

Alternatives to Establishing Conducive Learning Environment (AECLE) Model for Schools: Assertive Discipline Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Effective classroom management necessitates a continuous adaptation of teachers' tactics, due to the dynamic nature of the classroom, which comprises learners from diverse backgrounds. These individuals are influenced by the continuous changes that occur in response to the dynamic nature of the world. This paper presents a conceptual model framework for managing learner classroom indiscipline. This model is derived from a theoretical framework that was adopted during an empirical investigation, carried out in four Quintile 3 secondary schools in South Africa. The paper exclusively concentrates on a literature review of empirical studies pertaining to indiscipline in South African secondary schools, the studies that either adopted or explored the implementation of the assertive discipline model and relevant South African education legislation and reports from government websites. Based on assertive discipline theory, the alternatives to establishing a conducive learning environment model offers alternate solutions for managing learners' behavioural issues. The core component of the strategy focuses on proactive behaviour management strategies that encourage the school to take full responsibility for student conduct and disregard extraneous influences. The model emphasises implementing a behaviour management strategy that encompasses the articulation of expectations, the establishment of classroom rules, the communication and instruction of these rules to learners, the demonstration and reinforcement of desired behaviour, and the utilisation of consequences.

KEYWORDS

Assertive discipline; conducive learning environment; schools; classroom management alternatives.

INTRODUCTION

The discipline issue has garnered significant attention in South Africa in recent years, particularly following the prohibition of corporal punishment in 1996. This form of punishment was previously employed as a prominent means of addressing indiscipline. The commitment to constitutional principles throughout the post-apartheid period shaped the decision to prohibit physical punishment, during which the democratic nation prioritised protecting human rights (Dubow, 2012).

Research suggests that prohibiting corporal punishment has heightened the challenges and pressures of teaching, resulting in teachers experiencing despair (Marais & Meier, 2010; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). Teachers experience a sense of powerlessness and incapacity to effectively handle students' misconduct within schools, due to rife in indiscipline and the ban on corporal punishment (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). The Alternative to Corporal Punishment (ATCP) strategies were developed by the South African Department of Basic Education in 2000 to support teachers in maintaining school discipline (Kalisti, 2021). Moyo et al. (2014) define ATCP as a systematic methodology that prioritises polite and efficient communication, as well as constructive educational exchanges between educators and learners. According to Fahri (2024), the measures encompass a range of disciplinary procedures, including verbal warnings, detention, demerits, community service and small physical responsibilities.

The issue of indiscipline remains a prominent worry among teachers, administrators and professionals, notwithstanding the implementation of ATCP. Various research has indicated that the standard of teaching and knowledge acquisition is affected, resulting in a significant decline in learners' academic achievement (Batool et al., 2023; Peter & Mohamed, 2024). Numerous researchers have for over a decade observed that the issue of indiscipline continues to persist despite implementing various disciplinary strategies, including ATCP (Khewu, 2012; Segalo & Rambuda, 2018; Motseke, 2020). For that reason, teachers resorted back to the illicit method of corporal punishment to exert authority (Motseke, 2020).

The Centre for Child Law (CCL) and two parents, represented by Section 27, recently filed a lawsuit against the South African Council for Educators (SACE) in the Pretoria High Court, due to the Council's leniency in imposing punishments on teachers (CCL, 2024). The case pertained to two teachers, who engaged in violent behaviour by administering corporal punishment to learners. Similarly, Statistics South Africa (SSA) attests that the predominant type of violence reported by learners at school was corporal punishment, administered by teachers. The information is derived from a newly published report titled, *Children Series Volume 1: Children Exposed to Maltreatment, 2021*. The report reveals that in 2019, slightly more than 1 million out of 13 million school-age children between the ages of 5 and 17 reported having encountered some type of violence. Among individuals, who encountered violence in schools, over 84% were subjected to corporal punishment by teachers (SSA, 2021a).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The paper focuses solely on the empirical research conducted between 2014-2023 on the issue of indiscipline in secondary schools in South Africa. The search results also included books on assertive discipline, classroom management, South African education legislation, and relevant governmental websites. Additionally, literature also contained empirical studies that have either applied or examined implementing an assertive discipline model in schools in different countries in last decade. The study specifically targeted South African secondary school teachers, who teach in economically disadvantaged communities. The schools in these areas are categorised as Quintile 1-3, indicating that students are provided with meals and stationery supplies. The search criteria did not encompass the empirical research on schools in Quintiles 4-5, which cater to affluent communities where parents bear the full financial responsibility for their children's education.

