

LEARNER INVOLVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT ASPECTS OF SENIOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT OF BOTSWANA

by

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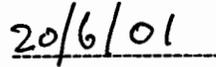
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I declare that “Learner involvement in management aspects of Senior Secondary Schools in the North Central District of Botswana” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V.Y. M Gomezulu', written over a horizontal dashed line.

SIGNATURE

(V.Y. MGOMEZULU)

A handwritten date '20/6/01' in black ink, written over a horizontal dashed line.

DATE

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Scolastica and children, Maliwase, Kandoko and Yewo.

SUMMARY

LEARNER INVOLVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT ASPECTS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT OF BOTSWANA

This study explores the involvement of learners in aspects of educational management in senior secondary schools of the North Central District of Botswana.

The findings revealed that:

- The learners should be involved in as many aspects as is possible. The *tests of relevance and expertise* can be applied to determine whether the learners can participate meaningfully in an aspect or not.
- The extent to which the learners can participate was *partial*. This extent of participation will allow school managers to take quick decisions in times of emergency or take a unilateral decision if it is established that the learners will not make a meaningful contribution to the process of making decisions. In this case too, the *tests of relevance and expertise* can be applied.
- The training and guidance of prefects can significantly improve the quality of participation of learners in management aspects of the school. The training exercise must include aspects that could be specific to a locality such as culture, politics or economic status of the community in which the school is situated.

Based on the above findings, recommendations are made and suggestions for future research are postulated.

KEY TERMS

Equality, freedom, democracy, participation, management, discipline, learners, aspects, involvement, participatory management, participative management, human rights, district.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

DfL	Discipline for Learning
LRC	Learner Representative Council
LSN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
SRC	School Representative Council
TQM	Total Quality Management
UN	United Nations

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 Background

Indiscipline in schools is a common problem in many countries. Individual schools and educational bodies in various parts of the world, including Botswana, have tried to solve the problem of indiscipline but many of them have not been successful. Among the many possible reasons for worsening indiscipline, one could be the transition from a one party to a multi-party democracy which promises human rights and freedom which learners, consciously or not, manipulate to suit their agendas (Nation 7-1-1998: 8; Mmegi 5-11 June 1998: 7). In some countries, for instance Botswana, the problem seems to be growing worse with time. A government minister, Mrs J. Phumaphi, endorses this when she points out that the youth have lost direction because of negligence by parents or elders. She says, "These people these days do not take time to teach the youth anything about moral values and our culture" (Mmegi 7-13 November 1997: 16). The situation is worrisome and calls for more research and more innovative solutions. The gravity of the situation is epitomised by a commentary in Mmegi (13-19 March 1998: 10) which reads: "These days, no school term goes by without a violent and destructive riot occurring in one of our senior secondary schools over one small, insignificant complaint or another." In fact, the country experienced four senior secondary school riots during 1998. Another observer confirms the above observation when he says: "The history of student protests dates back to the early 1970s but the rate at which they are occurring of late suggests a shift from the old way of viewing students who protest as nothing other than trouble makers"(Mmegi 24-30 July 1998: 5).

During the past ten years, there has been a rapid increase in learner numbers in the secondary education sector in Botswana. This has made it necessary for the government to build new schools and to expand the already-existing ones. The fact that schools now

have much larger numbers of learners has meant more diversity of personalities. This diversity has given rise to more potential for non-conforming behaviour that may give rise to discipline problems in schools. With larger numbers of learners, the communication between the administration and the learners has to be effective if misunderstanding is to be avoided. In situations of larger numbers of learners and more cases of indiscipline, the old methods of managing schools do not seem to be adequate any more. There seems to be a need for a new approach to deal with the problem of indiscipline in schools in Botswana (Mothobi 1994: 5; Mmegi 24-30 July 1998: 5).

The problems of indiscipline in schools in Botswana seem to be partly a by-product of the political system that espouses democratic values of freedom of expression and association. The learners in secondary schools seem to notice that adults can participate freely in matters that concern them. Thus the learners question when they are not allowed to do the same and yet they do have the right to exercise these rights (Laws of Botswana 1987, Article 12: 1). In some cases where the learners are allowed to participate in decision-making processes of the school, the opportunity is abused. For instance, the learners will demand more freedom to be able to do what they like (Saunders 1994: 31). Perhaps like learners in Malawi, learners in Botswana too have misunderstood the meaning of the words *human rights*, *freedom* and *democracy* to mean abandonment of old practices and doing what one pleases (Nation 7-1-1998: 6).

The liberation struggle in neighbouring South Africa, which included resistance against the education system by engaging in disobedience to the school authorities and what they represented, also seems to have had a profound impact on the discipline of learners in Botswana. Among other things, learners in South Africa fought for their inclusion in the management of schools through organisations such as the Student Representative Councils (SRC's) (Mayosi 1995: 4-5; New Nation 25-31 August 1989: 5; 5-11 April 1990: 14). Considering the proximity and the high degree of interaction between the two countries, it is likely that the South African learner campaign for more democratic school management could have spread to Botswana (Mmegi 5-11 June 1998: 7).

In recognition of the need to promote participative management, the Botswana Ministry of Education now requires schools to establish school councils which will include learners (Ministry of Education; 5 December 1995b: 3). It is important to find out whether there is a relationship between continuing strikes and the establishment or non-establishment of meaningful learner representation in schools. It is also important to find out to what extent learners are meaningfully involved in the management of schools. The aim of this research is, therefore, to investigate the influence of learner participation in school management on discipline in Botswana senior secondary schools.

The problem of poor discipline in educational institutions is not new in the world and not unique to Botswana. In the past, people have tried to understand the underlying causes of this problem and how the problem can be solved. They have developed various theories, some of which have been quite useful in addressing the problem of poor discipline. It is, therefore, important to study these theories in order to understand the problem of poor discipline in schools. The following section will be discussing the theories of democracy in management.

1.1.1 Democracy in management

During the 19th and 20th century a group of theorists, some of whom were practical managers and social scientists, developed theories about their own experiences in management with the idea of producing a set of principles of management applicable in a wide variety of situations. The very early theorists developed theories today referred to as “classical theories”. These theorists, such as Fayol, Taylor, Urwick, Brech and Weber, had certain things in common. For instance, they espoused the hierarchical organisational structure whereby communication was in one direction, that is, from the top to the bottom officers. The junior staff had no access to the officers above them. The main emphasis in management was to get the organisational mechanisms in order to realise high productivity. Little attention was given to the development of people, except for Brech who saw management as a social process for planning and regulating the operations of the enterprise towards some agreed objectives (Cole 1990: 26).

During the early 20th century another group of theorists known as "the human relations theorists" emerged. Elton Mayo is described as the founder of the human relations movement following his popular research on human relations. After Mayo the social psychologists, such as Maslow, McGregor, Herzberg, Likert, Argyris and others, also subscribed to the human relations theory. The research by Mayo was partly the result of observations that work productivity was not high in spite of what managers then believed were good methods of managing people in an institution. The classical theorists did not understand that a human being is a social being at work as well as outside it, and that membership of a group is important to individuals (Cole 1990: 40). Bottery (1992: 31) expands what should be considered in the concept of 'social man' as presented by the early theorists. He says:

One needs to look beyond the physiological, the psychological and the social to the sociological - to the structuring of the organisation and the society in which it works, and to the influence of these upon the individual.

The concept of 'social man' dominated the thinking of social researchers such as Maslow, McGregor and others. It also dominated and influenced the approach to management of practising managers. They now began to consider the social and belonging needs of the employees, as opposed to the needs of the task.

The research by Rensis Likert, who was a human relations theorist, indicated that the high-producing managers tended to build their success on interlocking and tightly-knit groups of employees, whose co-operation had been obtained by thorough attention to a range of motivational forces. These included not only economic and security motives but also self-actualisation such as creativity motives (Cole 1990: 50). Another observation by this research was that although the high-producers utilised the tools of classical management such as work-study and budgeting, they did so in a way which recognised the aspirations of the employees, by encouraging participative approaches. This new management approach believed that management could achieve high performance when

employees see their membership of a work group to be 'supportive', that is, when they experience a sense of personal worth and importance from belonging to it (Cole 1990: 50).

Likert's theory about high-producing managers acknowledged a range of factors that affect motivation and took the view that the best style of management has to utilise a variety of motivators. A participatory management style was said to be the best because commitment to the organisation's goal is high, communication is good, both upwards, downwards and laterally. Productivity is high and absenteeism is low (Cole 1990: 50).

More studies in management of organisations have revealed that organisational behaviour is more complex than previously understood. As a result organisational behaviour cannot simply be studied in terms of structures or people alone. It must be done from a multi-dimensional perspective by studying people, structures, technology and environment at the same time. Therefore the organisation must be treated as a system and hence the name "Systems Approach" theory (Cole 1990: 68).

The systems approach theory highlighted the complexity of the interdependent components of organisations within equally complex environments. The latest management theory of 'total quality' has highlighted that a major component of organisations is people because their behaviour can largely determine whether the environmental structures and technology will be conducive to high productivity. The behaviour of the people will largely be influenced by whether they participate in the management of the organisation or not.

The theory of total quality management has been widely adopted in the private sector in the past 20 years. This is mainly due to increased acceptance of the doctrine that greater worker participation in decision-making enhances productivity and organisational effectiveness (Conley, Schmidle & Shedd 1988:269; Jones & Villines 1987: 246-249; Shaw 1985: 25; Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 143). According to Conley *et al* (1988: 269) the fundamental nature of total quality management is the following:

A small group of between three and twelve people who do the same or similar work, voluntarily meeting together regularly for about an hour per week in paid time, usually under the leadership of their own supervisor, and trained to identify, analyse, and solve some of the problems in their work, presenting solutions to management, and where possible, implementing the solutions themselves.

The principles of participatory management were perhaps more clearly elaborated by Rensis Likert. In his discussion of the motivational forces, he emphasised the discussion of supportive relationships. The idea of supportive relationships is built into Likert's view of the ideal organisation structure. He believes supportive relationships lead to effective work groups which can interact with other effective groups in an overlapping form of organisation (Cole 1990: 50).

Participatory management has changed over time. In modern times it also means that those most affected by the decision should participate in the discussion and take the decision and the responsibility for the decision, themselves (Wringe 1984: 16). Scott and Jaffe (1992: 10) refer to people who can share power, responsibility, communication, expectations and rewards, as empowered workforce. The two authors believe that in modern times:

The major sources of competitive advantage will lie, not in new technology but in the dedication, the quality of the commitment and the competence of the workforce. The result of employee energy and creativity of human capital is the company's most important resource. Empowerment is the new fuel for the growing workplace.

As indicated elsewhere, the theory of total quality management is a good example of participatory management and it demonstrates how important human capital is in an organisation.

To gain higher effectiveness, motivation and productivity as a manager, one has to empower the people by giving up some of one's power and control over the people (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 13) and through genuine participation, let them have some power and control. Empowerment of the stakeholders means finding the right balance (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 17). For instance, as a leader or an expert in a certain field, one could exercise more control and guidance over some of the areas in which the other people are clearly inadequate.

In the case of an educational institution such as a school, learners should also participate in the consultation, negotiation, decision-making and implementation stages. Rules and regulations of the learners would be more acceptable if the learners participated in the formulation of the rules than if they were imposed on them (Gagne 1982: 98). Pipes, Sedgwick and Spear (1991: 7.2) conclude, "clear lines of responsibility and delegation and the involvement of senior pupils and developing 'power-shifts' between staff and pupils and pupils themselves will contribute immeasurably to that difficult transition from school to work".

By empowering the stakeholders such as the learners through participatory management, the principle that 'democracy is a government by the people' will be upheld in its fuller sense. Without the participation of the stakeholders democratic principles in management cannot exist or be realised.

It must also be noted that learner participation in decision-making does not, in and of itself, guarantee the benefits mentioned above because its success depends on a variety of contextual and intervening factors such as the economic and political situations in the area (Conley *et al* 1988: 260; Cole 1990: 68).

Although this may be the case, there are other indirect benefits that might manifest themselves later in life. This is, perhaps, why Rousseau (in Smith 1989: 224) believed that "the central function of participation is an educative one, with the term 'educative' understood in its widest possible sense". Maxcy (in Smith 1989: 223) also demonstrated

that there is a close conceptual link between the idea of democratic participation and education. He also argued that "democracy is a normative conception, in the sense that it represents a set of criterial conditions toward which persons ought to strive if they are to enlarge and increase their capacities in life".

Therefore, because schools are the major institutions for the process of education, it is important that they should be managed democratically because through them democratic values will be disseminated. Some of the democratic values of education are to raise a democratic person who will be able to uphold human rights, accept responsibility and be tolerant to others. As Hartshorne (1990: 13) puts it, "Democratic, informed people are very much the business of education in general and of the schooling system in particular".

Democratic education should inevitably entail participatory management and it has, thus far, been suggested that participatory management is one way of introducing democratic principles in the management of a school. It is believed that participatory management could improve the management, in general, and discipline of the school in particular.

This research, therefore, seeks to find out how the democratic participation of learners in some aspects of senior secondary schools in Botswana can improve discipline. The above experiences, although foreign to Botswana, are quite relevant to the attempts at finding appropriate solutions relevant to the economic, cultural, political and educational circumstances of this country.

1.1.2 Democratic principles in education

"When citizens rule in a democracy, they determine, among other things, how future citizens will be educated. Democratic education is therefore a political as well as an educational ideal. Education not only sets the stage for democratic politics, it plays a central role in it. Its dual role poses one of the primary moral problems of politics: Who should share the authority to influence the way democratic citizens are educated?" (Gutmann 1987: 3).

During the Enlightenment era, Rousseau's philosophy challenged the philosophy of education that had derived from Plato and Aristotle and had provided the dominant educational doctrine right up to the 18th century. The philosophy of Plato and Aristotle maintained that education should be centred on the subject matter and not on the learners. Rousseau suggested that instead of education being centred on **what** is taught (subject matter), it should be centred on **who** is taught (the child) (Bowen & Hobson 1987: 122).

Rousseau believed that education should be learner-centred but it cannot be successfully realised if the learners are not involved in the process of learning. This belief is further elaborated in modern thought that the learners should be involved in all aspects of education that have some bearing in the process of their learning. For instance, the learners should participate in the processes of decision-making. This suggests that the learners should share the authority to influence the way they are educated (Gutmann 1988: 195-196).

Rousseau also highlighted the value of participatory democracy and added that participation is also a way of protecting individual interests and ensuring good governance and even promoting efficiency. He further stated that institutional arrangements do have an impact on personality development. For instance, a centralised authoritarian structure can be expected to teach people to be timid, suspicious and self-interested. Participatory structures will reverse the negative effects of authoritarian structures. Rousseau therefore asserted that the central function of participation is an educative one with the term "educative" understood in its widest possible sense. "Participatory structures provide the incentive and the appropriate motivation for individuals to become socially and politically involved, and this involvement, in turn, means that participatory structures are strengthened, acquiring legitimacy and credibility..."(Rousseau in Smith 1989: 224).

The principles of participation overlap a great deal with those of learner-centred education. Therefore the benefits of participation that are mentioned above can also be realised in learner-centred education.

Education that is learner-centred inevitably allows the learner to participate in the process; otherwise it is not learner-centred. In genuine participation, the concerns of the learner must also be considered. For the teacher or manager to win the trust of the learner, he/she must convince the learner that he/she is genuine in his/her actions. For the learner to genuinely participate in the process, he/she must be equipped with enabling tools such as freedom to be able to do certain things and must be treated as equals and not as subordinates. Equipping the learners with such tools is the business of education (Hartshorne 1990: 13).

The United Nations has passed legislation on some bills on human rights that form the foundation for democratic education. All democratic countries which have signed the United Nations Charter for Human Rights are expected, among other things, to uphold and respect the rights of persons to individual freedom and equality before the law (Squelch 1996: 17-20). Yet the implementation of these rights to the letter in a school situation is not always easy. For instance, Gutmann (1990: 19) states that democratic education aims at the empowerment of free and equal citizens, people who are willing and able to share together in shaping their own society. However, for people to shape their own destiny collectively, they need to share common ideals and methods of realising their destiny. Unfortunately, it is not always possible that all the people will agree on everything. Usually, societies use views that are acceptable to the majority of the people and ignore those of the minority. In some cases, the majority does not even give the minority a chance to express their views. In these cases, the majority has not respected the freedom of the minority. So already there is a situation that the freedom of the majority can override the freedom of the individual or the minority. This situation underscores the problem of achieving total freedom and equality for everyone.

From Gutmann's (1990: 19) statement, a question can be asked. For instance, who are "free and equal citizens"? The concepts of freedom and equality can be viewed on two levels. One level is that they can be provided for by legislation which organisations such as government can do. This kind of freedom and equality is not enough because it is possible that people might still not feel free and equal as a result of other factors which

cannot be monitored by legislation. On the second level, the enjoyment of freedom and equality will come from within the people themselves as a result of the conviction that they can actualise themselves in the absence of threats or intimidation. It is the latter kind of freedom and equality that can be observed in people's lives which confirms that people are indeed free and equal with others. Therefore the responsible organisation must create systems which will empower the citizens to feel free and equal. Among other methods, education through schools is perhaps the most universally accepted method.

The learners in schools cannot participate in management meaningfully if they are not empowered to feel free and are treated as equals. This is the ideal but its realisation is difficult and subject to many obstacles as will be indicated below.

*** Freedom**

A central justification for democracy is that the individual has aims that are as important to him/her as the aims of others are to them. It is also assumed that the individual is most likely to achieve these purposes if he/she is allowed to choose the means to those ends himself/herself (Wringe 1984: 76). For the individual to be able to choose the means he/she has to enjoy a high measure of freedom.

The problem in the case of children is that because they are still young, purposes that seem important to them now may seem less so in future. Also given their limited experience and, perhaps, limited reasoning powers they risk choosing trivial and misguided ends for themselves (Wringe 1984: 76). Therefore they need to be trained and guided in using their freedom usefully.

The following is an example where the learners do not enjoy enough freedom to participate in decision-making processes of the school such as those concerning the curriculum. Research in English secondary schools has shown that the main cause of truancy is the curriculum. The research has not shown learner dissatisfaction with the curriculum in general. On the contrary, it has shown that a very large number of learners

are dissatisfied with some of their lessons mainly because they were not consulted about the inclusion of some content in the curriculum (O’Keeffe &Stoll 1995: 9). It is evident in this case that without a high measure of freedom for the learners meaningful participatory democracy cannot be realised in the management of schools.

This is one example where management approaches that give freedom and involve people in the system of management can circumvent the problem of truancy due to the curriculum. For instance, the Total Quality Management approach, which is an example of participatory management, would have engaged the learners to solve the problem of truancy. In TQM, Deming (the father of total quality) said: “Our aim must be to enable and empower students to take control of their own learning and empower them to maximise their capabilities, and find ‘joy in learning’ (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 151). For this aim to be fulfilled learners must enjoy a high measure of freedom to be able to solve their own problems under the guidance of knowledgeable and experienced adults. Therefore, although absolute freedom may not be attainable in a school situation, learners should be allowed to exercise their freedom to choose and decide as far as it does not interfere with the freedom of others or disturb others from achieving the greater good of the school.

* **Equality**

In the context of educational institutions, equality is an ideal to aspire for. For instance, for some people the requirement of equality of educational opportunity is taken to mean not merely that all children should receive the benefit of the same quantity of educational resources, but also that outcomes should be equal (Wringe 1984: 45). Sallis (1996: 22) disagrees with this perception. He says it is difficult to quantify the outcomes of education because:

In education we talk as though learners are the output or product and yet for a product to be the subject of a quality assurance process the producer needs to specify and control the source of supply. Secondly, the material must pass

through a standard process and the output must meet predetermined and defined specifications. Such a model does not fit education. It is impossible to produce learners to any particular guaranteed standard because human beings are notoriously non-standard.

Therefore, education does not produce a product rather it provides a service. Services are delivered directly by people to people. There is a close relationship between the customer and the service provider. The quality of service is determined both by the provider and the receiver. Unlike products there can be no absolute consistency in service delivery. A service can not be serviced or mended. For instance, a poor meal is a poor meal (Sallis 1996: 22).

Education being a service, it is therefore difficult to measure successful output and productivity. The only meaningful performance indicators are those of customer satisfaction (Sallis 1996: 22).

Providing the same quantity of educational resources in itself or the involvement of learners in the choice of inputs into the process of education cannot constitute equality. This is because the provision of these resources can be quantified to establish equality but its effect on output cannot be quantified.

Wringe (1984: 61) shares the view with Sallis (1996: 22) when he concludes: "To suggest that all children, whatever their aptitudes, tastes, temperaments, previous learning and so on, ought to achieve the same educational outcomes is, in the present state of our pedagogic skills, a recipe for creating failure".

If "equality" is interpreted strictly as suggested in the U.N. Charter for Human Rights (Squelch 1996: 17-20), there will likely be more questions than answers. For instance, should school administration bow to the demands of the learners because they are in the majority? If the learner and the teacher are equal, should the learners be granted the

freedom to independently choose their goals and standards for themselves and the means and processes by which they are to be achieved (Wringe 1984: 76)?

Perhaps democratic education should be understood as an ideal of a society whose members try to realise its goals (Gutmann 1987: 71). In the process of realising this ideal, there are bound to be conflicts, for instance, between the professional autonomy of the teachers and the political equality of the learners as indicated in the previous paragraphs.

In real life, there are many obstacles to absolute equality but it must remain the goal towards which society must strive. Therefore the kind of equality that can be achieved now is only relative to the ideal.

In participatory management, which is exemplified by TQM, a high degree of equality for learners can be achieved because in the quality circles, which are small functioning units, everybody is generally equal. For instance, Sehr (1997: 178) proposes that:

Schools should be built around relationships between students and teachers, among teachers and among students. This in turn will require that new schools be organised and existing schools be reorganised into smaller functioning units than that of the traditional comprehensive high schools.

For the relationships in the small units to be meaningful there is need for mutual acceptance between the learners and the teachers. There is need to treat one another as equal partners if the relationships should be meaningful.

Notwithstanding the other obstacles, a high degree of equality of learners can also be achieved if the curricula are the same for all, learners attend common schools, and the classrooms have learners of mixed ability and such other equalities (Wringe 1984: 63). This should be so because the one area in which equality can be ensured is the provision of equal access to resources.

Wringe (1984: 22) observes that some people enjoy more rights of freedom and equality because they, perhaps, have certain skills and attributes. He argues that the claim that all people are equal in rights cannot be justified if other qualifications are used. The qualification for equality should be based only on the fact that all people are human beings.

Here again it is apparent that absolute equality in life, and particularly in schools, is difficult to practise. However, absolute freedom and equality of the individual should be seen as the ideals of democracy, and institutions may be regarded as more or less democratic as they approach or recede from the ideals (Wringe 1984: 23).

Considering the potential benefits of democratic governance, it can be appreciated that theories of democracy and participatory management, although they have their origins outside education, are pertinent and could be considered for application to education (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: xiii). In the above discussion it has been observed that the democratic principles, such as freedom and equality, can be actualised in participatory management, although in a limited sense. In the case of education, participatory management could provide a good opportunity for training the learners in democracy but also for managing the schools well to achieve the objective of sound discipline. Democratic management of schools has improved discipline in other parts of the world (Brancato 1988: 46-48; Gordon 1990: 30-31; Holdsworth 1985: 6-12). It is possible that democratic management of schools can help in improving discipline in Botswana. It is in this light that the problem of discipline in Botswana should now be discussed.

1.2 The problems of indiscipline in schools in Botswana

During 1994, the school at which the researcher teaches experienced two major learner strikes and a few near-strikes and threats. Since then, other senior secondary schools, in this and in other regions, have also experienced spontaneous strikes (Mmegi 13-19 March 1998: 10). The reasons for these strikes seem to vary but they all point to the state of unhappiness and discord between the school management and the learners. For instance,

learners in some schools have alleged *inter alia* that there is “no freedom in their schools” and that schools are “being run like prisons”. Others have complained that they “fear the principal” and that he/she “does not co-operate with them” (Midweek Sun 8 July 1998: 1; Mmegi 5-11 June 1998: 7). Whether the negative attitudes of the learners are justified or not, their reactions to the school authorities and regulations have the potential to be negative and disruptive.

Disruption interrupts learning for all learners and disruptive learners lose even more learning time. For example, in six middle schools in Charleston, South Carolina, learners who broke school rules spent considerable time doing their punishment instead of learning in class. These learners collectively lost 7932 instructional days to in-school and out-of-school punishments/suspensions in a single academic year. The innocent learners too were disrupted because the teachers had to suspend teaching to attend to the disruptive learners (Gaustad 1992 -accessed 28/10/98). Disruptive learners in Botswana schools also lose much of their learning time due to punishments. The non-disruptive learners too are affected in the same way as the disruptive learners because the teachers have to attend to the disruptive learners. In the end this results in poor performance in their examinations. This is a worrying situation and research should be conducted to understand why some learners are so disruptive.

It was with the above concern in mind that an action research project was conducted in the researcher’s school to identify the problems that could have caused the tense situation and to use the findings to reduce the chance of recurring. The concerns that prompted the research were that:

- (a) there was a general decline of discipline standards among the learners;
- (b) there was a lack of standard guidelines on disciplinary procedures;
- (c) there was a lack of co-ordination in enforcing disciplinary measures, and
- (d) there was failure by some teachers to live up to their role-model expectations.

To be able to collect enough information to address the problems, it was decided that an investigation be conducted to understand what learners, teachers and parents thought about the effectiveness of some areas where learners were mostly involved and to seek their suggestions in order to correct the situation. The following areas were covered:

- (a) study periods
- (b) teacher/learner relationship
- (c) learner leadership
- (d) professional conduct
- (e) home environment for day learners
- (f) boarding environment
- (g) entertainment for learners
- (h) dining environment

The research involved a questionnaire, involving 65 teachers, 500 learners and 50 parents.

A question was asked to the learners on the extent to which learner-involvement in the management of the school through a system of prefects, monitors and house captains was effective. The following statistics emerged from the responses of the learners: Very effective: 23%; Adequate: 15%; Fair: 32%; Ineffective: 30% (Lotsane Secondary School 1997).

Thirty percent of the respondents thought that learner- involvement through prefects, monitors and house captains was ineffective. Semantically “Fair” does not represent a low opinion, but, according to this scale, it does represent an unfavourable opinion by the respondents because it is only second from the most unfavourable option. According to the above findings, it would seem that only about a quarter of the respondents had a strong positive opinion about the involvement of learners in the school management. These figures are seemingly indicative of a situation of ineffective managerial participation by learners in senior secondary schools, as can also be learned from the

media. Admittedly, the grading and resultant interpretation of the responses may be questionable but a general degree of dissatisfaction about learner participation was apparent. This is unfortunate, especially for schools in a country that espouses principles of democracy.

1.3 Learners' participation in the management of schools

In some countries participatory management in schools has long been practised in various shades or forms of participation. It has been observed elsewhere, for instance in the USA (Brancato 1988: 46-48), and Australia (Westlake 1989: 27-29) that learners' participation through Learner Representative Councils (LRC's) represents a valuable source of leadership and information that can be used when addressing a wide range of issues that develop in a school. LRC's can provide leadership in addressing aspects such as general learner conduct, class attendance and learner participation in scheduling and conducting school programmes (Gordon 1990: 30). In separate observations, Holdsworth (1985: 8) and Polan (1989: 11) point out that LRC's can also assist the principal in addressing issues like drugs, alcohol, vandalism and violence within the school community.

The next two examples are cases in point. The first example is of a school where learners are allowed to participate in some aspects of school management, while the second example is of a school where learners seem to be directly involved with almost all aspects of the school management.

(1) In New South Wales (Australia) the Hunters Hill High School has an LRC which has the aim of encouraging learners to take part in the democratic process and to accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions. The LRC has formed many committees in which many learners can have the opportunity of practising and experiencing the system of participatory management. For instance, the learners are fully responsible for the management and activities of the social committee, the canteen committee, the environment committee and sports committee. Observations by Westlake (1989: 27) at

the Hunters Hill High School indicate that although the benefits are difficult to quantify, these have nevertheless been reflected in improved attendance, behaviour and general learners' attitudes.

(2) At Ralph Dunlap School in Santa Maria, California, learners' participation in management has been very successful. The learners participate through a learner government based on the British parliament. The school has laws in which all the classes have input and each class has a representative in the "parliament". They also have a learner court which meets once a week to settle disputes between learners. An elected student judge presides. Every Tuesday, parliament meets with the principal to discuss and plan events (Brancato 1988: 48).

There is a concern that learners do not seem to participate effectively in the management of the schools in Botswana. Learner involvement in the management of schools in other countries has solved a great deal of discipline problems. It is assumed that learner involvement in some aspects of management in senior secondary schools in Botswana will improve discipline. It is therefore the intention of this research to investigate how effective and meaningful learner involvement in management aspects of senior secondary schools in Botswana can improve discipline.

1.4 The main question

The main question that the research will try to answer is as follows;

To what extent can the participation of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana improve discipline?

The subquestions

- (a) In what aspects of school management can learners participate meaningfully?
- (b) How can school authorities and other interested bodies equip learner leaders so

- that they can meaningfully participate in management aspects of the school?
- (c) How will the participation of learners in school management aspects contribute to the constructive maintenance of discipline in a school?

1.5 Aims of the research

There are five aims to this study, namely:

- to establish the relationship between (a) sound discipline and (b) learners' participation in aspects of school management.
- to review the available literature on learners' participation in aspects of senior secondary school management.
- to identify aspects of management in which learners could meaningfully participate.
- to determine empirically the extent to which learners could participate in the management aspects of the senior secondary school.
- to make recommendations on how training prefects could improve their participation in management aspects of the school.

