Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

in Education Management, Law and Policy Studies

in the

Faculty of Education

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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OCTOBER 2020

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Jane Mathukhwane Serakwane, declare that the thesis titled **Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms**, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor in Education Management Law and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution. The sources that I used have been acknowledged.

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October 2020

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CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER: **EM 18/02/02**
DEGREE AND PROJECT	PhD Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms
INVESTIGATOR	Ms Jane Mathukhwane Serakwane
DEPARTMENT	Education Management and Policy Studies
APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY	09 April 2018
DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	15 July 2020

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ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, the applicable research ethics approval for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code of Ethics for Research* and *The Policy Guidelines for Responsible Research.*

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to two special women in my life:

My mom, Mokgadi Hildegard Serakwane, for the sacrificial love and care she persistently gave to all her children, and most importantly for giving me an opportunity to be the education professional that I am today.

My loving daughter, Katlego, my inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To have achieved this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following:

God Almighty for giving me strength and perseverance to complete this study. All Glory to Him.

My supervisor, Professor Chaya Herman, for her invaluable expertise and tireless support. This study would have not been possible without her insightful comments and direction. Thank you for leading me to this conclusion of my study.

Dr Michelle Finestone, for your support throughout this journey. You made a real difference.

Dr Nevensha Sing, for your encouragement and support during difficult times. Thank you.

All the participants in this study for volunteering to give me their time, space, information and their various perspectives that helped me to answer the research questions of my study and made my work unique and original.

Anthony Moen, for editing my thesis and providing constructive feedback that made my work a polished product.

Special thanks to my caring daughter Katlego, for her tireless support and inspiring motivation throughout my PhD journey.

ABSTRACT

Despite considerable interest among South African scholars in learner behaviour management in South African schools, there is little literature on learner behaviour management in the context of cultural diversity. The present study investigates this essentially neglected space by focusing on learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms of a high school in the Tshwane South District within the Gauteng Department of Education, South Africa.

Cultural diversity is used as a lens to explore the practices of teachers. The theoretical underpinnings of culturally responsive classroom management are used to describe and to interpret learner behaviour management practices of teachers to determine whether the approaches and the resultant strategies that they use are culturally responsive.

A qualitative case study approach was used, and data was collected through semi-structured interviews that included critical incident narratives obtained from teachers, analysis of pertinent documents and observations of 10 culturally diverse teachers who teach the same class consisting of culturally diverse learners, as well as of the Discipline Officer and two additional teachers that were identified through snowball sampling.

The findings revealed that learner behaviour management practices of most teachers are not culturally responsive. This is a result of factors such as lack of recognition of their own ethnocentrism and biases, as demonstrated mainly by their unrealistic expectations, pessimistic attitudes and stereotyping perceptions; ignorance of learners' cultural backgrounds, as demonstrated mainly by teachers' denial and minimisation of the importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds (leading to misinterpretation of the behaviours of culturally different learners); lack of commitment to building a caring classroom community; lack of consciousness of the broader social, economic and political context of the South African education system; and lack of ability to apply culturally responsive classroom management strategies, which is exacerbated by lack of teacher education and development in this regard.

The implication of these findings is that teachers need to possess an ethnorelative mindset, and to be interculturally competent.

A key recommendation is that teachers should endeavour to move away from ethnocentrism towards being ethnorelative by developing an inclusive outlook, accepting cultural differences and adapting their perspective to take the cultural differences that influence learner behaviour into account. The study also recommends that teacher education programmes should prioritise teacher development on intercultural issues and the acquisition of intercultural competencies, as these aspects are crucial for teachers to appropriately manage the behaviours of learners whose cultural backgrounds are different from their own.

Keywords: Learner behaviour management; culturally diverse classrooms; culturally responsive; dominant culture; non-dominant culture; ethnocentrism; ethnorelativism; intercultural competencies; intercultural development; learner-centred approach; teacher-centred approach

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ABBREVIATIONS

CRCM	Culturally Responsive Classroom Management
CRLBM	Culturally Responsive Learner Behaviour Management
CRP	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
CRT	Culturally Responsive Teaching
LBM	Learner Behaviour Management
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
SEL	Socio-Emotional Learning
SGB	School Governing Body

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Schools in South Africa were opened to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds as part of the new democratic dispensation, with the objective of establishing social integration, promoting social justice and giving learners access to equal education (Badat & Sayed, 2014). However, the literature indicates that while these schools may accomplish racial desegregation to a certain extent, they often do not realise the critical goal of social integration (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Badat & Sayed, 2014; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014; Teeger, 2015). Discrimination issues on the basis of race and cultural background are still rife in these schools and are regularly reported on media platforms (Alexander, 2016). The reality is that learners from non-dominant groups are simply assimilated into the mainstream culture, and the status quo is maintained (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014; Teeger, 2015). The literature reveals that institutionalised racism and desegregation as assimilation practices at the classroom level include negative stereotyping of African learners and neglect of African languages (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Teeger, 2015).

Media reports on learners' protests at a South African girls' high school in Gauteng against the deprecation of African languages and teachers' perceptions of how learners should wear their hair (Mail & Guardian, 29 August 2016) indicate setbacks/challenges to integration resulting from teachers' attempts to modify behaviours and cultural characteristics of learners. Another incident of learners who were penalised for speaking African languages and for afro hair was reported from a Cape Town girls' high school shortly afterwards (Mail & Guardian, 01 September 2016). The next year, a Kempton Park school sent several girls out of class because their braided or dreadlocked hair was deemed "inappropriate" (Daily Maverick, 26 July 2017). It has been suggested that these kinds of challenges occur when there is a cultural disconnect between the teachers and learners and when integration is perceived as assimilation (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014). Assimilation is explained as a process by which "one cultural group acquires the behaviour, values, perspectives, and characteristics of another cultural group and

sheds its own cultural characteristics" (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006:383). In the above-mentioned incidents, learners from the non-dominant group were coerced to give up their own cultural identities and to take up "the identities of the group to whose social context" (Soudien, 2004:96) they had moved. Learners were expected to adapt to the mainstream character of a school that may have been developed for a different learner population (Meier & Hartell, 2009).

Drawing from international literature, it is evident that learner behaviour management in culturally diverse classrooms poses a great challenge to teachers internationally as well as in South Africa. Dray and Wisneski (2011) argue that teachers are seldom aware of the effect that cultural diversity has on their interpretation of learners' actions as well as their interactions with their learners. Monroe (2005) contends that teachers at times interpret learner behaviour as inappropriate, while the same behaviour is interpreted as culturally appropriate in another cultural location. In this regard, Sugai *et al*. (2012:211) assert that "with increasing cultural diversity in the classrooms, teachers are more likely to devalue, censor, and punish behaviours that are uncommon in the mainstream cultural group".

1.2 Background to the study

Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke and Curran (2004) assert that definitions and expectations of appropriate behaviour are culturally influenced and that conflicts are likely to occur when teachers and learners come from different cultural backgrounds. This means that interpretations that teachers attach to behaviours of learners from cultural backgrounds that are different from their own and the expectations that teachers hold may differ from those held by learners themselves and their families. In support of the assertion made by Weinstein *et al.* (2004), Milner and Tenore (2010) indicate that cultural disconnect between teachers and learners is often the main reason for many challenges that surface in the classroom. The above authors thus seem to suggest that (1) there is a connection between learner culture and learner behaviour, and (2) as a result of the divergent cultural understandings and expectations, clashes may arise between teachers and learners in culturally diverse classrooms. It follows that to manage behaviours of a culturally diverse learner population and to mitigate the clashes that may arise, teachers need to be culturally responsive and interculturally competent.

Research by South African scholars (Jansen, 2004, 2013; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar 2010; Badat & Sayed, 2014; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014; Alexander, 2016) has given attention to the general challenges emanating from diversity in the South African education system and schools in particular. These challenges generally include the dynamics of the "political play of power" (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006:387), issues of policy and actual practice, curriculum issues, instructional issues and academic achievements. However, little attention has been given to the issue of managing learner behaviour in a culturally diverse environment. The question that arises is: How culturally responsive are teachers' practices in South Africa's culturally diverse classrooms, especially as regards learner behaviour management? Which approaches and strategies do teachers use to respond to the diverse nature of the learner population that is found in South Africa's classrooms? What could be the best practice of managing learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms?

Based on the assumption that learners' behaviour is linked to their unique culture and that teachers' interpretations and expectations of learner behaviour are also likely to be culturally influenced (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004; Milner & Tenore, 2010), this research seeks to explore learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms of South African high schools.

1.3 Problem statement

South African literature on the management of learner behaviour reveals that learner behaviour issues are still a serious problem in South African high schools and that the strategies employed by teachers to manage learner behaviour are generally not effective (Mokhele, 2006; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Dhlamini, 2014; Segalo, 2015; Van Wyk, 2016). However, the studies conducted by these scholars do not indicate the significance of managing learner behaviour in the context of cultural diversity. In addition to the challenge of the alleged ineffective strategies, the right of equal access to schools for all, as stipulated in the Bill of Rights and as formalised through the South African Schools Act, brought a 'new sensitivity' to schools in the sense that the changing learner profile has put enormous pressure on teachers to create interculturally responsive classrooms (Grobler, Moloi, Loock, Bisschoff & Mestry, 2006; Lemmer & Meier, 2011; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014). These are classrooms in which the cultures and individual differences of learners from diverse backgrounds are understood, accepted and

respected and where it is ensured that “learners feel a sense of belonging, and are able to reach their full potential” (Grobler *et al*., 2006:449).

Research studies show that schools’ responses to diversity are inadequate (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Alexander, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010). Besides assimilating learners from non-dominant groups “into the school and its culture” (Meier & Hartell, 2009:181), diverse cultures are only accommodated at superficial levels, as they are merely reduced to cultural celebration of food and dressing in cultural attire (Alexander, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010;). “The problem is not that schools start here, but that they often stop here” (Meier & Hartell, 2009:182); the implication is that most teachers are often not able to go beyond the assimilation approach and the celebratory approach.

To further confirm the inadequacy of teachers’ response to diversity, literature reveals that teachers tend to be more accommodating towards learners who belong to cultural backgrounds that are similar to their own (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014). African learners were reprimanded if they attempted to speak with each other in their mother tongue, while Afrikaans-speaking learners were regularly invited to engage in the lesson through the medium of Afrikaans by teachers’ code switching between English and Afrikaans throughout the lessons (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006) – even in a classroom where the majority of learners were African. Cultural prejudices were reflected in the manner in which teachers portrayed negative generalisations about African learners and in that way reinforced cultural stereotypes; for example, one of the teachers insinuated that African learners were unruly (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). In one study, African learners in the Zulu classes were told by their teachers not to “bring their ghetto behavior to school” (Teeger, 2015:236).

Teachers’ actions and learners’ experiences as depicted in the scenarios described above indicate that teachers are facing a serious challenge with regard to managing diversity in South African classrooms. The scholars quoted above (Teeger, Vandeyar & Killen) merely reveal teachers’ inadequacies and do not necessarily address the issue of learner behaviour management.

This study therefore seeks to explore in depth the behaviour management practices of teachers in classrooms with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in South Africa’s high schools in order to find effective and practical strategies that teachers

can employ to manage the behaviours of diverse learners in culturally responsive and contextually appropriate ways.

1.4 Rationale and significance

The management of learner behaviour in the classroom became a phenomenon of interest to me in the days when I was a lecturer at a college of education. One of my responsibilities as a lecturer was to assess student-teachers during their teaching practice sessions in the local schools. It was during this period that I discovered the challenges in schools with regard to learner behaviour management.

In my master's degree study, I decided to explore the topic of establishing discipline in a contemporary classroom. The focus of that study was on how teachers were coping with the management of discipline after the abolition of corporal punishment in schools. The study highlighted the need for further research on how culture affects learner behaviour and teachers' behaviour management practices.

The preliminary literature review revealed that despite the learner behaviour management challenges that teachers face in South Africa's culturally diverse schools, the literature on learner behaviour management (e.g. Mokhele, 2006; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Dhlamini, 2014; Segalo, 2015; Van Wyk, 2016) paid scant attention to cultural diversity, and the literature on diversity (e.g. Jansen, 2004, 2013; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Mpisi, 2010; Badat & Sayed, 2014; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014; Alexander, 2016) also devoted only limited attention to learner behaviour management. The above-mentioned authors focused on how diversity is handled in education in South Africa and on whether desegregated schools are achieving the ideal of social integration, with the focus on macro and meso levels of the education system. It is important to note that literature on cultural responsiveness in the context of learner behaviour management in culturally diverse classrooms has attracted the attention of a number of international scholars, but not in South Africa.

Literature from the South African scholars mentioned has revealed that schools are still struggling to achieve social integration, and mostly how prevalent racial discrimination is in South Africa's 'integrated schools', but – with the exception of Vandeyar and Killen (2006), Alexander (2009), Teeger (2015) and Vandeyar (2010, 2017) – has paid far too little attention to the micro (classroom management) level.

While the study conducted by Alexander (2009) focused on instruction and curriculum issues at classroom level, and not on learner behaviour management, the studies conducted by Vandeyar and Killen (2006) and Vandeyar (2010) focus more on the challenges of social integration and the dynamics of "an underlying political play of power" (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006:387), as manifested in South Africa's desegregated classrooms; so does Teeger (2015). The studies conducted by Vandeyar and Killen (2006), Vandeyar (2010), and Teeger (2015) provided valuable insights into the inequitable experiences of learners at classroom level. However, these studies do not focus on how teachers in culturally diverse classrooms are to be culturally responsive in managing the learner behaviour aspect.

The South African situation outlined in the paragraphs above, and the incidents mentioned in the section that describes the problem, show that schools and teachers are still facing a great challenge with regard to cultural responsiveness and learner behaviour management. It is therefore, in the light of the above-mentioned gaps that the need to study this topic on learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms within South African schools emanates.

This study contributes new knowledge by looking into the convergence of cultural diversity and learner behaviour management specifically. This study closes the gaps identified in the work done by South African scholars who looked at learner behaviour management outside cultural diversity and those who provide valuable insight into the handling of cultural diversity, e.g. by revealing the underlying forces of hegemony in South Africa's historically white schools, without paying particular attention to the issue of learner behaviour management in these schools. This study thus provides a deeper understanding of teachers' classroom behaviour management practices in the South African context by exploring the cultural underpinnings and biases that may be interacting to cause incompatibilities in classrooms.

1.5 Research aim and statement of purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the cultural responsiveness of teachers' practices when managing the behaviours of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in a classroom setting.

1.6 Research questions

The following main research question will be explored:

How do teachers manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms of high schools in South Africa?

In order to get to the bottom of learner behaviour management practices of teachers, I would have to find answers to the following sub-questions:

1.6.1 What learner behaviour management challenges do teachers experience in culturally diverse classrooms?
1.6.2 How do teachers recognise their own ethnocentrism and biases about behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms?
1.6.3 How do teachers understand their learners' cultural backgrounds?
1.6.4 What approaches and strategies do teachers use to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms?
1.6.5 How do teachers promote caring classroom communities?

1.7 Research methodology

A qualitative case study approach with an ethnographic element was used in this study. Purposive sampling was used to select a school with a culturally diverse learner population and a culturally diverse teaching staff in the Tshwane South District within the Gauteng Department of Education, South Africa. Purposive sampling was further used to select the class that had the most culturally diverse learners and was also taught by culturally diverse teachers. Data was primarily collected through non-participative classroom observations as well as semi-structured interviews, which included critical incident narratives obtained from teachers. Pertinent documents on learner behaviour management were explored and analysed. The inductive analysis strategy was used to analyse and interpret the data that had been collected. Trustworthiness and credibility of this study as well as ethical considerations were observed.

1.8 Theoretical framework

Learner behaviour management (LBM) practices of teachers were observed and analysed through the lens of the Theory of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management formulated by Weinstein *et al.* (2004). This theory is founded on

cultural difference theories that were advanced by Gay (2000) in her discussions of culturally responsive teaching, Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000) in her discussions of culturally relevant pedagogy, and Irvine (2003) in her cultural incongruence and cultural synchronisation interpretations. The theoretical framework identifies five fundamental components/prerequisites on which culturally responsive classroom management is centred. These prerequisites involve recognition of one's own ethnocentrism and biases, knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds, understanding of the broader social, economic and political context of the education system, ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate classroom management strategies and commitment to building caring classroom communities.

1.9 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis comprises seven chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter one, as the introductory part of this thesis, presents the background to the study and contextualises the problem the study seeks to address. The chapter essentially provides the reader with a view of the South African landscape with regard to the desegregation of schools. The chapter also positions the study within the pertinent research literature on LBM and cultural diversity. The research literature in the main reveals that in spite of the increasing body of knowledge on LBM and cultural diversity respectively, as well as the increasing challenges that South African teachers face with regard to LBM in culturally diverse classrooms, culturally responsive LBM has not yet become established.

Chapter two reviews pertinent literature with the view of positioning the study in context. The chapter starts by introducing the relevant constitutional provisions, outlines the social integration deficit in multicultural public schools, and subsequently discusses LBM in the South African context following the introduction of alternative disciplinary strategies by the South African Department of Education. The chapter also highlights the LBM challenges that teachers face in culturally diverse schools as revealed by the literature review. Various classroom management approaches are examined in this chapter to determine a classroom management approach that could make behaviour management practices of teachers more culturally responsive and contextually appropriate. The literature review confirmed that although South African scholars have written much on diversity and deficient social integration in South

African desegregated schools, scant attention has been given to the issue of LBM in the context of diversity. Likewise, there is ample South African literature on LBM, but it has mainly examined LBM generally without giving attention to the culturally diverse context that exists in South African desegregated schools. The study aims to address these gaps.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework that undergirds this study. The framework was derived from Weinstein *et al.*'s (2004) Theory of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM), which draws special attention to the fundamental components of CRCM as they relate to LBM in the context of cultural diversity. Other theories and studies that expand and support the CRCM theory are also highlighted in this chapter.

Chapter four describes the overall research methodology used for this study, which includes the research paradigm, approach and design, the sample and the sampling strategies used, as well as the procedure followed in the analysis of the data. The chapter also discusses the procedures and actions taken to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the study, the limitations of the study and the ethical considerations. The constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm was adopted for the frame of this study, and the approach was qualitative. A qualitative case study design with an element of ethnography was employed. Purposive sampling was used to select a school with a culturally diverse learner population and the most culturally diverse class that was taught by culturally diverse teachers. Since a case study is flexible, snowball sampling was also employed. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, which included teachers' narratives of critical incidents, non-participant observation and document analysis. The inductive analysis strategy was used to analyse and interpret the data collected.

Chapter five presents an account of the findings derived from the analysis of data collected by interviewing teachers and the Discipline Officer, observation of Grade 9 classes and analysing relevant documents. The findings are grouped in themes and interpreted. In the main, it was found that cultural disconnect between teachers and learners who come from different cultural backgrounds is likely to be a source of conflict between teachers and their learners if teachers' LBM practices are not culturally responsive and contextually appropriate.

Chapter six discusses the research findings in view of the theoretical framework that guides the study and the reviewed literature. The findings are compared with the existing body of knowledge, and areas of concurrence and divergence between the aspects arising from the findings of the study and those indicated in the theoretical framework and in the literature are pointed out. The chapter also puts forward new lessons and insights that emerged from the current study. A theory related to the findings is presented graphically as a framework that illustrates why LBM practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms may present a challenge and how the challenges may be overcome.

Chapter seven concludes the study by highlighting the main findings and making the necessary recommendations. The chapter also highlights the contributions made to the existing body of knowledge, points out the limitations of the study and makes suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on learner behaviour management as an aspect of classroom management in a culturally diverse teaching and learning context. It starts by introducing constitutional provisions in South Africa that regulate desegregation of schools and the ensuing challenge that multicultural schools in South Africa face with regard to social integration. Then, after outlining the social integration deficit in multicultural public schools, the chapter highlights the overall learner behaviour management challenge that teachers face in culturally diverse schools. This leads to a discussion of learner behaviour management in the South African context since the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act of 1997 and the introduction of alternative disciplinary strategies by the South African Department of Education (Department of Education, 2001). The chapter further explores whether these alternative learner behaviour management strategies are effective or not, in view of the criticism of these disciplinary strategies in the literature.

As learner behaviour management is an integral aspect of classroom management, the chapter also discusses classroom management as a construct and considers the various aspects of classroom management in order to elucidate the integrated conceptualisation of the construct. Various classroom management approaches are thereafter explored in search of a classroom management approach that could make teachers' practices for managing learner behaviour culturally responsive and contextually appropriate, so that they can meet the needs of the culturally diverse learner population in the present-day classrooms. The chapter further reviews literature that explores cultural responsiveness as an antecedent to learner behaviour management in culturally diverse classrooms as well as specific learner behaviour management challenges that teachers experience in classrooms with learners from culturally diverse backgrounds.

2.2 South African constitutional provisions on desegregation of the schooling system

Since 1994, South African society has undergone notable social, educational, economic and political changes in its attempt to become a democratic and humanitarian nation, redress past injustices and amend the existing imbalances in the provision of education. Among other changes in the South African education sector, the schooling system was desegregated – accommodating learners from different racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, with different beliefs, values, languages and behavioural patterns. In this regard, the promulgation of the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), (the "Schools Act" hereafter) in support of the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996), (the "Constitution" hereafter) formalised the desegregation of schools in line with Section 29 (1), Section 29 (2), Section 30 and Section 31 of the Bill of Rights, thereby enacting racial diversity, and consequently wide-ranging cultural diversity, in schools.

Section 29 (1) of the Constitution determines that "everyone has the right – (a) to a basic education... which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible", and Section 29 (2) determines that "everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in the public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account – (a) equity; (b) practicability; and (c) the need to redress the results of the past racially discriminatory laws and practices" (SA Constitution, 1996:12). Section 30 of the Constitution determines that "everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision in the Bill of Rights" (SA Constitution, 1996:13), while Section 31(1) determines that "persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other member of the community – (a) to enjoy their culture, practice or use their language..." (SA Constitution, 1996:13).

As a result of this major legislative change, the learner population in South African public schools – and particularly former Model C schools[1] – came to be comprised of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Although the educational reform allowing learners from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend the same schools and classrooms was an effort and a vehicle to bring about a democratic and humane nation, to inculcate the constitutional value of 'unity in diversity' and to promote freedom, equality and justice, research indicates that the ideal of social integration has been and still remains a challenge. In this regard, Jansen (2013:81) maintains that while "education policy reforms are admirable in their ideals and ambitions; … those same policies remain detached from the realities of education on the ground". This is because the status quo is maintained in these schools (Jansen, 2004, 2013; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010; Badat & Sayed, 2014; Naidoo, Pillay & Conley, 2018); learners from non-dominant cultural groups are merely assimilated into the prevailing culture. These are schools of which the demographics have changed from predominantly white learners to predominantly African learners. In this regard, Vandeyar (2008) adds that the identities of learners are moulded and structured within entrenched institutional cultures, which continue to exist and are resistant to transformation in spite of the changed demographics of the learner population.

The challenge of social integration in South African desegregated schools also finds expression in the address made by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education in Gauteng, Mr Panyaza Lesufi (2017), where he cites the discrimination incidents that occurred involving "parents and communities around Klipspruit West Secondary School who have protested against the appointment of a black (African) principal and want the appointment of a coloured principal; and pupils at Kempton Park's Windsor House Academy who were allegedly kicked out because their African hairstyles were deemed unacceptable by the principal" (Lesufi, 13 August 2017). These challenges and injustices, which regularly come up in culturally diverse school contexts and are brought to the attention of the South African citizens by the press,

[1] Model C schools were whites-only government schools in apartheid South Africa.

are – in the words of the MEC for Education in Gauteng – "constant reminders that all is not well …. Discrimination still exists in our nation" (Lesufi, 13 August 2017) and thus, in the South African schools' domain. In this regard, the MEC in his address against the persistence of discrimination in schools and in support of social integration highlights the significance of diversity, which, he maintains, should be taught in schools as part of nation-building. He also said that talking about our differences (whether racial, ethnic or cultural) should not be viewed as taboo, but as an opportunity for all involved to learn more about each other, because people cannot embrace what they don't know (Lesufi, 13 August 2017). This means that in order for South Africans to effectively experience the benefits of the unique qualities that are inherent in diversity, a culture that accepts and supports cultural differences must be created for South African schools to arrive at genuine social integration. The existing social integration deficit in schools is also mentioned by Naidoo *et al.* (2018), who maintain that most teachers lack knowledge of the customs and cultures of other racial and cultural groups, as they have not been equipped to deal with racially and culturally diverse learners. In this regard, biased and stereotyping perceptions of most teachers affect their capability to enable social integration.

The existence of multicultural schools has also had a direct impact on the traditional ways in which teachers manage behaviours of learners in their classrooms, and it has confronted teachers with serious challenges when disciplining learners in their classrooms in the way they would perceive as effective. In a way, the learner behaviour management challenge has become even thornier in the wake of racial, ethnic and cultural amalgamation (mixing) as a result of desegregation of schools in South Africa. Teachers need to revisit the classroom management approaches they have been following, and their behaviour management practices in particular, in order to advance towards becoming culturally responsive and contextually appropriate.

For the purpose of this study on learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms, it is essential to first clarify key concepts such as culture, cultural diversity, culturally diverse classrooms and learner behaviour management.

2.3 Clarification of key concepts

Culture

Banks and Banks (2010) state that culture is a way of life invented and acquired by a group of people. This means that culture is a social construct; it is an agreed way of life. By this, I mean culture is constructed and is a way of imposing accepted behaviour and knowledge. In support of this assertion, Irvine (2003:6) defines culture as "shared behaviours and knowledge that represent the total way of living and are important for any group's survival in a given environment". The behaviourist nature of cultural acquisition is also highlighted by Gay (2010), who states that culture determines people's belief and value systems, thoughts, behaviours and perceptions, and these in turn affect teaching and learning. In the context of this study, culture refers to the combined ways of living generated and accepted by a group of people and transferred from one generation to another. The definition embraced in this study highlights the behaviourist, constructivist and epistemological nuances of culture. It is important to understand culture as encompassing the knowledge, language, interpretations, perspectives, behaviours, beliefs, values and norms that a group of people accept and which comprise the group's foundation for social action.

Cultural diversity

Cultural diversity in the classroom would then refer to different cultural backgrounds in terms of language, knowledge acquired, belief systems, perspectives, values and norms (Gay, 2010; Banks & Banks, 2010). Since the inhabitants of a classroom are normally teachers and learners, cultural diversity would exist among learners themselves and also between learners and their teachers, since they bring different cultural backgrounds to the classroom.

A culturally diverse classroom

The desegregation of South African schools created the opportunity for learners from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds to attend the same schools (Vandeyar, 2010, 2017; Alexander & Mpisi, 2014), and therefore to sit in the same classrooms. In the context of this study, I therefore define a culturally diverse classroom as a classroom consisting of learners from different racial, cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds following the desegregation of schools in South Africa.

Learner behaviour management

In South Africa the concept of learner behaviour management is often referred to as "maintaining or establishing discipline in the classroom". In this sense, it refers to the behaviour management aspect of classroom management; classroom management has a broader meaning and includes a number of aspects, such as creating physical order in terms of the physical arrangement of the classroom, controlling behaviours of learners, effective teaching and learner-teacher interactions. Thus, Francis and Oluwatoyin (2019:75) maintain that effective classroom management is characterised by effective management of the classroom atmosphere, effective learner behaviour management, appropriate methods of teaching, effective use of instructional materials and effective communication. However, if all these aspects of classroom management are not properly handled or managed by the teacher, they eventually affect the management of learners' behaviour. Each activity that teachers are expected to carry out plays an important role in enabling and enhancing learner behaviour management in the classroom for effective teaching and learning to occur. In the context of this study, learner behaviour management forms the central part of classroom management. Learner behaviour management (LBM) is described as actions that teachers carry out to achieve learner cooperation, to guide learner behaviour and to establish order in the classroom so as to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Flowing from the definitions of the key concepts in the context of this study, it must be noted that the teachers' cultural backgrounds, which influence their way of doing things, their perceptions, etc., may have an impact on their LBM practices; and likewise, the learners' respective cultural backgrounds may have an influence on their behaviour and perceptions. However, before exploring the issues of cultural backgrounds that may play a role in teachers' LBM practices in a culturally diverse classroom, it is essential to first reflect on the context of LBM in South Africa: What does the current LBM situation look like? Is the current LBM system effective? Are teachers well prepared for LBM?

2.4 Learner behaviour management in the South African context

The issue of learner behaviour management has always been and is still a major challenge that confronts teachers in their day-to-day functioning in South Africa (Mokhele, 2006; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Dhlamini, 2014; Segalo, 2015; Van Wyk,

2016; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). This literature has, however, been confined to studying learner behaviour management in the wake of new education legislation that promulgated the alternative disciplinary strategies now in force, with little attention to the topic of managing learner behaviour in the context of cultural diversity in South African schools.

The alternative disciplinary strategies that are recommended by the Department of Education, when arranged hierarchically from lesser sanctions to more serious ones, comprise but are not limited to a points system or demerit system, detention, time-out, withdrawal of privileges, report, suspension (out-of-school suspension or in-school suspension) and expulsion (Department of Education, 2001). These LBM strategies, which also include the use of rewards, are more inclined to the behaviourist approach (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006), which is an approach that involves the use of extrinsic rewards and punishment of some sort to control learner behaviour.

Some studies explored whether these alternative strategies are found to be effective in managing behaviours of learners in the contemporary classroom (Serakwane, 2007; Joubert & Serakwane, 2009; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Marais & Meier, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). It seems that teachers do not find the alternative discipline strategies to be effective or helpful. A study conducted by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) revealed that when using the alternative strategies, teachers feel disempowered and deprived of the ability to establish discipline. Similarly, Segalo and Rambuda (2018) assert that rights that teachers had to discipline learners have diminished, and that this is indicated by absence of respect, erosion of values and morals on the side of learners. Basically, the banning of corporal punishment in 1997 and its replacement with alternative strategies has not led to any significant improvement of learner behaviour (Moyo *et al.,* 2014). The conclusion that alternative strategies seem not to meet the intended objective raises the basic question whether these alternative strategies offer an appropriate and beneficial system for instilling discipline in learners (Moyo *et al.,* 2014). On further scrutinising these alternative disciplinary measures, Moyo *et al.* (2014) report that the problem with the alternative strategies is that they are employed in “punitive ways which end up taking up characteristics and consequences similar to those arising out of corporal punishment” (Moyo *et al.,*

2014:12). This confirms the finding by Serakwane (2007) that the disciplinary strategies employed by teachers are largely control-oriented, punitive and reactive and are therefore not effective. Furthermore, teachers are not trained in the proper application of alternative disciplinary strategies (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012). Serakwane (2007) also argues that some teachers' struggle to maintain discipline relates to their understanding of the term "discipline". The next sections will elaborate on these findings.

2.4.1 Interpretations of the term "discipline"

With regard to the meaning or interpretation of the word *discipline*, previous studies conducted by Serakwane (2007) found that this concept (which is referred to as "learner behaviour management" (LBM) in this study) is perceived differently by individual teachers. Most teachers perceive discipline as control over learners through punitive measures; few teachers perceive discipline as the inculcation of self-discipline (Serakwane, 2007; Joubert & Serakwane, 2009). These different understandings have a bearing on the strategies that teachers choose to use in order to manage the behaviours of learners. If the teacher equates discipline with control, he or she tends to use control-oriented strategies. If the intention is to develop self-discipline, the teacher tends to strive to inculcate values that will develop self-control in the learner, thus enhancing the learner's ability to behave responsibly. The distinctive interpretations of *discipline* are discussed below.

Discipline as self-discipline: Gordon (1989) maintains that discipline that arises within a learner (self-control) is the only effective discipline. Similarly, Charles (2002) maintains that the aim of discipline is to gradually lessen the need for teacher intervention by assisting learners to become self-disciplined. Learners need to be assisted by teachers to develop such self-control (Gordon, 1989; Buluc, 2006). Dreikurs, Grunwald and Pepper (1971) argue that self-discipline can be developed, as they maintain that "responsibility is taught by giving responsibility" (Dreikurs *et al.,* 1971:31). Giving responsibility entails an understanding that self-discipline is imparted through employing developmental actions and democratic principles when handling learners' behaviour (Pepper & Henry, 1985). In this regard, Gordon (1989) maintains that in order to help learners to control or regulate their own behaviour, teachers will have to give up their controlling power over learners.

Discipline primarily as control: Most teachers perceive *discipline* (LBM) as control through punitive measures because they themselves were educated in a school system were the violation of learner rights was prevalent. As a result of the schooling system that produced them, these teachers do not comprehend that the employment of control-oriented strategies restrains learners' capability to develop inner control. Arguing from a restorative justice point of view, Abregu (2011) contends that the original meaning ascribed to the term *discipline* was misplaced, and came to be associated with *chastise* and *punish*. He maintains that the original meaning that was attached to the word *discipline* was to educate, which means to develop by giving intellectual, moral and social instruction or information and to correct, which means to set right in accordance with truth rather than to punish.

While the disciplinary strategies employed by South African teachers were found to be control-oriented, as they centre on extrinsic rewards and various forms of punishment, it must be noted that rewards and punishments are actually controlling mechanisms that teachers employ because they are destitute of effective strategies. Serakwane (2007) maintains that the use of control-oriented strategies often causes learners to engage in a variety of coping mechanisms that eventually make the teachers' control strategies ineffective. The use of these control-oriented strategies essentially lessens a learner's chance to develop self-discipline, because a learner who has been coerced more often than not demonstrates little or no self-control once he or she is not within the confines of the controller (Gordon 1989). In the same vein, Evertson, Emmer and Worsham (2000) recommend restraint in the use of extrinsic rewards, pointing out that sometimes the use of extrinsic rewards may wear down the learner's intrinsic motivation to participate in the activity for which the reward is offered. This means that when a learner receives a reward for demonstrating an appropriate behaviour, the learner's motivation to maintain such behaviour may diminish when the extrinsic motivation is subsequently removed. Overall, research of control-oriented strategies has revealed that such strategies are not only ineffective, but also "increase the risk for negative social and academic outcomes, especially for children from historically disadvantaged groups" (Skiba & Losen, 2016:4). Instead of relying on control-oriented strategies or punitive measures, many researchers (Dreikurs & Pepper, 1982; Landau, 2001; Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Soheili, Alizadeh, Murphy, Bajestani & Ferguson, 2015; Lopes, Silva, Oliveira, Sass &

Martin, 2017) suggest that teachers should manage their classrooms in a democratic way, neither permissive nor autocratic, a way that gives learners the necessary opportunity to contribute to the development of standards of behaviour and to work on how the shared standards ought to be maintained.

2.4.2 Deficient training and development on alternative disciplinary strategies

South African literature (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo 2012; Moyo *et al.,* 2014) indicates that most teachers have not received pre-service or in-service training with regard to the disciplinary strategies recommended by the Department of Education and how these strategies must be applied. In this regard, Mestry and Khumalo (2012) maintain that teachers' lack of learner behaviour management skills has a negative impact on how they maintain discipline in their classrooms, and more particularly how they implement alternative disciplinary strategies and as a result "some of them resort to old punitive methods while others do things that violate the rights of learners" (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:108).

