THE EFFECT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES USED BY TEACHERS ON LEARNERS WHO DISPLAY EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS IN SOME SCHOOLS IN THE QWAQWA REGION OF THE EASTERN FREE STATE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES USED BY TEACHERS ON LEARNERS WHO DISPLAY EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS IN SOME SCHOOLS IN THE QWAQWA REGION OF THE EASTERN FREE STATE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

This study sought to investigate the extent to which teachers witness any kind of emotional and/or behavioural disorders displayed by learners at the three levels of schooling in QwaQwa, namely junior and senior primary and secondary schools. The focus was on whether the intervention strategies teachers use are effective or not, particularly since corporal punishment was curtailed by law as stated in the South African Schools Act of 1996. The effectiveness of each strategy was investigated at these three levels in 12 schools, where 98 questionnaires were distributed to teachers, and principals were interviewed with the hope of uncovering information that people might more easily provide in conversations than in written form.

The findings revealed that learners do display emotional and emotional behavioural disorders (EBDs), which are sometimes stressful for teachers. Although there were no significant differences in the extent of the occurrences, neverthless it was alarming to discover that senior primary learners were the most problematic of the three levels.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Overview

For a number of years, QwaQwa in the eastern part of the Free State Province of South Africa has been known as a peaceful homeland rich with schools, especially those with boarding facilities, to which parents could send their children, believing that they would be kept away from the streets and that self-discipline would be instilled in them. While there were students who were disorderly, many of them responded positively to intervention strategies which teachers employed with children who displayed emotional and behaviour disorders.

The situation began to change soon after the 1976 national political unrest when students took to the streets in protest against the inferior education, which was then known as Bantu education (Christie, 1990). This unruly situation, where teachers became afraid of learners, worsened from 1984 when many students also became politicised and rebellious over trivial issues, including disciplinary measures. The learners hated corporal punishment, which was relied on by many teachers for maintaining discipline, and they protested against it from 1980 onwards (Christie, 1990).

During this period (1976- 1984) of political unrest, teachers resorted to other measures of discipline such as the following:

- sending the offender away from the class for a specified period
- referring the offender to the headmaster/principal's office for reprimanding
- summoning the parents/guardian of the offender to the school
- assigning an extra task to the offender.

In 1994 when the new ANC-led government took over power from the National Party, the Education Act was amended. The new Act, South African Schools Act of 1996, implemented by the Department of Education, curtails the use of corporal punishment. The Act states that teachers will be charged with child abuse in a court of law in the event that such form of punishment is used. This led to the teachers feeling powerless and uncertain as to which intervention strategies to employ when faced with emotional and behavioural problems in the classroom, especially in secondary schools. The reason was probably that corporal punishment had been convenient for many teachers, who apparently believed it to be effective with learners who displayed emotional and behavioural disorders or breached rules.

When ordinary intervention strategies failed, one amongst many other disciplinary measures that were taken as a drastic alternative to other forms of intervention strategies was to refer those learners with severe Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (EBD) to special schools. However, the new 1996 South African Schools Act requires that all children, including those with severe EBD as well as those with other special educational needs, must be educated together with their normal counterparts in the regular schools or classrooms. That learners are not supposed to be segregated for the purpose of education, except in extreme cases when the lives of others are threatened, adds to the teacher's problems insofar as dealing with misbehaviour is concerned. This is because many teacher-training programs do not prepare teachers with skills for handling such types of problems.

Definition of Terms

Emotional and behaviour disorders (EBD): For the purpose of this study the concept emotional and behaviour disorders (EBD) is used to refer to those:

> Emotional and behavioural responses that are so different from those appropriate to age, culture, or ethnic norms that they adversely affect academic, social, vocational or personal performance,
> Responses that are more than temporary and expected as a result of stressful events in the environment,
> Consistent problems in an environment in addition to school,
> Persistent disorders despite ordinary interventions,
> The possibility of emotional and behavioural disorders with other disabilities,
> A range of disorders related to emotions and behaviour, such as schizophrenia, anxiety, affective, conduct, or adjustment (Gearheart, Weishahn & Gearheart, 1996, p. 376).

The above-mentioned definition was preferred to others because it attempts to include many types of emotional and behavioural problems and will therefore be used for the purpose of this study.

Intervention strategies: In this study the term refers to actions and measures that teachers take to alleviate emotional and behavioural disorders displayed by learners.

Junior primary school: This is a school whose organization accommodates children from reception grade (R), formerly known as preschool, to grade 3. The admission age at this level is 6 years.

Senior primary school: The organization of this school varies according to availability of staff, the number of learners enrolled, as well as buildings. It accommodates children from the grade 4, previously known as standard 2, to the grade 7.

Secondary school: The term is used to cover a range of school levels that accommodate learners from grade 8 to grade 12. The range may include junior secondary schools with only grades 8 to 10, or senior secondary schools with only grades 10 to 12.

Interest of the Study

The curtailment of the use of corporal punishment by the 1996 Schools Act has brought some discipline problems with it. In my observation as a former teacher it has become evident (from teachers' complaints and actions) that some teachers, especially at senior primary and secondary school levels, are faced with problems. They find it difficult to decide when to intervene and to determine which intervention strategies they should apply when learners display emotional and behaviour problems.

For fear of being victimized by parents, learners, or the government's education department, some teachers let the offender get away with a serious offence without being punished. Others complain that the intervention strategies they employ are not always effective, but they are reluctant to try out different ones, possibly because they are not certain as to the appropriateness of these new strategies, or they fear of retaliation from learners or parents.

It would be in the best interest of the country's education system to find out from teachers what problems they face and how they deal with them, and then to recommend intervention strategies which might be effective in alleviating the behaviour of learners with EBD based on the research done in this area.

Perhaps some teachers will benefit from the findings of this study, develop better intervention and coping strategies, and thereby bring about a reduction of the high rate of school leaving, truancy, absenteeism, as well as unnecessary failure of learners, largely attributable to emotional and behavioural disorders.

It is hoped that the results of this study may make the work of some teachers easier since some parents and learners tend to blame teachers for the failure of learners.

Those teachers who feel some degree of professional burn-out may be assisted by recommendations of this study, which include those offered by other teachers in the field.

Research Questions

Through questionnaires distributed to schools, interviews conducted with teachers and principals, the study sought to address the following questions:

1. What types of emotional and behavioural disorders do teachers witness at the three school phases, from grade R to grade 12?
2. Which intervention strategies do teachers employ to help control emotional and behavioural disorders of such learners, especially since the banning of corporal punishment by the Schools Act of 1996?
3. Which of the intervention strategies do teachers feel to be most effective?
4. How do intervention strategies employed by teachers in the study compare with those found to be effective in literature?

It is hoped that the findings of this study will benefit those teachers who find themselves hard-pressed to maintain order and discipline in classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

This study looks at how teachers deal with learners who display severe emotional and behavioural disorders in some schools in the QwaQwa region of the Eastern Free State and its findings are therefore not generalizable to schools in other regions of the province or in the rest of South Africa.

The self-reporting done by the teachers and principals necessitated by this study is another limitation. Self-reporting is perceptual and what teachers and principals say may

be different from what they do in real practice. People tend to report only the good things and not bad ones about themselves.

Some participants may have felt awkward about completing the items dealing with age, professional qualifications, and years of teaching experience. The collection of background information from the participants made the responses less anonymous and may have made some teachers and principals reluctant to provide details. They may have felt like they were being spied on, or that the information requested from them might be used negatively against them.

Since some individuals are reluctant to complete any kind of questionnaire, particularly one that requires lengthy written responses or takes up a lot of time, an attempt was made to streamline the response process and to make the questionnaire user-friendly. For this reason, only two items in the questionnaire required more detailed written responses.

Author's Profile

Makgoarai Emelina Mofutsanyana known to her friends as Mumsy, is a junior lecturer at The University of the North, QwaQwa campus (Uniqwa), born in 1963 in Katlehong in the Gauteng province of South Africa. She obtained her primary education from two primary schools, Umkhathizwe and Maphanzela, where she was brought up in foster care by relatives, while her father, who had been mugged, was hospitalized for 8 months and her mother was caring for a newly born baby.

After the death of her foster care mother in 1976, she rejoined her siblings in QwaQwa in 1977, where she entered high school. She completed her secondary school at Manthatisi High School in 1981. In 1982 she started her teacher-training programme,

which she completed in 1984 at Tshiya College also in QwaQwa. She started teaching at Katlehong High School in 1985 to 1987, after which she returned to QwaQwa to further her studies.

Mumsy obtained her B.A and B.ED degrees at Uniqwa in 1992 and 1997 respectively, after which she joined the Education faculty and began working at her M.A degree with Concordia University in the Special Individualized Programme (SIP). She now lives in Elite, Phuthaditjhaba with her three daughters.

Mumsy intends to focus her study on finding out how teachers cope with learners who display Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (EBD) in some public schools of the QwaQwa region, especially since the curtailment of corporal punishment by the South African Schools Act of 1996. This curtailment resulted from a chain of student protests against the use of corporal punishment, amongst other grievances, which started in 1976 and intensified from 1984 to 1993. Particular attention will be paid mainly to the types of EBD displayed by learners, the types of intervention strategies used by teachers, and the degree of the effectiveness of those strategies.

The need for this study emanated from the visible lack of discipline displayed by school children in and outside of school premises and the teachers' apparent loss of skills and controlling power over such behaviour, possibly out of fear of victimization by learners or their parents.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

Types of Problems Witnessed by Teachers in Schools

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

The term refers to a disorder whereby a child fails to pay attention to a learning activity and displays hyperactivity during that activity. Learners with such a behaviour have been found to be impulsive, listless, aggressive, and to experience more conduct problems and more incidents of mild depression (Goldstein, 1995). According to Goldstein (1995) these children appear to be victims of their own temperament, making it difficult for them to complete repetitive, uninteresting activities.

Disruptive disorders

Goldstein (1995) also mentions oppositional, defiant conduct. Learners with this type of disorder present the most difficult challenge facing classroom teachers. These children display verbal and physical aggression, throw tantrums, destroy property, steal, lie and refuse to comply. Their defiance is often directed towards authority figures and classroom rules. This is rare in early childhood, tending instead to manifest itself more at the secondary level.

Goldstein goes on to report that most children showing disruptive disorders, especially boys, display one of the two broad dimensions of disruptive behaviour. The first includes oppositional and aggressive behaviour, and the second, fighting, disobedience, tantrums, destruction of property, bullying and attention seeking. The second dimension also takes in theft, lying, delinquency, truancy and running away from home.

Goldstein (1995), proposed dividing behavioural symptoms of conduct disorders into overt problems such as aggression, where the aggressor may attack other learners, and covert problems such as stealing. This distinction is an important one for this study since overt problems are likely to be reported by teachers more frequently than covert problems.

Depression and anxiety disorders

Anxiety refers to a sense of apprehension or unease that is often related to an individual's expectation of some kind of threat to his or her physical well-being. Anxiety disorders are found to be more prevalent in adults than in children, but can be found in common clusters of problems among learners (Goldstein, 1995; Fontenelle, 1983).

Because of the tendency of anxious children to internalise or over-control the existence of their problem, many of their problems do not come to the teacher's attention soon enough to get them help. The more subtle symptoms of anxiety are not disruptive, and learners with such problems may not be referred to specialists until their symptoms begin to affect schoolwork, often quite late in the development of the disorder. Some of the most common types of anxiety and depression disorders are discussed below (Goldstein, 1995).

Separation-anxiety disorder

According to Goldstein (1995) the essential feature of this childhood problem is excessive anxiety concerning separation, usually from the mother, father or any attachment figure who happens to be a family member, or a caregiver. It is a normal developmental phenomenon from approximately age seven months to the early childhood and preschool years. Reactions to separation may vary, depending on the situation in

which the separation occurs. When the young learners are brought to preschool, they may cry when the attachment figure leaves them with an unfamiliar person, or may later refuse to attend school out of fear or worry about perceived potential dangers that threaten the attachment figure when separated. This disorder appears to occur most frequently in boys than in girls (Goldstein, 1995; Margolin, 1992). Since pre-school is a luxury unaffordable to many South Africans and since quite a number of children live in rural environments far from the school they will eventually attend, a good number of children suffer from a separation-anxiety disorder when they begin their studies.