1.6 Motivation for the research

The recent state of discipline in schools in Botswana and many other countries is a cause for concern for many people associated with education. Many people do not understand why there are so many strikes in schools, and so much defiance of school authorities, rules and regulations. The authorities seem to have lost control over learners. People do not understand why learners seem to have lost interest in what is being offered and/or how it is being offered in schools. The learners seem to have found substitutes that are more interesting such as gangs and drugs (Botswana Gazette 23 September 1998: 2; Mmegi 13-19 March 1998: 10).

The problem has also been recognised by the Ministry of Education, which has produced a manual to equip principals of schools with necessary information for managing strikes

and grievances and promoting communication (Ministry of Education 1995b: 4-7). Indeed, it would appear that communication is a big part of the problem between learners and the school management. Almost invariably, strikes have been staged when learners have felt the management no longer gives attention to their concerns. Some media reports suggest that the management may be actively dealing with their concerns but that this has not communicated to the learners. The perception of the learners will be that the management is not addressing their concerns (Mmegi 12-18 June 1998: 7; Midweek Sun 8 July 1998: 1).

This research is necessary because:

*An investigation of the role of learner participation in school management will indicate what learners and school authorities could do to improve discipline in schools.

*Equally important, the research will investigate ways of allowing learners to participate in management aspects of the school as a mode of training the learners to assume responsibility in school and in later life.

1.7 Research methods and design

1.7.1 Literature review

A literature study will be conducted with the aim of establishing the nature and directions of theory on learner involvement in managing schools. The study will also investigate issues that would be relevant to the Botswana education system so that some helpful practices could be adopted for the benefit of the education system.

In order to achieve the above aims, the literature review will cover the meaning, scope of and approaches to discipline. It will then cover the causes of discipline problems, models of maintaining discipline and the policy for school discipline. It will also discuss participatory management with regard to the meaning and extent of participatory management, models of participatory management and participation in decision-making. In the last section, it will cover the rationale for learner participation in school

management, management aspects in schools in which learners may participate, obstacles to learner participation in school management and ways of overcoming participatory management barriers.

1.7.2 Empirical research

A questionnaire survey will be used. This method is more suitable than the interview or observation methods because it does not require the researcher to visit all schools that are far apart.

The aims of the questionnaire survey are:

- (i) to establish the current degree of learner involvement in the management of senior secondary schools.
- (ii) to establish respondents' views on aspects of school management which learners should be involved in.
- (iii) to determine what learners, teachers and managers view as meaningful involvement of learners in the management of schools.

1.7.2.1 Population

The proposed target population for this study is eight senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana. These schools comprise the universum of senior secondary schools in the district.

1.7.2.2 Sampling

The sampling was limited to the eight senior secondary schools in the district. The sampling was based on cluster sampling (Oppenheim 1992: 40). Samples consisted of 16 learner respondents for a school, namely, one head-boy, one head-girl, two dining prefects, two hostel prefects (boy and girl), one sports prefect, one entertainment prefect,

four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 5, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 4. The selection of the prefects and non-prefect learners was done by the conductor of the research (my contact person). He/she listed each sample of prefects alphabetically and chose the first boy and girl on the list. For the non-prefect learners he/she listed each sample (such as all boys' hostel prefects) alphabetically and chose the 15th and 25th boys and 10th and 20th girls on the list.

It must be noted that the population of interest comprised the learner representatives but provision was also made to represent the views of the non-prefect learners. Sometimes the non-prefect learners may think that the prefects do not represent them well and that they are the puppets of the principal. The inclusion of the non-prefect learners in the research was important in that it either confirmed or dispelled the suspicions of the non-prefect learners. The kind of balance between the prefects and the non-prefects helped to show if there was agreement or a rift between the views of the two groups about their involvement in the management of schools.

From each school two prefect advisors, one member of the management team (usually a head of department) and the principal of the school were included to confirm or negate the views of the learners and prefects from a professional point of view. The inclusion of the principals was important in order to get their views about participation of the learners in some management aspects of the school. Where possible the gender ratio of the prefect advisors and management members was balanced.

1.7.2.3 Type of questions

The questionnaires comprised closed multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions (Appendices A and B).

All the respondents answered the same questions because it was expected that all of them had sufficient experience about the issues in question. By giving the same questions, a fair representative opinion about the issues could be obtained. In the case of question 11, the

phrasing of the teachers' question was different from that of the learners but both of them were similar and were meant to elicit similar responses. The questions would cover areas of learner involvement that would partly be determined by the literature study.

1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A general orientation on the research is given, after which the research problem is formulated and the research is motivated. The aims, objectives and the research methods and design are explained.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A critical review of related literature on discipline and participatory management will be the main focus of this chapter. The concepts of discipline and participatory management will be discussed and the relationship between discipline and participatory management will be explained.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY OF THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

This chapter will present the research design, sampling, research tools and the procedure of collecting data through a questionnaire. The method of analysing the data will also be presented.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will unfold the findings of the questionnaire survey, as well as secondary data, such as from literature, and such data will be given in narrative, table and chart forms. Emphasis will be placed on analysing the results objectively.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The summary of chapter 4 will be presented here with conclusions emanating from the discussion. Recommendations based on the conclusions will be given and the chapter will close with suggestions for further research in some aspects of the research topic.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the background to the study of learner involvement in the management of schools with regard to discipline in schools in Botswana was discussed. The researcher looked briefly at the theories of management, in particular theories of participatory management. In connection with democracy, the researcher looked at individual freedom and equality in democratic education because these are the basis of the concept of democracy. The relationship between theories of management and theories of education were also discussed. It has been observed that the trends in the development of theories of democracy and management seem to have had considerable influence on education especially with regard to issues of educational management, such as discipline in educational institutions.

From the above background the important focus for the study is the relationship between school discipline and learner participation in school management. Chapter two will discuss the available literature dealing with the concepts of discipline and participatory management that are important to the study of learner involvement in management aspects of senior secondary schools.

CHAPTER TWO

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT AT SCHOOL

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the study of involvement of learners in the management aspects of senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana. The type of management referred to in this study is participative management. In the process of managing schools, "discipline" is one of the central factors that usually indicates whether management has been successful or not. Therefore the concepts of discipline and participative management will be discussed.

If it were possible to collect the views of the public on the role of the school it is likely they would include, "to prepare children adequately for life and work", and /or "to instil discipline and sense of responsibility and teach them what is needed for future life" (Whitaker 1983: 25). Others would say the role of the school is to teach children norms and values critical to the peaceful functioning of society (Ramatsui 1989: 89). Judging from what appears in the media it seems the efforts to realise these aims have not been successful in many schools, in particular with regard to discipline. At the centre of the problem are learners who are in constant conflict with school rules and regulations. Therefore for schools to be managed properly, authorities need to understand why there is conflict between learners and school rules and regulations and/or school authorities. It would appear that many learners do not understand or appreciate these rules and regulations. From this situation a few questions arise: why do these learners not understand or appreciate these rules and regulations. How can the management of schools be made more meaningful for the learners and the school so that indiscipline can be reduced?

To answer the above questions, this chapter looks at what discipline at school entails with regard to six approaches to discipline. These are: Manichean and Augustinian

perspectives of discipline; the closed and open approaches; the judicious discipline approach; the Glasser system; the logical approach to developing discipline strategies and the discipline for learning. To be able to understand discipline problems in Botswana, the causes of school discipline problems are studied, together with models that can be used to solve discipline problems.

Furthermore, the chapter will discuss what participatory management entails, the models that can be used to effect management participation and what "full" management participation means. "Unilateral" decision-making is also studied to provide a comparison of the two extreme sides of the continuum of participation. To be able to involve learners, certain conditions that are suitable for a school setting would have to be created. These conditions are discussed along with the rationale for involving learners in school management. Finally, obstacles to better discipline and their possible solutions are highlighted with reference to senior secondary schools in Botswana.

2.2 Discipline in schools

2.2.1 The meaning of school discipline

The term discipline has a variety of meanings. Some people use it to describe spanking or flogging. Others describe discipline as training that corrects, moulds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character (Newman, accessed 25/11/98). Discipline is also sometimes understood to mean control gained by enforcing obedience or order. Others still describe discipline as an orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behaviour (Cotton 1990, accessed 25/11/98).

In the educational context, Jones (in Cotton 1990) defines discipline as the business of enforcing simple classroom rules that facilitate learning and minimise disruption. Hymes (in Cotton 1990) defines it as the slow, bit by bit, time-consuming task of helping children to see the sense in acting in a certain way. Newman (accessed 25/11/98) also prefers a definition that includes any technique designed to control or train or educate a

submissive person or fulfil his/her potential. He adds that discipline need not involve any corporal punishment or even any punishment at all.

As can be appreciated, it is not easy to come up with a universally accepted definition of “discipline”. The definitions above differ in many ways but they all seem to fit on a continuum, ranging from the strictest and most authoritarian forms of discipline to laissez-faire forms of discipline.

It is also important to understand that although there are various interpretations of discipline, they all strive to achieve a kind of order that will permit learners to engage in a valued activity (Wilson 1971: 34). The effect of the various interpretations of discipline has led educational writers develop a number of approaches to deal with the problem of indiscipline in schools. One usually adopts one approach or combines various approaches. The aim of adopting a particular approach to discipline is to teach the learners how to conduct themselves well without having to force them all the time. Therefore the lessons from the chosen approach have to be internalised by the learners. In other words, the force that will make them follow the rules must come from within them as a result of appreciating the reasons for following the rules. The learners will internalise and follow the rules because they can see something valuable as a result of being disciplined. If learners fail to internalise the rules they will have difficulty in following them.

For the learners to conduct themselves well without having to force them all the time there must be another *force* to make them comply with the rules. Dewey (1944: 124-126) refers to this force as *interest*. He states that the word *interest* expresses (i) the whole state of active development, (ii) the objective results that are foreseen and wanted, and (iii) the personal emotional inclination. He further states that, educationally, to attach importance to interest means to attach some feature of seductiveness to material rewards otherwise indifferent; to secure attention and effort by offering a bribe of pleasure. Dewey (1944: 129) concludes that interest and discipline are connected, not opposed. He indicates that good discipline cannot be realised if the learners are not interested in the

rules and regulations of the school or their purported outcome. It is self-evident that the learners cannot internalise what they are not interested in. The fact that good discipline cannot be achieved if learners are not interested or fail to internalise the rules emphasises the need for approaches to discipline that the learners can accept in order to be interested in or to internalise the school rules.

Discipline is an issue that concerns many organisations. The success of their approaches to discipline has depended on the approach adopted and whether the various factors, such as culture and the political system in the society, have been considered. These factors should be considered seriously in the choice of an approach because they largely determine how a society defines “discipline”. It is important to understand that it is possible that every society will have its own understanding of the meaning of the term “discipline”. For instance, a society that has authoritarian tendencies in its culture or political institutions may find undemocratic methods of instilling discipline in the learners more appealing. It can therefore be expected that there will be various approaches to discipline depending on the culture and other factors of a society. This is important for this study because it highlights the need to understand the culture, political system, economic status and literacy level of a society in order to identify a relevant approach to discipline.

In this research, “discipline” will refer to a state of order in the school and conduct by the learners whereby learners intrinsically abide by the rules and regulations of the school so that a learning environment is created for the realisation of the school objectives.

2.2.2 Approaches to school discipline

There are many types of approaches that can be used to deal with the problem of indiscipline. These approaches are usually followed to suit a problem in a specific environment and under specific conditions. It is, therefore, important to consider the suitability of an approach with regard to factors such as the culture, the economic status

and the political system of the society. If an approach does not quite suit the user, it might be necessary to make modifications or to combine elements from other approaches.

There are legal or constitutional matters that need to be considered too in the choice of a suitable approach. For example, the determination of an act of indiscipline is often dependent on whether the violation of a rule has interfered with the rights of the majority. The violation of the rights of an individual by the majority is often not considered as an act of indiscipline supposed to attract sanctions (Wolfgang 1995: 125). For example, the school manager and the teachers have the dilemma of balancing the democratic concepts of 'majority rule' and 'the rights of an individual'. There is also the issue of *in loco parentis* (in place of parents). Historically, schools enjoyed the widest power and authority - just like parents - to impose their will on learners, as long as it was not arbitrary, malicious or in bad faith (Wolfgang 1995: 128). In recent times, the rights of the child have been accentuated and it has become more difficult to continue with the status of *in loco parentis* as has been the case in the past because one is likely to breach one of the rights. For example, corporal punishment was used in the past without causing any outcry. It is, in these times, unacceptable in most educational institutions. These issues have to be considered in the choice of an approach or approaches. The following are some of the approaches that can be used to deal with the problem of indiscipline:

- (a) The Manichean and Augustinian perspective
- (b) The closed and open approaches
- (c) The judicious discipline approach
- (d) The Glasser system
- (e) The logical approach to developing discipline strategies, and
- (f) The discipline for learning approach

(1) Manichean and Augustinian perspectives

According to Postman & Weingartner (1971: 124-125) discipline at school can be viewed in terms of "Manichean" and "Augustinian" perspectives.

The term Manichean comes from the name of its founder, Mani or Manes who was born in 216 AD in Southern Babylonia. Mani disagreed with some of the practices of the then Christian faith, such as the use of daily and frequently repeated ablutions. He believed in gnosticism, a religious outlook that believed matter is evil and that emancipation comes through knowledge. He also believed that God who is nothing other than goodness and truth cannot have willed the suffering human beings experience. He concluded that the suffering caused on human beings is the responsibility of a principle that is evil and opposed to God (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1982: 442-444).

The Manichean perspective views "evil" (anything that frustrates or bothers or scares one) as a result of a conscious, deliberate plot by an enemy whose primary purpose is to make life difficult for other people. This "devil" serves several functions, not the least of which is that of shifting the responsibility for some problem from oneself to someone else. Those who operate from the Manichean perspective may put a lot of energy and resources into fighting "the enemy", but they scarcely ever get to dealing with the causes of a problem. The result is that the more activity they engage in, the worse the problem gets (Postman & Weingartner 1971: 124-125).

In schools there are teachers and managers who seem to have a Manichean view of learners. They believe some learners are determined to cause trouble for the school and thus the learners' actions must be stopped swiftly and decisively. The Manichean view of learners often prevents the teachers and the managers from taking responsibility for their own faults or examine the real causes of the indiscipline and they are thus unable to find creative solutions. The Manichean opponent, who is said to be the cause of problems for the manager, is in many cases not a real enemy but only perceived as such.

Quite different from the Manichean perspective is the Augustinian perspective. The term Augustinian comes from the name of its founder, St. Augustine who was born in 354 A.D. Augustine disagreed with the gnostic views of Manichean approach. He believed imperfection is the feature of the world as we experience it. Augustine refuted

the teachings of the Manicheans that tended to put the blame for human suffering on some evil force existing in human beings. The Augustinian approach to evil and suffering opines that evil is not a separate force opposing the good, but is a lack of goodness. Human fallibility and human free will can lead to suffering and evil (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1982: 371; Kuchinsky, accessed 19/2/2000).

The Augustinian view of the universe is that chaos is more probable than order, not as the result of any activity on the part of an evil opponent, but because that's the way it is. This tendency to disorder is also called entropy (Wiener in Postman & Weingartner 1971: 124-125). Therefore all forms of "order" are anti-entropic, and this includes all forms of organised human behaviour. Human organisation has only one basic tool to use in combating entropy, namely information. By information is meant how the environment influences us and how we influence the environment. The process of receiving and using information is the process of our adjusting to the contingencies of the environment, and of our living effectively within that environment. To live effectively is to live with adequate information (Wiener in Postman & Weingartner 1971: 126-127).

When the Manichean view is compared with the Augustinian view, the Augustinian view seems to provide a more realistic perspective from which to see and deal with problems in the schools. Indeed, one cannot deal with discipline problems in the school without first of all gathering enough information about the problem and using the information to act. The Manichean view of the school discipline problem will be to blame the "enemy" who may not even be there. According to the Augustinian perspective, it is more helpful to accept responsibility for some error and to solve it, rather than relegating responsibility to some evil force.

(2) The closed and open approaches to school discipline

The closed approach is the traditional way of management that tends to have autocratic characteristics. For instance, the manager will try to keep processes such as decision-making to himself/herself, there will be little communication between the subordinates

and the manager and he/she will use orders most of the time and they cannot be questioned (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 143).

The opposite of the closed approach is the open approach. In this system people are empowered to make their own decisions and manage themselves (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 17). Communication between the manager and the subordinates is good and it operates in both directions. This facilitates regular and easy consultations (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 143).

In the closed approach, the role of the manager is to keep processes and people under tight control. According to this approach, the best manager keeps the tightest reins on people. Thus employees and learners' behaviour is to be watched closely and controlled by supervisors and managers (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 17; Policy Information Centre Report: accessed 15/8/1999).

In the closed system:

- People are viewed as commodities with little autonomy and doing no more than they are told.
- Failure is seen as the fault of the followers.
- An adversarial relationship exists between management and followers with restricted communication and much secrecy.
- Control over people is achieved through inflexible rules and procedures.
- Motivation is achieved by fear of punishment (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 143).

In the open system, people are empowered to make their own decisions and manage themselves. Ideally, people who are empowered ought to be responsible and free to take decisions (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 17).

Secondary school learners prefer the open system because it gives them a high degree of freedom (Saunders 1994: 31-32). The open systems, however, have their own shortcomings, such as:

- Non-learners can enter the school and cause problems.
- Learners can be victimised or hurt when they are outside school grounds.
- Learners can bring disallowed items such as weapons and drugs into school.

Because of the above problems, many schools adopt the closed system. The supporters of the closed system believe that there are very few problems with it. The only likely problem is that learners will complain about not being given freedom. However, closed systems have elements of confining people and this could lead to stress and tension. This could easily result in behaviour that contravenes school rules. The benefits of a closed system cannot, therefore, be fully justified in view of the potential psychological damage to learners' lives.

The open system that overlaps, in many ways, with participatory management, tries to correct the deficiencies of the closed system as follows (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 143):

- People are seen as vital; they are given opportunities for growth and personal development. They are encouraged to learn and grow in self-esteem, becoming active and creative contributors. Each person owns and manages his/her part of the process.
- It is assumed that failure is due to systems, not people, and it is the responsibility of management to seek continuous improvement through teamwork that can promote the ideals of the systems.
- Management and employees act in partnership and collaboration, recognising a common interest in survival and success. Training and involvement of employees are seen as critical.
- Control over people is achieved by shared beliefs, values and sense of mission.
- Managers lead by empowering individuals, creating a sense of having made a contribution.

If the current social and political trends that call for democracy, which in part implies openness, freedom, fairness and flow of information, are taken into account, the open system would appeal more to the school managers and the learners than the closed system. This would mean that in order to promote good discipline in schools, the principles of freedom, openness, fairness and access to information must be entrenched in the management style. Espousing these principles means involving the learners with honesty and allowing them access to the necessary information so that, collectively, the learners and the managers can find solutions to the discipline problems.

(3) The judicious discipline approach

According to Gathercoal and McEwan in Wolfgang (1995: 120), the moral growth and understanding of children (their sense of right or wrong) is based on two basic motivators. The first motivator, also known as Level 1 is *Fear of authority*. The second one (Level 2) is *Feelings and understanding of social responsibility*.

(a) Fear of authority

Gathercoal and McEwan (in Wolfgang 1995: 122) state that fear of authority is the first moral understanding of very young pre-school children (2-7 years old); they intellectually cannot understand how their actions can deprive others of their rights, and they simply obey parents' rules out of fear of losing their parents' love. In this first childish moral position, what is right or wrong is not related to motive, but is tied to parents' punishment or reprimand. As soon as children are out of the sight of supervision of the parent or other adult authority they lose the ability to control themselves. When their wants and selfish needs are in conflict with the established rules, selfishness wins and the rules are broken.

There are many students in elementary and secondary schools, and even adults, who grow up but never grow out of this first moral position - fear of authority. They will obey

rules only under the strict monitoring of a strong authority figure. When released from the close supervision of that authority, they will quickly break society's rules (such as stealing or lying) and will take destructive actions to serve their selfish and self-centred needs. It is in the elementary and middle school years that children grow into an understanding of how their actions affect others in society. Gradually with the right educational experiences, they move to the second moral position: feelings and understanding of social responsibility and empathy for others (Gathercoal & McEwan in Wolfgang 1995: 122).

(b) Feelings and understanding of social responsibility

From a child-development perspective, it is the role of the teachers and school managers to build their discipline strategies on an understanding that learners are still in transition from the immature fear of authority and are growing to a more mature social responsibility. Gathercoal and McEwan (in Wolfgang 1995: 123) emphasise that:

If our discipline actions are based on fear, power and unilateral authority to simply bend the will of learners and coerce them to perform under strict rules and severe punishment, we will retard the children's moral growth and development.

Highly authoritarian school discipline procedures not only fail to serve the learners but also fail to serve the democratic society in which the learners will become adults and assume responsibility as citizens. A democratic society requires the learners to develop to the second moral position of feelings and understanding of social responsibility. Children must develop the abilities to inhibit their self-centred approach of wanting something now or being first. As they grow and mature, they must develop an understanding of a moral view. This moral view holds that rules that are collectively established by citizens serve to give everyone an equal chance (equal rights) and that these rules are for safety and society's good and they permit an opportunity for everyone to find a chance for his/her needs to be adequately met.

(c) What actions should be taken when rules are broken?

When learners break rules, the school manager and teachers need to take actions. The actions taken can be morally directive and controlling, as punishment, or educational and supportive, in focussing on logical consequences. For example, a food fight among learners occurs in the cafeteria. One possible sanction could be a two-week detention after school. This is a punishment and keeps the learner in the first moral position of being externally controlled by fear of authority. Instead, the school authority could require the food-fighting students to lose their after-lunch recess period and clean up the cafeteria floor and tables for a three-week period. This would be a logical consequence of their actions (Gathercoal & McEwan in Wolfgang 1995: 124).

Punishment, then, is an authoritarian action requiring the educator to take a position that the learners are 'sinful' because of their misbehaviour and therefore must suffer some degree of discomfort in the form of punishment. To set out a logical consequence, in contrast, is educational. It takes the position that the learner is still immature and growing, and will make mistakes. The mistake, which appears as misbehaviour by the learner, is an educationally valuable, judicious teachable moment for the teacher and the school manager. The actions that the adults take towards that misbehaving learner will serve to enable the learner to gain a new perspective on his/her behaviour and actions. Such learners can learn how they may have taken away the rights of others, and they can become more aware of their social responsibility towards others (Gathercoal & McEwan in Wolfgang 1995: 124).

The judicious discipline approach has many useful points such as enabling the authorities to think carefully about the punishment as the logical consequence and the consequences of such a disciplinary action. This approach also enables authorities to give sanctions that are morally acceptable and educational.

The judicious discipline approach has several shortcomings too. For example, it requires personnel that has learned the skills and reasoning of level two. It also requires more time for the manager or the teacher to consider many options and come up with one that would qualify for level two. The problem is that teachers do not have much time especially if their classes are large. The approach also wrongly assumes that the school manager or teachers themselves have feelings and understanding of social responsibility. The truth is that there are many people in authority who themselves operate at the level of fear of authority. In this case, the approach cannot be implemented successfully.

(4) Glasser system

According to Wolfgang (1995: 101), the Glasser discipline system is based on the premise that people who escape reality by behaving in inappropriate ways do not need to find a rationale and defence for their illogical behaviour. Instead people must be helped to acknowledge their behaviour as being irresponsible and then to take action to make it more logical and productive. He believes that each individual must satisfy his/her own needs in a way that does not infringe on another's. He states that people are each responsible for their own actions and they must bear the consequences of their own behaviour and make a commitment to act in a responsible manner.

This approach is being used in many schools but Balmain High School in the USA will be used as a case study. This school has two very important aims: (a) to create a pleasant and creative working environment. (b) to develop in the learners a concept of self-discipline. In order to achieve these two aims, the learners in the classroom are encouraged to participate in creating a positive learning environment but if they are unwilling to do so, and thereby are disturbing the learning of other learners, they will be removed from the classroom. Those learners thus removed will be fully supervised, allowed to do private work or reading, and given the opportunity to meet with the school counsellor or other staff members on any issue they want to discuss with them. This is not to be seen as a punishment but as an opportunity for the learners to work out for themselves why they are not co-operating, and to encourage them to take the

responsibility for their own behaviour and learning. As soon as these learners have agreed to abide by the principles of not disturbing the learning environment, they will be allowed to return to class (Balmain High School, accessed 18/9/1999).

The following is a description of the Glasser system used at Balmain High School, that is, what teachers do in a classroom situation. It is most important that the ten steps are followed in the order as stated and that they are not rushed or skipped.

Step 1: What am I doing?

Recognise what you are doing, what the learner is doing and then assess the problem.

Step 2: Is it working?

Are the strategies you are using successful? If one is not working, stop using it.

Remember what works with one learner may not work with another.

Step 3: Make a plan

If what you are doing is not working, do something different. Give recognition to learners when they are not being disruptive. Do something positive, for example, make a friendly greeting, talk about things that interest them.

Step 4: What are you doing?

If a learner disrupts the class, ask in a normal quiet tone of voice: "What are you doing?" Do not accept answers such as "Nothing" or "I don't know". You should say it sharply, quickly but not angrily or punitively.

Step 5: Is it working? Is it against the rules?

Ask the learner "Is it against the rules?" The learner must accept that rules are necessary and are to be obeyed. If the learner does not admit the disruptive behaviour you declare, do not enter into an argument with the learner.

Step 6: We must work it out

You must say and mean “We have to work it out”. The behaviour cannot continue, the teacher and learner must reach a solution through negotiation.

Step 7: Withdrawal

A pleasant but isolated place is designated the withdrawal area in the classroom. If the learner continues to disrupt, ask the learner to move to the spot where work can be continued but where the learner is not a part of the class. Movement back to the body of the class is dependent upon agreement to “work it out” with the teacher/manager.

Step 8: Time-out

If disruption continues to occur the learner is excluded from class to a pre-arranged area. The learner must stay until he/she decides to work out a plan to behave in an acceptable manner and give a commitment to follow through on the plan.

Step 9: Suspension

If the learner continues to disrupt in the time-out room, suspension must take place. It is important to treat the learner with courtesy and emphasise quietly and politely “You have to obey the rules. We’re happy to have you back when you are ready to follow rules.”

Step 10: Referral to outside agency

If there are indications of serious emotional disturbance or behaviour disorder and the parents recognise the problem, the school may suggest a referral to a support service such as specialist counsellor or itinerant teacher for behaviour disorders or to a community agency such as a Child Health Service.

The Glasser system fits well with educational theories that argue that learners should be constructively involved in their learning. Some of these theories call for involvement in decision-making processes at management level. The Glasser system asks for involvement in reflecting on learners’ own conduct at school. Indeed it places the responsibility for their behaviour and learning in their own hands. This view also agrees

with the Augustinian view that one must take responsibility for one's life (Postman & Weingartner 1971: 123). The learners can be penalised if they act against expected behaviour. This will teach them the “cause and effect” principle, that is, if one breaks a rule there is a penalty for it. This system could indeed teach the learners the concept of self-discipline that will create a positive learning environment.

The Glasser System, however, expects a teacher to keep a very close eye on and a discipline record for all the learners in order to monitor their behaviour correctly. This would take so much of the teacher’s time that it is only feasible for small classes of probably less than 25 learners.

(5) Logical Approach to Developing Discipline Strategies (LADDS)

According to Koch Crime Institute (KCI) (accessed 18/9/99), this approach is based on the belief that discipline must be treated with the same importance as the development of curriculum and instruction. LADDS is learner-centred and teacher-centred with emphasis on teaching and learning the intended curriculum. It is designed to provide the school community with a discipline foundation that supports teaching and learning of the curriculum for all learners, including misbehaving learners.

This approach was developed by the KCI task force on schools whose task was to examine ways for schools to decrease incidents of violence, decrease the loss of teaching and learning time due to disruptive and violent learners and reduce the number of drop-outs. The focus of the LADDS approach is “What we can do for learners, not what we can do to learners”.

LADDS utilises a process that deals with different levels of unacceptable behaviour but the most common levels are the following (Koch Crime Institute, accessed 18/9/99):

- **Level 1: Productive personal environment.** This involves the behaviours that occur in the classroom and affect only the misbehaving learner. The minimum consequences

are to look at the environment of the misbehaviour. The maximum consequence is detention with the teacher.

- **Level 2:** Productive classroom environment. These are behaviours that occur in the classroom and interfere with the learning of others. Minimum consequence for such is verbal correction. Maximum consequence is an in-school suspension for a specified period.
- **Level 3:** Orderly environment. This refers to behaviours that are not intended to cause physical or mental harm to another individual but do negatively affect an orderly environment. Maximum consequence is an out of school suspension.
- **Level 4:** Safe environment. Behaviours that are intended to cause another individual physical or mental harm and/or are illegal. Minimum consequence is an out of school suspension. Maximum consequence is an expulsion for 186 days.

The LADDS approach is similar to the Glasser system in that it emphasises making the learners know the consequences of their actions in school. This approach could be a successful deterrent to misbehaving if all the teachers and managers are consistent in implementing it.

(6) Discipline for Learning (DfL)

This approach recognises that the essential purpose of school, and the reason for having a behaviour code, is to promote effective learning. Ultimately, the best kind of discipline is self-discipline and this is a major goal of this approach (Inveralmond High School, accessed 18/9/ 99).

The basis of DfL is that it seeks to emphasise positive behaviour instead of focussing only on negative behaviour. The approach also emphasises that behaviour is a matter of choice and that the task of the manager/teacher is to help ensure that learners make good choices in the ways that they behave.

In realising this approach, it is important that all staff maintain consistency in its implementation. The involvement of parents is considered very important in implementing the DfL approach. For this reason, good communication with parents regarding achievements as well as difficulties and their early involvement is highly valued (Inveralmond High School, accessed 18/9/ 99).

