. Data were collected by means of a case study which explored a qualitative design, employing purposive sampling strategies for participant recruitment. The study found that behaviour management was one of the strategies to manage and redirect learners' behaviour by utilising behaviour modifications, establishing group contingencies, fostering-self regulation and management, as well as employing behaviour tools.

Moreover, Cole (2013) reviewed effective teaching strategies for teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in the United States. The article intended to review the current literature (Allday et al., 2012; McIntosh et al., 2008; Musti-Rao & Haydon, 2011; Sugai & Horner, 2008) in the disruptive behaviour arena over the past ten years to determine the current and best strategies of teachers for learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. After an extensive literature review covering the past years, the findings reveal some of the most frequently discussed strategies that were proven to be effective for improving the behaviour or outcomes of learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. The strategies are academic engagement, the provision of sufficient resources, class management and effective praise.

Additionally, Ngundo (2007) conducted a study regarding the pedagogical constraints on the learning of upper primary learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour in various rehabilitation centres in Kenya. The study objectives were to examine strategies employed to teach learners

who exhibited disruptive behaviour, investigate the adequacy and appropriateness of the teaching resources for disruptive behaviour and, lastly, to establish intervention strategies that teachers utilised in managing learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. The study was conducted in the Wamumu, Kirigiti and Kirinyaga approved schools. The researcher employed a descriptive design with a sample population of 90 pupils and 16 teachers. The findings show that those instructional strategies employed were inappropriate; thus, indicating pedagogical constraints.

A further research study was conducted by Mastropieri (2000). It found that as much as half the time allocated for instruction during the school day was lost to learners' off-task behaviour, interruptions, disruptive behaviour and lack of teachers' preparation. Transitions are those times during the day when learners are moving from one activity to another. According to Polloway, Patton and Serna (2008), teachers can minimise disruptive behaviour during transition times by giving learners specific directions on how to move from one activity to another and by rewarding them for making an orderly and smooth transition. Furthermore, class arrangement, which is the physical layout of the class, can minimise disruptive behaviour (Salend, 2008).

According to Scheuermann and Hall (2008), positive behaviour support includes providing effective academic content and instructions to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. It requires curriculum adaptations to incorporate learners' interests into the curriculum. Teachers should endeavour to design a curriculum that is relevant and motivating for those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. For instance, instructional delivery involves teachers engaging often and substantially when providing instruction to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Continuously, applied behaviour principles for increasing desired behaviour are principles that refer to a systematic, performance-based, self-evaluative method of changing behaviour by applying interventions based on behaviour principles (Alberto & Troutman, 2010). These include

positive reinforcement which focuses on providing rewards immediately after desired behaviour occurs, the premark principle which allows the child to engage in a favoured activity immediately following the occurrence of desired behaviour, contingency contracting which specifies in writing the desired behaviour and the positive consequences that will follow when the child engages in the desired behaviour. Additionally, self-management, assertiveness and self-control refer to a wide range of activities that learners engage in to increase or decrease the probability of appropriate behaviour (Alberto, 2010).

Other strategies, such as interpersonal problem-solving and conflict resolution, assist learners whose thought processes rapidly become disorganised under stress conditions. It is necessary to provide special training in those cognitive skills which are required to deal with problematic situations. It also focuses on teaching learners the “thinking” skills necessary to avoid and resolve interpersonal conflict, resist peer pressure and cope with their emotions and stresses. Learners are taught to identify their problems, consider and select from a range of alternative solutions and evaluate the result of their selection (Vaughn & Lancelotta, 1990).

Furthermore, teachers’ ability to manage learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour is a very important element in teaching and learning. Wambungu (2006) conducted a study on factors that hinder the educational performance of orphans in selected primary schools in Kenya. It shows that teachers lacked adequate skills in handling behaviour and social problems. The primary task for a teacher who teaches disruptive learners is to teach them social skills, help them replace their abnormal behaviour with more socially appropriate responses, manage the class environment, such as desk arrangement and set class rules and regulations (Kauffman,2007).

Moreover, Marais and Meier (2010) conducted a study on disruptive behaviour in the foundation phase of schooling in South Africa. The main purpose of the study was to investigate the types

and causes of disruptive behaviour and provide strategies that teachers can employ to prevent disruptive behaviour in classes. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and collected data from foundation phase teachers by means of interviews comprising semi-structured questions. Parental involvement and class rules were found to be good approaches to manage disruptive behaviour and redirect learners' behaviour positively.

County et al., (2015) state that reporting learners to the disciplinary committee is an effective strategy to combat disruptive behaviour. Schools make use of disciplinary committees to combat disruptive behaviour continually in order to teach harmoniously for the achievement of school objectives. However, it has been reported that most schools have disciplinary committees but, in most cases, they do not function.

To sum up, Kamenye (2020) conducted a study on teachers' strategies to combat disruptive behaviour in classes in the Otjozondjupa Region. The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which teachers conceptualise disruptive behaviour and to explore the strategies they utilise in combating class disruption at senior primary schools in the Otjozondjupa region. A qualitative case study design was employed to investigate this phenomenon in the two best-performing schools and two under-performing schools in the Otjozondjupa region. The findings of the study confirm parental involvement and keeping learners engaged emerged as strategies teachers most prominently employed in managing class disruption. The study recommends broadening the understanding of inclusive education approaches and cultures for addressing class behaviour in the Namibian school system; consequently, it constitutes the need to conduct this study.

## **2.7. Summary**

This chapter provided literature reviewed for the study regarding on approach towards inclusive education (IE). It also discussed the theoretical framework that underpins the study and the definition of disruptive behaviour.

Furthermore, it presented the different types of disruptive behaviour in classes and the challenges faced by teachers when managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Finally, it looked at the coping mechanisms that teachers employ to manage those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

In the next chapter, the research methodology is discussed. It will inform the readers on procedures and/or techniques employed to identify, select, process and analyse information regarding the research study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the research design, population and setting. It also describes the sample and research instrument.

It, furthermore, explains the pilot study and its results. Finally, it presents the pilot study, procedure and data analysis, as well as discuss ethical considerations adhered to.

#### **3.2. Research design**

This study adopted a quantitative approach. An important characteristic of quantitative research designs is to distinguish between non-experimental and experimental research. In experimental research, the researcher manipulates what the participants will experience (Mertens, 2010). Non-experimental research embodies a group of techniques to conduct quantitative research where there is no manipulation of any variable in the study (Mertler, 2014). Non-experimental designs allow a researcher to obtain measures from participants to describe the situation as it has occurred naturally.

In this study, the researcher made use of a non-experimental research design as not to manipulate variables because it is assumed that teachers already know these learners as problematic. There are three types of non-experimental research designs, namely descriptive research (which includes observational and survey research), correlational and causal-comparative research.

This study employed a quantitative research approach by making use of structured survey questionnaires to collect data regarding specific actions of school learners which teachers would describe as disruptive behaviour in class. The items of the questionnaires included a wide range of issues related to learners' actions or behaviour in the class. A survey allowed the researcher to

describe, and interpret, the current status of individuals, settings or events (Mertler, 2014). Furthermore, the survey was selected because of its ability to scan a wider field of issues and the fact that it relies on self-reports from respondents representing a wider population (Mertens, 2010).

### **3.3. Population**

The population included all teachers teaching in the 32 private and government primary schools in the Omaheke educational region (Education Management Information System, 2019).

### **3.4. Sampling and sample**

The study employed the probability sampling techniques of systematic and simple random sampling in order to select a reasonably large number of participants (Taherdoost, 2016). To this effect, a total of 290 primary teachers were randomly selected from the target population (580 teachers) by means of a list of schools that was obtained from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

To select schools, the researcher created a list of schools and selected a beginning number as well as an interval and gathered a list of 16 participating schools based on the interval number. Procedurally, the researcher wrote all the names of teachers at each school on pieces of paper and put all the names in a box to select 50% of the teachers at each school to participate in the study. For logical reasons, some schools contributed more teachers than others because some schools had more staff members than others.

### **3.5. Research instruments**

A structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from the 290 primary school teachers who agreed to participate in the study. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first

section focused on demographic data, such as school, gender, age, qualifications and years of teaching experience. The second section consisted of close-ended questions on types of behaviour in class. The third section focused on challenges that teachers faced when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. The last section focused on coping mechanisms that teachers employ when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour (see Appendix H: Research Instrument).

### **3.6. Pilot study**

Before conducting the full-scale research project, the researcher selected a pilot sample of 12 teachers at one primary school in the Omaheke region. This was to ensure that the research questionnaire was understood and to eliminate any misinterpretations and biases that could occur in the research.

Questionnaires were administered to a total number of 12 teachers at the selected primary school. The researcher asked the teachers to read and complete the questionnaire. When the teachers had completed the questionnaire, they were asked to notify the researcher which questions were not well understood. The teachers were also asked to make suggestions in order to improve the quality of the instrument. This assisted the researcher in deciding whether the questions asked were pertinent and suitable.

### **3.7. Results of the pilot study**

After the completion of the questionnaire, the researcher made a few changes to the instrument. This was to clarify some of the items.

The results of the pilot study were significant because they enabled the researcher to amend the instrument in order to enhance its reliability. The process ensured simplified meanings of words and statements.

### **3.8. Data collecting procedures**

After obtaining authorisation from the relevant offices and institutions (i.e. the UNAM Ethics Committee, the Executive Director in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Regional Director of Omaheke Educational Region and principals of participating schools), the researcher physically went to the schools of the selected participants for data collection (see Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G).

At the schools, the principals allowed the researcher to meet the participating teachers during break times. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the participating teachers and explained all four sections of the questionnaire. Teachers took about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the researcher collected all completed questionnaires from participants for data analysis.

### **3.9. Data analysis**

The researcher employed descriptive analyses, such as frequencies and percentages. This was done to compare the information collected from the different participants.

A percentage frequency distribution is a display of data that specifies the percentage of observations that exist for each data point or grouping of data points (Mertens, 2010). It is a particularly useful method of expressing the relative frequency of survey responses and other data.

### **3.10. Research ethics**

The University of Namibia's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) issued the required ethical clearance to carry out the study (see Appendix A). In compliance with research ethical protocols, the researcher grouped the participants at their respective schools, and explained to them the

purpose and procedures of the study as well as the ways in which their contributions or information would be utilised.

Before the questionnaires were distributed and before their participation, participants were given informed consent letters to sign (see Appendix I). They were, furthermore, informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the process at any time. Finally, they were assured that the data they provided would be treated as highly confidential.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULTS

#### 4.1. Introduction

The findings of this study are presented in this chapter as per the research questions of the study. These include the demographic variables and personal views of the respondents on disruptive behaviour of learners in classes.

Tables have been utilised in most instances to present the responses of the participants.

#### 4.2. Demographic data

All research participants of this study were requested to provide personal information to establish their gender (male or female), age (in years), teaching qualifications and teaching experience (in years).