The above-mentioned findings, as elucidated in the literature referred to above, reflect the challenges with regard to understanding of the concept of discipline and the bearing this has on the disciplinary strategies that South African teachers employ. The findings also reflect the challenge that teachers face in the implementation of the alternative strategies that have been recommended by the Department of Education, but in which they have not been thoroughly trained, as these alternative disciplinary strategies are mainly control-oriented and – extremely importantly – most teachers find them ineffective. The ineffectiveness of control-oriented strategies (punishment and rewards) is confirmed by both local (Joubert & Squelch, 2005; Serakwane, 2007; Joubert & Serakwane, 2009; Marais & Meier, 2010; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012; Moyo *et al*, 2014; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018) and international literature (Dreikurs & Pepper, 1982; Gordon, 1989; Evertson *et al*., 2000; Landau, 2001; Charles, 2002; Buluc, 2006; Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Abregu, 2011; Soheili *et al.,* 2015; Skiba & Losen, 2016; Lopes *et al.,* 2017).

Taking into consideration the different conceptions that teachers hold about LBM and also considering viewpoints from both local and international literature with reference to control-oriented strategies, as discussed in this section, I tend to believe that it is

the classroom management approach that the teacher subscribes to that will determine the LBM strategies that he or she uses. As indicated before, LBM is one aspect of the broad construct of classroom management, while all the other aspects/activities involved in the process of classroom management support LBM. This explanation suggests that there is a distinction between LBM and classroom management, but the two constructs are inseparable. Effective LBM relies on successful execution of other aspects of classroom management, and classroom management takes account of LBM. It is from this argument and the belief that the teacher's classroom management approach determines the LBM strategies that he or she uses that the need to explore the conceptualisation of classroom management as well as the different approaches to classroom management as expressed in the literature becomes imperative. This may explain how LBM relates to classroom management and how the LBM practices of teachers are influenced by the classroom management approaches that shape or inform their actions. In the following section, the definitions of the concept of classroom management as articulated by various scholars will be examined, thereby providing the integrated conceptualisation of this multifaceted concept.

2.5 Integrated conceptualisation of classroom management

An integrated conceptualisation of classroom management refers to a comprehensive understanding of classroom management that not only emphasises the creation of calm and quiet classrooms, but expands to include other significant aspects and perspectives of classroom management that seem to have been neglected in the traditional description of the concept.

Evertson and Weinstein (2006:4; 2013:4) define classroom management as "the actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning". Doyle (1986) maintains that classroom management has both an academic purpose and a social purpose to fulfil, namely: (a) to create a calm and quiet environment so that meaningful learning can take place and (b) to support or contribute to the social and moral development of learners. Both of these descriptions indicate the integrated nature of the construct of "classroom management" by highlighting its dual purpose and also highlighting teachers' engagement in various actions and strategies in the classroom management process.

Evertson and Emmer (2013:1) expand the description of classroom management to mean “a broad concept that encompasses the set of behaviours and strategies that teachers use to guide students’ behaviour in the classroom”. In this way, Evertson and Emmer (2013) also indicate the integrated nature of the concept classroom management as they mention that it includes various actions and strategies that teachers put together and employ to guide or direct learner behaviour. They describe classroom management as having planning facets as well as interactive facets. Planning facets comprise tasks such as arranging the physical space of the classroom, establishing expectations for learner behaviour, establishing incentives to promote desirable behaviour, establishing consequences to deter inappropriate behaviour and developing instructional activities to encourage learner participation and engagement. Interactive facets comprise interacting with learners and observing their actions and performance, providing them with feedback and support, stepping in to avert learner behaviour, stimulating learner interest, participation and cooperation (Evertson & Emmer, 2013).

Martin, Schafer, McClowry, Emmer, Brekelmans, Mainhard and Wubbels (2016) expand the description and understanding of the concept of classroom management further by suggesting an integrated conceptualisation that considers precursors to teacher actions. According to Martin *et al.* (2016), precursors to teacher actions highlight the complexities of the construct and are undergirded by the assumption that effective classroom management is “more than the ‘bag of tricks’ that teachers use to manage their classrooms, but is rather a highly complex construct that encompasses the often invisible aspects of classroom interaction...” (Martin *et al.,* 2016:32).

In this regard, Martin *et al.* (2016) postulate precursors to teacher actions that are meant to address five interrelated aspects of classroom management: teacher self-regulation/control; teacher caring and authority; knowledge of learner temperament; managing behaviour and instruction in a culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate manner; and understanding the importance of classroom community. These precursors are the skills that teachers must possess to be able to execute the actions required to address the respective aspects of classroom management. Table 2.1 below (adapted from Martin *et al*. (2016)) represents the aspects of classroom

management that are interrelated as well as the corresponding precursors to teacher actions.

Table 2.1 Classroom management aspects and precursors to teacher action

Interrelated aspects of classroom management	Precursor to teacher action
Managing the "self" aspect of classroom management (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015)	Teacher self-regulation/control – ability to understand and manage their own emotions and stereotypes
Relational aspect of classroom management (Wubbels *et al.,* 2006)	Caring and authority – demonstrating a rather high degree of care and a high degree of teacher authority
Temperament-based aspect of classroom management (McClowry, 2014)	Knowledge of learner temperament (learner disposition/character)
Developmental, culturally responsive classroom management (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Martin, 2004)	Belief system regarding learner development and cultural responsiveness – managing behaviour and instruction in a culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate manner
Participation-centred aspect of classroom management (Hickey & Schafer, 2006)	Understanding the importance of classroom community – establish regular patterns and practices that characterise classroom community; and make certain that learners achieve membership

Source: Adapted from Martin *et al*. (2016)

The aspects that emerge from the above table are described as follows:

The participation-centred aspect (Hickey & Schafer, 2006) of classroom management requires teachers to understand the significance of classroom community. As teachers strive to create classroom community, they need to ritualise routines and practices that define classroom community and also assist all learners to attain a sense of belonging in the classroom. The developmental, culturally responsive classroom management aspect (Martin, 2004) requires teachers to consider developmental levels of learners and to manage their teaching and learner behaviours in a culturally responsive manner. With reference to the temperament-based aspect (McClowry, 2014), teachers are required to know the differences between their learners, including learner temperament and characteristics. At the same time teachers need to monitor/regulate themselves so as to manage their own emotions while attending to learners with different personalities (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). Teachers are also required to conscientiously manage their relations with

learners so as to balance both high-level care and high-level authority (Wubbels *et al.,* 2006).

Fundamental to the above-mentioned precursors to teacher actions is the belief that consideration of precursors to teacher actions is often neglected with regard to classroom management as teachers focus more on the anxieties of "establishing order and getting academic work accomplished" (Martin *et al.,* 2016:32). In line with this assertion, Schwab and Elias (2014) indicate that control of learner behaviour so that teaching and learning can carry on without disruptions has been the traditional purpose of classroom management. The authors argue that as much as this control purpose of classroom management is essential to ensure effective functioning in a classroom, it needs to be taken into account that while certain teacher actions may possibly maintain control, those actions may not promote or encourage learning. In order to achieve a more comprehensive, integrated (or rather: holistic) goal of classroom management, a classroom environment must be established that advances academic, social and emotional learning. This is done with the aim of equipping learners holistically, so that the skills obtained during their years of learning can be put into "positive use in the world around them" (Schwab & Elias, 2014:95). This argument requires exploration of the evolution of the conceptualisation of classroom management, which will elucidate the various approaches to classroom management and the paradigm shifts from traditional to contemporary approaches as viewed on a continuum from teacher-centred classroom management to learner-centred classroom management (Garrett, 2008). This will be discussed in the next section.

2.6 Approaches to classroom management

The classroom management concept evolved over time, from the behaviourist approach to the ecological approach to classroom management; to the socio-emotional learning approach, which includes development of self-discipline; and to the culturally responsive classroom management approach (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). While earlier conceptualisations of classroom management were drawn from the behavioural theory, which focuses on reinforcement and punishments, the contemporary conceptualisations emphasise the ecological approach or perspective, with the following four common themes: firstly, positive teacher-learner relationships are the foundation of classroom management; secondly, classroom management

serves as a utility to develop moral and social values in learners; thirdly, proactive approaches to classroom management give rise to learner self-regulation and classroom connectedness rather than rewards and punishment; and finally, teachers' classroom management strategies need to be adjusted to learners' dispositions, cultural norms and developmental levels (Martin *et al*., 2016). This suggests that the contemporary approach reflects the integration of the ecological aspect of classroom management, which considers classrooms as environmental settings; the socio-emotional learning aspect, which embraces social and moral development, as well as inculcation of self-discipline in learners by empowering them to be in charge of their behaviour; and the cultural responsiveness aspect, where the management of learner behaviour is viewed through a cultural lens. The different approaches to classroom management are discussed below.

2.6.1 The behaviourist approach

The behaviourist approach is viewed as the predominant and prevailing paradigm in educational research (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006, 2013; Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). Landrum and Kauffman (2006), who are proponents of this perspective, highlight that this approach is not reputable in the school domain. They attribute its disreputable state to teachers' failure to translate the behavioural strategies emanating from this approach into practice properly, arguing that the strategies are employed inconsistently, randomly and incorrectly. Landrum and Kauffman (2006:47) provide "five basic behavioural operations" (actions to be employed by teachers to manage learner behaviour), namely "positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, extinction, response cost punishment or punishment involving presentation of aversives". A brief explanation of each operation is provided in the paragraphs below.

Positive reinforcement denotes the outcome or influence that is detected when an unexpected stimulus is applied following a learner's behaviour to strengthen that particular behaviour. Studies have revealed, however, that teachers do not acknowledge positive behaviours of learners as often as they should, but tend to show discontent rather than recognition (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006).

Negative reinforcement denotes the influence that is detected when a stimulus that learners find uncomfortable or distasteful is removed unexpectedly. Because such a

stimulus is found uncomfortable for learners, escaping or avoiding it becomes the outcome they actually desire.

Extinction denotes the act of decreasing behaviour by removing the support that has been sustaining it. An example of extinction can be in the form of deliberate ignoring or intentional non-response from the teacher when the learner gets to make comments that are beside the point or is speaking loudly, for instance.

Response cost punishment is likened to the point system/demerit system mentioned earlier with reference to the South African context. It is a learner behaviour management mechanism where a reinforcer/behaviour strengthener that was earned earlier becomes removed consequent to a demonstration of an inappropriate behaviour (Walker, Shea & Bauer, 2004). Teachers who employ this method always need to bear in mind that every response cost punishment must fit the offence (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006).

Punishment using aversives/unpleasant stimuli: Since the application of aversives that cause physical pain is outlawed in many countries, most teachers use aversives or punishment that causes emotional distress to learners (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006). The limitation of the use of emotional pain to control leaner behaviour is that it only results in temporary containment of the targeted behaviour, and does not teach learners what they should be doing or teach them appropriate behaviours. Alberto and Troutman (2003) maintain that the use of aversives may stimulate retaliation, aggression and amplified anxiety from learners, and in that way it does not offer misbehaving learners a good model of behaviour (Walker *et al.,* 2004; Bos & Vaugh, 2006).

One of the most commonly heard criticisms of the behaviourist perspective of classroom management is that through this perspective classroom management came to be associated with or seen as synonymous with classroom order and behaviour management in the form of control of leaner behaviour by means of teacher-centred procedures (Garrette, 2008; Bear, 2014). As much as earlier understanding of classroom management was engrained in the behaviourist perspective, over time classroom management came to further be perceived as “the class as a social system” (Postholm 2013:389) that functions in an environment (physical context) that needs much of the teacher’s attention (Doyle, 2013). The ecological approach is therefore discussed below.

2.6.2 The ecological approach

According to Doyle (2013), the ecological approach is centred on the physical context or setting with distinctive "purposes, dimensions, features, and processes that have consequences for the behavior of occupants in that setting" (Doyle, 2013:98). This sense of direction, as provided by Doyle, (2013) leads to an understanding that a person's behaviour is controlled by the specific setting, environment or situation in which that person is located at a specific moment. In a classroom context this assertion therefore means that the physical setting within a classroom can cause learners to behave appropriately or inappropriately. In support of this view, Astor, Benbenishty, Marachi and Meyer (2006) maintain that a crowded classroom is likely to create learner behaviour problems, particularly when teacher supervision is inadequate. In addition, an unappealing and uncomfortable classroom with inadequate cooling or heating system or uncomfortable seats can tamper with learners' behaviours (Berkowitz, 1989, as cited in Bear, 2014). While teachers' ability to alter or amend their physical environment is often limited, Bear (2014) contends that teachers who are effective in terms of the ecological perspective of classroom management will do the best that they can to adapt the physical setting in order to avert behaviour glitches. This can be done by, for instance, improving the arrangement of furniture and making the physical space in the classroom look good, placing the teacher' seat in a tactical position, etc. Taking into consideration what Astor *et al*. (2006), Doyle (2013), and Bear (2014) postulate with regard to the ecological perspective of classroom management, it becomes clear that this perspective promotes an idea of designing, adjusting and maintaining classroom environments that would assist teachers to establish order in the classroom. The ecological perspective therefore considers classroom management as the facilitation and creation of a physical environment that is favourable for teaching and learning and prevents challenges to learners' behaviour.

Osher, Bear, Sprague and Doyle (2010) expand the understanding of the ecological approach to classroom management by including the importance of classroom activities and the purpose they serve. In this regard, the authors maintain that it is rather the nature and value of classroom activities facilitated by the teacher and that learners participate in that create and maintain order in the classroom. Emmer and Sabornie (2015) maintain that the manner in which teachers manage classroom

activities and the way they engage learners can help minimise disruptive behaviours. Learner participation, and subsequently learner self-discipline, are encouraged when classroom activities are well thought through and well facilitated by the teacher. For this reason, Osher *et al.* (2010), as well as Emmer and Sabornie (2015) promote the ecological perspective with a learner-centred orientation. Also in support of the ecological perspective from a learner-centred point of reference, Postholm (2013) posits that learner-centred practices of teaching encourage learners' active participation in the classroom and generate the sense of belonging and the sense of duty necessary to create and sustain "productive learning communities" (Postholm, 2013:394). However, she points out that sustaining learning contexts that are productive will also require that the participants develop a sense of being appreciated and of being respected. In this way, Astor *et al*. (2006), Osher *et al.* (2010), Postholm (2013), Doyle (2013) and Bear (2014) emphasise the crucial role that teachers must play in establishing and sustaining inviting and productive learning contexts.

2.6.3 The socio-emotional learning approach

Schwab and Elias (2014:95) describe social-emotional learning as "a process of gaining competencies and intrinsic motivation for emotional self-awareness and self-regulation, for safe and responsible behaviour and for assertive, empathic, and skilful social interaction". The fundamental orientation within the social-emotional learning (SEL) approach therefore lies in the reasoning that while procedures or techniques that feature in the behavioural and ecological approaches can be used by teachers to avert behaviour problems, the SEL approach can proactively avert such problems through developing social and emotional skills related to self-discipline and also through instituting secure and caring relationships (Bear, 2014), thereby advancing learners' psychological wellbeing not only during their school-going age "but also in adulthood" (Bear 2014:24). This approach therefore requires that teachers should guide learners with understanding and empathy as they empower them for their current life as learners and their future life as functionaries in society. In this regard, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) use the construct 'warm demanders' to characterise the kind of teachers who approach classroom management from the SEL perspective. They say these are teachers who, while making demands on their learners, remain attentive, warm, supportive and caring. These teachers are able to

strike a balance between offering support and demanding determination and effort from learners (Postholm 2013).

From the arguments of the aforementioned authors, it is evident that SEL is underpinned by a learner-centred viewpoint as opposed to the teacher-centred viewpoint. In this regard, Postholm asserts that the focus of the SEL approach to classroom management is on learner self-discipline which provides learners with an opportunity of sharing "control in the classroom with the teacher" (Postholm, 2013:394). Above and beyond being given an opportunity to share responsibility in the classroom, learners need to know that their teacher cares about them, otherwise they are unlikely to take much interest in whatever knowledge or information the teacher is about to present (Freiberg & Lamb, 2009; Postholm, 2013). This implies that building positive teacher-learner relationship, and therefore a pleasant, productive learning environment where learners feel appreciated and also feel a sense of belonging, is key to the academic, social and emotional development of learners. When learners have developed self-discipline, they can restrain inappropriate behaviours and demonstrate prosocial behaviours based on their own convictions without being coerced to do so.

The approaches to classroom management discussed above reflect orientations that depict distinctive positions along a continuum in terms of the amount of teacher versus learner control. Absolute teacher control is positioned within the behaviourist approach, which is for this reason perceived as being teacher-centred; the ecological approach lies in the middle, with an inclination to learner-centredness; while shared teacher-learner control is positioned within the socio-emotional learning approach, which is perceived as being learner-centred due to the holistic development (including learner development of self-discipline) this approach upholds for the benefit of learners during their school-going years and in adulthood. Throughout this continuum, the goal of classroom management has been mainly to establish and maintain orderly classrooms with minimal disruption by learner behaviour. It is only in the approaches/methods that are employed to achieve this common goal that the difference exists, and thus the result is different, especially between the behaviourist approach and the socio-emotional learning approach.

The authors that discuss the three approaches, and in particular the ecological approach and the socio-emotional learning approach, which are the approaches that lean towards learner-centredness, are silent on cultural diversity. This does not mean that their ideas may not have a place in the culturally responsive classroom management approach. The discussion of the above-mentioned approaches to classroom management guides the way to better understanding of the significance of a culturally responsive approach to classroom management and the difference that such an approach can make in a culturally diverse learning environment if it is to be considered in teaching and in managing behaviours of learners.

2.6.4 The cultural responsiveness approach

Establishing and maintaining an "orderly environment" with minimal disruption by learner behaviour can present serious challenges in classrooms with a culturally diverse learner population, because learners within the classroom may not "share a common understanding of what constitutes order and how is it maintained through individual action" (Cartledge, Yu Lo, Vincent & Robinson-Ervin, 2015:411). This problem area has resulted in a body of literature (mostly international) that focuses on addressing the possible challenges by merging the principles of classroom management with the fundamentals of cultural responsiveness (Obidah & Teel, 2001; Weinstein, Tomlinson- Clarke & Curran, 2003, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Brown, 2004; Monroe, 2005; Brown, 2007; Bondy, Ross, Gallingane & Hambacher, 2007; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Cartledge *et al.,* 2015) from which emerged the culturally responsive perspective/approach to classroom management.

The cultural responsiveness approach is an approach where classroom management in general and the management of learner behaviour in particular are viewed from a cultural difference viewpoint. To institute culturally responsive classroom management, it is critical to concede that conventional classroom management approaches and strategies for generating orderly classroom environments are not culturally impartial, but are often based on cultural norms of the dominant cultural group(s), which become institutionalised in culturally diverse schools (Casey, Lozenski & McManimon, 2013; Cartledge *et al.,* 2015). Cultural responsiveness requires that teachers make concerted effort towards understanding, embracing, respecting and meeting the needs of learners from backgrounds that are culturally different from theirs (Ford & Kea, 2009 as cited in Emmer & Sabornie,

2015). This suggests that teachers should adopt a classroom management approach in which cultural diversity becomes a lens through which behaviour management practice is viewed.

Such an approach is proposed by Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke and Curran (2004) in their theory of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM), which is discussed in detail in the theoretical framework section of this study. CRCM suggests a proactive approach to managing culturally diverse classrooms in a culturally responsive manner that specifically addresses the management of learner behaviour. Weinstein *et al.* (2004), and similarly Milner and Tenore (2010), contend that developing and implementing CRCM is a mindset rather than a set of predetermined actions or strategies, and that strategies that can enable teachers to advance classroom learning opportunities and to renounce endeavours to control learners can be developed and implemented through teachers' responsive attributes.

2.7 Cultural responsiveness for learner behaviour management

Milner and Tenore (2010) argue that cultural responsiveness is about "equity in practice", which implies that behaviour management approaches for culturally diverse learners would not essentially be the same across the board; instead, the intervention required for successful behaviour management with one learner may be reasonably different from the intervention required for another learner, and in this way cultural responsiveness repudiates a "one-size-fits-all-approach" (Milner & Tenore, 2010:577). This would also mean that the culture-neutral approach (Jansen, 2004; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Gay, 2010; Gay, 2013) and the assimilation approaches (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010) that are often employed by teachers in managing culturally diverse classrooms can only cause behaviour challenges in culturally diverse classrooms to proliferate. The following section explores learner behaviour challenges in culturally diverse classrooms.

2.7.1 Learner behaviour management challenges in culturally diverse classrooms

Behavioural problems that surface in classrooms not only hamper the learning process and the achievement of learning objectives, "but also change the classroom dynamic, as the focus of attention shifts from the academic tasks at hand to the

distractions provided by disruptive behaviours" (Parsonson, 2012:16). Central to the complexity of managing behaviours of learners in classrooms that are populated by learners from diverse cultural backgrounds are the identities of not only learners, but also of teachers in those classrooms (Milner & Tenore, 2010). This is because learner behaviour management challenges that teachers face may often be aggravated in learning contexts where learners' "languages, experiences, ethnicities, religions, and abilities may be highly diverse and may or may not be shared by the teacher" (Milner & Tenore 2010:561). This means that attention needs to be given to the contexts, as the cultural backgrounds offer crucial information regarding the variety of teachers' and learners' experiences (Milner & Tenore, 2010). People from different cultural backgrounds often behave in accordance with different cultural norms. Cultural norms are described as "the collective expectations of what constitutes 'proper' or 'improper' behaviour in a given situation" (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015:412). Due to different cultural norms of social interaction (cultural misunderstandings) between teachers and learners, the meanings attached by teachers and learners as well as the intentions behind their behaviours and actions are often incongruent. As a result of the existing discrepancy, alarming referral patterns arise (Milner & Tenore 2010). Themes that emerged from the literature (Milner & Tenore, 2010) regarding learner behaviour management challenges that are experienced by teachers in culturally diverse classrooms include *disciplinary referral patterns, teachers' and learners' cultural disconnects* and *institutional and systemic barriers.*

2.7.1.1 Disciplinary referral patterns

The literature indicates that learners who receive the most disciplinary referrals are from non-dominant/non-mainstream cultural groups (Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Monroe, 2005; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Kozleski, 2010). The opportunity to learn is reduced by disciplinary referrals, and as a result the academic achievement of learners deteriorates when they miss some lessons (Milner & Tenore 2010) because teachers use up much of the teaching time in attempts to manage and control learners who deviate from the norm.

Skiba *et al.* (2002) indicate that most of the disciplinary referrals are due to situations where learners are behaving in ways that are in contrast with what their teachers

expect, and teachers are not accustomed to or feel uneasy with such behaviours. Similarly, Milner and Tenore (2010) indicate that some teachers are likely to be anxious and to overreact to comparatively minor threats to authority in the classroom, especially if their concern is combined with "a misunderstanding of cultural norms of social interaction" (Milner & Tenore, 2010:564). In this regard, Milner and Tenore (2010) assert that learners are often viewed as the only problem, whereas teachers actually may be contributing to the clashes that ensue in the classroom and result in referrals. Weinstein *et al.* (2004) confirm this assertion when they relate the story of a teacher who referred the two male learners to the office of the principal so that the principal could reprimand them after she had observed them engaging in crosstalk that seemed to be aggressive. The teacher was disappointed when the principal, who was from the same cultural background as the two male learners, criticized her instead of the learners and advised her that she had "misread the situation and treated the boys prejudicially and unfairly" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004:25). This exemplifies the misinterpretation that can occur and that may lead to unnecessary disciplinary referrals when teachers and learners come from different cultural backgrounds. This also confirms the assertion by Skiba *et al.* (2002) that most of the infractions that result in disciplinary referrals of culturally different learners are found to have been subjectively interpreted.

2.7.1.2 Teacher and learner cultural disconnects

Gay (2002), Skiba *et al.* (2002), Weinstein *et al.* (2004), Monroe (2005), as well as Milner and Tenore (2010) indicate that cultural disconnects between learners and teachers cause most of the conflicts in the classroom. It is suggested that in culturally diverse classrooms, many of the learner behaviour challenges are aggravated by teachers' lack of multicultural competence (Obidah & Teel, 2001; Weinstein *et al*., 2004; Marks, 2015), and most often by differences in the ways of communicating. Marks (2015) posits that when the teacher's culture is significantly different from the learner's culture, the teacher is likely to misread the learner's intentions, as a result of different communication styles. The literature provides some examples of the kinds of disconnects that often occur in culturally diverse classrooms and that emphasise the importance of multicultural/intercultural communication competence. One example is that teachers who are familiarised to a "passive-receptive" discourse pattern (Gay 2002) may tend to expect learners "to

listen quietly while the teacher is talking and then respond individually to teacher-initiated questions" (Gay, 2000:90). In this way, only the teacher gets to play an active role, while the learners are passive (Gay 2002). Another example is that when learners who are used to a more participatory discourse pattern, also known as "call-response pattern", get to display their engagement through comments and feedbacks, some teachers may view such behaviour as inappropriate and disruptive or rather rude (Gay, 2000; Gay, 2002). Similarly, some teachers may conclude that learners who demonstrate reluctance to take part in competitive activities are lazy, whereas the learners' lack of participation in competitive activities is due their strong cultural value of interpersonal harmony (Sileo & Prater, 1998, as cited in Weinstein *et al.,* 2004).

Support and illustration of the above are found in Weinstein *et al.* (2003), where three scenarios of classroom interactions between three different teachers and their respective learners depict how teachers can misinterpret behaviours of learners with whom they have a cultural disconnect: Maria, a learner who is always quiet in the classroom and only speaks when the teacher gives her permission to speak, has developed this behaviour as a result of her parents' expectation that she needs to be obedient and to seek permission at school before doing anything. Houng's brief responses to teachers' questions are interpreted by teachers as an indication of lacking motivation to learn. However, Houng's brief responses are based on her cultural value of interpersonal harmony, and she wishes to avoid being competitive in the classroom. James, who is a more active participant in class, is assertive, loud and often gets into discussions without requesting permission by raising his hand. His active participation is regarded as inappropriate behaviour by the teacher, who interprets passivity as good manners. The situations that are depicted in Weinstein *et al.* (2003) and the teachers' interpretations of their learners' behaviours illustrate the kinds of misinterpretation that may occur when teachers do not recognise that behaviour is culturally influenced (Weinstein *et al.*, 2003). In this regard, Gay (2002) maintains that it is imperative for teachers to have an understanding of the different communicative styles in order to "avoid violating the cultural values of culturally diverse learners" (Gay, 2002:112). "Multicultural communication competence" (Gay, 2002:112) is therefore viewed as an important contributor to a teacher's cultural responsiveness in a classroom with a diverse learner population, and indispensable

for understanding the various behaviours and discourse patterns of culturally different learners.

Milner and Tenore (2010) bring an additional viewpoint to the challenge pertaining to teacher-learner cultural disconnects and argue that the role played by teachers in the conduct of learners is tremendous, especially when learners from non-dominant cultures come to develop a perception that they are being marginalised. They maintain that the behaviours of marginalised learners tend to be purposeful because their relationships with their teachers and their perception of how the school is treating them form the basis of their behaviours. Noguera (2003) similarly acknowledges that learners who are frequently punished for misbehaviour are usually not inactive victims. He states that many of these learners do realise that "the consequences of violating school rules can be severe. However, as these learners internalise that they are being marginalised, they just lose the motivation to observe the school norms" (Noguera, 2003:343). In this regard, Milner and Tenore (2010) state that learners tend to have the ability to discern the unwarranted detachment between their teachers and themselves, and it is such disconnects that eventually determine learners' actions.

In line with the above arguments that teachers' decisions and actions can have a negative influence on learners' actions is the critical reflection based on a meaningful dialogue between the two colleagues (Teel, the white teacher and Obidah, the African teacher) with regard to their behaviour management decisions. Teel's narrative demonstrates lack of knowledge and experience of African learners and their culture, while Obidah's narrative shows lived experience and understanding of African learners (Obidah & Teal, 2001). The perception that Obidah had of her learners is described as follows:

> *"There was more to my friends and my students than perception of them as problem students within schools. Their problems did not encompass all of who they were as human beings. Yet in their interactions with society, and schools in particular, they were often viewed through the lens of their problems. Teachers equipped with this one-dimensional lens are incapable of effectively teaching these students" (Obidah as cited in Obidah & Teal, 2001:20).*

The perception that Teel initially had about her learners is described as follows:

> *"All my perceptions of African American students at this point in time were based on assumptions I had about them that came from what I had seen or heard from the media about life in the inner city and from the students' placement in lower track classes. I assumed that these students were so-called underachievers because of their own shortcomings, which were the result of their upbringing" (Teel as cited in Obidah & Teal, 2001:20).*

From the critical reflection advanced by a meaningful dialogue between the two colleagues (Obidah and Teel), the following lessons are learnt:

(a) Familiarity with the culture of the learners the teacher is teaching is essential when managing the behaviour of culturally diverse learners. This is evident in the way Obidah was able to create respectful rapport and "the business-like yet very supportive learning environment" (Obidah & Teal, 2001:28) in her classroom, and in the way her methods were found to be effective even when teaching learners who, because of repeated problems with their teachers, had been separated from other learners in their mainstream classes. Learners in her classroom were attentive, focussed and motivated to learn (Obidah & Teal, 2001).

(b) Awareness of own biases and misconceptions is crucial if teachers are to become culturally responsive. This is evident from Teel's realising that she and her colleague were using different approaches to teaching and classroom management of the same group of learners; she then sought mentorship from the colleague who was familiar with the culture of the learners they were teaching, and also observed the colleague teaching in the classroom to learn about her approach and strategies she used and how she applied those strategies.

Before Teel could embrace the approaches that could be helpful in the situation she found herself in, she had to reconsider the beliefs she had concerning learners from whom she was culturally disconnected as well as some of her management decisions. She had to work on transforming her worldview and ultimately managed to change her expectations and classroom management style. She started to actually listen to her learners' perspectives, to negotiate and to redefine inappropriate

behaviour and to explore the root causes of disruptions (Obidah & Teal, 2001; Pang, 2002; Milner & Tenore, 2010), rather than "thinking that she already had everything figured out" (Milner & Tenore, 2010:568).

2.7.1.3 Institutional and systemic barriers

Gay (2010) maintains that the "mainstream cultural fabric", which is primarily of European and middle class origin, is deeply rooted in the structures, systems, atmosphere and decorum/protocol of most schools which presently have culturally diverse learner populations. This mainstream cultural fabric is being preserved because it is basically considered "the 'normal' and 'right thing' to do" (Gay 2010:9). In a way, the character of the dominant culture is being held up as a norm within the structures of these schools, while the role of non-dominant culture(s) is being ignored (Marks, 2015). In this regard, Milner and Tenore (2010) contend that the school policies and institutional expectations may create challenges for teachers, who in their endeavour to meet institutional expectations may find themselves reinforcing the privilege of only certain perspectives and certain groups of learners in the school (Kumashiro, 2009; Milner & Tenore, 2010). When learners from non-dominant cultural backgrounds perceive that they are not privileged like others, that they are alienated and marginalised, they could resort to what Dreikurs *et al.* (1998) refer to as mistaken goals.

As regards institutional and systematic barriers, the following aspects could pose a challenge with respect to learner behaviour management in culturally diverse classrooms:

(a) *Teachers' beliefs or expectations with regard to learner behaviour.* Besides grappling with behaviour misinterpretation due to cultural incompatibilities (Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Monroe, 2005), teachers seem to believe they can only teach effectively when learners behave in certain ways (Kumashiro, 2009; Casey *et al.,* 2013). Controlling learner behaviour based on the teachers' or the school's definition of what is appropriate is perceived by Casey *et al.* (2013) as an act of maintaining the status quo. It is also perceived by Kumashiro (2009) as oppressive education, which is in contrast with the cultural responsiveness approach to LBM.

(b) *Cultural assimilation.* Cultural assimilation is a practice whereby those from the dominant group or mainstream culture coerce those from the non-dominant culture to acquire or put up with the practices of the dominant culture (Chisholm & Sujee, 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010; Soudien, 2012; Marks, 2015). In this regard, Meier and Hartell (2009) state that learners are often expected to adjust their actions and behaviours to the mainstream ethos even when this ethos was established for a different learner population. In this way, "power relations largely remain intact even as there is greater contact" (Chisholm & Sujee, 2006:142). Creation of a particular overriding culture through the assimilation of non-dominant cultures needs to be avoided, as diversity must be valued and accommodated (Meier & Hartell, 2009).

(c) *Marginalisation of cultural responsiveness*. Challenging the marginalisation of culturally responsive practice in schools and in classrooms, Sleeter (2012) contends that consideration of culturally responsive approaches to teaching has mainly been transacted with standardised syllabi and teaching practices founded on "neoliberal business models of school reform" (Sleeter, 2012:562). As a result of this, teachers find themselves under enormous pressure to adhere strictly to the assigned curriculum, and to spend less or no time on forging relationships with learners (Sleeter, 2012; Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Sleeter (2012) points out three main reasons why cultural responsiveness is relegated to the margins: (i) a persistent, flawed and naive conception of what cultural responsiveness means, (ii) little research that connects cultural responsiveness with learner success, and (iii) anxiety on the part of the elite and white middle class that it might lose nation-wide (domestic) and international supremacy (Sleeter, 2012). These reasons suggest that for cultural responsiveness to be employed by teachers to manage learner behaviour, a proper understanding of what the concept of cultural responsiveness means is required on the part of teachers; extensive research that links cultural responsiveness with LBM needs to be conducted internationally and within the South African context; citizens of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds need to come and have honest, educational dialogues about cultural differences and the importance of cultural responsiveness.

(d) *Misconceptions and distorted understanding of cultural responsiveness.* Studies of teachers' classroom management practices reveal that teachers'

perceptions/conceptions of cultural responsiveness are sometimes distorted (Irvine, 2003; Sleeter, 2012; Casey *et al.*, 2013; Ladson-Billings 2014). The "colour-blind" or culture-neutral approach (Ladson-Billings 2000; Jansen, 2004; Vandeyar, 2010; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Kozleski, 2010; Gay, 2010, Gay, 2013) is often employed by teachers. Vandeyar (2010) maintains that the colour-blindness' perspective is intended to conceal institutionalised discriminatory attitudes in desegregated schools, where the term is an attempt to conceal the prejudice they hold. In this regard, Jansen (2004:118) maintains that "teachers, when approached on the subject of race and identity in their classrooms, would invariably make a claim that they see children, not colour". Milner and Tenore (2010) state that while several teachers tend to adopt colour-blind ideologies, i.e. imagining that they pay no attention to colour, these teachers come to miss significant features and scopes of the identity of these learners. Learners from non-dominant groups are then managed from the mainstream frameworks that shape school and classroom management practice, and the perception of 'colour-blindness' would stem from the notion that "education has nothing to do with cultures and heritages, … students … need to learn knowledge and skills that they can apply in life and how to meet high standards of academic excellence, rather than wasting time on fanciful notions about cultural diversity" (Gay, 2010:22).