This approach has four key features:

- Promoting positive behaviour
- Emphasising choice
- Maintaining consistency
- Developing partnership with parents

The three main elements in the DfL plan are: Rules, Recognition and Behaviour checks.

The following is an exposition of DfL in table form:

Table 2.1: An exposition of DfL based on Rules, Recognition and Behaviour Checks.

Rules	These are in clear language and few in number.	
Recognition	In order to encourage learners to choose to follow the rules, a system of recognition and reward is in place.	
	The recognition system includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Congratulations from tutor and entry made on learner achievement card. ▪ Congratulations from Year Head and entry on learner achievement file and a letter home. ▪ All the above and a “reward” voucher. ▪ All of the above and inclusion on a free school outing. ▪ Individual certificates.
Behaviour checks	Learners who choose to break a rule will have chosen automatically one of the consequences.	

	Behaviour checks include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warning given and noted. ▪ Punishment exercise. ▪ Removed to another class to work. ▪ Department detention. ▪ Removed from normal classes to a serious misbehaviour room. ▪ Options at this stage include: parents informed, pupil “on report”, school detention (24 hours notice given), informal exclusion, formal exclusion.
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Source: Inveralmond High School; (accessed 18/9/99).

The DfL approach is similar to the Glasser system in that both place the responsibility for the learners' behaviour in their own hands and that they should bear the consequences thereof. Both approaches try to impart to the learners the concept of self-discipline. The DfL approach departs from the Glasser system in that it places high importance on the development of partnerships with parents. Involving parents is important so that they know what their child is doing at school and so that there is continuity of monitoring their behaviour or implementing some measures.

This section discussed six approaches to discipline. According to the Manichean approach learners are labelled as inherent causes of indiscipline in schools, while according to the Augustinian approach school managers must not blame all the indiscipline on the learners. The managers must study the situation objectively. The judicious discipline approach states that it is not possible to maintain discipline if the learners respect rules and regulations because of fear of authority. As soon as the authority is out of site, the learners will break the rules again. Rules and regulations can be truly respected if the learners have developed feelings and understanding of social responsibility. In other words they must do so because they understand why they must behave in a way that does not hurt others. The closed approach states that learners must

be restricted in their movement in and out of the school in order to ensure their security. The open system advocates removing restrictions in order to promote personal development and self-esteem in the learners. The Glasser System, the LADDS and DfL approaches are mainly based on creating in learners a sense of self-discipline by making them responsible for their own behaviour and learning. Anyone of the above approaches can instil discipline depending on factors such as the causes for, and type of the problem, as well as the cultural, political and legal systems in place. It is important to understand the causes of discipline problems. It is therefore appropriate to now discuss the specific causes of discipline problems in schools. For purposes of this study, no approach will be considered more valuable than another because the value of an approach depends on the circumstances in which it is applied.

2.2.3 Causes of discipline problems

Indiscipline shows itself in many forms ranging from verbal to violent reactions and it is usually a demonstration indicating that dialogue has failed to solve the problem. This demonstration is one approach learners use to show how unhappy and determined they are in terms of forcing their point of view onto the school management and that they are adamant that they must be listened to (Farrell 1975: 1, Sowetan 25 July 1988: 4, Star 22 February 1990: 8).

It is therefore necessary to study what causes the unhappiness of the learners, which leads to discipline problems. The experiences, as presented in literature, will be important as references in a quest to finding solutions relevant to Botswana.

Many causes of indiscipline in schools can be identified. In this study the causes of indiscipline are categorised according to: (a) society, (b) home or family, (c) school as causal factors of indiscipline. Examples of causes of indiscipline problems relevant to these factors are:

- Society: violence in society, the influence of the media.

- Home or family: poverty in family, death or divorce of parents.
- School: lack of communication between management and learners, lack of participation of learners in decision-making processes, overcrowding in schools and physical disfigurements.

1. Societal factors

There are causes of discipline problems that do not develop on the school premises and do not seem directly related to discipline problems at school. Although these problems develop outside school control, they become the concerns of schools. The following are examples:

(a) Community influence:

- Researchers have found that learners can learn violence from the society around them. For instance, learners who come from societies where parents are sexually and physically abusive or have criminal records are likely to be violent persons themselves (Saunders 1994: 42; Ezewu 1990: 36-37). It is therefore possible that learners who experience antisocial behaviour in their families and/or communities can adopt that behaviour and display it at school and thereby break school rules.
- Discrimination exists all over the world. It can be based on race, ethnicity, religion and nationality among other criteria. It, almost always, depends on ignorance of the other people. Due to lack of knowledge or fear of socialising with the other people, people know so little about the other group and begin to stereotype them. Normally the stereotype is based on negative aspects, positive ones are conveniently left out.

The learners may experience discrimination in their communities and they later transfer this to school and victimise other groups. Discrimination often leads to a range of problems from intimidation to violence and some schools have even closed because of

religious class, colour clashes, nationality, tribal and others discriminatory practices (Cangelosi 1997: 74).

(b) Peer influence:

- The effect of the experiences of the learners in their peer groups can also be negative. Some of the peer groups could be engaged in illegal behaviour which is contrary to school rules and regulations. The learners that are involved in such groups might be victimised in two ways; (a) they will be punished by the school authorities, and (b) their attention might be diverted from their education to serving the interests of the peer-group as it is expected that they must give unflinching allegiance to it. Here again the school has discipline problems of trying to stop the illegal behaviour and to try to help them concentrate on their education.

- Other forms of peer groups are called gangs. Gangsterism is a growing cause of discipline problems in schools. According to Saunders (1994: 46) and Cangelosi (1997: 71) a gang is a group of people who have joined together, usually either to defend a turf area or for perceived protection from other gangs. A turf is an area that a gang decides belongs to them, and no one else can pass through it without paying a price. This turf can be a particular school bathroom, a street corner or any other place they think will serve them well. It is usually in such places where illegal behaviour, like underage drinking, fighting, taking drugs and other activities takes place. Gangsterism causes discipline problems in schools because innocent learners who pass through a turf will be harassed verbally or even physically. This will create insecurity in the school and may even lead to fear of going to school. The gangsters also usually bring a culture of their own into the school. For example, they will have their own language, hairstyles, dressing styles, earrings, rules and regulations. These symbols act as identity marks for their groups. This culture could well be against school rules and the other learners who see this as a smart way of life might also adopt the behaviour. For instance, truancy rates and availability of weapons could

increase with their associated consequences of increased indiscipline (Cangelosi 1997: 74; Ezewu 1990: 44).

(c) Media influence:

Saunders (1994: 43) also includes the media as partly responsible for fanning antisocial and violent impulses. He opines that watching violence on television contributes to violent behaviour. Reading or viewing pornographic material is likely to incite the impulses of those viewers to do the same. For example, some people in South Africa are unhappy about a drama programme called Izo-Izo on SABC Channel 2. The programme, in parts, shows violence like crude language, elements of gangsterism and fighting. The people are unhappy about this programme because they fear the youth that watch it will learn the violence and display it in future (SABC channel 2: March 12, 1999).

The widespread ownership of television sets and video recorders has caused many learners to come to school tired from watching videos for many hours in the night. In addition to tiredness, the nature of the videos watched often has a bad influence on the young people (Lovey 1992: 56). These tired learners do not often perform well in school and they might even pick bad role models from the film that might conflict with school rules.

It is a given fact that human beings are influenced, negatively or positively, by what they experience in their environment. In the purposes of this sub-section, the environment of the learners referred to is partly made up of people such as adults and peers. It is also made up of household instruments, such as the television (Ezewu 1990: 37). The negative influence of this environment on the learners might have two effects: (a) the effect of victimising the learners themselves and (b) the effect of practising those experiences on others. For example, if learners are subjected to abuse and violence or they are discriminated against, they will be victims because they are unhappy people and they can not concentrate on their education. The learners will also most likely internalise their experiences and later repeat them on someone, possibly in school. The school will

have the problem of dealing with learners who are bitter or unwilling to engage in meaningful learning and learners who are harassing other learners.

Watching violence or obscene scenes on television creates problems for the learners in that they will internalise these as acceptable ways of conduct. These scenes work against the aims of the school to impart morality, self-respect and respect for others to the learners. The likely situation will be that the learners will want to practise what they watch on the television and the school authorities will try to stop them. There will be conflict and it will become a discipline problem.

2. Home factors

A normal home for a child is supposed to have a mother and a father and adequate basic provision of shelter, food and security. Unfortunately, there are homes that do not have parents or sufficiently provide for basic needs. Learners from such homes experience problems of learning at school and their unfortunate background can also spark off in them tendencies that might be against school regulations.

(a) Poverty in a family

Poverty in the family is a breeding ground for violent and antisocial behaviour in learners. For instance:

Children from a poor family may regularly have a poor diet that causes malnutrition and related health problems such as physical and mental underdevelopment. A child who is mentally underdeveloped has problems in coping with schoolwork. As a result of frustration from not coping with schoolwork, the child may resort to destructive behaviour in class and school. Bigger children in a poor family may also resort to criminal ways of fending for themselves (Saunders 1994: 42).

(b) Loss of parents

Some learners go through tragic experiences that can shape their future behaviour, such as the death or divorce of their parents. Such losses of parents affect the learners badly in that it often happens when the children are still too dependent on both parents. According to Martin (1995: 25) 50% of all first marriages currently end in divorce in the USA. He further explains:

By the year 2000, projections are that 60% of all US children will spend some part of their lives in single-parent homes. When they divorce, children always suffer. This event is a major stressor. Millions of children in classrooms across America are desperately trying to adjust to the personal tragedy of divorce.

Among the many problems the children will suffer, they will also suffer as a result of the collapse of the family support and protection system that the children need. Often they have to change their economic standing, living arrangements and daily routines. Most children are not provided with either an adequate explanation of what has happened or assurance of continued care, which makes the perception of events all the more traumatic.

One study of children of divorced parents cited a number of symptoms that they might display. Behaviours in the classroom may include anxiety, depression, regression, daydreaming, overaggressive behaviour, poor academic performance and withdrawal from relationships (Martin 1995: 26). All these behaviours would be cause for concern in terms of discipline in the school.

A home is a place where many learners spend most of their learning life. It is therefore an important place in that if it is and all the basic needs are met, it then becomes a good starting point for meaningful learning. On the other hand, if the basic needs are not met and the parents are not supportive or are dead or divorced, the learner will lack this starting point and this could manifest itself in discipline problems at school.

3. School factors

As indicated in the previous sections, the causes of discipline problems experienced at school are sometimes outside the bounds of the school. There are, however, other causes that are within the school itself. These causes are divided into non-academic and academic factors.

(a) Non-academic factors

What are learners reacting to? Fako (1993: 25) observed that, "Students who protest against threats to human existence present hope to mankind rather than reasons to despair."

- **Unsatisfied physical needs:** It is true, for example, that a number of strikes or threats have been about issues of human existence such as food and shelter (Maslow's idea in Gagne 1982: 14). Maslow's theory states, in part, that physical needs for food, shelter and security, generally outweigh other considerations in the determination of acts of conformity or of defiance. For instance, poor food or poorly prepared food was one of the causes of the strike at the author's school (Lotsane Senior Secondary School 1997). It is likely that learners complained about poor food because they had no input as to what should be included in the menu. It is in recognition of the lack of consultation between the school management and the learners that the Botswana Ministry of Education has recently required schools to establish school councils that will include learners so that they can be involved in the management process. One area where learners will be involved is in proposing the school menu (Ministry of Education 5 December 1995b: 3).

- **Unsatisfied self-actualisation needs:** In his research in the area of Toronto in Canada, Farrell (1975: 11) identified another area from which protests could arise. In this area issues of dress (uniform), hair style, sports, smoking, drugs and drinking

and other recreational activities are "important" in the eyes of the learners and many protests are as a result of disagreement about these with the school authorities.

- **Poor communication:** Lack of flow of information between the school management and the learners is another common cause of indiscipline. The important task for managers is to give and receive as much information as possible, upwards, downwards and sideways. This reduces uncertainty and the risk of rumour and misinformation (Dunham 1995: 120). If the learners develop the perception that the principal is not being honest or fair with them, the relationship between them inevitably deteriorates and may lead to a strike. Therefore to improve discipline in a school, among other things, communication links should be established and improved so that there is free flow of information in the school (Blackburn 1982: 42).

- **Hearing impairment:** McCarthy-Tucker (1993: 31) has identified more causes of discipline problems in schools. For example, he observed that approximately 5% of all school age children and adolescents have hearing impairments. It is very difficult for someone who cannot hear properly to master language or understand well what is being taught in class. This means they could fall behind in schoolwork. They could also have a feeling of being alienated in conversations and some people might not be tolerant with them. They could also be frustrated with themselves because they cannot hear everything that is being said and this can lead to some disruptive behaviour seeking attention or recognition. Hearing impairment can also cause speech disorders such as not being able to modulate one's voice, resulting in speaking too loudly, or lowly or unclearly.

- **Physical disfigurement and differences:** These can be cause of discipline problems in a school (McCarthy-Tucker 1993: 57). Studies have shown that teenagers are especially concerned about how they look and how others perceive them. Even minor disfigurement such as pimples or slight scars can be perceived as major problems. Such learners may resort to some disruptive behaviour as they try to make up for what they perceive as a deficiency in their lives.

(b) Academic factors

- **Out-of-school academic issues:** According to Farrell (1975: 11), another possible area that can cause discipline problems is one concerning issues like extension of the school year or the teacher-pupil relationship.
- **In-school academic issues:** Farrell (1975: 11) also identified other causes of discipline problems such as course content, grading and examination policies, attendance or teaching problems. O'Keeffe and Stoll (1995: 9) support Farrell's view and report that in English schools the main engine of truancy is the curriculum itself. The report by O'Keeffe in the British Department of Education Publication of 1994 shows that students do not like some of the lessons. They do not like the content and/or the manner of delivery and it is from this dislike that truancy problems emanate. School managers usually find it unpalatable to allow learners to choose and pick what they like. This view is in part modelled after Plato and Aristotle's philosophies that the teacher's role is to instil in pupils a required body of knowledge. Little attention is paid to individual differences or interests (Bowen & Hobson 1987: 14). Coercive techniques have to be employed to ensure compliance. This usually invites truancy from the learners.
- **Forced school attendance:** Related to the academic issues is the culture of requiring the youth to attend school. Gagne (1982: 19) points out that compulsory education, when the learners themselves are not interested, is not only mistaken but also counter-productive. For example:

Youth who are failing in school, but who remain in school are faced with the problem of salvaging their self-esteem and of having enough fun to compensate for the daily humiliations to which they are subject. Such youth are more than likely to meet peers with the same needs and problems within the school situation

since schools regularly group students according to other achievement levels (Gagne 1982: 19).

Such peers will probably resort to delinquent activities. The loss of self-esteem is usually inculcated into the learners by the system of education whose unspelt objective seems to be to distinguish the failures and the successful. The result is that learners who are exposed as failures may be expected to display high levels of deviant behaviour (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 158).

- **Overcrowding in schools:** In many poor countries, overcrowding in schools is very common because the governments try to provide education to as many people as they can with little resources. For example, in the author's school there are classes with as many as 37 learners. Overcrowded schools not only make learning much more difficult, they are also unsafe. Too many learners squeezed into classrooms create tension and stress that can lead to disruptive behaviour (Saunders 1994: 90).

It is the duty of the school authority to deal with the causes of indiscipline in the school. Some of the non-academic causes are a little easier to solve, such as ensuring that there is good communication between the management and the learners. Other causes, such as hearing impairment and physical disfigurement, can be very difficult for the school to deal with, especially because it cannot change them. These cases might need specialist teachers who might be difficult to find, let alone to afford.

Among the academic causes, there are 'forced school attendance' and 'overcrowding in schools' which are problems beyond the control of the school management. Forced school attendance is usually a requirement by law that a school or an individual must not contravene. Overcrowding in schools is usually a result of dictates from higher ministerial or political authorities to enrol more learners in order to satisfy some demand. For a school management, it is very difficult to contradict these authorities. In the end the school has to continue running with these unresolved problems.

In many of the cases mentioned above, the underlying problem seems to be that the learners were not allowed to participate in the decision-making processes. For example, in the case of Lotsane Senior Secondary School the menu was imposed on them as it is usually prescribed by the Ministry. In the case of truancy in the British schools, the learners are not consulted about what should be included in the curriculum and this is why they do not like some of the lessons. If the learners had been allowed to participate in deciding the menu, in the case of Lotsane Senior Secondary School, and the curriculum, in the case of the British schools, there would have been no reason for rejecting what they had themselves created.

In the other causes of indiscipline, the school authorities do not have the means to deal with the causes, such as hearing impairment, physical disfigurement, forced school attendance, overcrowding in school, poverty at home, loss of parents, violence and discrimination in society and media influence on the learners. It must, therefore, be noted that the school management cannot successfully deal with the problem of indiscipline in schools without the involvement of all the stakeholders. Such stakeholders are the parents, the government and political structures, the media, and the society at large who can assist to deal with discipline problems outside the school premises. It is usually difficult for the school to win the support of some of these stakeholders because of problems such as lack of resources and poor communication between the school and the community. Although the school must keep on trying to win the support of all the stakeholders it must more particularly try to win the support of the learners. It is in view of the importance of involving the learners that the researcher will later on explore matters of participation in the management of the schools by the learners.

It is important to note that there are possibly many more causes of discipline problems in schools, homes and societies, and as such, it is not possible to discuss all of them. The causes discussed above should mainly highlight how varied the causes of discipline problems are. For instance, different environments create different problems and different people might create different problems. For the purposes of this research, suffice it to say that this research dwells on the problems that have already been

discussed because they probably represent the commonest causes of discipline problems. Considering the complex nature of the causes of discipline problems, the school managers and the teachers must indeed involve all stakeholders but even more urgently, it must involve the learners to deal with the problems of indiscipline.

2.2.4 Models of maintaining discipline

School managers and researchers have in the past tried to solve discipline problems as discussed above. They have formulated certain methods of approaching the problems. It must be noted that the nature of problems will vary from place to place and from time to time. Therefore one approach may not always suit certain problems. Because of this dilemma, the choice of discipline models should be based on what serves the situation best depending on factors such as culture, political system, economic status and literacy level of the society. Modification to the models might be necessary so that it suits the values and environment of the society (Gushee 1984: 2, accessed 28/10/1998).

The following paragraphs will discuss six models that can be used to maintain discipline in a school. These are: the schoolwide discipline model, “off-site units” model, outreach model, redefining model, assertive discipline model and guidance approach model. There are more models but these represent some of the commonly used ones.

(1) Schoolwide discipline model

According to Cangelosi (1997: 177), there is a direct correlation between the lack of order in an environment and the potential for antisocial behaviour. The more orderly the school environment, the better-behaved learners are. He further states that allowing learners to engage in disruptive, non-compliant behaviour, regardless of how minor, makes learners think that they can break the rules without reprimand from the school authorities.

A school-wide discipline plan spells out rules learners are expected to follow in the common areas of the school, such as the halls, the cafeteria, the yard and the rest rooms, and the consequences they will face for not following the rules.

Cotton (1990: 2, accessed 25/11/1998) has illustrated the model with some examples of research. She presents a comparative study of well-disciplined and poorly disciplined schools to identify critical differences in discipline practices. From this research has emerged a list of elements commonly found in safe, orderly, well-managed schools. Cotton (1990: 2, accessed 25/11/1998) identifies the following components of preventive discipline practices (NB: Preventive discipline practices are those practices that are meant to prevent a non-compliant behaviour from taking place):

- ***Commitment*** on the part of all staff to establishing and maintaining appropriate learner behaviour as an essential precondition of learning. Well-disciplined schools tend to be those in which there is a school-wide emphasis on the importance of learning and tolerance of conditions which inhibit learning.
- ***High behavioural expectations.*** In contrast to poorly disciplined schools, staff in well-disciplined schools share and communicate high expectations for appropriate learner behaviour.
- ***Clear and broad-based rules.*** Rules, sanctions and procedures are developed with input from learners, are clearly specified, and are made known to everyone in the school. Researchers have found that learner participation in developing and reviewing school discipline programmes create a sense of ownership and belongingness. Widespread dissemination of clearly stated rules and procedures, moreover, assures that all learners and staff understand what is and is not acceptable.
- ***Warm school climate.*** A warm social climate, characterised by a concern for learners as individuals is typical of well-disciplined schools. Teachers and

administrators take an interest in the personal goals, achievements, and problems of learners and support them in their academic and extracurricular activities.

- ***A visible, supportive principal.*** *Many poorly disciplined schools have principals who are visible only for "official" duties such as assemblies or when enforcing school discipline. In contrast, principals of well-disciplined schools tend to be very visible in hallways and classrooms, talking informally with teachers and learners, speaking to them by name, and expressing interest in their activities.*

- ***Delegation of discipline authority to teachers.*** *Principals in well-disciplined schools take responsibility for dealing with serious infractions, but they hold teachers responsible for handling routine classroom discipline problems. They assist teachers to improve their classroom management and discipline skills by arranging for staff development activities as needed.*

- ***Close ties with communities.*** *Researchers have generally found that well-disciplined schools are those which have a high level of communication and partnership with the communities they serve. These schools have a higher-than-average incidence of parent involvement in school functions, and communities are kept informed of school goals and activities.*

This model seems quite positive especially because it does involve other interested groups such as the learners and the communities. Because of their participation the model stands a better chance of working because it receives their acceptance and support.

However, the model is not devoid of problems. There could be learners who cause problems in school and yet the cause of their bad behaviour is related to problems at home, such as poverty in the home. It may not be easy to fully understand the effect of poverty on a learner. This is an example of how an orderly school environment would not fully solve a problem that is caused outside its bounds.

(2) "Off-site units" model or Alternative schooling model

According to Lovey (1992: 93) and the Policy Information Centre Report (accessed 15/8/1999), this model was set up for learners whose behaviour was no longer tolerated in mainstream schools. Some of these off-site units included those for maladjusted learners or learners with special educational needs (LSN) or learners who consistently infringe school rules. The aim of secluding them was to give them more and specialised attention but also to protect those who had lesser problems with the mainstream school. In the early 1970's the emphasis of off-site units seemed to be on pastoral care with a curriculum based on social skills. But in the 1980's many off-site units were acknowledging the need for a fuller curriculum so that they started to teach a more comprehensive curriculum.

The intentions of the model are good because it really is difficult to teach learners with special educational needs (LSN) and normal learners together. The LSN will probably need more time and resources in order to be helped. If these learners could indeed get an education they would be able to find employment and live independently. That would be a great achievement for the country because that would reduce the number of dependants on government support. These LSN learners need trained personnel in this area of specialisation and will probably also need more financial and material resources. Poor countries cannot afford this if they fail to manage normal learners. The model would therefore suit wealthy countries better.

(3) Outreach model

According to Lovey (1992: 106), some educationists felt there was need for a model, different from the off-site units model, which allows learners with special needs to learn together with the less-problematic learners in the mainstream school. They developed the Outreach model.

Outreach work involves people, some of whom could be experts from outside the school to work alongside colleagues in schools to help them find strategies for containing and engaging learners who could otherwise be sent to an off-site unit. Members of outreach teams are usually teachers who have had proven success in dealing with difficult learners in a special school or unit for emotionally and behaviourally disordered children. As well as being skilled teachers and managers of difficult children, in this role they must be tactful and perceptive communicators, able to diagnose the problem in a classroom and help a teacher to solve it (Lovey 1992: 106-107).

The outreach teacher has regular contact with the parents and is therefore in a position to know if there is anything going on at home which might be responsible for difficulties at school (Lovey 1992: 106).

With disruptive pupils, work experience may be arranged in an attempt to keep the young person out of areas of conflict and to add relevance to the curriculum (Lovey 1992: 107)

This model has many advantages of providing the best possible education but it is more suitable for rich countries because it might require specialised equipment and personnel.

(4) Redefining model

According to Postman and Weingartner (1971: 131), this model redefines the meaning of a word or an event. For instance, in France traffic offenders were kissed by a beautiful girl and given flowers. It was observed that the offenders felt embarrassed and thus traffic offences declined. Another example of redefining the meaning of making noise in class would be to provide the noisemakers with a room where they can freely make noise.

As a method of solving problems, the two examples have something in common. In each instance, redefining the meaning of a word or an event solved the problem. In the first case, the definition of "speeding" was changed. Normally, over-speeding would be punished and drivers understand this. It is embarrassing to be rewarded for over-

speeding. The likely effect on offenders is that they will not do it again to avoid embarrassment. In the second case an "unauthorised" school activity was redefined as an "authorised" one. After making noise in the separate room, it will eventually dawn on the disruptive learners that they are in the wrong place. This feeling will likely make them realise that they should not be making noise in class.

This process is a powerful instrument for positive change, if used with imagination and intelligence (Postman & Weingartner 1971: 131). The problem is that not all teachers or managers have the required levels of imagination and intelligence to use this model. It also becomes difficult for the teachers and managers to use the model because one could not tell how the punished learner would respond to it.

(5) Assertive discipline model

According to Canter (in Cangelosi 1997: 39), this model focuses on the right of the teacher to define and enforce standards for learner behaviour. Clear expectations, rules and a penalty system with increasingly serious sanctions are major features. With this approach teachers:

- (i) Use the assertive response style that is associated with assertion training.
- (ii) Recognise fallacies in reasons for excusing off-task behaviours.
- (iii) Specify exactly what types of behaviour will not be tolerated.
- (iv) Develop a plan for encouraging on-task behaviours and discouraging off-task behaviours.
- (v) Persist in following through with the plan.
- (vi) Seek and expect support from parents, instructional supervisors and school administrators (Canter in Cangelosi 1997: 39).

In expanding on the above expectations of the teachers, Canter (in Cangelosi 1997: 41) who developed the Assertive Discipline model, warns teachers not to let excuses deter them from insisting on appropriate learner behaviour. Peer pressure, inadequate

parenting, learning disabilities, personal stress and poor health are just some of the factors that make it more difficult for some learners to be on task than it is for other learners. It is a fallacy, however, that the presence of such factors excuses learners from being responsible for their own behaviours.

It is also important that the teacher should specify the desirable and undesirable behaviours. This should be done by formulating plans for encouraging learners to behave as you want them to behave and discouraging them from behaving otherwise.

According to Canter's assertion, the teacher has the right to seek and expect support from parents, school administrators and instructional supervisors because they have a vested interest in the success of the school and therefore are expected to help.

Assertive discipline clearly establishes the authority of the teacher and the role of the learner. The model teaches the learners to choose between the rewards of compliance and the consequences of disobedience (Gartrell 1994: 14).

This model too has many points that can be useful in managing a school. For example, defining what is expected of the learners is useful in order to avoid excuses that the learners were not informed. However, the model does not seem to have provisions for the input of the parents in the formation of the rules. It would not be fair to expect parents to support the implementation of the model when they were not consulted at all. It is also quite intolerant of learners who cause problems because of factors beyond their control, such as loss of parents or disabilities. It has been established that these factors can negatively affect a learner (McCarthy-Tucker 1993: 57). Therefore the teacher must try to understand the backgrounds of the learners in order to deal with such discipline cases in a more humane manner than by simply using assertion.

(6) Guidance approach model

This model is a synthesis of prevailing trends in research done and developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (Gartrell 1994: 17). The synthesis advocates educational practices that allow for an interactive approach to learning and teacher-child relations. This practice reflects the guidance-oriented approach to discipline. The model encourages the teacher to establish routines and expectations understandable to children; to use methods such as modelling and encouraging expected behaviour; to redirect behaviour towards more acceptable activity, and to set clear limits. The teachers' expectations match and respect children's developing capabilities. In addition,

children are provided many opportunities to develop social skills such as co-operating, helping, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Teachers facilitate the development of these positive social skills at all times (NAEYC in Gartrell 1994: 17).

The research by NAEYC showed a clear distinction between positive and negative discipline practices. Teachers using negative discipline relied on punishment to enforce compliance or to impose retribution. In contrast, teachers using positive discipline, worked to prevent problems and when they occurred intervened in ways respectful of the child's self-esteem (NAEYC in Gartrell 1994: 15).

Although this model was designed primarily for three to eight year old children, it can be adapted for older learners such as those of senior secondary schools (NAEYC in Gartrell 1994: 19). One principle of this model is that many punishments have degrading elements and make people lose their self-esteem. This is true irrespective of age, although children are more vulnerable to it than adults. It is therefore true that learners in senior secondary schools would be affected in the same way especially with dehumanising punishments, such as corporal punishment. In view of these negative effects, guidance discourages negative discipline and apart from solving the problems of

losing self-esteem of the learners and dehumanising them, the model also sets standards of how the learners themselves should treat others.

NAEYC (in Gartrell 1994: 19) believes that the guidance approach teaches the skills children need in order to get along with others, to express strong feelings in acceptable ways and to solve problems with words and not through violent means. It is, however, still questionable whether punishment can completely be avoided as the model implies. Whatever model suits one's needs, it cannot work by itself if certain conditions are not satisfied. Such conditions will now be discussed with specific reference to a policy on discipline in schools.

As discussed, there are many useful points in each of the models that can be used to deal with discipline problems in a school. There are also many points that cannot work well in some schools because of factors like differences in culture and lack of resources. The fact that there seems to be no ready-to-use model creates difficulty for the school managers and teachers because they have to study the various models and choose from them what can be of use for their schools. In other words, they have to formulate a model from the other models. This is not easy, partly because the model has to be tested in action research to find out if it works. The managers and teachers may not have the resources, the time and the expertise to test the model. Because of this problem, there is a temptation for the managers and the teachers to choose a model despite its imperfections. If this is what would likely happen, discipline problems cannot be solved because some factors pertaining to the problem will be ignored, such as the culture, literacy rate and the economic status of the learners and society in which the school is situated.