Overanxious disorder

Generally, children with this disorder experience a sensation of anxiety or worry that is not exclusively focused on a specific object, stress or situation. Goldstein (1995) describes these children as anxious; they tend to worry about insignificant matters such as future events; they cannot relax and appear to need frequent reassurance. The novelty of the school experience for many South African children results in heightened degrees of general anxiety about what will happen to them and how they will survive in school.

Avoidance disorder

Children with this disorder avoid contact with unfamiliar persons. The avoidance becomes severe enough to interfere with social relationships. According to Goldstein (1995) some of these learners have other disorders such as over-anxiety concurrently with avoidance.

Fears and simple phobias

A simple phobia results in the specific, isolated and persistent fear of a particular stimulus, for example, fear of criticism from adults, fear of small animals or fear of the

unknown. The diagnosis is made only if the phobia interferes with normal functioning during school hours. Girls have been found to report more fears than boys. The fears are usually temporary and some are age or time specific. However, it may be difficult to determine whether young children have achieved sufficient cognitive development to recognize the irrational nature of their fears (Goldstein, 1995).

Obsessive-compulsive disorder

Goldstein (1995) and Margolin (1982) refer to obsessions as recurrent, persistent, private thoughts, or ideas often of an unpleasant nature, such as violence, that seem intrusive and frequently senseless to the individual. Compulsions are explained as repetitive, purposeful behaviours or rituals that often accompany obsessions and are utilized to reduce anxiety, avoid feared events, or lessen feelings of guilt. The age of onset of this disorder may vary for many children, with symptoms occurring sometimes gradually and sometimes dramatically and suddenly.

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Researchers such as Margolin (1982), amongst others, have come to recognize that post-traumatic stress disorder occurs with greater frequency than first thought in children and adolescents. The disorder is characterized by symptoms typical of depression, such as insomnia, poor concentration, and irritability, as well as from anxiety disorder symptoms like avoidance and exaggerated startle response. This disorder is mostly evident in children exposed to events involving actual or threatened serious injury or death (Margolin, 1982; Goldstein, 1995). Given the very violent recent history of South Africa, it is reasonable to believe that a number of South African children could be suffering from such a disorder.

Lack of judgement/impulsiveness

Margolin (1992) and Goldstein, (1995) stated that impulsive learners may not be able to anticipate the process of confirming whether the results of a situation are congruent with expectations, or whether the action in question matches what is anticipated, and are able to adjust their behaviour in the light of the results. Children who are unable to match results and expectations have a great deal of difficulty within a school system that constantly assesses and grades their performance.

Difficulties in perceiving how others feel

Learners with social or emotional disorders may use inappropriate behaviour or language because they do not know if the person to whom they are reacting is sad or happy, approving or disapproving, rejecting or accepting, and because they are insensitive to the general atmosphere of a social situation (Margolin, 1992; Goldstein, 1995)

Problems in socializing and making friends

Parents and researchers (Margolin, 1992; Goldstein, 1995) affirm that if and when there is no planned activity during or after school hours, holidays, weekends, the children with socialization problems have trouble making friends, and are usually ignored when attempting to initiate a social activity or interaction.

Social disabilities in the school setting

Due to lack of social competence, learners suffering from this disability are often ignored when attempting to initiate a social interaction with teachers. Thus, they receive less positive and more negative reinforcement than their counterparts with no social and emotional disorders (Sanders, 1981).

Poor self-esteem

Having many problems in the social realm can lead to disappointment, frustration, lower self-esteem and poor self-concept. To build confidence and feelings of self-worth, students need successful social experiences, which may be lacking in the life of a learner with a social disability (Sanders, 1981). The problem of poor self-esteem is an important one in post-apartheid South Africa, where the black population has had to completely reconstruct its identity since 1994.

Problems in adaptive behaviour

Teachers have noticed that learners with a social disability also experience problems with adaptive behaviour, as evidenced by assessments of behaviours related to areas independence, self-care, and communication, social, academic and occupational skills. Measures of adaptive behaviour reveal low scores for learning disabled children at both elementary and secondary schools (Mwamwenda, 1992).

Categories of problem behaviours

Lindgren (1976) identify the types of behaviour problems teachers witness and classify them into three major categories namely: conduct problems, personality problems, and emotional and social immaturity problems. The behaviours associated with each type of problem are summarized in Table1 below:

Table 1
Categories of Behaviour Problems

Personality Problems	**Conduct Problems**	**Problems of Emotional/Social Immaturity**
Unable to have fun	Restless	Restless
Self-conscious	Attention-seeking	Self-conscious
Feeling inferior	Disruptive	Feeling inferior
Preoccupied	Boisterous	Preoccupied
Shy	Short attention span	Short attention span
Withdrawn	Inattentive	Lacking confidence
Easily flustered	Lazy in school	Daydreams
Lacking confidence	Lacking interest	Easily flustered
Lacking interest	Irresponsible	Passive, suggestible
Irresponsible	Disobedient	Hyperactive
Given to daydreams	Uncooperative	Distractible

(Lindgren, 1976, p. 134)

Frequency of Problems Witnessed by Teachers in Schools

In a study of classroom EBD conducted by Jones, Charlton, and Wilkin, (1995) in St Helena in the South Atlantic, the 50 out of 54 returned questionnaires indicated that a significant 28% of the respondents felt that they were spending more time than they ought to do on problems of order and control. The primary problem cited was talking out of turn (42% of the respondents), followed by students facing away from work (25%), and disturbing others (12%). Non-attendance and disobeying were not cited as significant problems.

In Whitney and Smith's (1993) study on the extent of bullying in schools, the results indicate a disturbingly high level of reports of being bullied. This was especially true in junior and middle schools, where many students reported having been bullied at least sometimes and others said that bullying was happening at least once a week. The

results showed lower, but still significant, occurrences of bullying in high schools. Twice as many boys than girls admitted to bullying.

Whitney and Smith's (1993) findings indicate that most incidents of bullying occur in playgrounds, classrooms or in corridors in secondary schools, while in junior/middle schools they happen predominantly in the playgrounds. Being bullied while going to and from school was reported as occurring to a higher extent in junior schools than in secondary schools. However, what I have witnessed in South African schools is that bullying on the way to or from school is rife at the senior primary and secondary levels.

Stafford and Stafford's (1993) study reports frequent occurrences of aggressive behaviour, including kicking, pushing, pulling, name-calling and fighting, during recess and lunch periods.

Boulton (1993), in a study conducted in middle schools in England, finds that aggressive behaviour occurs frequently during lunch, recess, or playtime or during learning activities conducted outside the classroom.

Teachers and principals in a study conducted by Oswald (1995) in Salisbury East, South Australia reported frequently occurring behaviour problems as follows:

- Physical violence towards teachers and/or other learners over trivial issues
- Unpredictable aggressive behaviours
- Grudges held over unresolved issues and revenge on others
- Loners (with few or no friends) due to their aggression.

Interestingly Oswald's study reveals evidence of a pattern of 'denial of responsibility' by parents of children showing inappropriate behaviour. One principal reported that when parents were verbally abusive, their children were as well.

Given the numerous sources of stress and conflict present in South African society, the children of this country could potentially suffer from a variety of different disorders that could be manifested in a wide range of behaviours. The following checklist provided by Gearheart et al. (1996) could prove useful to the regular classroom teacher interested in recording the various types and frequencies of emotional and behavioural disorders that are displayed by his or her learners (Appendix A).

Assessing Problematic Behaviours

Traditional framework for assessing problematic behaviours

The traditional framework for assessing problematic behaviours in the classroom is heavily focused on the learner and his or her particular comportment difficulties. In other words, it relies on an essentially one-way system of causality: the learner has problems and the effects of these problems are felt by the teacher in the classroom. Within this framework, problematic behaviours are listed and classified, but there is little attempt to understand them as part of a broader social interaction (Hamill, Bartell & Bunch, 1984).

Biophysical approach

According to the biophysical approach problematic behaviour is assessed focusing on internal causes such as chemical imbalances, genetic deficiencies, poor nutrition, disrupted sleep, and brain injury, which are regarded as attributes to problematic behaviour. The biophysical approach treats behaviour problems using

medication such as tranquillizers, stimulants or antidepressants or behaviour modification. However, because the biophysical approach requires extensive professional medical expertise, which teachers do not possess, it is difficult to use in a school setting without involving medical practitioners (Gearheart et al., 1996).

Behavioural approach

The behavioural approach attributes behaviour problems to external causes such as inappropriate behaviour learned, reinforced and maintained by others in the environment. Treatment of such behaviour using the behavioural approach entails removal of reinforcement that maintains the behaviour, and teaching appropriate behaviour. Because of the great effort needed to apply this approach and sustain it over time, it becomes less successful to use, unlike the ecological approach (see below).

Psychodynamic approach

The assessment of behaviour following this approach attributes inappropriate behaviour to internal causes such as unsuccessful negotiation of psychological stages, internal conflicts and feeling of guilt. The treatment advocated by the psychodynamic approach allows free expression of feelings, provides an accepting, warm environment, and avoids making too many demands (Gearheart et al., 1996). However, while the results may be positive in treating the target child, the approach may also be time-consuming. It is applied at the expense of other learners, particularly in class the size of those in South Africa. Furthermore, South African teachers have not been trained in the field.

Ecological framework for assessing problematic behaviours

The ecological framework differs from a more traditional assessment framework in that it assumes that many factors other than child-centred ones may cause or aggravate behavioural problems (Hamill et al., 1984). Examples of such factors according to Gearheart et al. (1996) include internal or external causes such as interaction between feelings, needs and society's norms, demands and responsibilities. Treatment is offered in the form of aiding the adjustment of the individual, the environment, or both.

According to Hamill et al. (1984), it would be important that assessing behaviour information be gathered within the ecological frame of reference. Ecological assessment allows an examiner to evaluate a student's status in the various environments in which the learner functions. Since this type of evaluation is gaining popularity in the public schools of many countries which require that students identified as emotionally disturbed be evaluated in an ecological manner, it would be in South Africa's best interest to recommend that teachers adopt this assessment framework.

The ecological framework provides a broader and more natural picture of the target child than the one obtained from conventional evaluations that typically remove the child from the classroom and that are conducted in an unfamiliar environment, such as the testing room or the school psychologist's office.

Whether behaviour is a problem or not depends on the perception of the observer, for example, the teachers whose evaluations of behaviour may affect their subsequent academic evaluations of their learners. For example Hamill et al. (1984) reported that teacher approval of student behaviour was highest for above-average classes, while teacher disapproval was highest for slow, average, and below-average classes in that

order. According to (Hamill et al., 1984), teacher disapproval may result in lessened enthusiasm for teaching slow classes, and might give rise to undesirable classroom behaviour. This means that teachers can unwittingly create their own behaviour problems where none previously existed by the way they interact with their lower-achieving learners.

Techniques for Assessing Problem Behaviour

Direct Observation

Hamill et al. (1984) consider this method the most convenient for teachers to use in measuring problem behaviours in the classroom, particularly if they wish to work within an ecological framework. Examples of this method are:

Automatic recording

This involves using recordings (audio or audio-visual) to measure behaviour. This method is rarely used in school settings due to its cost and rigidity, and also due to problems in obtaining consent to record or videotape students and staff.

Analysis of permanent products

The teacher evaluates the product of behaviour rather than the behaviour itself. However, this cannot be used to measure affective behaviours, which do not have permanent products associated with them.

Observational recording

This involves using anecdotal, event, duration and interval records, time samplings, and planned activity checks. Data obtained from these techniques should be recorded systematically for subsequent quick and easy interpretation. Anecdotal records should be presented in narrative form, and other records graphically (Hamill et al., 1984).

Behaviour checklists and Inventories

Checklists are helpful in terms of relating to a variety of normal and problem behaviours. They are intended for use with several children, rather than a single one.

Published Checklists

These are norm-referenced and yield standardized results, for example, a behaviour rating profile. Many of these provide rough criteria for interpretation and do not have adequate reliability or demonstrated validity. Therefore care should be taken to limit their use to general observation and assessment. One example of a published checklist is a Behaviour Rating Profile which is an ecological battery that includes a 5-point norm referenced scale and a sociogram. It is appropriate for use with learners aged 6 to 18 years and with teachers and parents. The instrument has high reliability with both normal deviant populations, and test-retest reliability is acceptable (Hamill et al., 1984).