##### 4.2.1. School milieu

By ticking on the school milieu in the questionnaires that were administered to them, teachers were requested to state their school milieu. Teachers' responses are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: School milieu**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
School milieu	Urban	74	25.5%
	Rural	175	60.3%
	Suburban	41	14.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>

Regarding the school milieu, it was found that there were more respondents in the rural area (175 or 60.3%), followed by urban (74 or 25.5) than in the suburban area (41 or 14.1%). In the Omaheke educational region, there are more primary schools with more teachers in the rural area than in the urban and suburban areas. As shown by these findings, rural schools dominated the number of schools in the Omaheke region with a massive 60.3%.

#### 4.2.2. Gender

Research participants were requested to indicate their gender by ticking male or female on the questionnaire administered to them.

**Table 2: Gender**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gender	Male	130	44.8
	Female	160	55.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table indicates that there were more female teachers (160 or 55.5 %) than male teachers (130 or 44.8%). This is in line with EMIS (2019) which indicates that there are more female teachers than male teachers in the teaching profession in the Omaheke region. The findings, furthermore, indicate the domination of women in the education sector. The need to have at least approximately equal gender representation is based on the assertion that reaction and handling of disruptive behaviour between women and men differ, as theory suggests that women are more tolerant than men; hence, the reason why women dominate the education industry in terms of numbers (Moran, 2008).

#### 4.2.3. Age

Respondents were asked to indicate their age in categories ranging from less than 20 to over 45 years. The respondents' ages were categorised into five-year intervals.

**Table 3: Age**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Age	Less than 20	3	1.03%
	21-25	38	13.1%
	26-30	69	23.8%
	31-35	90	31.0%
	41-45	59	20.3%
	More than 45	31	10.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to the Table above, the majority of the respondents (31%) were in the age category of 31 to 35 years, followed by the age category of 26 to 30 years (23.8%). The age category of 41 to 45 comprised 59 (20.3%) teachers, followed by the age category 21 to 25 (13.1%). The age category of more than 45 years comprised 31 (10.7%) teachers while the age category less than 20 comprised 3 (1.03%) teachers.

#### 4.2.4. Teaching qualifications

All participants were requested to show their teaching qualifications by selecting the highest level of training they had received before they were appointed as teachers.

**Table 4: Teaching qualifications**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teaching qualification	Degree, teaching diploma plus additional qualification	16	5.5%
	Degree plus teaching diploma	19	6.5%
	Teaching degree plus postgraduate qualification	20	6.9%
	Teaching degree	76	26.2%
	Teaching diploma plus another qualification	136	46.9%
	Certificate	6	2.1%
	Grade 12	1	0.3%
	No teaching qualification	16	5.5%

The Table above indicates that the highest qualified teachers were those with a teaching diploma plus another qualification (136 or 46.9%), followed by those with a teaching degree (76 or 26.2%). The next category consisted of teachers with a teaching degree plus a postgraduate qualification (20 or 6.9%), followed by those with a degree plus a teaching diploma (19 or 6.5%). Teachers with a degree, teaching diploma plus an additional qualification and those with no teaching qualification were 16 (95.5%) each, 6 (2.1%) with only a certificate and, lastly, there was 1 (0.3%) with only Grade (0.3%). The majority of the respondents had the necessary qualifications that enabled understanding and responding to the subject topic. This is despite the

fact that 5.5 % of the respondents did not have any recognised qualifications. However, the researcher certified them fit as they had experienced the issue under investigation.

#### 4.2.5. Teaching experience

Teaching experience in teaching service is very important when one has to investigate disruptive behaviour in schools. There was a need to see the respondents' experience in teaching experience and their knowledge of the subject topic. The teaching experience was categorised into 8 intervals.

**Table 5: Teaching experience**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teaching experience	Less than 12 months	22	7.6%
	1-5 years	53	18.3%
	6-10 years	74	25.6%
	11-15 years	66	22.8%
	16-20 years	21	7.2%
	21-25 years	18	6.2%
	26-30 years	16	5.5%
	30-40 years	20	6.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>

The teaching experience of teachers is presented in the Table above, and show that the majority of the teachers (74 or 25.6%) had 6 to10 years of teaching experience. This was followed by 11 to 15 years teaching experience (66 or (22.8%), 1 to 5 years (53 or 18.3%), less than 12 months (22 or 7.6%), 16 to 20 years (21 or 7.2%), 30 to 40 years (20 or 6.9%) and lastly 26 to 30 years (16 or 5.5%). The majority of the respondents' experience in the teaching industry added reliability and some validity to their views.

#### 4.2.6. Number of learners per class

The number of learners in a class contributes to managing those learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour; hence, it was necessary to measure learner numbers during the collection of the research data.

The more overcrowded classes are, the more complicated it would be for teachers to cope with learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The numbers of learners per class were divided into 7 categories.

**Table 6: Number of learners per class**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Number of learners per class	Less than 20 learners	25	8.6%
	20-25 learners	16	5.5%
	26-30 learners	60	20.7%
	30-35 learners	70	24.1%
	36-40 learners	103	35.5%
	46 and above learners	16	5.5%

The Table above shows that the majority of classes taught comprised 36 to 40 learners (103 or 35.5%), followed by 30 to 35 learners (70 or 24.1), 26 to 30 learners (60 or 20.7%), less than 20 learners (25 or 8.6%) and, finally, 20 to 25 learners and more than 46 learners had a frequency of 16 (5.5%) each. As highlighted previously, Kamenye (2020) conducted a study on teachers' strategies to combat disruptive behaviour in classes in the Otjozondjupa region of Namibia. She advocates that the number of learners in a class will allow teachers to adopt certain suitable measures to address the disruptive behaviour by learners.

#### **4.2.7. Teacher training**

The difference in responses to dealing with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour is often determined by the nature of the training received by the teacher as far as ways to deal and cope with such behaviour are concerned. Participants were required to show the nature and level of their training in teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour.

**Table 7: Teachers' training in special education**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Training in Special Education	Full time training at university	70	24.4%
	In-service training	21	7.2%
	No training at all	199	68.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Table indicates that 199 (68.6%) had no training in handling learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour, 70 (24.4%) had full-time training at university while 21 (7.2%) of the respondents indicated that they had in-service training for learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. This also had a direct impact on the way in which they would manage disruptive behaviour in the class as, according to Cole (2014), teacher training is critical in managing disruptive behaviour.

#### **4.3.Participants' views of disruptive behaviour**

The study sought the personal opinions of each participant on the nature and the frequency of learners' disruptive behaviour as experienced inside class. The responses to the question of "Which of these types of disruptive behaviour are displayed by learners in your class?" were rated and ranged from very often to none.

**Table 8: Frequency of occurrence on disruptive behaviour**

Disruptive behaviour in the class	Very Often (4)		Often (3)		Occasionally (2)		Never (1)		Total	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
1. Untimely talking or laughing	173	59.7	44	15.2	57	19.7	16	5.6	290	100
2. Arguing with adult	20	6.9	41	14.1	106	36.6	123	42.4	290	100
3. Losing temper easily	13	4.5	46	15.9	137	47.2	94	32.4	290	100
4. Actively refusing adult requests or rules	27	9.3	48	16.6	150	51.7	65	22.4	290	100
5. Deliberately annoying others	30	10.3	40	17.8	151	52.1	69	23.8	290	100
6. Blaming others for his or her mistakes	144	49.7	110	37.9	15	5.2	21	7.2	290	100
7. Touchy or easily annoyed by others	80	27.6	99	34.1	67	23.1	44	15.2	290	100
8. Angry and disrespectful	192	66.2	46	15.9	22	7.6	30	10.3	290	100
9. Bullying, threatening and intimidating others	215	74.1	38	13.1	19	6.6	18	6.2	290	100
10. Starting physical fights	17	5.9	14	4.8	150	51.7	100	34.5	290	100
11. Lying to get out of trouble	77	26.6	100	34.5	101	34.8	12	4.1	290	100
12. Absent from school without valid reasons	180	62.0	44	15.2	57	19.6	9	3.1	290	100
13. Physically cruel to people	52	17.9	50	17.2	100	34.5	88	30.3	290	100
14. Stealing from other learners	36	12.4	37	12.8	157	54.1	60	20.7	290	100
15. Carrying and using objects like knives at school	6	2.1	4	1.4	3	1.0	283	97.6	290	100
16. Destroying others' property	10	3.4	11	3.8	20	6.9	249	85.9	290	100
17. Forcing someone into sexual activities	6	2.1	8	2.8	4	1.4	271	93.4	290	100
18. Yelling outside or inside class	190	65.5	44	15.2	20	6.9	36	12.4	290	100
19. Hyperactive in- and outside class	250	86.2	18	6.2	10	3.4	12	4.1	290	100
20. Showing behaviour which is harmful to self and others	12	4.1	14	4.8	100	34.4	164	56.6	290	100
21. Displaying behaviour that hampers teaching	189	65.2	70	24.1	16	5.5	15	5.1	290	100

#### **4.3.1. Untimely talking or laughing**

Table 8 shows that the majority of the respondents (59.7 %) reported having experienced learners' untimely talking or laughing very often. Only a few of them (5.6%) indicated that they had never experienced such behaviour.

#### **4.3.2. Arguing with adults**

As reflected in the Table above, most of the respondents (42.4%) indicated that they had never experienced learners arguing with adults. About 36.6% of the respondents, however, indicated to have occasionally experienced this kind of behaviour and a few (6.9%) reported to have faced the behaviour very often.

#### **4.3.3. Losing temper easily**

As shown in the Table above, the majority of respondents (47.24%) indicated that learners losing their tempers easily occurred occasionally. About 32.4% of them, however, indicated to have never experienced such situations, while 15.9% said it occurred often and a few (4.5%) said it occurred very often.

#### **4.3.4. Actively refusing adult requests**

The results in the Table above show that 51.7% of the total number of respondents indicated that refusing adult requests or rules occurred occasionally, while 22.4% indicated that it never occurred; 16.6% indicated that it occurred often and, lastly, 9.3% said it occurred very often.

#### **4.3.5. Deliberately annoying others**

Based on the results presented in the Table above, most of the respondents (52.1%) showed that deliberately annoying others occurred occasionally, while 23.8% said it never occurred, 17.8% said it occurred often and a few of them (10.3%) reported that it occurred very often.

#### **4.3.6. Blaming others for his or her mistakes**

Based on the findings presented in the Table above, the majority of the respondents (49.7%) indicated that blaming other learners occurred very often, while 37.9% indicated that this behaviour occurred often; 7.2% said it never occurred and a few (5.2%) had experienced it occasionally.

#### **4.3.7. Touchy or easily annoyed by others**

The Table above shows that the majority of the participants (49.7%) had experienced learners being touchy or easily annoyed by others very often. Other respondents (37.9%) indicated that this behaviour occurred often, while 7.2% reported that they had never experienced it and a few (5.2%) indicated that they had experienced this behaviour occasionally.

#### **4.3.8. Anger and disrespect**

The Table above reveals that the majority of respondents (66.2%) had experienced learners angry and disrespectful very often. Other respondents (15.9%) indicated that this behaviour occurred often while 10.3% reported that it never happened, and a few (7.6%) said it happened occasionally.