Finally, it is apparent that, in order to avoid the problem of adopting models that do not suit a specific environment, there is need for a school to use other models selectively in order to develop its own discipline model that will take into account most of the factors that have an influence on a school's discipline.

2.2.5 A policy for school discipline

According to Hoy and Miskel (1991: 304), a policy is a statement of objectives that guides the actions of a substantial portion of the total organisation, such as a school. In order to implement the policy, the requirements of resources of people, money, authority and materials have to be well thought out and mobilised. It is important to work out the discipline policy in this manner to minimise room for failure. For example, a discipline problem like alcohol or substance abuse might need law-enforcement agents to be involved or specialists to counsel the users or it might need money for radio or local news campaigns. It would be difficult to deal with this problem and use the required resources without the guidance of a policy. A policy is therefore important because it legalises some actions that would otherwise be illegal.

A policy provides the general guidelines that need to be transferred into action depending on the local circumstances. According to Gushee (1984: 1, accessed 28/10/1998), each school, each learner and each situation is unique; there is therefore no single solution to discipline problems. However, it is important to have a policy that will give direction to the way the problem of indiscipline is tackled. The importance of a discipline policy is that it can help prevent and control learner behaviour problems by co-ordinating the school's disciplinary procedures and by informing learners what types of behaviour are expected of them and what types are forbidden (Gushee 1984: 1, accessed 28/10/1998).

It is also important to realise that the usefulness of a policy depends on the way it is implemented. For the implementation to be effective, it will depend on the healthy relationship between the school and the learners (Gushee 1984: 1, accessed 28/10/1998).

The basic functions of a discipline policy are as follows:

- Informing the reader of the school board's discipline philosophy.
- Indicating who is responsible for policy enforcement.
- Specifying offences and fixing their seriousness.

A few broad recommendations from Gushee (1984: 2, accessed 28/10/1998) can be included to make a discipline policy effective, such as:

- **Information.** *Policies must be aimed at factual problems, not rumours or suspicions. Schools should gather accurate data on learner behaviour before setting policy or before judging a wrongdoer.*
- **Involvement.** *All groups affected by a policy should be involved in creating it. In this case, the learners who must conform to the policy, the school personnel who must enforce it, and ideally, the families of the learners and other stakeholders should be involved.*
- **Problem definition.** *Policy-makers cannot assume that everyone agrees on what constitutes undesirable student behaviour. Defining the problem is the first step towards solving it.*
- **Flexibility.** *Rather than relying on a rigid system of penalties, policy should allow for different situations and prescribe different methods for different problems.*
- **Communication.** *All students, parents, and school personnel should be aware of the school's discipline policy or student conduct code. A well-designed learner handbook is a widely used tool for informing learners.*
- **Consistent enforcement.** *If learners are to co-operate with a discipline code, they must believe they will be treated fairly.*

2.2.6 Botswana policy for school discipline

The management of school discipline in Botswana is also guided by a policy on education (Botswana Government Education Act 1978: Chapter 58:01, parts v and vi,

sections 21-36). These parts provide guidelines as to what kind of offences can attract corporal punishment, suspension, expulsion, exclusion and withdrawal of a learner. They also include who can administer these punishments and how it should be done. These guidelines are too general. It was for this reason that the Ministry of Education came up with an interpretation of this policy which is called “Guidelines on Offences and Punishments” (Ministry of Education 5th December, 1995a: 3). This document has categorised possible offences into three classes depending on their degree of seriousness. This document has made it easier for managers to implement the policy. It however warns that it should not be taken as a prescription or remedy for all the problems but as a guideline. It encourages managers to investigate the cases thoroughly and treat each case on merit.

The Botswana policy for school discipline does largely fit the characteristics of a policy as mentioned by Gushee (1984: 1-2, accessed 28/10/1998). One deficiency observed is that it does not in these parts indicate the commitment of resources to deal with the causes of school indiscipline as expected by Hoy and Miskel (1991: 304). This raises the question of whether resources are committed at all at policy level or if it is left to school managers to decide.

In the previous sub-section (2.2.5), it was indicated that policy on discipline is necessary to give direction to the use of resources and efforts in dealing with the problem of indiscipline. The researcher has so far discussed issues of discipline as presented in various literature sources. It can be observed from the literature data that learner participation in school management is an important factor in creating and maintaining sound discipline in schools. For example, the Glasser system, the judicious discipline approach and the open and closed approaches, among others, demonstrated this fact. Such a management system that allows participation of the stakeholders is called participatory management. The following section will therefore discuss participatory management and how it would be useful for schools in Botswana.

2.3 Participatory management

2.3.1 Orientation

The term *participation* is a warmly persuasive one that seems never to be used unfavourably (Nelson & Wright 1995: 2). Although this may be the case, the term can sometimes be used abusively.

Nelson and Wright (1995: 1) point out that the term *participation* can be interpreted in a variety of ways. One of the common distinctions of these interpretations is that of a *participation as a means* (to accomplish the aims of a project more efficiently, effectively or cheaply) as opposed to *participation as an end* (where the stakeholders set up a process and control its developments). Both types of participation imply the possibility of very different power relationships between the stakeholders and the agency institutions such as the school management team. These authors conclude that the extent of empowerment and involvement of the stakeholders is more limited in the first approach than it is in the second one.

According to Abrahamsson (1977: 187) in some organisations *participation* is used in order to lower costs, to improve quality or to discourage the stakeholders from making demands. This seems to be a sinister way of using *participation* in management.

In the following discussion, the term *participation* will be used to mean an end in itself. If there will be any benefits, such as high productivity, they should only be by-products of the system.

2.3.2 The meaning and extent of participation by the learners in school management

According to the Longman Dictionary of contemporary English (1987: 749) the word “participate” means “to take part or have a share in an activity or event”. Although the meaning of this word seems simple, Anthony and McGregor, in Mayosi (1995: 15)

highlight how *participation* is one of the most misunderstood concepts in management. The difficulty arises from the fact that the very wide range of meaning attached to it tends to cover almost any situation, even if some minimal interaction has taken place. Participation can therefore be seen as a continuum ranging from pseudo participation where learners merely rubberstamp what has already been decided by those in management, to full participation that means that the learners meaningfully participate in decision-making processes.

Verba, in Mayosi (1995: 16) warns that full participation is an ideal state of affairs and therefore rare to find in real situations because many factors or barriers militate against it. Some of these barriers are organisational, such as the tendency of clinging to the tradition, policy, procedures, philosophy and values of an organisation and a reluctance to allow new and innovative suggestions. Sometimes those in authority make it very difficult for others to access information, so that the subordinates are unable to make informed decisions.

There are varying degrees of participation that can be adapted for school management. The choice of the degree of participation will be to try to find a degree of participation that may impact constructively on discipline and may improve the learning environment.

Although so much good has been written about participatory management, it is not a cure for all the management problems in schools. Participation does provide solutions to some of the management problems, such as improving productivity, morale and in reducing waste and absences (Anthony 1984: 27). But it can also create new problems such as taking a long time to reach a decision.

The experience in some Danish schools shows that it is a wrong belief that merely because learners have at some point participated in a management aspect, albeit little, the following will automatically arise:

- That these learners will possess a good and necessary knowledge of the structure of the school and how decisions are made within that structure.
- That they will have mastered the techniques of running meetings and of working as a council (Jensen & Walker 1989: 151).

These authors emphasise that participation is not an obvious experience and has to be learnt over some period and through participating in many aspects of management. For example, some of the best ways of learning participation are by (a) participating in the access to and production of information about school and education (b) in sharing of responsibilities and (c) in creating conditions of participation (Jensen & Walker 1989: 137).

Calkins (1975: 35), however, referring to an American environment, maintains that allowing the young people to participate in management of organisations is a good way of teaching them management skills. He adds that such participation must commence in childhood and be allowed to mature as they experience more participation in more aspects of management.

Furthermore, Calkins (1975: 46) believes that learners should be involved in the decision-making process of the school only if the administrators are willing to take prudent but definite risks. A necessary risk involves a willingness to have faith, trust and confidence in young people to the point of allowing them to share mistakes with administrators and staff in crucial areas of the school. Only if the administration believes that learners can learn to be responsible and to make meaningful decisions, can it share its power.

Likewise, learners must be willing to become involved. Not all learners want to be involved. But Calkins (1975: 46) believes that when the real opportunity to share actively in school decisions is explained to them, most learners will be eager to be involved.

Jensen & Walker (1989: 137) also advise that the demonstration of schooling (i.e. evidence that the process of schooling is taking place) is not a goal in itself, but a strategy to promote personal and social development. This being the case, character development of the learners and imparting of skills cannot fully and simply be attributed to participation in some aspect of management. The building of character and imparting of skills are normally a result of several factors at play. This is one of the reasons why the learners should be involved in as many aspects of school management as possible in order to have greater impact on their democratic character development and the mastering of democratic skills.

Learners obviously cannot be expected to participate beyond the level of their knowledge and expertise. However, they can become informed and it is possible for them to make sound judgements based on facts and information. Herein lies the challenge of collaborative learning, for example, learners who are participating in decisions about the curriculum can learn from teachers and administrators collaboratively exploring what is needed to know in order to render judgements (Calkins 1975: 46).

In order to be involved successfully in the process of decision-making, learners must become convinced of the intent of the school principals to share real power with them. Only by repeatedly demonstrating commitment to sharing their power can principals convince learners that they are serious about sharing power. The principal of an institution can play a major role in involving the learners in management. The principal should therefore be aware of those roles in which the learners can participate meaningfully. Although Kanter (1982: 6-7) refers to the participation of the teachers, the same roles can apply to the participation of the learners. The following are some of the roles:

- To gain new sources of expertise and experience.
- To get collaboration that multiplies a person's effort by providing assistance, back up or stimulation of better performance.
- To allow all of those who feel they know something about the subject to get involved.

- To build consensus on a controversial issue.
- To allow representatives of those affected by an issue to influence decisions and build commitment to them.
- To balance or confront vested interests in the face of the need to change.
- To address conflicting approaches or issues.
- To avoid precipitous action and explore a variety of effects.
- To create an opportunity and enough time to study a problem in depth.
- To develop and educate people through their participation: creating new skills, new information and new contacts.

In the previous paragraphs the meaning of participation and the extent of participation by the learners in school management were discussed. The instances that would justify the participation of the learners were also listed. Benefits of participatory management were also indicated. Although some of the benefits refer to commercial organisations, the principles of participatory management can also benefit educational organisations such as schools. Participation in decision-making will now be discussed.

2.3.4 Participation in decision-making

The impression created by *full participation* is that it intends to involve everyone in every decision, but Owens (1987: 288) believes this is erroneous because of various reasons, such as lack of time or lack of expertise amongst the participants about the matter in discussion. Inkyen (in Gorton 1980: 242) also responds to this impression by alleging that not every member of the stakeholders desires to participate, and secondly, not all of the decisions under the jurisdiction of a principal will be of concern to the individuals and groups with whom he/she has contact. Nevertheless, the principal will have to decide who should assist him in making decisions. Bridges (in Hoy & Miskel 1991: 329) proposes the *test of relevancy* and the *test of expertise* as the criteria for deciding who should be involved in decision-making.

- (i) **The test of relevancy.** Those learners who have an interest in or are concerned about the problem should be involved. Learners will certainly display greater than usual concern in problems such as discipline, cafeteria matters and their welfare (Owens 1987: 288). Hoy and Miskel (1991: 329) claim that if a member of an organisation has a personal stake in an issue his/her interest in participation will be high. The majority of the learners would pass this test because they will be interested in the issues of discipline and their welfare. On the other hand, not all the learners would be interested in matters concerning the welfare of the teachers.

In a school situation all the interested learners could participate in a discussion but it does not mean that all the views expressed there will be taken for implementation. The various views have to be synthesised so that only the more representative views are carried forward for more discussion. In the end the final decision is taken on the most representative views. The final decision would have been a result of full participation of those who were willing to participate.

- (ii) **The test of expertise.** This refers to the degree to which a team member possesses the expertise or qualification to make a useful contribution to an improved decision, or solution of the problem (Gorton 1980: 243, Hoy & Miskel 1991: 329). The problem is that the learners are still young and they may not have acquired any certificate yet that can speak of their qualification or experience. This will make it difficult for the principal to determine who should be involved.

Because the *test of expertise* may not quite apply to the young inexperienced learners in most secondary schools, the principals usually substitute the “experts” with learner-representatives who have been elected by the school-body, such as prefects. There could be a problem with the prefects because they might as individuals, not be interested in some of the issues and yet by virtue of their status they have to participate in the process of decision-making. The lack of expertise in the learners to make useful contributions to

solving problems might justify the principal in taking a unilateral decision. Although the principal might be justified in taking a unilateral decision, there is the danger of the learners mistaking this action for sheer dictatorship. This could result in more discipline problems such as strikes.

The dilemma of whether or not learners without expertise and interest should be involved, can raise questions. For example, the terms expertise and interest are not discrete, they are relative. One could have a high or low degree of expertise and interest.

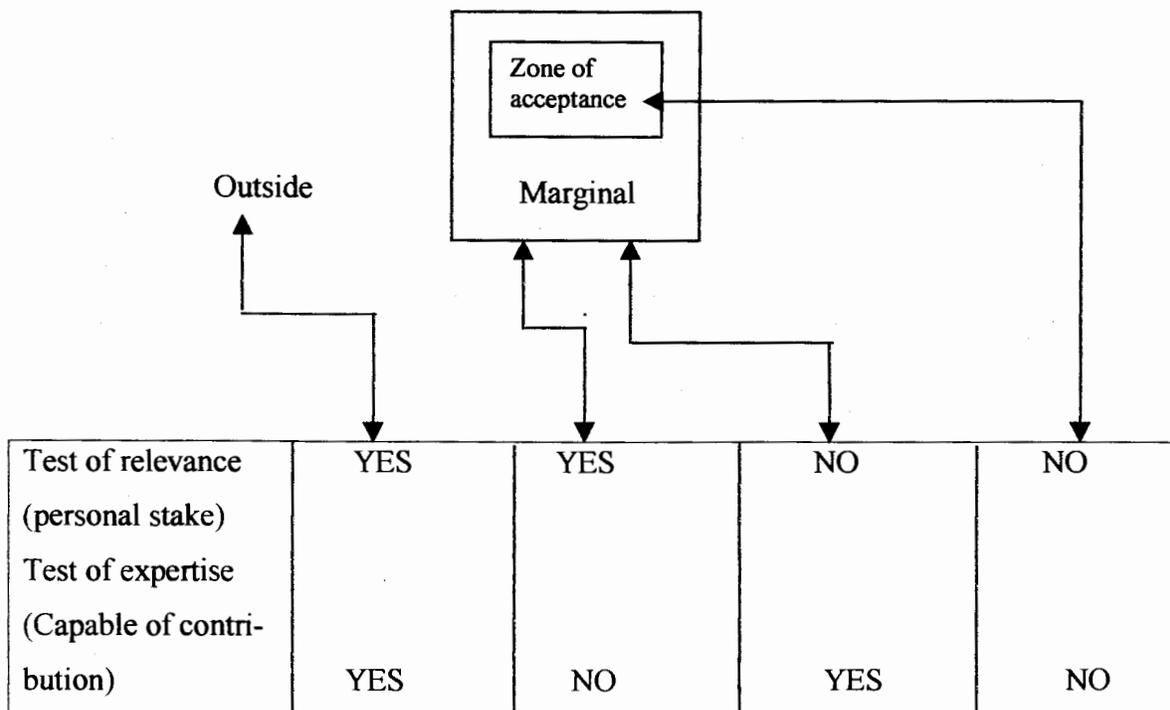
The question could be asked: What kind of degree of expertise and interest would pass for involvement in decision-making? Hoy and Miskel (1991: 328) ask a similar question: "Under what conditions should subordinates be involved in decision-making". Bridges (in Hoy and Miskel 1991: 328) attempts to answer this question. He has developed a model for shared decision-making called "Zone of Acceptance". Bridges postulates that (1) as the manager involves subordinates in making decisions located in their zone of acceptance, participation will be less effective, and (2) as the manager involves the subordinates in making decisions clearly located outside their zone of acceptance, participation will be more effective. He further states that the problem for the manager, therefore, is to determine which decisions fall inside and which ones fall outside the zone of acceptance. Bridges proposes the *test of relevance* and the *test of expertise* to determine which issues fall within the subordinate's zone of acceptance and which ones fall outside his/her zone of acceptance.

To put it simply, Hoy and Miskel (1991: 328-329) state that:

If subordinates have a personal stake (high relevance) in the decision and have the knowledge to make a useful contribution (high expertise), then the decision clearly falls outside the zone of acceptance, and subordinates should be involved in the decision-making process. If the issue is relevant and it falls outside their sphere of competence, however, then the decision clearly falls within the zone of acceptance and involvement should be avoided.

The issues of relevance, expertise and degree of involvement can be presented in a diagram form (1991: 330).

Figure 2.1: The relationship between the tests of relevance and expertise, and the degree of participation.



The diagram illustrates the following:

In type I situations, where the issue is clearly outside the subordinates' zone of acceptance, the subordinates' role in decision-making should be optimal. That is, subordinates should be involved as early as possible and they should be given as much freedom as possible in defining the problem and specifying the objectives.

Type II situations are marginal; they are neither clearly outside nor inside the zone of acceptance. On the occasions the subordinates are involved, the involvement should be limited because they do not pass the *test of expertise*.

Type III situations are also marginal. The involvement of subordinates should be limited because they do not pass the test of relevance.

Type IV situations clearly fall inside the zone of acceptance. These are administrative decisions that should not involve subordinates.

From the above discussion, it can be observed that in order to determine whether to involve the learners or not, the manager has to constantly decide on whether the issues fall within or outside the zone of acceptance of the learners. It would be simplistic to believe that full participation or unilateral decision-making alone can be used to solve all the problems at all times. However, full participation is the ideal organisations must strive for as people become more educated and interested in various issues.

While efforts to achieve full participation should be increased with time, unilateral decision-making remains relevant in management. The following section elaborates the importance of unilateral decision-making.

2.3.5 Unilateral decision-making

Taking decisions is not an easy thing because it requires one to be capable of carefully going through the following steps before a decision is finally made (Hoy & Miskel 1991: 300):

- Identifying the problem
- Establishing goals and objectives
- Generating all possible alternatives
- Considering the consequences of each alternative
- Selecting the best alternative
- Implementing the decision

For the manager to consider these points and to come up with a good decision, s/he needs to have all the necessary information at his/her disposal. Some of the information may be

with him/her and other information may be with other people. This is why unilateral decision-making should be understood in the context that the information leading to decision-making could come from the manager him/herself or other people, such as subordinates individually or collectively (Hoy & Miskel 1991: 335). The manager will then make the decision that may or may not reflect the subordinates' influence.

There are, therefore, times when a manager should resort to unilateral decision-making if s/he has all the necessary information that can lead to a good decision. Unilateral decision-making should be done only if it will be in the best interest of the school, according to his/her judgement. Kanter (1982: 7) provides the following instances to make a unilateral decision:

- When one person clearly has greater expertise on the subject than all the others.
- When those affected by the decision acknowledge and accept that expertise.
- When the subject is part of someone's regular job assignment, and it was not his or her idea to form the team.
- When no one really cares all that much about the issue.
- When there is no time for discussion.
- When no important development will result or others' knowledge would neither contribute to nor be served by their involvement.
- When people work more happily and productively alone.

Kanter (1982: 7) maintains that "there are times when autonomy and individual responsibility are more important than participation and team responsibility". He further alleges that invention and innovation "may derive from a single-minded determination of autocratic geniuses who need to be left alone to do things their way, and who must not be bound by 'democracy or peers' comments that limit and constrain them".

In the previous section it was indicated that participation is not always possible or even necessary. In cases where it is not possible or necessary unilateral decision-making can be very useful particularly in times of emergency. This research recognises these

advantages but its use must be limited to cases where participation will not be in the best interest of the stakeholders.

The next section discusses the prerequisites for participation in management. These are commitment, training and cohesion.

2.3.6 Prerequisites for participation in management

The underlying justification for democracy, on which participatory management is founded, is the right of all to equal influence and consideration of matters that affect people collectively and correspondingly. This ideal would seem to be best realised in a society in which as many opportunities as possible exist for democratic participation at all levels (Wringe 1984: 29).

Even if this foundation for participation were established, for instance, through legislation, there would still be certain factors that would be obstacles to participation, such as lack of commitment to duty, lack of training and lack of cohesion amongst the participants.

(1) Commitment

According to Coley (1980 in Moloko 1996: 40), commitment is characterised by at least three related factors, viz.,

- A strong belief in and acceptance of the school organisation's goals and values.
- A willingness to exert a great deal of effort to achieve school goals, and
- A strong desire to maintain membership in the school.

Commitment viewed in this way suggests individual loyalty to execute tasks and participate in school or team activities. Commitment can be obtained from team members if they understand clearly what they are doing and why they are doing it (Bell 1992: 48). In this manner they identify themselves with the team activities or decisions.

A committed team member is usually motivated to put in extra energy and show initiative towards team goals. An uncommitted team member generally gives an average performance in accordance with what is expected of him/her. On the other hand, the committed member is not satisfied to perform at an expected level. His/her goal is to achieve the end result with which he/she strongly identifies, even if it means some sacrifice on his/her part (Herbert 1976: 416).

Herbert (1976: 426) also states that members who cannot identify with, or are not committed to organisational goals cannot meaningfully participate in democratic management. Such a situation can become quite dangerous when team members see democratic management as a way to satisfy their own personal or work objectives, without attempting to integrate themselves into the broader purposes of the entire work group and its manager.

(2) Training

In section 2.3.3 it was indicated that the *test of expertise* could be used to determine whether learners should participate in a management process or not. It was further stated that because of the young age and lack of experience of the learners, it would be difficult to justify their participation in management. One of the important ways to help them pass the *test of expertise* is by training them in management skills.

Even if the learner leaders were empowered, it would not be fair to expect them to perform well without having prepared them for the task. School principals and other leaders are usually trained in the management of schools. Learner leaders too must be trained in the art of participatory management. The management team must also try to extend the training to the rest of the learners in the school so that the culture of democracy can spread quickly (Moloko 1996: 42).

Effective participation requires certain skills, understanding and knowledge. Participants at all levels can benefit from training aimed at developing their capacity to participate effectively (Wood 1984: 62; Badenhorst *et al* 1995: 63). The acquisition of knowledge and skills through training is essential in that it empowers the team members to participate on equal terms with their leaders.

The principal must ensure that team members, such as some of the learners, are provided with adequate training for participation in decision-making, as well as enough information on which to make a decision before putting them through the process (Gorton 1980: 248). Failure to do this results in poor decisions, confusion, frustration and disillusionment.

Dillion and Brown (1983: 52) suggest that leaders and team members alike may need training in techniques like brainstorming and group discussion. These authors recommend that potential leaders should receive training in the control of meetings, counselling techniques, discussion group leadership, identifying and promoting individual potential and the problem-solving process. Problem-solving skills, according to Robbins (1988: 435), include activities to sharpen logic, reasoning and skills at defining problems, assessing causation, developing alternatives, analysing alternatives and selecting solutions.

Concerning the type of training to give the learner leaders, the following remarks can be made: Given the extent of aspects of leadership, it is not possible to train the learners in all of them mainly because of time constraints. The limited nature of their area of operation also restricts some leadership aspects, such as staff appraisals, as irrelevant for learner leaders.

According to Cawood (1980 in Badenhorst *et al* 1995: 69), the learning content of the learner leadership training programmes may include such elements as the following:

- (a) Interpersonal relations: This may include aspects such as knowledge of human nature, application of learner discipline, dealing with difficult learners and dealing with criticism and conflict.
- (b) Communication skills: This entails the correct use of channels of communication, the art of debating and communication with large groups.
- (c) Management skills: Competence in the following management skills is important for learner leaders: planning, determining objectives, organising, leadership and control.
- (d) Leadership theories and styles: This may entail a knowledge of aspects such as autocratic, laissez-faire and democratic leadership styles, as well as certain theories of leadership such as the theories of attribution, situation, group function theory and relationship-task interaction.
- (e) Leadership practice: this may include the following aspects such as knowledge of group dynamics techniques, the correct use of meeting procedures, delegation, etc.

For the training efforts to be effective in improving leadership performance, it depends on identifying what needs improvement and then helping learners discover how to change their perceptions, cognition, attitudes and behaviour (Bass 1990 in Madigoe 1993: 41-42).

Bass 1990 and Maier and Zerfoss 1972 (in Madigoe 1993: 42-43) list several ways of training learner leaders, namely:

- coaching done by teachers.
- project assignments.
- through lectures and discussions, providing information, and stimulating thinking.
- through role playing; this adds to the leader's skills in dealing with human relational problems.
- through role reversal in which the leader may be asked to play the role of the subordinate while the subordinate plays the role of the leader. Here the leader may gain insight into what is affecting his/her subordinates.

- through multiple role playing in which an audience is divided into small teams, and each member of the team receives instructions to play a particular role. Following the role-plays within each team, the audience reassembles and shares experiences.

Whatever method of training one may choose, Gardner 1990 (in Madigoe 1993: 40) believes that in addition the learner leaders should be given an indication of the many kinds of leaders and styles of leadership, and should be encouraged to move towards those models that are right for them.

From the above information, it becomes evident that leadership training can be approached in different ways. Methods mentioned above can complement one another in bringing about acceptable leadership training. According to Charlton 1992 (in Madigoe 1993: 43), preference should be given to methods that are action-oriented especially those that cause learners to participate actively whilst being trained, for example in letting learners attend their own organisational meetings, where they will participate in discussions. Learners can also be exposed to leadership styles such as autocratic, laissez-faire, bureaucratic and democratic styles.

- **The autocratic style**

This style relies on authority-obedience relationship to get work done, the rigid adherence to defined lines of command and centralised decision making (Johannsen & Page 1990: 180). The phenomenon that there is only one-way communication between the leader and the group is very characteristic of this style of leadership (Van der Westhuizen *et al*, in Madigoe 1993: 44).

- **The laissez-faire style**

In this type of leadership the leader does not make his/her presence felt. Group members have the freedom to make individual or group decisions while the leader guides members

of the group by appealing to personal integrity. (Van der Westhuizen *et al*, in Madigoe 1993: 44).

▪ **The bureaucratic style**

According to Weber (in Cole 1990: 29), the main features of a bureaucracy are:

- A continuous organisation of functions bound by rules.
- Specified spheres of competence, that is, the specialisation of work, the degree of authority allocated and the rules governing the exercise of authority.
- An hierarchical arrangement of offices (jobs) i.e. where one level of jobs is subject to control by the next higher level.
- Appointment of offices is made on grounds of technical competence.

According to Owens (1987, in Madigoe 1993: 44), the leadership style of a bureaucratic leader is usually a combination of democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles in varying degrees.

The ability of the leader to integrate, blend and adapt components of his/her own style of leadership in harmony with the situation will to a large extent ascertain his/her success as leader of the organisation. This type of leader adheres strictly to the letter of the law, rules and regulations and tries in this way to maintain his/her position but sometimes does as he/she chooses.

▪ **The democratic style**

This style of leadership (also known as participative) is characterised by sharing of responsibility, reliance on the participants' own willingness to take whatever actions are required of them and a high degree of participation in decision-making (Johannsen & Page 1990: 180).

A cardinal feature of democratic leadership is that the leader is always a team member who takes part in group activities on a democratic, even level and he/she never creates

situations where he/she operates single-handedly in isolation like his/her autocratic counterpart (Madigoe 1993: 45).

As already pointed out by Gardner (1990, in Madigoe 1993: 40), the choice of a leadership style depends on the leaders themselves. The duty of the trainer should be to expose the advantages and disadvantages of the styles, in such a way that finally the learner leaders will opt for a democratic style which allows participation of the stakeholders in its management practices and which has a higher productivity rate than other management styles. However, participatory management cannot be effective if the learners who are supposed to participate have not been prepared to do so. Training will familiarise them with the process and activities of the school. It will help them understand their roles and what is expected of them. This will also minimise role conflict and can enhance cohesion.

(3) Cohesion

Group cohesion has been defined in various ways by different authors. Robbins (1988: 252) defines it as the degree to which group members are attracted to each other and share common goals. According to Siegel and Dnen (1974: 38), group cohesion exists when the forces acting to hold the group together are stronger than the forces acting to break the group. Bateman and Zeithmah (1993: 480) refer to the attractiveness of the group to its members, motivation of members to stick to the group and the extent to which members influence one another.

All these definitions refer to how tight the team members keep together and work or operate as a close knit rather than as a group of unfamiliar individuals. A cohesive team motivates its members to maintain their membership in the team. According to Fox *et al* (1974: 8), cohesiveness is measured by the person's feelings towards the team such as a school. Members prefer to stay with it and have an opportunity to influence it in collaboration with other team members.

Bateman and Zeithmah (1993: 480) elaborate further that the significance of cohesiveness is its potential to contribute to member satisfaction. In such a team, members communicate and work well with one another, while enjoying being a part of the team. These authors argue that even if team members' jobs are unsatisfactory or the organisation is oppressive, employees gain some satisfaction from enjoying their co-workers. This means the interaction provides the motivation (social need satisfaction) to remain.

Another significant aspect concerns the powerful effect cohesiveness has on team performance. The success of the team is interpreted as indicative of team members being close, getting along well, and understanding one another's situation. On the other hand, defeat is attributed to infighting and divisions (Bateman & Zeithmah 1993: 480).

Cohesiveness can also produce poor performance due to group thinking taking place when team members decide not to disagree or raise objections even if there is need for disagreement, because they don't want to destroy a positive team spirit. In cohesive teams the desire for consensus by members can become more critical than evaluating problems and solutions realistically (Lunenburg & Ornstein 1991: 174).