Informal behaviour checklists

Informal behaviour checklists are teacher-made according to a particular classroom or child's observed behaviour (see Appendix A)

Interviews

Interviewing can be used to gather a great deal of information from a variety of subjects. It is subjective in nature, and quite informal. However, specific goals should be established before an interview is scheduled, and several possible approaches to conducting interviews should be considered (Hamill et al., 1984).

The above-mentioned techniques, amongst others, may be useful in assisting the teacher with problem behaviour assessment in order to seek relevant and effective intervention strategies or behaviour management techniques.

Intervention Strategies Used by Teachers

Prevention

Gnagey (1981) suggests that teachers take preventive measures to avoid or to limit misbehaviour. Going to class well prepared for the lesson is essential. A teacher who varies teaching methods and approaches keeps the attention of pupils. Learners should never be left idle; they should be kept busy with some tasks to perform especially when the teacher has to leave the classroom to attend to urgent official matters, such as: going to the principal's office, attending to sick or injured learner, to mention but a few.

Good and Brophy (1987) and Matthews, Spratt, and Dangerfield (1991) echo Gnagey when they argue that teacher preparation is essential to preventing misbehaviour in the classroom. They also speak of the importance of teacher knowledge of the subject matter, which allows teachers to function as authorities rather than as authoritarians.

Intervention

Despite taking precautionary measures, teachers may still find themselves in a situation where preventive measures have not been effective, and they have to take some action to control undesirable behaviour. Research has shown that reprimanding a learner privately is more effective than doing so publicly (Mwamwenda, 1992; Good & Brophy, 1987).

Mwamwenda (1992) suggested a number of ways of dealing with classroom problems. He says that if a learner misbehaves during a learning activity, the teacher may take one or more of the following actions:

- Give the offender a long, hard look to show displeasure with the offending behaviour and that the sooner it stops, the better.

- Simply draw the attention of the learner to the undesirable behaviour.
- Command the learner to pay attention to what is going on.
- Draw the attention of the offender to one who is behaving appropriately.
- Ignore the misbehaviour and praise positive behaviour.

Stafford et al. (1995) report that children who demonstrate aggressive behaviour, specifically in the playground, find themselves having to spend some or all of their playtime facing the wall. This was a sanction used regularly by teachers, where the offender was placed by the school wall, and had to remain standing there without being involved in any way with others. The duration varied from one minute to the whole break time, depending on the seriousness of the offence or misbehaviour.

Stafford et al. (1995) referred to the Elton report, which states that in order to create a positive atmosphere schools need to establish a healthy balance between punishment and reward. Furthermore, Stafford added that deviant and unacceptable behaviour is not just the province of the school. Teachers should not be expected to solve society's problems. Instead, it is suggested that the school and the home should form a working partnership.

Another way of managing behaviour according to Stafford et al. (1995) is making use of diaries, or the so-called good books, which are sent home with the children, with the aim of identifying positive aspects of behaviour as well as incidents of misbehaviour. Information concerning behaviour over a period of time can then be used to identify any patterns that are evident in the children's behaviour. The good books incorporate smiley stamps for acceptable behaviour, which can be awarded by staff or by the children themselves to one another. At the end of the week, those children who have satisfied the

negotiated criteria are allowed to participate in any agreed activity of their own choice. All reports are then recorded in the school's good books and read out in assembly on Friday mornings. The approach has been reported to be effective and is worth implementing more widely in South Africa.

In New Zealand, disruptive secondary school pupils were referred to a number of off-site units, which were established to cater to such children. However this exclusion from the mainstream secondary school system was not totally successful, since some of the units were under-resourced. There was less support than expected from the Department of Social Welfare, the Youth Aid branch of the police and the Department of Education's psychological service. Even Advisory teachers who were appointed by the local education boards appeared to have minimal involvement in the units. The very small numbers of pupils returning to the mainstream system showed evidence of little success from these units (Galloway & Barrett, 1984). This approach would also break new South African laws combating segregation.

In England referring the so-called disruptive or naughty pupils to special units seemed effective, evident from the large number of pupils reintegrating to the mainstream schools after spending between one month and three years in rehabilitation (Jenkins & Miller, 1995).

A study by Briggs, MacKay and Miller (1995) reported on a particular Scottish primary school which was making multiple referrals of children with serious behaviour problems to the psychological services. A group of 12 children who were perceived as the most aggressive were selected and put into an intervention program called The Edinbarnet Playground Project, whose purpose was to change behaviour. A separate

group of children with similar difficulties had also been informally identified, and the chosen method of intervention was cooperative group work, which was to take place in class time, but in a separate room within the school building. The sessions followed a distinct pattern divided into two sections. The first part consisted of discussions and feedback on recent playground behaviour, combined with exercises on topics such as My Self and My Feelings. The second part consisted of games in the school gym. The games ranged from non-competitive to ones of a more competitive nature. All playground incidents were recorded by the head-teacher for one month prior to the start of the project (Briggs et al., 1995).

All staff involved reported that the project was very successful in reducing disruptive incidents in the playground and that the participating children had benefited greatly from the project. Teachers also commented positively on changes in their classes, noting that the behaviour of one whole class had improved and less time was being spent dealing with incidents of misbehaviour after recesses. It also fostered a sense of responsibility amongst the children for good behaviour (Briggs et al., 1995).

Even though both teachers and students rated the Edinbarnet playground project as successful, it had some shortcomings of its own. A number of non-project pupils who were interested in participating were excluded. There was a concern from staff that working exclusively with the group of problem children created an aura for that group, resulting in other children misbehaving deliberately in order to take part in the group (Briggs et al., 1995).

West, Hailes, and Sammons (1995) reports preliminary results of interviews with classroom teachers in infant schools regarding behaviour management. When questioned

about their approach to teaching, some described it as child-centred, others as a mixture of child-centredness and more traditional, formal approaches. Others said that they worked with a variety of different sorts of activities taking place at the same time. Another group emphasized group work as well as whole-class work. However, these teachers reported some degree of change following the introduction of the National Curriculum, when children with special educational needs including behaviour problems, were worked on at an individual level, and provided with a combination of different methods for support (West et al., 1995).

Newton, Taylor, and Wilson (1996) describe an approach they named Circle of Friends whereby circles of friends were set up to include children with severe emotional and behavioural disorders and help them get into the mainstream. This approach was applied to children whose teachers had described them as having no friends, unable to make or sustain relationships, always fighting or arguing with other pupils. Other pupils would describe them as "nutters", mad, and always getting in trouble for something. As a result these children had been excluded from friendship groups.

Newton et al. (1996) described the formation of the circles and their implications. The first innermost circle, representing the level of intimacy, includes those people one cares about most dearly (parents, brothers, and sisters). The second circle, that of friendship, defines the closest friends whose lives enrich one's own. Circle three covers acquaintances; people one likes and who might almost have been included in circle two. The fourth circle consists of those people who are paid to provide one with essential services: teachers, doctors and dinnertime supervisors. The circle can quickly become a learning experience for all children in the group as they talk about feelings, solve

problems, listen, empathize, challenge and work out new ways forward (Newton et al., 1996). The effect of circles of friends on children became evident in developments in the following: empathy, problem-solving skills, listening skills, ability to identify and express feelings, understanding the links between feeling and behaviour, increased awareness of an individual's power to change. Teachers reported feeling more supported by the involvement of an outsider. The approach encourages emphasis on the positive for both teachers and parents, who feel less isolated as they now have many more allies. Teachers appear to experience an increase in self-esteem, and increased sense of pride in their class (Newton et al., 1996).

Gearheart et al. (1996) refer to another technique called behaviour modification, used in an attempt to change behaviour, especially physical and verbal aggression. Behaviourists assume that inappropriate behaviours have been learned and are being maintained by reinforcements. To eliminate or reduce the repetition of the inappropriate behaviour, the teacher finds out what is reinforcing it, for example, by observing what learners do during free time or asking what they would enjoy doing. Some types of re-enforcers used in behaviour modification are explained below and can take the form of the following:

- tangible items: peanuts, personal grooming aids, pens, toys, models
- token re-enforcers: behaviour charts, achievement charts, checks, points, smiley faces, or stars
- social re-enforcers: verbal praise, cheering and clapping from others, display of work or projects
- special privileges such as :

- being exempt from an assignment, homework or test
- being awarded extra time for rest before or after recess
- taking class roll
- serving as secretary for class meetings
- operating teaching media such as projecting machines, or audio-visual recorder
- organizing a school event such as a raffle or concert.

The technique of using time-outs is applied to students who have behaviour disorders and require a period of time during which they are separated from the rest of the group by some physical space in the room. When this separation seems advisable, the teacher can physically move the desk of the student to a place to provide physical space between that student and the rest of the class. The purpose of the removal varies. However, the teacher should ensure that this place is regarded as a safe-haven, and not punishment, so that time-out is a way to reduce tensions that arise from having to deal with pressing problems (Gearheart et al., 1996).

Contracts can also be effective in solving behavioural problems. Contracts are agreements that specify in exact terms what the students must do and what the teacher will do after the student has completed his/her portion of the agreement. These contracts may take the form of informal verbal agreements, simple written statements, or sophisticated written and witnessed agreements. Their usefulness depends primarily on the needs of the students. Contracts involving homework may require parents' signature to ensure their awareness (Gearheart et al., 1996)

Gearheart et al. (1996) also refer to techniques they called classroom dynamics, which they believe could temporarily address the needs of a student or prevent further problems among other students as a result of contagion:

Hurdle lessons:

The teacher is advised to provide individual attention to the student's academic needs in order to get past some difficult hurdle. However they must be alert as to when to provide such assistance

Restructuring classroom routine:

Although students sometimes enjoy routine, it is wise for a teacher to provide a change of pace.

Direct appeal to values:

The teacher has to get students to think by asking questions. Long and Newman (as cited in Gearheart et al., 1996) suggest that the trick is to learn how to say no without being angry and how to say yes without feeling guilty.

Removal of seduction object:

It is often easier to remove an object from sight than it is to manage the behaviours related to the object, for example, place a toy or pen which causes distraction on a shelf or in a container to alleviate the seduction caused by the object.

Tension reduction through humour:

A teacher may also defuse many potential explosions by using humorous comments. However, such comments should never be aimed at humiliating the learners.

Sloane, (1979) argued that a specific intervention program required for modifying classroom behaviour would usually vary according to the behaviour being

modified and the child. However they suggest the use of some set of procedures, which can be followed in the process of modifying behaviour as follows:

Setting behavioural and academic goals for each child in the room

When goals and materials are individualized, each child can master the material as it is introduced. Once children are succeeding in school and feel good about themselves and their place in school, many behaviour problems may be reduced. The educator should be careful about selecting and giving directions to each child and keeping up to the style of directions for success.

Decide how often the behaviour is currently occurring

A learner cannot begin a behaviour modification program without prior assessment in the same way the learners cannot begin a reading program until the teacher has determined their reading level. Generally about one week of baseline behaviour data is needed. Selecting the types of rewards a learner may receive for good behaviour may help in establishing the frequency at which misbehaviours occur. One easy method of achieving results from this is by using Direction Worksheet as the one in Sloane (1979, p. 27).

Setting daily steps

Target behaviours as well as daily goals should be set above what the child can do on average, but equal to or below the highest level that he or she can perform.

Involving the child

The problem child should be an active participant in changing his or her own behaviour. To gain cooperation, the child should feel a part of developing the expected behaviour, the goals and the rewards. Thus success is achieved for both the teacher and

the student, as is failure shared equally by both parties. Record the behaviour throughout the behaviour change process to determine success (Gearheart et al., 1996)

Change the program

If the program is not producing changed behaviour, the data should be studied to discover the problem. Even an effective program may need change. This can be done by gradually increasing the behaviour expected by using a variety of re-enforcers for increased interest (Gearheart et al., 1996).

Since these strategies have proved effective (though not necessarily perfect) in some school settings, they are worth trying out to see how they will work out in South African schools, particularly in the schools situated in QwaQwa. However, one needs to mention that the results might vary form one school level to another, and from rural and semi-rural area to semi-urban or urban areas.