#### **4.3.9. Bullying, threatening and intimidating others**

According to the Table, nearly all of the respondents (74.1 %) reported to have experienced bullying, threats and intimidation of others very often as part of the disruptive behaviour in their classes. Another 13.1% indicated that such disruptive behaviour occurred often, 19 (6.6%) said that it occurred occasionally and the remaining 18 (6.2%) said they had never experienced it.

#### **4.3.10. Starting physical fights**

As can be seen in the Table above, most of the respondents (51.7%) reported that the starting of physical fights occurred occasionally. About 34.5% said that they had never experienced such

behaviour and others (5.9%) said it occurred very often. The remaining 4.8% had experienced the behaviour often. This challenge of starting fights is more prevailing among boys than girls.

#### **4.3.11. Lying their way out of trouble**

It is shown in the Table above that the majority of the teachers (34.8%) reported that the behaviour of learners lying their way out of trouble occurred occasionally. Other respondents (26.6%) mentioned that it was a very frequent practice while 34.5% of the respondents indicated that it occurred often; a few (4.1%) indicated that they had never encountered this kind of disruptive behaviour.

#### **4.3.12. Absence from school without valid reasons**

The Table indicates that being absent from school without valid reasons was highlighted as being rampant. Of the respondents, 180 (62.0%) indicated it occurred very often while 44 (15.2%) found that it occurred often; 57 (19.6%) showed that it occurred occasionally whereas the remaining 9 (3.1%) said it never happened.

#### **4.3.13. Physical cruelty to others**

As highlighted in the Table above, 17.9% of the respondents indicated that physical cruelty to others happened very often; 7.2% of the respondents indicated that it occurred often; 34.5% indicated occasionally and 30.3% that they had never experienced this behaviour. The majority of the respondents indicated that, although it was taking place, it was not at a large scale.

#### **4.3.14. Stealing things from other learners**

Based on the Table above, the results show that the majority of the respondents (54.1%) had experienced occasionally that learners were stealing things from other learners. Other respondents indicated that it occurred very often (12.4%) while 12.8% said it occurred often and another 20.7% said it never happened.

#### **4.3.15. Carrying and using objects like knives at school**

As presented in the Table above, most of the respondents (97.6%) reported that the carrying and using objects like knives at school had never been experienced. A few of the respondents (2.1%) said it occurred very often, 4 (1.4%) said it occurred often and, lastly, 3 (1.0%) said that it occurred occasionally. There is an overwhelming suggestion in the learning institution that this disruptive behaviour was not that common in many schools.

#### **4.3.16. Destroying the property of others**

According to the Table above, one of the most common challenges that teachers were facing in schools was the destruction of property. This is supported by the findings as 74.1% of the respondents indicated that this behaviour occurred very often in schools. Others (13.1%) indicated that it occurred often while 6.6% mentioned that it happened occasionally and, finally, 6.2% said it never occurred.

#### **4.3.17. Forcing someone into sexual activities**

The researcher wanted to establish how often disruptive behaviour forced someone into sexual activities. The Table above shows that the majority (93.4%) indicated that they had never experienced such behaviour. Only a few (2.1%) said that it occurred very often, 2.8% said that it occurred often and, lastly, 1.4% reported that this behaviour occurred occasionally in schools.

#### **4.3.18. Shouting in- or outside class**

As highlighted in the Table above, most of the respondents (65.5%) reported that yelling outside or inside the class occurred very often. Other respondents (15.2%) reported that this behaviour occurred often, while 6.9% said it occurred occasionally and, lastly, the remaining 12.4 % said it never occurred.

#### **4.3.19. Hyperactivity in- and outside class**

Hyperactivity in- and outside class was indicated as one of the disruptive behaviours. According to the Table above, nearly all of the respondents (86.2%) indicated it was very often the behaviour amongst learners. Another 6.2% of the respondents said that it occurred often while 10 (3.4%) of the respondents said it happened occasionally, whereas the remainder of the respondents (4.1%) said it never happened.

#### **4.3.20. Showing behaviour which is harmful to self and others**

Based on the Table above, the majority of the respondents (56.6%) showed that this behaviour never occurred in schools. Another 34.4% indicated that this behaviour occurred occasionally while 4.8% said it occurred often and, lastly, 4.1% said they had experienced it often.

#### **4.3.21. Displaying behaviour which hampers teaching and learning**

The last issue regarding the types of disruptive behaviour in schools was the displaying of behaviour that hampered teaching and learning. Based on the results presented in the Table above, 65.2 % of the participants indicated that, indeed, the practice occurred very often, 24.1% said it happened often and 5.5% said that it happened occasionally whereas the remaining 5.1% said that it never happened.

#### **4.4. Teachers' challenges**

The study, furthermore, investigated the challenges that participants experienced when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. The responses were rated as being serious, not serious or not sure, as shown in the Table below.

**Table 9: Teachers' responses to challenges**

Factors	Serious		Not serious		Not sure	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	%
1. Lack of teaching and learning aids	100	34.4	102	35.2	90	31
2. Shortage of specialised training	230	82.8	34	11.8	26	9
3. Overcrowding of classes	277	96.6	8	2.8	15	5.2
4. Lack of school administrators' support	196	67.6	50	17.2	44	15.17
5. Understaffing in schools	57	19.7	200	68.9	33	16.5
6. Poor class environment	44	15.2	201	69.3	45	15.7
7. Poor school environment	49	16.8	200	68.9	41	14.1
8. Lack of curriculum support	257	88.7	23	7.9	10	3.4

**4.4.1. Lack of teaching and learning aids**

According to the Table above, the majority of the respondents (35.2%) mentioned that the lack of teaching and learning aids was not serious. Others (34.4%) indicated that this factor was serious and, lastly, 31% said they were not sure whether the lack of teaching and learning aids posed a challenge when they were dealing with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour.

**4.4.2. Shortage of specialised training**

As highlighted in the Table above, a large number of the respondents (82.8%) said that the shortage of specialised training was serious. Others (11.8%) said it was not serious and, lastly, 9% said that they were not sure.

**4.4.3. Overcrowding of classes**

Overcrowding was identified as an issue that was also causing problems. As shown in the Table above, the majority of the respondents (96.6%) said that overcrowding was serious, another 8 (2.8%) said it was not serious and the remaining 15 (5.2%) said that they were not sure.

**4.4.4. Lack of school administrators' support**

In the Table above, it is indicated that most of the respondents (67.6%) said that the lack of school administrators' support was serious; another 17.2% said that it was not serious and, finally, 15.17% felt they were not sure.

#### **4.4.5. Understaffing at schools**

The Table above reflects that most of the respondents (68.9%) reported that the issue of understaffing at schools was not serious. Others (19.7%) felt it was seriously dealt with and the remaining 16.5% said they were not sure.

#### **4.4.6. Poor class environment**

As reflected in the Table above, nearly all 69.3% of the respondents said that the poor class environment was not serious. A few (15.2%) reported that it was serious and, lastly, 15.7% said they were not sure.

#### **4.4.7. Poor school environment**

As indicated in the Table above, the majority of the respondents (68.9%) said that poor school environment was not serious while 16.8% reported that it was serious and, lastly, 14.1% said they were not sure whether poor school environment was serious or not.

#### **4.4.8. Lack of curriculum support**

The findings in the Table above indicate that it was overwhelmingly reported that most of the respondents (88.7%) felt that the lack of curriculum support was serious. Others (7.9 %) said it was not serious and, lastly, 3.4% indicated that they were not sure.

#### **4.5. Intervention strategies responses**

Interventions are necessary for the control of disruptive behaviour and, as a result, the researcher wanted to establish the effectiveness of the teachers' strategies in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Answers are rated from number 1 (not effective) to number 4 (very effective). From the findings, the following was established.

**Table 10: Responses regarding intervention strategies**

Strategy	Not effective (1)		Not sure (2)		Effective (3)		Very Effective (4)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. Providing clear class rules	14	4.8	17	5.7	66	22.8	207	71.4
2. Praising good behaviour of learners	20	6.9	19	6.6	64	22.0	187	64.4
3. Applying class-wide punishment	225	77.6	28	9.7	30	10.3	7	2.4
4. Organising class well	7	2.4	7	2.4	174	60	102	35.2
5. Managing time well	5	1.7	5	1.7	220	75.9	60	20.7
6. Providing sufficient learning resources	102	35.2	120	41.4	30	10.3	38	13.1
7. Teaching all learners social skills	10	3.4	20	6.8	62	21.4	198	68.2
8. Managing aggressiveness skills	99	34.1	102	35.2	40	13.8	49	16.9
9. Developing positive self-image	8	2.6	20	6.9	218	75.2	44	15.8
10. Teaching stress management skills	99	34.1	89	30.7	50	17.2	52	17.9
11. Changing seating arrangements	20	6.9	20	6.9	150	51.7	100	34.5
12. Informing learners of consequences of disruptive behaviour	64	22.1	120	41.4	55	18.9	51	17.6
13. Teaching conflict resolution skills	84	28.9	104	35.9	50	17.2	52	17.9
14. Teaching problem-solving skills	21	7.2	22	7.6	175	60.3	72	24.8
15. Showing respect towards learners	5	1.7	4	1.8	146	50.3	134	46.2
16. Giving individualised behaviour plans	4	1.4	20	6.9	50	17.2	216	74.5
17. Reporting learner to disciplinary committee	50	17.2	8	2.6	144	49.7	88	30.3
18. Consistency in applying rules	23	7.9	29	10	146	50.3	92	31.7
19. Teaching sufficient academic content	109	37.6	100	34.5	47	16.2	34	11.7
20. Referring to Life Skills teacher	10	3.4	9	3.1	201	69.3	70	24

**4.5.1. Providing clear class rules**

As demonstrated in the Table above, it is shown that almost all 71.4% of the respondents indicated that providing clearly defined class rules was very effective whereas 22.8% said that it was effective. Another 5.7% indicated that they were not sure and a few (4.8%) said that it was not effective.

**4.5.2. Praising good behaviour of learners**

The Table has also shown that another strategy whose effectiveness the research sought to identify was the praising of learners' good behaviour. Most of respondents (64.4%) said it was a

very effective strategy while 22.0% indicated that it was effective. Others (6.9%) reported that it was not effective and the remaining 6.6% were not sure.

#### **4.5.3. Applying class-wide punishment**

As reflected in the Table above, there was an overwhelming response to the effect that applying class-wide punishment was not effective, with 77.6% ascertaining this. Others (2.4%) indicated that it was very effective, while 10.3% said that it was effective. The remaining 9.7% were just not sure whether applying class-wide punishment was effective or not.

#### **4.5.4. Good organisation of the class**

As shown in the Table above, most of the respondents (60%) felt that organising the class well was effective while 35.2% said that it was very effective. On the other hand, 2.4% said that it was not effective. The remaining 7 (2.4%) were not sure of their answer. From the finding, this method seems to be effective for most teachers when dealing with the disruptive behaviour of learners.

#### **4.5.5. Managing time well**

According to the Table above, a large number of participants (75.9%) attested to the effectiveness of managing time well, while 20.7% said that this method was very effective in addressing disruptive behaviour. A small number of 1.7% did not agree and said it was not effective. The remaining 1.7% were not sure.