Bateman and Zeithmah (1993: 98) opine that pressure to conform to the team's preferred solution stifles creativity. Cawood and Gibbons (1985: 90), on the other hand, allege that the more cohesive and secure a group is, the greater the tendency of individual members to restrict any doubts they have.

The significance of cohesiveness for participatory management lies in the fact that it elevates the possibility of team members co-operating to achieve team goals.

The important prerequisites for cohesiveness are that:

- The principal himself/herself must be interested in sharing power with the learners (Calkins 1975: 48). As Scott and Jaffe (1992: 9) emphasise, "the principal is the

initiator and champion of the change". Therefore if the principal does not champion the changes such as sharing power with the learners then participatory management cannot succeed.

- S/he must be willing to delegate authority and responsibility with the purpose of developing the learners.
- Participating learners have to be democratically elected. If they are not, they will not win the confidence and support of the people they should be representing.
- The principal has to develop good relationships in order to achieve effective results in the organisation. This on its own presupposes a very crucial condition for the principals, forcing them to interact well with the learners (Mayosi 1995: 36).

Having described the necessary conditions of sufficient commitment, training and cohesion for the participation of the learners, it is important to understand the role of learners' participation in the management of the school. The following section will discuss this.

2.3.7 Models of participatory management in the school

According to Mayosi (1995: 15), there are various conceptions about participation, ranging from pseudo-participation to full participation. The models of participatory management are consequently based on these conceptions.

(1) Pseudo-participation model

This model is used where the values of genuine participation of the subordinates in the management process such as learners in a school, is not understood or appreciated. In this model, the learners are used to merely endorse the decisions already taken by management. In some cases the principal has a particular goal in mind and makes use of group discussion as a means of inducing acceptance of the goal. This approach is often a kind of trickery in that it still vests power and authority for decision-making in the principal. Such participation is manipulation of learners to impart the impression that

their views are being taken into account when in fact the decision has already been made (Mayosi 1995: 15). The school managers that use this model also claim that the stakeholders participate in management but the truth is that they should not claim that they engage stakeholders in a meaningful participation.

Initially, pseudo-participation could motivate some people; it could also have counter productive effects. For instance, when learners see that their contribution is ignored if it does not conform with the principal's plan, they could become cynical about the entire process and withdraw from it or attempt to undermine it (Bottery 1992: 176).

(2) Partial participation model

This occurs when management and learners come together for discussion but the final decision still lies with management. The learners have an influence on the decision but the final power to decide rests with the principal (Mayosi 1995: 15, Pateman 1970: 70).

The supporters of autocratic management could complain about this model that it gives too much power to the learners who do not know much about management. The supporters of the full participation model could complain that it is fraudulent because it gives the impression that there is honesty and fairness yet it is the school manager who will finally decide (Wringe 1984: 79, Bottery 1992: 176).

Practically, this model seems preferable to the other models (i.e. pseudo or full participation) because if participation by the learners is taken as an educative process that will prepare them for more responsibility, then the learners must be involved gradually. The learners must be helped to understand the complexities of issues beyond their present experience to enable them to participate more fully. To avoid management disaster and disillusionment as a result of mistakes by the learners, they must begin with partial participation and move to full participation as individuals demonstrate their ability to contribute at a particular level (Bottery 1992: 165&176, Wringe 1984: 79).

(3) Full participation model

This model is open for each individual to participate directly in decision-making and individuals have equal power with management to determine the outcome of decisions. What is of vital importance in full participation is that learners must be in possession of requisite information on which they can base their decisions and must have equal influence with management on the outcome of the decision (Mayosi 1995: 15).

Bottery (1992: 176) opines that equal influence on decisions with all other interested persons is ideal for any school aiming for genuine participation. It will, however, be limited by a variety of reasons; by lack of experience and expertise in management, by lack of time to listen to everybody's contribution and by legal statutes as to where responsibility ultimately lies.

To sum up: For the purposes of this research, pseudo-participation will not be advocated for although its advantages will be recognised. The advocated degree of participation will range from partial participation to full participation. As mentioned earlier, full participation is ideal but difficult to achieve. Another problem is that the term participation is subject to many factors that can influence it. The result is that it is not easy to be specific in describing the extent of participation because it is a continuum ranging from no participation to full participation. This being the case, there must be preparation of the learners before they can contribute meaningfully in the process of participation. More understanding of the term *participation* and its implications need to be achieved so that participants work from a common understanding. In order to provide more understanding of the term "participation", the following paragraphs will demonstrate that although full participation is advocated, it is not always necessary that every stakeholder should be involved in every activity.

2.4 The role of learners' participation in school management

2.4.1 The rationale for learner participation in school management

In trying to reduce the conflict between learners and school authorities, democratic methods of managing schools may be able to provide the solutions. The following discussion provides the rationale for learner participation in school management.

(a) Autocratic management systems must democratise: Considering that governments and industry are democratising, it has become imperative for educational institutions such as schools to do the same as they can not remain immune to the global revolution to democratise management systems (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: xiii). The need to democratise has generally been understood but, despite this, some schools have not democratised because they consider it to be a radical and experimental departure from the traditional autocratic system (Bell & Harrison 1995: 154). They are unwilling to democratise because they do not trust the learners who are young and inexperienced to share with them in the tasks of management. Nonetheless, the process of democratising schools must, of necessity, include learners so that they, forming the largest group in school, can meaningfully participate in issues that concern them. (Poster 1976: 96).

(b) The learners are mature to participate meaningfully: In theory many people seem to accept the advantages of democratic management in schools, but not many people seem to practise it. It could be because learners are considered too irresponsible, ignorant and inexperienced to allow them to participate in school management (Treslan 1983: 124; New Nation 5-11 April 1990; Bottery 1992: 154). Nkondo, in New Nation (5-11 April 1990), Newton (1986: 69) and Bottery (1990: 236) disagree that learners are irresponsible, unreasonable and ignorant. The latter reveals that there has been a steady stream of developmental psychological material over the previous 15 years which suggests that children are much more capable of complex logical and moral thinking than had been believed by Piaget. This being the case the argument that learners cannot participate in decision-making because they are irresponsible and incapable of logical and

moral thinking is invalidated. Involving the learners can improve the quality of decisions and discipline because they will respect the decisions and rules made by themselves. Even if learner participants make mistakes the benefits are still high because the experience would have provided them with good educational experience to learn, by being allowed to make mistakes, and being obliged to deal with the consequences of those mistakes (Polan 1989: 14).

(c) It is the right of the learners to participate: Apart from the benefits of involving learners, it is their democratic right to participate in matters that affect them. Bottery (1992: 153) highlights the violation of children's rights by adults. He says adults enjoy three distinct rights that are denied or severely limited when applied to children. These are:

1. The right to decision-making about their own actions
2. The right to expression of opinions
3. The right to involvement in institutional decisions

In the constitutions of many countries is enshrined a recognition that young people including children have the right to make their own decisions about their lives if and when they are mature enough to understand and make up their minds about issues concerning them (Meredeen 1991: 15, Phumaphi, in Mmegi 7-13 November 1997). Some people consider the provision of allowing learners to participate in decision-making too dangerous for management. But the right to participate in decisions concerning their treatment must be respected (Wielkiewicz 1986: 13). Many schools have not respected this right. Learners in the age-range of 15-20 are apparently mature enough to contribute sensibly in the management of a school, such as coming up with suggestions to control truancy. The Botswana government has recently recognised the fact that young people of this age range are mature enough to be involved in important issues such as voting. Consequently, the voting age has been reduced to 18 years. Most young people are in senior secondary school around the age range of 15-20. It is therefore important that

these learners should participate in the process of managing schools in order to learn from their input for the benefit of the school.

(d) There are benefits from learner participation: If learners are allowed to participate in the management of the school, evidently many more important benefits could be realised. For example;

- Farrell (1975: 6) and Gagne (1982: 1) state that what learners learn about school may be as important or even more important than what they learn in school. For these potential benefits to be realised, all the learners of the school should be involved in the consultation, negotiation and implementation of what was agreed upon in order to achieve greater learner morale and satisfaction, co-operation and reduction of conflict.
- Rutter (the Elton Report 1989: 142) found better behaviour in secondary schools in which a higher proportion of learners held positions of responsibility such as form captain. He also found better behaviour in schools where learners were responsible for caring for their own learning materials, such as books and folders. Mortimore (in the Elton Report 1989: 142) found better behaviour in junior schools where learners were responsible for managing their own work within clear guidelines set by the teachers. These findings suggest that learners are likely to respond to being given responsibilities by behaving more responsibly (the Elton Report 1989: 143). Assuming that the behaviour of youths is similar, the recommendation by Lord Elton that head-teachers and teachers should give learners every opportunity to take responsibilities can also apply to senior secondary schools in Botswana.
- The learners also learn increased responsibility and independence. (Conley *et al* 1988: 260; Wielkiewicz 1986: 13; Brandes & Ginnis 1990: 27; Gagne 1982: 98; New Nation 5-11 April 1990; Badenhorst 1995: 62-64; Phumaphi, in Mmegi 7-13 November 1997).

- When the learners are allowed to contribute to the management of their school, their self-esteem is enhanced (Conley *et al* 1988: 260).
- Because many people prefer their own ideas to those of others and when their ideas are implemented they have a better chance of ensuring that they succeed (Shaw 1985: 25).
- Learner participation in curricular decision-making will improve motivation in their work and a feeling of autonomy (Passe 1996: 13). If the learners are not motivated to learn, the teachers are forced to rely on motivational techniques to make them work. Such techniques do not create the intrinsic appreciation of the subject, and that makes appreciation short-lived and more discipline problems could follow.
- It can also be less costly in terms of time, personnel and other resources because some decisions can be taken at a lower level by people closer to the problem, rather than by a manager who might be far removed from the problem (Wielkiewicz 1986: 13).
- For Rousseau (in Smith 1989: 224) participation is a way of protecting individual interests and ensuring good governance and even promoting efficiency. A centralised authoritarian social structure like in most schools today, “can be expected to teach people to be timid, suspicious and self-interested”.

(e) Additional benefits from learner participation: Anthony (1984: 27-29 & 40) lists several more benefits which this author has paraphrased to fit the school situation:

- **Greater readiness to accept change.** When learners participate in making changes they become more receptive of them.
- **More peaceful manager-learner relations.** The use of participation tends to bring into the open any concerns the group might have. The concerns can then be resolved by frank discussion.

- **Increased learner commitment to the school.** When learners are allowed to participate in important school processes such as decision-making, they feel a greater affinity towards the school. Thus, their ego and self-actualisation needs are better satisfied.
- **Greater trust of management.** Learners who participate tend to develop stronger feelings of trust toward management. In order to take part in the important decisions of the school, they must know management's motives and desires. Knowing these in an open framework enables them to put faith in management's intentions. A feeling of trust is a necessary ingredient for the effective operations of any institution.
- **Greater ease in the management of learners.** If learners are more committed, accept change, and have greater trust in management, they will be more easily managed. Close supervision will be reduced and fewer disciplinary actions will be required because they will be more willing to accept the authority of their superiors.
- **Improved quality of managerial decisions.** Participative management can improve the quality of managerial decisions because a wide range of alternatives and their consequences are brought to bear on the decision process.
- **Improved upward communication.** Participation enhances upward communication. In non-participative organisations, the communication process seems to work well in passing information down the organisational chain of command. Upward communication is a valued resource and this is a very real benefit to participatory management.
- **Improved teamwork.** Teamwork is essential in solving the myriad complex problems faced by most of today's organisations, such as schools. Organisations find that they are not very effective if their stakeholders work at cross-purposes with each other. Building employee/learner groups into effective, co-ordinated work teams is a

tangible benefit derived from participatory management and one which is a valued resource for today's complex organisations.

(f) Discipline problems can be solved: When the authorities at Mt. Edgecumbe High school in Canada used participatory management, they solved the following problems (Greenwood & Gaunt 1994: 15) which also support reasons for learner participation in school management.

Table 2.2: Discipline and academic benefits as a result of learner participation

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Action taken</u>	<u>Gains</u>
Learner apathy	-learners invited to help plan class activities.	-increased learner self-esteem shown by active participation in the school activities. -focus on quality, not quantity.
	-change education from what is done to learner, to working with learners as 'coaches'.	-increased pride in their work. - peer tutoring. - co-operative learning.
Truancy	-co-operation between staff and learners in controlling the problem.	-learners help identify and control discipline.
Lateness	-to bring improvements in late coming of learners by identifying the problems.	-learners arrive early.
Discipline	-identify reasons and causes of discipline problems.	-control discipline problems.
	-teach time management skills.	-improved classroom productivity.

	<p>-improve system, educational and organisational arrangement by involving the learners in dealing with discipline problems.</p>	<p>-teacher time on discipline problems reduced to zero. -withdrawals from school reached new low of 1% in 1990.</p>
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To emphasise the importance and benefits of participation in management, Lester and French (in Hoy & Miskel 1991: 326) did research which demonstrated that the workers who were highly involved in decision making had a higher productivity rate, less absenteeism and grievances than the workers who were not involved.

In America there was an observation of high dissatisfaction amongst the workers of General Motors. Research conducted at the company revealed that the major reason was that the workers were not being involved in the business. They wanted to be treated like worthwhile members of the company by way of being provided access to decision makers so that they could contribute and possibly influence decisions about issues that concerned them (Farrell 1975: 4). Although Mc Daniel and Ashmos's (1980: 17) and Farrell's (1975: 1) observations are about industrial management, they do also apply to the management of schools with respect to the participation of the learners in the way the schools are managed.

In this section the following reasons for allowing the learners to participate in the management of the school have been highlighted:

(1) Reasons concerning principles

- It is their right to participate in matters that concern them.
- Learners are regarded as capable enough to participate in decision-making.
- It binds the learners to the decisions and rules that they participated in making and renders them more legitimacy.

(2) Reasons concerning practice

- The experience of participating in a decision-making exercise provides the learners with good educational experience of a democratic process which could be of use in their later lives.
- It diffuses the build-up of tension or anger that could result in a discipline problem.
- It is less costly in terms of time, personnel and other resources because people close to the problem can take some decisions at a lower level. For instance, the principal could give more autonomy to the learners to manage their entertainment. This could allow the principal to attend to other matters.
- The quality of the decisions is higher because the input of all the stakeholders is usually used.
- As a result of the participation of the learners there is transparency and less suspicion between the learners and the manager.
- Communication between the manager and the subordinates will improve.
- There is greater readiness to accept change.
- There is increased learner commitment to the school.
- There is improved team work and increased productivity.
- There are many more benefits for the participants and the school as a whole, such as reduced late-coming, absenteeism and learner apathy.

The wind of change within democratised management systems has influenced autocratic systems to change to more democratic management systems. Supporting arguments that even young people are capable of contributing sensibly to important issues and that it is their democratic right to participate validate the viewpoint that learners should participate in the management of the school. The view that a decision arrived at as a result of input from many people is likely to be of better quality than the one made by one person also supports participation of the learners in management. The participation of the learners on issues that fall outside the zone of acceptance is likely to produce a better decision than one that ignores the participation of the learners. It is therefore important to encourage

participation of the learners in the management of schools as long as they satisfy certain prerequisites for participation.

The following section will discuss the school management aspects in which learners can participate. In theory the learners can participate in all matters that concern them in the school. In reality there are some limitations which will be discussed now.

2.4.2 Management aspects in schools in which learners may participate

The reasons for allowing learners to participate in the management of the schools are quite convincing but it could be a more difficult exercise to establish in which aspects the learners can meaningfully participate. As it was pointed out earlier, it is not always possible nor necessary to allow learners to participate in every activity of management in the school. In this section aspects of school management in which learners can meaningfully participate will be identified.

Although "full participation" is difficult to achieve, it should remain an ideal that schools strive to work for as and when circumstances of resources, learner readiness to accept responsibility and other factors permit. There are schools that are quite advanced concerning the level of participation of learners, such as the Dunlap school (Brancato 1988: 47-48), others are only beginning. As a result of different circumstances for different schools, it is difficult to identify all aspects or tasks that will apply to all schools.

In a report by the Hunter Commission (Hunter 1995: 52) that reviewed the organisation, governance and funding in schools in South Africa, there was an attempt to differentiate "managerial" and "governance" tasks. The exercise was undertaken to throw light on the question of roles of the various stakeholders in the management of the school. The commission distinguished between managerial and governance tasks as follows:

Governance is widely agreed to be concerned with the formulation and adoption

of policy and management for day-to-day delivery of education. Generally, stakeholder groupings should be involved where policy matters are decided, while day-to-day decisions about the administration and the organisation and activities supporting teaching and learning in the school should be the domain of the professional staff, although stakeholders should have the right to comment on and make suggestions with regard to such decisions.

According to the above definition, management has to do with decisions that are concerned with day-to-day teaching and learning in the schools as being in the hands of the teachers and school managers. The other stakeholders, such as learners, will be involved with the determination and adoption of the school policy. This separation of tasks does not seem to work well for the attainment of "full participation". For example, it seems wrong to allow learners to participate in policy making and then exempt them from the implementation process. It is unlikely that the implementation will be successful without the participation of the learners.

Other writers believe that the "managerial" and "governance" tasks should not be separated. Full participation is actually advocated. Holdsworth (1985: 7), for example, believes that to be an effective voice for learners, "a school representative council (SRC) must share in making decisions that affect the everyday life of learners. And this is largely *what* is taught and learned and *how* it is taught and learned". He also observes that in recent years there has been a rapid growth in projects that actively involve learners in real decision making in schools. He adds, "the range of possible areas is bounded only by the imagination of the proposers and participants" (Holdsworth 1985: 7) and the fulfilment of the requirements for participating as set out by the tests of relevance and expertise (Hoy & Miskel 1991: 328).

The above observations suggest that limitations should not be put to the aspects that learners can participate in. In other words, if the learners are capable of participating responsibly, and resources permitting, then they should be allowed to participate. Even if there were limiting factors to participation, managers must try to be imaginative and

involve the learners because even under such conditions the learners will be educated as to what one can do under such conditions.

It is important to briefly explain how participation in management aspects impacts on discipline. As already discussed that allowing learners to participate in aspects of the management of the school helps to improve discipline in the schools (section 2.4), it must however be noted that there are some aspects that have a more direct effect on discipline. For example, the participation of the learners in a disciplinary committee might be such a case. There are other aspects that have a less direct effect but they nevertheless positively affect discipline. For instance, learners could participate in an environmental committee. They would be occupied with something worthwhile and therefore be kept away from daydreaming or contemplating to break a rule. Therefore the benefits in this case will be that the learners would have contributed something worthwhile to their environment and they would have been occupied and kept away from possible temptations to break school rules.

Different schools have involved learners in different aspects and in different degrees. At Promat, a group of private colleges in South Africa, the managers see learner government as part of the learning experience. By way of teaching them, the learners are allowed to write their own charter in which, among other aspects, they put the onus on themselves to deal with the problems of drugs, alcohol and pregnancy. Robertson, who is the founder of these colleges, observes that the learners are "tough on each other" in observing these rules (Financial Mail 25 May 1990). The learners in this school can solve real problems for the school such as fundraising or indiscipline by themselves enforcing school rules but probably the greatest benefit is that they are learning by participating in such real-life activities as working, banking, and judging cases and other aspects.

A similar system is in operation at Staples High School in the USA. They have the SGB (Staples Governing Board) consisting of 10 learners and 10 adults. The SGB is the unicameral legislative branch of the governance of the school. In effect the SGB can pass laws and direct the governance of the school in any area normally authorised to the

principal, subject to the limitations that may be imposed by state law, local town ordinances or board of education policy. It passes laws that govern the school when they are ratified by the principal.

The principal has two kinds of veto powers that he/she may exercise. He/she may deliver an absolute veto, which kills a bill. The action, rarely taken, comes about when in the principal's judgement a bill contradicts a law or board of education policy. This action can be objected to and appealed about to the superintendent or to the board of education. A suspensive veto may be used if the principal wishes the bill to be reconsidered and revised by the SGB. In this case the SGB may accept the veto with a 2/3 vote, they may choose to rewrite the bill and resubmit it at a later date (Calkins 1975: 53).

The principals of Ralph Dunlap School (Brancato 1988: 47-48), Staples High School (Calkins 1975: 46-55) and the Hunters Hill High School (Westlake 1989: 27-29) must have expected that the learners would make mistakes but they still allowed them to participate for the sake of raising democratic citizens. The three cases also emphasise the point that with some understanding and innovation on the part of the principals, learners can participate in almost any management aspect of the school with a satisfactory measure of success. The learners of these schools participated in the following aspects: the control of drugs, alcohol, vandalism and violence, the promotion of general learner conduct, class attendance and conducting school programmes. They also participated in the management of the social committee, the canteen committee, the environment committee and sports committee, the settling of disputes between the learners and the planning of events with the principal (section 1.3).

According to Passe (1996: 13), one management aspect in which principals and teachers find it difficult to involve the learners, is the curriculum. Because teachers and principals are trained in matters of curriculum they don't consult with the learners because the learners are supposedly incapable of participating meaningfully because they are not trained. Passe (1996: 14) states that learners often describe school content as irrelevant and boring. Subject matter that the child views as irrelevant causes the learner to dislike

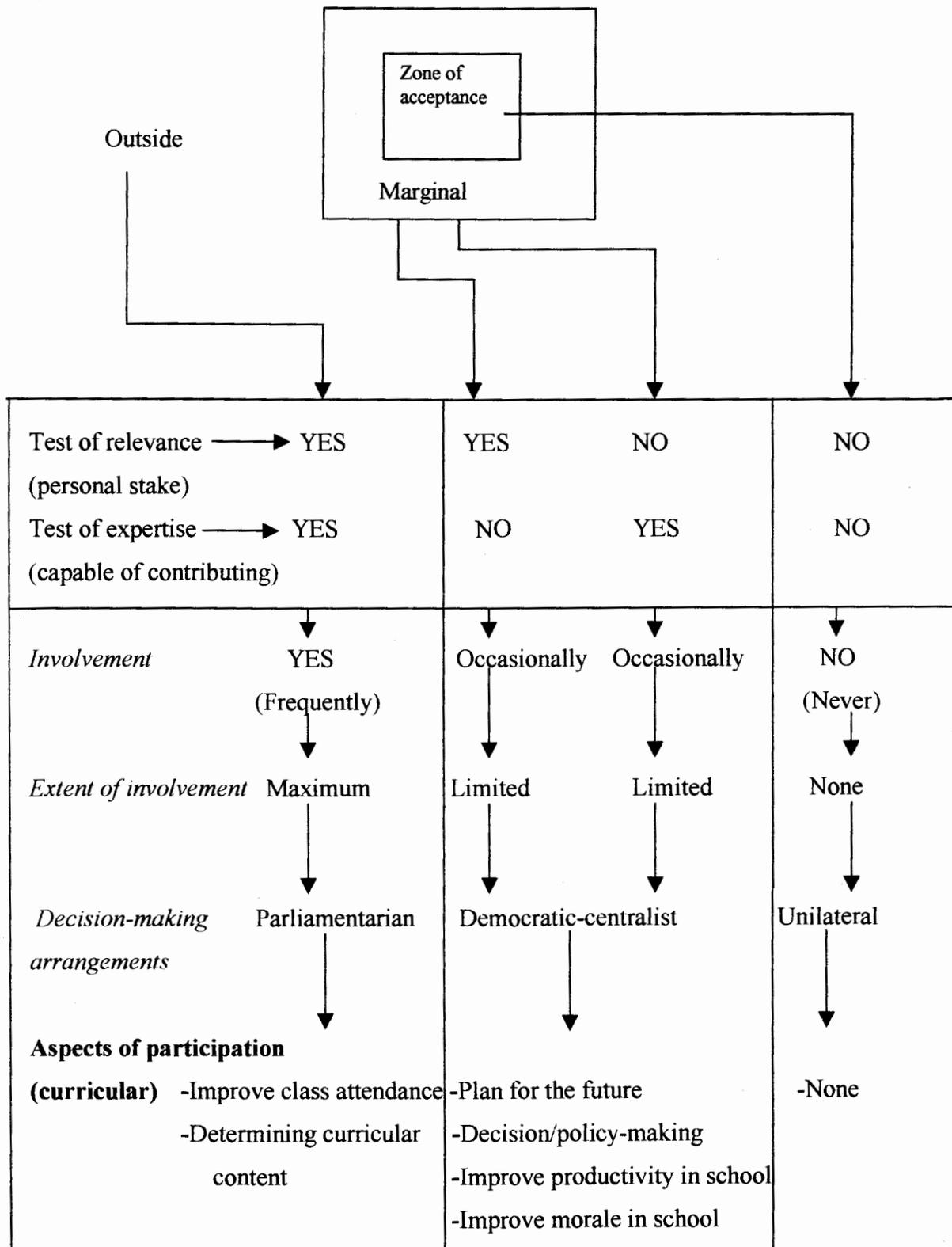
the curriculum. The learner will dislike the curriculum normally because it has no direct relationship with his/her present experiences. The dislike of a curriculum could easily cause problems of low motivation, bad classroom behaviour and little learning.

Passe (1996: 9) indicates that when learners are given the responsibility of choosing content, they tend to select topics that interest them, thus avoiding motivation problems. Giving them the power to choose the curriculum is a method of developing motivation to learn, and a feeling of autonomy. Dewey (in Passe 1996: 13) elaborates that a feeling of autonomy will give the learner "such possession of him/herself that he/she may take charge of him/herself, may not only adapt him/herself to the changes which are going on, but have power to shape those changes". He adds that a feeling of autonomy has the capacity of providing the child with the instruments of effective self-direction. Such feeling will help to develop a society that is worthy, lovely and harmonious.

In this section the researcher has identified aspects in which learners can participate in order to improve the management of a school in general, and of discipline in particular.

It was indicated earlier on that all aspects of management could be suitable for the participation of the learners. Regarding the aspects in which participation is foreseen, there remains the question of the extent to which they can participate. The following schedule lists the aspects in which the learners can participate and provides a participatory management framework applicable to each aspect, indicating the extent to which the learners can participate.

Figure 2.2: Model of extent of involvement, decision-making arrangements and aspects of learner participation. (adapted from Hoy and Miskel 1991: 333)



<p>(extra-curricular)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Plan for the future -Reduce vandalism -Control drugs, alcohol, aids, pregnancies -Fundraising -Control violence -Standards of dress -Hostel issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leading others -Organising activities -Implementing decisions/projects -Judging disputes between learners -Decision/policy- making -Environmental committee -Food issues -Monitoring the implementation of decisions/projects -Training of learners in management aspects -Social committees -Sport committee -Resource budgeting and spending -Editorial committee 	<p>-Urgent decision</p>
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Note: The aspects indicated in the above figure have been taken from the various literature sources discussed in this chapter (2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.4.1, 2.4.2). They have been categorised based on the ideas the researcher obtained from the literature sources. For example, there are very few aspects in which learners cannot participate at all except in cases where a decision has to be made urgently (2.4.2). It must be indicated that the aspects under *Outside Zone of Acceptance* and *Marginal Zone of Acceptance* might have elements of arbitrary categorisation because the application of tests of relevance and expertise can also be subjective.

The above discussion and framework have indicated the aspects in which the learners can participate in the management of a school, related to:

- how the aspects rate with regard to the tests of relevance and expertise,

- which model of participatory management suits each aspect and,
- what level of involvement the learners can be engaged with regard to each aspect.

The following section will discuss the obstacles in the way of learner participation in school management.

2.4.3 Obstacles in the way to learner participation in school management

The benefits from participatory management system are quite attractive but the users of the system should also be aware of the problems that are related to it. By recognising them early on, the managers can then prepare for them to ensure success.

There are many problems that can stifle efforts to successful participatory management. These problems are related to the way the managers and authorities perceive participatory management. The school managers who perceive it with suspicion or who don't understand it, will be obstacles to its implementation. The subordinates to the managers or the learners can be barriers if they don't understand or are suspicious of the system. Other barriers are situational, such as the time or environment in which the participatory management is being implemented.

(a) Managerial obstacles

- School managers sometimes seem uncertain of involving learners because they are afraid of the consequences of the learners' mistakes. This may result in over-protecting learners and in the process stifling their confidence. Managers must understand the fact that even adults learn from suffering the consequences of their mistakes. Learners should therefore be allowed to learn through an age-old process of learning by practice (Pfanstiehl 1975: 7).
- The authorities are not sure of how much power they should give learners (Gorton 1975: 32). They are afraid of being "net losers" of power when asked to share with

learners. Scott and Jaffe (1992: 13) allay such fears when they advise that "as a manager, you have to give up power and control over your people to gain higher effectiveness, motivation and productivity."

- There is also a fear that if learners are involved, they may come to expect to be involved in all the decisions. They may then resist decisions that are appropriately but unilaterally handed down from higher authorities (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 32). If arrangements for authorities sometimes to take decisions unilaterally are explained to the learners, it will be unlikely that the learners will expect to be involved all the time.
- Treslan (1983: 124) points out that there can be problems of improving discipline due to inefficient planning to modify secondary school governance so as to allow for input from learners in management decisions. The organisational structures, which are usually prescribed by some authority, do not usually provide for the empowerment of learners or genuine participation in the management of schools. Yet empowering learners and allowing their participation will create a synergy of many people working together and producing better results (Scott & Jaffe 1992: 72).
- Authorities will sometimes muzzle learners' efforts by limiting resources for the learners' cause (Conley *et al* 1988: 260; Moloko 1996: 79). For instance, the learners could ask for training in management skills but the principal could just tell them there is no money, even when he/she has or could try to raise the money.
- Lack of training of learner leaders is another barrier to equipping leaders to tackle discipline problems in schools. If the representatives of the learners are not trained in management skills, the school will not benefit from their contribution that could be very important in promoting discipline. If learners are expected to participate well in the management of the school, they need to be trained in skills like problem solving, group discussion, conducting meetings, listening and communication (Mayosi 1995: 41-42).