South African situation

According to Van der Walt and Wolhuter, (2019), the socioeconomic and educational circumstances in South Africa are not conducive to establishing and maintaining effective school discipline. The prevailing circumstances are further intensified by the presence of corruption, violence, and criminality within the wider South African community, as well as the breakdown of familial structures in numerous cases (Van der Walt & Wolhuter, 2019). The assertion aligns with the poverty and equity study, released by the World Bank Group (WBG), highlighting the substantial and enduring nature of inequality in South Africa, with a notable upward trend observed since 1994 (WBG, 2020). The research highlights that, although there has been progress in reducing poverty since 1994, the country witnessed a reversal in the rate of poverty reduction from 2011 to 2015 (WBG, 2020). According to the research, almost 55.5% (30.3 million people) of the population live in poverty at the national upper poverty line (ZAR992), while 13.8 million people (25 per cent) are experiencing food poverty (WBG, 2020). In addition to the aforementioned, South Africa's Gini score in 2014/15 was 63, positioning it as one of the most unequal nations worldwide (WBG, 2020). The circumstances negatively influence schools, affecting the conduct of schools' support networks, including the community and parents, through several means.

According to Van der Walt and Wolhuter (2019), a mere 34% of children in South Africa reside with both parents, while 23% do not. Additionally, approximately 148,000 families are led by a child, who is 17 years old or younger. This phenomenon could potentially be associated with poverty, which compels parents to pursue employment opportunities in distant locations, as well as circumstances, such as mortality or parental neglect towards their children. When children are left unattended, they may be susceptible to various challenges, including abuse and, in the case of girls, pregnancy.

Statistics South Africa (2021b) noted that the number of births in 2020 to women aged 17 years or younger, was 33,899. Of these, mothers between the ages of 10 and 13 delivered more than 600 children. The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, verified in her

written reply to Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Basic Education that a total of 90,037 school girls between the ages of 10 and 19 gave birth in South Africa from March 2021 to April 2022 (Mkize, 2022).

The situation in South African communities implies that the availability of primary teachers, responsible for imparting values and skills to children from an early age, is constrained within society. Consequently, children develop with limited abilities, skills and values. The convergence of these forces has led to the emergence of divergent roles and responsibilities between parents and teachers. Teachers censure parents for inadequately enforcing rules and regulations at home, while parents hold teachers accountable for ineffectively executing their responsibilities (Kitching et al., 2019).

Considering the challenging circumstances faced by families and society, it became crucial to identify a model that would not rely on external parental support. Research indicates that parental involvement holds limited significance in relation to learners' educational and behavioural development, especially in South African township schools (Tshatshu, 2016; Naidoo, 2021). Consequently, there is a growing demand for teachers to assume greater responsibility for improving the learning and teaching environment. Hence, it was determined that an assertive discipline technique was relevant to the Alternatives to the Establishing a Conducive Learning Environment (AECLE) Model.

Origin of assertive discipline theory

The Assertive Discipline Theory (ADT) was developed to tackle prevalent classroom management challenges that hinder learners' learning and achievement (Onyango et al., 2018). The theory was created by Lee and Marlene Canter during the 1970s, following their observation of teachers' challenges in effectively managing disruptive behaviour exhibited by students within the school setting (Veronica, 2021). Canter's active participation in both the theoretical and practical aspects of assertiveness training, across several domains of human conflict, has contributed to the advancement of this particular approach. The programme was designed to assist individuals in enhancing their ability to effectively express their needs and ambitions (Eichmann, 1994). ADT is based on the fundamental idea that teachers possess the entitlement to instruct without any disruption. Similarly, the learners possess the entitlement to acquire knowledge in a setting devoid of any disruptions (Charles & Senter, 2005). According to Praveen and Alex (2017), if a learner's behaviour deviates from the guidelines, the teacher is obligated to take responsibility for that learner's actions.