Arguing against the culture-neutral and colour-blind approaches, Irvine (2003) emphasises that ethnic and cultural differences do matter and that the colour-blind ideology is "sincere fiction" (Irvine, 2003: xv). The fiction in the notion of colour-blindness or cultural neutrality is said to be sincere because teachers who tend to embrace this fiction as true or factual tend to believe that it is consistent with notions of fairness, equality and non-discrimination (Irvine, 2003; Gay, 2010), whereas it is not.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed pertinent literature that positions the study of learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms in context. The section on learner behaviour management in South Africa provided background on the current LBM situation and the LBM system commonly used in South African schools. Literature reviewed in this section discussed the alternative

discipline strategies recommended by the South African Department of Education and suggested explanations why these alternative strategies are ineffective.

The section that explores the integrated conceptualisation of classroom management provided a broader perspective of the classroom management construct, and more importantly, revealed the integral position that LBM takes in the classroom management process. Exploration of the different approaches to classroom management further broadened the perspective from which LBM is viewed and provided possible options regarding approaches to LBM in culturally diverse classrooms. It is suggested that there is a link between the conception held about classroom management, the approach the teacher subscribes to and the LBM strategies that the teacher would ultimately employ to manage behaviours of learners. The review of international literature on the notion of cultural responsiveness provided broader understanding of the LBM challenges that teachers often face in culturally diverse classrooms.

The review identified ample literature written by South African scholars on diversity and deficient social integration in South African desegregated schools. However, very little was found on LBM in the context of diversity. Similarly, while there is ample South African literature on LBM, it has mainly focused on LBM generally, without giving attention to the culturally diverse context that exists in South African desegregated schools and how it affects LBM.

The review also established that although the LBM challenge in South African schools has become even more intensified with the desegregation of schools, most of the South African literature that reports on the challenges that teachers face with LBM have not yet attempted to answer the question whether different approaches to LBM are required when dealing with culturally diverse learners, and what could be the appropriate approach and strategies that teachers could use to respond to the diverse nature of the South African learner population in culturally responsive and contextually appropriate ways.

The chapter that follows is therefore aimed at outlining the theoretical framework that attempts to answer these questions and that undergirds this study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the theoretical framework selected for this study of learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms. It describes the fundamental components of the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM) theory and outlines the resultant strategies that could be employed by teachers to manage behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms. Other theories and studies that expand and support the CRCM theory are also discussed.

Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000), Gay (2000, 2010) and Irvine (2003) make a persuasive argument for teachers to understand how their own and their learners' cultures affect the teaching and learning process though predominantly focussing on curriculum content and teaching strategies (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004) to ensure optimal academic achievement of learners from culturally diverse backgrounds. Although the main focus of these authors is on curriculum content and teaching strategies, their principles of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2000, 2010), culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000) and cultural synchronisation (Irvine, 2003) are found to be relevant, as these lay a very important foundation for the whole process of teaching and learning in culturally diverse learning environments, which essentially includes learner behaviour management. Their theories are premised on the idea that culture is central to learning and teaching and are thus aimed at centring culture and difference in the teaching practice (Gay, 2013). While some of the discussions in their works looked at how culturally responsive teachers promote connectedness, a sense of community and joint effort (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004) in culturally diverse learning environments, the issues of cultural diversity in relation to learner behaviour management are not thoroughly explored.

The theory that expands the discussions of the above-mentioned cultural difference theorists, and that best explains and underpins this study, is the theory of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management developed by Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke

and Curran (2003, 2004) – precisely because it focuses on issues of classroom management and cultural diversity in relation to learner behaviour management.

3.2 The Culturally Responsive Classroom Management theory

Weinstein *et al.* (2003) maintain that like CRT and CRP, culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) embarks on an understanding of "the self," "the other," and "the context" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003:270). The theory of CRCM, as conceptualised by Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004), attempts to answer the question whether different approaches to classroom behaviour management are required when dealing with culturally diverse learners, considering that cultural clashes are likely to come up in classrooms with culturally diverse learners, and therefore attempts to offer feasible ways to help teachers to develop multicultural competence. Underlying the discussions of Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004) on CRCM "is the premise that CRCM is a frame of mind, more than a set of strategies or practices, that guides the management decisions that teachers make" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004:27). In this regard, Weinstein *et al.* (2004) maintain that culturally responsive classroom teachers reflect on their biases and values, how their expectations of the behaviour of and their interactions with learners are influenced by their biases and values, and they argue that the eventual aim of classroom management is not to attain control or compliance, but to afford all learners with learning opportunities that are equitable. In order to provide a clearer shape of CRCM, Weinstein *et al*. (2004) provide the five components that are fundamental to CRCM.

3.3 Fundamental components of the CRCM theory

Figure 3.1 below illustrates the five fundamental components of the CRCM theory as they relate to cultural diversity and learner behaviour management and also indicates the interrelationship and connectedness of these components.

Figure 3.1 – Components essential to CRCM, or prerequisite understandings of CRCM (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004)

Each of the components/prerequisite understandings of CRCM represented in diagram 3.1 is described below.

(a) *Recognition of one's own ethnocentrism and biases.* Weinstein *et al.* (2004) emphasise the need to recognise that human beings are beings with cultural orientations, have their own views, biases and expectations about behaviours of others. This argument is supported by Spradley and McCurdy (2012), who maintain that people tend to believe that their own culture exemplifies the most appropriate way for human beings to do things, and as a result come to judge or evaluate other people's behaviours using values of their own culture. This suggests that the perspective from which teachers often interpret and respond to learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms may be based on their own cultural beliefs and norms,

or the mainstream socio-cultural norms; and as a result, teachers may tend to punish the behaviours of non-mainstream groups (Skiba *et al.*, 2002). In this way teachers may fail to realise that their practices marginalise and alienate some learners while privileging others (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003). Weinstein *et al.* (2004) add that teachers are unlikely to misinterpret the behaviours of learners from cultures that are different from their own and to treat such learners in an inequitable manner when they become aware of their own biases. Teachers are therefore urged to reflect on their assumptions and to understand that their assumptions, attitudes and cultural biases can lead them to misinterpret the behaviours of learners from culturally different backgrounds.

(b) Knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds. Acquisition of knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds, including their parents' expectations of discipline as well as their families' cultural norms for interpersonal relationships, will enable teachers to be culturally responsive (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004). In a sense, teachers need to have knowledge of their learners' and their families' cultural backgrounds, for it is in this way that they can develop skills for cross-cultural interaction (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003), also referred to as intercultural competencies (Perry & Southwell, 2011; Dusi, Rodorigo & Aristo, 2017).

(c) Understanding of the broader social, economic and political context of the educational system. Teachers need to understand that discriminatory practices of the larger society are often preserved and replicated by schools and that the policies and practices of the school can privilege learners from dominant cultures while marginalising those from non-dominant cultures (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004, Kumashiro, 2009; Casey *et al.*, 2013). Teachers need to understand how differences such as culture, "race, social class, gender, language background, and sexual orientation are linked to power" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004:31), and thus need to be conscious of the manner in which specific prejudices constructed on the norms of the dominant groups become institutionalised (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004; Kumashiro, 2009; Casey *et al.,* 2013).

(d) Ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate classroom management strategies. With consciousness of their assumptions and cultural biases, and knowledge of their learners' cultural backgrounds as well as understanding of the wider context, teachers can begin to examine whether their learner behaviour

management practices are culturally appropriate (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004). In a sense, teachers are urged to view the functions of classroom management – and learner behaviour management in particular – through a lens of cultural diversity. The proposed classroom management responsibilities for teachers include: (i) creating a supportive physical environment; (ii) communicating with learners in culturally consistent ways; (iii) creating caring, inclusive classrooms; (iv) working in partnership with families; and (v) using appropriate learner behaviour management interventions (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003).

(e) Commitment to building caring classroom communities. Teachers must create learning environments that respect diversity, circumvent marginalisation of learners and endorse connectedness and a sense of community. In a sense, teachers are expected to build caring and nurturing relationships with their learners, and such teacher-learner relationships must be grounded in "cooperation, collaboration, and reciprocity rather than the current teacher-controlling-student compliance patterns" (Sheets & Gay, 1996 as cited in Weinstein *et al.,* 2004:33). However, Weinstein *et al.* (2004) cite the following as structural restraints on caring that are often mentioned by teachers: too many learners in one classroom, insufficient time, pressure to cover the curriculum and standardised testing. If the number of learners per classroom is too high, teachers may not be able to cater for the range of diverse needs of learners while also covering the specified curriculum and preparing learners for examinations. However, according to Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004), this situation does not justify the marginalisation of learners from non-dominant cultural groups or the teacher-controlling-learner compliance paradigm.

Culturally responsive teachers must understand the connectedness and inter-dependence of the components essential to CRCM. In addition to developing a culturally responsive mindset, they must recognize that intercultural competence is directly linked to an understanding of one's own assumptions and biases about behaviours of other people (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004); they must make great efforts to gain knowledge of their learners' cultural backgrounds and to understand the broader social, economic and political context in order to be able to use culturally and contextually appropriate behaviour management strategies. Culturally responsive teachers must strive to establish caring classroom communities, realising

that their learners are likely to be cooperative and to achieve success when they perceive that their teachers care for them.

3.4 Theories and studies that support CRCM

The theory of CRCM (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004) is supported by Irvine's (2003) framework of cultural synchronisation and her "cultural incongruence" interpretations. According to Irvine (2003:7),

> *"Teachers bring to school their own set of cultural and personal characteristics that influence their work. This includes their beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, ethnicity, genders and social class. Many…students…, by contrast, have a different set of cultural and personal characteristics. When teachers and students bring varying, and often conflicting, cultural experiences to the classroom, there is a possibility of cultural discontinuity. When cultural conflicts exist between the student and the school, the inevitable occurs: miscommunication and confrontation between the student, the teacher, and the home, hostility, alienation, diminished self-esteem, and eventually school failure. When teachers and students are out of sync, they clash and confront each other both consciously and unconsciously" (Irvine, 2003:7).*

Consistent with the major premise that underlies CRCM, as articulated in Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004), that CRCM is more of a mindset than the strategies that teachers use, Irvine (2003) argues that while it is important for teachers to master content knowledge and instructional skills, these may not be enough; to be successful in culturally diverse classrooms, teachers need to be culturally sensitive, ensure a sense of identity with their learners, perceive teaching as a calling and understand the power of caring. Irvine's (2003) framework of cultural synchronisation and her "cultural incongruence" interpretations are also held by Gay (2010) in her cultural difference theory, which is based on the premise that –

> *"Teachers carry into the classrooms their personal cultural backgrounds. They perceive students, all of whom are cultural agents, with inevitable prejudice and preconception. Students likewise come to school with personal backgrounds that influence their perceptions of teachers … and the school itself. Together students and teachers construct without being conscious of doing it, an environment of meaning enacted in individual and group behaviour, of conflict and accommodation, rejection and acceptance,*

alienation and withdrawal" (Spindler & Spindler 1994, as cited in Gay, 2010:9).

Gay's (2000, 2010) cultural difference theory and Irvine's (2003) cultural incongruence interpretations, like Weinstein *et al.*'s (2003, 2004) theory of CRCM, emphasise the possible cultural disconnect between teachers and learners in culturally diverse classrooms and the behavioural implications thereof, and urge teachers to be culturally responsive and interculturally competent.

Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000) presents a CRP model which is based on three propositions: (a) Learners must experience academic achievement; (b) learners must develop and maintain cultural competence; and (c) learners must "develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995:160). In other words, teachers must be able to help their learners to be academically successful, culturally competent and socio-politically conscious (Ladson-Billings, 2000). This expectation calls for teachers themselves to be interculturally competent and socio-politically conscious, among other things, so that they can develop their learners in such aspects. Gay (2010) concurs with both Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000) and Irvine (2003) that instructional skills and awareness of cultural differences in classroom interaction are important, though not enough, and further emphasises that teachers need to also develop courage to "dismantle the status quo" (Gay, 2010:14). Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004) further maintain that it is important for teachers to understand that the type of classroom management that they should employ in culturally diverse classrooms should epitomise a service for "social justice": "CRCM is classroom management that furthers the cause for social justice" (Weinstein *et al.* (2003:275).

3.5 Principles and strategies to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms

Scholars who contributed ideas to CRCM maintain that managing classrooms with culturally diverse learners necessitates much more than the approaches and strategies that have been recommended in the earlier classroom management literature (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Brown, 2004; Bondy *et al.,* 2007; Milner & Tenore, 2010). Consistent with Weinstein *et al.*'s (2004) theory of managing culturally diverse classrooms, Milner and Tenore (2010:570) emphasise the use of a

culturally responsive classroom management as a preventive approach to managing learner behaviour, and therefore set some prerequisites for teachers to effectively manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms. These include: "(a) understanding equity and equality, (b) understanding power structures among students; (c) immersion into students' life worlds, (d) understanding the Self in relation to Others, (e) granting students entry into their worlds, and (f) conceiving school as a community with family members" (Milner & Tenore, 2010:560).

The principles/prerequisites of CRCM, as set out by Milner and Tenore (2010), and the fundamental components of CRCM as posited by Weinstein *et al.* (2004) (and supported by other scholars who contributed ideas to CRCM) underpin proactive strategies that could be employed by teachers to handle learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms. Some of these proactive strategies emanating from the literature are discussed below.

3.5.1 Organising the physical environment

It is important for teachers to understand the diversity of learners in their respective classrooms, so that they can create classroom environments that reflect the cultural heritage of the learners (Skiba *et al.,* 2016). This means that the way teachers decide to create a welcoming environment should be perceived through the lens of cultural diversity. The physical environment should make all learners feel a sense of belonging; teachers should use the environment strategically "to communicate respect for diversity, to reaffirm connectedness and community, and to avoid marginalizing learners" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003:271). The physical environment could, for example, display a map of the world to draw attention to learners' countries of origin; photographs of learners could be affixed on a display board to emphasise the idea that the learners have come together to form a unified whole or community (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Kozleski, 2010).

3.5.2 Communicating with learners in culturally consistent ways

Dissimilarity of communication styles between teachers and their learners can have a negative effect on learner behaviour. Therefore, culturally responsive teachers need to adjust their communication styles to be consistent with learners' cultural backgrounds (Gay, 2002; Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Gay, 2010; Emmer &

Sabornie, 2015). Effective cross-cultural communication is a pivotal element of cultural responsiveness (Gay, 2002; Brown, 2004; Bondy *et al.,* 2007; Gay, 2010).

3.5.3 Establishing caring, inclusive classrooms

Culturally responsive classroom teachers make deliberate efforts to build positive learner-teacher relationships, maintain connectedness with all their learners and encourage collaborative learning and sense of community among learners (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Brown, 2004; Bondy *et al.,* 2007; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Postholm, 2013; Martin *et al.,* 2016; Skiba *et al.,* 2016).

3.5.4 Communicating and working in partnership with families

Since parents' views of what comprises appropriate behaviour may be different from the school's (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003), the inclusion of "families and communities as resources" (Sugai, O'Keeffe & Fallon, 2012:213) to help determine school practices (Sugai *et al.,* 2012) is recommended.

3.5.5 Utilizing appropriate learner behaviour management interventions

When teachers become aware of the disparities between their own cultures, perspectives, beliefs and value systems and those of their learners and their families, when they start to reflect on the type of behaviours they classify as problematic in relation to learners' cultural backgrounds (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003), the probability of inequitable disciplinary practices that are often caused by teachers' misinterpretation of learner behaviour may diminish (Skiba *et al.,* 2016). Knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds and awareness of context in a broad-ranging sense can help teachers broaden their definition of what is acceptable learner behaviour.

3.6 Conclusion

The theoretical framework of this study has been constructed from the cultural difference theory as postulated by Gay (2000, 2002, 2010) in her discussions of CRT and Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000) in her discussions of CRP, as well as Irvine's (2003) framework of cultural synchronisation and her "cultural incongruence" interpretations. Weinstein *et al.*'s (2003, 2004) CRCM theory, which is based on the above-mentioned theories and is centred on the premise that CRCM is "a frame of mind, more than a set of strategies or practices, that guides the management decisions that teachers make" (Weinstein *et al.*, 2004:27), underpins the discussions in this research. The five essential components of CRCM (Weinstein *et al.,* 2004)

guide the shaping of this study. In extending Weinstein *et al.'s* (2004) idea of CRCM, the scholarly discussions and the principles that emerged from the studies conducted by Milner and Tenore (2010) on classroom management in diverse classrooms, and those from other additional literature that expands the concept of cultural responsiveness in relation to learner behaviour management, are explored.

For this study, the CRCM perspective allowed me to explore teachers' classroom management practices in culturally diverse South African classrooms, with particular focus on cultural diversity and learner behaviour management. The CRCM theory, as the framework selected for this study, also guided the review of existing literature that emphasises the issues of classroom management and cultural implications in the context of learner behaviour management in culturally diverse classrooms, as well as the design of the data collection instrument. The framework was therefore also used to guide the development of the interview questions and the observation protocol in preparation for the qualitative research that was to be conducted in the field.

The following section will focus on the research methodology and design of this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research paradigm, research approach, and the research design chosen for this study are explained, followed by a discussion of the sample and the sampling strategies as well as the data collection methods that were used to gather information from the participants. The reasons for the choices made in the research methodology and design of this study are also provided. The various stages of data analysis are discussed, followed by the discussion of trustworthiness and credibility of this study, the limitations and ethical considerations.

4.2 Research paradigm

The constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm was selected for the framework of this study because I believe reality (of the social world) is socially constructed and knowledge of it is gained through interpretation. Mertens (2014:16-17) maintains that since reality is socially constructed by people who are engaged in the research process, the researcher comes to understand "the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live in it". This means that human beings construct meanings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Cohen *et al*. (2011) state that interpretive research seeks to understand the subjective world of human experience, and as a result, phenomena are understood through the meanings that participants attach to them. The constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm fits the objective of this study best, as the purpose of this study is to gain understanding of teachers' LBM practices in culturally diverse classrooms from teachers' standpoint of their distinctive contexts and backgrounds. Epistemologically, constructivism as a research paradigm deals with participants' realities. Data, interpretations and conclusions are "rooted in the contexts and participants apart from the researcher" (Mertens, 2014:19). This means I collected data from the participants' own experiences. Ontology is the belief that there is no one reality, that reality is socially constructed by a human community (Mertens, 2014). In the context of this study, this means that I received a number of versions of reality, as I collected data from various participants of different cultural backgrounds and with different experiences and views.

4.3 Research approach – Why a qualitative approach?

The research approach that I adopted was qualitative, as the nature of my research required understanding of human behaviour (i.e. the behaviour of teachers when managing learner behaviour) within a natural setting (i.e. in culturally diverse classrooms). "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2014:4). The qualitative research approach gave me access to teachers' experiences with and views of managing their learners' behaviour and allowed me to uncover how teachers understand the essential principles of managing behaviours of a culturally diverse learner population and to document their experiences, feelings and thoughts in their own words.

4.4 Research design – Why a qualitative case study design?

A qualitative case study design emphasises the gathering of data on naturally occurring phenomena, where the researcher explores the use of various methods in the hope of achieving a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Thus a case study is defined as a design of an enquiry in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, "within a real-life, contemporary context or setting" (Yin, 2014 as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018:96).

A case study is basically "the study of an instance in action" (Adelman *et al.,* 1998 as cited in Cohen *et al.,* 2011:289), as it provides a distinctive pattern "of real people in real situations..." (Cohen *et al.,* 2011:289). The case investigated in this study was teachers' LBM practices in a culturally diverse high school. As a case study is characterised by rich descriptions and details (Cohen *et al.,* 2011), teachers' ways of managing learner behaviour in the classroom setting were explored in detail, and the detailed information was collected by means of semi-structured interviews, which included teachers' narratives of critical incidents, non-participant observation as well as document analysis.

A qualitative case study design had a number of advantages for my study. Firstly, my study was investigating a complex social phenomenon, a subjective reality that could not be measured quantitatively (Kalu & Balwa, 2017), but required profound understanding and interpretation, and the qualitative case study research design served this purpose by *allowing diverse viewpoints and interpretations* (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018) held by participants about the issue under study. Secondly, because detailed understanding and interpretation could only be accomplished by talking directly to the people involved and by observing them in situ, the selected design became the most suitable approach as it *encourages the collection of data at the site where the issue under study is experienced by the participants* (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This is because behaviour is optimally understood while it happens naturally, without manipulation of a setting (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Thirdly, as qualitative case study research *allows researchers to collect and integrate various forms of qualitative data*, I was able to use interviews, observations and documents as sources of data, as indicated earlier. Fourthly, as qualitative case study research *allows both inductive and deductive analysis* (Creswell & Poth, 2018), and I was able to analyse data inductively and to subsequently generate patterns and themes. On the other hand, deductive analysis involves the analysis that set out to test whether data are consistent with prior assumptions or a theory that is already in place (Thomas, 2006) and therefore moves from the general to the specific. Furthermore, as a qualitative case study seeks to understand how people understand their world and how that understanding shapes their practice, the approach selected allowed me to access participants' social world and *to make sense of their world through an interpretative activity*. In other words, as the participants tried to make sense of their world and shared their understanding with me as a researcher, I inductively analysed and made sense of their understanding and interpretations. This means that my interpretations depended on participants' interpretations. As a result of this kind of process, there was *a two-phase interpretation* – what Giddens (1984) in his structuration theory refers to as "double hermeneutic" (Jones & Karsten, 2008; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Cohen *et al*, 2011). Lastly, as a qualitative case study is an *"*emergent design*"* (Creswell & Poth, 2018:44), the flexibility of this design allowed me to follow the research process and to adjust or expand the study during data collection in my endeavour to elicit the requisite information.

As the study of teachers' learner behaviour management practices in culturally diverse classrooms was a case study with an element of ethnography (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Grenier, 2019), I spent considerable time observing the same group of participants.

The ethnography element of this case study rests on the basis that the study seeks to understand cultures, beliefs and values of individuals (teachers and their learners) in a natural setting (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017). Essentially, the study seeks to understand how teachers interpret and manage behaviours of learners (teachers' actions) and how learners behave and interpret their teachers' actions. In order to satisfy the ethnographic element of this case study, the group of participants had to remain unchanged for the duration of the study. To ensure that I observed the same group of participants over a prolonged period of time, purposive sampling was used to select the class that had the most culturally diverse learners of all the classes in the school and was taught by the same group of culturally diverse teachers all the time. The choice of one class had a number of advantages: I was able to gain a deeper insight into my sample, I got to know the learners and the way they interacted with their teachers better, and the prolonged and continuous period of observing the same group reduced the risk that the behaviours of the participants would be modified by their awareness that they were being observed.

The participants in this study were culturally diverse teachers who taught the same group of learners, who also came from different cultural backgrounds. While I intended to observe one class, I expanded the sample to occasionally observe another class to broaden my perspective. I also included other participants from the school, such as the Discipline Officer, who focused solely on learner behaviour management, and two more teachers from other cultural backgrounds.

The section below provides details of the sampling strategy, from the initial phase of selecting the school to selecting the suitable class and suitable teachers and to the final stage of inclusion of additional teachers and the Discipline Officer.

4.5 Sampling strategy and participants

This study made use of convenience sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was the main sampling technique used in this study. Convenience sampling was used in the initial phase of sampling and snowball sampling was used later, when data was collected.

Convenience sampling was used to select multicultural schools under the jurisdiction of the Tshwane South District, Gauteng Department of Education in South Africa, which is an area near me, so as to ensure that my daily visit to the school was

convenient in terms of distance and costs. Convenience sampling is commonly used in qualitative studies because “this may be the best the researcher can accomplish due to practical constraints, efficiency, and accessibility” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:151). To ensure that my use of convenience sampling was free from any bias which can affect the findings, I chose schools with the intended characteristics fit for this study. Gaining access to multicultural schools was the hardest part; most of the school principals and school governing bodies did not want to involve their schools and teachers in the topic of my study, which they deemed controversial. It took some determination and persistence to gain access to a school with a suitably culturally diverse population.

Purposive sampling was employed to select the school and was further employed to select the most suitable class for this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:152) describe purposive sampling as a technique where the researcher “selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest”. The selection of the school (in particular the selection criteria of the staff complement and the overall constitution of the learner population) is discussed below, followed by the selection criteria for the class and the participants (teachers). This is followed by a discussion of the use of the snowball technique to purposefully enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study. Lastly, I provide the overall summary of the participants in this study, which includes their profiles.

Selection of the school

I approached a few high schools that could suit the purpose of this study and eventually selected the school with the most suitable learner and teacher population. The school selection criteria were as follows: A school with high cultural diversity of learners that is well resourced and is a fully integrated English medium school with learners and teachers from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds to ensure that there is adequate diversity. Thus, this study was conducted in a sample with wide-range of participants from various cultural backgrounds within diverse ethnicities/racial groupings.

Diversity of the teaching staff

The demographics of the teaching staff of the high school that was selected are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Demographic breakdown of the teaching staff at selected high school

Ethnic/racial groups[2]	**Numbers**	**Percentage**
South African (white teachers)	24	47%
South African (African teachers)	17	33%
African teachers from other African countries	4	7.8%
Coloured teachers	4	7.8%
Indian teachers	2	3.9%
Total	**51**	100%

Diversity of the learners

The majority of the learners were African (86. 4%), as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Demographic breakdown of the learners at selected high school

Grade	**African**	**Coloured**	**Indian**	**White**	**Other**	**Total**
Grade 8	200	13	2	13	0	228
Grade 9	202	20	2	12	0	236
Grade 10	212	16	4	5	0	237
Grade 11	193	15	9	8	1	226
Grade 12	156	23	4	4	0	187
Total	**963**	**87**	**21**	**42**	**1**	**1114**
Percentage %	86.4%	7.8%	1.9%	3.8%	0.1%	100%

The school is a former model C high school, which – like many such schools which were attended by whites only before the desegregation of the schooling system – experienced white flight as more African learners gained entry into these schools. As a result of the influx of African learners into this school and the gradual disappearance of white learners, the African learners came to constitute a higher percentage than the other ethnic and cultural groups. Although the percentage of learners of African origin is much higher, the majority of teachers are still white.

[2] In South Africa, the racial categories constructed under apartheid persist to this day, as the country tries to redress the injustices of the past. Nomenclature varies but the current dominant categories are African, coloured, Indian and white. The generic term for all categories other than white is 'black'.

Selection of the class

The school principal was requested to recommend the most appropriate class, one that has the most culturally diverse group of learners who are taught by teachers from various cultural groups. The recommended class was described as Grade 9B, which was taught by ten teachers. Through the prolonged engagement, I got to know the names of all the learners, their countries of origin and their cultural backgrounds as reflected by the languages they spoke at home. The Grade 9B register class teacher provided me with a class list with names and surnames of the learners as well as their countries of origin and their home languages, which I mapped according to their seating arrangement. I requested the teacher (Grade 9B register class teacher) to add the names of the respective learners on the map so that I would be able to follow their distinctive behaviours as they interacted with different teachers and the actions of their respective teachers as they interacted with them. Even though the learners were not the actual participants in the study, knowledge of their names and insight into their cultural as well as linguistic backgrounds was crucial for the study. The learners' cultural and linguistic diversity is shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Summary of learners' cultural and linguistic diversity (Class 9B)

Ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of learners			
Country of origin	Ethnicity	Home language	Number of learners per linguistic/cultural group
South Africa	African	Xhosa	3
South Africa	African	Zulu	1
South Africa	African	Pedi	7
South Africa	African	Tswana	4
South Africa	African	Ndebele	1
South Africa	African	Swati	2
South Africa	African	Tsonga	2
South Africa	White	Afrikaans	1
South Africa	Coloured	Afrikaans	6
South Africa	Indian	Hindi	1
Rwanda	Rwandan	Swahili	1
Congo	Congolese	Swahili	1
Cuba	Cuban	Spanish	1

Ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of learners			
Country of origin	Ethnicity	Home language	Number of learners per linguistic/cultural group
Argentina	Argentinian	Spanish	1
Portugal	Portuguese	Portuguese	1

The Grade 9B class was composed of thirty-three learners from African, white, coloured and Indian cultural backgrounds. The linguistic backgrounds are listed to indicate the cultural diversity, as the distinctive culture of a people is also inherent in their language, among other characteristic features of a culture.

Selection of teachers

The selection of teachers was based on the following criteria: the teachers had to be teaching the same class on a daily basis; teachers were to be from various cultural backgrounds that were represented in the school, so that the teachers' experience could contribute valuable and wide-ranging information about the challenges involved in managing diversity and the classroom behaviour management strategies that are often employed.

The flexible case study design allowed me to expand the number of participants by *snowball sampling*, i.e. by observing another class. Snowball sampling, also known as the "chain-referral method" (Cohen *et al.,* 2011:158) is a type of sampling where informants or initially selected participants identify other potential participants or put the researchers in touch with others who qualify for inclusion and these, in turn, identify yet others. Snowball sampling is therefore participant driven in the sense that the participants not only recommend potential participants to the researcher, but then they also get to recruit them to take part in the research. These additional participants were the Discipline Officer and two additional teachers. The Discipline Officer recommended one of these additional teachers, who taught the class next to her office. He was an African teacher of Zimbabwean origin who taught Grade 9D. It was recommended that I observe his class, as it appeared chaotic.

The second additional teacher was an Indian teacher who also taught Grade 9D. He was described by the Grade Tutor (participant teacher who also oversees all classes of the same grade), who referred him, as a proficient teacher experienced in managing learner behaviours. I therefore became interested in observing him teach

and learning about his learner behaviour management practices and interviewed him to get his perspective of my interview questions. Furthermore, involving him as a participant added a teacher with an Indian cultural background that I could not get from Grade 9B.

The Discipline Officer was a white female who grew up in a very conservative Afrikaner family. She was of middle age and had spent most of her career life in the military environment as a police officer. She had joined the school as a Discipline Officer 5 years earlier. The main purpose of including her was to get first-hand information on how she handled behavioural problems, to understand why learners were referred to the Discipline Office, as well as the types of infractions that caused the referrals. Her contribution regarding her role, and also with regard to teachers' behaviour management practices, provided in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this sense she was a case of revelatory sampling, which is a kind of sampling "in which individuals are approached because … they can reveal heretofore unknown insights" (Cohen *et al.,* 2011:157).

4.5.1 Summary of participants

Table 4.4 below summarises the participants that took part in this study in terms of their ethnic and cultural diversity. The names used to identify participants are pseudonyms. The table also lists the teachers' home languages, which are further indicative of their diverse cultural backgrounds, their years of teaching experience in a multicultural school and the subject they taught.

Table 4.4: Summary of participants that took part in the study

Participant	Ethnic group	Home language	Years of teaching experience in multicultural school	Subject
Grade 9B Class Teachers				
Ms Van Rooyen	White (SA)	Afrikaans	18	Creative Arts
Ms Rossouw	White (SA)	Afrikaans	22	Geography
Ms Visagie	White (SA)	Afrikaans	5	Technology
Ms Pienaar	White (SA)	Afrikaans	5	Afrikaans
Mr Potgieter	White (SA)	Afrikaans	3	English 01
Ms Kunonga	African (Zimbabwean)	Shona	17	English 02
Mr Atta	African (Ghanaian)	Twi	1	Natural Science
Mr Nkosi	African (SA)	Swati	1	Accounting

Participant	Ethnic group	Home language	Years of teaching experience in multicultural school	Subject
Ms Kunene	African (SA)	Ndebele	6	History
Ms Mbatha	African (SA)	Zulu	3	Life Orientation
Grade 9D Class Teachers				
Mr Naagesh	Indian (SA)	Hindi	23	English 02
Mr Moyo	African (Zimbabwean)	Ndebele	8	Geography
Discipline Office				
Discipline Officer	White (SA)	Afrikaans	5	Discipline

4.6 Data collection methods

Data collection is described as a progression of interrelated activities to gather sufficient and relevant information to respond to the research questions (Creswell, 2014). Semi-structured interviews, direct observation and document analysis were used as the main methods of data collection in this study.

4.6.1 Observation

Non-participant observation as a source of data collection provided me with an opportunity to collect information about natural social occurrences "in *situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts" (Cohen *et al*., 2011:456). As a non-participant observer (Creswell, 2014), I was able to see the actual actions of teachers in a natural setting. Observation took place in classrooms of teachers who consented to be observed while teaching. In order to ensure that teachers did not construe my presence as an inspection and attempt to "front" a happily responsive classroom, I first established rapport with them in order to build trust and mutual understanding (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen & Liamputtong, 2007; Zakaria & Musta'amal, 2014). I built rapport using my communication and interpersonal skills, self-disclosure and reciprocity in knowledge sharing. The intention was to observe how teachers reacted to behaviours of learners in the classroom, to establish the types of behaviours that triggered the teachers' reactions, to establish teachers' ability to link learners' behaviour to learners' cultural background (intercultural competence of teachers) and to establish teachers' classroom behaviour management approaches and strategies in the context of cultural diversity, the discourse styles they used, as well as their

ability to promote a caring classroom community.

An observation schedule (Annexure A) was developed with focus items that were determined on the basis of the research questions. The first item in the schedule aimed to observe the interactions between teachers and their learners in order to determine the kind of challenges that teachers might experience in their respective classrooms. Elements of *teacher-learner interactions* that were carefully observed included:

a) What did learners actually do that was regarded by their teachers as inappropriate?
b) How did teachers respond to inappropriate learner behaviours?

The second item aimed to observe the approaches adopted by teachers to manage behaviours of culturally diverse leaners in their classrooms. Elements that were carefully observed included:

a) Was the teacher's LBM approach teacher-centred?
b) Was the teacher's LBM approach learner-centred?

A number of items aimed to elicit the strategies that teachers used to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms. These were:

a) Physical arrangement of the classroom;
b) Seating arrangement of learners in the classroom;
c) Disciplinary techniques used to manage learner behaviour;
d) Classroom rules;
e) Communication/discourse styles used by the teacher.

Other items aimed to observe how teachers promote a caring classroom community. Elements that were carefully observed in this regard included:

a) Teachers' sense of caring;
b) Teacher's promotion of collaborative or independent learning.

Direct observation was conducted continuously for 15 days with the initial 10 teachers (i.e. 15 observations per teacher). This meant spending 15 uninterrupted school days with the same group of learners. I followed the learners as they moved from classroom to classroom to the different subject teachers. As indicated earlier, I

also observed classes of the additional two teachers respectively and also observed the sessions held between the Discipline Officer and learners that were referred to her Office for discipline-related issues. As a non-participant observer, I did not interact with learners.

I observed the Discipline Officer during test periods and during break times, and these observations were often followed by interviews with the Discipline Officer. The learners who came to the Discipline Office were either referred by the teachers or identified and called in by the Discipline Officer. Visits to the Discipline Office and talks with the Discipline Officer provided me an opportunity to get extensive information that I would not have been able to get from the teachers with regard to the supportive role that the Discipline Officer plays and her own personal view of teachers' behaviour management practices, which in turn provided in-depth understanding of teachers' LBM practices.

4.6.2 Semi-structured interviews

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used as another source of data collection in this study (Creswell, 2014, McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). An interview protocol (Annexure B1) with open-ended questions was developed. The purpose of the interviews was to acquire information about the experiences and views of the respective teachers regarding their learner behaviour management practices, and particularly their expectations of learner behaviour; LBM challenges they encountered; their understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds; the approaches and strategies they used to manage behaviours of culturally diverse learners and how they promoted caring classroom communities. The interview questions were divided into categories to ensure that they covered all areas to be explored in terms of the research questions. Each interview lasted about 90 minutes and was audio-recorded and later transcribed. The Discipline Officer's interview protocol was slightly different, in the sense that it was customised to explore her space of responsibility and understanding (Annexure B2); however, the focal point of the questions was similar in both interview protocols.