#### **4.5.6. Providing sufficient learning resources**

Based on the results displayed in the Table above, a large number of participants (41.4%) said that they were not sure about this strategy in addressing disruptive behaviour. This was followed by an overwhelming response of 35.2% who indicated that it was not effective. A few of the respondents (13.1%) said that it was effective and the remaining 10.3% said that it was effective.

#### **4.5.7. Teaching all learners social skills**

The Table above demonstrates responses regarding the teaching of social skills to learners. Social skills are regarded as key to the well-being and normal development of a child. Hence, this study sought to understand the effectiveness of teaching learners social skills. From the findings of the study, it can be seen that most (68.2%) indicated that this method was very effective, 21.4% concurred that it was effective. Others (6.8%) said they were not sure, and a small number of respondents (3.4%) disagreed as they said that teaching social skills was not effective.

#### **4.5.8. Managing aggressiveness skills**

According to the Table above, teachers had to deal with the aggressiveness of learners; they had to manage this aggressiveness through the strategy of managing aggressiveness skills. A few (16.9%) agreed that this strategy was very effective, another 13.8% shared similar sentiments by agreeing that indeed it was effective. However, 34.1% did not agree and said that they had a largely negative view of the effectiveness of this strategy in addressing disruptive behaviour.

#### **4.5.9. Developing positive self-image**

The development of a positive self-image was tested on its effectiveness in addressing disruptive behaviour. The Table above shows that 15.8% agreed that it was very effective, the majority (75.2%) shared similar sentiments and said it was effective. Only a handful (2.6%) did not agree, while the remaining 20 (6.9%) remained unsure of their answer.

#### **4.5.10. Teaching stress management skills**

The Table above shows responses to the teaching of stress management skills. Most of the respondents (34.1%) said that the teaching of stress management skills was not effective in dealing with disruptive behaviour. This was followed by several respondents (30.7%) who said

that they were not sure of their answer regarding the effectiveness of teaching stress management skills in handling disruptive behaviour by learners in schools. Others (17.9%) indicated that it was very effective and, lastly, 17.2% said that it was effective.

#### **4.5.11. Changing seating arrangements**

As indicated in the Table above, a further aspect that was investigated had to do with seating arrangements in classes as a strategy to address disruptive behaviour. A major part of the respondents (51.7%) indicated that changing seating arrangements was effective. Others, sharing the similar sentiment (34.5%), indicated that the strategy was very effective. Opposing this strategy were 6.9% of the respondents who indicated that it was not effective, and the same percentage indicated that they were not sure.

#### **4.5.12. Informing learners about the consequences of disruptive behaviour**

Table 10 above also shows the results regarding informing learners of the consequences of disruptive behaviour as another strategy often adopted by teachers in trying to address this issue. From the findings of the study, it was established by a high number of respondents (41.4%) who said they were unsure of their responses. Other respondents (17.6%) said that the method was very effective and 18.9% concurred that the method was effective. This shows clearly that the method was not popular among teachers as a strategic mechanism for addressing disruptive behaviour by learners.

#### **4.5.13. Teaching conflict resolution skills**

According to Table 10, 17.9% of the respondents felt strongly that teaching conflict resolution skills was a very effective strategy in managing disruptive behaviour among learners while, in the same vein, 17.2% said that it was effective; however, 28.9% felt that the method was actually not effective.

#### **4.5.14. Teaching problem-solving skills**

As specified in Table 10, the majority of respondents (60.3%) indicated that teaching problem-solving skills strategy was effective while, similarly, 24.8% felt that it was very effective. The last 7.2% said that it was not effective while 22 (7.6%) were not sure.

#### **4.5.15. Showing respect towards learners**

The Table above also presents the findings of the research study regarding showing respect to learners. As detailed in the Table, the majority of the respondents (50.3%) indicated that showing respect to learners was effective, 134 (46.2%) said it was very effective, 1.7% indicated that it was not effective and 1.4% said they were not sure.

#### **4.5.16. Designing individualised behaviour plans**

With reference to the Table, a large number of respondents (74.5%) indicated that individualised behaviour plans were very effective and 17.2% said that they were effective in combating disruptive behaviour in classes. A few (1.4%) and 6.9% were not sure of whether individualised behaviour plans were effective or not. A behaviour intervention plan is a strategy developed for learners who are experiencing social and academic failure despite targeted intervention.

#### **4.5.17. Reporting learner to the disciplinary committee**

From the Table above, it was established that the majority of the respondents (49.7%) indicated that reporting learners to disciplinary committees was effective. Others (30.3%) felt that it was very effective, 17.2% showed that it was not effective and finally 8 (2.6%) were not sure.

#### **4.5.18. Consistency in applying rules**

As demonstrated in Table 10, the majority of respondents (50.3%) indicated that consistency in applying rules was effective. While 31.7% indicated that it was very effective. A class without

consistent class rules could often be chaotic. Opposing this strategy, 7.9% said it was not effective and, lastly, 29 (10%) said they were not sure.

#### **4.5.19. Teaching sufficient academic content**

Teaching sufficient academic content was measured as a strategy to combat disruptive behaviour in classes. As per the Table above, most of the teachers (37.6%) indicated that this method was not effective, 34.5% showed that they were not sure, 16.2% said that it was effective while 11.7% said it was very effective.

#### **4.5.20. Referring learners to the Life Skills teacher**

The last strategy regarding teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour was referring them to Life Skills teachers. As set out in the Table, most respondents (69.3%) agreed that this strategy was effective, 24% indicated that it was very effective, 10 (3.4%) said that it was not effective and, in the final analysis, 3.1% were not sure whether referrals to the Life Skills teacher were effective or not.

### **4.6. Summary**

This chapter provided a summary of the results regarding the demographic information of respondents and the different types of disruptive behaviour. It also discussed the challenges that teachers faced when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour, as well as the strategies developed to teach these learners.

In the next chapter, these findings are discussed in order to highlight the challenges that teachers faced when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. Finally, the results regarding teaching strategies for learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour are also presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The findings of the study are discussed in detail in this chapter. Conclusions and specific recommendations are covered under this section as well.

#### **5.2. Discussion of results related to types of disruptive behaviour in classes**

The act of untimely talking or laughing at learners in classes was found to be very disruptive as the teaching time was often adversely affected by constant noise from learners. These results are supported by Ghazi, Shahzada, Tariq and Khan (2013) who found that entering the class while shouting, chatting with others during teaching, untimely talking or laughing and being absent from schools were the major incidences of disruptive behaviour in classes. It is, therefore, clear that learners can produce several inappropriate forms of behaviour that directly or indirectly distract teachers and other learners.

The disruptive behaviour of arguing with adults in class was found as not being as disruptive as previously assumed by the researcher. However, it was found to be occasionally experienced by some respondents. This finding diverts from Kourkoutas, Stavrou and Plexousakis (2018) who regard arguing with adults as disruptive behaviour. They, furthermore, posit that some learners seem to enjoy arguing, criticising decisions, challenging answers and questioning directions. They also state that learners argue not just because they have a gripe, but also because of what they hope to gain from their arguing, namely attention and power. Learners who are argumentative can be very distracting as teachers spend time debating, justifying and explaining.

It also encourages other learners to behave similarly. Hence, this diverts teachers from lessons and encourages the arguer's classmates to engage in similar behaviour.

The disruptive behaviour of learners losing their tempers was found to be occasionally experienced by the respondents. Some learners were prone to exhibiting improper behaviour in class, such as losing their tempers easily. This result concurs with Kourkoutas, Stavrou and Plexousakis (2018) who also noted this aspect as disruptive behaviour.

Actively refusing adults' requests was found to be occasionally experienced by teachers. The results reveal that some learners actively refused teachers' requests or refused to work. Throughout the researcher's years of teaching, and as a learner, the researcher came across learners who refused to work. For various reasons, this behaviour can be incredibly frustrating for both teachers and learners. It can also be very challenging to deal with once the learners start to act as if they are not working. Additionally, this finding is consistent with Ghazi, Shahzada, Tariq and Khan (2013) who also listed refusing adults' requests as disruptive behaviour in class.

Deliberately annoying other learners was found to be periodically experienced and indicates that it impeded teaching and prevented a smooth learning process. Akawa (2013) also found that annoying other learners was one of the major examples of disruptive behaviour that occurred in classes. Annoying behaviour in the class can be a management issue for teachers. It can make it difficult for them to focus on their teaching objectives. Learners of all ages exhibit disruptive behaviour, such as tardiness, complaining, apathy, irresponsibility and rudeness that makes it difficult for teachers to focus on class objectives.

It was found that blaming others for the learner's own mistakes occurred frequently. This is a clear indication that blaming other learners is practised by most learners at school. It is, furthermore, interesting to note that these results are actually supported by Sullivan, et al. (2014)

who mention blaming as one of the forms of disruptive behaviour. Teachers occasionally run into a learner who consistently blames other learners or adults for his or her own mistakes. Learners do this to elicit approval as they feel that the teacher will not approve if they acknowledge that they have done something wrong.

Being angry and disrespectful was found to occur very often in classes. This clearly shows that most teachers in the region have had to deal with this form of disruptive behaviour more frequently than with others. Disrespecting teachers is highly unacceptable as the values of respect and obedience are imbibed in the education of the learners.

In support of these findings are findings from research conducted by Ulrika (2017) on types of disruptive behaviour in class. It was established that angry and disrespectful behaviour was a form of disruptive behaviour among learners in class. Disrespecting teachers include different kinds of disruptive behaviour, such as refusing to follow instructions, behaving oppositely to instructions, not listening to the teachers, rude answers, throwing books, knocking on the table and confronting teachers. This affects the effectiveness of teaching and also prevents the learning process of all the learners in class. Additionally, such behaviour ultimately results in poor academic performance and instigates delinquent behaviour among the learners.

Bullying, threatening and intimidating others in class were found to be very disruptive. The finding concedes that the teaching and learning time is often adversely affected by constant bullying, threatening and intimidating other learners. The findings are in line with a study conducted by Shilongo (2002) in which teachers in Namibia indicated that the most frequently occurring types of unwanted behaviour in the class were teasing, bullying and threatening. To strengthen the above statements, the Namibia Global School-based Health Survey (2013) reports that more than 44.6% of teachers in Namibian schools had experienced behaviour problems,

such as bullying, teasing, insulting, threatening, hitting, kicking or punching at school, as a result of learners with behaviour problems. In other studies, Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2014) found that bullying existed in the classroom and on the playground of all schools around the world. They, furthermore, acknowledge that several learners reported that they were frequently called names, such as stupid, dumb, skinny, fat or retarded, by other learners in the class and on the playground, and that they felt ashamed and humiliated by that experience. The next most frequent forms of bullying included physical blows administered to, or threats uttered against, chosen victims and the spreading of malicious rumours. Other forms of bullying, such as dispossessing fellow learners of their belongings, are less frequent.

Starting physical fights was found to be occurring occasionally in the participating schools even though it did not occur as frequently as other forms of disruptive behaviour. This finding supports the perception that fighting in schools occurs as a disruptive behaviour that disturbs teaching and learning; this finding is consistent with findings by Rayment (2006) who argues that physical fighting is an assaultive behaviour that is a significant public health issue among learners in schools worldwide. Starting fights appears to be, however, more prevalent among boys than girls.