Emphasis on teacher-parent cooperation

This refers to the practice of involving parents in the school life through parent-teacher associations, as paid paraprofessionals, or as volunteer teaching aides. As a result of the collaboration, a closer bond may be formed between the home and the school, and absences may drop dramatically (Lindgren, 1976). This practice was implemented in South African schools, where such structures were known as PTSAs (Parent -Teacher-Student Associations). The structures still exist today, but with a different name: SG's (School Governing Bodies). These SGBs assist the school management teams in matters of school policy, employment of staff and other problems related to maintenance of discipline. At this stage it should be noted that the effectiveness of the SGBs varies from one school to another, as it does from one community to another.

Summary

Children with EBDs often manifest attention-seeking and disruptive behaviours in classrooms. These are often greater in scale but not fundamentally different in quality from those of other pupils. Many of these problem behaviours are a direct result of the interaction between socio-emotional, interpersonal, cognitive and classroom factors (Montgomery, 1990).

Pupils with behaviour problems with or without learning difficulties profit from the same types of intervention. These interventions involve teachers taking a positive, supportive and constructive role in the management of the classroom, the pupils' behaviour and the task, so that all pupils can enjoy success. Access to the curriculum can be opened up on a broader scale for children with learning difficulties and behaviour problems if the teaching methods and intervention strategies are changed to cater for them and the needs they share in common with many other children.

Not all strategies can be 100% effective. However, for teachers to solve the behaviour problems expressed by pupils in their classes, they may apply those intervention strategies that seem to them to be potentially effective. The choice of strategies will depend on the severity of the offences, the age and developmental level of the offenders, and the personality of the teacher.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study takes the form of a survey involving descriptive, qualitative research. It relies on questionnaires administered to teachers and principals of the 12 selected schools. The questionnaires were intended to determine the extent to which the respondents encounter various types of EBDs displayed by learners in schools. Another goal was to determine which types of intervention strategies are perceived by teachers to be effective and which are not. The researcher also interviewed principals of the selected schools in order to obtain more information that might be omitted when completing the questionnaires. Permission to carry out this study was obtained from the Free State Department of Education (Appendix B), and school principals were asked to give their consent (Appendix C).

The Sample

There were 98 purposively sampled participants involved in this study. Eighty-six of the participants were teachers and 12 were principals. Forty-one were men and 57 women. They were based in 12 randomly selected schools situated within Phuthaditjhaba Township, and from six purposively selected schools situated in two neighbouring villages, Tseki and Makwane. Schools in these villages were selected because some individual teachers based in them had voiced more complaints about EBD problems than teachers in other villages in QwaQwa. Phuthaditjhaba on the other hand was selected because it has many schools that attract learners from a number of outlying villages. The various types of learners who come from different backgrounds in towns outside of

QwaQwa to seek schooling in Phuthaditjhaba schools bring with them different types of EBDs that they display in schools.

Measures and Materials

The interview guide for principals

The intention was to audiotape the interviews, but the first three principals approached preferred not to be tape-recorded. As a result, this procedure was eliminated. Instead notes of responses were taken down in shorthand writing during all the interviews. It proved difficult to interview and take notes at the same time, but key information was nonetheless recorded.

The guide consisted of the following questions:

1. Do you ever witness any emotional and behavioural disorders (EBDs) displayed by your school pupils, or have incidents of these reported to you?
2. What types of EBDs do you witness more frequently than others do?
3. In your experience (as witnessed) do boys or girls manifest these disorders you have just mentioned mostly?
4. Which types of intervention strategies do you usually employ in the event that EBDs occur?
5. Which of these strategies you have just mentioned are more effective than others?
6. In your opinion what do you think could be the cause of EBDs in school children?
7. How long have you been teaching?
8. Would you still like to be a teacher in the next five years? Why?

The questionnaire

Only one questionnaire, designed for both teachers and principals was used to gather data for this study (see Appendix D). The questionnaire consisted of nine

questions in all, six of which were about EBD and three concerned general and personal data. It was designed with user-friendliness in mind. For this reason most of the items could be completed by respondents merely ticking boxes. In spite of efforts made to keep the questionnaire simple and efficient, a few problems arose. Some teachers, particularly those at the junior primary level, found the length of the document intimidating. Unfortunately, little could be done to solve this problem since the length resulted from attempts to make the questionnaire easier to complete.

Procedures

The pilot study

A pilot study was conducted in four schools, two primary and two secondary, in the Phuthaditjhaba area. None of these schools was included in the main study sample. The sample of the pilot study consisted of five secondary school teachers including two principals, and six primary school teachers, including two principals. Three of the secondary level respondents were male and two were female. At the primary level there were two males and four females.

To increase the number of administrators (those who held senior positions) of schools participating in the pilot study, interviews were also conducted with three retired principals, two male and one female. Each of the participants in the pilot study was requested to respond to the items in the questionnaire, to make a note of weaknesses, ambiguities and difficulties, and to make recommendations that would facilitate the understanding of the questionnaire.

As a result of the feedback received from the pilot study, the wording and format of some items in the questionnaire were changed. Instead of having respondents write up

all of their responses to questions, Likert scale choices were introduced. Where the relevant or possible answers were not provided, particularly in questions 4 and 5 the respondents were requested to provide their own responses. Personal data were requested in such a manner that the responses would not reveal precise information, such as age, that some participants might not wish to divulge. All of the aforementioned changes made the questionnaire far more user friendly.

Procedure for the administration of the research questionnaire

Permission to conduct research in the QwaQwa schools was sought from the Department of Education, and was granted. In all, 98 questionnaires were distributed to the 12 selected schools. Since the sample schools were concentrated within a 22 to 24-kilometre radius, the questionnaires were not mailed to schools. Instead, they were taken personally to the schools by the researcher.

The teacher respondents were selected with the assistance of the principal or deputy principal of each school. Since many of the primary (junior and senior) school teachers only have teacher- training education, which could be obtained after grade 10, some of them were likely to experience problems in understanding and responding to some items in the questionnaire. In order to minimize the effect of such a problem in the findings of this study, the assistance of the principals or that of the researcher was sought.

The details of the questionnaire were discussed with the principals as well as the sample teachers before-hand during break times in some schools, or in the morning before distributing the instrument to individuals in other schools. The purpose of these briefing sessions was to explain the questionnaires to the respondents so that they could be completed with minimal difficulty. Most high school teachers had no problem with

understanding the contents of the instrument and were left to complete it with minimal briefing.

The respondents were then requested to complete the questionnaires during their free periods, to prevent the possibility of their skipping classes. At the beginning of the next school day, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher and the principals, since the researcher had requested that they be completed the same day they were delivered. This was done to avoid excuses that the respondents could make, for example that questionnaires had been forgotten at home, or misplaced.

All the 98 questionnaires which had been distributed, were returned without problems, although some of the questions had been left blank. This was particularly true for those from junior primary schools. It was easy to identify them as they were put in envelopes marked according to school.

The data collected in this study are presented and analysed in Chapter 4.

Procedure for interviews with principals

The principals of the 12 participating schools were interviewed by the researcher. The purpose of the interview was to obtain more information than might be provided by them in writing. Initially the researcher had intended to audiotape the interviews, but because the first three principals requested not to be recorded, the exercise was then omitted. Instead notes of responses were taken down in shorthand writing, which was difficult to do.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The data presented in this chapter are based on the responses to the questionnaires received from the participating teachers and principals, as well as from notes taken during interviews conducted with principals.

General Information About the Participating Schools

Table 2 shows that a similar number of educators at each school level completed the questionnaires.

Table 2
Participating Educators by Level (N = 98)

	School Type													
	Junior Primary				**Senior Primary**				**Secondary**					
Grade	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Educators	3	15	9	6	6	8	8	9	5	7	9	6	7	
Total per level				33				31					34	

Table 3 provides general information about the populations of the participating schools. It gives a broad idea of the size of the schools (in terms of students), the gender breakdown, the number of subjects taught by a single educator, and the graduation rates.

EBDs as Reported by Educators

Table 4 provides a breakdown of educator-reported EBDs by type and by frequency. The highest figure in each category is printed in bold.

Table 3
Populations of Participating Schools

	Junior Primary		Senior Primary		Secondary	
Learner Age Range	6-12		9-15		14-21	
Class Size Range	35-45		40-55		40-50	
Gender Distribution Range	Boys 10-22	Girls 14-28	Boys 20-28	Girls 20-24	Boys 15-21	Girls 19-27
School Enrolment Range	400-800		500-670		600-720	
Graduation Rate Range	90%-95%		92%-96%		20%-90%	
Number of subjects taught per educator	3-7		2-3		1-4	

Note. These are the figures reported by the participating educators. Where there were discrepancies between numbers reported by teachers in the same school, the results of all of the reporting teachers of that school were averaged.

Table 4
Percentage of Educators Rerpoting Types and Frequencies of EBDs: All Levels Combined

Types of EBDs	Frequency			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
a. Being aggressive towards other students	16.3	25.5	**42.9**	15.3
b. Being aggressive towards the teacher	**51.0**	29.6	4.1	15.3
c. Being irritable	22.4	**34.7**	23.5	19.4
d. Crying	17.3	24.5	25.5	32.7
e. Using vulgar language	23.5	32.7	18.4	25.5
f. Lying	11.2	25.5	22.4	**40.8**
g. Destroying property	31.6	18.4	16.3	33.7
h. Stealing	22.4	24.5	28.6	24.5
i. Bullying	32.7	28.6	15.3	23.5
j. Being disobedient	17.3	29.6	25.5	30.6
k. Being hyperactive	9.2	32.7	24.5	28.6
l. Not participating in class	18.4	32.7	29.6	19.4
m. Being inattentive	17.3	32.7	33.7	16.6
n. Clowning	18.4	32.7	29.6	19.4
o. Truancy	17.3	32.7	33.7	16.3
p. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, glue, etc.)	24.5	22.4	25.5	27.6

Note. Highest precentage in each category is printed in bold.

Dealing with all grade levels together in a single table tends to mask some of the more interesting findings of this study. For this reason, Table 5 was produced. It shows the percentage of educators who rated the types of EBDs manifested by the children in the three school sectors surveyed: junior primary, senior primary, and secondary. The most salient responses are printed in bold.

Of the respondents rating the frequency of occurrence of the EBDs in the junior primary sector, the majority rated three behaviours as occurring **Often** to **Very often**; namely, Lying, Crying, and Being hyperactive. If one combines those who rated Lying as occurring Often (30.3%) and those who rated it as occurring Very often (36.4%), a total of 66.7% attested to its frequency in this sector. Crying was reported as occurring Often by 21.2% and by 42.4% as Very often (total of 63.6%). Being hyperactive was reported as occuring Often by 24.2% and Very often by 24.2% as well (total of 48.4%).