- The managerial barriers often come to the fore in situations when those in management tend to see themselves as better able to decide for the learners in every case. Access to information is treated as their exclusive right, making it very difficult for others to make informed decisions (Mayosi 1995: 16).

Anthony (1984: 33-45) observes other managerial barriers to effective participation such as:

- **Managerial habits.** Many managers manage on the basis of habit. They do things because they have always done them a particular way. Too often managers who manage by habit see no need to change, for instance to new styles such as participatory management.
- **Failure to understand participatory management.** Many managers want to change their style and use participatory management but they simply do not understand it or know how to apply it. Both the managers and the subordinates need to be trained and educated in participatory management techniques.
- **Theory X assumptions.** McGregor (Steyn 1994: 6-7) states that many managers make so-called Theory X assumptions about people. They believe people are basically lazy and do not want to work and that it is the manager's duty to closely control them in order to ensure that they do a good job. A manager who holds Theory X assumptions about subordinates/learners is not about to let them participate in major organisational decisions. In contrast with Theory X assumptions, managers who believe in the so-called Theory Y assumptions trust their subordinates that they are responsible enough and that they can work well without close supervision.

Anthony (1984: 33-45) observes three more types of barriers to participatory management which he terms *organisational barriers, subordinate barriers and situational barriers*.

(b) Organisational barriers

- **Organisational philosophy and values.** The philosophy and values of the top-management group in an organisation can serve as another barrier to the adoption of participatory management. A managerial philosophy is the basic approach managers use in making decisions and carrying out their important tasks. The philosophy manifests what the management believes to be really important. It may exist in a document form or may not even be documented but it will show in the way that the managers conduct themselves.
- **Quality of policy and procedures.** Some organisations believe in very detailed and comprehensive policy and procedures established to cover any conceivable situation that might arise. In such organisations, managers are fond of quoting policy as a reason to reject a new idea or a new approach. In these cases participatory management can easily be subverted or rejected. Policy here is valued as the end in itself, rather than as a means to an end.
- **Lack of a supportive climate.** An organisation's climate is the atmosphere it engenders. It is the sum total of the feelings, attitudes, and beliefs that the people in the organisation have toward the organisation. It is also the image the employees and the public have of the organisation. A supportive climate is one in which people feel that the organisation supports them in their endeavours and where the people support the organisation in its endeavours. Such a climate is often very difficult to create but its absence makes participatory management very difficult to achieve. It is difficult for people to participate and contribute ideas if they feel threatened or subject to punishment for any mistake.

(c) Barriers from subordinates

- **Quality of personnel.** An organisation may attract personnel who are simply not able to engage in participatory management. They don't have the skills, knowledge,

desire, expertise, training, or experience to be participative managers or employees/learners. People don't become participators overnight. It takes time and training to produce such personnel. The other problem is that some people will never learn to be effective at participative management. This is a severe barrier.

- **Lack of desire.** Some subordinates do not wish to participate. Participation may violate their role perceptions of their job. They may not believe they are expected to participate; or if they realise that they are expected to, they do not see it as a part of their responsibility.
- **Lack of content/subject knowledge or expertise.** Some employees simply do not have the subject matter knowledge needed for participation. Participants must have the knowledge necessary in a field in order for them to make significant contributions when participating. Too often people are asked to participate in areas in which they have no knowledge. Participation in this case cannot work.
- **Fear.** Subordinates may fear participatory management because they may be afraid of failure. If they fail they fear they will be blamed and embarrassed. Subordinates may fear to be branded troublemakers by some managers who do not quite like participatory management.

(d) Situational barriers

- **Time.** Probably the most common barrier to participatory management is time. There does not seem to be enough time to have full participation, even among those who are truly committed to the approach. It is easier and quicker to make decisions autocratically but such decisions do not guarantee acceptance by those who are expected to carry them out. Autocratic decisions can be made quickly but they might be bad decisions. Compliance to these decisions can be forced, but at great costs. The time spent in participatory management should be seen as an investment.

- **Task.** Some tasks don't lend themselves well to participatory management. For example, one person can do some tasks better than a group of people. Some decisions are so complex, and require such detailed knowledge in a highly specialised technical area, that only one person or two persons in the entire organisation are capable of making the decision.
- **Environmental influences.** Sometimes there are constraints in the environment that hinder the use of participatory management. An example of a constraint might be the cultural values and mores of a country which do not emphasise democracy.

In this section, the researcher has discussed the various types of obstacles to participatory management. The following section will discuss possible methods of overcoming these barriers.

2.4.4 Overcoming participatory management barriers

According to Anthony (1984: 50) it is not an easy task to implement participatory management in an organisation because there are many barriers as indicated in the previous discussion. It is however possible to reduce the effect or indeed solve the problem completely.

Anthony (1984: 46-47) provides some useful guidelines that can be used to deal with barriers to participatory management. This section will now discuss the five steps that can help in overcoming these barriers in an organisation such as a school.

- **Developing a supportive organisational climate.** Participatory management cannot be successful in an organisation that does not provide support for its people. This means that the organisation should create structures, policies, and procedures that ensure that the members of the organisation are supported in their endeavours for the greater benefit of the organisation. For example, an organisation must provide security and encouragement for its people and the top management must apply

Theory Y assumptions (McGregor, in Steyn 1994: 6-7) in dealing with the subordinates. This climate is not created overnight. It takes several months, even years of real, concerted effort.

- **Changing structure, policies, and the reward system.** Participatory management cannot exist in an organisation where the structure and policies work directly against it and where participatory management is not rewarded actively. These facets of organisation simply must be in harmony with participatory management.
- **Providing training and education.** Training and education are the key to participatory management's success. They provide the manager and subordinates with the knowledge and the tools to practise participatory management. They decrease the chances of failure when participatory management is tried out in the organisation.
- **Sensing the environment.** Organisations that accurately know their environment and react quickly to it will see the necessity for participatory management. Few organisations in today's complex environment can be run by one or two all-powerful and knowing individuals. Joint effort and teamwork are required.
- **Using time as a resource.** Managers and subordinates must view time as a resource, not as a constraint. They must be more careful about wasting time. They must see the time spent on certain activities as investments for some future return.

The above solutions to participatory management are only guidelines. They can be altered or left out as a particular problem may demand. The guidelines are useful but they do not preclude other possible solutions.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher firstly discussed the meaning of school discipline and the various approaches of creating good discipline in a school. It was important to define school discipline and discuss the approaches to creating good discipline because the realisation of good discipline in school is the very essence of this research. It is important to note that the whole aim of encouraging learners to participate in aspects of school management is to promote good discipline in schools. Some of the important approaches discussed were the closed and open approaches, the judicious discipline approach, the Glasser system, the logical approach, and discipline for learning approach. It must be noted that these approaches are not ready-made solutions for every discipline problem. Often there is need for the user to pick and choose elements from various approaches and adjust them to suit one's problem.

In the later paragraphs, the parameters of learner participation in school management were discussed, and the potential of such learner participation in solving discipline problems was also indicated. The parameters are among others: delegation of responsibilities, transparency in what the authorities do, good communication up and down the organisation, participation by all who are affected by what happens in the organisation, trust and training.

The latter parts of this chapter discussed how the participation of the learners in the management of schools could help to improve discipline in the school. In this discussion it was established that learner participation can indeed help improve discipline but the lack of learner participation is not the only factor that is responsible for poor discipline in schools. There are other factors such as lack of policy on discipline, lack of funding for programmes meant to promote good discipline, poverty in the family, loss or separation of parents, exposure to uncensored literature and television shows, violence in the communities the learners come from and bad influence amongst the peers, such as gangsterism. The influence of school management to help learners not to be negatively

affected by these factors is limited because they take place outside the control of the school where rules and regulations of the school do not apply.

There are several models that school managers and teachers can adapt for learner participation. Some of the common models are the following: school-wide discipline model, alternative schooling, outreach model, redefining model, guidance approach model and assertive discipline model.

Even if the above models were used there is still the question of how much participation should learners be allowed. This chapter discussed the continuum of participation from pseudo-participation, partial participation to full participation. These degrees of participation can be equated with the "Situations and involvement in decision-making model" (Figure 2.1, section 2.3.2). For example, pseudo-participation can be equated with IV in the model, partial participation can be equated with II and III, and full participation can be equated with I in the model. The extent of participation can also be equated with the decision-making arrangement (Figure 2.3, section 2.4.2) as follows:

- (a) full participation can be fulfilled through the parliamentary decision-making process.
- (b) partial participation can be fulfilled through the democratic-centralist decision-making process.
- (c) pseudo-participation can be fulfilled through the unilateral decision-making process.

There is still the problem of what criteria can be used to determine whether a discipline issue deserves full participation, partial participation or otherwise. The criteria to be used are the *test of relevance* and the *test of expertise*.

By using the tests of relevance and expertise the researcher has been able to place the aspects of learner participation according to the degree of participation (Figure 2.2 in section 2.4.2). The researcher has been able to place the aspects of learner participation

against what good disciplinary effect it would have on the discipline of the school (see Table 2.3).

Table 2. 3: How aspects of learner participation relate to good discipline

<u>Aspects for learner participation</u>	<u>Indicators of good discipline</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Control of drugs, alcohol, vandalism, and violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Use of drugs and vandalism is controlled. -Vandalism and violence are minimised.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in decision/policy-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Quality of decisions/policy is high. -improves social-responsibility attitude.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in disciplinary committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learners ensure their ideas are implemented.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given more positions of responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Truancy, lateness and absenteeism decrease. -Learners behave more responsibly and learn more independence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in curricular and extra-curricular aspects (Figure 2.2) will enable the learners to acquire the skills of leading, planning, organising, implementing, monitoring, assessing, consultation and negotiation, among others. It will also increase the autonomy, motivation, learning and classroom behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Greater learner morale, satisfaction, co-operation and reduction in conflict. -Increased self-esteem. -Promotes efficiency and good governance. -Greater readiness to accept change. -Peaceful manager-learner relations. -Greater trust of manager. -Improved communication. -Improved teamwork. -Increased learner commitment. -Diffuses the build-up of learner tension/anger.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training of learner leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Promotes efficiency and good governance. -Prepares the learners to be responsible learners and citizens. -Minimise role conflict and enhance cohesion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in determination of curricular content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ -Promotes motivation. -Promotes good classroom behaviour. -Promotes effective learning. -Promotes feeling of autonomy.

Note: The aspects for learner participation and indicators of good discipline have been taken from the various literature sources discussed in this chapter and they have been compiled by the researcher (2.3.5,2.3.6,2.4.1,2.4.2).

As mentioned in section 2.3.3, the learners cannot pass the test of expertise because of their lack of experience and exposure. The researcher however suggested that training the learners in the skills of management and participation could solve this problem. Training the learners will empower them to participate meaningfully in the management of the school. Some of the important skills that can be imparted to the learners are: decision-making, problem solving, group discussion, communication, active listening, brainstorming, control of meetings, leadership and accepting responsibility, among others.

Although most of the experiences discussed above are from non-African contexts, it is assumed that many also apply to Botswana. To be able to apply them there is need to understand the educational set-up, culture, education policy, resources available and other related factors in Botswana. It is for the above need that a further aim of this study is to research empirically and study the management practices in Botswana senior secondary schools and suggest solutions that would be relevant to the promotion of meaningful learner participation in school management. Meaningful learner participation in school management can hopefully promote better discipline in schools in Botswana.

The following chapter will now deal with the empirical research which will attempt to investigate the aspects of school management in which the learners can participate.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the theoretical aspects of discipline and participatory management were investigated through the study of relevant literature. The literature on learner involvement in school management indicated that the following aspects are important issues that may influence discipline in a school and require further empirical investigation:

- Aspects of school management in which learners can participate meaningfully.
 - The extent to which learners can participate in school management.
 - The extent to which the training of the prefects can improve the quality of learner participation in aspects of school management.
-
- ❖ **Aspects of school management in which learners can participate meaningfully.**
This section will cover the following aspects;
 - ☒ Policy making such as the making of school rules and the choice of the curriculum.
 - ☒ Planning, such as the budgeting of resources and planning timetables and schedules.
 - ☒ Leading, such as the monitoring of the implementation of policies and decisions.
 - ☒ Organising, such as school programmes.
 - ☒ Productivity of teachers and learners, such as the annual appraising.
 - ☒ Motivating, such as the reward systems of high performers.
 - ☒ Communicating, such as through school magazines, meetings and notice boards.
 - ☒ Conflict resolution, such as through the discipline committee or learner grievances/strike committee.
 - ☒ Learner and school welfare, such as the type of entertainment and the control of drugs, alcohol and HIV/AIDS.

- ❖ **The extent to which learners can participate in school management.** This section will contain questions about all the aspects listed in the foregone paragraph and will try to establish the extent to which the learners are involved in the above aspects.

- ❖ **The extent to which the training of the prefects can improve the quality of learner participation in aspects of school management.** This section will contain questions that will try to establish if prefects receive any training or guidance about their leadership roles before they begin their new roles and whether it is a good idea that they be given the training or guidance.

This chapter deals with the design of the empirical investigation. The aims of the research will be listed and followed by a discussion on the questionnaire as a research tool. The design of the questionnaire will be explained and the population and samples that will be involved in the research will be indicated. The researcher will also discuss the statistical techniques that will be used in the research. In the last sections, the pilot work and administrative arrangements will be discussed.

3.2 Aims of the empirical investigation

In section 1.5 five aims of the research were indicated. These were:

- To review the available literature on learners' participation in aspects of senior secondary school management.
- To establish the relationship between (a) sound discipline and (b) learners' participation in aspects of school management.
- To identify aspects of management in which learners could meaningfully participate.
- To determine empirically the extent to which learners could participate in the management aspects of the senior secondary school.
- To make recommendations on how training prefects could improve their participation in management aspects of the school.

Based on the above aims and the literature study, the researcher formulated the following research questions for an empirical investigation:

- In what aspects of school management can learners participate meaningfully?
- To what extent should learners be involved (i.e. participate) in the management aspects of the school?
- To what extent can the training of prefects improve the quality of participation of learners in management aspects of the school?

Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses were formed based on the aims of the research:

- (a) Official policy on learner participation in school management is only partly followed.
- (b) There is no consensus amongst stakeholders on the aspects of school management in which learners can meaningfully participate.
- (c) Principals and learners differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management.
- (d) Prefects are not trained in the basics of leadership and management.

3.3 The questionnaire as a research tool

3.3.1. Objectives

Two questionnaires were designed to elicit information from the respondents in order to determine their perceptions regarding the participation of learners in the management of senior secondary schools in Botswana.

Most particularly the questionnaires sought to determine the degree of learner participation in aspects of school management and how such participation is related to constructive discipline.

The questionnaire as a tool was chosen because of its advantages, although it also has some disadvantages.

3.3.2 Advantages of questionnaires

The questionnaire was used as a tool of investigation because of the following advantages (Oppenheim 1992: 102; Sidhu 1984: 139):

- It is economical both for the researcher and for the respondent in terms of time, effort and cost.
- It is cheaper to process the data.
- It facilitates contact with respondents who live at widely dispersed addresses or abroad.
- It is relatively easy to plan, construct and administer.
- It has great potential when properly used.
- Once it has been constructed skilfully, the investigator may ask anybody to administer it on his/her behalf.
- It places less pressure on the subject for immediate response; the subject can answer it at leisure.
- It helps in focusing the respondent's attention on all the significant items.

3.3.3 Disadvantages of questionnaires

Apart from the above-mentioned advantages, the questionnaire has the following disadvantages (Oppenheim 1992: 102; Borg & Gall 1989: 446; Schnetler *et al.* 1989: 50; Sidhu 1984: 139):

- It is prone to low response rates, and consequent biases.
- It is unsuitable for respondents of poor literacy, for the visually handicapped, and for people with language problems.
- It gives no opportunity to correct misunderstandings, to probe, or to offer explanations or help.
- There is no control over the order in which questions are answered, no check on incomplete responses, or on the passing on of questionnaires to others.
- Structured questionnaires can result in a loss of rapport and also lead to frustrations when respondents feel that their personal options are not included.
- The absence of subtlety in structured questions makes it easy for respondents to discern the purpose behind the question, thus forming subjective opinions.
- The structured questionnaire limits the subject's response, so that some vital information may be omitted. Subjects may also choose alternatives that do not really reflect their true attitudes.
- Some respondents may not feel happy about airing their views on controversial issues in writing. Such views can be drawn out only through interviews.

Despite the above-stated disadvantages, Sidhu (1984: 131) maintains that the questionnaire is the most flexible of tools in collecting both quantitative and qualitative information, thus it was chosen as the appropriate instrument for this empirical survey.

3.4 Questionnaire design

Sidhu (1984: 132) points out that a well designed and administered questionnaire can boost the reliability and validity of the data to an acceptable level. Schnetler *et al* (1989: 44) warns that a poorly designed questionnaire can invalidate research results. The researcher tried to comply with the following guidelines of what constitutes a good questionnaire, as indicated in Oppenheim (1992: 128-130) and Sidhu (1984: 133):

- It deals with a relevant topic so that it enthruses respondents to give responses.

- It seeks only such data that cannot be obtained from resources like books, reports and records.
- It is as short as possible (not more than 20 words per question) and at the same time as comprehensive as necessary so that it does not leave out any relevant and critical information.
- It avoids double-barrelled questions. Each question deals with a single idea, is worded in a simple and as clear a manner as possible, and provides an opportunity for easy, accurate, unambiguous responses.
- Proverbs are avoided.
- Double negatives are avoided.
- The questions are objective, with no clues, hints or suggestions as to the response desired. Leading questions are therefore avoided.
- It uses simple words and avoids acronyms, abbreviations, jargon and technical terms.
- It avoids words with alternative or ambiguous meanings.
- It avoids questions that will over-tax the memory of respondents.
- It is easy to tabulate, summarise and interpret.

3.4.1 Construction of the questionnaire items

In developing questionnaire items, the guidelines discussed above were followed. The structure of the questionnaire was partly influenced by attempts to achieve internal coherence and logic within the sections (Oppenheim 1992: 109).

In formulating the questions the language proficiency of the sampled group was taken into account. The researcher tried to use simple words because most of the respondents were not first-language speakers of English.

Another aspect of the questionnaire design was the measure to reduce the risks of *ordinal biases*. Ordinal bias is the tendency of people to choose a figure near the average or near the middle of the series. For instance, if people are asked to choose an answer from five

items arranged in a numerical order, the tendency will be to choose the third one. In order to overcome this problem, the researcher avoided using a 'middle' option.

3.4.2 Format of the questionnaires

The format of the questionnaires was informed by the following guidelines of Borg and Gall (1989: 431-432), Schnetler *et al* (1989: 82), and Rummel in Moloko (1996: 92):

- Organise and lay out questions so that the questionnaire can be as easy to complete as possible.
- Group questions according to subject. This would cause questions to be logical, enabling the respondents to understand the relationship between them.
- Include the introductory remarks or directions when changing to a new section. These directions should explain the purpose of the following set of questions so as to help respondents switch their orientation.
- Group together items that require similar responses. This would prevent repetition of responses in other categories.

Two questionnaires were designed. The first questionnaire (Questionnaire A) was designed to solicit responses from learner leaders and learners about the participation of learners in aspects of school management. The second questionnaire (Questionnaire B) was designed to solicit the views of prefect advisors, heads of department and the principals about the participation of learners in aspects of school management.

With the above aspects in mind the questionnaires were divided into five sections (see appendices A and B). Each section was preceded by directions for answering the questions so as to promote accurate replies and to eliminate the need for help from anyone in answering the questions (Rummel 1964: 126).

Section 1 consists of four questions. This section is intended to collect biographical data about the respondents. It also acts as a warm-up section for the respondents.

Section 2 is made up of twenty six (26) closed items that seek to determine aspects of school management in which learners can participate and determine the extent of participation by learners in the above management aspects.

Section 3 consists of eleven (11) closed items and one open-ended question that seek to determine the extent of participation by learners in the management aspects of the schools and how else learner participation can be helpful or detrimental.

Section 4 is made up of five closed items and one open-ended question that are meant to establish how training of prefects impacts on school management.

Most of the questions in sections two to four required respondents to indicate their responses on a four-point scale (Likert scale).

3.5 Population and sample

3.5.1 Population

The proposed target population for this study is eight senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana.

3.5.2 Sample

The sampling was limited to the eight senior secondary schools in the district. Samples consisted of 20 respondents per school, i.e. 16 learners and four staff members. The learner sample was constituted as follows: One head-boy, one head-girl, two dining prefects, two hostel prefects (boy and girl), one sports prefect, one entertainment prefect, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 5, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 4. The facilitator whom the researcher personally knew and trusted that he/she would collect the data on his behalf did the selection of the

prefects and non-prefect learners. The researcher knew these facilitators as a result of his involvement in a number of regional school activities where he had met these people.

The facilitator selected the respondents as follows:

- **Hostel prefects:** Listed the boys and girls in alphabetical order. Chose the first boy and first girl on the alphabetical list.
- **Dining prefects:** Listed the boys and girls in alphabetical order. Chose the first boy and first girl on the alphabetical list.
- **Sports and Entertainment prefects:** Separately listed them alphabetically and chose first one from each list.
- **Non-prefect learners in Forms 4:**
Boys: Select the 15th and 30th boy from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 4 learners.
Girls: Select the 10th and 20th girl from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 4 learners.
- **Non-prefect learners in Forms 5:**
Boys: Select the 15th and 30th boy from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 5 learners.
Girls: Select the 10th and 20th girl from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 5 learners.
- **Head of department:** Chose any member to respond to the questionnaire.
- **Prefect advisors:** Chose the first two on the alphabetical list.
- **Other respondents:** The principal, the head-boy and the head-girl. In the absence of the principal, the deputy principal could be used.

NOTE: The learner respondents were assembled in a classroom at a convenient time. The other respondents were given the freedom to answer the questionnaire at their own convenient time but they were given a definite period, such as three days. All the respondents were supposed to return the completed questionnaires to the facilitator who, in turn, sent them back to the researcher.

The following instructions concerning the completion of questionnaire were given to them:

- ◆ They could use pen or pencil.
- ◆ They had to attempt all questions.
- ◆ If they did not understand anything they could ask the facilitator for clarification.
- ◆ No consultation was allowed.

It must be noted that the population of interest were the prefects because they represent the other learners in the matters concerning the management of the school. Provision was also made to represent the views of the non-prefect learners. The kind of balance between the prefects and the non-prefects will help to show if there is agreement or rift between the views of the two groups about their involvement in the management of schools.

The principals and teachers were included to confirm or contradict the views of the learners and prefects from a professional point of view. Where possible the gender ratio of the prefect advisors and heads of departments was balanced.

3.5.3 Dispatch of questionnaires

Each school was sent a “package” containing two separate envelopes.

Envelope 1 was addressed to the principal containing:

- the letter to the principal.
- a copy of the letter to the facilitator (for the principal’s information).
- the questionnaire to be completed by the principal.

Envelope 2 was addressed to the facilitator containing:

- the letter to him/her, giving all procedural information.
- the head of department and prefect advisors' questionnaires. The relevant cover letter was attached to each questionnaire.
- the prefect and non-prefect learners questionnaires. The relevant cover letter was attached to each questionnaire.
- two big envelopes with postal stamps already pasted on them and addressed to the researcher. The envelopes were used to send back the completed questionnaires to the researcher.

These two envelopes were contained in a bigger envelope that was addressed and dispatched to the principal.

3.6 Statistical techniques

The descriptive data was analysed by using a computer-aided statistical analysis programme. The analysis included frequency distribution, percentages, bar graphs, histograms and pie charts. The non-descriptive data was analysed by the researcher by categorising the responses that had similar meaning.

3.7 Pilot study

To realise validity and reliability, the author conducted a pilot study. Content validity seeks to establish that the items or questions are a well-balanced sample of the content domain to be measured (Oppenheim 1992: 162). Reliability means consistency. To ensure reliability the measuring instrument has to behave in a way that is consistent, so that a high proportion of the score on every occasion is due to the underlying scale variable, with a minimum of error. In other words, if there are differences between readings on the same instrument on two separate occasions, or when applied to two different objects or respondents, these must be genuine differences or changes in the subject of measurement - not differences which could be attributed to inconsistencies in

the measuring instrument or to changes in the attendant conditions (Oppenheim 1992: 159).

The desirability of a pilot study cannot be over-emphasised. Tuckman (1994: 235) expresses it succinctly:

It is usually highly desirable to run a pilot test on a questionnaire and to revise the questionnaire based on the results of the test. A pilot test, which uses a group of respondents who are part of the intended test population but who will not be part of the sample, attempts to determine whether questionnaire items possess the desired qualities of measurement and discriminability.

In view of the above advice a pilot study was conducted to field-test the questionnaire. According to Jones (in Moloko 1996: 93) a researcher can use one or both of the following methods:

- He may decide to submit his questionnaire to experts. These experts can then analyse the instrument, based upon their expertise and thereby imply its validity.
- A pilot study may be conducted. A major pre-test offers the advantage of being able to refine the techniques associated with the study and not just the questionnaire itself.

The researcher utilised both of the above-mentioned methods. The questionnaire was given to the researcher's study leaders and then pre-tested using a sample of three (3) heads of department, ten (10) prefects and six (6) non-prefect learners. It was not possible to use prefect advisors and a headgirl and a headboy (school prefects) because they were the only ones available and they were again needed in the actual survey.

A feedback form was attached to the questionnaire to enable the pilot study respondents to comment on the questionnaire. The respondents were asked the following questions (Bell 1987: 84):

- How long did it take you to complete the questionnaire?
- Were the instructions clear?
- Were any of the questions unclear? If so, which and why?
- Did you object to answering any of the questions?
- In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?
- Was the layout of the questionnaire clear and attractive?
- Any further comments?

After the pilot study, the responses were analysed and the observations considered with a view to minimising the areas that could invalidate the questionnaire. After this exercise the final questionnaire was set.

3.8 Cover letter

A questionnaire that is sent out to respondents must include a cover letter. Tuckman (1994: 242) states that a cover letter is a critical part of the initial mail because it must establish the legitimacy of the study and the respectability of the researcher. The cover letter should be brief but should focus on the following points:

- **The purpose of the study.** The cover letter should indicate the purpose and intentions of the study and allay the fears of the respondents that participation in the study will threaten their privacy or reputation.
- **The protection afforded the respondents.** The letter should indicate whether respondents are to identify themselves and, if so, how their identities and responses will be protected.
- **Endorsements of the study.** Because respondents will be more secure if they know that recognised institutions are conducting the study, university or agency letterheads should be used.

- **Legitimacy of the researcher.** The researcher should identify him/herself by name and position.
- **Request for co-operation.** The letter should constitute an appeal from the researcher for the co-operation of the respondents.
- **Special instructions.** The cover letter should contain general instructions regarding on-site procedures and deadline for return.

3.9 Follow-up strategies

Two disadvantages of the mailed questionnaire are usually a low rate of response and a lack of control over the time the questionnaire is completed (Bailey in Moloko 1996: 96). In the case of this questionnaire the researcher expected fewer such problems because he used contact persons to conduct the research at the school sites. However, the need for follow-ups was evident. This was done three weeks after the day of dispatching the questionnaires and was done by telephone.

3.10 Summary

This chapter contains an outline of the research methodology. The chapter indicated the aims of the research and the hypotheses that would be tested in chapter 4. The researcher discussed the advantages and the disadvantages of the questionnaire and opted to use the questionnaire method of gathering data because it suited his situation. The designing and the construction of the questionnaire items were done, followed by the formatting of the questionnaire. The population and the sample of the population that would be involved in the research were defined and the method of dispatching the questionnaires was identified. Regarding the method of analysing the data, the researcher decided to use a computer-aided statistical analysis formula. From the descriptive data, the analysis

would produce frequencies, percentages. The non-descriptive data would be analysed by the researcher.

In order to correct mistakes that the researcher might have overlooked, a pilot study was conducted so that the participants of the study could point out such mistakes or suggest ways of improving the questionnaire.

All the questionnaires were attached with a cover letter which explained what was expected of the respondents. Because the researcher feared that not all the respondents would return the questionnaires in time, a follow-up strategy was devised to ensure that most of the questionnaires were returned. The strategy was to telephone some of the respondents and in some cases the researcher travelled to meet the respondents to urge them to answer the questionnaire.

The foregoing exposition elucidates the methodology that would be used to determine the aspects in which and the extent to which the learners can participate in the management of schools. The data would also be used to determine how the training of the learners could improve the extent and quality of participation in aspects of school management so that good discipline can be realised in senior secondary schools of North Central District of Botswana.

In the following chapter 4 the researcher will present the data analysis and discussion of the findings. Finally, the analyses will also be used to provide answers to the hypotheses.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The results and interpretation of the empirical study are provided in this chapter based on a population sample of 32 teachers and 121 learners. The results are presented in table and narrative forms.

Through the use of the empirical study the researcher attempted to verify and compare the main issues that were raised in the previous chapters. The following are the issues that this chapter attempts to address (section 1.4, 3.1):

- In what aspects of school management can learners participate meaningfully?
- To what extent should learners be involved (i.e. participate) in the management aspects of the school?
- To what extent can the training of prefects improve the quality of participation of learners in management aspects of the school?

Through the use of the empirical study the researcher also tested the following hypotheses (section 3.2):

- (a) Official policy on learner participation in school management is only partly followed.
- (b) There is no consensus amongst stakeholders on the aspects of school management in which learners can meaningfully participate.
- (c) Principals and learners differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management.
- (d) Prefects are not trained in the basics of leadership and management.

The forthcoming sections include discussions about biographical data, research questions and the testing of the hypotheses. The chapter concludes with a brief summative overview.

4.2 Biographical data

4.2.1 Learners

There was a deliberate effort to balance the male-female ratio so that possibilities of bias based on gender could be reduced. As a result of this effort, there was indeed a gender balance amongst the learner respondents (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Biographical detail on the learners (n=121).