In order to elicit more rich data from teachers on cultural diversity and learner behaviours, the critical incident technique was included in the interviews. The critical incident technique is a data collection strategy "that uses narratives and self-reported

stories to classify specific events, phenomena or occurrences, referred to as incidents" (Flanagan, 1954 as cited in Bianchi, 2013:399). During every interview, teachers were given an opportunity to narrate incidents of learner misbehaviour from their own perspectives, which reflected the teacher's personal situation and standpoint regarding the phenomena being investigated (Bianchi, 2013). Teachers were specifically requested to provide comprehensive descriptions of incidents they experienced of inappropriate learner behaviour. Each teacher provided a clear example of the misbehaviour, describing the circumstances of the misbehaviour and how he/she responded to it in the classroom, enabling me to visualise the incident (Bianchi, 2013). This was intended to enable me to establish any cultural clash or cultural disconnect in learner behaviour management strategies employed by teachers. Each critical incident narrative was audio-recorded and transcribed as an extension of the interview.

4.6.3 Document analysis

Documents are a powerful source of data. While the presence of the researcher intrudes upon and may alter the natural setting during interviews and observation, documents are already existent and are thus not reliant upon impulses of people, whose cooperation is crucial for collecting data by means of interviews and observations (Sharan & Grenier, 2019). Documents that were relevant to this study included the school's code of conduct, the blue slip (merit slip) and documents that were displayed on the wall of the register classroom, such as "hair rules". I was also able to access letters written to parents.

4.7 Data analysis

Data collected through interviews, classroom observations and documents was qualitatively processed, analysed and also triangulated. I processed and analysed the data manually. The data analysis strategy that I used was thematic analysis for the general themes and conclusions that emerged from the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Thematic analysis is described as an inductive data analysis approach that involves the formation and application of codes to data, which leads to the formulation of themes. The data analysis steps therefore included data transcription, data organisation, data coding, forming categories and developing themes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014), followed by interpretation of the research findings (what is learned from the data).

After all the interviews had been transcribed, I immersed myself in the transcripts, documents and the field notes from classroom observations in order to get the sense of the data before breaking it into fragments. This was followed by assigning codes. I used thematic coding to assign labels for text that contained one idea. Cohen *et al.* (2011:559) describe coding as "the ascription of a category label to a piece of data, with the category label either decided in advance or in response to the data that have been collected". The assigned category labels/codes in this study were decided in response to the data collected. Initial codes were generated from key ideas that emerged from the responses in the first few transcripts that I read, and an abbreviated code was assigned to each key idea. As I continued to analyse the remaining set of transcripts, I assigned similar codes to data that held the same idea. Ideas emerging from the data were assigned new codes. In some instances, the same piece of text was given more than one code as a result of "the richness and contents of that piece of text" (Cohen *et al.,* 2011:559). Through the process of coding I was also able to detect the most commonly occurring codes and the codes that occurred together/patterns (Cohen *et al.,* 2011), as well as whether there were any overlaps among the assigned codes.

The process of coding was essentially used to reduce the data into themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This means that through coding, specific code categories were formed for the purpose of further analysis (Cohen *et al.,* 2011). Themes were subsequently generated from the code categories, at times referred to as sub-themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018), and were further organised into units of abstractions through interpretation. In interpreting the data, I considered my own understanding of the participants' views as well as perspectives from the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Table 4.5 below depicts how the participants' responses to the question: *What are your expectations of learner behaviour?* were analysed. The first column in the table identifies the participant by a pseudonym and 2018 denotes the year in which the participant was interviewed. The codes assigned to key ideas that emerge from the data are indicated in the 3rd column and range from C1 to C30. Emerging themes are listed in the last column.

Table 4.5: Illustration of text analysis

Pseudonym	**Responses (segments from data)**	**Important words, phrases – codes (C1-C30)**	**Emerging themes**
Ms Rossouw, 2018	*"I expect learners to be quiet at all times, to listen to instructions and to immediately respond as instructed. … It's becoming so difficult. Look, I'm a strict disciplinarian …sometimes I still struggle. I am also anxious about the coming exam because learners do not want to work".*	Teachers' expectations: Silence in classroom (C1); Attentiveness and responsiveness from learners (C2); Learners expected to do their work (C2); Teacher struggling with LBM (C3).	✓ Teachers' expectations of learner behaviour are not met (teacher struggling with LBM)
Ms Van Rooyen, 2018	*"I expect learners to listen and to respond quickly to instructions. I want them to be little soldiers, when I say, take out your books, they all dive down and take out their books. It will never happen. I have made peace with that. Books must be perfect…, it will never happen".*	Teachers' expectations: Attentiveness and responsiveness from learners (C2); Teachers doubt their expectations will ever be met (C4).	✓ Teachers are pessimistic that learners will ever meet their expectations
Discipline Officer, 2018	*"My expectations are not very realistic; my expectations seem to be much higher than the outcome. We* assume that they would know what is expected, *what is the standard, the normal behaviour. But then I hear the principal mentioning to the noise levels between, you know when children change classes, that it is too high for the school".*	Teachers' expectations: Expectations are higher than the outcome (C5); learners' awareness of normal behaviour/standard (C5); noise levels too high for the school (C6/C5/C1)	✓ Teachers' expectations are not realistic ✓ Demonstrated behaviour does not meet required standards

Pseudonym	Responses (segments from data)	Important words, phrases – codes (C1-C30)	Emerging themes
Mr Naagesh, 2018	*"…So in other words, the world and the universe is a legal universe, it operates according to laws and principles. This is the worldview that many of our teachers come from. Our learners don't come from the same worldview…"* *"I expect learners to be disciplined, respectful, responsive and work hard…."*	Teachers' expectations: Universe operates according to laws and principles/legal universe (C7); worldview that many of our teachers come from … learners don't come from the same worldview (C7) Disciplined learners (C8); respectful learners(C9); responsive and work hard (C2)	✓ Worldviews of most teachers are different from worldviews of most learners ✓ Teachers expect order and obedience to rules ✓ Importance of self-discipline
Mr Moyo, 2018	*"I expect learners to have the will to learn, to be intrinsically motivated in the sense of knowing the value of coming to school"*	Teachers' expectations: intrinsic motivation is required (C8)	✓ Importance of intrinsic motivation

The main themes that emerged from the data analysis process were formulated and presented. The next stage of data analysis involved discussions of the main themes that were generated in relation to the research questions, the literature review and the theoretical framework. That was followed by the final stage of data analysis, which comprised profound reflection on the discussions of the findings/themes with the purpose of deriving conclusions and providing recommendations.

4.8 Trustworthiness and credibility

I used the following strategies to check and to deal with trustworthiness and credibility concerns:

Triangulation of data – As data was collected from several sources, i.e. interviews; observations (Creswell, 2014) and analysis of LBM-related documents, the findings from interviews were compared and corroborated with findings from observations and from documents. The process of comparing and corroborating the findings from

the three methods of data collection provided me with an opportunity to reduce probable sources of error that could lead to the wrong findings and conclusion and in that way weaken the quality of this research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The use of the different data collection methods also provided me with an opportunity to collect richer and meaningful data that became helpful in providing answers to the research questions.

Member checking – This strategy was employed through continuous dialogue with participants about the interpretation of their reality and also to have them confirm the accuracy of the data (Creswell, 2014). To this end, I sent transcripts to participants for them to verify the accuracy of the captured data. This was done because although I had audio recorded all the interviews, there were a few instances where I could not hear their words very well; and in this way the participants were able to provide the missing words. Through continuous dialogue I was also able to telephonically call and write messages to participants to ask for verification of the meanings of the data. This was done "to enhance confidence in the data interpretations" (Creswell & Poth, 2018:182).

Prolonged engagement strategy - Observation at the research site continued for three weeks with the same group of teachers teaching the same group (class) of learners.

Thick description - A detailed description of the case in section 4.5 and the findings in Chapter 5 were provided to enable readers to transfer the information derived from this case to settings that have the same features as the school and class researched in this study.

Reflexivity – The aim of reflexivity is to ensure that interpretations of the findings are not shaped by the researcher's background or worldview (Kalu & Balwa, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018). My PhD research diary became advantageous in this regard. In this diary I firstly wrote my past experience as a college lecturer who visited schools during students' teaching practices. I also wrote down how this experience could shape my interpretation of the phenomenon under study. Secondly, I always wrote down my views and ideas as well as reflections concerning my research experience as the study progressed. I also wrote down ideas with regard to methodologies I was going to employ as well as ethical issues to consider during the research process. The views, ideas and reflections that I documented in my research diary became useful to me because they continually reminded me of

the process to follow during my research, ensuring that I adhered to the standard requirements of the research methodology and design that I had selected and that I carefully considered the research ethics throughout the research process. I was then able to examine my views, ideas, reflections and assumptions and to ensure that they did not influence the processes of data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and consequently the results of my research. Thus, when I analysed the data, I made sure not to include my views, ideas, reflections and assumptions. In this way I ensured that the analysis, interpretation and conclusions emanated solely from the data.

4.9 Limitations of the study

A possible criticism of this study might be that qualitative case study design does not produce dependable and generalisable outcomes and conclusions (Kalu & Balwa, 2017) due to a small sample. My case study design, which involved 13 participants from various cultural backgrounds and observation of these participants dealing with issues of behaviour management among culturally diverse learners, enabled my research to provide context-bound outcomes and conclusions for understanding similar cases; the intention never was to search for universally applicable findings, but to provide in-depth understanding of a human practice by studying a particular, contextualised case. Cohen *et al.* (2011:294) posit that "significance rather than frequency is a hallmark of case studies, offering the researcher an insight into the real dynamics of situations and people". Rather than offering statistical generalisability, my study offers analytic generalisability (Cohen *et al.,* 2011; Kalu & Balwa, 2017).

The view expressed by some that the topic of my study was too controversial did limit the number of schools willing to consider participating, and even made some of the staff of the selected school feel uncomfortable (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014); they viewed it as divisive for the existing staff because it required the participation of members from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Most of the staff also viewed the topic as one that was not easily open for dialogue. To address this limitation, I had to make a strong effort to build rapport with the participants, so that through the use of the qualitative approach I was able to elicit meaningful, reliable and valuable data. I created rapport by assuring them that the data obtained would be used only

for this study, thus establishing a relationship of trust between myself as a researcher and the participants.

Lastly, due to time constraints and because not all parents had given the required consent, I could not interview individual learners. However, the involvement of learners was indirectly reflected upon and represented in my study, as the participation of teachers in classroom observation depended on learners' presence in the classroom. The learners' perspectives could be interesting and will therefore be suggested for further research.

4.10 Ethical considerations

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:129), "ethics generally are concerned with beliefs about what is right or wrong from a moral perspective". The aim of taking ethics into consideration in this study was to protect the rights and well-being of the participants. I applied for and received ethics approval from the Faculty of Education: Research Ethics Committee, University of Pretoria (Annexure C). Permission to conduct research in the Tshwane South District schools was obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education (Annexure D). Permission to conduct research in the selected school was obtained from the school principal and from the School Governing Body (SGB) (Annexure E and Annexure F respectively). A copy of the permission letter obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education was forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the SGB. Parental consent was sought for making observations in the classroom. A letter was written to each parent, stating a due date for obtaining the requested consent (Annexure G); if I did not receive the parents' response by the due date, it would be assumed that they had no objection to the proposed observation. The principal and the SGB had indicated that if I did not get consent from all the parents, I should still continue, because I was not going to be interacting with learners, but with teachers, who would be the actual participants.

I prepared a letter of informed consent for participants in accordance with ethical requirements (Annexure H). The Discipline Officer's letter of informed consent was customised to suit her area of responsibility (Annexure I). The participants were informed of the purpose, procedures and all other aspects of my research, as well as of what was expected from them. In order to confirm their understanding of the

research and their willingness to participate, the participants were expected to sign the consent form (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time.

Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants' rights to privacy and anonymity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Confidentiality, which is interrelated with the ethical requirement of anonymity, was maintained in the sense that participants remained anonymous during the collection, analysis and interpretation of data as well as in the research report. Participants were also informed about measures that would be put in place to maintain confidentiality of the recorded data, which could be used only for academic purposes. By upholding the principles of confidentiality and anonymity, I ensured that participants were protected from harm or any form of risk (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). I also took care to maintain honesty and trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2018) in writing my research report.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014:134) do, however, indicate that "in some kinds of research, such as face-to-face interviews and observational studies, strict anonymity is not possible". The ethical dilemma that was presented in this study is that while the names of teachers were disguised, the participant whose identity/position could not be completely disguised was the Discipline Officer, who was described by her position. The name of the position was, however, changed from the commonly used term Disciplinarian to Discipline Officer.

My other ethical dilemma was that when I requested access to conduct my research at the school, the school principal requested to be presented with the preliminary findings at the end of the field work; in her view, these were going to be helpful to her and the school. I ensured that the presentation based on the preliminary data analysis (just after concluding the field work) delivered to her was highly generalised and did not in any way expose the identity of any participant. I also took care not to disclose information that could harm participants.

4.11 My experience and what I learnt about conducting a qualitative case study

My experience of a qualitative study was tremendously enhanced during my PhD research, as I acquired a much deeper insight. I learnt more about the different types of qualitative approaches, and most importantly, I was introduced to a case study

with an ethnographic element. This meant that I had to read up on qualitative enquiry and research design literature in order to understand what ethnography/ethnographic research was all about, which in turn provided insight on the differences and points of intersection between ethnography and a case study design.

I must indicate that I fell in love with qualitative research, as it provided in-depth understanding of a unique case, a case that has received little attention and that I found necessary to describe and detail. I also learnt that in-depth analysis of data – data coding, categorising, interpretation and identification of themes – is a significant function of qualitative research. Here the process of inductive and deductive logic enhanced my reasoning skills.

I have learned that the themes identified in this study can represent specific issues that can be studied as individual cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018:98). I am therefore encouraged that my study of this case will help researchers to understand other similar cases or situations, and that this case could contribute to the expansion and generalisation of theory.

Besides learning about others, this research made me examine my own history and cultural background. I had an opportunity to reflect on my worldview and to appreciate the worldviews of other people. I learned to consider other people's cultural backgrounds and not to judge other people's ways of doing things/cultures, but to strive to learn from them and not to think of my way of doing things as the only appropriate ways of doing things. In other words, I learned to see situations through the eyes of those who live in those situations.

Lastly, I learned that writing a qualitative research report is "co-construction, representative of interactive processes between the researcher and the researched" Creswell & Poth, 2018:228). I am therefore confident that through this research, I have been able to represent various voices, to advance proper discernment and to encourage social transformation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The phenomenon this study sought to investigate is the learner behaviour management practices of teachers in the context of cultural diversity. The fundamental question is whether teachers' ways of managing learner behaviour are culturally responsive and contextually appropriate, and what approach and strategies teachers could use to respond to the diverse nature of the South African learner population in culturally responsive and contextually appropriate ways.

The previous chapter discussed the methodology, research design and data collection methods that were employed in conducting this research as well as how the collected data was analysed. This chapter presents the findings and the interpretation of the findings. For the purpose of enabling understanding of the context in which the findings of this research are presented and interpreted, the research questions that guided this study are restated. The findings are subsequently presented in themes that emerged from the analysis of data obtained from interviews, classroom observations and relevant documents.

5.2 Research questions, themes and sub-themes

The main research question that needed to be answered was: How do teachers manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms of high schools in South Africa? In order to get to the bottom of learner behaviour management practices of teachers, the five sub-questions presented in the table below were explored.

From the responses of the participants to the interview questions, which were based on the research questions, and from the direct observations that were made as well as the analysis of documents, five major themes with resultant sub-themes emerged. They are also presented in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Research questions, themes and sub-themes

Research question	Themes and sub-themes
What learner behaviour management challenges do teachers experience in culturally diverse classrooms?	Theme 1: Learner behaviour management challenges experienced by teachers • Learners' lack of work ethics • Learners' sense of entitlement

Research question	Themes and sub-themes
	• Learners acting up • Lack of parental involvement and support • Maintaining order in a multicultural classroom
How do teachers recognise their own ethnocentrism and biases about behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms?	Theme 2: Teachers' expectations of learner behaviour • Expectations of learners' responsiveness to instructions • Intrinsic motivation and self-discipline as an expectation • Unmet expectations and teacher pessimism • Unrealistic expectations • Divergent worldviews
How do teachers understand their learners' cultural backgrounds?	Theme 3: Teachers' understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds • Importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds • Language as a carrier of culture • Behavioural differences that teachers have noticed among learners • Communication styles and norms of interpersonal communication • Culture and gender in relation to norms of interpersonal communication
What approaches and strategies do teachers use to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms?	Theme 4: Approaches and strategies used by teachers to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms • Physical arrangement of the classrooms as an LBM strategy • Different perspectives, different approaches and strategies ✓ Punitive and insensitive LBM strategies ✓ Purposeful ignoring ✓ Creating personal relationships ✓ Responsibility teaching • School's code of conduct and the prescribed LBM tools ✓ Blue slip (demerit slip) ✓ Referral to Disciplinary Office ✓ Working with parents • Discordant strategies – an existing incongruence
How do teachers promote a caring classroom community?	Theme 5: Promotion of a caring classroom community • Lack of sense of caring • Collaborative versus independent learning

5.3 Discussion of themes

The following sections discuss the themes and the corresponding sub-themes in detail.

5.3.1 Learner behaviour management challenges

The participants indicated a variety of challenges they experienced in culturally diverse classrooms. These included learners' lack of work ethics; learners' sense of entitlement; learners acting up; lack of parental involvement and support, and difficulty in maintaining order in a multicultural classroom. These challenges are discussed below.

Learners' lack of work ethics

The majority of teachers reported that the main challenge that they experienced with learners was their lack of work ethics, learners who were unwilling to work and do their homework. Some of these learners did not bring books to the classroom or to school.

> *Learners don't do their homework…You see them seated by the staircases. If the teacher is one who is very harsh and will scream at them, in the morning they're trying to do some homework there (by the staircases)* (Mr Moyo).

> *What do you do if they don't work, because this is my biggest problem… I've given her (the learner) hard copies and she would throw it away, and then she would just sit. … I cannot fight with one learner while a lot of other learners are sitting, waiting for me... Weeks of work have not been done, a list of the outstanding work that's on the last page of the book, and she took it out…* (Ms Rossouw).

The learners' lack of work ethics and the resultant clashes between some teachers and some learners became evident during observation. In one Geography classroom, I observed the Rwandan learner sitting on the floor at the front of the class. The teacher had instructed the learner to sit on the floor during the Geography periods until she received a response from the mother to a letter concerning her daughter's underperformance and lack of work. In a different subject, I observed another teacher instructing learners who had not completed their homework to go outside and

complete their homework.

In relation to a lacking work ethic, truancy of some learners also became apparent. In this regard one of the teachers had the following to say:

> *I've got a child that's over 40 days absent for this year… The child still is constantly being absent from school… there is always an excuse* (Ms Visagie).

Learners' sense of entitlement

A sense of entitlement, sometimes referred to as a culture of entitlement, is a belief system that contemporary learners are said to embrace since the attainment of democracy in South Africa. It is a popular perception that the existence of this belief system is based on the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, which promotes human rights (e.g. right to education, right to human dignity, etc.). As a result, learners have become aware of what they deserve and how they should be treated by others. While the present-day learner embraces this culture, teachers seem to perceive contemporary learners, and especially those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, as having extremely unreasonable expectations, and thus find that this culture presents a challenge with respect to LBM.

Learners' sense of entitlement was mentioned by some teachers, and by the Discipline Officer, as the major LBM challenge they were facing.

> *So I said, leave the classroom now… Two minutes later, nobody invited him; he came in again into the classroom. Why're you coming, who invited you? 'I must learn I've paid school fees' …* (Mr Atta).

> *I think the biggest challenge for us is we are living with a generation of entitlement… You will hear learners quickly referring to "it is my right…" They think that adults must first treat them well before they will consider treating the adult well back …* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer added that in relation to the culture of rights, the "culture of politics" also exacerbated teachers' LBM challenges. By "culture of politics" the Discipline Officer seemed to refer to the political discourse in the country, which learners have come to internalise. The perception that the political discourse in the country has added to teachers' challenges was confirmed by the following comment

from another teacher:

> *At times, these things are a result of political utterances… That is when children (learners) lost the respect of the elders, and that was never corrected nationally. "Don't talk to me like that" (learner responding to the teacher); sometimes it is not from home* (Mr Moyo).

The contention that the culture of rights has contributed to LBM challenges in the sense of learners losing respect of the elders, including their teachers, found support in another teacher's response, as he commented:

> *… It has grown to become a culture that the child rather knows his or her rights… I have realised that what is making us lose control on the kids (learners) largely has been some of these do's and don'ts that make the parents so weak to handle them… Most of the kids know more of their rights and they capitalise on it … our learners here can speak to you boldly – and mostly it is from African South African learners… This culturally, compared to other systems that I know, it is not allowed* (Mr Atta).

The responses of the interviewed participants who were concerned about the culture of rights suggest that this culture contributed to the erosion of respect that learners are expected to show. It is also interesting that the teacher of Ghanaian heritage (Mr Atta) found the African South African learners' bold or rather assertive way of speaking to be culturally questionable; he said the way these learners expressed themselves was "not allowed" in the "systems" he knew. While other participants raised their concerns about the culture of rights, the perception of another teacher was that the culture of rights needed to be promoted, but together with emphasis on the responsibility aspect, as the culture of rights was often taught to learners without emphasising the responsibility that had to go with such rights. In this regard the teacher had the following to say:

> *A whole lot of our children have been taught rights without the responsibilities. And so, inasmuch as we promote rights, because we have basic human rights and those children also really have rights, but I think we have not taught our children the responsibilities that go with those rights… Yes, they have a right to education… They have the right*

> *to use the bathroom at certain times, but sometimes they abuse those rights. Inasmuch as we have rights, we have order. Inasmuch as we have rights, the next person also has rights and so having your rights, if it's going to infringe on another learner's rights, then that becomes a problem* (Ms Kunonga).

What is deduced from the teacher's response is that while learners have rights, order is also a prerequisite in the classroom. The challenge remains how we bridge the gap between the culture of rights on the one hand and order in the classroom on the other. The latter teacher's response suggests that responsibility must be taught.

Learners acting up

Instances of learners acting up (rebelling) or demonstrating indifference to their teachers were commonly reported by teachers during interviews and as they narrated critical incidents that they experienced regarding LBM. In this regard, teachers cited the challenge of facing learners who acted in a way that was different from what was expected.

> *So I said, leave the classroom now… he gets up, moves out of the classroom, and he (African South African boy) bangs the door… (Mr Atta).*

> *When I said to the learner (African South African girl) who did not do her work: "You have* a zero", *she replied: "That's okay, Mam can give me a zero". But what worried me was that the learner was not really concerned. I was not expecting that response* (Ms Van Rooyen).

> *I've given her (Rwandan learner) hard copies and she would throw it away, and then she would just sit…* (Ms Rossouw).

These quotations reveal an unhealthy teacher-learner relationship. They indicate strife between teachers and learners who are from different cultural backgrounds, as evidenced between the African South African boy and the Ghanaian teacher, between the white teacher and the African South African learner and continual strife between another white teacher and the Rwandan learner. Follow-up discussions with the teachers also revealed as problematic the fact that some of the teachers did not make time to follow up on these learners who demonstrated unexpected behaviour (e.g. a learner responding by saying "… *Mam can give me a zero"*) so that they could

understand where this emanated from, and could understand the life worlds of these learners, the challenges they were facing and how these challenges affected their behaviours. Teachers just viewed such behaviour as inappropriate and it ended there – the strife was not resolved. It may also be that some of these behaviours that teachers perceived as unfitting stemmed from a dissonance that existed between themselves and some of the learners and which learners detected.

An example of the fact that when teachers made time to follow up on learners who demonstrated unexpected behaviour, they came to understand the issue better or differently, was demonstrated in the instance of the Rwandan learner. While the learner's problem was perceived by the white teacher as lack of a work ethic, the African teacher, who took some time to speak to the learner, found that the learner's problem was psychological as well as cultural:

> *That's not…a discipline issue. I think it has to do with a psychological issue…this is what I have picked up with the Rwandan learner… She doesn't have her book. Okay let's go outside and talk about it. Then as you are trying to ask questions, she starts to cry. So, I was like, okay …And I think learners have a tendency of looking down on each other* (Ms Kunene).

However, even in this instance there was insufficient follow-up, as the Rwandan learner was not referred to the educational psychologist or discipline office to explore her challenges further.

Nonetheless, the possibility that this learner's problem might have been cultural too cannot be excluded, as evidenced by the African teacher's further statement in the above case that *"learners have a tendency of looking down on each other".* Sometimes behavioural challenges displayed by learners may have emanated from cultural differences. In one History class, where the Rwandan learner had been accused of theft by the South African learner, the teacher's interpretation of the incident was that "*the learner is being looked down upon by other learners because she is an outsider"* (Ms Kunene). This evidence suggests that the Rwandan learner was being discriminated against and looked down upon by some of her classmates, as she was from another African country than South Africa. The cultural aspect of being looked down upon by other learners was also mentioned by the teacher's

further comments concerning other learners from countries outside South Africa, namely that they tended to form cliques with others from foreign countries as a way of defending themselves:

> *But then again, when you are looking at the Argentinian, the Cuban and the Portuguese girls, they sort of like can fight for themselves, because now they are sort of in a group… they keep together…they have got like a backup system, a friend in need, whereas the Rwandan learner doesn't have a friend* (Ms Kunene).

This comment reveals that the Rwandan learner also lacked a sense of belonging. This means that there may have been more to her behaviour than lack of a work ethic. If teachers do not delve deeper to uncover the source of learners' behaviours which they perceive as inappropriate, they may interpret the learners' behaviour as wilful, while there are other factors causing it.

Lack of parental involvement and support

When asked about learner behaviour management challenges experienced by teachers, one of the teachers cited lack of parental involvement and support as a prominent challenge that teachers experienced, and had the following to say:

> *Lack of parental involvement, mostly from a certain group of learners …. If I can say this, some of the parents, and I won't mention any race, are outsourcing bringing up their children to teachers. So in other words, I pay fees, you take care of my problem. We've got a father or parent and child day on Saturday, come have a braai at school. Let's see how many turn up. … You know what, what does your father do? I don't know. What does your mom do? I don't know. Don't you live in the same house?* (Mr Naagesh).

While the teacher in the above response did not specifically refer to any race, his expression showed that parents from a particular ethnic group had shifted their parental responsibility to teachers, and thus their support was inadequate. The issue of lack of parental involvement and support was confirmed by some of the teachers, who had the following to say:

> *One of our challenges now, that I really think is a big challenge, is*

> *parents not coming back to you, not paying attention… I called a mother on 21st April and on the 3rd May, and the mother promised to check…, she (the mother) doesn't do anything about it* (Ms Rossouw).
>
> *We wait a very long time for feedback. Letters being handed in, it's not necessarily just your children, but your parents… I've got a child that's …absent… I've been contacting her parents for, since February, and the mother has not still, there is always an excuse…* (Ms Visagie).

The teachers provided a number of examples indicating lack of collaboration, such as not responding to letters. In one of the letters, which was in fact a follow-up letter with the subject *'lack of work ethics and inability to follow instructions'* written by a teacher and addressed to a parent, the teacher stated *"… I informed you in a letter dated (stamped) 2018-03-13. No reply was received from you"* (Ms Rossouw).

Some teachers maintain that the behavioural challenges emanate from the family dynamics and thus perceive learners' behaviour as a cry for help.

> *Family structure is very important. …some learners have got problems with their own fathers at home and they're playing it out here, or they've got some other issue. So, any behavioural issue, just about, is actually a cry for help* (Mr Naagesh).

Another teacher agreed and narrated the critical incident where the learner's aggressive behaviour, as well as not doing homework, was a manifestation of a problematic home situation:

> *I have one child that got extremely aggressive towards me as I reprimanded him because his homework was not done… He got extremely upset… and just stormed off… It was later found that the mother is remarried with the stepfather… The mother has been beaten and abused… He (the learner) needed to protect his mother from this man. So, the aggression that he was experiencing at home and the confusion - I'm 15 years old but they want me to become an adult and protect my mother and my sister, that came out in his schoolwork and it came out in his (behaviour)… You know how children play with each other, and that triggered him and he started fighting. And it became a*

big fight in the classroom (Ms Visagie).

Most of the above behaviours pointed out by teachers as incongruent with expectations originated from ways things were done by parents (culture). Thus we find a learner who is constantly absent from school and a mother that is always making excuses; a learner who lacks a work ethic because the mother does not show a sense of responsibility (she does not respond to the teacher's call for her attention to the problem) and a learner who becomes extremely aggressive when the teacher reprimands him (his stepfather at home beats and abuses his mother, and he finds himself having to protect his mother from this man). In all these cases, the teachers' reactions to the inappropriate behaviour in class would have been different if they had known the underlying motivations. This demonstrates the interrelatedness of the dynamics, such as lack of a work ethic, lack of parental involvement and support or inefficient family structure, with the behaviour manifested by the learner.

Maintaining order in a multicultural classroom

Most teachers did not seem willing to converse about the subject of cultural diversity or to relate some of the challenges to cultural differences. However, there were some teachers who emphatically stated that bringing a multi-cultural environment to order was a challenge, and in this regard the following examples were provided:

> *I just cast my eyes. I don't talk. They know that they are doing something and they stop it... And you will never know that I have disciplined them. But now, you look at someone (another learner). They believe you are challenging them. "…Why are you looking at me alone? That's unfair". The way of reprimanding may not be acceptable. But in my culture, it is acceptable… I can raise my voice. Hey, sit down. They will say "no, no why are you shouting at me?" But to me, it is only that I have raised my voice so that you can hear me… The learner will say no, we are not fighting* (Mr Moyo).

This anecdote suggests that sometimes the teacher's way of reprimanding may not be acceptable to learners; they might interpret it as intimidation, whereas in the teachers' culture it is acceptable. The same applies to the teacher raising his voice, which may be interpreted by the learner as fighting.

> *So I am going around, then I see him (white learner) on WhatsApp. Then I ask him, "Why are you on WhatsApp?" And he did not respond. Then I said, "I will take that phone away, why are you on WhatsApp?" Then he says "You are being racist. Why are you talking to me only?" I said, "Excuse me". He says "Yes, you are being racist", and he storms out with his phone in his hand. And I said, "if you get out of that door, don't come back in here". So he went out* (Ms Kunonga).

> *I had two white boys in my class… whilst you are busy teaching they are, – it's like there's nothing you can teach them, … they are super over you, so they are busy (on phone). My friend, are you fine? "Yes, yes sir, I'm fine". They won't disturb your class, they wouldn't be disruptive in class but they will just not participate. Ja, you wouldn't find them copying what you are writing or participating, they are busy on phone, like this, whilst you are busy explaining* (Mr Atta).

The above-mentioned anecdotes reveal a cultural disconnect between learners and their teachers. This cultural disconnect is displayed by the learners in Mr Moyo's case by misinterpretation of the teacher's actions, which were acceptable in his culture but were perceived by his learners as unfair or a sign of fighting. In Ms Kunonga's case, the learner labelled the teacher's practice racist. This might have been due to the learner's views of racism – or the learner might simply have played the race card to evade responsibility.

Mr Atta's anecdote suggests that both the teacher and the learners may have stereotyping tendencies, as the teacher perceives the learners as having ideas of supremacy and thereby undermine his status. It may be that the learners' disrespect towards the teacher is due to how they perceive his cultural/ethnic background versus theirs, which they may consider superior.

It is evident that in the first two excerpts above, the question of rights that was discussed in the earlier sub-theme plays a part where learners want to speak for themselves and try to have their voices heard in a multicultural environment. Nevertheless, the challenge of maintaining order in a multicultural classroom is apparent.

Whereas the discussion in this sub-section reveals challenges of maintaining order

in a multicultural classroom that are related to cultural disconnects and misinterpretation of each other's intent or actions, the discussion below highlights the challenge of maintaining order in relation to the concept of quietness in a multicultural classroom.

> *The talking… It's become worse…* (Ms Van Rooyen).

> *No conversations, if you don't understand, come and ask* (Ms Pienaar).

The concept of quiet in the classroom was found to be a recurring challenge, as much of teachers' time was spent on reacting to lack of the anticipated quietness during classroom observation. Most of the teachers expected learners to be completely quiet all the time after entering the classroom, while some of the learners demonstrated an inability to meet the standard of quietness that was expected by the teachers.

White teachers seemed to be more repressive in this regard, and also seemed frustrated by learners speaking to each other at end of a period (when they were about to change classes) and when they had just entered the classroom. Observation of Mr Potgieter's reaction to his English 01 class demonstrated this fact:

> *Please do not speak to each other. Do not make me repeat myself unnecessarily. You are really very annoying at this stage in your life; you are just not aware how annoying you are...You are not hooligans, are you?* (Observation of Mr Potgieter, English 01 class, 08 May 2018).

Besides the issue of learners speaking to each other, it was also observed that some of the teachers were very sensitive to low sounds:

> *Who is opening a sweet?* (Observation of Ms Pienaar, Afrikaans class, 17 May 2018).

As a result of this enquiry, the class – that had no disruption prior to the teacher's enquiry – became a blaming game as the learners' attention focused on a sweet and they started pointing fingers at each other.

While on the subject of learners speaking to one another: I observed an incident of learner restlessness that occurred after break, where some "trouble" broke loose in the classroom. When the teacher turned her back to write on the board, some learners started audibly whispering: *"Pontsho, your head*", said Makgabo, and then

Bonolo said "*Makgabo, your head*" – each calling the one in front that her head was obstructing their view of what the teacher wrote on the whiteboard. The teacher's response in this instance was as follows:

> *I do not appreciate it that when I turn my back you start talking… I did not raise you in the previous months for you to be rude… We are here to teach you, not to handle your nonsense. We can support you, but not deal with your teenage stage… Hoor jy my? (Observation of* Ms Pienaar, Afrikaans class, 17 May 2018).

The teacher's loss of control of her emotions became evident in her attempt to handle some of the disruptions and to address the learners on the issue. It also became apparent that the teacher lacked basic teaching skill, because she turned her back to write on the board, thus not giving learners her full attention. During the interview, when asked about the incident that happened on that particular day, the teacher responded in a way that suggested that learners' behaviours could be attributed to their cultural affiliation or membership, without taking any responsibility for the incident.

> *I feel that sometimes when someone of one culture makes a statement, the people of that same culture will try and follow…* (Ms Pienaar).

My observation supported the perception that the learners who were engaged in the infraction were from the same ethnic group, as learners of the same ethnic group were seated in the same column. One African learner uttered a statement, and the African learner sitting behind her expressed the same thought.

The overall findings from the evidence obtained from teachers' responses and from classroom observations with regard to keeping order in a multicultural classroom reveal cultural disconnects and stereotype tendencies that prevail between teachers and learners in culturally diverse classrooms and misinterpretations of each other's intent and behaviour as existing challenges.

Since challenges in human interactions are normally caused by differences in expectations of the people involved, the discussion in the section below addresses teachers' expectations of learner behaviour in a culturally diverse teaching and learning context.