Lying to get out of trouble was found to occur occasionally. Based on the results, it shows that, when learners lie sometimes and are occasionally dishonest, it should not be cause for alarm. However, Reichow et.al. (2016) argue that, when lying becomes a regular occurrence, it can turn into a significant problem. One big issue is that when a child is prone to lying, he or she might not be believed when telling the truth.

The findings of the research reveal that some learners steal from others. The data contributed a clear indication to the researcher that stealing from others was indeed a practice in schools. This

finding is in line with Shilongo (2002) who listed stealing as a disruptive behaviour. Learners steal for a variety of reasons. Some steal simply because they want an item and have not developed the impulse control to curb their behaviour. Other learners steal to express unhappiness or distress or to get back at someone they believe has wronged them.

The outcome of the research reflects that carrying and using objects like knives at school was hardly ever experienced. This finding contrasts with that of Landsberg and Nel (2014) who found that the incidence of learners carrying sharp objects in schools was a common practice. Similarly, Namibia's National Safe Schools Framework (2018) also found that learners brought sharp objects like knives to school. It could be that this disruptive behaviour is not common in primary schools.

It was unexpected that the research findings showed that learners did destroy the property of their peers at school. This finding is in line with that of Landsberg and Nel (2014) who indicate that learners destroy property as a way of coping. To add, this may be because children cannot cope with their frustrations and extreme feelings, and destroying property is a release of sorts. Thus, it makes them feel better, if only for a while.

The data analysis of the research indicates that learners did not exhibit the behaviour of forcing someone into sexual activities. These research results contradict Murnen and Smolak (2000) who found that the majority of the children had experienced peer sexual harassment and that the boys and girls had experienced this in about equal amounts. In addition, it is often assumed that all learners with problematic sexual behaviour have been sexually abused.

The results of this study indicate that teachers experienced the behaviour of learners shouting outside or inside the class more often. This analysis supports the findings of studies conducted by Akawa (2013) and Shilongo (2002) who found similar behaviour. Examples are being out-of-

seat, calling out in class, tantrums, swearing, screaming or refusing to follow instructions. It is the researcher's view that shouting by learners is indeed a practice that disturbs teaching and learning, most especially in primary schools.

From the results presented in Chapter Four, numerous findings emerge. One of the most frequent forms of disruptive behaviour experienced in schools was hyperactivity in- and outside class. The researcher is of the opinion that most of the learners are hyperactive both in- and outside classes. These results build on the research by Levin and Nolan (1996) who found that common, day-to-day, disruptive behaviour that poses a challenge to teachers comprises verbal interruptions, such as talking out of turn, name-calling, humming, calling out, daydreaming, fidgeting, doodling, tardiness, physical movement, whether intended or not, visiting other learners, passing notes, sitting on the desk and throwing objects around in the class.

The findings of this study reflect that learners did not show behaviour that was harmful to themselves and others. This finding contradicts Namibia's National Safe Schools Framework (2018) which found that harmful behaviour to self and others, such as suicide, was a serious concern in Namibia. Schools are often ill-equipped to deal with suicidal learners, as well as with those struggling with poor mental health or thoughts of suicide or self-harm. The research findings propose that when learners are struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts or when school staff suspect that a learner is at risk of self-harm, the school counsellor or Life Skills teacher should assess him or her for early intervention.

The last issue on the types of disruptive behaviour in schools was the displayed behaviour which hampered teaching and learning. It was indicated by the findings that behaviour which hampered teaching and learning was indeed a practice that occurred very often. The data contribute a clearer grasp that disruptive behaviour hampers teaching and learning. There are, however, many

different forms of challenging behaviour which hamper teaching. The analysis of this data is supported by Levin and Nolan (1996), namely, that dealing with challenging behaviour in the class is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching and, sadly, the one that causes the most anxiety in teachers.

### **5.3. Teachers' challenges**

There are numerous factors that make it difficult for teachers to manage learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour effectively. Answers relating to different challenges were obtained from teachers' responses to eight statements. These statements covered several forms of challenges that teachers face when handling learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour, and range from lack of teaching and learning aids, limited specialised training, overcrowding of classes, lack of support by a school administrator, understaffing, a poor class and school environment, as well as a lack of curriculum support.

This study found that overcrowding of classes was a serious challenge that teachers faced when teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. The researcher argues that the issue of overcrowded classes is indeed challenging when it comes to teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. This is in line with Ross (2013) whose findings indicate that the challenges teachers faced most frequently when teaching learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour were high enrolment rates, overcrowded classes and a lack of training. It is not surprising that the classes in the Omaheke region were overcrowded as the majority of classes taught by the teachers comprised 36 to 40 learners. The normal teacher ratio of learners is 1:35 for primary schools. The finding was also supported by Namibian teachers' unions that have expressed concern regarding overcrowded classes in schools. It has been reported that some public schools were forced to accommodate more learners than the agreed ratio of one teacher per 30 learners in

secondary schools while for primary schools it is one teacher per 35 learners due to inadequate numbers of classrooms (Nakale, 2019). Furthermore, for instance, in some regions, there have been reported cases of schools having to accommodate 70 learners per class because of the unavailability of space. The larger the number of learners per class, the more complicated it would be for teachers to cope with disruptive learners. Overcrowding increases class discipline issues. With an increase in learner numbers comes an increase of risk factors, such as tensions, conflicts and disruptive behaviour. Teachers in the schools found it difficult to manage overcrowded classes successfully. As a result, teachers could be forced to shift their focus from teaching to trying to manage their classes and controlling all learners.

Moreover, the study revealed another interesting finding, namely, that the lack of curriculum support was a serious negative factor. The findings of this research are in line with those of Scheurmann and Hall (2008) who posit that curriculum support is one of the major challenges in educating learners with special needs. They, however, state that the curriculum should be suitable for all learners, including those exhibiting disruptive behaviour. In further support, designing an appropriate curriculum should take into cognisance a curriculum plan that would suit every Namibian child, including those with special needs. Such a curriculum should be planned in such a way that it would provide opportunities, activities and experiences for the education of learners with special needs. In support of the above, the Ministry of Education (2013) developed a sector policy on inclusive education that all children, regardless of their challenges, learning difficulties or impairments, should receive education together in the least restrictive environment. In line with the Sector Policy on Inclusive Education, today's educators are asked to meet the diverse needs of all learners, including those exhibiting disruptive behaviour. Therefore, the curriculum should be designed to address the specific learning needs of

all learners. The researcher is of the opinion that curriculum developers should develop or adopt a curriculum that addresses the needs of all diverse learners, including those exhibiting disruptive behaviour.

Lack of specialised training was mentioned in the research finding as being a serious challenge. This concurs with UNESCO (2005) whose findings show challenges, such as a lack of specialised training in handling learners with special needs and of teaching learning resources. They also pointed out that there were no recreational facilities and that schools were understaffed. Further issues were over-enrolment and congested classes in public, primary schools.

The response to dealing with disruptive behaviour is often determined by the nature of training in the ways to deal and cope with such behaviour that the teachers had received. In addition, Table 9 indicates that most teachers had had no training in handling learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour, while a few of the respondents indicated that they had received in-service training for learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. This also had a direct impact on the way in which they would manage disruptive behaviour in the class, as Cole (2014) mentions that teachers' training is critical in managing disruptive behaviour.

Moreover, the researcher is of the opinion that the need for teachers who have both the knowledge and the ability to teach learners with learning difficulties is more critical today than ever before. An international and national push to teach learners with disabilities out of isolation means most of them now spend the majority of their days in general-education classes, rather than in separate special-education classes, something which is known as segregation. That implies that general-education teachers are teaching more learners with disabilities, including

those exhibiting disruptive behaviour; however, training programmes are doing little to prepare them for teaching different groups of learners in general education classes.

The lack of support from school administrators was found to be a serious challenge when dealing with disruptive learners. These findings are in line with those of Ofsted (2014) who posits that teachers are working hard to maintain high standards of behaviour in classes but, in too many cases, they are not being supported appropriately by school administrators. Teachers need to be backed by the school management but, regrettably, too many school leaders have not taught for years and have lost touch with the day-to-day realities of the class situation.

The impact of government policies is also contributing to the problem of disruptive behaviour at schools with poor leadership; consequently, it is robbing learners of an hour of learning per day. It, furthermore, reports that teachers complained that school leaders were failing to assert their authority when dealing with poor discipline and learners' flouting of school rules. Class teachers must have the support of their senior leaders to tackle these problems. Learners need to know the rules, and teachers need to know they will be supported in enforcing these class rules in an effort to combat disruptive behaviour.

The majority of teachers indicated that understaffing schools was a not serious factor. This result disagrees with Gateru (2010), Mukangu (2008) and UNESCO (2005) who argue that understaffing is one of the major factors that teachers experience when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The issue of understaffing has a direct impact on controlling disruptive behaviour. Increased class sizes and the employment of supply staff have an adverse effect on their ability to manage learners effectively. Schools need sufficient, directly employed staff to ensure learners who need extra support receive such support, and classes are not disrupted (UNISON Survey, 2016).

The findings of the study show that poor school and class environments were not mentioned to be a serious challenge when managing learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour; however, several researchers and scholars have echoed that environmental factors contribute to the learner's social behaviour at school but little has been said on the ways in which school and class environment contribute to difficulty in controlling disruptive behaviour. Muna (2020) found that a poor environment contributes to challenges in managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Another study that contradicts the research finding is a study by Miller and Cunningham (2003) that found that a friendly class develops an environment that creates children's desired social behaviour. Additionally, the class environment attempts to spell out the teacher's expectations regarding the children's motivation for effective learning, the strategies that should be employed for effective teaching, the kind of materials that would motivate children to have a greater interest in learning and the social behaviour that should be exhibited in a class.

#### **5.4. Intervention strategies**

The third and last research question to be answered was about the coping mechanisms that teachers employed to manage those learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. From the findings of the study, it has been established that there are a number of strategies for addressing disruptive behaviour.

Drawing up individualised behaviour plans was tested regarding their effectiveness in addressing disruptive behaviour. The analysis of the research findings revealed that giving individualised behaviour plans was an effective strategy to combat disruptive behaviour. In support of the finding, a study by Elam (2016) found that behaviour management was one of the strategies to manage and redirect learners' behaviour by employing behaviour modifications, establishing

group contingencies, fostering-self regulation and management and employing behaviour tools. Another study that supports the finding is a study by Bambara, Nonnemaker and Kern (2009) that advocates that the purpose of an individual behaviour plan is to modify a learner's environment systematically with the goal of changing the learner's behaviour. Additionally, the idea of the plan is to be explicit about the specific interventions to be applied to the learner in order to change that learner's behaviour, and to coordinate the efforts of the adults involved in implementing the plan.