Behaviours that were rated to occur **Rarely** or **Only sometimes** by a very large majority of the respondents (between 90-93%) include Being aggressive towards the teacher (51.5% Rarely and Only sometimes 42.2%), Being irritable (36.4%, Rarely and 54.5% Sometimes). Other behaviours reported to occur Rarely or Only sometimes include: Being aggressive toward other students (reported by 24.2% to occur Rarely and 27.3% to occur Only sometimes), Being inattentive (3%, 51.5%), Using vulgar Language (18.2%, 45.5%), and Being disobedient (18.2%, 42.4%). A smaller majority reported Destroying property and Substance Abuse to occur Rarely (reported by 39.4% and 33.3%, respectively. The respondents were split in their ratings for the frequency of Being aggressive towards other students, Stealing, and Not participating in class. Being aggressive was rated by a combined total of 51.5% as occurring Rarely (24.2%) and

Table 5

Percentage of Educators Reporting Types and Frequencies of EBDs by Level

Types of EBDs	Frequency											
	Junior Primary				Senior Primary				Secondary			
	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very often	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very often	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very often
Being aggressive towards other students	**24.2**	**27.3**	**36.4**	**12.1**	16.1	19.4	**41.9**	**22.6**	8.8	29.4	**50.0**	**11.8**
Being aggressive towards the teacher	**51.5**	**42.2**	3.0	3.0	25.8	22.6	**9.7**	**41.9**	**73.5**	**23.5**	-	2.9
Being irritable	**36.4**	**54.5**	9.1	-	6.5	25.8	**38.7**	**29.0**	23.5	23.5	**23.5**	**29.4**
Crying	12.1	24.2	**21.2**	**42.4**	9.7	25.8	**32.3**	**32.3**	**29.4**	**23.5**	23.5	23.5
Using vulgar language	**18.2**	**45.5**	18.2	18.2	25.8	19.4	**16.1**	**38.7**	**26.5**	**32.4**	20.6	20.6
Lying	9.1	24.2	**30.3**	**36.4**	19.4	29.0	**16.1**	**35.5**	5.9	23.5	**20.6**	**50.5**
Destroying property	**39.4**	24.2	15.2	21.2	3.2	16.1	**19.4**	**61.3**	**50.0**	**14.7**	14.7	20.6
Stealing	**15.2**	**33.3**	24.2	27.3	9.7	22.6	45.2	22.6	**41.2**	**17.6**	17.6	23.5
Bullying	15.2	51.5	12.1	21.2	**45.2**	**12.9**	12.9	29.0	**38.2**	**20.6**	20.6	20.6
Being disobedient	**18.2**	**42.4**	36.4	3.0	12.9	22.6	**25.8**	**38.7**	20.6	23.5	**35.3**	**20.6**
Being hyperactive	18.2	33.3	**24.2**	**24.2**	16.1	19.4	**25.8**	**38.7**	17.6	26.5	**26.5**	**29.4**
Not participating in class	**6.1**	**42.4**	9.1	42.4	-	32.3	**9.7**	**58.1**	20.6	23.5	**20.6**	**35.3**
Being inattentive	**3.0**	**51.5**	36.4	9.1	16.1	25.8	**12.9**	**45.2**	11.8	32.4	**23.5**	**32.4**
Clowning	12.1	45.5	30.3	12.1	19.4	29.0	**19.4**	**32.3**	23.5	23.5	**38.2**	**14.7**
Truancy	15.2	39.4	30.3	15.2	**19.4**	**35.5**	**32.3**	**12.9**	17.6	23.5	**38.2**	**20.6**
Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, glue, etc.)	**33.3**	24.2	24.2	18.2	16.1	25.8	**29.9**	**29.9**	23.5	17.6	**23.5**	**35.3**

Note. Percentages of the most salient items are in bold.

Sometimes (27.3%). An almost equal combined total (48.9%) rated this to occur Often (36.4%) and Very often (12.1%). About half the respondents (a total 48.5%) thought Stealing occurred Rarely (15.2%) or Only sometimes (33.3%).

Of the respondents rating the frequency of occurrence of the EBDs in the senior primary sector, a large majority reported three EBDs to occur **frequently**: Destroying property (reported by 19.4 % as Often and 61.3% as Very often), Being aggressive to other students (41.9% as Often and 22.6% as Very often), and Not participating in class (9.7% as Often and 58.1% as Very often). Eight other EBDs were also reported to occur Often to Very often but by a smaller majority: Being aggressive to the teacher (9.7%, 41.9%), Vulgar language (16.1%, 38.7%), Crying, (32.3%, 32.3%), Lying (16.1%, 35.5%), Being disobedient (25.8%, 38.7%), Being hyperactive (25.8, 38.7%), Being inattentive (by 12.9%, 45.2%), and Clowning (19.4%, 32.3%). Being irritable was reported by a combined total of 67.7% as occurring Often (38.7%) to Very often (29%). Substance abuse was also reported by a combined total of 59.8% as occurring Often (29.9%) to very Often (29.9%). Only two behaviours were rated as occurring **Rarely** or **Only sometimes**: Bullying (45.5% Rarely; 12.9%, Sometimes) and Truancy (19.4%, Rarely; 35.5%, Sometimes).

A majority of respondents rating the frequency of occurrence of EBDs in secondary school (50%) reported several EBDs to occur **frequently** (i.e., Often or Very often) in this sector: Being aggressive towards other students (50%, 11.8%); Lying (20.6%, 50.5%), Being irritable 23.5%, 29.4%), Being disobedient 35.3%, 20.6%), Being hyperactive (26.5%, 29.4%), Not participating in class (20.6%, 35.3%), Being inattentive

(23.5%, 32.4%), Clowning (38.2%, 14.7%) and Truancy (38.2%, 20.6%) and Substance abuse (23.5%, 35.3%).

Interestingly, most of the respondents reported that Being aggressive toward teachers occurs only **Rarely** (73.5%) or **Sometimes** (23.5%) in this sector. A large majority also reported that Destroying property also occurs only Rarely (50%) or Sometimes (14.7%). As well, Stealing is reported to occur only Rarely or Sometimes: (41.2%, 17.6%), as are Bullying (38.2%, 20.6%), Crying (29.4%, 23.5%) and Using vulgar language (26.5%, 32.4%).

Table 6 shows the percentage of educators rating the EBDs in terms of gender. The majority of the educators attributed five behaviours to be frequent among male students: Being aggressive towards learners (by 48%), Destroying property (41.8%), Stealing property (44.9%), Bullying (42.3%) and Substance abuse (41.8%). The majority of the respondents attributed two behaviours -- Crying (59.2%) and Being inattentive (38.8%) to be frequent among females. Finally, the majority attributed four behaviours to be frequent in both: Being irritable (44.9%), Using vulgar language (49%), Lying (40.8%), and Being inattentive in class (48%).

Table 7 shows the percentage of educators who rated the EBDs according to academic proficiency levels. It shows the educators attributing most of the EBDs to the lower achievers (bottom 25%). A majority of these respondents (above 50% to as high as 69.5%) indicated each EBDs to be more likely to be committed by the underachievers. Being irritable (69.4%), Being aggressive to the teacher (67.3%), Crying (66.3) and Using vulgar language were particularly singled out by a large majority about (66%). Being hyperactive (49%), Being inattentive (45.9%) and Playing truant were highlighted

Table 6
Percentage of Educaors Reporting EBDs by Gender: All Levels Combined

Types of emotions/behaviours	Males	Females	Neither	Both
a. Being aggressive towards other learners	**48.0**	24.4	0.0	27.6
b. Being aggressive towards the teacher	27.6	25.5	18.4	28.6
c. Being irritable	15.3	22.4	17.3	**44.9**
d. Crying	7.1	**59.2**	15.3	18.4
e. Using vulgar language	15.3	25.5	10.2	**49.0**
f. Lying	15.3	28.6	15.3	**40.8**
g. Destroying property	**41.8**	23.5	1.0	33.7
h. Stealing property	**44.9**	13.3	12.2	29.6
i. Bullying	**42.3**	15.5	7.2	35.1
j. Being Disobedient	34.0	13.4	15.5	37.1
k. Being hyperactive	14.3	30.6	16.3	38.8
l. Not participating in class	26.5	34.7	2.0	36.7
m. Being inattentive	11.2	**38.8**	2.0	**48.0**
n. Clowning	31.6	32.7	3.1	32.7
o. Truancy	34.7	23.5	10.2	31.6
p. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, glue, etc.)	**41.8**	25.5	6.1	26.5

Note. Percentages for the most salient items are in bold.

Table 7
Percentage of Educators Attributing EBDs According to Students' Academic Proficiency Levels

Observed behaviours	Neither	Top 25%	Bottom 25%
a. Being aggressive towards other learners		37.8	62.2
b. Being aggressive towards the teacher		32.7	**67.3**
c. Being irritable		30.6	**69.4**
d. Crying	1.0	32.7	**66.3**
e. Using vulgar language	1.0	33.0	**66.0**
f. Lying		41.8	58.2
g. Destroying property		40.8	59.2
h. Stealing property		40.8	59.2
i. Bullying		37.8	62.2
j. Being disobedient		39.8	60.2
k. Being hyperactive		**49.0**	51.0
l. Not participating in class		35.7	64.3
m. Being inattentive.		**45.9**	54.1
n. Clowning		43.9	56.1
o. Truancy		**44.9**	55.1
p. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, glue, etc.)	14.3	35.7	50.0

Note. Percentages for the most salient items are in bold.

by 44.9% of the respondents to be committed by the top 25% (high achievers), although the percentage of respondents doing so was smaller than those who attributed the other EBDs to the bottom 25% of learners.

Effectiveness of Intervention Strategies

The next part of the questionnaire asked teachers to rank various intervention strategies in terms of effectiveness. The results of the entire group of educators are reported in Table 8.

Table 8
Percentage of Educators Rating the Effectiveness of Different Intervention Strategies: All Levels Combined

Intervention strategies used by teachers	**Practically ineffective**	**Somewhat effective**	**Moderately effective**	**Highly effective**
a. Ignoring behaviour	25.5	27.6	24.5	22.4
b. Making eye-contact with the offender (a cold, hard stare)	17.3	14.3	32.7	35.7
c. Reprimanding the learner	14.3	14.3	32.7	38.7
d. Raising voice with the learner (yelling)	22.4	15.3	30.6	31.6
e. Assigning an extra task	20.4	22.4	28.6	28.6
f. Asking the learner to stand up for a specified period as punishment	27.6	18.4	**33.7**	20.4
g. Sending the learner to the principal's office	22.4	13.3	18.4	45.9
h. Requesting an interview with parents	9.2	9.2	27.6	**54.1**
i. Having the learner expelled from school for a short period of time	27.6	16.3	25.5	30.6
j. Having the learner expelled from school for a long period of time	**30.6**	24.5	12.2	32.7
k. Referring the learner to a special needs psychologist (therapist)	21.4	29.6	26.5	22.4
l. Detention	25.5	**33.7**	15.3	25.5
m. Other strategies	--	--	--	--

Note. Highest percentage in each category is printed in bold.

Once again, grouping all of the levels together masked differences. For this reason, Table 9 was created. It shows that, overall, the respondents endorsed the efficacy of Requesting an interview with parents as an intervention strategy. A large majority of the respondents (57.6%) rating its effectiveness for junior primary pupils felt this to be a Highly effective strategy for this group. A similarly large majority (54.8%) rating its effectiveness for senior primary students found it Highly effective for this group. A majority equivalent to half the respondents (50%) rating its effectiveness for secondary students reported it to be Highly effective for this level.

For junior primary pupils, four intervention strategies in addition to Requesting a parent interview were found by the majority of the respondents to be **Highly effective.** These are: Raising voice (reported 33.3% to be Highly effective), Assigning extra task (30.3%), Asking students to stand for a period of time (30.3%). Two were found by the majority to be **Moderately effective**: Eye contact (reported by 42.4%) and Reprimand (39.4%). Four strategies were thought to be only **Somewhat effective** or **Practically ineffective**. These are: Expelling learners for either a short (reported by 12.1% to be Somewhat effective and 33.3% to be Practically ineffective), Expelling for a long period (42.4%; Somewhat effective; 33.3%, Practically ineffective), Referring learners to psychologists (30.3%, Somewhat effective; 24.2% Practically ineffective) and Detention (36.4%, Somewhat effective; 30.3%, Practically ineffective). The status of Sending learners to the principal's office is not clear. About half the respondents found this to be Moderately to Highly effective (18.2% and 33.3%) and about half, Somewhat effective and Practically ineffective (18.2%, 30.3%).

Table 9

Percentage of Educators Reporting Effectiveness of Different Intervention Strategies by Level

Intervention strategies	Frequency											
	Junior Primary				Senior Primary				Secondary			
	Practically ineffective	Somewhat effective	Moderately effective	Highly effective	Practically ineffective	Somewhat effective	Moderately effective	Highly effective	Practically ineffective	Somewhat effective	Moderately effective	Highly effective
a. Ignoring behaviour	24.2	33.3	21.2	21.2	22.6	19.4	**35.5**	**22.6**	**29.4**	**29.4**	17.6	23.5
b. Making eye contact with the offender (a cold, hard stare)	15.2	15.2	**42.4**	27.3	25.8	12.9	**25.8**	**35.5**	11.8	14.7	29.4	**44.1**
c. Reprimanding the learner	3.0	24.2	**39.4**	33.3	25.8	9.7	**29.0**	**35.5**	14.7	8.8	29.4	**47.1**
d. Raising voice with the learner (yelling)	21.2	15.2	30.3	**33.3**	19.4	9.7	**32.3**	**38.7**	26.5	20.6	**29.4**	**23.5**
e. Assigning an extra task	27.3	18.2	24.2	**30.3**	12.9	22.6	**35.5**	**29.0**	20.6	26.5	**26.5**	**26.5**
f. Asking the learner to stand up for a specific period	30.3	21.2	18.2	**30.3**	19.4	19.4	**41.9**	**19.4**	32.4	14.7	41.2	11.8
g. Sending the learner to the principal's office	**30.3**	**18.2**	**18.2**	**33.3**	19.4	12.9	22.6	**45.2**	17.6	8.8	14.7	**58.8**
h. Requesting an interview with parents	6.1	15.2	21.2	**57.6**	3.2	6.5	35.5	**54.8**	17.6	5.9	26.5	**50.0**
i. Having the learner expelled from school for a short period	**33.3**	**12.1**	27.3	27.3	22.6	22.6	**25.8**	**29.0**	26.5	14.7	**23.5**	**35.3**
j. Having the learner expelled from school for a long period	**33.3**	**42.4**	9.1	27.3	32.3	16.1	**19.4**	**32.3**	**26.5**	**26.5**	8.8	38.2
k. Referring the learner to a special needs psychologist	**24.2**	**30.3**	33.3	12.1	19.4	22.6	**29.0**	**29.0**	**20.6**	**35.3**	17.6	26.6
l. Detention	30.3	36.4	15.2	18.2	**25.8**	**35.5**	16.1	22.6	**20.6**	**29.4**	14.7	35.3

Note. Percentages of the most salient items are in bold.