5.3.2 Teachers' expectations of learner behaviour

One's expectation of other people's behaviour is founded on one's worldview[3], which may be either ethnocentric[4] or ethnorelative[5]. In order to understand teachers' recognition of their own ethnocentrism and biases about behaviours of learners, teachers were asked to describe their expectations of learner behaviour. This was because teachers' ethnocentrism and biases (which influence their expectations of learners' behaviour) could not be easily expressed in words by themselves, but could be understood from their responses and deliberations on the kind of behaviour they expected, as well as through their actions and reactions to learner behaviours as directly observed during their interactions with learners.

As teachers' expectations are also expressed through the rules that they set or pronounce, teachers were also asked to state what rules they had for their classrooms and to describe the process that was followed when setting rules for their classrooms. The code of conduct and written disciplinary notes written by teachers were also analysed to confirm teachers' expectations and worldviews and whether they were consistent with the school's code of conduct.

The findings revealed that most teachers of white descent expected learners to react quickly and positively to instructions, to be quiet and to be respectful. Most of the teachers, however, reported that most of the learners were not able to meet the stated expectations, with some of the teachers expressing the pessimistic outlook that learners would never meet their expectations. There was also an indication that teachers' expectations were often unrealistic and that basically most of the teachers' worldviews were different from most learners' worldviews. While most teachers emphasised learner responsiveness to teachers' instructions as a common expectation, very few teachers mentioned expectations of self-discipline and intrinsic motivation.

[3] A worldview is a certain set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality that guide one's perceptions and actions.
[4] An ethnocentric worldview is the belief that one's way of doing things is the only right way to do things, and that people or cultures that do things differently are wrong. It is an act of evaluating another culture based on preconceptions that are found in the values and standards of one's own culture.
[5] An ethnorelative worldview is the view that one's values, beliefs and behaviours are not the centre of everything, but are only one of the possible ways of organising reality, or rather just one possible reality among various other valid possible realities. It is a state of being comfortable with various standards and customs and being able to adapt one's behaviour and judgments to many interpersonal settings.

Expectations of learner responsiveness to instructions

Teachers whose expectations had more to do with learners' responsiveness to teachers' instructions in terms of reacting quickly and positively, as well as being quiet at all times, described their expectations in these ways:

> *I expect learners to be quiet at all times, to listen to instructions and to immediately respond as instructed* (Ms Rossouw).
>
> *I expect learners to listen and to respond quickly to instructions. I want them to be little soldiers, when I say, take out your books, they all dive down and take out their books….* (Ms Van Rooyen).

Some teachers mentioned respect as part of their expectations, but with differing connotations.

> *I expect learners to be respectful towards their teacher …* (Ms Visagie).
>
> *They must show respect and be normal, be kids…* (Ms Kunene).
>
> *As much as I expect them to respect me, I try to respect them* (Ms Kunonga)

The excerpts above demonstrate that while respect is a shared expectation across cultures, teachers' understanding of how it should be shown may vary. While the teacher's response in the 1st excerpt communicates an expectation of respect in a teacher-centred manner, the responses in the 2nd and 3rd excerpts communicate expectations of respect that take account of learner-centredness, though still with different inferences. The 2nd excerpt suggests that while learners show respect, they must be typical kids, i.e. show characteristics expected of being children, while the 3rd excerpt communicates an expectation of mutual respect.

In agreement with the finding that respect is a shared expectation across cultures, the Discipline Officer had the following to say:

> *What I expect from the learners is, despite our differences in culture… I expect them to adhere to respect. Respect for oneself, respect for each other and respect to elders…It doesn't matter who raised you or where you come from, respect is the one thing that shines through all cultures… I don't think culture should be compromised for a lack of*

manners (Discipline Officer).

While the Discipline Officer correctly perceived respect as a requirement across all cultures, it becomes apparent from her description of the concept of respect that she has a more teacher-centred/adult-centred perception, with no suggestion of mutual respect between teacher and learner. Her interpretation of the concept of respect may be influenced by her cultural background. Undeniably, respect is an intercultural requirement; the only difference may be how learners from diverse cultural backgrounds interpret respect. Do they understand it as mutual, or is it only young persons who are to show respect to adults? This question is relevant because if the learner sees it as mutual, conflict may result if, for instance, the teacher uses inappropriate or insensitive language when rebuking such a learner.

Intrinsic motivation and self-discipline as an expectation

Besides teachers' expectations of quietness, respect and responsiveness, few teachers added an expectation that learners should be intrinsically motivated and demonstrate a sense of responsibility and maturity.

> *I expect learners to have the will to learn, to be intrinsically motivated in the sense of knowing the value of coming to school (Mr Moyo).*
>
> *Considering this is now high school… I expect that sort of maturity whereby they are responsible… from the moment they walk through the door, they should have that mindset that we are going to learn something…* (Ms Kunonga).

It became apparent that while some participants emphasised intrinsic motivation and self-discipline as an expectation, some only focused on learners' responsiveness to their teachers' instructions, and some expressed respect as an expectation with different connotations. These various expectations were influenced by the participants' personal worldviews and belief systems, and hence by their various cultural backgrounds.

Unmet expectations and teacher pessimism

Many of these expectations were not met, and some participants expressed pessimism:

> *…. It will never happen. I have made peace with that. Books must be*

> *perfect, everything must be underlined, it will never happen…* (Ms Van Rooyen)
>
> *You know what, it's becoming so difficult. Look, I'm a strict disciplinarian, and I'm an excellent disciplinarian, but that only came with age. And sometimes I still struggle* (Ms Rossouw).

Even though Ms Rossouw did not clearly indicate the same sense of giving up as Ms Van Rooyen did, her response indicated that she did struggle with learners having to meet expectations, which she found depressing.

Unrealistic expectations

The Discipline Officer's response to the question of expectations of learner behaviour further endorsed the assertions made by the teachers that most learners were not able to meet the expectations. However, her response clarifies that learners actually did not meet the required "standard" of behaviour.

> *My expectations are not very realistic; my expectations seem to be much higher than the outcome. We assume that they would know what is expected, what is the standard, the normal behaviour. But then I hear the Principal mentioning the noise levels between, you know when children change classes, that it is too high for the school. And then I am thinking but maybe it is not my expectations that are too high. Maybe that is the standard of this institution that everybody is trying to achieve. So, that doesn't have a cultural stamp on it. … My standards sometimes are extremely high because of the way I was raised myself in a very disciplined home* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer's response suggests some realisation or recognition that some of her expectations may possibly be unrealistic as the standard that she expects learners to meet is being influenced by how she was raised; in other words, the standard that she expects from learners is that of her cultural background. This further suggests that her view of learners' behaviour in this regard is ethnocentric. She uses terms/phrases such as "*normal behaviour"*; "*noise levels… too high for the school"*; *"… standard of this institution"*; and then a phrase that contradicts the others: "…*that doesn't have a cultural stamp on it"*. The logical reasoning is that the standard of an institution has a cultural stamp on it. This communicated perception

would mean that the participant views all cultures as having the same norms and standards of behaviour with regard to the accepted level of pitching one's voice, for instance.

With reference to the issue of noise levels, one of the white teachers at an advanced stage of her interview strongly linked the noise level to African culture.

> *… African learners, you will see as they walk in and they always have to shout at each other. It feels like you're sitting this far but they're talking so loud. And I asked them why? But Mam, this is how we are…* (Ms Visagie).

Interestingly, one of the African teachers agreed that African learners tend to raise the pitch of their voices when speaking to each other.

> *I've noticed in this school even when there are functions that the Afrikaans learners are much better behaved in terms of expectations regarding noise levels. It is not that the Afrikaans learners won't be talking, but they don't get to these high-pitched loud voices when they are talking to each other. And it's been part of our culture to say that the louder you are, it means the more in control you are, the more knowledgeable you are, the more confident you are…* (Ms Kunonga).

This was confirmed during observation; African learners were reprimanded most often for talking or "making noise". The learner's response: *"Mam, this is how we are…"* suggests that the cultural expectation of the school with regard to the level at which one's voice can be pitched when speaking to each other may be unrealistic, taking into consideration learners who come from different cultural background(s). This is actually implied in the Discipline Officer's further indication that her expectations may not be realistic, or, as she subsequently puts it, *"my standards sometimes are extremely high because of the way I was raised myself".*

It was also confirmed during observation of the disciplinary sessions that occurred between learners and the Discipline Officer in her office that most of the learners who were referred to the Office were African. Most of these learners were referred for infractions such as coming late, not responding to teachers' instructions, and some for verbal exchanges with their teachers. In cases of lateness, learners mainly cited transport challenges as the reason.

Taking into consideration the wide-ranging challenges mentioned by teachers and their various expectations, the question that comes to mind could be: “Why are the teachers’ expectations often not met by most learners? Why are the teachers’ expectations sometimes unrealistic?”

The next section explores whether these unmet and unrealistic expectations relate the divergent worldviews of the teachers and the learners.

Divergent worldviews

Participants seldom brought up the notion of linking teachers’ expectations to their worldviews. When asked about teachers’ expectations of learner’s behaviour, one of the teachers shared the following observation:

> *Predominantly, now, obviously I’m not saying this as like, a law, that it applies in every case – People that have a European heritage, right, have been brought up with, if you want Z you must do Y and X. That, plus that, plus that, will give you this, it’s like a formula in mathematics or physics… There’s a time for this, there’s a time for this, there’s a time for that. You are in charge of your own life; you make choices and the results you get are the results of the choices. So, in other words, the world and the universe is a legal universe, it operates according to laws and principles. This is the worldview that many of our teachers come from. Our learners don’t come from the same worldview. The worldview that many of our learners have is, I’m living life but I’m not really in charge, I’m on a roller-coaster, you see, and the roller-coaster is going. This week I’m down but in two months’ time I’ll be up, life happens. The truth is a mixture of both. Sometimes life happens to you. I mean, weird things happen. But much of the time we need to make choices. Our learners come from a worldview that is very different, and so, how do we perhaps bridge or combine or synchronise those worldviews? Because there’s truth involved, I’m not making any kind of value judgement on it either. So, our learners don’t know that if you keep on playing computer games until two in the morning, you’re going to come to school tired, you will not pay attention, you will not take notes, and you will not do your homework. If you don’t eat, you can’t concentrate*

(Mr Naagesh).

While a knowledge of divergent worldviews and the understanding of how teachers' expectations related to their worldviews attempted to provide the reasons why the (sometimes maybe unrealistic) expectations of most teachers were not met by their learners, further analysis of the data indicated that at the same time learners also had unmet expectations of their teachers based on their own worldviews. The instance where a learner disputed his teacher's body language and perceived it as unfair validates this perception. The learner's reaction came as a result of the teacher giving the learner one fixed look as a form of non-verbal reprimand. While the teacher indicated that the action would be well received by learners of his culture, it seems that the teacher's action was misinterpreted by this particular learner, who was from a different cultural background. Recounting the learners' response to his action, the teachers retold the learner's statement as follows:

> *…Why are you looking at me alone? That's unfair…* (Mr Moyo).

In another case, the Rwandan learner requested to be moved to another class as she also perceived her current Geography teacher to be unfair when she constantly instructed her to sit on the floor until the mother responded to her letter.

> *The Rwandan learner went to the Deputy Principal with the intention to change classes. She wants to go to another class that I'm not teaching* (Ms Rossouw).

The learners' perceptions of their teachers' unfairness as recorded in the instances cited above might be due their conflicting expectations, which were based on different worldviews. This evidence revealed that while teachers expected learners to behave well before they could teach, learners seemed to expect teachers to be caring and not to intimidate them.

Classroom rules are in most cases an expression of expected learner behaviour in the classrooms; they are indicative of teachers' expectations and their personal worldviews. The interviewed teachers consistently indicated that they individually set their own classroom rules for their respective classes. It also became apparent that the learners were not involved in the setting of classroom rules. These were some of the teachers' responses regarding their classrooms' rules:

> *There are other rules in other classes …I have five rules that I have set for my class. The rules are: Be punctual and well organised; listen when somebody else is speaking; look after all property; behave appropriately; submit work on due date; respect your teacher, classmates and yourself; always be seated* (Ms Van Rooyen).
>
> *I have rules that relate to how to enter my room; how to work quietly and take detailed notes every lesson; what to do at home – which is revise notes, prepare for the next day, use a diary, and do own research* (Mr Naagesh).
>
> *Be punctual; respect all teachers; keep the classroom clean; always do your class and homework* (Mr Nkosi).

The teacher's responses showed that classroom rules varied from one teacher to the other. This meant that the same group of learners had to acquire, learn, and consciously live to different rules and expectations of their different teachers. The drawback is that learners did not internalise the rules and own them, they just conformed to different expectations of the different teachers when they were in their particular classrooms, and sometimes they simply did not.

In none of the classrooms were the rules laid down by the respective teachers displayed on the walls of the classrooms; the rules were communicated verbally by the respective teachers. General rules were displayed only in the register class and comprised two sets of rules. The first dealt with learners' hair and were also stated in the school's code of conduct. I was told that this emphasis on hair was a result of the Department of Education's directive following learners' protests against hair rules in some of the South African former model C schools.

The second set of rules displayed on the wall of the register class read as follows: *No eating; No smoking; No littering; No cell phone* (Register Class Rules, 2018). It was apparent during observation and interviews that most learners did not comply with the no cell phone rule, which became the source of conflict in most instances, where teachers had to confiscate learners' phones.

From the discussion of expectations and rules that were based on teachers' personal worldviews, it became apparent that understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds is imperative in LBM if teachers are to be considerate in their expectations and in the

development of classroom rules. Understanding learners' cultural backgrounds is discussed below.

5.3.3 Understanding learners' cultural backgrounds

Most of the teachers agreed that understanding learners' cultural background was important. While some teachers could not explain why, there were a few teachers who could:

> *Knowledge of learner cultural background is quite important – this can be used as bridge to connect with learners* (Mr Naagesh).

> *I think it is important because we also need to leave room and space for those differences, meaning we cannot use the same yardstick to measure learners' behaviours… they do come from different cultural backgrounds …we can't really have the same expectations… because it's nothing that you can teach them overnight because this is something that has come a long way… and so for us to think we can transform them in a matter of minutes or the hours that we spend with them would sometimes be unreasonable* (Ms Kunonga).

This teacher seemed to acknowledge the effect of culture on behaviour and that contextual analysis was important in LBM. She also admitted that it would be unreasonable to apply the same yardstick to all learners.

While the statements cited above acknowledge the importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds, merely understanding them may not necessarily mean that teachers will know how to handle these differences. Interestingly, some teachers acknowledged the existence of cultural differences among learners while declaring that they did not know how to handle the existing cultural differences:

> *I see the difference, but I don't know how to handle these differences* (Ms Rossouw).

While other teachers acknowledged the existence of cultural differences and the importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds, there were some teachers who clearly stated that they were not important and explained why not, while others did not state this outright, but implied it. The following examples are illustrative of this finding:

> *It's not important, as I view them as a group* (Ms Van Rooyen)
>
> *I do feel that teachers need to know the cultural background. They don't necessarily need to know what the culture is about and the facts and things about their culture… But at least know that this learner is Pedi or is Xhosa or is Zulu* (Ms Pienaar).

The view of the second teacher implies that it is enough for teachers to know that learners come from different ethnic or cultural groups, but not necessary to have knowledge about the realities/specifics of their cultures/cultural backgrounds. This view was tantamount to saying that understanding a learner's cultural background was not important. Both teachers denied/minimised cultural differences.

The following teacher denied the importance of understanding learners' cultural background and explained that acknowledging different cultures could be a source of bias and prejudice:

> *I try not to mind about their cultural backgrounds; because once I know their backgrounds I think I am going to be biased in a way* (Mr Nkosi).

It was also interesting to find that other teachers thought that it was not correct to talk about cultural differences. In this regard, one of the teachers had this to say:

> *You must know where people come from, but you don't advertise it in class. You don't say, Oh you're a Zulu, you're a Tswana. And also, in my class I'm moving away from local to global. I'm showing them how the world is influencing us* (Ms Van Rooyen).

The idea that differences must not be acknowledged or talked about in class minimises cultural differences or takes them for granted. The question is: how will other learners come to know and appreciate the difference that each learner is bringing into the class, or the cultural differences that exist in the broader society? The idea of "*moving away from local to global … showing them (learners) how the world is influencing us"'* represents and reveals a worldview that propagates cultural assimilation.

As regards understanding learners' cultural backgrounds, it was interesting to learn during the classroom observations and the interviews that some of the teachers did not know the names of most of their learners. The question is, how does a teacher

even come to know or understand the learners' cultural background when she/he does not know their names? I interpret ignorance of learners' names as lack of eagerness to know more about their cultural identity.

It became apparent that some teachers did not acknowledge cultural diversity and the reality of cultural diversity, and thus did not comprehend the importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds. Those who did not acknowledge cultural diversity reiterated that they perceived learners as a group, not as individuals who came from different cultural backgrounds. This suggests that they employed a one-size-fits-all approach to LBM. Such an approach to culturally diverse learners – which is also inherent in the propagation of a cultural assimilation approach – was also demonstrated in not teaching learners their mother tongue, but Afrikaans, as a subject – an issue that is discussed separately below.

Language as carrier of culture

As a former model C school, the school under study used English as the medium of instruction/language of teaching. English was also taken by all learners as compulsory 1st language, while Afrikaans was taken as a compulsory additional language for all learners**.**

Seen against the need to acknowledge and understand learners' cultural backgrounds, one of the interviewed teachers asked why – as one way of enhancing appreciation of different cultural backgrounds – the mother tongue of most of the learners was not taught:

> *1st languages of learners must be taught as a subject, not to replace their 1st language with Afrikaans… If you could learn the languages of these various cultures …you are now able to penetrate into their culture, as language is a carrier of culture* (Mr Moyo).

This situation was confirmed during classroom observations, as learners who spoke common local African languages such as Northern Sotho (Pedi), IsiNdebele, Xhosa and Tsonga, for example, were found not to be taking their mother tongue as a subject but instead taking compulsory Afrikaans as an additional language. This suggests that Afrikaans was being imposed on non-Afrikaans-speaking learners in historically white schools. The view expressed by the teacher was that the inclusion of learners' 1st languages as an alternative subject to Afrikaans could reassure

learners who speak those languages at home that they rightfully belonged to the school they were attending and that their respective cultures/heritages/identities were incorporated and appreciated. Another insight that came from the teacher's response was that teachers should be interested in learning the languages of their learners, as languages are transmitters/carriers of cultures.

Behavioural differences that teachers had noticed/identified among learners

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' knowledge/understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds, participants were further asked to describe the behavioural differences that they had noticed among the diverse learner population in their classrooms. One of the teachers' responses in this regard was as follows:

> *I don't do any stereotyping… I see you as you are in front of me… I don't really distinguish in a class, because we have to move forward (*Ms Van Rooyen).

The implication in the above response is that the teacher viewed all learners through the same lens, i.e. that cultural differences were not important. As indicated earlier, this represents a culture-neutral (one-size-fits-all) approach.

Some of the teachers, who had indicated that cultural differences were not important, contradicted themselves when giving examples demonstrating that cultural differences were a reality. For instance, the same teacher who mentioned that she did not do any stereotyping or distinguish in class mentioned later in the interview a cultural difference that seemed specific to coloured learners:

> *Mrs Harris once said to me, in Eersterus*[6] *that's how they live. Parents are screaming at the children the whole time* (Ms Van Rooyen).

The contradiction in the teachers' narrative could be caused by her discomfort talking about cultural differences.

It was however, interesting that when I probed further and asked how this culture affected Coloured learners with regard to their behaviour in the classroom, the teacher's response was as follows:

[6] Eersterus is a township within the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The area was created by the government of the apartheid era, which allocated and relocated people of the Coloured ethnic (race) group to this area.

> *They do not want their parents to hear that they misbehaved at school. As a result, some of these learners are fearful of an adult person, and thus do not misbehave, but some are challenging when they find adults who are soft spoken* (Ms Van Rooyen).

A similar affirmation/assertion about learners of coloured origin was made by another teacher, who had the following to say:

> *They have it very tough, the Coloured children…I don't like to phone their parents, they come in here and they hit that child from head to toe in front of the whole school…the parents are very aggressive… they won't warn…listen, you're not doing right…they do corporal punishment first. I will hit you now and we will talk later* (Ms Visagie).

When other participants were asked to describe the behavioural differences that they noticed among the culturally diverse learners in their classrooms, their responses were as follows:

> *Normally learners from the Indian culture, they won't interrupt. They will wait until you give them an opportunity to speak… I've also noticed they are respectful…they have a certain amount of respect for themselves and for others… I would like to think they are told never to go beyond certain boundaries, ever. It doesn't matter where they are; no matter what others are doing; they are focussed and education oriented. They are never easily influenced by other learners* (Ms Kunonga)*.*

> *… No matter how loud the class is, you will never see them making noise or talking… No matter what happens in their surroundings they never change their ways – manner of doing things… Indians in different classes, you can name them, their behaviour is the same and they are from different homes… With the Indians, I can say their culture has a lot to do with the way they are behaving* (Ms Mbatha).

This suggests that the behaviour of learners from an Indian cultural background, as described by teachers at large, is culturally influenced. This view was confirmed by the Indian teacher:

> *…You will see amongst Indian learners, Asian learners … and you will*

> *see they are totally focussed on education; the teacher is actually higher than God. An Indian learner from India, for example, if I'm walking on the street, he or she will cross the street, come walk on the same side, bow to the teacher and greet the teacher and then walk off. That's how important the teacher is* (Mr Naagesh).

It seems that the reason why teachers do not have a problem with Indian learners is because the behaviour demonstrated by this group of learners seems to exceed most teachers' expectations in terms of showing respect and keeping quiet in the classroom.

When indicating the differences in behaviour that they had noticed among learners of different backgrounds, some teachers described some groups of learners:

> *… When you look at the diplomats, definitely it will be very naïve to say, a country can send out a diplomat with sub-cultural values. He is representing the country. So, definitely the children from these diplomats, for example the Cuban learners, their behaviour is totally different…they know their values, which means at home they are taught, don't put us to shame, and don't embarrass us… I have never heard the diplomatic son or daughter being called for disciplinary action.* (Mr Moyo).

> *…I've got three of the Cuban girls … Their view of the world is very different. They've travelled internationally; they've seen life in different countries. And when you see me teaching you'll see them arguing with me. I've got no problem with that… Fine, because you're thinking* (Mr Naagesh).

The above comments reveal that Cuban and other foreign learners were perceived as not displaying disciplinary challenges and it is suspected that they may have been encouraged by their parents or influenced by their parents' diplomatic position to be disciplined and to comply with the discipline requirements of the school. A more interesting finding was that the Cuban learners were found to show an explorative and scrutinising disposition.

From the perceptions provided by teachers as they describe the behavioural differences they observed among culturally diverse learners, it appears that cultural

differences have a bearing on behavioural differences. The teachers' viewpoints with regard to the cultural differences identified were consistent with my classroom observations, as learners of Indian descent were more respectful, and the Cuban learners seemed to be more open-minded and engaging with teachers who promoted learner engagement.

It is evident that the cultural differences also manifested in different communication styles, especially as regards eye contact.

> *You know when you reprimand a learner … why didn't you do this? Now this kid sits, and he looks away and he ignores me. …I'm talking to you, I'm not shouting at you… so why are you ignoring me? So now, I march this kid to the Deputy Principal. Now this kid says but Sir, in my culture I've been taught that if a grown up person speaks to me, I'm not allowed to say something back* (Ms Rossouw).

> *You know it is interesting, some of them don't look you in the eyes… we were brought up that if we look in the eyes it shows that you are actually listening to that person and that you are involved in the conversation* (Ms Pienaar).

It seems that in the African culture, keeping eye contact might be interpreted as challenging authority:

> *Looking into the teacher's eyes when talking to the teacher, it's like you are challenging authority… It will be interpreted so wrongly in the African culture. And yet in the European culture, you are supposed to look someone in the eyes to show that you are genuine, you are honest and you have nothing to hide. …* (Ms Kunonga).

The analysis of documents obtained from one of the teachers confirmed this cultural misunderstanding. One blue slip indicated a punitive measure taken by a white teacher against an African learner who, when reprimanded, did not look at the teacher and did not answer the teacher's question. This infraction was ticked as insolence on the blue slip. During interviews, the teacher indicated that to her amazement, when the learner was instructed to sign the slip she respectfully signed the slip. The teacher confirmed that she had interpreted the learner's action as

disrespect and rudeness.

Further examples that related to differences of communication styles involved body language and the way young persons in African cultures hand paper, a book or anything else to an adult:

> *Some African learners put the left hand on the wrist of the right hand when handing the book to the teacher and some of them use both two hands simultaneously, which is an expression of respect. That is my culture… I view giving with one hand as a sign of disrespect, and this is what all coloured learners and others do…* (Mr Moyo)

> *…You should never give anything to an elder using your left hand. And yet sometimes in class a learner is holding something else with their right hand and if they give it to you (African teacher) with the left hand, because maybe in their culture there's nothing wrong with that, you would correct that. And sometimes if they (African) are told never to give anything using their left hand, the moment they try to put this down so that they give with their right hand, the teacher may say they are not responding quickly to an instruction* (Ms Kunonga)

The Discipline Officer narrated a critical incident which is rather long, but packed with insight, and relates to gender disparities that are prevalent in African culture with respect to norms of interpersonal communication. These were illustrated by the circumstance that some African male learners who attend high school would not accept being spoken to by a woman in a disciplinary capacity.

> *It happened a few times in the time that I have been here, and coming from where I am coming from, a military background, I refuse to be ignored…So, we were having boys in the office and it was a drug-related case…So, I would ask the boys one by one… And they wouldn't even look at me when I speak to them…they would pretend that I wasn't even in the room. And then Mr Sokupa would say, did you hear ma'am speak to you? And then the boy would say, yes sir but … and then he would answer Mr Sokupa to my question… That happened a couple of times and then I asked the boy to look at me. And I said, look at me*

> *when I speak to you and answer me. I am the one asking the question. And I discovered how extremely difficult it was for that boy to answer me, because his culture didn't allow him to acknowledge, number one, a female in authority, and a white female at that…Their cultural background doesn't allow them to be spoken to in a disciplinary capacity by a woman… It was an eye opener for me to think that a young man, so young, to still be at school, can be influenced by culture so much that he is basically not allowed to recognise me for my position, for my gender and for my race, because in his culture women do not have authoritative positions* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer may have come up against a cultural feature among some African male learners that young males who have undergone African male initiation[7] perceive themselves as having transitioned from a boy into a man. A white female teacher stated that she had had the same experience:

> *"I found especially in the African boys, that like Mr Mabena is a teacher with me, if he has to shout at the boys and I have to shout at the boys about the same thing, they will respect Mr Mabena more than me …They see a woman as inferior"* (Ms Visagie).

This comment, and the critical incident narrated by the Discipline Officer, confirms gender disparities that are prevalent in some African cultures and that often become an issue with regard to LBM.

Overall, the evidence obtained from participants' responses and perceptions about learners' behavioural differences in relation to their cultural backgrounds affirms the importance of understanding learners' cultural backgrounds, which includes their communication styles as well as norms of interpersonal communication. Clearly, the same yardstick may not be used to measure all behaviours of learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

[7] African male initiation is a tradition (culture) which continues to be practised by some of the African societies (cultural groups) as an initiation ritual that marks a boy's transition to manhood and entails the young male person's change in status. Manhood is primarily determined by the young man's initiation journey and not by his physical development or age, and as a result the young man is treated with respect by those men and young men who have not gone through the same practice and by women in his community.

5.3.4 Approaches and strategies used by teachers to manage learner behaviours

The discussion of this theme starts by addressing the physical arrangement observed in the classrooms were learners attend their various subjects and subsequently addresses the various approaches and strategies that the teachers employ in managing the behaviours of learners as reported by themselves and by the Discipline Officer as well as observed during classroom visits. This section also outlines the areas of teachers' strategies that were found not to be consistent with the school's code of conduct as determined through document analysis.

Physical arrangement of the classrooms

The seating arrangement of learners can be used strategically by teachers to minimise disruptions in the classroom, to enhance learner engagement and to promote a sense of classroom community.

The learners attend their various subjects in different classrooms that are allocated to their respective subject teachers. There is also a register classroom that is allocated to each class/group within a grade. I observed that in all these classes, Grade 9B learners were seated in traditional columns configuration. It is suggested that sitting in columns will not encourage collaborative learning or social interaction among learners, and thus will not promote a sense of classroom community. This is because sitting in columns encourages individual work, as learners are all facing the teacher and not one another; this discourages learner-centred discussions and group work that could be done if learners were seated in a cluster-type arrangement (Kaya & Burgess, 2007).

In the additional Grade 9D classrooms that were observed through snowball sampling, desks were arranged in a cluster-type of seating arrangement to allow working in groups and collaborative learning in small groups. However, it was interesting to observe that even in these classrooms, collaborative working was not demonstrated. Another interesting observation was that the class seemed to be under control when taught by the Indian teacher, but the same class was often chaotic and uncontrollable when taught by the Zimbabwean teacher. This difference may have been attributable to the respective teachers' leadership styles, their cultural backgrounds or worldviews, which seemed to have a bearing on how

learners reacted to them as well as how they handled a diverse learner population in one class. My observation suggested that the same group of learners could behave differently when taught by teachers who used different leadership styles.

The displays on the walls of the different classrooms were also telling. All the displays were subject related, with no reference to cultural diversity. It seemed that teachers were missing an opportunity to demonstrate appreciation of diverse cultures and heritages and to promote cohesion and a sense of belonging in a culturally diverse learner population.

Different perspectives, different approaches and different strategies

When asked about the LBM approaches they employed, participants gave various responses, such as: saving own energy; rare referral to discipline office; use of verbal reminder of rules and physical proximity as well as taking a step back and trying to understand the learner, which indicated their individual perspectives.

> *Teachers must save their energy; you kill yourself if you keep on screaming… that's what I've decided quite a while ago … I will write out a blue slip if it's really, really serious incident* (Ms Van Rooyen).
>
> *… I seldom refer learners to the office. I try to handle their misbehaviour in my class* (Ms Rossouw).
>
> *I use verbal requests and physical proximity, as well as verbal reminder of rules …* (Mr Naagesh).
>
> *My approach should not be too forceful. …because maybe you've seen something out of line. And then maybe from the way they explain it then you'll, you need to actually step back and understand them* (Ms Kunonga)

Classroom observations confirmed the different approaches that teachers used and that these approaches related to their different leadership styles. It was evident that Ms Van Rooyen's approach was neither autocratic nor authoritative, and she was therefore more inclined to a laissez-faire disposition, as she often overlooked and seldom reprimanded learners for behaviours that other teachers never ignored. Ms Rossouw was found to be more inclined to be autocratic, even often dictatorial and tyrannical. The evidence with respect to teachers' autocratic dispositions is provided

in the next section, which discusses punitive and insensitive strategies (which most of the teachers were found to employ).

From the last two responses above, and observing the classroom interactions with their learners, a more authoritative or "influential with care" approach and leadership style was evident. These two teachers seemed to strive to inculcate a sense of responsibility by advancing mutual respect between themselves and their learners, actively engaging their learners and thereby limiting possible disruptions in the classroom. Further elaboration of the strategies they used is provided under the responsibility teaching section below. However, it needs to be noted that few teachers demonstrated authority with care; the same applies to teachers who demonstrated a laissez-faire disposition. Most of the teachers' approaches to LBM were too autocratic or rather tyrannical. As a result of the teachers' different approaches to LBM and their different leadership dispositions, the teachers were found to employ different strategies to LBM, which are discussed below.

Punitive and insensitive disciplinary strategies that were often used by teachers included the use of verbal reprimands, which were often harsh; instructing the learners to step out of class; and instructing learners to sit on the floor. The insensitive nature of these punitive strategies also involved instances during classroom observations where teachers were rude when communicating with learners or rebuking them for behaviours that they considered inappropriate:

> *If you have not done the work, lift your bum and go now… Your late coming is ridiculous! You are aggravating me…* (Observation of Mr Potgieter, English 01 class, 15 May 2018).

> *We are here to teach you not to handle your nonsense… If you can't behave, pack your bags and go* (Observation of Ms Pienaar, Afrikaans class, 17 May 2018).

Instructing learners to step outside was another measure used to punish learners for inappropriate behaviour.

> *…You be outside, you finish your work…* (Observation of Mr Potgieter, English 01 class, 15 May 2018).

> *Leave the classroom and go and stand outside* (Observation of Mr Atta,

Natural Science class, 13 May 2018).

Instructing learners to sit on the floor was another punitive measure that teachers often used to handle behaviours that they perceived as inappropriate.

> *You will sit on the floor until your mother speaks to me* (Observation of Ms Rossouw, Geography class, 06 May 2018).

The above punitive measures seemed to be more teacher-centred than learner-centred, as they seemed to afflict some learners emotionally and psychologically, but hardly ever improved learners' undesirable behaviours. For instance, in the case of the learner in the last-mentioned excerpt, as the learner was continually shouted at by the teacher when she instructed her to sit on the floor, the learner seemed to be in distress while she obeyed the instruction. None of the above punitive measures were mentioned in the school's code of conduct as strategies to be used for LBM, which suggests that most teachers tend to use their discretion.

Contrary to the above-mentioned punitive and insensitive strategies, one of the teachers suggested using *the principle of differentiation*, as she believed that learners' temperaments differed and that they might therefore have to be handled in a differentiated manner:

> *… Because with others (learners) they enjoy certain attention and so the moment you say, "leave the class", they quickly jump up in order for them to leave the class…So you need to know who you are dealing with. We also have the sensitive children as well that also do not appreciate being reprimanded in public and who need you to actually walk to them and tell them, "Can you stop chewing what you are chewing"* (Ms Kunonga).

The following excerpt refers to *purposeful ignoring*, which is another LBM strategy that was used by very few teachers.

> *I've learned that they do talk. I just continue with my lesson and I try to grab more attention… because they will stop talking eventually (Ms Van Rooyen).*

A potential shortcoming of this strategy is that while the teacher focuses on teaching, occasionally one or two learners tend to engage in speaking to each other, which may be disruptive. However, if the teacher constantly captures the learners' attention, meaningful learning may proceed and disruption may stop without taking teaching time to reprimand such learners.

While some teachers perceived call response as disruptive, it was allowed by other teachers. Observation of one of the teachers during his lessons revealed that he did not mind when learners asked questions as and when they thought of them, without raising their hands. For example, one of the learners spontaneously said *"I am getting a different answer – R2400.00"* as she sought for clarification. Answering such calls tends to be learner-centred to some extent. However, when misguidedly used or allowed by a laissez-faire type of teacher, the risk exists that some learners may start to take the teacher for granted and strike up conversations that have nothing to do with the lesson in progress.

Teachers who seemed to believe that the use of strategies that seem to be learner-centred could make a difference occasionally created time to talk to the concerned learner alone as an individual and also *engaged in informal discussions* with the concerned learners. In this regard, one of the teachers had the following to say:

> *… An individual talk, informally, on the playing fields, in the corridors, not in the classroom. I have done this on many occasions… come here …you are a very good player. How did you get to this? ... And this informal talk tends to bring out a lot of things. And that is when you can actually say, how do you work on this … how do you address this in your culture? Then they are eager to tell you…* (Mr Moyo).