Participant teachers in this study recognised the need to employ social and behaviour strategies in their efforts to combat disruptive behaviour. One such strategy that the study revealed was rewarding good behaviour with praise and credit. The research finding indicates that most teachers were employing this strategy in an effort to combat disruptive behaviour in their classes. These results concur with Alberto (2010) who found that positive reinforcement was one of the most effective strategies to deal with learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. Furthermore, Alberto (2010) demonstrates that positive reinforcement that is tied to learners' competence can increase the likelihood of appropriate class behaviour and academic achievement without undermining learners' intrinsic motivation. Other studies supporting this finding (Morin, 2016; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005) found that when teachers employed positive reinforcers, such as praise, rewards and privileges, as well as communicated a positive attitude to their learners, they lay the foundation for learners to try hard and reach new goals. Furthermore, teachers need to reward learners with behaviour-specific praise, employ positive reinforcers to encourage student achievement, effort, and motivation, as well as convey honest feedback to learners about the quality of their work and effort. Subsequently, they can gradually fade extrinsic rewards when learners display mastery (Morin, 2016; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). As teachers employ these

strategies and learners develop maturity, fewer extrinsic motivators will be needed. Many experienced teachers have found that, as learners became more internally motivated, their behaviour issues diminished and their academic competence strengthened (Morin, 2016).

To continue, the study also revealed another interesting and effective strategy to combat disruptive behaviour, namely the provision of clearly defined class rules. These results are in line with Marais and Meier (2010) who found that parental involvement and class rules were found effective approaches to managing disruptive behaviour in an effort to redirect learners' behaviour positively. The importance of clearly defined class rules can never be overemphasised as they enable learners to understand what kind of behaviour is expected from them. The primary reason for clearly defined class rules is to eliminate and avoid all distractions and possible misconduct that interfere with learning. The aim is to create a positive and conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning, and, in order to do so class, management is essential. Additionally, the findings of this research are also supported by Kamenye (2020) who advocates that class clearly defined rules are the foundation of a functional and successful class in any setting. Kaufman (2001), furthermore, states that rules vary from procedures as they determine what the class looks like, what type of behaviour is acceptable and encouraged and help learners work towards a common goal. In other words, they set the tone for good behaviour.

Moreover, time management was another major strategy employed by teachers in dealing with disruptive behaviour. These findings are supported by Bond (2017) who found that time management, emotional assessment and positive relationships between learners and teachers were the most effective strategies of teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour. Effective time management allows learners to complete more in less time, because their attention is focused and they are not wasting time on distractions, such as chatting, talking or laughing.

Furthermore, by utilising time efficiently, learners can complete their work on time, stay engaged with their learning and have more free time to pursue activities that are important to them.

Furthermore, the study found learning social skills as one of the most effective strategies to deal with disruptive behaviour. These findings are supported by the significant body of research by Kauffman (2001) who advocates that the primary task for a teacher who teaches disruptive learners is to teach them social skills, helping the learners replace their dysfunctional behaviour with more socially appropriate responses, as well as managing the class environment, such as desk arrangement and setting clearly defined class rules and regulations (Kauffman, 2001). Teaching learners social skills improve learners' positive behaviour and reduce negative behaviour. It prevents a variety of problems, such as alcohol and drug abuse, violence and bullying. In addition, effective social learning skills improve social-emotional skills, academic achievement, conduct in school and attitudes about self and others as well as social interactions significantly.

The provision of sufficient resources was found not to be an effective strategy to eliminate disruptive behaviour. The findings of the study indicate that most of the teachers were providing sufficient resources to deal with disruptive behaviour. Surprisingly, these findings contradict Cole (2013) who reviewed effective teaching strategies for teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour and found that the provision of sufficient resources, academic engagement, class management and effective praise were the most effective strategies. This research finding also diverts from Scheuermann and Hall (2008) who found that effective usage of proper learning resources assisted the learners in constructing more than superficial knowledge, thus, building in-depth knowledge of a particular subject and also developing their learning strategies,

values, attitudes and generic skills. When learners are focused on teaching and learning, fewer incidents of disruptive behaviour will likely occur.

Applying class-wide punishment was found not to be an effective strategy to assist learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. This is a clear indication that most teachers did not employ punitive measures to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. On the contrary, Raby (2012) found that punitive measures, such as time out, referral to the principal, suspension and expulsion, were some of the strategies to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. The findings in the current study regarding this strategy are in support and in line with the Namibian Education Code of Conduct (1990) that forbids out-of-class or time-out, punitive strategies. The Namibian Education Act 16 (2001) states that no child should be sent out of the class as this violates the child's right to education. This principle is supported by one of the Namibian Goals for Education for All "Access," which respects the right of all individuals to have access to quality education (MoEAC, 2003). Punitive measures do not assist learners to learn what was wrong with their behaviour, nor do they help them to believe in their ability to act differently. They also cause physical injury, distrust and low self-confidence, all of which can lead to further misbehaviour. Additionally, they provoke fear, anger and shame, all of which obstruct learning (Ministry of Education Arts and Culture, 2018).

Referring learners to Life Skills teachers was also a strategy rated by the majority of the respondents as being effective in addressing disruptive behaviour. This is similar to the findings of Raby (2012) who mentions referring disruptive learners to the Life Skills teacher as a strategy to combat disruptive behaviour. The Education for All (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993) includes Life Skills among the essential learning tools for survival, capacity development and a quality life. It also advocates that all young people and adults have the

“human right to benefit from an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together.” This is recognising the importance of living together as much as acquiring knowledge from an academic environment. The finding regarding this strategy was supported by other researchers who found that school counsellors, known as Life Skills teachers, play vital roles in schools in improving the behaviour of learners (Bauman, Rgby & Hoppa, 2008; Christianson & Everall, 2008; Harris & Jeffery, 2010). Further elaboration indicates that many school administrators focus on disciplinary measures without considering the mental health of learners. Life skills teachers are in an optimal position both to advocate for these learners and to collaborate with school and community stakeholders to prevent and address the challenges experienced by disruptive behaviour. One of the roles of Life Skills teachers is to counsel. Counselling is designed to facilitate learners’ achievement, improve learner behaviour and attendance, as well as help leaners develop socially.

The findings of the study reveal that most of the teachers changed seating arrangements as an effective measure to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. The findings of the research indicate that seating arrangement is powerful for minimising distractions; furthermore, seating arrangements are important class setting events because they have the potential to help prevent problem behaviour that decreases learner attention and diminishes available instructional time. Studies which support these findings (Raby, 2012; Sun & Shek, 2010) indicate that changing seating arrangements assisted in reducing disruptive behaviour. This finding is also consistent with Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) who posit that the physical arrangement of the class has the potential to encourage either desirable behaviour or contribute to learners’ misbehaviour. It is of the researcher’s opinion that seating arrangement is one factor that is typically under teacher control. To add, learners at the back of the class tend to interact with each other more

frequently than those seated at the front, potentially adversely impacting their attention to the task at hand.

The present study established that teachers did not employ the management of aggressiveness skills as a strategy to cope with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. The study found that teachers lacked skills in teaching ways to manage the aggressiveness of learners in classes. This research finding contradicts with that of Alberto (2010) who found managing aggressiveness skills a good strategy for managing the aggressive behaviour of learners.

Moreover, most of the teachers indicated that developing a positive self-image was effective in disruptive behaviour management. A prior study's findings (Alberto, 2010) emphasises that developing self-image boosts learners' physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

The results of this study indicate that teaching stress management skills as a strategy to combat disruptive behaviour was not effective. This finding clearly shows that teachers are not aware of teaching stress management skills as a strategy to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. This finding contradicts Vaughn and Lancelotta (1990) who found that teaching elementary school learners stress management skills would promote appropriate class study behaviour by enhancing learner ability to attend to teacher-assigned tasks.

Showing respect to other learners was found to be one of the effective strategies to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour, as detailed in the research analysis. This finding of the research posits that teachers regard learners with special attention, honour them, show consideration towards them, are concerned about them, appreciate them, relate to them, admire their strengths and care for them. Supporting this strategy is the research by Salend (2008) that

regards showing respect to learners as one of the best strategies to deal with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour.

Finally, it was encouraging to find that reporting learners to the disciplinary committees was effective in dealing with learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. This research result shows evidence that most of the schools are making use of disciplinary committees in the administration and management of learner discipline. However, County et al., (2015) found that most schools had disciplinary committees but that, in most cases, they did not function. It is suggested that schools should make use of disciplinary committees to combat disruptive behaviour continually in order to teach harmoniously for the achievement of school objectives.

### **5.5. Recommendations of the study**

By employing a structured questionnaire, the study successfully gathered a rich set of data detailing the challenges that teachers faced in managing learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour, as well as the most effective strategies in managing disruptive behaviour. In view of the findings reported, the following recommendations are made.

#### **Recommendations specific to the research questions of the study:**

##### ***Teachers' challenges in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour***

- **Overcrowding of classes**
  - With regards to the challenge of overcrowding, this study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture build more teaching and learning facilities at schools in the Omaheke region in order to accommodate learners better and avoid the issue of overcrowding.

- The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should limit the enrolment of learners at some schools and distribute the enrolment equally among schools in the region in order to control the teacher-learner ratio.
- **Lack of curriculum support**
  - Curriculum developers, policy-makers, educational planners, teachers, significant other role players in the life-world of the learner, government departments and members of all stakeholders in education should collaborate and offer a holistic, joint service to assist and understand the behaviour problems of learners, creating a network of support to learners in need of assistance and understanding.
  - The curriculum review should support all learners with special needs. The curriculum should be specifically designed to address the specific learning needs of special-needs learners, including those exhibiting disruptive behaviour. The curriculum planning should involve breadth and flexibility, and the content should ensure its adaptability to the dignity of learners' circumstances and experience.
- **Limited specialised training**
  - The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should establish in-service training workshops where teachers are trained to gain knowledge and skills in order to address behaviour problems in the class more effectively.
  - Educational institutions that train teachers should focus more on training teachers fully in ways to handle learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.
  - Specialist teachers should be appointed per school to assist regular teachers with the diverse needs of all learners.

***Strategies to combat disruptive behaviour***

In line with the findings of the research, the research recommends teachers to make use of the following strategies that appear to be effective in managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour:

- Clearly defined class rules
- Praise of good behaviour
- Development of individualised behaviour plans
- Time management
- Teaching social skills
- Referral to Life Skills teachers
- Changing seating arrangements

***Recommendations for further research***

- In light of the data analysis employed in this study, the researcher recommends the analysis of data utilising a chi-square test to establish whether there are significant relationships between the variables mentioned in this study.
- Research can be conducted to establish teachers' competencies in data collection, recording and analysis in observation and interviewing as identification methods.
- Research could be conducted to establish the ways in which home environment factors affect learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in inclusive settings.
- The study only focused on challenges teachers faced daily in teaching learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour and identifying coping mechanisms that teachers employed daily in their regular classes when teaching such learners. There is a need to look at the causes of disruptive behaviour within the region.

- Future studies could be aimed at broadening the scope of the study to include secondary schools where disruptive behaviour is a major challenge affecting the learning environment in most schools in Namibia.
- Geographically, this research study was confined to the Omaheke region. Given the fact that the ethnic, cultural and socio-economic distribution of the population is geographically oriented in Namibia, broadening the geographic scope of this study could serve to yield findings and consequently recommendations that would apply to the whole of the Namibian educational system. Research of such importance needs to cover the whole country in order to design policies that address the challenges.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

The present study looked at the types of disruptive class behaviour, challenges that teachers faced when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour, as well as the most effective strategies that teachers employ frequently to handle learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in selected primary schools in the Omaheke region.