For senior primary pupils, two intervention strategies were found by a clear majority of the respondents to be **Highly effective**: Requesting to see the pupils' parents (reported by 54.8%), Sending Pupils to the principal (45.2%). Several were found to be **Moderately** to **Highly effective:** Eye contact (25.8%, Moderately effective and 35.5%, Highly effective) and Reprimanding (29%, 35.5%), Raising voice (32.3%, 38.7%), Assigning extra work (35.5%, 29%), Ignoring behaviour (35.5%, 22.6%), Asking learner to stand up (41.9%, 19.4%) and Referring to a psychologist (both 29%). Having the learner expelled for a short or long period of time was rated by slightly more than half of the respondents to be Moderately to Highly effective (54.8%, for a short expulsion and 51.7% for long a explusion). Detention was rated to be only **Somewhat effective** by 35.5% and **Practically ineffective** by 25.8%.

For secondary students, a very clear majority, as stated above, found two strategies to be **Highly effective:** Sending learners to the principal (58.8%) and Requesting a parent interview (reported by 50%) (already discussed above). Two others were found by a smaller majority to be Highly effective: Eye contact (rated so by 44.1%) and Reprimanding (47.1%). Four were found to be **Moderately** to **Highly effective**. Raising voice (rated by 29.4%, Moderately effective and 23.5%, Highly effective), Assigning extra task (26.5%, Moderately, 26.5%, Highly effective), and Having students expelled for a short period (23.5%, 35.3%). The rest were found to be only **Somewhat effective** and **Practically ineffective**: Ignoring behaviour (29.4%, Somewhat effective, 29.4%, Practically ineffective), Expelling student for a long period (26.5% in each case), Referring to a psychologist (35.6%, Somewhat effective; 20.6%, Practically ineffective) and Detention (29.4% Somewhat effective, 20.6% Practically ineffective).

Causes of EBDs

Table 10 outlines what teachers perceived to be the roots of the EBDs displayed by the learner in their classes. This table indicates the combined responses of participants at all three levels.

More than 50% found Hunger (54.1%) and Language problems (50%) to be the most relevant causes of EBDs. Tiredness at the end of the day and Nearness to holiday periods and Group work were each found by a majority of the respondents (40.8% in each case) to be Highly relevant. Nearness to holiday periods was also found by 30.6% to be Slightly relevant.

Table 10
Causes of EBDs According to Educators: All Levels Combined

Possible roots of emotional and behaviour disorders	**Slightly relevant**	**Partially relevant**	**Relevant**	**Highly relevant**
a. Difficulty in understanding concepts	23.5	16.3	32.7	27.6
b. Difficulty in completing seatwork in time	19.4	21.4	**33.7**	25.5
c. Language problems	21.4	13.3	15.3	**50.0**
d. Group work	28.6	12.2	18.4	**40.8**
e. Delay in starting lessons	25.5	16.3	25.5	32.7
f. Interruptions in classroom routine	23.5	21.4	16.3	38.8
g. Hunger (learning on empty stomach)	16.3	12.2	17.3	**54.1**
h. Tiredness at the beginning of the day	21.4	12.2	30.6	35.7
i. Tiredness at the end of the day	29.6	13.3	16.3	**40.8**
j. Nearness to holiday periods	**30.6**	13.3	15.3	**40.8**

Note. Percentages for the most salient items are in bold.

Table 11 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated what they thought were the relevant causes of EBDs in students at the junior primary, senior primary, and secondary levels.

For junior primary level students, five possible causes were rated by a clear majority of the respondents to be **Highly relevant:** Hunger (rated by 66.7%), Language Problems (48.5%), and Interruptions in the classroom (42.4%). Three were rated to be **Relevant** to **Highly relevant**: Difficulty in completing seatwork (rated by 42;4% as relevant, 27.3% as Highly relevant), problems with Group work (18.2%, Relevant; 39.4%, Highly relevant) and Delay in starting lessons (18.2%, Relevant; 39.4%, Highly relevant). The rest were rated as **Slightly relevant** to **Partially relevant** causes. Difficulty in understanding concepts was rated by 36.4% of the respondents as Slightly relevant and 21.2% as Relevant. Tiredness at the beginning of the day (36.4% Slightly relevant; 12.1% Partially relevant), and Nearness to holiday periods (42% Slightly relevant; 15.2%, Partially relevant) are included in this category.

For senior primary, three were rated by a clear majority as **Highly relevant** causes of EBDs: Language problems (rated by 48.4%), Tiredness at the end of the day (48.4%) and Nearness to holiday periods (41.9%). Five were rated to be **Relevant** to **Highly relevant.** These include: Hunger (rated as Highly relevant by 38.7%, as Relevant by 25.8%), problems with Group work (35.5%, Highly relevant; 25.8%, Relevant); Delay in starting lessons (38.7%, Highly relevant; 22.6%, Relevant); Tiredness at beginning of day (38.7%, Highly relevant; 38.7%, Relevant) and Difficulty in understanding concepts (32.3%, Highly relevant; 35.5%, Relevant). Rated as **Slightly relevant** to **Partially**

Table 11
Causes of EBDs by Level

Possible Causes	Rating											
	Junior Primary				Senior Primary				Secondary			
	Slightly relevant	Partially relevant	Relevant	Highly relevant	Slightly relevant	Partially relevant	Relevant	Highly relevant	Slightly relevant	Partially relevant	Relevant	Highly relevant
a. Difficulty in understanding concepts	**36.4**	**21.2**	27.3	15.2	19.4	12.9	**35.5**	**32.3**	14.7	14.7	**35.3**	**35.3**
b. Difficulty in completing seatwork in time	12.1	18.2	**42.4**	**27.3**	22.6	25.8	29.0	22.6	23.5	20.6	**29.4**	**26.5**
c. Language problems	21.2	12.1	**18.2**	**48.5**	19.4	9.7	22.6	**48.4**	23.5	17.6	5.9	**52.9**
d. Group work	33.3	9.1	**18.2**	**39.4**	19.4	19.4	**25.8**	**35.5**	**32.4**	8.8	11.8	**47.1**
e. Delay in starting lessons	27.3	15.2	**18.2**	**39.4**	19.4	19.4	**22.6**	**38.7**	29.4	14.7	**35.3**	**20.6**
f. Interruptions in classroom routine	12.1	30.3	15.2	**42.4**	**35.5**	**16.1**	19.4	29.0	23.5	17.6	14.7	44.1
g. Hunger (learning on empty stomach)	12.1	9.1	12.1	**66.7**	22.6	12.9	**25.8**	**38.7**	14.7	14.7	14.7	**55.9**
h. Tiredness at the beginning of the day	**36.4**	**12.1**	18.2	33.3	12.9	9.7	**38.7**	**38.7**	14.7	14.7	**35.3**	**35.3**
i. Tiredness at the end of the day	39.4	12.1	18.2	30.3	29.0	6.5	16.1	**48.4**	20.6	20.6	14.7	44.1
j. Nearness to holiday periods	**42.4**	**15.2**	3.0	39.4	19.4	16.1	22.6	**41.9**	29.4	8.8	20.6	**41.2**

Note. Percentages of the most salient items are in bold.

relevant are Interruptions in classroom routine (Slightly relevant 35.5%; Partially relevant 16.1 %).

For secondary students, rated **Highly relevant** by a clear majority are: Language problems (52.9%), Hunger (55.9%), problems with Group work (47.1%), Interruptions of classroom routine (44.1%), Tiredness at the end of day (47.1%) and Nearness to holiday periods (41.2%). Rated as **Relevant** to **Highly relevant** are: Difficulty in understanding concept (35.3%, Relevant; 35.3%, Highly relevant), Tiredness at the beginning of day (35.3%, Relevant; 35.3%, Highly relevant), Delay in starting lessons (35.3%, Relevant; 20.5%, Highly relevant) and Difficulty in completing seatwork (29.4%, Relevant; 26.5%, Highly relevant). No cause was considered irrelevant but a number of respondents (32.4%) thought Group work problems may be only Slightly relevant.

The Views of the Principals

The principals of the 12 participating schools were asked questions similar to those put to the educators in the course of informal interviews. Their responses are summarized as follows.

The junior primary principals reported that they had been in service from 16 to 22 years. The senior primary principals indicated that they had between 18 and 19 years of experience. The four secondary principals were the most experienced, having spent between 20 and 35 years in the field of education. All of the principals reported that they would very much like to be still working at their jobs in 5 years' time.

All 12 participating principals reported that they witnessed and received reports of EBDs in their schools. The types of EBDs listed by the principals varied according to the level of their school. They are summarized in Table 12. In addition, the secondary

principals also reported very violent occurrences such as rape and gang conflicts in their schools.

Table 12
EBDs Reported by School Principals

Observed Behaviours	**JP**	**SP**	**S**
a. Being aggressive towards other learners	X	X	X
b. Being aggressive towards the teacher			X
c. Being irritable	X	X	
d. Crying		X	
e. Using vulgar language	X	X	
f. Lying		X	
g. Destroying property		X	X
h. Stealing property	X	X	X
i. Bullying		X	X
j. Being disobedient	X		X
k. Being hyperactive	X	X	X
l. Not participating in class	X		
m. Being inattentive.			
n. Clowning		X	X
o. Truancy	X	X	X
p. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, glue, etc.)		X	X

The principals were also asked whether boys or girls exhibited more EBDs in their schools. The four principals from the junior primary level reported that boys and girls manifested undesirable behaviours almost equally. In contrast, the senior primary and secondary principals felt that boys showed more behavioural problems than girls.

When asked about the intervention strategies they favoured, the principals responded as reported in Table 13.

Table 13
Intervention Strategies Favoured by School Principals

Intervention Strategies	**JP**	**SP**	**S**
a. Ignoring behaviour			X
b. Making eye contact with the offender (a cold, hard stare)			
c. Reprimanding the learner	X	X	X
d. Raising voice with the learner (yelling)	X		
e. Assigning an extra task	X	X	X
f. Asking the learner to stand up for a specific period			
g. Sending the learner to the principal's office			
h. Requesting an interview with parents	X	X	X
i. Having the learner expelled from school for a short period		X	X
j. Having the learner expelled from school for a long period			
k. Referring the learner to a special needs psychologist			
l. Detention		X	X
m. Corporal punishment	X	X	X

It is noteworthy that principals at all levels mentioned favouring the use of corporal punishment. Because the use of corporal punishment has been curtailed by the South African Schools Act of 1996, it can only be administered with the consent of parents, granted by the latter in the course of a meeting with the school staff and governing bodies. The principals indicated that this form of punishment is only applied in extreme cases, either in the presence of the parent or when the parent has signed a

consent form to have their child punished by receiving of a few lashes of the strap. Principals also mentioned that very extreme cases are referred to the police.

In response to the question concerning causes of EBDs, the principals responded as reported in Table 14.