A step towards *introducing a sense of responsibility in learners* by reinforcing mutual respect was indicated in strategies that teachers seldom employed:

> *… I will talk to them sometimes in a way that they also feel that they are being respected and so in a normal situation they will also then behave a bit more responsibly* (Ms Kunonga).

Evidence of steps taken by very few teachers towards inculcating a sense of responsibility, which also resembled an integration of authority and care, was

demonstrated during classroom observations. One of the teachers would address learners as “Yes Mam, Yes Sir”. For example, the teacher referred to a male learner as Mr Joel when he asked him a question. The teacher was thereby giving learners an opportunity to talk and to share their opinions in class. The same teacher (Mr Naagesh) was heard correcting the behaviour of a learner in the following manner “When we watch a video, we watch and we do not talk, Tebello”. This was an expression of disapproval that is still respectful and considerate. At the same time, the teacher also indicated what appropriate behaviour would be. Another teacher corrected the behaviour of a group of learners in a similar manner: “Can we be quiet so that we can follow” (Ms Kunonga). This way of correcting learners’ behaviour was found impressive, as the teacher explained why learners had to be quiet. What was also interesting was that these very few authoritative teachers were often found to be able to capture the attention of all learners, including the talkative learners, as they engaged learners in constructive conversation (participation during their lessons). In most instances, these teachers did not have to reprimand learners regularly. These were not strategies stipulated in the school’s code of conduct; they came with experience and the right approach/worldview.

School code of conduct and the prescribed LBM tools

The school’s code of conduct was found to be the main document that described processes and procedures for handling instances of unacceptable conduct on the school premises and in classrooms. This document outlined disciplinary procedures that comprised three steps. The 1st step intervention was to be handled by the teacher concerned and recorded on a blue slip. If the teacher’s intervention failed, then the 2nd step was considered, where the learner was referred to the discipline department. In the 3rd step, the discipline department met the parents.

When asked specifically about how effective they found the school’s code of conduct in managing learner behaviour, most of the teachers reported that the school’s code of conduct was not effective.

> *The code of conduct has been defective* (Mr Moyo).
>
> *It takes a long time and long procedure to expel a troublesome learner as the Department of Education’s procedure takes forever (*Ms Visagie).

It was evident that while some teachers were trying to follow the prescripts of the

code of conduct to manage learner behaviours in the classrooms, most of the teachers were exercising their discretion. While the code of conduct prescribed LBM strategies that included demerits (blue slip), detention and use of the time-out centre, community service as well as compulsory homework classes for homework not completed or not done, teachers would employ measures such as making learners sit on the floor, instructing the offenders to lie with their heads on the desks, instructing learners to step outside and go write homework on their laps, and other forms of harsh reprimands as demonstrated in earlier discussions. It was clear that most of their LBM strategies were not consistent with the stipulations in the school's code of conduct.

Teachers used the blue slip more than the other strategies stated in the code of conduct. The blue slip had to be completed by the teacher when a learner had committed the following infractions (as they appear on the blue slip): late for class, homework not done, book not at school, insolence, dishonesty, failure to respond to instructions, appearance/uniform infringement and bunking. The blue slip contains the learner's name, grade, the teacher's comment and the signatures of the teacher and the learner. The analysis of some of the blue slips that had already been completed and issued to learners showed that some teachers just ticked the relevant infraction and described the infraction committed by the learner in the comment field, whereas the blue slip required the intervention by the teacher to be stated – e.g. "instructed learner to go to compulsory homework class for homework not completed/not done". This was further evidence that teachers' actions were sometimes not consistent with the code of conduct, as they would for instance instruct learners to sit on the floor for homework not completed or not done. There were, however, some teachers who indicated that they seldom used the blue slip and some who clearly stated that they did not use this tool and were able to provide reasons for this.

> *I think that the blue slip is a waste of time. I believe that you must have consequences for your actions* (Ms Van Rooyen).
>
> *… with some kids, if they are used to being punished, … when you give them punishment, whether you write the blue slip (demerit slip), … they no longer care* (Ms Kunene).

Referral to the discipline office as the 2nd step intervention was often employed in situations where a teacher's interventions, including issuing the blue slip, did not yield the desired results. Most teachers declared that they seldom referred learners to the Discipline Office and that they tried to manage their classrooms themselves. The Discipline Office was, however, commonly sought when teachers had trouble handling learner behaviours in their classrooms.

> *I don't like referring learners to Discipline Office. It also makes you look like you cannot do classroom management…* (Mr Nkosi).
>
> *… But then when all hell breaks loose in your class who do you call to discipline them? Please come and sort out these children* (Discipline Officer).

According to the school's code of conduct, the Discipline Officer gets to meet with the learner's parents if the teacher's intervention and subsequently the intervention of the Discipline Officer still do not yield the desired results. However, the code of conduct also allows teachers to contact the parents before escalating behaviour issues to the Discipline Office, which some teachers do.

> *If there is some behavioural situation – I call parents to help resolve the matter…* (Mr Naagesh).

While working with parents was envisaged to be a useful strategy for LBM, it did not always work. As indicated before, in many cases parents failed to respond.

From all that has been reported by teachers so far with regard to their LBM strategies, it is evident that their strategies were not uniform. The Discipline Officer described the situation of not having a unified approach as a kind of a 'yo-yo' environment.

> *Unified approaches and rules…. Not this yo-yo environment where this teacher does this, this teacher doesn't. There we may do this and here we may not. Here this is fine, here we are in trouble. …Because you do get teachers who feel that – but this is my classroom, this is my little kingdom and here I rule as I deem fit. Also missing the point completely of having a set of uniformity rules applying to everybody … Children crave direction, they crave routine* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer's comments also suggest that some of the teachers did sometimes argue that the rules were confusing. In this regard, she contended:

> *…it is extremely frustrating… I mean if a rule is kept short, uncomplicated and doable, where is the confusion? Confusion gets created by us…But then when all hell breaks loose … You will find that I say bluntly, no, to some teachers. I say sorry I am not coming, it is a classroom management issue…I look at the CCTV footage of an incident, and I am like … but why didn't you let them line up? Why did you allow them to just stumble into your class … where is the control?* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer also brought to light the use of CCTV for discipline mediation. CCTV is installed in every classroom and is regularly used by the Discipline Office to try and understand how the incident started, how it developed, what the learner(s) did and what the teacher did or didn't do.

One of the teachers, who at some point mentioned that she had been a learner at this school, also mentioned deviations from the school's system and its code of conduct by other teachers' LBM practices, and commented as follows:

> *I feel that standing outside in lines…; being led in, standing behind your chair, waiting for the teacher to greet you; and when the period ends greeting your teacher and being led out quietly; those three things make life easier for a teacher. Because I receive a class from a teacher and that teacher just lets her children come in and then sit down whenever they want to …and as soon as I receive those children from that teacher, it takes me almost 10 minutes to quiet them down and get them ready to start focusing on their work… But that's the biggest problem … we need to speak all out of one mouth… and it's a constant fight that we have between the teachers… You saw me on the corridor with those two boys, where is your permission slip? Another teacher will walk past. Instead of asking them, reprimanding them there and then. … It's tough, you cannot force someone to change their ways that they have been doing it for years.* (Ms Visagie).

While this teacher expected learners to behave the same way she remembered as a

learner in a model C school, and also as prescribed in the code of conduct, she indicated that other teachers' ways of managing learner behaviour were not compliant with the school's philosophy. The teacher suggested that lack of uniformity amongst teachers with regard to their ways of managing learner behaviour might be because some teachers had been doing things in particular ways (culture) for a long time, and were therefore unable to depart from the ways that were rooted in their personal beliefs. This suggests that different teachers' ways of dealing with learners' behaviours may be influenced by their cultural backgrounds. It also implies that some of the teachers' practices may depend on the kind of practices, norms and standards they were exposed to in the school they attended and the kind of norms and values that were inculcated in the homes or families in which they were brought up.

Despite the Discipline Officer's preference for a unified approach, which would assist teachers to establish a routine and would make all teachers follow the same disciplinary methods, such a practice would only be teacher-centred and would only achieve the purpose of maintaining the status quo; it would still not cater for a diverse learner population. While the Discipline Officer was actually advocating a one-size-fits-all approach to LBM, the evidence provided in this section suggests that the teachers might not be equally convinced that the prescribed methods could be effective or helpful for their culturally diverse learner population and culturally diverse teachers.

While the study indicates cultural disconnects between teachers and learners, there also seemed to be disagreements among teachers themselves, as manifested by the absence of uniform LBM practices. The question is whether training and development of teachers on LBM as well as their intercultural development could improve teachers' LBM practices. The teachers unanimously agreed that they had not had any diversity or LBM training or workshops. The Discipline Officer, however, made this remark:

> *There was another attempt that I made in the staff room at the beginning of the year and I asked everybody for one week to great each other in our mother tongue. It lasted one day…* (Discipline Officer).

The fact that it lasted one day signifies lack of interest, which may be due to a lack of

real understanding of the importance of the exercise, or rather denial of cultural differences as an indication of ethnocentrism among most of the teachers.

5.3.5 Promotion of caring classroom communities

Some teachers perceived their job as only delivering content and not dealing with issues beyond instruction.

> *…I don't deal with their complicated situations …we have a discipline team. I will refer them immediately…* I will give it to the appropriate people… *We have our social workers; we have a feeding scheme* (Ms Van Rooyen).

The teacher's refusal to deal with learners' problematic situations may suggest the teacher's lack of a sense of caring and reluctance to know her learners' life worlds. The teacher continued as follows:

> *I'm very strict about one thing; it's that they don't stand up and walk toward Mam (the teacher)… Perhaps that's a cultural respect to go to the teacher. That they stand up and walk to the teacher, in my class you sit down. Because if you have twenty children running to you and asking you the same question it's just you can't handle it* (Ms Van Rooyen).

While the teacher justifies her rule as a means to avoid an unruly class, she also refers to learners' behaviour of standing up and walking to the teacher as culturally based. If the behaviour of learners as described by the teacher is indeed culturally based, it would mean that the teacher did not exhibit a sense of caring or responsiveness towards learners who presented this cultural trait.

Another instance of teachers' lack of a sense of caring was demonstrated in the critical incident narrative told by the Discipline Officer. In the 5th month of the year, she had come across a learner whose school bag was almost empty, and the very few books in his bag had very little written in them, with the last work written on 28 January 2018. This incident left the Discipline Officer wondering what the role of the 9 teachers was who had been teaching this learner without reporting the issue to her:

> *… Don't teachers check the books? And if they do, don't they care if they see that there are weeks and weeks of work not done? That is my*

> *question… Do they in fact care? Don't tell me they don't see the books. All teachers need to check homework some or other time… Why is it that a non-teaching staff member is picking it up in the middle of May? How is that even possible? Unfortunately... If a child, for instance in teacher X's class, repeatedly doesn't do the homework, mom cannot be reached, book is never at school, the teacher quits on that child… you clearly have no interest in learning, sit there and die a slow educational death, while I am focusing on those who want to get taught... But in the meantime, the learner (African South African boy in this case) is not focusing at school because maybe he is tired because his stepdad beat his mom until 23:30 last night… But now you don't want to get involved…* (Discipline Officer).

The Discipline Officer's narrative suggests that teachers may ignore learners who have problems because for various reasons they do not want to get involved in learners' situations.

Contrary to teachers' perception of their job as only delivering content and not dealing with issues beyond instruction, as was expressed earlier by Ms Van Rooyen, Ms Kunonga highlights the importance of caring:

> *Caring is important, and we can't really separate a teacher from a caregiver at the end of the day. … Sometimes you call a learner and ask, are you okay, because maybe you've seen something out of line. And then maybe from the way they explain it then you'll, you need to actually step back and understand them… meet them halfway* (Ms Kunonga).

While Mrs Rooyen was not prepared to deal with learners' "complicated situations", and therefore referred them to the relevant office immediately, Ms Kunonga promoted the idea of making an effort to find the cause of learner misbehaviour.

During observations I followed a single and notable instance where one African teacher made an effort to resolve a learner-learner conflict that occurred in the classroom and which the teacher later, in her interview, attributed to xenophobia and discrimination. In this instance, an African South African learner had referred to the Rwandan (African) learner as a thief. Realising that the accusation levelled against

the Rwandan learner was unfounded, the teacher ordered the South African learner to write a letter of apology to the Rwandan learner and to read it out to the whole class, which the learner did. Thereafter the teacher instructed the two learners to make peace with each other. The teacher was at the end of the incident heard saying *"hug each other*" (Ms Kunene). An interesting observation regarding this incident is that in demonstrating a sense a care, the teacher decided to resolve the issue in this calm manner rather than instituting punitive action that would not have promoted a caring classroom community.

Promotion of a sense of community through collaborative learning was found to be lacking in the classrooms, as teachers promoted independent learning among learners. As indicated earlier in the discussion of classroom layout, even in the two classrooms where learners were seated in clusters, collaborative learning was not evident. When asked about collaborative learning versus individual learning, some of the teachers had the following to say:

> *I sometimes avoid having them work in teams because they will make noise* (Mr Atta).

> *Almost a third of the class (Geography class) does not have tablets. So now I'm allowing A and B to sit together. Now B doesn't have a tablet, who's causing the drama? B. So now she wants to talk, so I said you know, this is really not fair, somebody else is willing to help you, and then you sit and talk and you create drama, when you are the one who actually needs the help… So you can see, that is a challenge* (Ms Rossouw).

The deduction made from responses during interviews and from classroom observations was that in a school where quiet was emphasised, an opportunity for learners to work together collaboratively was not encouraged, as it was perceived that such a class would "make noise". Although some of the learners did not have tablets, those who did were not encouraged to share them, as they might talk to each other. A noteworthy example of the extent to which collaborative learning was avoided was the teacher who, even though he regarded collaborative learning as advantageous for deeper learning and had arranged learners in clusters, seldom used it, if ever. This is an example of a systemic and institutional barrier – a

challenge in a culturally diverse learning environment that restrains promotion of classroom community and collaborative learning.

5.4 Conclusion

A description of data that was collected from the interviews, observation and documents and was subsequently analysed with the purpose of exploring teachers' practices with regard to LBM in culturally diverse classrooms has been presented in this chapter.

Overall, the findings reveal that most teachers were struggling with LBM in culturally diverse classrooms. The worldviews of most teachers were not congruent with those of most of the learners. Teachers' expectations of learner behaviour, which were infused with their own cultural values, were often not met and might not be realistic for a culturally diverse learner population.

Apart from divergent worldviews of teachers and learners, the findings also revealed that teachers themselves had divergent worldviews and divergent expectations of learner behaviour. Teachers' approaches to LBM, their classroom rules and the strategies they employed were not uniform and, in some cases, were inconsistent with the school's code of conduct.

In relation to the LBM approaches, the findings revealed that teachers seldom employed learner-centred approaches to LBM. Generally, the school emphasised the behaviourist approach, which is more teacher-centred.

The findings further revealed that teachers lacked understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds, the different discourse styles of some learners, the importance of home language as carrier of culture and of norms for interpersonal communication that learners had acquired from their cultures. Lack of acknowledgement of the importance of such understanding was also demonstrated by some of the teachers.

Generally, teachers were not encouraging a sense of community and collaborative learning in their classrooms. Learner quietness was overemphasised, and independent learning was emphasised more than working in teams. Similarly, most of the teachers did not demonstrate a sense of care towards learners.

While awareness of cultural differences and understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds seemed to be crucial, the findings revealed that none of the teachers had ever received diversity training or any intercultural development. In any case, there were teachers who were not ready for intensive intercultural development, as they constantly denied the importance of cultural differences.

It was clear that divergent worldviews tended to be an overarching challenge to teachers' LBM practices in culturally diverse classrooms. Generally, the findings reflected in this chapter point to the reality of cultural diversity, and thus the requirement for culturally and contextually responsive practices of teachers with regard to LBM.

The next chapter will present an in-depth analysis and interpretation of these findings in view of the theoretical framework that was detailed in Chapter 3 and the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the research findings in the context of the theoretical framework that was outlined in chapter three and the literature that was reviewed in chapter two. The theoretical framework draws attention to five fundamental components of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) that are equally crucial for learner behaviour management (LBM) in culturally diverse classrooms. These are: (a) recognition of one's own ethnocentrism and biases; (b) knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds; (c) understanding of the broader social, economic and political context of the educational system; (d) ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate classroom management strategies; and (e) commitment to building caring classroom communities.

The structure of this chapter consists of three sections. The first section provides the position of this study with regard to the LBM practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms in view of the research findings and the reviewed literature. The second section discusses aspects of LBM practices of teachers that had a bearing on the failure of their practices to achieve cultural responsiveness, bearing in mind the respective fundamental components of CRCM as enunciated in the theoretical framework, and also taking into consideration the literature review. The discussion also recognises similarities and differences between the aspects arising from the findings of the study and those indicated in the theoretical framework and in the literature review. A graphic framework of insights derived from lessons learnt from practices of teachers that reveal possible elements that can hinder or enable culturally responsive learner behaviour management (CRLBM) in schools and similar contexts is presented in the concluding section of this chapter. The last part of the section describes the elements presented in the graphic framework.

6.2 The status of cultural responsiveness of teachers' LBM practices

It is evident from this study that teachers were struggling to maintain order in culturally diverse classrooms. They were experiencing a wide range of challenges that included a perceived lack of learners' work ethics and a perceived sense of

entitlement, with teachers grappling with how to reconcile the culture of rights and learners' awareness of responsibility; learners who were indifferent/acting up, family structures that were not supportive and lack of quietness in classrooms.

The study points to a degree of cultural disconnection as an underlying factor that led to regular strife between teachers and learners who were from different cultural backgrounds. This was evident in the examples of the white teacher who misinterpreted the African learner's communication style of no response; the white teacher who punished an African learner who did not look at her when reprimanded; continual clashes between white teachers and African learners over noncompliance with the requirement of quiet in the classroom; the clash between the white teacher and the African South African learner who displayed indifference by responding to the teacher '*Mam can give me a zero'*; continual strife between the white teacher and the Rwandan learner because of the learner's inadequate response to the teacher's instructions, where the learner eventually reported to the Deputy Principal that the teacher was unfair; the clash between the African teacher and the white learner who, when reprimanded, told the teacher "*You are being racist"*; and the clash between the African South African boy who refused to leave the classroom when ordered to leave, and expressed his right to education by telling the Ghanaian teacher *'I must learn, I've paid school fees'.*

The struggle to bring order in culturally diverse classrooms is well documented (Skiba *et al.*, 2002; Weinstein *et al., 2004;* Monroe, 2005; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Cartledge *et al.,* 2015). A number of studies support the findings that a cultural disconnect between learners and teachers is a cause of most conflicts in the classroom. As teachers bring into classrooms their own cultural backgrounds and values, which influence how they act and perceive the learners, learners are also cultural agents who bring their own cultural backgrounds and values into the classroom, and these influence their responsiveness and their perceptions of teachers (Gay, 2000, 2010; Irvine, 2003). When teachers and learners bring contrasting cultural experiences into the classroom, cultural discontinuity is likely to occur and to manifest itself in various ways, which may include confrontation, misunderstandings, alienation, rejection, diminished self-confidence and eventually poor performance.

In my study, while teachers' struggle was apparent, it was not easy to determine whether their LBM practices were culturally responsive, since the participants (i.e. teachers and the Discipline Officer) held different perceptions and approaches to learner behaviour management. The majority of the participants seemed to favour the behaviourist approach to LBM, which tends to be too teacher-centred; only a few employed some elements of a SEL approach, which suggested a progressive move towards a learner-centred LBM.

The perception that the majority of teachers were more inclined to the behaviourist approach is consistent with literature (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006, 2013; Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). Garrette (2008) and Bear (2014) also suggest that teachers who use the behaviourist approach tend to be overly controlling, as they often compel learners to behave in ways that are preferred by themselves.

Since the findings of this study reveal that the behaviourist approach was used by most teachers and the Discipline Officer to manage behaviours of culturally diverse learners, this study would like to adopt the position that the LBM practices of most teachers were not culturally responsive. This position is taken in light of the premise that underlies cultural responsiveness as stated by Weinstein *et al.* (2004) and as provided in chapter three. According to Weinstein *et al.* (2004), cultural responsiveness is a mindset rather than predetermined practices or a set of strategies that teachers often use to control learner behaviours or to create order in their classrooms. A culturally responsive mindset starts with an understanding of "the self", "the other", and "the context" (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004); in other words, culturally responsive teachers need to reflect on their preconceptions and values (i.e. "the self"), how their expectations of behaviour and their interactions with learners (i.e. "the other") are influenced by their preconceptions and values, and need to understand that the ultimate aim of classroom management is not to attain control or compliance, but to provide all learners with learning opportunities that are equitable (i.e. "the context"). In essence, cultural responsiveness requires teachers to make a concerted effort towards understanding, embracing, respecting and meeting the needs of learners from backgrounds that are culturally different from theirs (Ford & Kea, 2009 as cited in Emmer & Sabornie, 2015), and to abandon a one-size-fits-all approach to LBM (Milner & Tenore, 2010).

In line with the above premise and principles, the findings demonstrate that the majority of participants had not yet acquired a culturally responsive mindset. They seemed to lack awareness of how their values, their own cultural backgrounds and their preconceptions formed their mindset and influenced their interactions with their learners. It is also evident that a teacher-centred and one-size-fits-all, control-oriented approach fell short of providing equitable opportunities to all learners.

The available international literature indicates similar findings. The studies conducted by Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004), Brown (2004), Bondy *et al.* (2007), and Milner and Tenore (2010) found that central to the complexity of managing behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms is the finding that most teachers are not culturally responsive.

In light of the discussions above, the question that arises is: Why were the teachers' LBM practices in the present study not culturally responsive? This question is the subject of the next section.

6.3 Why were the teachers' LBM practices not culturally responsive?

While the study indicated that few teachers were culturally responsive, most of them were not. The following factors may explain these challenges: teachers' ignorance of their own ethnocentrism and biases; lack of knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds; lack of understanding/consciousness of the broader social, economic and political context of the education system; lack of commitment to building caring classrooms communities; and lack of capability and willingness to use culturally appropriate classroom management strategies.

6.3.1 Recognition of own ethnocentrism and biases

The findings arising from this study demonstrate that realising and acknowledging one's own ethnocentrism and biases is a fundamental step that teachers need to take if they are to be culturally responsive. Teachers seem to not recognise their own ethnocentrism and biases. Their ethnocentrism is evident in their conviction that the ways of doing things or behaviours that they have acquired from their cultures (families or the schools that shaped them) are the ultimate ways of how their learners must do things or behave. As a result, most of their expectations were not met by most of the learners, who came from other cultural backgrounds.

For example, most of the teachers' expectations of a quick and positive response to instructions, as well as quiet in the classroom at all times, were not met by most of the learners. The evidence obtained in this study demonstrates that these challenges were experienced mainly by white teachers and the Discipline Officer. The evidence also reveals that the challenges of lack of quiet in the classroom and loudness when learners spoke to each other outside the classrooms were mostly experienced by the participants from the white Afrikaans cultural background who previously attended former white-only schools; they were not of major concern to African teachers. The difference in the approaches was explained by one African teacher, who suggested that loudness in speech or speaking with a high-pitched voice was a cultural attribute of Africans. It may therefore be deduced that being vociferous may not necessarily be regarded as inappropriate behaviour by African people. This finding supports the study conducted by Monroe (2005) that indicates that teachers at times interpret learner behaviour as inappropriate, while the same behaviour is interpreted as culturally appropriate in another cultural location. This finding also supports the argument advanced by Spradley and McCurdy (2012) that suggests that teachers tend to evaluate learners' behaviours using values of their own culture.

Another significant finding emerging from this study is that expectations of some teachers and of the school were sometimes unrealistic, which could be the reason why most of the learners could not achieve them. For example, the Discipline Officer demonstrated an ethnocentric worldview, a belief that what she expected was normal behaviour when she said: *"We assume that they would know what is expected, what is the standard, the normal behaviour".* The ethnocentric aspect of her remark became more evident when she commented on the Principal's repeated admonishments about the noise level, which she believed could be a confirmation that the noise levels were really too high for the school. Her concession that her standards were sometimes extremely high because she was raised in a very disciplined home also explains possible unrealistic expectations she might have had of culturally diverse learners. Her approach confirms the assertion by Cartledge *et al.* (2015) that LBM approaches to orderliness in culturally diverse teaching and learning environments are not culturally impartial, as they are often based on cultural norms of the dominant cultural group which become institutionalised in culturally diverse schools.

Evidence obtained in this study also demonstrated that most of the learners who were often reprimanded by most of the teachers for talking to another in the classroom, and most of those referred to the Discipline Office for these types of infractions, were African. In essence, the finding established that learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, and African learners in particular, were finding it hard to keep up with the ethos of the school. This finding that learners who received disciplinary referrals were largely African is consistent with the results of the studies conducted by Skiba *et al.* (2002), Monroe and Obidah (2004) and Milner and Tenore (2010), which ascribe such disciplinary referrals to cultural disconnects. The finding that African learners at large were struggling to keep up with the ethos of the school confirms the findings of Meier and Hartell (2009), which suggest that learners of the non-dominant culture are often expected to adjust their actions and behaviours to the mainstream ethos even when that ethos was established for a different learner population.

A new insight that emerged from this study is that while teachers' expectations were found to be unrealistic and unmet by most learners, at the same time learners also had unmet expectations of their teachers. This is evident from one white teacher's account of the African learner who perceived her actions as unfair and reported the matter to the Deputy Principal.

The evidence from this study also demonstrates that unmet expectations lead to pessimism and frustration among teachers. Teacher pessimism that learners would ever meet their expectations was evident in utterances such as *"It will never happen. I have made peace with that…"* (Ms Van Rooyen). We can also see how teachers' frustration sometimes caused them to become insensitive in the way they talked, which exacerbated the disconnect between them and the learners. This is evident in teachers' statements such as "*You are really very annoying… You are not hooligans, are you?"*(Observation of Mr Potgieter, English 01 class, 08 May 2018).

Teachers' stereotyping tendencies are apparent in the findings of this study. The study established that learners from culturally diverse backgrounds were often perceived by teachers from other cultural backgrounds as depicting anomalous behaviours in various ways. For instance, African learners were perceived by mostly white teachers as talkative and loud, lacking a work ethic and having a sense of

entitlement as well as a disorderly cultural affiliation. Some of the African learners were labelled as more challenging and questioning teachers' authority, while interestingly, the open questioning from well-travelled Cuban learners was appreciated by some teachers as demonstrative of the learners' thinking ability. Coloured learners were labelled as learners whose parents were very aggressive and screamed at them all the time, and were therefore viewed as being fearful of adults. The white Afrikaans-speaking learners were labelled by mostly African teachers as low-spirited and somewhat despondent. Learners of Indian heritage were categorised by teachers, and more especially by the teacher of Indian heritage – as respectful and focused on their education. From teachers' categorisation of learners, it is apparent that some learners were marginalised, while some were praised. This finding is in agreement with findings in the study conducted by Weinstein *et al.* (2003), which recognises that teachers' practices may marginalise and alienate some learners while privileging other learners due to stereotyping.

It may be concluded from this finding concerning teachers' stereotyping perceptions that learners who feel marginalised are likely to feel disempowered because teachers disregard or demean them, and that would not make their behaviour any better. This conclusion supports findings in the study conducted by Milner and Tenore (2010) that suggests that the effect of teachers on the conduct of learners is tremendous, especially when learners come to develop a perception that they are being marginalised. This is because when learners perceive that they are not privileged like others, they could resort to mistaken goals.

A new and interesting finding that emerged from this study is that the behaviour of learners of Indian heritage was not only esteemed by the teacher of their own cultural background, but was also admired by teachers of African cultural backgrounds. It may therefore be deduced that as teachers from other cultural backgrounds were informed of the ethos of the school, which everybody was expected to comply with, they were able to recognise learners from other cultural backgrounds when they exceeded expectations. This finding adds new information to the literature; Vandeyar & Killen (2006) assert that teachers are more attracted to learners who belong to cultural backgrounds that are similar to their own. In this case, teachers of an African culture stereotyped Indian learners positively with respect to their quietness and focus on academic performance. Interestingly, none of

the white teachers expressed this view about Indian learners. A dynamic of power play or race ranking may not be excluded in relation to this finding.

Interestingly, the findings of this study also reveal that some of the African teachers feel that white learners demonstrate hegemony tendencies. For instance, one of the African teachers reported that he regularly observed white learners who indicated feelings of supremacy over African teachers, as they tended to show undermining tendencies such as being busy on their cell phones while teaching was in progress. This finding, as indicated earlier, may be an indication of stereotyping tendencies that are demonstrated by both the mentioned learners as well as the teacher who perceives the act of supremacy. This finding adds new knowledge to the literature (Weinstein *et al.*, 2003; Vandeyar & Killen, 2006; Milner & Tenore, 2010), namely that not only learners from African/previously disadvantaged backgrounds are marginalised in culturally diverse classrooms, but teachers from previously disadvantaged backgrounds also experience a degree of marginalisation.

On the whole, evidence obtained in this study concerning teachers' unmet and unrealistic expectations, teacher pessimism about learners ever meeting their expectations, biased and stereotyping perceptions about culturally diverse learners, as well a realisation that learners had expectations too that teachers did not meet, reveals that most of the teachers and most of the learners had divergent worldviews. This finding was also supported by the view of one of the teachers, who indicated that the worldview of the teachers from the white Afrikaans cultural background in particular was more formulaic in the sense that it operated according to fixed laws and principles, while the worldview of most of the learners was that 'life happens' and is full of upheavals. Based on the finding, it may therefore be inferred that learners with the kind of worldview described by the teacher would expect teachers to be adaptable. This finding confirms the findings of Milner and Tenore (2010), who found that due to different ethnicities, cultures, identities and life experiences between the teachers and the learners, their worldviews were likely to be conflicting.

Besides the divergent worldviews between teachers and learners, the findings of this study also reveal that in the present-day culturally diverse school, divergent worldviews also exist between teachers themselves. This is because former model C schools have come to employ teachers from diverse ethnic and cultural groups, who have now joined white teachers who have been teaching in these schools, including

those who were taught in these schools. As a result of this transformation, teachers themselves come to have incongruent worldviews, which ultimately influence their LBM practices differently. This is also evident in the fact that they have different classroom rules that express their different expectations. This finding adds new knowledge to the studies conducted by the cultural difference theorists (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000, 2010; Irvine, 3003) and most studies that support CRCM and focus on cultural differences between teachers and learners. But it supports the findings in the study conducted by Obidah and Teel (2001), as these two teachers are examples of teachers from different cultural backgrounds who demonstrated how their different worldviews influenced their LBM practices distinctively.

6.3.2 Knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds

Besides recognition of own ethnocentrism and biases, this study also established that knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds is an important element that requires teachers' attention if they are to be culturally responsive. Challenges presented by teachers with regard to knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds included negating perceptions of the importance of knowing learners' cultural backgrounds, misinterpretation of learners' communication styles and their cultural norms of interpersonal communication as well as marginalisation of learners' home languages.

The study revealed that teachers were reluctant to talk about cultural differences. For example, one of the teachers stated that she did not want learners to hear her saying "you are Zulu", "you are Pedi"; she preferred not to openly acknowledge or mention their individual cultural/ethnic identities in the classroom. This of course hinders understanding of cultural differences or diversity among learners, and such perceptions and practices are not aligned with the directive from the current MEC for Education in Gauteng that diversity must be taught in schools. This finding confirms the argument advanced by Irvine (2003) that most teachers erroneously think that if they recognise or discuss issues of diversity or ethnicity in the classroom, they might be branded as insensitive or discriminatory. In this regard, Irvine (2003) and Taylor (2016) advance that when teachers disregard ethnic identities of their learners, when they fail to realise that recognition of diversity does not suggest divisiveness or disunity, they fall short as culturally responsive teachers.

Furthermore, it was found that while some teachers perceived knowledge of

learners' cultural backgrounds as important, there were some teachers who did not. Only a few teachers of those who acknowledged the importance of cultural background could indicate why it is important. The teachers who did not acknowledge the importance of knowing learners' cultural backgrounds were in the "denial of cultural difference" frame of mind (Bennett, 2004). Denial of cultural differences was expressed openly by some teachers, whereas others implied it in their comments – for instance where teachers maintained that they viewed learners as a group, not as individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, while others maintained that they did not necessarily have to know the facts about learners' cultures, as long as they at least knew that learners just belonged to different ethnic groups. The denial of cultural differences by teachers confirmed the existence of the culture-neutral or colour-blind ideology, which is well documented in the literature (Ladson-Billings, 2000, 2014; Irvine, 2003; Jansen, 2004; Vandeyar, 2010; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Kozleski, 2010; Gay, 2010, Sleeter, 2012; Gay, 2013; Casey *et al.*, 2013). Milner and Tenore (2010) argue that while these teachers hold these culture-neutral notions, they come to miss significant features and scopes of the identity of these learners.

It was also apparent that most teachers did not possess the competence to handle the existing cultural differences in terms of communication styles, norms of interpersonal communication, as well as norms of interpersonal communication in relation to culture and gender. The findings in this study established that misinterpretation of learner behaviour was likely to occur when teachers lacked understanding of the norms of interpersonal communication of learners from culturally diverse backgrounds. This was evident where a teacher issued a blue slip for what she interpreted as insolence, whereas according to the learner's culture a young person was expected not to look an older person directly in the face when reprimanded. In a similar case, a learner was marched to the Deputy Principal's office because the learner, while being reprimanded, did not respond to the question "why did you do this?", and the learner explained to the Deputy Principal that in her culture she was not allowed to talk back to an older person when being reprimanded. This finding is consistent with findings in the studies conducted by Skiba *et al.* (2002) and Weinstein *et al.* (2004) where misinterpretation of learner behaviour leading to unnecessary disciplinary referrals stemmed from instances where behaviours of

culturally different learners were interpreted subjectively. This finding therefore confirms Weinstein *et al.'s* (2004) assertion that acquisition of knowledge about learners' cultural backgrounds, including their parents' expectations as regards discipline as well as their families' cultural norms for interpersonal relationships, will enable teachers to be culturally responsive.

While the above evidence demonstrates teachers' lack of understanding of norms of interpersonal communication, the following evidence relates specifically to communication styles. The African learners' response that *"this is how we are"* when asked by the culturally different teacher about their inappropriate behaviour of speaking in high-pitched voices, which was later corroborated by one of the African teachers as being one of the cultural attributes of Africans, serves as an example. Based on this corroboration, it may be concluded that African learners' high-pitched voices are a manifestation of their culture. This finding corresponds with the study conducted by Marks (2015), which found that when the teacher's culture differed significantly from the learner's culture, the teacher was likely to misread the learner's intentions. Evidence in this study also demonstrates that African learners were sometimes reprimanded for talking before permission had been granted. Teachers' misunderstanding of this behaviour is consistent with the findings of studies conducted by Gay (2002) and Weinstein *et al.* (2003) that reveal that teachers who are accustomed to a "passive-receptive" discourse pattern may tend to interpret behaviours of learners who engage in a "call response" pattern as inappropriate, while they interpret behaviours of 'passive receptive' learners as appropriate.