Understanding assertive discipline

According to the assertive disciplinary model, teachers assume the role of the external locus of control and are responsible for ensuring that learners take actions that align with their own best interests (Lewis, 1991, cited in Eichmann, 1994). The model is teacher-oriented, as it assumes that teachers are the most suitable individuals to address learners' disruptive behaviour, due to their greater life experience, compared to learners. The argument emphasises that teachers possess firsthand knowledge of the consequences of specific behaviours and are therefore well-

suited to guide learners in schools (Eichmann, 1994). Hence, it is presumed that learners are inclined to cooperate and adapt their conduct, based on the circumstances. According to Canter (1989), it is argued that a disruptive learner in one classroom may not necessarily be disruptive in another classroom. This suggests that learners are responsive to what each does in each classroom. For that reason, if teachers are doing almost the same, regarding behaviour management, they are likely to receive almost similar responses from the way learners conduct themselves in schools.

Canter (2010) suggests that when learners possess a comprehensive understanding of the teacher's expectations, the consequences of meeting those expectations, and the potential consequences of deviating from the established classroom norms, they are more likely to make an informed decision, regarding their behaviour. According to Malmgren et al. (2005), the fundamental objective of the assertive disciplinary strategy is to proactively deter disruptive behaviour, rather than resorting to punitive measures. The hypothesis, thus, supports the implementation of proactive actions by teachers to manage disruptive classroom conduct, exhibited by learners, effectively.

Situating assertive discipline in South African schools' legal context

Legislation and rules regulate South African schools. Hence, any behaviour management approach must conform to these requirements. Therefore, it is imperative to align the implementation of assertive disciplinary-driven models and principles with the South African legislative framework for schools, which is founded upon the nation's constitution. This discussion will demonstrate the importance and connection of the theory to legislations, such as the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2006), the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), the SACE *Code of Professional Ethics* (Act 31 of 2000), the ATCP Strategies (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2010), and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC, 2015).

The utilisation of corporal punishment is prohibited by both Section 7(1)(h) of the Children's Act of 2005 and Section 10 of the South African Schools Act (SASA). These provisions advocate for the eradication of any conduct that has the potential to inflict bodily or emotional harm on a child. Likewise, the South African teachers' profession is regulated by the SACE. The establishment of the council was in compliance with Act No. 27 of the National Education Policy. The SACE Code of Professional Ethics (2000) establishes guidelines for the behaviour and responsibilities of instructors inside the educational institution. According to the code, educators are required to provide guidance and support to every student, in order to facilitate the realisation of their individual capabilities. Additionally, they are expected to facilitate the development of a set of values that align with the fundamental rights, outlined in the Constitution of South Africa. Teachers are expected to exercise their authority in a compassionate manner, refrain from any form of humiliation and psychological or physical abuse, uphold gender equality, and take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of learners (SACE, 2000). In response to the ban of corporal punishment through legislation, notably the

SASA 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b) and the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act 33 of 1997, the ATCP measures were introduced in schools in 2000. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2010), there exist alternative disciplinary procedures in schools that can be employed to maintain order without inflicting physical injury on students.

Act 108 of 1996 of the Constitution of the RSA (1996a) specifically acknowledges and maintains the right of all individuals to be treated with respect and dignity. This concept is expounded upon in Sections 10 and 12, Subsection 1(e). The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) supports the constitutional right outlined in Clause 139 (2) of the Children's Act Amendment Bill. This provision explicitly prohibits the use of corporal punishment or any other kind of punishment that is considered cruel, barbaric, or degrading towards children (SAHRC, 2015). Section 28 1(d) of the Bill of Rights ensures the protection of children by implementing legal measures to prevent violence and exploitation. According to the Constitution of the RSA (1996a), the provision asserts the right of each child to be safeguarded against mistreatment, neglect, abuse, or humiliation.

The ADT holds great importance, and its pertinence to legislation stems from its condemnation of practices that employ humiliation and physical punishment as means of managing behaviour among learners. The theory emphasises the significance of establishing a conducive setting wherein the rights of all individuals, engaged in the process of learning, are duly acknowledged and protected (Praveen & Alex, 2017). Hence, implementing approaches, consistent with the ADT, would motivate educators to imbue their students with a set of principles that correspond to the rights acknowledged by the South African Constitution by tactfully dissuading students from interfering with their classmates' educational progress.