Table 14
Causes of EBDs as Suggested by Principals

Causes	**JP**	**SP**	**S**
a. Poverty (hunger)	X	X	X
b. Peer-pressure	X	X	X
c. Media programmes (e.g., violence on television)	X	X	X
d. Parental neglect	X	X	
e. Physical abuse at home	X	X	
f. Post-traumatic stress disorder			X

Summary

Although the results indicated that EBDs occurred in various degrees at the three school levels, the bottom line that could be drawn was that educators are not seriously bothered by many of the behaviours displayed by their learners. None of the behaviours seemed to be uncontrollable at school level. One important finding to note was that the results revealed a surprisingly high occurrence of more EBDs at senior primary schools than at the other two levels, but they were manageable. However, even for those serious transgressions such as rape and vandalism (destruction of property), with help from the police, the schools can manage well.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter is organized along the follow lines. The first part will discuss the types of EBDs observed by the participating teachers and principals. The next section will consider potential causes of the observed behaviour by considering both the demographic of the participating schools and the educators' observations. Finally, possible intervention strategies will be considered, once again taking into account the information reported by the educators.

Types of EBDs observed

Table 4 presents a summary of the responses given by educators on the types of EBDs displayed in schools at all levels, and the extent at which they occur. Behaviours such as lying, crying and being agressive toward other students topped the charts. More aggressive forms of behaviour, such as bullying, were reported as being far less frequent.

Far more interesting are the results reported in Table 5, which presents the responses of educators concerning the frequency of different types of EBDs by level. Here, a number of tendencies, some quite surprising, emerged. The first surprise was that learners at the senior primary level were perceived by their teachers to be far more aggressive than learners at the secondary level. For example, 64.5% of the participating senior primary teachers reported aggression towards classmates to be a behaviour that occurred either often or very often. Secondary students came very close, reaching a total of 61.8% in the same category. In contrast, junior primary students were reported as being often or very often aggressive towards classmates by 48.5% of respondents. Although all of these figures are high, they might really be a reflection of fairly normal

schoolyard behaviours resulting from disagreements over rule-governed games, the taking of one another's belongings, teasing, name-calling, and invasion of personal space. This opinion was held by many of the principals during interviews conducted with them.

It is not surprising that the frequency of aggression between classmates should increase by level. As the learners become bigger and stronger their play becomes rougher. They also find themselves in increasingly crowded classrooms where physical contact with their peers is inevitable.

Far more worrying were the reports made by principals to the effect that rape and gang violence were also part of the EBD picture. Clearly not all of the aggressive incidents reported by educators were the result of classroom and schoolyard horseplay. Unfortunately the questionnaire did not allow the researcher to separate out the different types of aggressive behaviours shown between classmates.

As for aggression shown by learners towards educators, the questionnaire revealed some surprising information. While one might expect secondary students to exhibit more aggressive behaviours, it was senior primary level pupils who were generally reported by their teachers as being the most threatening. At the senior primary level 41.9% of the respondents reported that aggression towards educators occurred very often. In contrast, only 2.9% of secondary educators reported being frequently on the receiving end of aggressive learner behaviour. This difference is a startling one and is not easy to account for. Perhaps a combination of physical maturity and emotional and social immaturity is to blame. The oldest learners at the senior primary level were 14 or 15 years of age. They may well be quite physically mature and tower above the youngest children in the school. However, they are also likely to be intellectual immature and

perhaps struggling academically, particularly if they are still in senior primary school at their age. These learners would be prime candidates for showing aggression in a school setting.

Senior primary students were also more likely than any of the others to destroy property, with 61.3% of respondents claiming this behaviour occurred very often. In contrast, only 21.2% of respondents at the junior primary level and 20.6% at the secondary level reported destruction of property to be a frequently occurring problem.

At all levels, the most frequently occurring misbehaviours involved non-participation, clowning, hyperactivity, lying, using vulgar language, and inattentiveness. For example, 67.8% of senior primary teachers reported non-participation as occurring often or very often. A total of 55.9% of secondary respondents and 52.1% reported the same thing. Lying was reported as occurring often or very often by 71.1% of secondary educators, 51.6% of senior primary educators, and 66.7% of junior primary educators. While teachers felt less threatened by older learners, they certainly did not trust them to tell the truth.

The findings that concern the less aggressive forms of EBDs seem to be very close to those reported in the various studies discussed in Chapter 2, particularly Borg and Falzon, 1989, Whitney and Smith, 1993, and MacKay and Boyle, 1994. Where the South African findings differ is in the frequency of aggression towards educators reported at the senior primary level. The phenomenon of teachers feeling threatened by primary pupils in South African schools might be a passing one which will diminish as teachers find disciplinary alternatives to the system of corporal punishment, illegal since 1994, and as students learn to study in a system in which they will not be physically beaten.

Potential Causes of EBDs in the Participating Schools

A look at the demographics of the participating schools (Tables 2 and 3) reveals a number of potential causes of EBDs in the classrooms surveyed. The large sizes of classes reported by the educators, up to 45 at the junior primary level and 55 at the senior primary level could pose problems in terms of behaviour management. Most of the classrooms that accommodated the classes involved in this study were designed for much smaller groups. The result is that many learners are crowded into relatively small physical spaces. This could aggravate the existing behavioural problems and give rise to new ones as students constantly jostle each other in over-crowded rooms.

As has already been mentioned, the age range that can be found amongst learners at the senior primary and secondary levels could also contribute to the existence of behaviour problems. At the senior primary level the youngest learners are 9 years old and the oldest 15, while the secondary level spans ages 14 through 21. This means that students at very different stages of intellectual, emotional and behavioural development find themselves together in crowded schools. It is highly likely that the behaviour of older learners influences that of younger learners in such situations. There is also the problem of physically mature learners who have not yet achieved intellectual and emotional maturity. When such learners are still stuck in a primary school, the problem is compounded since they have few role models of mature behaviour around them.

The gender distribution of boys and girls in the participating classes was not always balanced. In some classes there were far more boys than girls, while in others the opposite was true. Classes dominated by boys often prove far more difficult to control than those where girls form the majority (Sadker & Sadker, 1995).

Total enrolment varied from one school to another and depended on the location of the school. Those schools located in the Phuthaditjhaba area had larger enrolments than village schools, but these differences are hardly surprising. What is much more surprising is that in many cases different educators in the same school reported highly contradictory enrolment and graduation rate figures. The impression is that some educators have no idea of how many learners they have in their schools and how many of them successfully complete their studies. It is hard to say what this lack of awareness indicates. It could simply be that some educators had never taken the time to think about the number of pupils in their school and about how many of these students actually completed their studies. It might also be that some educators simply lacked awareness of their milieu. Such a lack of awareness could certainly contribute to the occurrence of EBDs in the learners they were responsible for. Misbehaviour is common in classrooms where teachers are unaware of what is going on around them (Good & Brophy, 1994).

The number of subjects (heretofore referred to as *learning areas*) taught by individual educators at the different levels varies from one school to another. At the junior primary level a single educator may teach between three and seven subjects. Educators who cover seven learning areas are generally classroom teachers who are with the same learners all day long. Those who cover fewer learning areas tend to see different groups of learners in the course of a day.

Classroom teachers are at an advantage in terms of identifying and dealing with EBDS; they see the learners more frequently and get to know them better. Moreover, the learners can adjust quickly to a classroom teacher's style and personality. Those educators who switch from one learning area to another and one group to another may

encounter more disciplinary problems than single-subject teachers. In contrast, educators who cover fewer learning areas in the course of a day may have better subject matter knowledge and better learning-area-specific teaching strategies.

At secondary level, many educators are responsible for one or two learning areas and occasionally a maximum of four. The amount of teaching load for each educator at each school is determined by the availability of staff, the number of learners enrolled, as well as the educators' areas of specialization. Those secondary educators who have to spend time preparing to teach three or four learning areas, instead of one or two, are less likely to have adequate time to spend on matters of ensuring and following up on discipline. Their classes are more at risk of being out of hand than those of educators with lighter or narrower teaching loads.

EBDs are also the result of factors in the learners' home environment. The principals surveyed in the course of this study were very clear on this point. They felt that children who lived in violent environments at home tended strongly to exhibit violent behaviours at school. They also felt that learners who were abused (physically, emotionally or sexually) at home showed problematic behaviours in school. Substance abuse was another problem that principals cited as being carried over from home to school.

Economic problems at home are also likely to result in EBDs in schools. For example, poverty may lead some of the learners to skip school to find work for income to alleviate poverty at home, while other learners may resort to stealing.

Being members of gangs have also been noted as problematic in secondary schools and slightly in senior primary schools as this behaviour takes up much of the learners' time from doing homework and contributes to their poor academic performance.

There was also a strong feeling among principals that academic success bred good behaviour. This can be particularly felt at the upper secondary level where a large portion of the classroom population is older and able to listen to reason. Furthermore, many upper secondary learners are career-oriented, full of the competitive spirit needed push them to obtain the excellent grades that would enable them to enter tertiary institutions.

Furthermore, secondary schools offer more options in sporting and cultural activities to choose from than primary schools. The principals surveyed believed that when learners are engaged in extra-curricular activities they do not have much time to waste on matters that would not benefit them.

Intervention Strategies

Preference for intervention strategies varied from level to level. The junior primary educators felt strongly (57.6%) that the most effective strategy was to request an interview with parents. This strategy was also popular with senior primary educators (54.8%) and secondary educators (50%). The effectiveness of all other strategies was felt to be much less by the junior primary educators. In contrast, while senior primary educators also ranked requesting an interview with parents as being most effective, 45.2% of them felt that a trip to the principal's office also got results. At the secondary level, sending learners to the principal's office was the strategy of preference (58.8%), followed by an interview with parents (50%) and, interestingly, simply calming learners with a cold, hard stare (44.1%).

A notable observation from these reports was that those strategies that introduced a person from outside the class, such as the parent or the principal, were ranked highly effective. Learners seem to be fearful of the embarrassment caused by having their transgressions exposed. This shows that there is still respect for the authority of the principals and the parents.

As for strategies judged by educators to be ineffective, there was a good deal of consensus between the three different levels. Few of the educators felt that any form of expulsion was effective in controlling EBDs. The educators also rejected punishments such as making learners stand up for specified periods or do extra tasks. These strategies may have been rejected for different reasons. In the case of making learners stand up as punishment, many teachers found that the standing student was even more of a distraction than he or she was sitting down. As for extra tasks, they were probably rejected because they resulted in work for the teachers who had to supervise or correct them. Generally speaking, educators rejected any form of intervention that added to their personal workload and preferred strategies which shifted some of the responsibility to a third party.

One finding worthy of note is that junior primary teachers were divided in their assessment of the effectiveness of sending a child to the principal's office. While 33.3% judged it to be a highly effective strategy, 30.3% found it to be ineffective. This split, not found at either the senior primary or secondary level, is probably due to the impact a visit to the principal's office can have on a young child. Those teachers who judged it ineffective may have done so because they may have perceived it to be too strong a measure for most junior primary transgressions.

In general, the findings in the section were not surprising. The teachers preferred strategies that took some of the burden of intervention off their shoulders and rejected strategies that increased their already heavy workloads. Perhaps the most surprising finding was an incidental one. A number of educators remarked that they had no idea that special needs psychologists existed and were available. This is surprising because teachers are made aware of the availability of the psychologists who are based at a nearby child guidance clinic.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Achievements of this Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent of the occurrence of EBDs displayed by learners at junior primary, senior primary and secondary schools. Another goal was to obtain information from educators about the types of intervention strategies they used as well as their effectiveness. The study has revealed that, despite the poor physical conditions under which educators and learners worked, the types and frequencies of EBDs do not differ in most respects from those observed in other studies. The only major differences detected were in the level of aggressive behaviours at the senior primary level and in the frequency of extremely violent acts such as rape and gang warfare. The study has also shown that teachers have their own unique ways of dealing with EBDs, and that in many cases their interventions are successful. However, the success of intervention strategies depended on the age of the learners at each school level and the seriousness of each problem addressed.

One of the major accomplishments of this study was addressing the problem of EBDs in under-resourced South African schools with 100% Black populations. Little research attention has been paid to these schools in the past. Perhaps this study will open the way for more researchers to take a careful look at what constitutes the daily reality of a majority of South African learners and educators.

Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in only 12 schools in the QwaQwa region of the Free State Province. Furthermore, the schools in question had limited resources and facilities, and exclusively Black learner and educator populations. Therefore the findings cannot be generalized for the rest of the Free State nor to the Republic of South Africa as a whole.