Dissimilarity of communication styles relating to body language also affects interaction between teachers and learners. This was evident in the accounts provided by the Zimbabwean teacher relating to his discourse style of giving a learner a stern look as a non-verbal reprimand, which the learner perceived as an unfair action; his shouting was perceived as a sign of fighting by another learner; and his own perception of the coloured learners who handed their books to the teacher with only one hand as a sign of disrespect. This evidence demonstrates the importance of understanding cross-cultural communication styles in culturally diverse classrooms, as suggested in the literature (Gay, 2002, 2010; Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Brown, 2004; Bondy *et al.,* 2007).

A new instance of misunderstanding of cultural norms of interpersonal communi-

cation between genders was also found in this study. The Discipline Officer was unaware that an African learner who had undergone the traditional male initiation rites expected to be recognised as an adult and treated with respect, especially by females. This finding adds new knowledge to the studies conducted by Weinstein *et al.* (2003, 2004) and Gay (2000, 2010) in that it points out the influence of gender disparities in interpersonal communication.

The study also revealed that in this school the teaching of home languages of culturally diverse learners was being marginalised. Afrikaans was being imposed on non-Afrikaans-speaking learners as the additional language to replace learners' home languages. This finding confirms findings in the study conducted by Mkhize and Balfour (2017) that indicate that even though the majority of South Africans speak other languages than English and Afrikaans, the two languages continue to dominate the public domain, with English being the most dominant and Afrikaans to a lower extent.

Section 29(2) of the Constitution provides that every learner has the right to receive education in the language of his or her choice "in the public educational institutions where that is reasonably practicable". Irrespective of the constitutional provision, the issue of teaching learner's home languages remains an institutional and systematic barrier in historically white schools. This is not to say home languages of learners must be used as mediums of instruction, but that this right as provided in Section 29(2) serves to recognise the importance of diversity and equality, and therefore learners should be taught their home language, and not necessarily Afrikaans, at least as a subject (additional language). The intention is to enhance appreciation of the home languages of culturally diverse learners, and having these languages taught at the school could be used as a cultural bridge to eliminate the lack of understanding of learners' cultural backgrounds among teachers, as languages are carriers of cultures.

Apart from being a cultural bridge, teaching of the learners' home languages has the potential to reassure culturally diverse learners that they belong to the school and to help them preserve their cultural identities. The finding regarding the marginalisation of other languages, such as African languages, is supported and confirmed in the address made by the President of the Republic of South Africa, President

Ramaphosa, on Heritage Day: "*under colonialism and apartheid, black languages were degraded and were also denigrated. This was done to ensure that African people forget about their history and their cultures and traditions – so that they die. …It is our national duty to preserve these languages and to protect them, and to make sure that they are taught … in all our schools"* (President Ramaphosa, 24 September 2019).

6.3.3 Understanding the broader social, economic and political context

The study revealed that understanding the broader social, economic and political context of the education system is another important aspect that teachers need to be conscious of if they are to be culturally responsive. The findings demonstrate a lack of social integration within the classrooms and the school at large. This is evident in teachers' seating arrangement in the staff room, which is characterised by ethnic and racial divides. Social integration is not encouraged through collaborative learning among culturally diverse learners in classrooms; when learners step out of the classroom, they walk in groups that consist of members of the same ethnic/cultural and racial groups. This practice is not unique to the school environment, but is also observable in some pockets of the larger society and creates barriers to the goal of desegregation of schools in the South African society so as to build a coherent nation and to afford equitable opportunities for all. This finding is consistent with studies conducted by Weinstein *et al. (*2004), Kumashiro, (2009) and Casey *et al*., (2013) that suggest that discriminatory practices of the larger society are often preserved and replicated by schools.

This study also established that the school's cultural ethos, which dated from an earlier dispensation, had been preserved and become a barricade to social integration, as it caused a conflict between teachers and learners. The school's cultural ethos caused conflict between teachers as well; culturally diverse teachers disagreed on the implementation of the LBM strategies prescribed in the school's code of conduct. Despite the discordance and the changed demographics of the learner population, the original white-only school culture still prevailed. This finding confirms the argument advanced by Gay (2010) that the "mainstream cultural fabric", which is primarily of European and middle class origin, is deeply rooted in the structures, systems, atmosphere and protocol of most schools which now have culturally diverse learner populations**.**

The study also revealed that teachers were not conscious of the economic context of the learners. Teachers obliged learners to use electronic gadgets such as tablets for academic purposes in the classroom, but some of the learners from the previously disadvantaged ethnic groups did not have the required resource. This was evident in the Geography classroom, where almost a third of the class were not in possession of tablets, which were required for the lesson; nevertheless, the teacher did not want learners to share tablets or work jointly, as she feared that leaners might start talking to each other.

The study also established that the poor socio-economic conditions in which some of the culturally diverse learners found themselves were likely to cause the negative perceptions that were ascribed to them by the teachers. For example, most of the learners that were perceived to be lacking a work ethic, did not bring a book or did not have a tablet came from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. It could therefore be concluded that the policies and practices of the school benefited learners from the advantaged socio-economic backgrounds, while marginalising those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

The findings further revealed that some teachers were not conscious or mindful of the political context of the education system. This was evident in teachers' views of learners' awareness of basic human rights – such as the right to human dignity, the right to education and the right to freedom of expression – as a sense of entitlement, i.e. presumptuousness. The teachers felt that learners misunderstood their rights and were not aware of the responsibilities that came with such rights. The study revealed the importance of responsibility teaching with regard to the above-mentioned basic human rights to help learners understand the responsibility that goes with human rights.

Overall, findings with regard to teachers' lack of understanding of the broader social, economic and political context of the education system suggest that teachers' understanding and practices lagged behind in terms of propositions made by cultural difference theorists such as Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000), Gay (2000, 2010) and Irvine (2003) who suggest that instructional skills and awareness of cultural differences in classroom interaction are important, but not enough, and that teachers need to develop the courage to contribute to the dismantling of the status quo by

helping learners to uphold their cultural distinctiveness while at the same time allowing them to develop critical perspectives that contest inequities that schools preserve.

6.3.4 Commitment to building caring classroom communities

Teachers' commitment to building caring classroom communities is an important element of cultural responsiveness. In this study, challenges that confronted teachers as regards their commitment to building caring classroom communities included lack of a sense of care, relegation of collaborative learning and promotion of independent learning, and inadequate learner-teacher relationships.

Some of the teachers perceived their job as only delivering content and not dealing with issues beyond instruction or concerning learners' complicated situations. One of the teachers said: "*…I don't deal with their complicated situations …I will refer them immediately…",* adding that she could not afford to give learners individual attention because of their numbers. This demonstrated the teacher's lack of time to create relationships with learners and to acquire knowledge about their life worlds. Weinstein *et al.* (2004) argue that while systemic restraints on caring, such as too many learners in one classroom and pressure to cover the curriculum, are often mentioned by teachers, this does not justify the teacher spending no time on creating relationships with learners. Irvine (2003) adds that while it is important for teachers to deliver content, that may not be enough, because teachers need to perceive teaching as a calling, be culturally sensitive, ensure a sense of identity with their learners, and be caring.

In addition to the latter finding, this study also established that when a learner's behaviour became problematic, teachers quit on them quickly, as they did not want to get involved. The instance of the African learner the Discipline Officer encountered in May and whose school bag was almost empty, with the last work written on 28 January, serves as an example; this problematic situation was never reported to the Discipline Office by any of the learner's teachers. In addition, while the Rwandan learner was perceived by most teachers as problematic, none of the teachers had referred the learner to the Discipline Office. While teachers might not have been able to solve the issues, they could have shown care by reporting the matters to the Discipline Office, as any behavioural issue may actually be a cry for help. If learners

do not sense or experience that their teachers care for them, they will not be interested in whatever the teachers want them to learn or know (Postholm, 2013). Milner and Tenore (2010) give an example in their study where a learner's problematic behaviour was resolved by one of the teachers immersing himself in the learner's life world/experiences by getting involved in the learners' activities outside the classroom walls. They argue that the knowledge and understanding teachers obtain about their learners when they immerse themselves in learners' life worlds will be incorporated into their classroom management practices.

This study established that the teacher's sense of care towards learners is directly linked to the teacher's commitment to building caring classroom communities. While most teachers could not demonstrate a sense of care towards learners, there was a significant incident that illustrated how a caring classroom community could be built. A teacher made an effort to resolve a learner-learner conflict that occurred in the classroom in relation to xenophobia and discrimination against the Rwandan learner by an African South African learner. By ordering the offensive learner to write a letter of apology to the Rwandan learner and to read it out to the whole class, and then ordering the two learners to hug each other in front of all the other learners, a good attempt was made towards building a caring classroom community. This practice is consistent with Weinstein *et al.*'s *(*2004) proposition that teachers are to create learning environments that hold high respect for diversity and prevent marginalisation of learners, endorsing connectedness and a sense of community.

While collaborative learning is one of the mechanisms to accomplish a caring classroom community, it was not encouraged in this case study. Some of the teachers said that they avoided engaging learners in teamwork because they would make noise. Even the teacher who admitted that he perceived collaborative learning as advantageous for deeper learning seldom used it to the learners' advantage. As indicated earlier, learners who did not have tablets were not allowed to share with those who had, as they would cause trouble by talking to each other. It can be concluded that a lack of collaborative learning was clearly a systemic and institutional barrier, as the school ethos emphasised quietness in the classrooms. Independent learning was therefore the most feasible method of learning for the culturally diverse learners. The literature (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2002; Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Brown, 2004; Bondy *et al.,* 2007; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Postholm, 2013;

Skiba *et al.,* 2016; Martin *et al.,* 2016) suggests that culturally responsive teachers make deliberate efforts to maintain connectedness by encouraging collaborative learning and a sense of community among learners.

Evidence obtained in this study also demonstrates that building positive teacher-learner relationships is another important element towards building caring classroom communities. Unhealthy relationships were evident between some of the teachers and most of the learners: teachers used harsh words, shouted at learners and would generalise when aggravated. It was found that where teachers were extremely autocratic and often treated their learners with contempt, most of the learners in their classrooms became unreceptive, and some developed indifferent behaviours. This finding corresponds with the studies conducted by Milner and Tenore (2010) that recognise learners' ability to discern the unwarranted detachment between their teachers and themselves, and that it is such disconnects that eventually determine learners' actions**.**

6.3.5 Capability and willingness to use culturally appropriate LBM strategies

It was found that because of their diverse perspectives, teachers employed different approaches and strategies to LBM. Most of these were more teacher-centred than learner-centred and not culturally responsive. Literature that supports a learner-centred, culturally responsive approach to LBM (Obidah & Teel, 2001; Weinstein *et al.,* 2003, 2004; Brown, 2004; Brown, 2007; Bondy *et al.,* 2007; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Gay, 2010; Cartledge *et al.,* 2015) sees the ultimate aim of classroom management not as gaining control or ensuring compliance, but as offering all learners equitable learning opportunities, and thus propose that teachers' classroom management practices should be culturally responsive and contextually appropriate.

In light of this definition of classroom management, the discussion below focuses on the teachers' use of culturally appropriate classroom management strategies. Aspects that are discussed are the physical classroom arrangement and the specific LBM strategies/procedures that teachers employed, focusing on whether they were culturally responsive or not.

It was clear that the teachers had not been able to create a physical environment that promoted a sense of classroom community and a sense of belonging for the culturally diverse learner population in their respective classrooms. For example, the

traditional seating arrangement used in most of the classrooms did not allow collaborative learning or social interaction among learners. Lack of appreciation of diverse cultures and heritages was also evident; each classroom had only subject-related posters on its walls, with no displays that indicated cultural diversity. In this regard, the teachers' practice contradicted propositions in the literature (Weinstein *et al.,* 2003) that teachers should use the environment strategically to advocate high respect for diversity and to endorse connectedness and a sense of community. Consistent with this finding, the study conducted by Martin (2004) points out that the arrangement of classroom space has the potential to communicate expectations of behaviour that are maintained by institutional policies.

It was found that while all teachers were expected by the Discipline Office to obey the school's code of conduct, which was more inclined to the behaviourist approach to guide their LBM interventions, most of the teachers used their own discretion. The application of the school's code of conduct and the LBM tools prescribed in it are discussed below, followed by a discussion of LBM strategies used in the teachers' discretion.

The LBM tools prescribed in the school's code of conduct, such as issuing the blue slip, referral to the Discipline Office and working with parents, were not consistently used by all teachers. Some teachers considered the blue slip a waste of time because it did not have immediate consequences for learners, and as a result they repeated the same infractions. Teachers' perception of the use of the blue slip as a waste of time corresponds with the findings in the literature (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mestry & Khumalo, 2012) that teachers view the alternative disciplinary strategies that are recommended in the schools' codes of conduct as ineffective.

The study also revealed that, for various reasons, some of the teachers did not refer learners to the Discipline Office: some of the teachers were adamant that they had sufficient LBM skills; others feared that they could be viewed as not having classroom management skills if they referred learners to the Office. The Discipline Officer, however, perceived the teachers' failure to refer learners as negligence, because they sometimes did not report critical matters that they could not handle. While some of the teachers maintained that they seldom referred learners to the Discipline Office, it was noted when observing its operation that the Office was

constantly receiving phone calls from teachers requesting the Discipline Officer to intervene in disciplinary issues as well as with referrals from most of the other teachers. The large number of referrals received by this office was consistent with the study conducted by Milner and Tenore (2010), which found that due to varying cultural norms of social interaction between teachers and learners, alarming referral patterns did arise in culturally diverse classrooms.

The study also revealed that although working with parents was one of the LBM strategies prescribed in the school's code of conduct, this strategy was not effectively used. Working with parents was a challenge, as parents would not respond when teachers called about their children's misbehaviours. It was, however, also established that the teachers often contacted parents when their child had broken a rule, but rarely in an attempt to know and understand the cultural background of the learner's family. The teachers' practice of only contacting parents to report learners' transgressions, as reflected in this finding, falls short of working with parents optimally to manage the behaviour of culturally diverse learners. Weinstein *et al.* (2003) and Sugai *et al.* (2012) suggest that since parents' views about what comprises appropriate behaviour may be different from those of the school, the inclusion of families as resources to help determine school expectations is vital.

While the findings of this study demonstrate that most of the teachers did not adhere to the school's code of conduct, it was also established that some teachers who identified with the school's cultural ethos and had been schooled under this ethos coerced all learners to comply with the stipulations in the school's code of conduct and also criticised other teachers who diverged from such stipulations. This was evident in one white teacher's narrative of other teachers' deviation from the provisions in the school's code of conduct as regards learners entering the classroom. While the teacher's narrative demonstrated that she realised that "*you cannot force someone to change their ways that they have been doing it for years"* (Ms Visagie), she insisted that all teachers should speak out of one mouth. Since the teachers also came from culturally diverse backgrounds, the practice of coercing all to comply without attempting to find out about their background may well be viewed as promotion of cultural assimilation. The literature (Chisholm & Sujee, 2006; Meier & Hartell, 2009; Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010; Soudien, 2012; Marks,

2015) disputes the cultural assimilation practice, whereby those from the mainstream culture decide and coerce those from the non-mainstream culture to acquire or put up with the practices of the mainstream culture. The above-mentioned literature refers mainly to cultural assimilation of learners; coercion of teachers into cultural assimilation as found in this study emerges as knowledge additional to that offered in the above-mentioned studies.

A more interesting finding is that the teacher's sentiment was shared by the Discipline Office, which insisted on a standard approach to LBM by all teachers. This appeared from the Discipline Officer's description of the situation of not having a unified approach as a kind of a 'yo-yo' environment; she advocated a single, overriding culture. This practice confirms the assertion by Nkomo and Vandeyar (2009) that the former model C schools have a mainstream cultural plan that influences the assimilation of non-dominant cultures.

When teachers perceived the school's code of conduct as ineffective, they resorted to LBM strategies that they perceived as working well or strategies that they were comfortable with. In exercising their discretion, teachers who were more inclined to the teacher-centred approach resorted to punitive and insensitive strategies, others to ignoring learners' misbehaviour, and a few resorted to learner-centred strategies. Details of these findings are discussed below.

It was found that most of the teachers employed punitive and insensitive strategies that caused learners emotional pain, such as harsh verbal reprimands and derogatory remarks, as exemplified in "…*We are here to teach you, not to handle your nonsense"* (*Observation of* Ms Pienaar, Afrikaans class, 17 May 2018) or instructing learners to sit on the cold floor or to leave the classroom. It is apparent that teachers' practices in this regard might not lead to the outcome teachers desired; besides, they violated the dignity of the learner as a human being. This finding supports the assertion advanced by Alberto and Troutman (2003), namely that the use of punitive and insensitive strategies may stimulate retaliation and aggression and amplify anxiety in learners, none of which are desired or desirable outcomes.

Teachers were found to apply punitive and insensitive strategies to all learners, irrespective of the circumstances leading to the infraction – even for infractions that were subjectively interpreted. This one-size-fits-all approach was out of line with

Milner and Tenore's (2010) understanding that cultural responsiveness is about equity in practice.

There was one teacher who preferred to apply the principle of differentiation instead of meting out the same punishment to all learners. This teacher's use of a differentiation technique was based on the reasoning that with some learners, if you instruct them to leave the classroom, you are in a way giving them what they want. Differentiating between cases showed that the teacher made an effort to know and understand the learner's thoughts/values. This knowledge and understanding was in this case a precursor to the teacher's action, and this may imply cultural responsiveness.

Some of the teachers punished learners by deliberately ignoring them. However, it was found that at times this strategy was not effective, because while attention-seeking learners were not getting the teacher's attention, they sometimes were able to get attention from some of their classmates, which in a way reinforced their attention-seeking behaviour. This finding is in agreement with literature (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006) that cautions teachers to be wary when using purposeful ignoring, as it may sometimes reinforce the learner's behaviour and aggravate the problem.

It was also found that the "call response pattern", which most teachers rarely used, was constantly allowed by one teacher. The literature (Gay, 2000, 2002; Weinstein *et al.,* 2004) correctly views call response as a culturally responsive LBM measure; it encourages learner participation, unlike the passive-receptive discourse pattern that is encouraged by most behaviourist inclined teachers. While one can assume that the teacher in this study was culturally sensitive, the teacher labelled himself as "culturally blind". This is contrary to one of the prerequisites of CRCM, which requires teachers in culturally diverse classrooms to have knowledge and understanding of learner's cultural backgrounds, but the teacher explained that he tried not to pay attention to cultural differences in order to avoid bias. Irvine (2003) maintains that when teachers disregard distinctive cultural identities of their learners, they fall short as culturally responsive teachers. Therefore, this teacher's acceptance of the call response pattern can be rather explained by his laissez-faire type of leadership. New knowledge that emerged from this study with regard to the use of the call response pattern is that some teachers who allow it may not be culturally responsive, but may be familiar with the pattern or using a laissez-faire type leadership.

Very few teachers endeavoured to employ the SEL approach to LBM, which included cultivating a sense of responsibility through mutual respect between themselves and their learners and encouraging learner engagement and participation in the classroom. Evidence to this effect is that very few teachers were authoritative, yet considerate; they were able to command authority in a caring manner. The LBM practice of these teachers was in agreement with the characterisation of teachers who employed the SEL approach as 'warm demanders' (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). These are teachers who, while setting demands for their learners, remain attentive, warm and supportive. As they encourage learner participation and engagement, these teachers are able to stimulate learner interest as well as cooperation (Evertson & Emmer, 2013).

It was also found that some of the teachers, when interviewed, subscribed to a learner-centred LBM strategy that might be effective if properly practised; but when observed in practice, these teachers actually employed a teacher-centred approach that turned out to be ineffective. This was evident in the practice of the teacher who described how he created personal relationships by having an informal individual talk on the playing fields with a learner who constantly misbehaved in the classroom – a learner-centred strategy that is inclined to the SEL approach and could aid learners to acquire intrinsic motivation and responsible behaviour (Schwab & Elias, 2014). However, in practice this teacher's classroom was the unruliest. It may be concluded that when teachers employ an intervention to cultivate intrinsic motivation and responsible behaviour by having an informal, individual talk with a learner outside the walls of the classroom, it must not be a once-off action with only one learner. Teachers must be committed to creating personal relationships with all the learners who may be causing the state of the classroom to be chaotic.

Taking into consideration the findings concerning teachers who allowed a "call response pattern" and the creation of personal relationships as established in this study, it can be determined that some of the interventions used by teachers that may be perceived as culturally responsive are actually not culturally responsive. Allowing a call response pattern as a learner-centred approach needs to accommodate culturally diverse learners' discourse styles and should not promote or accommodate laissez-faire leadership. Creation of personal relationships as a culturally responsive

LBM approach needs to yield the intended outcome of influencing learners to embrace the vision of learning and productive engagement in the classroom.

Generally, the findings indicate a number of patterns of behaviour management among teachers: teacher-centred strategies that include punitive and insensitive strategies; use of strategies that were contained in the school's code of conduct, but were still teacher-centred; teachers' use of their discretion, with some of their strategies still being teacher-centred and only a few teachers whose strategies were inclined to the learner-centred SEL approach, with some traces of cultural responsiveness; as well as strategies that could be (erroneously) perceived as culturally responsive while they were not. Based on the above patterns of behaviour management, it can therefore be concluded that teachers' practices were not yet culturally responsive.

A noteworthy finding is that while teachers are expected to manage behaviours of learners in a culturally responsive and contextually appropriate manner, teachers unanimously stated that they had not received any formal training or development that gave them the necessary competencies for managing behaviours of learners from culturally diverse backgrounds. This finding confirms reports in the literature (Gay, 2000, 2002, 2010, 2013; Irvine, 2003; Banks & Banks, 2004; Marks, 2015) that indicate that the majority of teachers state that very little, if anything, was done in their pre-service teacher education programmes to prepare them for the present-day culturally diverse classrooms. This finding has implications for the preparation of teachers to work with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds.

6.4 Conclusion

The study revealed that, for a number of reasons, most teachers' practices were not culturally responsive. In this chapter, the main elements that explain why the LBM practices of teachers were considered not culturally responsive were discussed. Figure 6.1 below summarises the insights derived from the study of LBM practices of teachers and puts forward for consideration a framework that explains why teachers' practices may fall short of being culturally responsive.

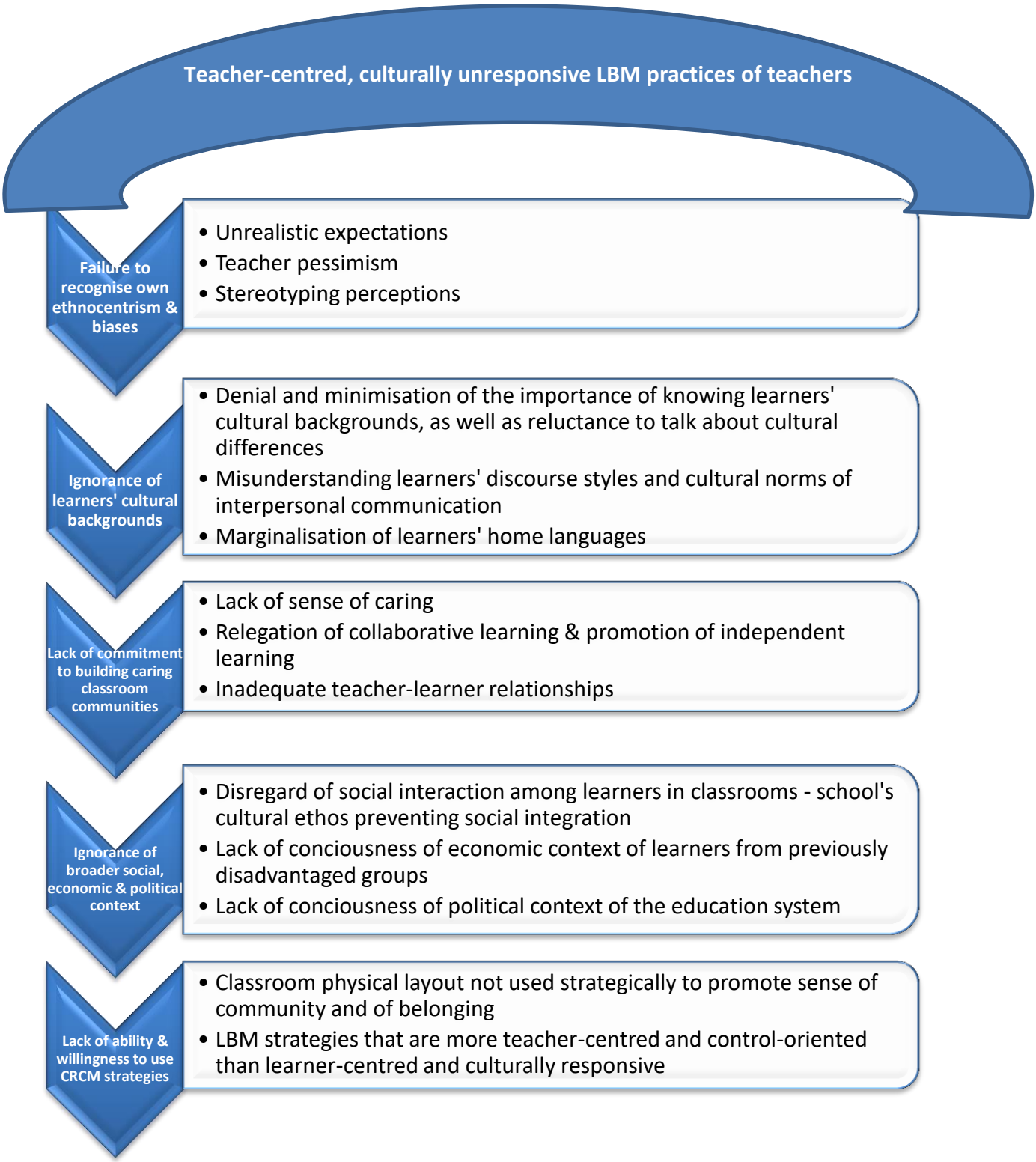

Figure 6.1: Framework for conceptualising teachers' LBM practices that may impede cultural responsiveness

The major elements that impeded teachers' LBM practices from being culturally responsive (as represented in figure 6.1) are described below.

First and foremost, the teachers could not recognise their own ethnocentrism and biases. These were demonstrated by their unrealistic expectations of the behaviours of culturally diverse learners, which in most cases resulted in their expectations not being met. The unmet expectations further resulted in the development of pessimistic attitudes among these teachers and aggravated their frustrations. This state of affairs exacerbated the disconnect between themselves and their learners. As a result of the ethnocentric preconceptions they held about learners from cultural backgrounds different from theirs, they also developed stereotyping perceptions which led to some learners being marginalised.

Secondly, the teachers were ignorant of their learners' cultural backgrounds. This was exacerbated by their denial or minimisation of the importance of knowing learners' cultural backgrounds, their reluctance to talk about cultural differences among themselves and with their learners, as well as the school's disregard of learners' home languages. As a result of lack of knowledge of their learners' cultural backgrounds, teachers misunderstood and misinterpreted learners' communication styles and cultural norms of interpersonal communication.

Thirdly, most teachers demonstrated a lack of commitment to building a caring classroom community. They often seemed not to care for learners, focusing solely on timeous completion of the academic work. Neither did they encourage a sense of connectedness among learners through collaborative learning; they wanted to maintain quiet classrooms and therefore promoted only independent learning. Poor teacher-learner relationships also hampered the creation of a caring classroom community. Teachers' lack of commitment to building caring classroom communities was also found to be related to the systemic and institutional barrier inherent in the cultural fabric of the school.

Fourthly, teachers seemed not to be conscious of the broader social, economic and political context of the South African education system. Their lack of consciousness of the social context was mostly demonstrated by not promoting social interactions such as encouraging learner engagement in teamwork among the culturally diverse learners. Teachers' seating arrangement in the staffroom also reflected ethnic and

cultural divides. Lack of consciousness of the economic context of the education system was also demonstrated by teachers' not encouraging or allowing learners to work jointly in cases where other learners did not possess the required learning resources. Teachers' perceptions of learners' awareness of basic human rights as unacceptable behaviour demonstrated their lack of consciousness of the political context of the education system.

Lastly, most teachers seemed to have limited ability to use culturally responsive classroom management strategies. They did not use the physical layout of the classroom to promote a sense of community and of belonging for the culturally diverse learner population in their classrooms. Teachers' limited ability, and in some cases unwillingness, to use culturally responsive strategies was demonstrated by their employment of mostly teacher-centred, control-oriented interventions to manage behaviours of learners. Their limited ability to utilise CRCM strategies seemed also to have been exacerbated by lack of training and development in preparing them to handle behaviours of culturally diverse learners.

The next chapter will draw conclusions from this study and accentuate the main contribution of the study to the body of knowledge. Recommendations for practice and suggestions for further research will also be made.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief background to the problem and aim of the study. The main conclusions drawn from the findings of the study are presented. The chapter also accentuates the main contribution of the study to the body of knowledge and makes recommendations for practice and further research.

7.2 Summary of the background and aim of the study

While South African desegregated schools were opened to learners from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds with the aim to establish social integration and to provide equitable opportunities to all learners, the critical goal of social integration has often not been realised in these schools. One of the areas that demonstrate this setback is teachers' LBM practices. Despite the findings in the South African literature that suggest that teachers are finding most of the alternative LBM strategies that were recommended by the Department of Education ineffective, and the finding that South African desegregated schools are generally struggling to achieve social integration, not much knowledge has been documented that focuses on the elements of teachers' LBM practices that may hamper or enable cultural responsiveness in South African culturally diverse classrooms.

Inspired by the necessity to give attention to this gap, this study was carried out to investigate how teachers were managing the behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms of high schools in South Africa. This was the primary question the study aimed to respond to. Five secondary research questions were formulated. The first question was directed at identifying the LBM challenges that teachers experienced in culturally diverse classrooms. The intention of the second question was to establish how/whether teachers recognised their own ethnocentrism and biases as regards behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms. The third question was intended to determine the extent to which teachers understood learners' cultural backgrounds. The fourth question was intended to determine the approaches and strategies that teachers used to manage behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms and whether such approaches and strategies were culturally responsive and contextually appropriate. The fifth question was directed at

ascertaining how/whether teachers' LBM practices promoted caring classroom communities. The conclusions in the following section attempt to answer these research questions.

7.3 Conclusions of the study

What learner behaviour management challenges do teachers experience in culturally diverse classrooms? The study identified the following challenges that teachers experienced in managing the behaviour of learners in a culturally diverse classroom. (a) *Perceived learners' lack of work ethics.* This challenge was largely reported by teachers of white Afrikaans culture (the dominant culture in the historically white school), as most African learners (learners from a non-dominant culture) seemed not to maintain the behavioural standard expected by these teachers. It was, however, established in this study that not all that teachers perceived as unethical behaviour would be perceived as such in these learners' cultural environments. (b) *Learners' sense of entitlement.* While learners of the non-dominant cultures demonstrated awareness of the human right to education when instructed to leave the classroom, the right to human dignity when their rights were violated by teachers' insensitive and derogatory remarks, and the right to freedom of expression when they were expected to be quiet at all times, these were perceived by teachers as learners having a sense of entitlement. (c) *Learners' indifferent behaviour*. As teachers often evaluated learners' behaviour through their own cultural lens and employed a one-size-fits-all approach to all cases, irrespective of the circumstances leading to the infraction, most learners demonstrated indifferent behaviour when reprimanded. (d) *Lack of parental involvement and support.* Parents were most times not responsive to teachers' letters concerning their children's behaviour.

These challenges point to teacher-learner cultural disconnects and teacher-parent cultural disconnects as a source of most LBM challenges that were experienced by teachers in culturally diverse classrooms.

It can therefore be concluded that when most of the teachers and most of the learners come from different cultural backgrounds, conflicts relating to behaviour management are likely to occur as a result of disparities associated with cultural norms. In addition, when teachers and parents of learners are from different cultural backgrounds, teachers are likely not to receive the support and parental involvement

that they expect in relation to LBM due to different views of what actually constitutes inappropriate behaviour and what does not. Furthermore, while contemporary learners need to be taught to balance awareness of basic human rights with responsibility, the perception of a 'sense of entitlement' among learners is likely to become misused by teachers as a justification for denying learners' awareness of basic human rights in culturally diverse schools.

The above-mentioned challenges can be explained by analysing teachers' practices according to the fundamental components of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM).

How do teachers recognise their own ethnocentrism and biases about behaviours of learners in culturally diverse classrooms? The study firmly indicates that teachers could not recognise that their own ethnocentrism and biases hampered their LBM practices from being culturally responsive. Their LBM practices were certainly based on their own cultural values and standards, which they strongly perceived as both normal and correct. The evidence gathered demonstrated that teachers' ethnocentric expectations of learners' behaviour by and large contributed to learners' incapacity to meet expectations and were the source of their doubts that learners would ever meet expectations as well as of their stereotyping perceptions. Teachers' ethnocentrism also became a contributing factor to their disinclination to acknowledge that most of their expectations might be unrealistic.

From these findings it can be concluded that CRLBM may not be attainable when teachers' LBM practices are driven by an ethnocentric worldview. When teachers' expectations of learner behaviour are influenced by their own cultural mores, most of their expectations are likely not to be met by culturally diverse learners.

How do teachers understand their learners' cultural backgrounds? The study conclusively proves that teachers' lack of knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds as well as lack of understanding of the importance thereof stood in the way of CRLBM. Fundamental to ignorance of learners' cultural backgrounds was the culture-neutral attitude that was held by most teachers, which underestimated cultural differences. Due to lack of knowledge of the learner's cultural background, teachers were not aware that learner's behaviour could be culturally influenced. As a result, communication styles and culture-related norms of interpersonal

communication of mostly African learners were subjectively interpreted by teachers. In addition, the fact that African learners were most frequently reprimanded for talking to one another and for engaging in call response patterns could likely be a demonstration of their collective and participatory attributes which teachers could not understand.

It can thus be concluded that when teachers are not interculturally knowledgeable, particularly in relation to behaviours that may be culturally influenced as well as cultural ways of communicating, their LBM challenges are likely to escalate – as they are unlikely to be culturally responsive.

How do teachers promote caring classroom communities? Fundamental to teachers' promotion of caring classroom communities is teachers' sense of care and the promotion of a sense of connectedness between themselves and their learners as well as among the learners. The study consistently demonstrated teachers' lack of a sense of care, as they could not create time to understand or immerse themselves in learners' life worlds. Furthermore, the teachers could not promote a sense of community among culturally diverse learners through encouraging collaborative learning and allowing learners to share their views of the type of community they wanted to live in, which could have been an opportunity to invite learners to develop a sense of responsibility, a sense of belonging and of connectedness. Instead, the prevailing alienating and 'push-away' teaching practices only intensified teacher-learner disconnects, as well as disconnects among learners.

It can be concluded that when teachers do not demonstrate care for learners, do not encourage a sense of collaboration and connectedness among learners and participatory engagement of learners to hear their perspectives, they fall short of being culturally responsive and, more importantly, are not enabling social integration.