Assertive teachers' assertive perspective

According to the assertive disciplinary perspective, teachers play a crucial role as a determining element within the school setting. Their behavioural management strategies establish the overall atmosphere (Bicard, 2000). This means their daily attitude has a significant impact on the learner, as it has the ability to either make a child's life unpleasant or joyful. They can serve as a means of inflicting torment or as a reservoir of motivation. or can demean or amuse, inflict harm or provide solace. The determination of whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, whether a child will be humanised or dehumanised, ultimately rests with the teachers' response in every given situation. According to Praveen and Alex (2017), it is recommended that teachers use an assertive approach in the classroom, rather than displaying hostility and indolence.

Learners in assertive perspective

The perspectives of assertive teachers, regarding learners are based on their idea that the environment has an impact on learners' behaviour (Felder, 2020). This implies that learners' geographical location substantially influences their personality, habits, knowledge and conduct. It also suggests that respectful, accepting, and industrious learners acquire these behavioural inclinations from their parents, previous educational settings, relatives, friends, and immediate socio-cultural contexts. Similarly, the aforementioned setting fostered characteristics, such as

impatience, high expectations, argumentativeness, a tendency towards laziness, and disruptive behaviour towards learners (Bennett, 2021). Therefore, it may be argued that this perspective on learners' behaviour implies that assertive teachers hold the belief that behaviour is acquired through learning and can be instructed and altered. Therefore, to facilitate learners' development, teachers should instruct them in their deficient behaviours (Canter, 2010). This means that behaviour in the perspective of the assertive model may be likened to a curriculum. Like any curriculum, it is not sufficient to simply provide instructions to learners and thereafter provide rewards or penalties based on their achievement (Bennett, 2021). However, like any practical skill in a curriculum, they initially instruct the learners in appropriate classroom conduct with patience, subsequently verify for any misconceptions, and persist in providing further instruction.

Assertive discipline classroom behaviour management plan

According to the ADT, every teacher has a right to teach in an environment, free from distractions, and learners have a right to learn in a well-organised classroom that does not tolerate disruptive behaviour (Malmgren et al., 2005). Hence the theory emphasises that teachers should uphold their rights and those of their learners by establishing an inviting environment for optimal teaching and learning. Considering these vital rights, it may be inferred that the theory supports a proactive approach to managing learners' behaviour. As a result, teachers commence their instructional efforts by formulating a comprehensive behaviour management strategy, which they employ to regulate the conduct of their learners, while imparting knowledge successfully. The plan includes identifying expectations, creating classroom rules, teaching the rules, posting rules publicly, as well as consequences (Şahin-Sak et al., 2018).

Identifying and expressing expectations

Expectations are criteria that prescribe the suitable behaviour and conduct that learners are expected to conform to (Harlacher, 2015). In order to address the specific behavioural challenges seen in each school, Harlacher (2015) suggests that teachers should take into account the following strategies to identify and express the expectations in schools:

- Examine the mission statement of the institution and formulate appropriate expectations.
- Consider the fundamental characteristics that students need to have to succeed in school and set classroom standards based on these attributes.
- Analyse data pertaining to students' classroom conduct, identify common problematic behaviours and develop a clear set of expectations to address and reduce such behaviours.
- Direct classroom observation or pre-existing data, such as records of office discipline referrals, can be utilised for this purpose.

Moreover, it is recommended that teachers incorporate a range of three to five expectations, since a smaller number may not adequately address learners' classroom conduct,

and a greater number of expectations may provide challenges for learners to remember (Harlacher, 2015). In addition, teachers should provide clear and specific objectives, such as instructing learners on what actions to take, rather than what actions to avoid (demonstrating consideration rather than self-centeredness) (Malone & Tietjens, 2000). This suggests that it is more appropriate for expectations to align with desired behaviour, rather than the other way around. The cultivation of responsibility inside the classroom can be demonstrated by implementing the expectation: "Be responsible." This expectation pertains to a broad spectrum of routines, environments and tasks, which encompass, but are not restricted to, participating in and providing significant contributions to collective endeavours within the educational setting.