The study concludes with examples of common disruptive behaviour, such as untimely talking or laughing, anger and disrespect, bullying, threatening and intimidating others, shouting out- or inside the class, hyperactivity in- and outside class and displaying behaviour that hampers teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the study also concludes that the overcrowding of classes, lack of curriculum support, and limited specialised training were the biggest challenges that teachers faced when managing learners who exhibited disruptive behaviour.

In the final analysis, the study concludes by advocating that providing clearly defined class rules, praising of the good behaviour of learners, managing time well, teaching all learners social skills,

and giving individualised behaviour plans are the most effective strategies for managing learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Research Ethical Clearance Certificate

**UNAM**  
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SoE-DEC100621/13 Date: 28 June 2021**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Decentralised Research Ethics Committee (DEC) 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/Unit Research Ethics Committee.

**Title of Project:** TEACHERS' CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISMS IN TEACHING LEARNERS WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE OMAHEKE REGION

**Nature/Level of Project:** MASTERS

**Researcher:** SIMON K THOMAS

**Student Number:** 201104585

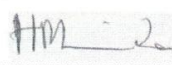
**Faculty:** EDUCATION & HUMAN SCIENCES


**School:** EDUCATION

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the DEC. 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 DEC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the DEC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus/Unit Research Ethics Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by DEC.
- (d) Approval is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue.
- (e) A mid-year report to be submitted to DEC (where applicable).
- (f) The DEC 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.

DEC wishes you the best in your research.

  
.....  
Dr Helena Miranda  
SoE-DEC Chairperson



UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA  
PO BOX 88, RUNDU  
TEL: 086 259 0000 FAX: 086 259 364  
2021-06-28  
DIRECTOR  
RUNDU CAMPUS

## Appendix B: UNAM Research permission letter

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH SERVICES  
*Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor: Research Innovation and Development*  
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA, Private Bag, 13301 Windhoek, Namibia  
340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pioneers Park, Office F224



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### RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

**Student Name:** SIMON K. THOMAS

**Student Number:** 201104585

**Programme:** MASTER OF EDUCATION

**Approved Research Title:** TEACHERS' CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISMS IN TEACHING LEARNERS WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE OMAHEKE REGION.

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I hereby confirm that the above mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees. The proposal adheres to ethical principles as per attached Ethical Clearance Certificate. Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards,

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 13/07/2021

Dr. AEE Shikongo, Head: Postgraduate Support Services,  
Tel: +264 61 206 3129, E-mail: aeshikongo@unam.na

**Appendix C: MoEAC request for permission letter**

Simon Kalitheni Thomas

P O Box 1400

Gobabis

21 July 2021

Cellphone number +264814426645

Email address: [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com)

The Executive Director  
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture  
Private Bag 13186  
Windhoek

Dear Mrs. Steenkamp

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE OMAHEKE EDUCATIONAL REGION**

I am a teacher in Omaheke region and a registered student at the University of Namibia (UNAM) pursuing a Master's degree in Inclusive Education. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of this degree, I am required to conduct a research project in the area of education related to inclusive education. My proposed and approved research by UNAM Research Ethic Committee is *“Teachers’ challenges and coping mechanisms in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in selected primary schools in the Omaheke Region”*.

Teachers teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are disempowered, and lacking the necessary skills in assisting learners exhibiting behaviour problems after the removal of corporal of punishment. Moreover, the majority of teachers struggle to find alternative effective solutions to deal with learners’ behaviour problems. Thus, the purpose of this study therefore seeks to investigate challenges teachers face daily in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour and to identify coping mechanisms that teachers use daily in their regular classes when teaching with learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Additionally, the results will add knowledge and specific skills on how to respond to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

I am therefore kindly requesting your good office to allow me to conduct research in selected primary schools in the Omaheke Region as part of the research population. Furthermore, this

research is only for academic purposes and has no intention of causing harms to the participants as well as the image of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Teachers' information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity, and no names will appear on the questionnaire.

Attached are copies of the ethical clearance certificate and a permission letter to conduct the study from the University of Namibia as well as the approved research proposal.  
I thank you very much for your earliest consideration to this request.


**Yours faithfully**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Thomas".

**Simon K Thomas**

**(Masters' Student, University of Namibia)**

## Appendix D: Permission letter from the Executive Director of MoEAC

  
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**

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<p>Enquiries: Mr. G. Munene Tel: +264 61-2933202 2 Fax: +264 61-293392 Email: <a href="mailto:Gibson.Munene@moe.gov.na">Gibson.Munene@moe.gov.na</a> File no: 13/29/1</p>	<p>Luther Street, Govt. Office Park Private Bag 13186 Windhoek Namibia</p>
---	--

Mr. Simon Kalitheni Thomas  
P. O. Box 1400  
Gobabis  
Email: [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com)

Dear Mr. Thomas,

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN OMAHEKE REGION**

The Ministry wishes to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 21 July 2021 seeking for permission to conduct academic research at schools for your Master's studies which is focusing on: *Teachers' Challenges and Coping Mechanisms in Teaching Learners with Disruptive Behaviors in Selected Primary Schools in the Omaheke Region in Namibia.*"

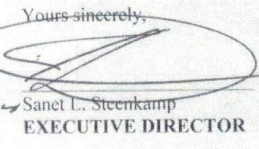
Permission has been granted to you. However, you have to seek for further clearance from the Omaheke Regional Director of Education, Arts and Culture to ensure that:

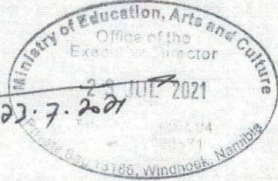
- the school principals are aware of your presence;
- teaching and learning should not be interrupted;
- participation is voluntary;
- you obtain consent from parents of learners under the age of 16 years.

Furthermore, you are kindly requested to share your research findings with the Ministry after completion of the research project. You may contact Mr G. Munene on the above provided contacts at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for submission of your research findings at the above indicated details.

We wish you the best in conducting your research and the Ministry looks forward to hearing from you upon completion of your studies.

Yours sincerely,

  
Sanet L. Steenkamp  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



All official correspondence must be addressed to the Executive Director

Page 1 of 1

**Appendix E:** Request letter for permission to Education Director of Omaheke Region

Simon Kalitheni Thomas

P O Box 1400

Gobabis

24 July 2021

Cellphone number +264814426645

Email address: [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com)

**The Directorate of Education  
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture  
Omaheke Region  
Private Bag 2004  
Gobabis**

Dear Mr. Semba

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE OMAHEKE EDUCATIONAL REGION**

I am a teacher at Christoph Ngatjizeko Primary School in the Omaheke region and a registered student at the University of Namibia (UNAM) pursuing a Master's degree in Inclusive Education. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of this degree, I am required to conduct a research project in the area of education related to inclusive education. My proposed and approved research by UNAM Research Ethic Committee is *“Teachers’ challenges and coping mechanisms in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in selected primary schools in the Omaheke Region”*.

Teachers teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are disempowered, and lacking the necessary skills in assisting learners exhibiting behaviour problems after the removal of corporal of punishment. Moreover, the majority of teachers struggle to find alternative effective solutions to deal with learners’ behaviour problems. Thus, the purpose of this study therefore seeks to investigate challenges teachers face daily in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour and to identify coping mechanisms that teachers use daily in their regular classes when teaching with learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Additionally, the results will add knowledge and specific skills on how to respond to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

I am therefore kindly requesting your good office to allow me to conduct research in selected primary schools in the Omaheke region as part of the research population. Furthermore, this research is only for academic purposes and has no intention of causing harms to the participants as well as the image of the Omaheke region. Teachers' information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity, and no names will appear on the questionnaire.

Attached are copies of the permission letter from the Executive Director of Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, ethical clearance certificate and a permission letter to conduct the study from the University of Namibia as well as the approved research proposal.

I thank you very much for your earliest convenience to this request.

**Yours faithfully**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SK Thomas', written in a cursive style.

**Simon K Thomas**  
**(Masters' Student, University of Namibia)**

## Appendix F: Permission letter from Omaheke Education Director



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



### Omaheke Regional Council

#### DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: 062-577600  
Fax: 062-564210/ 562888  
Web Address: [www.omahekerc.gov.na](http://www.omahekerc.gov.na)  
Email Address: [peckasemba@gmail.com](mailto:peckasemba@gmail.com)  
Enquiries: Mr. Pecka Semba

P/Bag 2004  
GOBABIS  
Namibia

4 August 2021

To: **Mr. Simon Kalitheni Thomas**  
P.O. Box 1400  
Gobabis

Cc: **Selected Primary School Principals**

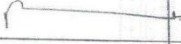
Dear Colleague,

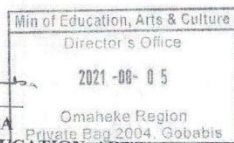
**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE OMAHEKE REGION AT THE SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

1. Your letter dated 24 July 2021, requesting permission to conduct research in the selected Primary Schools in the Omaheke Region, bears reference.
2. Let me from the onset congratulate you with your formal studies in Educational Research towards the attainment of a Master's Degree in Inclusive Education. Hopefully your research will inform our practice and fill the gap of knowledge that may exist in your chosen research discipline.
3. Unfortunately, you did not mention your sampled schools, learners and teachers, but probably you have not yet made up your mind in this regard. It would have been easier to communicate your intent to the targeted schools.
4. Be as it may, permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research at your chosen schools, teachers and learners. However, make sure that you contact the gatekeepers (the principals) of the targeted schools for full consent and not to disrupt the academic programmes running at the schools.
5. All Primary School principals will be aware of your visit to their schools, as this letter will be carbon copied to them, together with your request letter, hopefully they will provide you with the necessary opportunities and cooperation.

I hope you find this in order.

Yours Sincerely,

  
**MR. PECKA SEMBA**  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE  
OMAHEKE REGIONAL COUNCIL



05  
...../08/2021

ALL OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCES MUST BE ADDRESSED TO THE CHIEF REGIONAL OFFICER

## **Appendix G: Request for conducting research to selected schools**

Simon Kalitheni Thomas

P O Box 1400  
Gobabis  
08 August 2021

Cellphone number +264814426645

Email address: [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com)

### **THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Sir/Madam

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE ABOVE-MENTIONED SCHOOL**

I am a teacher at Christoph Ngatjizeko Primary School in the Omaheke region and a registered student at the University of Namibia (UNAM) pursuing a Master's degree in Inclusive Education. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of this degree, I am required to conduct a research project in the area of education related to inclusive education. My proposed and approved research by UNAM Research Ethic Committee is *“Teachers’ challenges and coping mechanisms in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in selected primary schools in the Omaheke Region”*.