Gender distribution	f	%
Male	60	49.6
Female	60	49.6
Total	120	99.2
Distribution according to Form		
Form 5	88	72.7
Form 4	32	26.4
Total	120	99.1
Distribution according to positions		
Head-girl	8	6.6
Head-boy	7	5.8
Dining hall prefects	14	11.6
Hostel prefects	11	9.1
Sports prefects	6	5
Entertainment prefects	7	5.8
None of above	63	52.1
Unspecified	5	4.1
Total	121	100

How prefects gained their positions		
Elected by learners	27	22.3
Appointed by school head	3	2.5
Appointed by teachers	19	15.7
Unspecified	1	0.8
Total	71	58.7

There was no equal representation between the Form 5s and Form 4s because at the time of data collection the majority of the prefects were in Form 5. It was only amongst the non-prefect learners that both forms had equal representation. The distribution was, therefore, 72.7% Form 5s and 26.4 % Form 4s (Table 4.1). This made good sense because the Form 5s had been in the school for a longer time. Their experiences would have been more tested and reliable than the Form 4s who had been in the school for only two terms. However, it was still important to involve the Form 4s because they too have opinions about what is happening in the school although they may be based on experiences gained over a shorter period of time than the Form 5s.

Table 4.1 also shows the distribution of learner positions. The inclusion of the headboy and headgirl was important because they are the head representatives of the learners. By virtue of their positions they are the closest to the principal of the school. Their close association with the principal could have a positive or negative impact on their outlook on the principal and management style of the school. Their views are therefore important but they may be subjective. Taking their views separately might show bias that might be contrary to the views of the other prefects. It is also possible that the views of the prefects might be unanimous but contrary to the views of the non-prefect learners. It was for this reason that the prefect and non-prefect respondents were evenly represented so that agreements and disagreements could be reflected clearly.

The choice of dining hall prefects, hostel prefects, sports prefects and entertainment prefects was based on past experience that these prefects represent areas that are usually a source of complaints and strikes amongst the learners. For example, quite often learners

complain about food and hostel related matters. It was therefore important to include dining hall, hostel, sports and entertainment prefects.

Table 4.1 also indicates how the prefects gained their positions. It is noteworthy that the learners elected 54% of the prefects, 38% of the prefects were appointed by the teachers and 6% of them were appointed by the principal. Evidently learners are sometimes deprived of their right to participate in the choice of their leaders.

4.2.2 Teachers

The gender balance of the teachers was unequal because the choice of the respondents was based on their positions (prefect advisors, head of department or principal). The distribution was 75% male and 25% female (Table 4.2).

The distribution of the teacher respondents concerning length of stay in the school was such that 75% of the teachers had been in the school for more than two years (Table 4.2). The fact that the majority of the teachers had been in the school for a considerable time attributed to the trustworthiness of their responses.

Table 4.2: Biographical details of the teachers (n=32).

Gender distribution	f	%
Male	24	75
Female	8	25
Total	32	100
Length of stay in the school		
Less than 2 years	8	25
2-5 years	12	37.5
More than 5 years	12	37.5
Total	30	100

Distribution according to positions		
Prefect advisor	13	40.6
Head of department	9	28.1
Principal	8	25
Missing	2	6.3
Total	32	100
Length of service in a particular position		
Less than 2 years	14	43.8
2-5 years	10	31.3
More than 5 years	8	25
Total	32	100

According to the research design, two prefect advisors, one head of department and one principal per school participated. The distribution according to position is represented in Table 4.2. The representation of prefect advisors was high because these teachers are the mediators between the prefects and the principal and it was assumed they were most likely to know quite well how the school management and prefects work together.

The background data also indicates that 56.3% of the teachers had been in their positions for more than two years (Table 4.2). Their considerable experience in these positions could enable them to account reliably on matters of learner participation in the management of the school.

4.3 Research questions

4.3.1 In what aspects of school management can learners participate meaningfully?

Table 4.3 is a summary of the frequencies and the percentages of the responses on question 5 of the questionnaire. Question 5 contained a list of 26 management aspects in which learners could possibly participate.

It must be noted that there was no obvious difference between the responses of the prefects and non-prefects. The term "learners" in Table 4.3 and the discussion thereof will refer to the prefects and the non-prefects.

The term "teacher" includes the principals, prefect advisors and heads of department.

Table 4.3 indicates the view of the learners and the teachers that learners should **not** participate in the aspect of planning the budget. They also indicated hesitation about participation in the following aspects:

- Making of school rules and regulations.
- The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.
- Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.
- Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.
- Planning of school timetables and schedules.
- Appraisal of the teachers.
- Convening meetings with learners.
- Organising extramural activities.

These aspects indeed imply certain skills, such as accounting skills, legal and professional requirements which learners may not be conversant with.

It is however disconcerting that the teachers and the learners were hesitant about learner participation in the following aspects:

- Making of school rules and regulations.
- Planning of non-academic school timetables and schedules.
- Convening meetings with learners.
- Organising extramural activities.

If learners are not involved in the making of school rules and regulations, it will be difficult to expect the learners to co-operate and implement rules and regulations which were imposed on them without their input. Planning of non-academic school timetables and schedules also need the input of the learners. The learners could, for example, influence the length of entertainment time, time for rising from bed or going to bed. It is also difficult to organise extramural activities and convene meetings with learners without active participation of the learners. The above are aspects in which the learners are capable of participating meaningfully.

Table: 4.3: The highest frequencies and percentages of the responses to each aspect as responded by the learners and teachers.

Number representing aspect	Learner responses			Teacher responses		
	f	%	Responses	f	%	Responses
1	44	36.4	S	18	56.3	S
2	46	38	N	16	50	S
3	59	48.8	A	14	43.8	O
4	56	46.3	A	15	46.9	A
5	84	69.4	A	21	65.6	A
6	80	66.1	A	21	65.6	A
7	47	38.8	S	15	46.9	S
8	35	28.9	S	16	50	S
9	59	48.8	N	20	62.5	S
10	72	59.5	N	13	40.6	N
11	57	47.1	A	17	53.1	A
12	79	65.3	A	16	50	A
13	72	59.5	A	21	65.6	A
14	94	77.7	A	25	78.1	A
15	36	29.8	O	9	28.1	A
16	41	33.9	S	15	46.9	S
17	44	36.4	A	15	46.9	O
18	53	43.8	S	15	46.9	O
19	40	33.1	S	14	43.8	A
20	39	32.2	A	17	53.1	O
21	65	53.7	A	21	65.6	A
22	73	60.3	A	20	62.5	A
23	44	36.4	A	11	34.4	A
24	83	68.6	A	19	59.4	A
25	54	44.6	A	12	37.5	O

26	67	55.4	A	14	43.8	A
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Key:

A= Always

O= Often

S= Sometimes

N= Never

Note: Always and Often were treated as positive responses. Sometimes and Never were treated as negative responses.

Table 4.3 indicates 17 aspects of school management in which learners, according to learners and teachers alike, can participate meaningfully (indicated by A or O by both respondents). It is understandable that learners should participate in these aspects because the learners pass *the test of relevancy* which states that those learners who have interest in or are concerned about the problem should be involved (2.3.2). For example, the learners are normally interested in the kind of entertainment or food that will be provided to them. The learners should also be concerned about matters of AIDS, violence, vandalism, how conflict is resolved, selection of prefects, school discipline and other issues that are indicated in Table 4.3.

The learners also seem to pass *the test of expertise* to some extent. The test of expertise refers to the degree to which a team member possesses the expertise or qualification to make a useful contribution to an improved decision, or solution of the problem (2.3.2). It is quite clear that the learners can make a useful contribution to an improved decision on matters such as the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared, entertainment for the learners, and reducing violence and vandalism in school. The learners can also make a useful contribution to improved solutions of problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancies, conflict in school, organising fundraising activities, abiding by the dress code, selection of prefects and other aspects listed in Table 4.3.

Learner involvement in the above 17 aspects passes both the *test of relevancy* and *test of expertise* which put them outside the *zone of acceptance* (2.3.2, Figure 2.1). This result confirms that there can be no doubt about the ability of the learners to participate in the mentioned aspects.

The desire of learners to participate in most management aspects coincides with literature findings that learners are capable of participating in many of the aspects in school management (2.4.2).

4.3.2 To what extent could learners participate in the management aspects of the senior secondary school?

The following table and discussion will attempt to establish the extent to which the teachers and the learners agree that the learners could or could not participate in the management aspects of the schools. The table is based on the data in Table 4.3.

Table 4.4: The extent to which learners could participate in school management aspects.

Key: ✓ = teachers

✗ = learners

Aspects in which learners could participate	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. Making of school rules and regulations.			✓ ✗	
2. The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.			✓	✗
3. Decisions on the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared.	✗	✓		
4. Decisions on entertainment for the learners.	✓ ✗			
5. Decisions on reducing violence.	✓ ✗			
6. Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.	✓ ✗			

7. Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.			✓ X	
8. Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.			✓ X	
9. Planning of school timetables and schedules.			✓	X
10. Planning the budget.				✓ X
11. Efforts of resolving conflict in the school such as strikes.	✓ X			
12. Efforts of motivating fellow learners.	✓ X			
13. Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.	✓ X			
14. Matters of learners' welfare, e.g. HIV/AIDS education and control of drug/alcohol abuse and pregnancies.	✓ X			
15. Appraisal of the learners.	✓	X		
16. Appraisal of the teachers.			✓ X	
17. Regular consultation with the principal on matters of learner concern.	X	✓		
18. Convening meetings with learners.		✓	X	
19. Organising extramural activities.	✓		X	
20. Organising of fundraising projects.	X	✓		
21. The efforts of ensuring that all the learners abide by the dress code.	✓ X			
22. Selection of prefects in any section of the school.	✓ X			
23. The demotion of prefects in any section of the school.	✓ X			
24. The production of a school magazine.	✓ X			
25. Functioning of the disciplinary committee.	X	✓		
26. The functioning of guidance and counselling team.	✓ X			
Frequency of unanimous agreement between learners and teachers on the extent of involvement.	12	0	4	1

In the following 12 instances the learners and the teachers unanimously agree that the learners should **always** participate.

- Decisions on entertainment for the learners.
- Decisions on reducing violence.
- Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.
- Efforts of resolving conflict in the school such as strikes.
- Efforts of motivating fellow learners.
- Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.
- Matters of learners' welfare, e.g. HIV/AIDS education and control of drugs/alcohol abuse and pregnancies.
- The efforts of ensuring that all the learners abide by the dress code.
- Selection of prefects in any section of the school.
- The demotion of prefects in any section of the school.
- The production of school magazine.
- The functioning of guidance and counselling team.

In addition to the 12 instances, there are the following five instances where both learners and teachers also give positive responses (by indicating either **always** or **often**).

- Decisions on the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared.
- Appraisal of the learners.
- Regular consultation with the principal on matters of learner concern.
- Organising of fundraising projects.
- Functioning of the disciplinary committee.

There are therefore 17 out of 26 aspects in which the learners and the teachers agree that learners should participate in the management of the school (Table 4.3).

There are four aspects on which the learners and the teachers agree that the learners should **sometimes** participate.

- Making of school rules and regulations.
- Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.

- Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.
- Appraisal of the teachers.

Specifically, the teachers and the learners agree that learners should **sometimes** participate in the making of school rules and regulations. This response relates well with the experiences of other schools (2.3.5.2) that it is not necessary that learners should always participate in all the processes of making school rules and regulations. It is, however, surprising that learners are not interested in always participating in a process that determines to a great extent how a school will be managed. Learners and teachers seem to realise that some rules and regulations are imposed on them from the education headquarters such as ministries of education (2.2.5.1 and 4.4). In such cases there is usually no room for stakeholders at a local level to alter the rules and regulations. This is common in education systems that are highly centralised.

The learners and the teachers agree that the learners should **sometimes** participate in the decisions on the suspension and expulsion of the learners (Table 4.4). Teachers' willingness to allow the learners to participate in this aspect might be indicative of a concern that suspensions and expulsions are sometimes effected without considering the views of the learners. Learners must apparently sometimes be given the chance to present their viewpoints before crucial decisions such as on suspensions and expulsions, are taken.

The learners and the teachers agree that the learners should **sometimes** participate in monitoring the implementation of management decisions. These views make sense because some of the management decisions will directly affect the learners or indeed the decisions may require that the learners should be the ones to implement them. In such a situation the learners should participate in the monitoring of the implementation.

It is believed that learners can tell whether a teacher is carrying out his or her duties of teaching well or not. The responses, indeed, indicate that the teachers and the learners feel that the learners should **sometimes** participate in the appraisal of the teachers.

Evidently, learners cannot appraise teachers on all aspects of their profession because some aspects require expertise that learners may not have. Learners can appraise teachers on aspects such as the following: Do they mark assignments? Do they come on time to class? Do they administer punishments without favour and fairly and do they refrain from using abusive language? These are aspects that the principal may never know about if the learners are not involved. These are issues about which the school management in the researchers' school usually complain and it is likely that other schools too have similar problems.

There is one aspect in which, according to the learners and teachers' view, learners should **never** participate. Planning the school budget is not easy and it is most likely beyond the comprehension and ability of the learners. It makes sense that the teachers and the learners feel that the learners should **never** participate in this aspect.

There are four aspects about which the learners have different views from the teachers concerning the extent of involvement, viz.:

- The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.
- Planning of school timetables and schedules.
- Convening meetings with learners.
- Organising extramural activities.

There was a strong opinion from the learners that they should **never** participate in the choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school (Table 4.4). This view contradicts with the literature findings which encouraged learner participation in curricular aspects (Figure 2.2, Table 2.3). A possible reason for their unwillingness to participate could be that they feel inadequate to contribute anything meaningful to the curriculum. Another possible reason could be that the learners have so much faith in the teachers and others who are responsible for designing the curriculum that the learners believe that all their interests will be taken care of. On the other hand the teachers feel that learners should **sometimes** participate in this aspect. It is noteworthy that the

teachers feel the learners have something to contribute in the choice of the curriculum. This could indicate genuine faith in the ability of the learners or lack of confidence amongst the teachers themselves as to whether they are choosing the best curriculum for the learners without the learners' participation.

The learners feel very strongly that they should **never** participate in planning of school timetables and schedules whilst the teachers feel that the learners should **sometimes** participate in this aspect (Table 4.4). It is not clear why the learners do not want to participate in this aspect. One would have expected a higher extent of participation because scheduling affects them directly. For example, lack of participation in planning of timetables and schedules could possibly result in little time for entertainment or recreation or very long study periods. If the learners are unhappy about these schedules they could possibly cause discipline problems.

It is not quite clear why the learners feel that they should only **sometimes** participate in convening meetings. The teachers feel that the learners should **often** participate in this aspect. A similar situation concerns organising extramural activities. The learners feel that they should **sometimes** participate and the teachers feel learners should **always** participate. It is surprising that the learners do not always seem interested in participating in aspects that would affect them directly. Possible reasons for their reluctance to participate fully could be lack of confidence in their capability to convene and conduct meetings, as well as their organising skills.

In summary, the respondents (teachers and learners alike) agree that the following items are issues that are not important for the learners to participate in:

- Making of school rules and regulations.
- The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.
- Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.
- Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.
- Planning of school timetables and schedules.

- Planning the budget.
- Appraisal of the teachers.

There are yet two more items about which the respondents differ. The learners consider the following aspects as not important to participate in, whilst the teachers consider learner participation as important:

- Convening meetings with learners.
- Organising extramural activities.

In general, Table 4.4 indicates that the majority of both the learners and the teachers would like a high extent of participation in most of the aspects of school management.

4.3.2.1 Disparities in the opinions of principals and teachers

The following items were chosen for closer examination because they showed disparities between the responses of the principals and the teachers. It was regarded as important to find out why the two groups of professionals, who are supposed to complement each other, have differences in opinions about the aspects as indicated in Table 4.5. The term “teacher” refers to the prefect advisors and the heads of department.

Table 4.5: Disparities in responses of principals and teachers.

Item 1: Making of school rules and regulations	Positive	Negative	Missing	Total
Principals	62.5%	37.5%		100%
Teachers	25%	62.5%	12.5%	100%
Item 15: Appraisal of learners				
Principals	37.5%	62.5%		100%
Teachers	54.2%	37.5%	8.3%	100%

Item 25: Functioning of disciplinary committee				
Principals	37.5%	62.5%		100%
Teachers	66.7%	25%	8.3%	100%

Table 4.5 indicates that 62.5% of the principals feel that learners can participate in the making of school rules and regulations whilst 62.5 % of the teachers feel that they should not participate. It is likely that the general trend of educational institutions moving towards more democratic management systems has influenced principals more than teachers. It is understandable that when new systems are introduced the principals are likely the first people to know about them because they are the leaders. In this case the principals seem to understand that the learners ought to be involved but the teachers do not believe that learners should be involved in the process of making school rules and regulations.

Table 4.5 indicates that 62.5% of the principals believe that learners should not be involved in the appraisal of fellow learners whilst 54.2 % of the teachers believe that they should be involved. It is rather difficult to explain why principals do not want the learners to be involved in the appraisal of fellow learners whilst the teachers want them to be involved. The probable answer could be that the teachers who are much closer to the learners appreciate better that they are capable of appraising each other. The principals tend to have little interaction with the majority of the learners. As a result of poor knowledge of the learners, perhaps they do not believe that the learners can participate meaningfully in appraising fellow learners.

Table 4.5 indicates that 62.5% of the principals feel that learners should not participate in the functioning of the disciplinary committee whilst 66.6% of the teachers feel that the learners should participate. Disciplinary committees usually do not include principals because they are usually very busy and cannot be expected to sit on this committee which has to deal with so many cases almost on a regular basis. As a result of their exclusion, principals probably do not quite appreciate how valuable the involvement of the learners can be in the functioning of the disciplinary committees. Prefect advisors and heads of

department are likely to be involved with the disciplinary committees and they probably appreciate the value of involving learners. This is perhaps the explanation why they feel that learners should be involved in the functioning of the disciplinary committees.

It may be difficult to establish exactly how non-participation of the learners in the above aspects can negatively affect the school but it is probable that the learners could react negatively. The negative reaction could also come from the teachers because they may feel that the principal is doing the wrong thing and should not be supported. It is therefore important that the principals and the teachers should reach a common ground so that they can, in a united way, support the ideals of the school.

4.3.2.2 The general level of learner participation in school management

The following tables and discussion will attempt to establish the level of participation that the learners could be expected to participate in the school management. It is important to establish this so that all the stakeholders have the same expectations of the extent of participation in the management of the school.

It must be noted that there was no obvious difference between the responses of the prefects and non-prefects. The term "learners" in this discussion will therefore refer to the prefects and the non-prefects. The term "teacher" includes the principals, prefect advisors and department heads.

Table 4.6: Level of learner participation in the management of their school.

Teacher responses (n=32)	Pos/Neg.	f	%
Noparticipation	Negative	12	37.5
Rarely participate			
Frequently	Positive	19	59.4
Always			

Learner responses (n=121)			
No participation	Negative	65	53.7
Rarely participate			
Frequently	Positive	52	43
Always			

Table 4.6 indicates that 53.7% of the learners feel that they do not participate meaningfully in the management of the school whilst the majority of the teachers (59.4%) feel that learners do participate in the management of the school.

The views of the learners in Table 4.6 correspond with those in Table 4.7 which indicate that 56.7% of the learners **disagree** that they are sufficiently involved in the management of the school. It is noteworthy that a substantial number of the teachers (43.8% in Table 4.7) also **disagree** that the learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school.

Table 4.7 indicates that 56.3% of the teachers are satisfied that the learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school whilst 56.7% of the learners are not satisfied. The learners have consolidated their view because in Table 4.6, 53.7% of them indicated that the general level of learner participation in the management of the school is low.

Based on Tables 4.6, the findings suggest that the learners believe that the general level of learner participation in the management of the schools is low whilst the teachers believe it is reasonably high.

Table 4.7 : I am satisfied that the learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school.

Teacher responses	Agree/Dis	f	%	Valid %
Strongly agree	Agree	18	56.3	56.3
Agree				

Strongly disagree Disagree	Disagree	14	43.8	43.8
Learner responses				
Strongly agree Agree	Agree	51	42.2	43.2
Strongly disagree Disagree	Disagree	67	55.4	56.7

Literature sources cited in section 2.4.1d indicate that there is a clear relationship between learners' participation in aspects of school management and sound discipline. The teacher responses seem to confirm this relationship because 56.3% of them are satisfied with the level of participation of the learners (Table 4.7) and 68.8% of them also believe that the general level of the discipline is sound (Table 4.8).

The learner response in Table 4.8 indicates that the majority agrees that the general level of the discipline in the school is sound whilst they disagree that learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school (Tables 4.8, 4.7 respectively). This appears to be a contradiction because, according to literature sources, it is inconsistent that one would have high level of participation and a low level of discipline. A possible explanation for this inconsistency could be that learners and teachers have a different perception of discipline.

Table 4.8: I believe that the general level of the discipline in the school is sound.

Teacher responses	Agree/Dis	f	%	Valid %
Strongly agree Agree	Agree	22	68.8	68.8
Strongly disagree Disagree	Disagree	10	31.3	31.3

Learner responses				
Strongly agree	Agree	67	55.3	57.3
Agree				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	50	41.3	42.8
Disagree				

The discussion of Tables 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, indicates that the views of the teachers suggest that the general level of learner participation in the management of their schools is reasonably high. The views of the learners in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 suggest that the general level of learner participation in the management of their schools is rather low. This is, to some extent, contradicted by the view in Table 4.8 which indicates that the majority of the learners (57.3%) believe that the general level of discipline in their schools is sound.

4.3.2.3 The ideal extent of learner participation in school management decision-making

It must be noted that there was no obvious difference between the responses of the prefects and non-prefects. The term "learners" in this discussion will therefore refer to the prefects and the non-prefects. The term "teacher" includes the principals, prefect advisors and department heads.

In this questionnaire item the options were:

- The learners must approve all management decisions.
- Learners should be excluded from decision-making which requires professional expertise.
- I don't mind whether the learners participate in decision-making or not.

Table 4.9: Ideal extent of learner participation in decision-making: Teacher and learner responses.

Extent of participation	f		%	
	T	L	T	L
Learner approval	6	44	19	36
Excluding learners	16	49	50	41
Don't mind	6	17	19	14
Total	28	110	88	91
Missing	4	11	13	9.1
Total	32	121	100	100

Key: T= Teacher

L= Learner

Teacher responses as indicated in Table 4.9 indicate that the majority of them (50%) are of the opinion that learners should be excluded from decision-making which requires professional expertise. This view is shared by 41% of the learners (Table 4.9). It should be noted that a substantial number of the learners (36%) feel that the learners must approve all management decisions.

As indicated in Table 4.9, 19% of the teachers and 14% of the learners, don't mind whether the learners participate in decision-making or not. These two groups could be representing learners and teachers who are not directly interested in school management issues.

In sum: The teachers have clear views that the learners should participate in some of the school management decisions. The learners are somewhat divided between the view that the learners must approve all the decisions and that they should be excluded from decisions that require professional expertise. Overall there is reasonable agreement that the learners must participate only in some of the decision-making. This view confirms what was stated in section 2.3.5.2, namely that partial participation of learners in school

management decision-making is the best for schools. Learners must be involved gradually and in the process be helped to understand the complexities of issues beyond their present experience to enable them to participate more fully.

4.3.2.4 The extent to which the participation of learners in aspects of school management can be helpful or detrimental

This was an open-ended item. Responses which were frequently made formed the basis for categorising the rest of the responses. The frequencies are presented in Table 4.10.

The term "learners" in this question and the discussion thereof will refer to the prefects and the non-prefects. It must be noted that there was no obvious difference between the responses of the prefects and non-prefects. The term "teacher" refers to the principals, prefect advisors and heads of department.

The numbers in brackets are percentages worked out of the total number of respondents.

Table 4.10: Ways in which the participation of learners in school management can be helpful or detrimental.

Ways in which participation of the learners can be helpful.	Learners (121)		Teachers (32)	
		%		%
1. Learners will be able to voice their concerns.	27	22	6	18.8
2. Will help learners abide by the rules/regulations.	18	14.8	15	46.9
3. Learners will be able to give solutions /ideas to some problems/issues.	31	25.6	0	0
4. Will reduce crime, vandalism and strikes.	26	21.5	0	0
5. Will promote unity and mutual understanding in the school.	19	15.7	0	0

6. Will teach the learners life-long skills of management.	6	4.9	6	18.8
7 Will reduce conflict between learners and teachers/management.	7	5.8	0	0
8. Will provide the learners with understanding of difficult management situations.	2	1.7	4	12.5
9. Will enable prefects to communicate well with fellow learners concerning issues from school management.	2	1.7	0	0
10. Will help in areas like fundraising.	2	1.7	0	0
11. Learners will know what is expected of them.	2	1.7	0	0
12. Will give learners confidence in how the school is managed.	1	0.8	0	0
Ways in which participation of the learners can be detrimental				
1. Learners will expect/demand too much.	5	4	5	15.6
2. It will not help because learners are playful and do not take things seriously.	4	3.3	0	0
3. Will cause them to strike.	3	2.5	0	0

It must be noted that some of the respondents did not attempt the question. Others gave irrelevant responses and these were discarded. It is disconcerting that learner respondents came up with 12 ways (1-12) in which their participation can be helpful whilst teacher respondents came up with only four ways (1,2,6 and 8). The teachers' low response rate somehow contradicts their opinions about wanting the learners to participate to a high extent in many aspects of school management (Tables 4.3 and 4.4).

Relatively larger percentages of the learners considered their participation in the issues as represented by items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as helpful. It is disconcerting that no teacher respondent was of the view that learner participation could enable the learners to give solutions/ideas to some problems/issues, could reduce crime, vandalism and strikes and could promote unity and mutual understanding in the schools.

Almost half of the teacher respondents (46.9%) expressed the opinion that the participation of the learners can be helpful in that it will help learners abide by the rules/regulations. Only in this case, the response percentage was substantial.

Concerning aspects in which learner participation can be detrimental according to respondent views, teachers indicated that learners will expect/demand too much. The learners indicated the following items as aspects with possible detrimental consequences if learners participate in the management of the school:

- Learners will expect/demand too much.
- It will not help because learners are playful and do not take things seriously.
- Participation will cause them to strike.

Table 4.10 substantiates what was discussed in section 2.4.1(d) with regard to how school management can benefit if learners are involved in some aspects of the school management. The views were expressed that the school would benefit in that crime, strikes and vandalism would reduce, learners would abide by school rules and regulations, there would be more mutual trust between the learners and the school management, and this would improve unity, communication, and the desire to work hard for the ideals of the school.

4.3.3 The extent to which training of prefects can improve the quality of learner participation in management aspects of the school

For the purposes of the following discussion, the term “teacher” includes the principals, prefect advisors and heads of department.

The following Table 4.11 will show how the prefects and teachers view the training and guidance provided to prefects and Table 4.12 will show the levels of involvement and understanding as viewed by the teachers and prefects respectively.

Table 4.11: Prefect and teacher views on training and guidance provided to prefects.

Item	T=Teacher P=Prefects	Agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%
When the prefects were elected their duties were well explained to them.	T	27	90	3	10	30	100
	P	54	94.8	3	5.3	57	100
Enough training/guidance was provided on leadership and management.	T	16	53.3	14	46.7	30	100
	P	51	91.1	5	8.9	56	100
The training/guidance gave the prefects confidence to participate in aspects of school management.	T	15	50	15	50	30	100
	P	48	87.3	7	12.7	55	100
The involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school has helped to improve discipline in the school.	T	21	70	9	30	30	100
	P	43	75.4	14	24.6	57	100

The data in Table 4.11 indicates that the majority of the prefect and teacher respondents **agree** with the statements. For example, 90% of the teachers and 94.8% of the prefects **agree** that the duties of the prefects were well explained to the prefects. It is rather worrying that only 53.3% of the teachers state that enough training/guidance was provided on leadership and management, whilst 91.1% of the prefects state that guidance was provided. A substantial number (46.7%) of the teachers as the providers of the training **disagree** with the statement. From the teachers' perspective the training is indeed deficient in important aspects. A similar situation also exists where 87.3% of the prefects **agree** that the guidance they received gave them confidence to participate in aspects of school management, whilst 50% of the teachers **disagree**. If 50% of the teachers feel that the training did not give the prefects confidence, then perhaps it is an indication that the training is deficient in some important aspects. The majority of the teachers and the prefects **agree** that the involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school has helped to improve discipline in the school. In general the

responses give the impression that the training/guidance of the prefects is done to a satisfying degree.

Table 4.12: The level of prefects' managerial involvement as viewed by teachers compared to the level of prefects' managerial understanding as viewed by prefects.

Item	T=Teacher P=Prefect	Agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%
The involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school is high.	T	19	63.3	11	36.7	30	100
The guidance I received helped me to Understand how the school is managed.	P	48	85.7	8	14.3	56	100

The implication that training and guidance of the prefects is done satisfactorily is also confirmed by the responses from the prefects and teachers in Table 4.12. The responses of the prefects in Table 4.12 indicate that the guidance the majority of the prefects (85.7%) received helped them to understand how the school is managed. This fact is complimented by the teachers (63.3%) who observe that the involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school is high. The explanation could be that the high involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school was facilitated by the training and guidance they received which helped them to understand how the school is managed.

Table 4.13: Teacher and learner views on the performance of the prefects.

	T=Teachers L=Learners	Agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%
The learners frequently meet prefects to discuss matters of concern.	T	21	65.7	11	34.4	32	100
	L	70	59.3	48	40.7	118	100
The prefects are doing a good job representing the interests of the learners.	T	23	71.9	9	28.1	32	100
	L	75	64.6	41	35.4	116	100

The impression that the prefects are trained well is supported by additional responses from the learners and the teachers. In Table 4.13, 65.7% of the teachers and 59.3% of the learners **agree** that the learners frequently meet prefects to discuss matters of concern. The majority of the teachers (71.9%) and learners (64.6%) **agree** that the prefects are doing a good job representing the interests of the learners.