Creating classroom rules

The major aim of establishing classroom rules, as stated by Malone and Tietjens (2000), is to protect the individual rights of learners, thereby preventing one learner's freedom from infringing upon the freedom of another student. According to Vijayan, Chakravarthi and Philips (2016), the establishment of well-designed classroom rules is crucial for fostering an effective classroom environment. According to Mitchell, Hirn and Lewis (2017), educators institute classroom regulations by establishing expectations, which serve as the fundamental basis for cultivating values and social competencies. According to the Analytical Design Theory (ADT), the inclusion of classroom rules in instructors' behavioural management plans, is crucial due to their specificity, as they pertain to certain activities or established patterns. Research has confirmed that classroom norms establish the expected behaviour of learners in several areas of the school (Zoromski et al., 2021). For instance, the principle of "concentrate on your designated responsibilities" can be drawn from the fundamental expectation of "take accountability". This guideline is relevant within the framework of a teaching environment. However, it may not be pertinent to students during their lunch breaks (Harlacher, 2015). The inference may be made that in order to instruct learners in the appropriate behaviour, assertive educators develop explicit expectations and implement rules that are customised to certain contexts.

The ideal quantity of rules is frequently mentioned as a crucial factor in the successful execution of rules (Alter & Haydon, 2017). While the precise quantity is not explicitly stated, there exists a prevailing consensus that the quantity of classroom rules ought not to surpass seven (Malone & Tietjens, 2000). Furthermore, it is generally advised to use language that conveys desired behaviours, rather than negative behaviours when creating classroom rules (Alter & Haydon, 2017). It is imperative to articulate classroom rules in a positive manner.

Actively teaching rules

According to Jones and Jones (2004 cited in Vijayan et al., 2016), classroom rules should not solely serve as a means of identifying learners' misconduct, but rather, they should aid students in making sound choices, regarding their behaviour. This suggests that it is advisable for educators to initiate the instruction and elucidation of rules and expected conduct to students, subsequent to their establishment. Therefore, it should be noted that exhibiting a compilation

of classroom rules on the walls within the classroom should not be considered a sufficient method of instruction. Bennett (2021) and Halarcher (2015) suggest that teachers should teach students about classroom rules in a way similar to teaching academic material. To effectively convey the rule, it is necessary to clearly articulate the rule, provide a justification for its significance (Malone & Tietjens, 2000), show concrete examples and counter-examples, and enable learners to apply the rule in real-life situations (Bennett, 2021). According to Alter and Haydon (2017), Kerr and Nelson (2010, as quoted in Alter) put out similar recommendations, which include offering explanations for each rule and incorporating role-playing activities to facilitate students' application of these principles.

According to the research conducted by Hepburn and Beamish (2020) in Queensland, Australia, it was determined that when secondary school teachers establish classroom rules and expectations without offering explicit guidance to learners and simply display them on classroom walls, the emphasis of classroom management transitions from promoting positive behaviour to diminishing or eradicating disruptive behaviour. The allocation of time for teachers to instruct pupils on expectations and norms may be a subject of contention, due to the limitations imposed by a predetermined curriculum and time constraints. Nevertheless, the implementation of assertive discipline underscores the significance of educators allocating their time towards instructing students in the desirable behaviours. The objective of this strategy is to promote positive self-control and improve the attainment of educational goals, in order to foster academic success among learners.

Posting the rule publicly

The act of publicly exhibiting rules in written format holds significant value as it serves as a visual stimulus that facilitates instruction and strengthens learners' expectations (Alter & Haydon, 2017). Scott et al. (2011, cited in Alter & Haydon, 2017) suggest that classroom management textbooks recommend the prominent presentation of rules as a means to promote pro-social behaviour. The authors also suggest employing visual aids, such as images, to represent words for pupils with restricted reading skills. In addition, it is recommended that educators contemplate the dissemination of physical copies of the regulations to students, alongside their public exhibition. Additional research (Bicard, 2000; Malone & Tietjens, 2000) provides comparable suggestions for openly and regularly publishing them in several locations.