It proved time-consuming for the researcher to explain the contents of the questionnaire to many of the respondents and how they were expected to complete it. Even with the copious explanations, many of the respondents had trouble coping with the length and format of the questionnaire, particularly the portion that required writing-in responses.

Language may also have had a negative impact on the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The items were presented in English, the second (or third or fourth) language of those who completed it. It is possible that some of the teachers, particularly those at the junior primary level, experienced comprehension problems that prevented them from being more thorough in their completion of the questionnaire items.

One other limitation was that the researcher relied on the self-administered questionnaire as the sole data-gathering instrument in the case of teachers. It would have been valuable to support the questionnaire data with class observations and interviews. These additional sources of information might have filled some of the gaps and clarified certain points where questionnaire answers were hard to interpret.

Because the principals were not willing to be audio-taped, that endeavour was abandoned. This resulted in the researcher being forced to rely on field notes which were not always complete because of the difficulties involved in interviewing and recording

answers at the same time. Taping the interviews would have saved time and heightened reliability.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Since the study was limited to 12 disadvantaged schools with 100% Black learner and educator populations, it would be useful to look at other well-resourced schools or schools with different populations to see if the same conditions prevailed. It would also be interesting to look at other schools with 100% Black populations and more varied educator populations to see if perceptions of the types and frequencies of behaviour disorders were the same.

The high rate of EBDs in senior primary schools and how teachers could deal with them also merits attention. The results presented in Chapter 5 showed higher frequencies of more aggressive behaviours at this level. In light of this, it would be useful to devote a single study to the senior primary level in order to sort out the types of behaviours present and their causes.

The relationship between the existence of EBDs and academic performance also needs to be studied. The results of this study would suggest that learners showing more aggressive types of behaviours experience more academic difficulties than classmates showing other types of behavioural problems.

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APPENDIX A

Sample items from a checklist used by the regular classroom teacher (Adapted from Gearheart et.al., 1996)

Types of Emotional/Behaviour disorders displayed by learners

Student's name:
Date:
Birth date:
School:
Please check the areas that are applicable. If you wish to make comments, please do so

	Frequency				
Behaviour	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Circumstances	Comments
Needs close supervision					
Destroys property					
Throws temper tantrums					
Displays erratic, unpredictable behaviour					
Indicates poor self-concept					
Appears angry or hostile					
Isolates self					
Appears out of touch with reality					
Does not achieve at expected academic level					
Seeks inordinate amount of attention					
Interferes with learning of others					
Makes inappropriate noises					
Threatens to injure self or others					
Does injure self or others					
Verbally assaults others					
Physically assaults others					
Avoids eye contact					
Cries inappropriately					
Refuses to talk with teacher					
Refuses to talk with others					
Seems to daydream					

APPENDIX B

FREE STATE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Education

Private Bag X20565 - Bloemfontein - 9300 - South Africa
55 Elizabeth Street - CR Swart Building - Bloemfontein
Tel.:- +27 (0) 51 - 4074911 - Fax : +27 (0) 51 - 4074036

Enquiries : Mr W.B. van Rooyen/LB
Reference no. 0-1/11/3/3

Tel. : 051-405 5504
Fax : 051-403 3421

02 August 1999

Mr T. I. Makume
Director (South Africa): Uniqiwa / Concordia Project
University of the North
Qwa Qwa Campus
Private Bag X 13
PHUTHADITJHABA
9866

Dear Mr Makume

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. Your request dated 9 June 1999 and the detailed research requests for eleven students received on 1 July 1999 refer.
2. Research titles applied for:

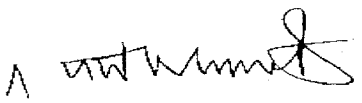
Name:	Titles:
Me Makgoarai Mofutsanyana:	The effect of intervention strategies used by teachers on the academic performance of learners with behaviour and/or emotional disorders in the Eastern Free State.
Mr Letekatoa Taoana:	Conceptual difficulties experienced by grade 12 pupils in basic concepts of chemistry, specifically the Mole.
Mr Molefi Tbobileng:	A survey of what facilitates or hinders ESL learning in QwaQwa high schools.
Ms Maria Nkosi:	How effectively do pre-primary school playroom(s) assist children to develop holistically (i.e., Intellectually, Emotionally (affective), Socially and Physically (fine and gross motor) through various learning centers (areas)
Mr Molefi Mofokeng:	Rethinking the sources of disaffection among secondary school students.

Mr Tatolo Edgar Molebatsi:	An investigation into the high failure rate of ESL grade 12 Exams.
Mr Thabo Letho:	An effective student - Teaching practice programme.
Mr Mohapi Mohaladi:	The relationship between matric pass rate and the extent of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles implemented in Harrismith District Schools.
Mr Paseka Maboya:	A study of parental / guardian involvement in decision making structures and processes at tertiary-level institutions in South Africa with special reference to tertiary educational institutions in the Free State Province.
Ms Varaluxmi Chettv	The role of organisation and management towards increasing pupil achievement in rural schools.
Me Mamokhele Julia Mami Maduna	Supporting curriculum change in the classroom: An analysis of the impact of the use of teaching aids in mathematics teaching and learning in QwaQwa primary schools.

3. Permission is granted for the above students to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education under the following conditions:
   - 3.1 The names of teachers/learners (where applicable) must be provided by the principals.
   - 3.2 Officials / Principals / HOD's / Teachers / Learners (where applicable) participate voluntarily in the projects.
   - 3.3 Where applicable, the names of schools and respondents involved remain confidential in all respects.
   - 3.4 Completion of questionnaires by teaching staff and learners must take place outside normal tuition time of the school.
   - 3.5 This letter must be shown to all participating persons.
   - 3.6 Individual reports on the 11 projects must be donated to the Free State Department of Education after completion of the projects where it will be accessed in the Education Library, Bloemfontein.
   - 3.7 You must address a letter to the Head: Education, for attention
     W.B. van Rooyen
     Room 1211
     C.R. Swart Building
     Private Bag X20565
     BLOEMFONTEIN
     9301
     accepting the conditions as laid down.

4. We wish the students every success with their research.

Yours sincerely



HEAD: EDUCATION

APPENDIX C

Concordia
UNIVERSITY
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
Montreal, QC. H3G 1M8

UNIQWA- CONCORDIA PROGRAMMES
Private Bab X 13
PUTHADITJHABA
9866

09 SEPTEMBER 1999

The Principal

Dear Sir / Madam

I am a Masters degree student of the above-mentioned institution and hereby request permission to spend one day, ONE day, i.e., _____ 1999 at your school to collect research data for the purpose of my studies.

I intend to follow the pattern listed below:

- Distribution of questionnaires
- Conduct interviews with the principal
- Collect the completed questionnaires

My research project is entitled "The effect of intervention strategies used by teachers on learners who display emotional and behavioural disorders (EBD) in schools "

This exercise is in no way intended to disrupt classes, or disturb teachers in their duties. Learners will not be involved in this study.

Your co-operation and that of your staff will be highly appreciated in this regard.

Thank you

M.E Mofutsanyana

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire given to teachers and principals

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

What types of undesirable behaviour and emotions occur more frequently than others in your classes or school? Please check the most appropriate box.

Behaviour	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Very often**	**Always**
Being aggressive towards other students						
Being aggressive towards the teacher						
Being irritable						
Crying						
Using vulgar language						
Lying						
Destroying property						
Stealing property						
Bullying						
Being disobedient						
Being hyperactive						
Not participating in class						
Being inattentive						
Clowning						
Truancy						
Substance abuse (glue, alcohol, drugs, etc.)						

2. Which of the behaviours mentioned below are manifested principally by boys? By girls? Please check the most appropriate box.

Behaviour	**Males**	**Females**	**Neither**	**Both**
Being aggressive towards other students				
Being aggressive towards the teacher				
Being irritable				
Crying				
Using vulgar language				
Lying				
Destroying property				
Stealing property				
Bullying				
Being disobedient				
Being hyperactive				
Not participating in class				
Being inattentive				
Clowning				
Truancy				
Substance abuse (glue, alcohol, drugs, etc.)				

3. Which of the behaviours mentioned below are manifested principally by students in the top 25% of the class? By students in the bottom 25% of the class? Please check the most appropriate box.

Behaviour	**Top 25%**	**Bottom 25%**
Being aggressive towards other students		
Being aggressive towards the teacher		
Being irritable		
Crying		
Using vulgar language		
Lying		
Destroying property		
Stealing property		
Bullying		
Being disobedient		
Being hyperactive		
Not participating in class		
Being inattentive		
Clowning		
Truancy		
Substance abuse (glue, alcohol, drugs, etc.)		

4. Which intervention strategies seem to work best in the event that such behaviour listed in Questions 2 and 3 above occur? Please check the most appropriate box. If you use strategies not listed in this question, please write them in at the bottom of the table.

Strategies	**Practically ineffective**	**Somewhat effective**	**Moderately effective**	**Highly effective**	**Completely effective**
Ignoring behaviour					
Making eye contact with the offender					
Reprimanding the learner					
Raising voice with learner					
Assigning an extra task to the learner					
Asking the learner to stand up for a specified period as punishment					
Sending the learner to the principal's office					
Requesting an interview with parents					
Having the learner expelled from school for a short term					
Having the learner expelled from school for a long term or permanently					
Referring the learner to a special needs psychologist					
Detention					
Other strategies:					

5. For each behaviour listed below, please indicate which of the intervention strategies listed in question 3 that you would be inclined to use. You can indicate the strategy or strategies by writing the corresponding letter(s) in the space provided. If you use any strategy not mentioned below, please write in what you do.

Behaviour	**Strategies Used**
Being aggressive towards other students	
Being aggressive towards the teacher	
Being irritable	
Crying	
Using vulgar language	
Lying	
Destroying property	
Stealing property	
Bullying	
Being disobedient	
Being hyperactive	
Not participating in class	
Being inattentive	
Clowning	
Truancy	
Substance abuse (glue, alcohol, drugs, etc.)	

Strategies
A. Ignoring behaviour
B. Making eye contact with the offender
C. Reprimanding the learner
D. Raising voice with learner
E. Assigning an extra task to the learner
F. Asking the learner to stand up for a specified period as punishment
G. Sending the learner to the principal's office
H. Requesting an interview with parents
I. Having the learner expelled from school for a short term
J. Having the learner expelled from school for a long term or permanently
K. Referring the learner to a special needs psychologist
L. Detention

6. Behaviour problems have their roots in many different places. Some behaviours seen in schools are caused by problems at home or with friends. Other behaviours are a direct result of happenings in the classroom. You are most familiar with the classroom environment. To the best of your knowledge, what are the most likely causes of misbehaviour? Please check the most appropriate box. You are free to indicate other possible causes not mentioned in this question, and rank them.

Causes of Misbehaviour	**Not relevant**	**Slightly relevant**	**Partially relevant**	**Relevant**	**Highly relevant**	**Determining factor**
Difficulty in understanding concepts						
Difficulty in completing seatwork in time						
Language problems						
Group work						
Delay in starting lessons						
Interruptions in classroom routine						
Hunger						
Tiredness at beginning of day						
Tiredness at end of day						
Nearness to holiday periods						
Other:						

7. General information about your school and students

a. Grade levels currently taught.....
b. Subjects taught.....
c. Age range of students.....
d. Number of students in classes.....
No. of boys..... No. of girls.....
e. Number of students in the school.....
f. Average percentage of students who graduate (of total entrants).....
g. General location of the school (eg. name of village).....
h. General socio-economic background of the majority of students
Low ..... Medium ..... High .....

8. General information about yourself (indicate the appropriate answer with an X)

Age : 20 - 25..... 26 - 30..... 31-35.... Above 35

Gender : Male.... Female.....

Professional/Academic Qualifications

P.T.C. only	.....
Matric only	.....
Matric + P.T.C.	.....
Matric + P.T.D.	.....
Matric + S.T.D.	.....
Matric + Junior Degree	.....
Matric + Post Graduate Degree	.....
Number of years in teaching	.....

9. Optional Questions

a. Would you still like to be a teacher in five years time? Please explain your answer

.....

.....

b. What is the most important thing to do to improve primary or secondary education in your region?

.....

End of questionnaire