Teachers teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour are disempowered, and lacking the necessary skills in assisting learners exhibiting behaviour problems after the removal of corporal of punishment. Moreover, the majority of teachers struggle to find alternative effective solutions to deal with learners’ behaviour problems. Thus, the purpose of this study therefore seeks to investigate challenges teachers face daily in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour and to identify coping mechanisms that teachers use daily in their regular classes when teaching with learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Additionally, the results will add knowledge and specific skills on how to respond to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

In light of the above, I am therefore kindly requesting your good office to allow me to conduct research at the above-mentioned school between 09<sup>th</sup> August 2021- 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021 as the school was selected to constitute the research population in the Omaheke region. Furthermore, this research is only for academic purposes and has no intention of causing harms to the participants as well as the image of the Omaheke region. Teachers’ information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity, and no names will appear on the questionnaire.

Upon arrival at school, principal will be briefed about the purpose of the study and ask permission to meet teachers during break times. The researcher will distribute questionnaires to the participating teachers and explain all four sections of the questionnaire. Teachers should take about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the researcher will collect all completed questionnaires from research participants.

Attached are copies of the permission letter from the Executive Director of Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Regional Director of the Omaheke Region, ethical clearance certificate and a permission letter to conduct the study from the University of Namibia as well as the approved research proposal.

I thank you very much for your earliest convenience to this request.

**Yours faithfully**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SK Thomas', written in a cursive style.

**Simon K Thomas**  
**(Masters' Student, University of Namibia)**

## Appendix H: Research instrument

HREC-NH Annex 5A Questionnaire

### QUESTIONNAIRE



#### Dear Participant

My name is Simon Kalitheni Thomas. I am a student at the University of Namibia studying towards a Master of Education degree in Inclusive Education. My research study focuses on the challenges that teachers face daily in teaching learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour as well as strategies that they use in their regular classes when teaching learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour. The research study has been approved by the UNAM Research Ethics Committee. I kindly request you to participate in this study. You are rest assured you of the following:

1. You will participate in this research study by your person choice. Nobody will force you to do anything in this study against you wish – your participation is entirely voluntary.
2. You can stop participating at any time if you want to, and there will be no negative consequences for you. Nobody will insist that you complete the questionnaire unto the end.
3. Your identity will be anonymous. You will not be required to provide your name on this questionnaire. Your identity will always remain confidential. There will be no mention of any personal information about participants that might identify them when data and results

of the study are analysed and discussed.

4. All data that will be collected will be stored in a safe and secure place. Only authorised University officials will have access to it. After five years, all the questionnaires and data will be destroyed in an environmentally friendly way.
5. Any questions that you would have about this study will be answered for more clarity and insight.
6. Your participation time in this activity will be short. It will not take you more 30 than minutes to complete the questionnaire.
7. I will promptly respond to you on my cell phone at 0814426645, or e-mail [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com) the moment you indicate that you need to contact me for a matter related to this research study.
8. No one will prevent you from contacting the UNAM Centre for Research and Publications for more information or because you have a comment or complaint about this research or about me. The contact details of the centre are (+ 264 61) 206 4673 and [research@unam.na](mailto:research@unam.na).

## **SECTION 2: DECLARATION BY THE INVESTIGATOR/PARTICIPANT**

I, *(name and surname of Investigator/Participant)*

.....

declare that:

- I am 18 years of age or older.
- I am participating voluntarily in this research, and I understand that I can leave at any time before the end of the questionnaire without any negative consequences for me.
- I understand that I provide my name above ONLY for record purposes for this research, and that the information will not be shared with a third party or used to communicate with me about anything else than this research project.
- I understand that my identity will be fully protected in any report on this research, and that all information I provide above and during the research will be safeguarded.
- I AGREE / DECLINE to take part in this research.

*(Delete the non-applicable word.)*



SIGNATURE: Participant

SIGNATURE: Investigator

DATE

## TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A (Personal information)

1. What is the name of the school where you teach? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is the location of the school where you teach? Urban \_\_\_ Suburban\_\_\_ Rural\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your gender? Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
4. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_years
5. What language do you speak (use) at home? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your highest teaching qualification? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many years of teaching experience do you have? \_\_\_\_\_years \_\_\_\_\_months
8. What is the average number of learners in the classes you teach? \_\_\_\_\_ learners
9. How were you trained to teach learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour? \_\_\_\_\_ Fulltime training at university \_\_\_\_\_ In-service training at workshops \_\_\_\_\_ No training at all.

### SECTION B (TYPES OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR)

The following is a list of statements associated with different types of disruptive behaviour that occur in schools. Which of these types of disruptive behaviour are displayed by learners in your class? Please mark x in the column of your choice.

<b>Disruptive behaviour in the class</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Very often</b>
1. Untimely talking or laughing				
2. argues with teachers				

3. loses temper easily				
4. actively refuses teachers request or rules				
5. deliberately annoys other learners				
6. blames others for his or her mistakes				
7. is touchy or easily annoyed by others				
8. is usually angry and disrespectful				
9. is spiteful and wants to get even				
10. bullies, threatens and intimidates others				
11. starts physical fights				
12. lies to get out of trouble				
13. is absent from school without valid reason				
14. is physically cruel to people				
15. steals things from other learners				
16. carries and uses objects like knives at school				
17. destroys properties of others				
18. forces someone into sexual activities				
19. yells outside or inside class				
20. is hyperactive in and outside class				
21. shows behaviour which are harmful to self and others				
22. displays behaviour which hamper teaching and learning				

**SECTION C: CHALLENGES)**

There are factors that make it difficult for teachers to effectively manage learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. The table below shows some of them. Rate each statement by ticking the response that best reflects your opinion on how serious does the factor contribute to the challenge of handling learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Serious</b>	<b>Not Serious</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
1. Lack of teaching and learning aids			
2. Shortage of specialized training			
3. Overcrowding of class			
4. Lack of school administrators' support			
5. Understaffing schools			
6. Poor class environment			
7. Poor school environment			
8. Lack of curriculum support			

**SECTION D (INTERVENTION STRATEGIES)**

Below are some intervention strategies that teachers often use to handle learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in their schools. Rate each strategy by ticking the response that best reflects your opinion about how effective it is in handling learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Not effective</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Very effective</b>
21. Providing clear class rules				

22. Praising good behaviour of learners				
23. Applying class wide punishment				
24. Organizing class well				
25. Managing time well				
26. Providing sufficient learning resources				
27. Teaching all learners social skills				
28. Managing aggressiveness skills				
29. Developing positive self-image				
30. Teaching stress management skills				
31. Changing seating arrangements				
32. Informing learners about consequences of disruptive behaviour				
33. Teaching conflict resolution skills				
34. Teaching problems solving skills				
35. Showing respect towards learners				
36. Giving individualized behaviour plans				
37. Report learner to disciplinary committee				
38. Consistency in applying rules				
39. Teaching sufficient academic content				
40. Referring to Life Skills teacher				

**Thank you for your participation!**

**Appendix I: Informed consent for participants**

UREC Annex 5F: Informed Consent for Quantitative Studies

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**



**Informed Consent for teachers.**

<b>Name of Principal Investigator:</b>	Simon KalitheniThomas
<b>Name of Sponsor:</b>	N.A

**This Informed Consent Form has two parts:**

- **Information Sheet (this section, to share information about the study with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)**

**You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form.**

**PART I: INFORMATION SHEET**

**Introduction**

I'm Simon Kalitheni Thomas, a teacher at Christoph Ngatjizeko Primary School pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Namibia. I am doing research on the teachers' challenges and coping mechanisms in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in selected primary schools in the Omaheke region. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the

research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher

### **Purpose of the Research**

Disturbing behaviour in the class are intolerable and stress-provoking. Teachers spend a great deal of their time and energy to manage classes. Learners' mis behaviour retard the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching and also impede the learning of other learners. This study seeks to investigate challenges teachers face daily in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour and to identify coping mechanisms that teachers use daily in their regular classes when teaching with learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour

### **Type of Research Intervention**

This research will involve your participation in filling the questionnaire that will take about 30 minutes to complete.

### **Participant Selection**

You have been invited to participate in this research because you are a teacher at the selected school in the Omaheke region and your experience as a teacher can contribute to the research findings of challenges and coping mechanisms of teaching learners exhibiting disruptive behaviour.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. If you choose not to participate, you have no bearing on your job or on any work-related

evaluations or reports. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

## **Procedures**

### **A. A brief introduction to the format of the research study.**

I'm asking you to help me gain more insight information on the teachers' challenges and coping mechanisms in teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in the Omaheke region.

### **B. Type of questions that are to be asked in the survey.**

The structured questionnaire consists of five sections. The first section focuses on demographic data such as school, gender, age, qualifications, and years of teaching experience. The second section consists of close-ended questions on types of disruptive behaviour in class. The third section focuses on challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour, and the fourth section focuses on coping mechanisms teachers use when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour.

Fill out a survey which will be provided by Simon Kalitheni Thomas and collected by the same person OR You may answer the questionnaire yourself, or it can be read to you and you can say out loud the answer you want me to write down. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions included in the survey, you may skip them and move on to the next question. The information recorded is confidential, your name is not being included on the forms, only a number will identify you, and no one else except Simon Thomas Kalitheni will have access to your survey.

## **Duration**

You should take about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the researcher will collect all completed questionnaires from you.

**Risks**

There are no risks involved in taking part in completing the survey.

**Benefits**

As a teacher, the study findings will bring more insights on specific challenges that teachers face when teaching learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour in the selected primary schools. The results will add knowledge about and specific skills on how to respond to learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour

**Reimbursements**

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research. However, your participation and your time will be highly appreciated.

**Confidentiality**

Your identity will not be revealed. The information that I collect from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. Only the researchers will know what your number is and I will lock that information up with a lock and key, and will afterward be burned. It will not be shared with or given to anyone except my supervisors or authorised University personnel.

**Sharing the Results**

The research findings will be shared more broadly through publications and conferences. The research findings will also be shared through the Regional Director of Education Omaheke region and different schools.

**Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so, and choosing to participate will not affect your job or job-related evaluations in any way. You may stop

participating in filling the questionnaire any time that you wish without your job being affected. You have right to skip questions that you do not understand.

**Who to Contact**

If you have any questions, you can ask me now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me at 0814426645 or [simonkalitheni@gmail.com](mailto:simonkalitheni@gmail.com)

**This research has been reviewed and approved by the relevant Ethics Review Committee at the University of Namibia, which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. The committee reports to the University’s Centre for Research Services. If you wish to contact this Centre, please call +264 61 206 4673 or send an e-mail to [research@unam.na](mailto:research@unam.na).**

You can ask me any questions about any part of the research study if you wish to. Do you have any questions?

**PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT**

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked, have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

.....

Name of Participant (print)

Signature of Participant

.....

Date (day/month/year)

**If illiterate**

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

.....

Name of Witness (print)



Thumb print of Participant

.....

Signature of Witness

.....

Date (day/month/year)

**Statement by the Researcher/Person taking Consent**

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability, I made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. Explaining the purpose of the questionnaire verbally.
2. Distributing the questionnaire to the participant

3. Collecting the questionnaire from the participant

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability.

I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

Simon Kalitheni Thomas



Name of Researcher/Person taking Consent (print)

Signature

.....

Date (day/month/year)