Reinforcing desired behaviour

Regular feedback is necessary for learners to understand their behaviour, hence praising is regarded as a tool for reinforcing behaviour. According to Caldarella et al. (2020), praise can be defined as a verbal manifestation of gratitude following learners' actions, with the intention of promoting acceptable behaviour. Praise can be conveyed through several means, including spoken communication, gestures, written expression, public displays, or private interactions. O'Handley et al. (2022) propose that teachers praise learners publicly in the classroom to enable others to recognise commendable behaviour. The act of a teacher providing praise is commonly perceived as a means of social reinforcement and a constructive behavioural intervention aimed

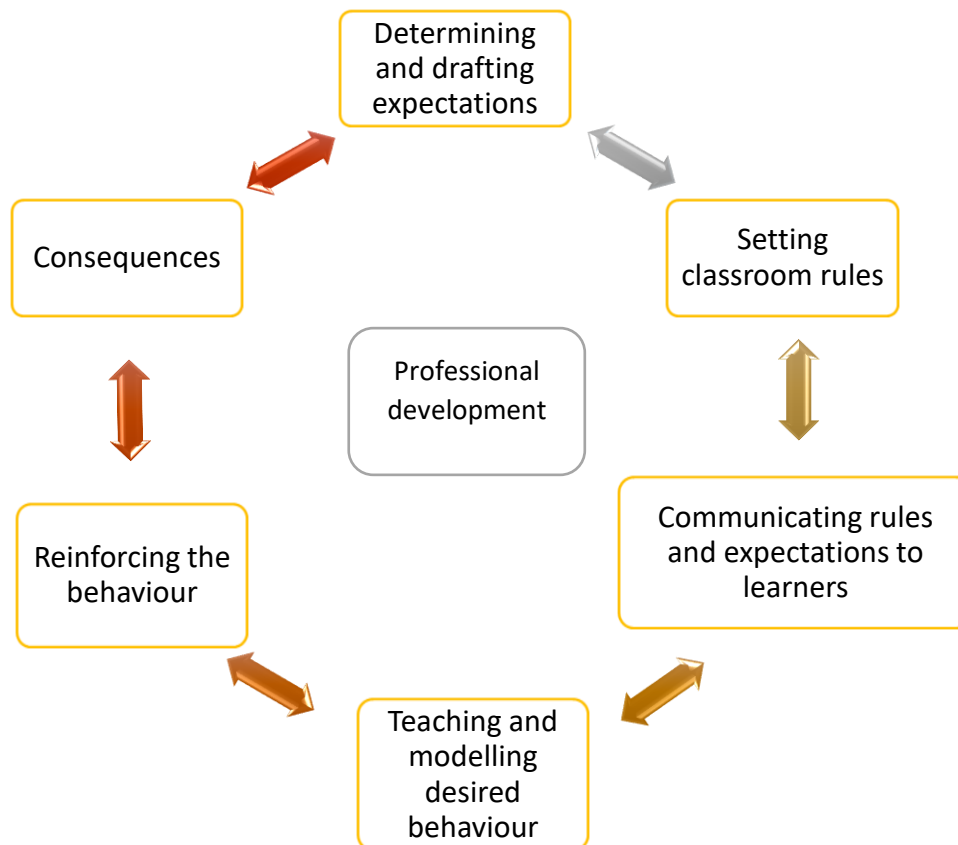
at inspiring students and motivating those who are facing difficulties, with the ultimate goal of enhancing their self-efficacy (Rafi et al., 2020).

Consequences

As per Malone and Tietjens (2000), learners who comprehend the purpose of classroom rules should see any action that breaches the rule as deliberate and swiftly confront it. Classroom regulations that are effective, typically involve the implementation of consequences that incentivize adherence to rules and penalise non-adherence (Zoromski et al., 2021). Bicard (2000) observed that the absence of proactive measures by teachers to encourage positive conduct and deter negative behaviour in the classroom, through the implementation of defined consequences, did not result in any substantial alteration in the learners' behaviour. Therefore, it is crucial to have both adverse and beneficial outcomes, in order to properly handle disruptive behaviour among students in the classroom.

Figure 1.

Alternatives to Establishing Conducive Learning Environment (AECLE) Model



Essentially, assertive discipline posits that classroom rules should be associated with both favourable and unfavourable outcomes. Nevertheless, it emphasises the importance of ensuring that the outcomes do not result in any type of physical or psychological damage (Canter, 2010). Therefore, the theoretical framework presents a stance against the utilisation of corporal punishment or the practice of degrading learners by means, such as public ridicule or humiliation. Positive motivation plays a crucial role in this theoretical framework, since it serves

to encourage and reinforce desired behaviours inside educational institutions. Given that behaviour can be seen as a kind of communication that necessitates a reaction, it is imperative for educators to consistently cultivate suitable behaviour in their classrooms through the implementation of behaviour management strategies. This approach ensures uniformity among all learners.