What approaches and strategies do teachers use to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms? Most of the behaviour management strategies that were employed by teachers were teacher-centred, control-oriented, one-size-fits all and inclined to the behaviourist approach. This was because the school's code of conduct, as the standard tool for managing behaviours of learners, was mostly based on the behaviourist ideology (which was also enforced by the Discipline Office). Since the staff complement consisted of teachers from diverse cultural

backgrounds and with different worldviews, the learner-centred SEL approach was employed by very few teachers who used their discretion. In using their discretion, other teachers still used teacher-centred strategies, with a few teachers using strategies that could be mistaken as learner-centred or culturally responsive, but were actually laissez-faire oriented. This assortment of approaches and associated strategies resulted in teachers setting different classroom rules.

It can be concluded that given the lack of intercultural synergy with regard to the LBM approaches and strategies, teachers' divergent expectations and divergent classroom rules were likely to confuse learners as to what could be acceptable behaviour and what could not.

How do teachers manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms of high schools in South Africa? In the main, it can be concluded that the teachers' traditional use of the behaviourist approach and strategies substantially stood in the way of CRLBM. Concomitantly, teachers' ethnocentric belief that their own culture was central to reality and thus represented the perfect or definite way things should be done became the main barrier to their cultural responsiveness. As a result of most teachers' behaviourist one-size-fits all LBM practices, which seemed to be tailored to lead to cultural assimilation, their LBM interventions could not provide equitable disciplinary practices, nor could they have a positive and progressive effect on behaviours of culturally diverse learners. LBM practices of the few teachers that were inclined to the learner-centred SEL approach could not fully satisfy the prerequisites of CRCM/CRLBM, as they fell short of promoting a sense of community among learners through encouraging collaborative learning, and also fell short of knowing learners' cultural backgrounds. In addition, the LBM practices of the few other teachers that could be (misguidedly) perceived as culturally responsive certainly indicated that not all practices that might be perceived as culturally responsive actually were culturally responsive.

Most importantly, the study proved conclusively that systemic and institutional barriers associated with the cultural fabric of the school, such as stringent restrictions on learners' talking to each other, lack of commitment to building cohesive classroom communities, marginalisation of the home languages of culturally diverse learners and the Discipline Office's insistence on a standard, but not interculturally

synchronised approach to LBM played a major role in preventing the successful implementation of policy imperatives that were intended to promote social integration and equitable learning opportunities for all through desegregation of South African schools. This has definite implications for educating teachers and preparing them to deal with a culturally diverse learner population.

7.4 Recommendations for practice

Proceeding from conclusions made on the basis of the findings that emerged from this study, a considerable number of recommendations are proposed in order to make certain that LBM practices of teachers in schools and classrooms that have the same context can be culturally responsive.

Recommendation 1

As regards teacher-learner and teacher-parent disconnects with respect to LBM, teachers should endeavour to understand and to view LBM through a multicultural lens, as such understanding will prevent them from using their own cultural values and standards to manage behaviours of a culturally diverse learner population. In addition, learners' parents should be included as resources to help determine the school's expectations of learner behaviour and the development of the schools' code of conduct, so that the cultural norms of diverse cultures can be considered for all to buy in and co-own the school's code of conduct. Learner participation in developing shared standards of behaviour and how these can be maintained should also be sought to ensure co-ownership by all stakeholders. This could help avoid potential disagreement with regard to what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and what constitutes appropriate behaviour.

Recommendation 2

For reconciliation of learners' awareness of basic human rights and responsibility, both teachers and parents should ensure that knowledge and understanding of the basic human rights and of the associated responsibility are imparted to learners simultaneously. Teachers should ensure that they understand the provisions in the Constitution relating to the rights that learners have and the provisions in the Schools Act that govern the desegregation of schools. At the same time, teachers should desist from using the concept of 'sense of entitlement' to deny learners' awareness of and/or claim to basic human rights. Teachers should understand that with learners'

awareness of basic human rights, a sense of entitlement among learners can emerge from feelings of being mistreated or can be the learner's way of saying 'I deserve to be respected as a human being - I deserve better than what I am getting', which should be perceived as a healthy shift towards self-respect.

Recommendation 3

Teachers should endeavour to move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism by developing an inclusive outlook, accepting cultural differences and adapting their perspective to take the existing cultural differences in learner behaviour into account. Teachers should also seek intercultural development in any informal way possible, even before receiving formal intercultural development. Teachers need to adjust their discourse styles to be consistent with learners' cultural backgrounds, and this can only occur if teachers acquaint themselves with and understand learners' cultural backgrounds. In addition, teachers should embrace the home languages of culturally diverse learners, as languages are carriers of culture. Home languages of culturally diverse learners should be taught at school instead of Afrikaans as the second language. If language teachers are not available in the existing teacher complement within the school, they could be recruited or sourced from dependable institutions like the Pan South African Language Board.

Recommendation 4

Teachers should make an effort to build caring classroom communities, to build positive teacher-learner relationships and learner-learner relationships and to promote interactions between learners through collaborative learning and sharing of perspectives, for it is in this way that they can enable social integration.

Recommendation 5

Cross-cultural collaboration of culturally diverse teachers should be instituted. Being open about your own LBM challenges and communicating those challenges to other colleagues with the intention of getting guidance from them could be helpful to teachers who teach learners from cultural backgrounds that are different from theirs. While cross-cultural collaboration between teachers of diverse cultural backgrounds would not be an easy venture, building trust will be imperative for this endeavour to be productive. Teachers may even consider inviting feedback from learners with regard to their approaches and strategies to LBM as they proceed with this venture.

Recommendation 6

An honest and constructive dialogue about cultural diversity and cultural differences through organised workshops is imperative for the entire teaching staff. It is envisaged that such a dialogue could eventually help to transform the cultural fabric of historically white schools that inhibits teachers from achieving cultural responsiveness and culturally diverse learners from enjoying equitable learning opportunities. Such a dialogue could be helpful in gradually developing the requisite culturally responsive mindset in teachers.

Recommendation 7

Strategic recruitment of teachers from non-dominant cultures into historically white schools should be prioritised, as these teachers could be used as cultural translators for teachers from the dominant culture. As a large number of the learners in the present-day culturally diverse public schools are African learners, and considering that cultural disconnects occur mainly between African learners and white teachers, the proposed strategic recruitment could help facilitate understanding of the cultural backgrounds of the non-dominant groups.

Recommendation 8

Cultural synchronisation of LBM approaches and strategies should be instituted to stamp out the cultural assimilation approach to LBM. Teachers should be able to adapt and respond to learners equitably rather than use the same management strategies for all learners. The intention of this venture is also to make teachers realise that the mainstream cultural fabric, which has been long preserved within the historically white schools while non-dominant cultures have been ignored, can no longer be preserved, but can only be transformed.

Recommendation 9

The physical classroom layout should be used strategically by teachers to support social integration through cluster-type seating arrangements that could be used effectively to promote a sense of classroom community and learner connectedness. The physical classroom appearance should also promote a sense of belonging for the culturally diverse learners by means of displays on the classroom walls that support cultural diversity and exemplify unity in diversity.

Recommendation 10

Teacher education programmes that are offered at universities and colleges of education should prioritise the inclusion of intercultural development and acquisition of the requisite intercultural competencies, as these aspects of teacher preparation are crucial for the appropriate management of the behaviour of learners whose cultural backgrounds are different from their own. While intercultural competencies can be gained through the acquisition of intercultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity (Dusi *et al.*,2017; Perry & Southwell, 2011), it is proposed that intercultural knowledge should be obtained through multicultural coursework that can be included in pre-service teacher education programmes. However, since intercultural sensitivity cannot be acquired through formal education, but requires intercultural experience, "domestic cross-cultural experimental placements" (Marx & Moss, 2011) are also recommended. This implies that in order to develop intercultural sensitivity, pre-service teachers should be given an opportunity to experience teaching in monocultural schools with cultural backgrounds that are different from theirs, such as an African, white, Indian or coloured monocultural school.

Recommendation 11

As it was found in this study that education reform policy imperatives are definitely not effectively practised, it is recommended that monitoring and evaluation interventions be resolutely instituted in desegregated schools to ensure effective practice of these policy imperatives. In addition, teacher performance appraisal that includes assessment of the application of intercultural competencies should be instituted.

7.5 Contribution to the growth of knowledge

The main contribution of this study to the body of knowledge is that it addresses a gap in the literature concerning the neglected area of LBM in the context of cultural diversity in South Africa, with particular attention to specific elements in teachers' practices that may impede achievement of CRLBM. This study has, in addition, developed a framework for conceptualising teachers' LBM practices in order to facilitate understanding of factors that have a bearing on LBM practices of teachers that are not culturally responsive. The proposed framework can be used in schools and classrooms that are similar to those in this case study.

An additional contribution of this study to the growth of knowledge is that it has unearthed the following new insights that may not have received much attention from international literature on CRCM:

- While most of the teachers' expectations of learner behaviour were found to be unrealistic and not met by most learners, learners likewise have unmet expectations from their teachers.
- Besides the divergent worldviews of teachers and learners from different cultural backgrounds, the worldviews of teachers from different cultural backgrounds also differ.
- Besides the well-documented practice of cultural assimilation of learners from non-dominant cultures into the dominant culture/cultural ethos of historically white schools, cultural assimilation is similarly enforced on teachers from non-dominant cultures.
- Some of the African teachers feel that white learners demonstrate supremacy tendencies over them in culturally diverse classrooms.
- While teachers' misunderstanding of culturally diverse learners' norms of interpersonal communication has been accounted for in the literature, a new insight emerging from this study concerns a misunderstanding of culturally diverse learners' norms of interpersonal communication with reference to culture and gender disparities.
- Another new knowledge emerging from this study with regard to teachers allowing a call response pattern is that some teachers who allow it may not be culturally responsive, but may be practising laissez-faire leadership.

The main limitation of this study lies in the fact that due to its design, the findings cannot be generalised. Nonetheless, the strong point of this study is its contribution of first-hand data derived from observing teachers' practices in situ and from their lived experience accounts that can inform or guide policy and practice on issues concerning LBM practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms.

7.6 Recommendations for further research

Further research in the following areas is recommended:

An extensive study could be carried out on LBM practices of teachers in the broader education sector with the focus on culturally diverse schools to strengthen the accuracy of the data established in this case study, taking into account that the current study involved participants in a bounded context.

In addition, an in-depth study that focuses on understanding the perceptions of culturally diverse learners with respect to their teachers' LBM practices could be pursued.

A study using mixed methods could be conducted on the same topic to obtain a broad view of the findings of this study and to allow generalisation.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: Classroom Observation Schedule

Grade: Grade 9B **Date of observation:**

Name of teacher: **Period/Time:**

Subject: **Number of learners: 33**

AREAS OF OBSERVATION

The areas of observation by the researcher (in this observation schedule) are based on the research questions of the study.

1. Learner behaviour management challenges:

- Teacher – learner interactions during the class period

Learner's action	Teacher's reaction

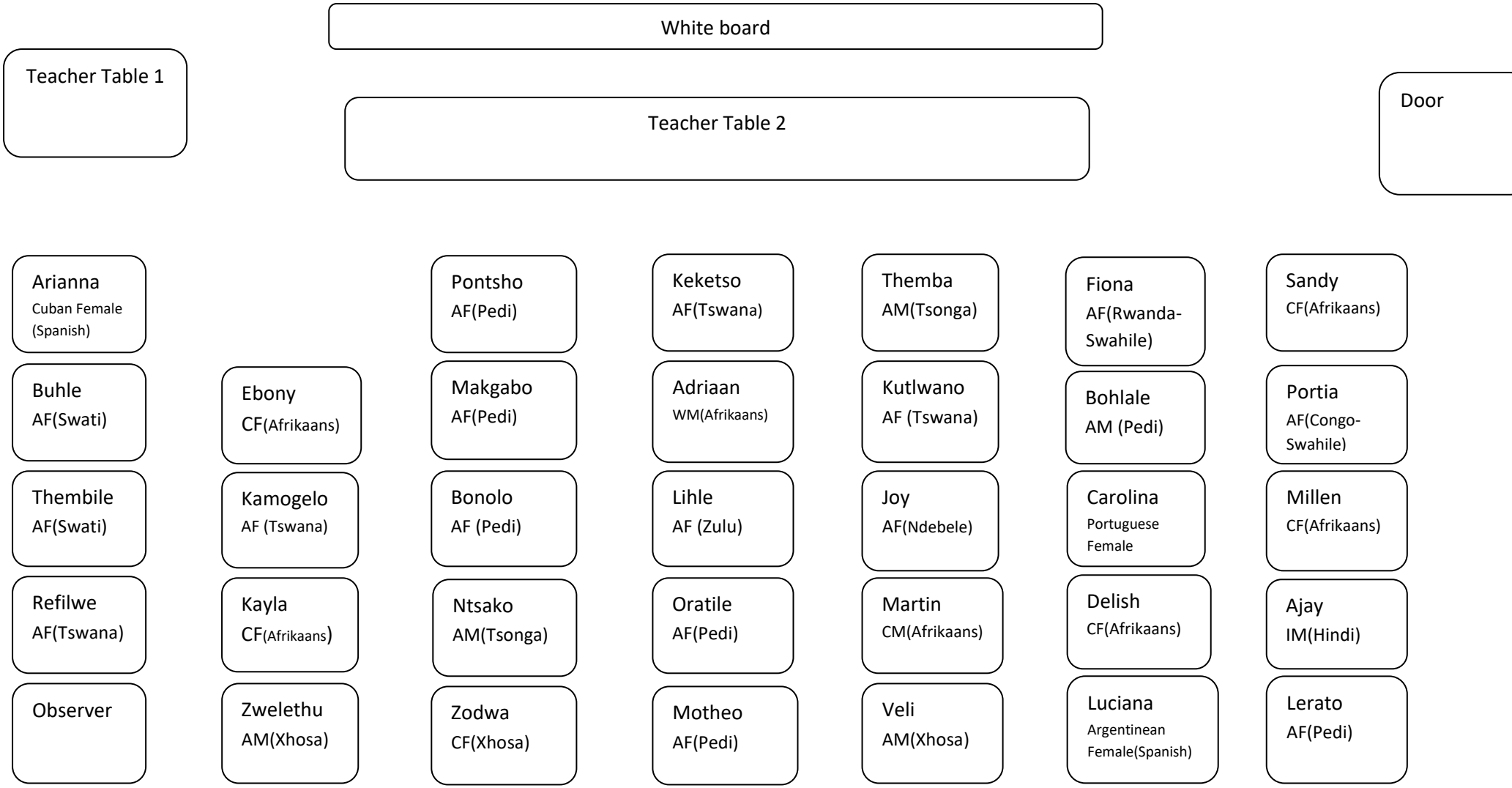
2. Approach adopted by the teacher to management learner behaviour:

Teacher-centred one-size-fits-all approach (describe)	Learner-centred SEL approach/cultural responsive (describe)

3. Strategies used by the teacher to manage learner behaviour:

- Physical arrangement of the classroom

- Seating arrangement of learners of Grade 9B (Illustration) – Pseudonyms are used for learners' names



- Disciplinary techniques (including referrals)

Type of disciplinary technique used	Infraction committed by learner	Learner (pseudonym)

- Classroom rules

- Communication/discourse style used or permitted by the teacher (passive-receptive pattern, learner active participation or "call response" pattern?)

4. How do teachers promote caring classroom communities?

- Teacher's demonstration of a sense of care

What behaviour is displayed by the learner?	How does the teacher demonstrate a sense of care / lack of care?	Learner (pseudonym)

- Teacher's promotion of collaborative or independent learning

Learners work collaboratively? Describe	Learners work independently? Describe

ANNEXURE B1: Interview Protocol for Teachers

Name of Teacher: **Date of Interview:**

Subject: **Duration of Interview:**

Years of teaching experience		
Country/Province	**Multicultural or 'monocultural' school**	**Number of years**
		Total =

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Teacher's own expectations regarding learner behaviour:
   - ✓ What are your expectations regarding learner behaviour in the classroom?
   - ✓ Do you have classroom rules? How do you set the rules in your classroom?

2. Learner behaviour management challenges:
   - ✓ What learner behaviour management challenges do you experience in your classrooms?
   - ✓ Are these challenges attributed to cultural differences?

3. Teachers' understanding (knowledge) of their learners' cultural backgrounds:
   - ✓ How important is it for the teacher to know his/her learners' cultures/cultural backgrounds?
   - ✓ Describe the behavioural differences that you have noticed/identified among the diverse learner population in your classroom.
   - ✓ What are the different communication (discourse) styles that you may have identified among your learners? If any, how do you often respond to these different communication styles?

4. Approaches and strategies used by teachers to manage learner behaviour in culturally diverse classrooms:
    - ✓ Which strategies or actions do you use to manage learner behaviour?
    - ✓ How do you take the different cultures/backgrounds into consideration?
    - ✓ How do you view the support do you get from parents in the management of learner behaviour? Are there sometimes cultural differences in terms of behaviour expectations or norms of interpersonal relationships emanating from the home? How do such differences manifest themselves?
    - ✓ Have you received any "diversity" or "intercultural" training or development?
    - ✓ Do you view intercultural development/training (pre-service or in-service) as a necessity in teacher preparation and development?
    - ✓ How effective do you find the school's code of conduct to manage learner behaviour?

5. Classroom community related:

    - ✓ Describe the teacher-learner relationships in your classroom (s)?
    - ✓ How do these relationships help in promoting learners' appropriate behaviour?
    - ✓ Do you find that learners respect each other and each other's cultures?
    - ✓ What is your view on collaborative learning (learners working in teams) versus learners working independently (as individuals) in the classroom.

Critical incident narrative by the teacher

You are specifically requested to provide a comprehensive description of a critical incident(s) you experienced of learner inappropriate behaviour. You are expected to provide a clear example of the misbehaviour (**what did the learner do?**); describe the circumstances surrounding the misbehaviour incident (**how did the event develop?**) and how you responded to the kind of behaviour in the classroom **(what did you do?**) to enable me to visualize the incident.

ANNEXURE B2: Interview Protocol for Discipline Officer

Name of Participant: **Date of Interview:**

Position: **Duration of Interview:**

Years of work experience in discipline position		
Country/Province	**Multicultural or 'monocultural' school**	**Number of years**
		Total =

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Discipline Officer's own expectations regarding learner behaviour:

   - ✓ What are your expectations regarding learner behaviour?
   - ✓ Describe the process that is followed in the school to determine or set school rules and general classroom rules?

2. Learner behaviour management challenges:
   - ✓ What learner behaviour management challenges do you experience in the school?
   - ✓ What learner behaviour management challenges do teachers generally experience in their classrooms?
   - ✓ Are these challenges attributed to cultural differences?

3. Understanding (knowledge) of learners' cultural backgrounds:
   - ✓ How important is it for a Discipline Officer to know learners' cultures/ cultural backgrounds?
   - ✓ Describe the behavioural differences that you have noticed/identified among the diverse learner population in the school.
   - ✓ What are the different communication (discourse) styles that you may have identified among your learners? If any, how do you often respond to these different communication styles?

4. Approaches and strategies used by the Discipline Officer to manage learner behaviours of a culturally diverse learner population in the school:
    - ✓ Which strategies or actions do you use to manage learner behaviour?
    - ✓ How do you take the different cultures/backgrounds into consideration?
    - ✓ How do you view the support do you get from parents in the management of learner behaviour? Are there sometimes cultural differences in terms of behaviour expectations or norms of interpersonal relationships emanating from the home? How do such differences manifest themselves?
    - ✓ Have you received any “diversity” or “intercultural” training or development?
    - ✓ Do you view intercultural development/training as a necessity for a Discipline Officer and for teacher preparation and development?
    - ✓ How effective do teachers use of the school’s code of conduct to manage learner behaviour?

Critical incident narrative by the teacher

You are specifically requested to provide a comprehensive description of a critical incident(s) you experienced of learner inappropriate behaviour. You are expected to provide a clear example of the misbehaviour (**what did the learner do?**); describe the circumstances surrounding the misbehaviour incident (**how did the event develop?**) and how you responded to the kind of behaviour **(what did you do?**) to enable me to visualize the incident.

ANNEXURE C: Initial Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

Ethics Committee

9 April 2018

Ms Jane Serakwane

Dear Ms Serakwane

REFERENCE: EM 18/02/02

This letter serves to confirm that your application was carefully considered by the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee. The final decision of the Ethics Committee is that your application has been **approved** and you may now start with your data collection. The decision covers the entire research process and not only the days that data will be collected. The approval is valid for two years for a Masters and three for Doctorate.

The approval by the Ethics Committee is subject to the following conditions being met:

1. The research will be conducted as stipulated on the application form submitted to the Ethics Committee with the supporting documents.
2. Proof of how you adhered to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) policy for research must be submitted where relevant.
3. In the event that the research protocol changed for whatever reason the Ethics Committee must be notified thereof by submitting an amendment to the application (Section E), together with all the supporting documentation that will be used for data collection namely; questionnaires, interview schedules and observation schedules, for further approval before data can be collected. Non-compliance implies that the Committee's approval is null and void. The changes may include the following but are not limited to:
    - Change of investigator,
    - Research methods any other aspect therefore and,
    - Participants
    - Sites

The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education does not accept any liability for research misconduct, of whatsoever nature, committed by the researcher(s) in the implementation of the approved protocol.

Upon completion of your research you will need to submit the following documentations to the Ethics Committee for your Clearance Certificate:

- Integrated Declaration Form (Form D08),
- Initial Ethics Approval letter and,
- Approval of Title.

Please quote the reference number **EM 18/02/02** in any communication with the Ethics Committee.

Best wishes

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn
Chair: Ethics Committee
Faculty of Education

ANNEXURE D: Letter of Approval to Conduct Research

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	16 January 2018
Validity of Research Approval:	05 February 2018 – 28 September 2018 2018/02
Name of Researcher:	Serakwane JM
Address of Researcher:	P O BOX 39625
	Faerie Glen
	0043
Telephone Number:	078 460 5607
Email address:	Jane.serakwane@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms
Number and type of schools:	Two Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

19/01/2018

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
4. *A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
5. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

.....

Ms Faith Tshabalala
CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 19/01/2018

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
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Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ANNEXURE E: Permission from School Principal

17 April 2018

The Principal

…..High School

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

I am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria. The major requirement for the awarding of this degree is the successful completion of a significant research project in the field of education. The title of my approved research project is ***'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'***, and permission for this study to be conducted in schools under the control of the Gauteng Department of Education has already been granted (see attached letter)***.***

With this letter, I respectfully request permission to conduct my research project at your school in a classroom with culturally diverse learners (i.e. learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds). The participants in this research project will be teachers who teach culturally diverse learners in one classroom. These teachers, who will participate voluntarily and will give their individual informed consent to participate, will provide data for the study by two means – firstly, by allowing themselves to be observed over a continuous period of 3 weeks (for at least 1 period per day) while teaching and managing a classroom with learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and secondly by allowing themselves to be individually interviewed.

My role during the observation phase of the study will be that of a non-participant observer who will take field notes while the teacher and the learners interact in class. At no time during these observations will I interact with either the teacher or the learners. During the interview phase, participant teachers will be interviewed individually about their classroom management practice and their understanding of the meaning and management of diversity. These individual interviews will be arranged in consultation with the selected teachers (who have been observed) and will be conducted after school hours.

Finally, it must be noted that both the school and the individual participants will be allowed to withdraw their permission for participation in the study without penalty or consequence.

The information obtained during both observations and interviews will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research project. Neither the school nor the individual participants will be allowed to be identified at any stage (field work, data analysis, writing up, reporting or dissemination of the findings) of the research project - pseudonyms will be assigned to both the school and individual participants to protect their respective identities.

With your permission, and before commencing with any data collection, I will come to the school and explain the aims, purpose and means of the research project and what each of the participants' role will be if they decide to participate.

At the end of the research study you will be provided, if requested, with a copy of the research report containing both the findings of the study and recommendations. This research study presents a unique opportunity for your school to get involved in the process of research aimed at exploring ways and means to improve relationships among teachers and learners, thus contributing to the prevention of misunderstandings between teachers and learners of diverse cultural backgrounds. If you decide to give permission for your school to participate, kindly indicate this by completing the consent form at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jane Serakwane

Student researcher

jane.serakwane@gmail.com

Prof Chaya Herman

Study supervisor

chaya.herman@up.ac.za

LETTER of INFORMED CONSENT

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED

'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'

I, _____, the principal of

_____

hereby voluntarily and willingly agree to the participation of my school in the above-mentioned study introduced and explained to me by Ms Jane Serakwane, currently a student enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria.

I further declare that I understand, as they were explained to me by the researcher, the aim, scope, purpose, possible consequences and benefits and methods of collecting information proposed by the researcher, as well as the means by which the researcher will attempt to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information she collects.

Full name Date

Signature

School stamp

ANNEXURE F: Permission from School SGB

17 April 2018

The Chairperson of the School Governing Body

…..High School

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

I am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria. The major requirement for the awarding of this degree is the successful completion of a significant research project in the field of education. The title of my approved research project is ***'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'***, and permission for this study to be conducted in schools under the control of the Gauteng Department of Education has already been granted (see attached letter)***.***

With this letter, I respectfully request your permission as the representative of the parents of the school to conduct my research project at your school in a classroom with culturally diverse learners (i.e. learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds). The participants in this research project will be teachers who teach culturally diverse learners in one classroom. These teachers, who will participate voluntarily and will give their individual informed consent to participate, will provide data for the study by two means – firstly, by allowing themselves to be observed over a continuous period of 3 weeks (for at least 1 period per day) while teaching and managing a classroom with learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and secondly by allowing themselves to be individually interviewed.

My role during the observation phase of the study will be that of a non-participant observer who will take field notes while the teacher and the learners interact in class. At no time during these observations will I interact with either the teacher or the learners. During the interview phase, participant teachers will be interviewed individually about their classroom management practice and their understanding of the meaning and management of diversity. These individual interviews will be arranged in consultation with the selected teachers (who have been observed) and will be conducted after school hours.

Finally, it must be noted that both the school and the individual participants will be allowed to withdraw their permission for participation in the study without penalty or consequence.

The information obtained during both observations and interviews will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research project. Neither the school nor the individual participants will be allowed to be identified at any stage (field work, data analysis, writing up, reporting or dissemination of the findings) of the research project - pseudonyms will be assigned to both the school and individual participants to protect their respective identities.

With your permission and that of the principal, and before commencing with any data collection, I will come to the school and explain the aims, purpose and means of the research project and what each of the participants' role will be if they decide to participate.

At the end of the research study you will be provided, if requested, with a copy of the research report containing both the findings of the study and recommendations. This research study presents a unique opportunity for your school to get involved in the process of research aimed at exploring ways and means to improve relationships among teachers and learners, thus contributing to the prevention of misunderstandings between teachers and learners of diverse cultural backgrounds. If you decide to give permission for your school to participate, kindly indicate this by completing the consent form at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jane Serakwane

Student researcher

jane.serakwane@gmail.com

Prof Chaya Herman

Study supervisor

chaya.herman@up.ac.za

LETTER of INFORMED CONSENT

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED

'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'

I, _____, the SGB chairperson of

_____

hereby voluntarily and willingly agree to the participation of my school in the above-mentioned study introduced and explained to me by Ms Jane Serakwane, currently a student enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria.

I further declare that I understand, as they were explained to me by the researcher, the aim, scope, purpose, possible consequences and benefits and methods of collecting information proposed by the researcher, as well as the means by which the researcher will attempt to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information she collects.

Full name Date

Signature

School stamp

ANNEXURE G: Consent Letter to Parents of Learners

17 April 2018

Dear Parent,

PERMISSION FOR LEARNER ATTENDANCE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

I am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management Law, and Policy at the University of Pretoria. The major requirement for the awarding of this degree is the successful completion of a significant research project in the field of education. The title of my approved research project is ***'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'***, and permission for this study to be conducted in schools under the control of the Gauteng Department of Education and at your child's specific school has already been granted.

With this letter, I respectfully request your permission as a parent to allow me to conduct my research project in a classroom where your child will be in attendance. Your child will be present in the classroom where I will be observing her/his teacher who is a participant in this study but your child is not the focus of this study. I will not interact with your child nor harm your child in any way. The teacher as a participant will be observed in the classroom over a continuous period of 3 weeks (for at least 1 period per day) while teaching and managing a classroom with learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

My role during the observation phase of the study will be that of a non-participant observer who will take field notes while the teacher and the learners interact in class. At no time during these observations will I interact with either the teacher or the learners. During the

interview phase, the teacher will be interviewed individually about his/her classroom management practice for a period of approximately 90 minutes. These individual interviews will be arranged at the teacher's convenience, and will take place after school hours.

Finally, it must be noted that you are free to withdraw the permission to have your child in attendance of the classroom where the teacher is participating in this study AT ANY STAGE OF THE PROJECT, without penalty or consequence.

The information obtained during observations will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research project. Neither the school nor the teacher as an individual participant will be identified at any stage (field work, data analysis, writing up, reporting or dissemination of the findings) of the research project - pseudonyms will be assigned to both the school and the teacher as an individual participant to protect their respective identities. At no stage will the name or identity of your child be made known.

At the end of the research study your child's school will, if requested, be provided with a copy of the research report containing both the findings of the study and recommendations.

This research study presents a unique opportunity for your child's teacher to get involved in the process of research aimed at exploring ways and means to improve relationships among teachers and learners, thus contributing to the prevention of misunderstandings between teachers and learners of diverse cultural backgrounds. If you decide to give your informed consent to have your child in attendance of the classroom where the teacher has given voluntary consent to participate in the study outlined above, kindly indicate this by completing the consent form at the end of this letter.

Should you object to your child's attendance of the classroom where the teacher has given voluntary consent to participate in the study outlined above, kindly let me know by 30 April 2018.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jane Serakwane

Student researcher

jane.serakwane@gmail.com

Prof Chaya Herman

Study supervisor

chaya.herman@up.ac.za

LETTER of INFORMED CONSENT

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED

'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'

I, _____, hereby voluntarily and willingly agree to my child's presence (attendance) in the classroom where her/his teacher is participating in this study. Participation of my child's teacher in the above-mentioned study was introduced and explained to me by Ms Jane Serakwane, currently a student enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria.

I further declare that I understand, as they were explained to me by the researcher, the aim, scope, purpose, possible consequences and benefits and methods of collecting information proposed by the researcher, as well as the means by which the researcher will attempt to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information she collects. I also understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent at any stage of the study, including during the observation phase.

Full name Date

Signature

ANNEXURE H: Letter of Informed Consent for Participants

04 May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

I am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria. The major requirement for the awarding of this degree is the successful completion of a significant research project in the field of education. The title of my approved research project is ***'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'***, and permission for this study to be conducted in schools under the control of the Gauteng Department of Education and at your specific school has already been granted.

With this letter, I respectfully request your individual consent to participate in my research project. As a participant, you will provide data for the study by two means – firstly, by allowing yourself to be observed in your classroom over a continuous period of 3 weeks (for at least 1 period per day) while teaching and managing a classroom with learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and secondly by allowing yourself to be individually interviewed on your understanding of diversity and your strategies and practices to manage a culturally diverse classroom.

My role during the observation phase of the study will be that of a non-participant observer who will take field notes while you and the learners interact in class. At no time during these observations will I interact with either you or the learners. During the interview phase, you will be interviewed individually about your classroom management practice for a period of

approximately 90 minutes. The individual interview will be arranged at your convenience, and will take place after school hours.

Finally, it must be noted that you as an individual participant will be allowed to withdraw your permission for participation in the study AT ANY STAGE OF THE PROJECT, including during observation, without penalty or consequence.

The information obtained during both observations and interviews will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research project. Neither the school nor you as an individual participant will be allowed to be identified at any stage (field work, data analysis, writing up, reporting or dissemination of the findings) of the research project - pseudonyms will be assigned to both the school and you as an individual participant to protect your respective identities.

At the end of the research study you and your school will, if you request it, be provided with a copy of the research report containing both the findings of the study and recommendations.

This research study presents a unique opportunity for you to get involved in the process of research aimed at exploring ways and means to improve relationships among teachers and learners, thus contributing to the prevention of misunderstandings between teachers and learners of diverse cultural backgrounds. If you decide to give your individual informed and voluntary consent to participate in the study outlined above, kindly indicate this by completing the consent form at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jane Serakwane

Student researcher

jane.serakwane@gmail.com

Prof Chaya Herman

Study supervisor

chaya.herman@up.ac.za

LETTER of INFORMED CONSENT

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED

'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'

I, _____, hereby voluntarily and willingly agree to my individual participation in the above-mentioned study introduced and explained to me by Ms Jane Serakwane, currently a student enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria.

I further declare that I understand, as they were explained to me by the researcher, the aim, scope, purpose, possible consequences and benefits and methods of collecting information proposed by the researcher, as well as the means by which the researcher will attempt to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information she collects. I also understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent at any stage of the study, including during the observation phase or during the individual interview.

Full name Date

Signature

ANNEXURE I: Letter of Informed Consent for Discipline Officer

07 May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

I am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria. The major requirement for the awarding of this degree is the successful completion of a significant research project in the field of education. The title of my approved research project is ***'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'***, and permission for this study to be conducted in schools under the control of the Gauteng Department of Education and at your specific school has already been granted.

With this letter, I respectfully request your individual consent to participate in my research project. As a participant, you will provide data for the study by two means – firstly, by allowing yourself to be observed over a continuous period of 3 weeks while supporting the teaching staff in managing behaviours of learners who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and secondly by allowing yourself to be individually interviewed on your understanding of diversity and your strategies to manage behaviours of a culturally diverse learner population.

My role during the observation phase of the study will be that of a non-participant observer who will take field notes while you and the learners interact. At no time during these observations will I interact with either you or the learners. During the interview phase, you will be interviewed individually about your behaviour management practice for a period of approximately 90 minutes. The individual interview will be arranged at your convenience, and will take place after school hours.

Finally, it must be noted that you as an individual participant will be allowed to withdraw your permission for participation in the study AT ANY STAGE OF THE PROJECT, including during observation, without penalty or consequence.

The information obtained during both observations and interviews will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of this research project. Neither the school nor you as an individual participant will be allowed to be identified at any stage (field work, data analysis, writing up, reporting or dissemination of the findings) of the research project - pseudonyms will be assigned to both the school and you as an individual participant to protect your respective identities.

At the end of the research study you and your school will, if you request it, be provided with a copy of the research report containing both the findings of the study and recommendations.

This research study presents a unique opportunity for you to get involved in the process of research aimed at exploring ways and means to improve relationships among teachers and learners, thus contributing to the prevention of misunderstandings between teachers and learners of diverse cultural backgrounds. If you decide to give your individual informed and voluntary consent to participate in the study outlined above, kindly indicate this by completing the consent form at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Ms Jane Serakwane

Student researcher

jane.serakwane@gmail.com

Prof Chaya Herman

Study supervisor

chaya.herman@up.ac.za

LETTER of INFORMED CONSENT

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED

'Learner behaviour management practices of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms'

I, _____, hereby voluntarily and willingly agree to my individual participation in the above-mentioned study introduced and explained to me by Ms Jane Serakwane, currently a student enrolled for a PhD degree in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria.

I further declare that I understand, as they were explained to me by the researcher, the aim, scope, purpose, possible consequences and benefits and methods of collecting information proposed by the researcher, as well as the means by which the researcher will attempt to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information she collects. I also understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent at any stage of the study, including during the observation phase or during the individual interview.

Full name Date

Signature