The model's centre revolves around professional development, which can be delegated to external sources to improve teachers' proficiency in any of the six circular components of the module. If there is a lack of proficiency in teachers to carry out their duties effectively, it is the responsibility of the school management to arrange professional development (RSA, 2022).

Determining and drafting expectations: The teachers mostly examine prevalent instances of indiscipline that a school encounters. The evaluation process involves the examination of many documents, including incident books, the South African School's Administration Management System (SA-SAMS), and information pertaining to school-parental involvement, regarding behavioural challenges. Upon doing an analysis, they formulate expectations to address the behaviour that leads to substantial issues inside their institution. One notable benefit is that the educational institution can focus on its unique obstacles and develop appropriate strategies, all the while promoting inclusion to strengthen unity and support among all educators.

Setting classroom rules: The proposed approach emphasises the significance of teachers consistently formulating classroom norms. An endeavour of this kind will successfully establish consistency in the number of classroom regulations and the terminology used in formulating these regulations. In this particular approach, learners are not actively involved in creating the classroom, as the responsibility of determining the expected behaviour for effective learning and teaching lies with the teachers. In addition, the model considers the teachers' expertise gained from their training and familiarity with the school, enabling them to identify the behaviours that hinder or facilitate effective teaching. The teachers ought to establish classroom regulations and related repercussions that may be enforced in the event of learners' non-compliance.

Communicating rules and expectations: After establishing classroom rules, it is the duty of the teachers to elucidate them to the learners, as the learners are not involved in the process. The teachers explain the need to establish norms and expectations, as well as the underlying reasoning behind them. During this phase, the staff additionally conveys the repercussions to learners, ensuring their awareness of the potential outcomes in the event of non-compliance with the established regulations.

Teaching and modelling desired behaviour: During this stage, the teachers instruct and exemplify the expected conduct of the learners. The teachers conduct the activity, due to their acknowledgement that secondary school kids are in the adolescent stage of development, during which their behavioural patterns can experience substantial and noteworthy changes. As a result, the staff refrains from making assumptions about learners' awareness of proper behaviour, due to their comprehension of this stage of development. By employing this

methodology, individuals are afforded the opportunity to exercise autonomy in their conduct as they receive instruction according to the prescribed norms and standards of behaviour.

Reinforcing desired behaviour: The assertion that positive reinforcement is crucial for properly controlling a school setting is backed by the theoretical paradigm of assertive discipline. Throughout this stage, the staff actively promotes and fosters positive conduct. The emphasis is placed on the conduct rather than on delivering satisfactory answers. Active participation, through responding to questions, is widely regarded as commendable conduct. However, it is important to note that certain rules may necessitate learners to raise their hands when they desire to speak. In instances of this nature, it is advisable for the staff to recognise and praise learners for their compliance with this regulation as well. This strategy facilitates educators in actively identifying and acknowledging positive conduct exhibited by students, so shifting the staff's attention towards rewards rather than punishments.

Consequences: Learners would have received comprehensive assistance to alter their disruptive conduct at this juncture. Hence, those who choose not to partake in suitable conduct have intentionally made such decisions. Consequently, the schools undertake disciplinary measures, such as enforcing a code of conduct and applying the consequences for the wrongdoing.

CONCLUSION

The AECLE Model advocates for a proactive approach by schools to develop strategies that enable teachers to assert their teaching rights while ensuring that learners have access to a disruption-free learning environment. It empowers teachers to recognise that if schools encounter behavioural issues among learners, they must first examine their methods of creating a conducive learning environment rather than assigning blame to the community. The model posits the underlying assumption that behaviour is acquired through learning. It also supports the idea that learners can modify their behaviour, regardless of the circumstances, as long as the school fosters an environment that encourages such change. When implementing the model, teachers should undergo professional development in the various components of the model. This will enable them to adapt the execution of the model to the specific needs of their learners and the circumstances in which they teach. Therefore, the model emphasises ongoing professional development, particularly in its components, to enable teachers to manage their classrooms effectively.

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