If the training of prefects is done properly, this should largely translate into successful prefects who understand how the school is managed and who have high involvement in the management of the school (Table 4.12). In return, this should have a positive impact on the discipline of the schools. Indeed, the responses to the last item in Table 4.11 indicate that the teachers and prefects are satisfied with the general level of the discipline in the schools and that the involvement of prefects has helped to improve discipline in the schools.

Based on the above responses, it can be stated that the training and guidance of prefects could improve the quality of the learner participation in management aspects of the school to a considerable extent (2.3.4.2).

4.3.3.1 Perspective on the opinions of the principals and the teachers on the training and guidance of prefects

It often happens that the opinions of the principal could be different from those of the teachers. Table 4.14 reflects the opinions of the principals and the teachers on the following statement: Enough training/guidance was provided on leadership and management. In this section the term “teacher” refers to the prefect advisors and the heads of department.

Table 4.14: A comparison of the opinions of the principals and the teachers on whether prefects are provided with enough training and guidance on leadership and management.

	Agree	Disagree	Missing	Total
Principals	75% (6)	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)	100 % (8)
Teachers	37.5% (8)	50% (12)	12.5% (3)	100% (24)

Table 4.14 shows that 50% of the teachers **disagree** with the statement that enough training/guidance was provided to the prefects on leadership and management. Seventy five percent of the principals **agree** with the statement. The fact that 50% of the teachers disagree with the statement could be an indication of some deficiencies in the content or method of training the learners. The views of these teachers, who could also be contributors to the training process, cannot be taken lightly because they are in a better position than principals to judge the efficiency of the training.

4.3.3.2 Suggestions regarding the orientation and training of prefects to equip them for meaningful participation in management aspects of the school

This was an open-ended item. Responses that were frequently made formed the basis for categorising the rest of the responses.

The term “teacher” includes the principals, prefect advisors and heads of department.

Responses to this item indicate a common view that there is a pertinent need to equip prefects so that they can meaningfully participate in management aspects of the school. Most of the respondents seem to be of the view that the prefects can be equipped by offering them training through workshops.

Although there is a common view on the need for training, there are varying views about how the training programme should be done: Who should do the training, what the training should contain and what should be done to ensure that the training is successful. Table 4.15 indicates respondent suggestions on how school authorities and other interested bodies can equip prefects so that they can meaningfully participate in management aspects of the school.

Table 4.15: Suggestions regarding the orientation and training of prefects.

Suggested item	Prefects	Teachers	Total
Make assessments of the workshops/training and provide refreshing workshops.	1	11	12
In addition to workshops/training, handouts should be given.	4	6	10
Workshops should provide for leadership, motivation, communication skills, assertiveness, case studies and decision-making.	0	8	8
Aspects of involvement, the powers and limitations of the prefects, chain of communication and school rules and regulations should be made clear to the prefects.	3	4	7
Outgoing prefects should also be resource persons to the workshops.	6	0	6
Orientation should include the input of guidance and counselling departments.	0	6	6
In addition to workshops, prefects need to be supported and empowered to be effective.	0	5	5
The prefects should be warned that they must themselves be disciplined.	5	0	5
Resource persons to conduct the workshops should be experts in the field.	0	4	4

Incoming prefects should first understudy the outgoing prefects.	0	3	3
The prefects should be given orientation on problems/challenges the school faces so that the prefects can appreciate them.	1	0	1
Orientation should include the discipline of keeping confidential information to themselves.	1	0	1

Table 4.15 suggests, in order of frequency, what aspects should be included in the training the prefects. It can be noticed that the elements the prefects want to be included in the training programme are in most cases different from the ones indicated from various literature sources cited in section 2.3.4.2. For example, the literature cited in this section recommends that the prefects should be trained in techniques such as brainstorming, group discussion, counselling, problem solving, interpersonal relations, communication skills, management skills, leadership theories and styles, and leadership practices. The difference between these two sets of recommendations is that those of the prefects are more specific whilst those from literature are rather general and need interpretation into the specific. For example, one would have to interpret what *management skills* entail. It should be noted that some of the responses from the teachers were also specific although others were the same as those cited in section 2.3.4.2. For example, teacher respondents indicated that the workshop should include leadership, motivation, communication skills, assertiveness and decision-making. No prefect mentioned these. Eleven teacher respondents indicated that follow-ups and assessments of the workshops should be done. Only one prefect mentioned the need for follow-ups and assessments of the workshops.

There are three cases in which the prefects and the teachers share the same suggestion. They agree that:

- (a) Assessments of the workshops/training should be made and refresher workshops should be provided.
- (b) In addition to workshops/training, handouts should be given.

(c) Aspects of involvement, the powers and limitations of the prefects, chain of communication and schools rules and regulations should be made clear to the students.

Perhaps this is an indication that these items are indeed considered very important by both groups for inclusion in the training programme.

It should be recalled that the majority of learners and the teachers indicated elsewhere (Table 4.11) that sufficient training and guidance was provided on leadership and management for the prefects. Yet they have also indicated aspects that they would like included in the programme (Table 4.15). The fact that they were satisfied with the training of the prefects may imply that the majority of the aspects indicated in 2.3.4.2 were covered in their training but it presumably omitted some specific aspects. Therefore the aspects in Table 4.15 could be the ones that are omitted and could make the training programme more specific and complete, and make prefects' participation in the management of the school more meaningful.

To ensure that the training process covers all the necessary content and includes all the people who should be involved, the content must be included in the main curriculum of the school. This is also important because it will be a more sure way of training democratic leaders who will be better prepared to assume leadership roles.

To complement the general leadership training indicated above, the role of school authorities and other interested bodies in equipping prefects for meaningful participation in management aspects of the school is to ascertain that aspects which could be relevant and specific to a particular locality are included. Issues concerning culture, politics, social and economic status of the community could be considered in order to design a training programme and content that will be meaningful to the school.

4.4 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

On the basis of the discussions in chapters 1 and 2, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Official policy on learner participation in school management is only partly followed.

The official policy (Ministry of Education 1995b: 2) states that:

A prefect system with supervisory powers shall be maintained. Initially students shall propose the prefects but final refinement and approval shall be done by the teachers and the boarding staff. The duties of prefects shall be principally to supervise, monitor and administer the general duties assigned to students in the whole school.

The same policy also specifies that learners will be involved in the proposing of the menu, choosing of the colour and pattern of their school uniform and in the formation of school rules (Ministry of Education 1995b: 3, 4).

It is noticeable that there is inconsistency in the policy. The policy states that the duties of prefects will be *supervisory*. In paragraph 2.4 of the above official policy, it states that:

- *Students shall be involved in proposing the school menu, guided by guidelines from the Ministry of Education (2.4.1).*
- *Students shall be involved and the PTA shall be consulted in the formation of school rules (2.4.3).*
- *Students, teachers and parents shall also be involved in choosing the colour and pattern of their school uniform (2.4.5).*

The meaning of *supervisory* seems to imply little involvement. For instance, according to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987: 1062, 13), *supervise* means to keep watch over a job or activity or the people doing it. The meaning does not imply that the supervisor will him/herself be actively involved in the task. The policy also states that the prefects shall also *administer*. The term *administer* means to manage or direct. The meaning of *administer* implies more responsibility and active involvement than the meaning of *supervise*. The inconsistency in the use of terms may confuse the school managers about what the terms *supervise* and *administer* actually mean and this can cause them not to act as intended by the official policy.

The policy indicates only three aspects in which the learners can be involved (2.4.1, 2.4.3, and 2.4.5). The school managers are likely to face pressure from the learners who would want participation in more aspects. The school managers could be uncertain about whether to allow learner participation in more aspects or not because the policy is silent on this.

The intention of the policy seems not to involve the prefects meaningfully in many aspects of management. The Education Act: Chapter 58:01 (Botswana Government, 1978) seems to confirm this view because it does not make any reference to learner involvement in school management aspects. It should, however, be mentioned that the Report of the National Commission on Education (Botswana Government 1993: 370) recommends that "the process of decision-making should be devolved to the level of those affected by them". This appears to be an indication of a greater willingness to involve the learners in school management aspects.

It is also noticeable that the policy is not clear about the extent of involvement in the aspects it mentions above. This probably creates dilemmas for the school managers as to what extent they should or should not involve the learners.

Table 4.7 indicates that the majority of teachers (56.3%) were satisfied that the learners were sufficiently involved in the management of the school whereas the majority of the

learners (56.7 %) were not satisfied that the learners were sufficiently involved. This contradiction can be regarded as an indication that the official policy on learner participation is only partly followed. If the policy were fully followed the positive responses of the teachers and the learners would probably have been congruent and stronger. It should be noted that the lack of defining the level of involvement might partly be responsible for the official policy being partly followed.

The policy is quite clear about how prefects should be elected but the practice in the school is different. For example, learners are normally only supposed to propose names of prefects. They should not be involved in the final choice of the prefects as the “final refinement and approval shall be done by the teachers and the boarding staff” (Ministry of Education, December 1995b: 2). Table 4.1 indicates that learners elected (the term *elected* understood to mean that the teachers did not censor the list of prefects elected) 54% of the prefects. This is violation of the above policy. This non-compliance of the policy demonstrates that it is partly followed.

Considering the information discussed above, the hypothesis is accepted that the official policy on learner participation in school management is only partly followed.

Hypothesis 2: There is no consensus amongst stakeholders on the aspects of school management in which learners can meaningfully participate.

The responses recorded in Table 4.4 indicate that there are 12 aspects on which the teachers and the learners agree that the learners should **always** participate. There are four aspects on which the stakeholders agree that the learners should **sometimes** participate. This represents relative agreement on the aspects in which learners can meaningfully participate. The hypothesis is thus rejected.

Hypothesis 3: Principals and learners differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management.

The following discussion concerns the extent to which learners can participate in school management as viewed by the principals and the learners.

Table 4.16: The extent to which learners can participate in school management: dichotomised responses of principals and learners.

RESPONSES BY PRINCIPALS		RESPONSES BY LEARNERS
Code numbers of aspects	Extent to which learners can participate	Extent to which learners can participate
	Positive	Positive
× 1	62.5%	46.2%
2	25%	40.3%
3	75%	66.1%
4	75%	67.3%
5	100%	84.2%
6	100%	79.2%
7	37.5%	23.5%
8	12.5%	40.2%
9	37.5%	26.7%
10	37.5%	19.8%
11	62.5%	67.8%
12	87.5%	86.7%
13	75%	82.2%
14	100%	88.2%
× 15	37.5%	59.1%
16	25%	39.3%
17	75%	60.8%
18	62.5%	52.1%
19	75%	55.2%
20	87.5%	60%

21	75%	77.6%
22	87.5%	75.6%
23	50%	42%
24	87.5%	83.3%
✕ 25	37.5%	71.7%
26	87.5%	78.5%

✕ represents aspects in which the principals and the learners have indicated significantly different extents of participation.

The code numbers of aspects represent aspects in question 5 of the questionnaire (refer Table 4.4). The term “learners” includes the prefects and non-prefects.

Table 4.16 indicates three aspects on which the principals and the learners differ significantly on the extent of participation (one of the responses is more than 50% and the other one is less than 50%). These are items 1, 15 and 25. The respondents indicated 16 aspects on which they expressed relatively stronger support that learners should participate. These are items 3, 4, 5, 6, 11,12, 13, 14,17, 18,19,20, 21, 22, 24 and 26 (responses are more than 50%). The principals and the learners indicated less support for learner participation in the following aspects: 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 23 (responses are less than 50%). The principals and learners seem to be in relative agreement on learner participation in 22 out of 26 items which calculates to 84.6%.

Based on the data presented above, the hypothesis that the principals and the learners differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management is thus rejected.

Hypothesis 4: Prefects are not trained in the basics of leadership and management.

The findings recorded in Table 4.15 indicate what the prefects and teachers think should be included in the training of the prefects. These are the aspects that are likely to be

lacking in the current training process. Notably, some teachers indicated that the training should include leadership, motivation, communication skills, assertiveness and decision-making. A point of concern was that the prefects and the teachers were not unanimous on the aspects that they wanted included in the training of the prefects.

In Table 4.11, the majority of the prefects (91.1%) indicated that they agreed that they were given guidance on leadership and management. It is noteworthy that 46.7% of the teachers, who were supposed to give guidance to the prefects, **disagree** that enough training/guidance was provided on leadership and management (Table 4.11). The training aspects suggested by the teachers (Table 4.15) seem to indicate that the training is deficient in some important aspects. The important aspects that could be lacking in the training of the prefects are aspects such as leadership, motivation, communication skills, assertiveness, decision-making and empowerment of the learners.

In summary, it appears that prefects do receive orientation and guidelines pertaining to specific functions, but that they do not seem to be trained in the basics of leadership and management. Based on the above findings, the hypothesis is accepted.

4.5 Conclusion

In this empirical study the researcher made an attempt to ascertain the views of teachers and learners regarding the participation of the learners in the management of schools.

From the empirical study the following conclusions can be made:

- The teachers and the learners displayed rational views about school management aspects in which the learners can or cannot participate (Table 4.3). Both groups of respondents indicated more aspects in which the learners could participate (Table 4.4). This indicates trust in learner capabilities to be involved in the management of the school.

- The learners and the teachers were mostly in favour of partial learner participation in the management of the school (Table 4.9). This indicates that the learners are realistic about the aspects they can participate in and the extent to which they would like to participate. The teachers also seemed prepared to involve the learners in some aspects of the school management in a meaningful way.
- Teachers and learners alike are in favour of a partial but reasonably high extent of learner participation in school management (see Table 4.4). As already indicated in this chapter, it may not always be possible to involve them but it must remain the goal for reasons of benefiting from their contribution and as an educational process to impart life skills in management and democracy.
- The suggestions in Table 4.15 indicate that the training of prefects will enable them to effectively carry out their leadership roles and to improve the quality of participation in management aspects of the school. The training programme must cover general aspects such as communication skills, decision-making and leadership. The training must also include some specific aspects which could vary from school to school depending on their social, cultural, economic and political background and set-up. As such, the specific aspects can only be sourced from the people who will undergo the training.

The empirical study has been successful in that it managed to establish the aspects in which and the extent to which the learners can participate in school management. It has also provided suggestions of training the learners so that the quality of participation in aspects of school management can be improved.

In the following chapter, the researcher will summarise the findings from the literature research and empirical research, and present conclusions and recommendations. The chapter will close with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The basic aim of this research was to determine the extent to which the participation of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools in North Central District of Botswana can improve discipline (section 1.5). The previous chapters dealt with this matter and the purpose of this chapter is to give a synopsis of the research undertaken. This makes it imperative to recapitulate on the statement of the problem and the aims and the hypotheses.

The main findings from both the theoretical and empirical investigations will then be discussed. This will be followed by the limitations of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

In chapter 1 the main research question was formulated as follows (section 1.5): To what extent can the participation of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools in North Central District of Botswana improve discipline? From this question, three sub-questions were formulated, namely:

- In what aspects of school management can learners participate meaningfully?
- How can school authorities and other interested bodies equip learner leaders so that they can meaningfully participate in management aspects of the school?
- How will the participation of learners in school management aspects contribute to the constructive maintenance of discipline in a school?

Ensuing from the problem statement the following specific aims of the study were stated (section 1.5):

- To establish the relationship between (a) sound discipline and (b) learners' participation in aspects of school management.
- To review the available literature on learners' participation in aspects of senior secondary school management.
- To identify areas of management in which learners could meaningfully participate.
- To determine empirically the extent to which learners could participate in the management aspects of the senior secondary school.
- To make recommendations on how training could improve learner participation in management aspects of the school.

For the empirical study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- Official policy on learner participation in school management is only partly followed.
- There is no consensus amongst stakeholders on the aspects of school management in which learners can meaningfully participate.
- Principals and learners differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management.
- Prefects are not trained in the basics of leadership and management.

5.1.1 Demarcation of the field of study

This research was undertaken in eight senior secondary schools of the North Central District of Botswana. The participants in this research consisted of 20 respondents per school, namely one head-boy, one head-girl, two dining prefects (boy and girl), two hostel prefects (boy and girl), one sports prefect, one entertainment prefect, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 5 and four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 4. The following staff members per school also participated in the research: two prefect advisors, one head of department and the school principal.

5.1.2 Method of research

The literature study was conducted with the aim of establishing the nature and directions of theory on learner involvement in managing schools. The study also investigated issues that would be relevant to the Botswana education system so that some of the helpful practices forthcoming from the literature study (5.2.1, 5.5) could be adopted for the benefit of the local education system.

In order to achieve the above aims, the literature review covered the theory, scope of, and approaches to discipline. The causes of discipline problems, models of maintaining discipline and the policy for school discipline were discussed. Participatory management was then focussed on with regard to the meaning and extent of participatory management, models of participatory management and participation in decision-making. In the last section, the rationale for learner participation in school management, school management aspects in which learners could participate, obstacles to learner participation in school management, and ways of overcoming participatory management barriers were dealt with.

An empirical investigation was subsequently undertaken. A questionnaire survey was used. This method was more suitable than the interview or observation methods because it did not require the researcher to visit all the schools which were located far apart.

The aims of the survey were:

- (i) to establish the degree of learner involvement in the management of senior secondary schools.
- (ii) to establish respondents' views on aspects of school management which learners should be involved in.
- (iii) to determine what learners, teachers and managers view as meaningful involvement of learners in the management of schools.

Based on the findings of the literature study, a questionnaire was compiled to gather data that would address the above aims. The questionnaire was then evaluated by several people, including teachers and the supervisors at the University of South Africa. During the pilot study stage several changes to the wording and structure of some items were made and the questionnaire was then administered to a small number of teachers, prefects and non-prefects at the school of the researcher. Changes were made to some items in the questionnaire based on what the respondents had suggested.

Permission to conduct research in the senior secondary schools of North Central Botswana was granted by the Permanent Secretary to the President (Appendix C). The questionnaire was administered to eight principals, eight heads of departments, 16 prefect advisors, 64 prefects and 64 non-prefects (1.7.2.2). The completed questionnaires were checked and coded. The data was computerised for statistical analyses. The following sections deal with a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 Summary

Findings of the research

Various matters related to discipline in schools and the participation of the learners in aspects of school management were investigated. The following findings are pertinent:

(a) Findings concerning aspects of school management in which the learners can participate

In the literature study various management aspects in which learners have participated meaningfully in other parts of the world were indicated (2.4.2).

In the empirical study the researcher ascertained the aspects of school management that learners can participate in meaningfully (Table 4.3). It was found that there was consensus amongst the learners and the teachers on the aspects of school management in

which learners can meaningfully participate (4.3.1). The following are examples of aspects in which learners can meaningfully participate:

- Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.
- Efforts of motivating fellow learners.
- Efforts of resolving conflict in the school such as strikes.
- Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.
- Functioning of the disciplinary committee.

Most of the aspects indicated in the literature research were also cited in the empirical study.

It has been established that the participation of learners in aspects of school management can be quite helpful. In addition the learners and the teachers have also indicated more aspects from their local environment which they think would be helpful to their particular schools (4.3.2.4).

There is, however, disparity in opinion between the principals and the teachers on the following aspects:

- The principals agree with the statement that learners should participate in making of school rules and regulations, whilst the teachers disagree.
- The principals disagree that learners should participate in the appraisal of fellow learners, whilst the teachers agree.
- The principals disagree that learners should participate in the functioning of the disciplinary committee, whilst the teachers agree (4.3.2.1).

(b) Findings concerning the extent to which the learners can participate in aspects of school management

The literature study revealed that there are three levels of participation, namely pseudo-participation, partial participation and full participation. It was found that pseudo-participation should not be encouraged in schools because it is important that the learners

should meaningfully participate in aspects of the school management. In a school situation, full participation is not desirable because the learners may not be willing or qualified to meaningfully participate in some aspects of the school management. Therefore the most logical level of participation is partial participation which enables learners to be involved in school management aspects in which they can meaningfully participate, whilst allowing the school management to take decisions in school management aspects in which the learners cannot meaningfully participate, such as in budgeting (2.3.2).

In the empirical research the extent of learner participation was also ascertained. The research revealed that the ideal extent of learner participation in school management decision-making and other aspects listed in Table 4.3 is partial participation. This view confirmed the hypothesis according to which principals and learners do not differ fundamentally in their opinions about the extent to which learners can participate in school management (4.3.2).

The teachers and the learners are in agreement that learners should only participate in some of the school management decision-making (4.3.2.3).

The tests of relevancy and expertise will be used to determine the extent to which the learners can participate in aspects of school management.

(c) Findings concerning the training of the prefects to improve the quality of participation in aspects of school management

Findings in the literature research indicate that for participatory management to be successful there is need for the participants to be trained in the art of participatory management. (2.3.5). Training learners could also help in finding solutions to some of the problematic issues, such as making learners recognise that time is a resource or making the learners sensitive to their environment (2.4.4).

The empirical research has ascertained that the training and guidance of prefects can significantly improve the quality of participation of learners in management aspects of the school (Tables 4.11, 4.12, 4.13 and 4.15). There are indications that prefects are not trained appropriately in the basics of leadership and management (4.3.3, 4.3.3.1).

Considering the possible negative effects that could result from using untrained prefects, it becomes more imperative that prefects should be trained in leadership and participatory management.

The role of school authorities and other interested bodies to train prefects for meaningful participation in management aspects of the school is to include management aspects which could be relevant and specific to a particular locality. Issues concerning culture, politics, social and economic status of the community could be considered in order to come up with a training programme and content that will be meaningful to the school (2.2.1; 2.2.2; 2.2.3; 4.3.3.2).

5.3 Limitations of the empirical study

The empirical study was faced with the following problems:

- Due to lack of time and resources the empirical research could only involve a sample of participants in senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana.
- Many learner respondents did not attempt the open-ended questions. This was unfortunate because their responses would have provided the research with a more complete picture of the reality of learner participation in some aspects of school management.
- There is a possibility that some of the respondents did not interpret certain items or terms in the questionnaire correctly and therefore did not give relevant answers.

5.4 Conclusions

Based on the preceding evidence from this study, the following conclusions can be made:

- Learners can participate meaningfully in the following aspects of school management (4.3.1):
 - Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.
 - Efforts of resolving conflict in the school, such as strikes.
 - Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.
 - Decisions on reducing violence.
 - The efforts of ensuring that all the learners abide by the dress code.
 - The functioning of the disciplinary committee.
 - Selection of prefects in any section of the school.
 - The demotion of prefects in any section of the school.
 - Regular consultation with the principal on matters of learner concern.
 - Matters of learners' welfare, e.g. HIV/AIDS education and control of drug/alcohol abuse and pregnancies.
 - The functioning of guidance and counselling team.
 - Efforts of motivating fellow learners.
 - Decisions on the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared.
 - Decisions on entertainment for the learners.
 - The production of a school magazine.
 - Appraisals of the learners.
 - Organising of fundraising projects.
- School authorities and other stakeholders can equip learner leaders so that they can meaningfully participate in management aspects of the school by providing them with training and guidance on leadership and participatory management skills. This is necessary because effective participation requires certain skills, understanding and knowledge. (2.3.5.2).

Learner leaders can also be equipped by providing them with the environment where they will feel free to be able to articulate what they feel. For the learner to genuinely participate in the process of school management, he/she must therefore be provided with an enabling environment of freedom (1.1.2).

- The participation of learners in school management aspects will contribute to the constructive maintenance of discipline in a school in the following ways (2.4.1, 4.3.2.4):
 - It will enable learners to voice their concerns.
 - It will help learners abide by the rules and regulations.
 - Learners will be able to give solutions and ideas to some problems and issues.
 - It will reduce crime, vandalism and strikes.
 - It will promote unity and mutual understanding in the school.
 - It will teach the learners management skills.
 - It will reduce conflict among learners, teachers and school management.
 - It will provide the learners with understanding of difficult management situations.
 - It will enable prefects to communicate well with fellow learners about issues from school management.
 - Learners will know what is expected of them.
 - It will give learners confidence in how the school is managed.
 - Their self-esteem will be enhanced.
 - Learner participation in curricular decision-making will improve motivation in their work and a feeling of autonomy.

Learner participation in aspects of school management will create:

- Greater readiness in the learners to accept change.
- More peaceful manager-learner relations.
- Increased learner commitment to the school.
- Greater trust of management by the learners.
- Improved communication between the learners and the school management team.

- Improved teamwork amongst the learners and between the learners and the school management team.
- Punctuality in the learners.

In conclusion, if learners are trained and allowed to participate in as many aspects of the school management as possible the discipline in senior secondary schools of the North Central District of Botswana will improve to a significant extent.

5.5 Recommendations

In view of the above findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. In order to develop democratic future leaders and citizens in general, it is important that the Ministry of Education should include some aspects of democracy and management skills in the core curriculum of the schools. This will give the learners confidence to participate and dispel the myth that they are unable to participate in the management of the school.
2. The Ministry of Education should intensify its efforts of training principals in participatory management skills. Since these skills cannot be learned for once and for all, the training should be on-going.
3. The Ministry of Education should promote to positions of principal only those teachers that have demonstrated management potential and those that have undergone a participatory management course. This is important because it will improve management and hence discipline in schools (Ramjan, 1994: 279).
4. Learners should be treated as important partners in the management of the school. As such, school principals must allow learners to participate in some aspects of the school management. This calls for openness on the part of the principals and the management team. Where the learners cannot participate due to the fact that they do

not pass *the tests of relevancy and expertise* (2.3.2), the principal and the management team should explain to the learners the school policies, practices, procedures and regulations regarding issues that the learners cannot participate in.

5. Principals of schools should inculcate into their teachers the culture of conducting research so that they can use the information to make meaningful decisions. This is a way of solving or preventing some of the discipline problems in a school. For example, research could be done about the effect of some cultural practices on the discipline of a school in a particular locality.
6. Institutions for training teachers and the in-service department (responsible for refresher courses, dissemination of new information and staff development) should include a strong component of *participatory management* in their training courses. This will help to have teachers in the schools who can already practise democratic methods of dealing with the learners. This is even more important because they can impart these skills to learners as they teach them.
7. The management team, the teachers, the learners, the parents and other stakeholders must be involved in stipulating aspects in which and the extent to which the learners can participate so that there is no confusion on the part of the learners or the management team.
8. As a representative body of the learners, the prefects must have a constitution that will guide them in their operations. The drawing up of the constitution should involve other stakeholders such as the learners, the principal, the teachers and the parents and should be guided by the school policy (Madigoe 1993:53).

5.6 Suggestions for future research

- Due to lack of resources and time the researcher was unable to involve a larger sample or include other important role players, such as the Chief Education Officers, who manage regions of the country, and School Management Advisors. In the new decentralised system in Botswana, the Chief Education Officers are the overall managers of the secondary education system in regions and the school principals report to them. The School Management Advisors work closely with the principals and advise them on various aspects of school management such as implementation of policies, implementation of curriculum, staff appraisals and lead inspection teams.

The researcher suggests that the Chief Education Officers and the School Management Advisors should also participate in future research on the participation of learners in school management because they could provide perspectives from their supervisory point of view.

- Future empirical research should also include the impact of the local culture on discipline in schools and on the participation of learners in aspects of school management. For example, local culture in cities could create different discipline problems and the more informed learners in cities could expect an extent of participation that differs from the expectation of rural and less informed learners. Traditional cultural values in Lesotho have been mentioned as inhibitions in the participation of learners in the management of schools (Matsepe 1996: 53). This could well be a problem in Botswana too.
- The findings of this research indicate that the principals and the teachers only partially follow what policy on learner participation in the management of the school demands of them (2.2.5.1, 4.4- Hypothesis 1). There is a need for more research in order to understand why the policy is only partly followed. There is also a need to find out if indeed this policy allows for a high extent of learner participation in the management of schools.

5.7 Closing remarks

In this research an attempt has been made to investigate the extent to which the participation of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools in North Central District of Botswana can improve discipline. It has been established that discipline in schools can improve if learners are allowed to participate in some aspects of the school management. Their participation cannot be meaningful because of their age and inexperience in matters of management. To mitigate this deficiency, learners should be trained in matters of leadership and participatory management so that they can participate in a more meaningful way.

It was also established that learners and other stakeholders of a school should be involved, as much as possible, in most of the issues concerning the school. For example, learners and other stakeholders should be involved in the determination of what aspects the learners can participate in. The determination of the aspects will partly depend on how qualified the learners are to participate in those aspects and how relevant the aspects are to the learners. Depending on whether or not the learners pass the *tests of relevancy and expertise*, the extent to which the learners can participate can be determined. In this research the extent to which the learners can participate was established as *partial participation*.

The aspects in which and the extent to which the learners can participate and the need for training learner leaders have been established. It is now possible that the participation of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools in the North Central District of Botswana can improve discipline to a high extent if the school authorities follow the guidelines. The importance of good discipline in schools was fully highlighted by the former president of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton, when he once said, "A lack of discipline in the nation's schools represents a threat to the strength and vitality of America" (New York Times, 21/7/1998). Botswana is no exception in this regard.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE A

TO BE COMPLETED BY PREFECTS AND LEARNERS

For official use
only

Record number

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(1 - 3)

INSTRUCTIONS: Please encircle the appropriate number, e.g.

3

1. Your gender:

- | | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Male | <table border="1"><tr><td>1</td></tr></table> | 1 |
| 1 | | |
| Female | <table border="1"><tr><td>2</td></tr></table> | 2 |
| 2 | | |

4

2 What form are you?

- | | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Form 5 | <table border="1"><tr><td>1</td></tr></table> | 1 |
| 1 | | |
| Form 4 | <table border="1"><tr><td>2</td></tr></table> | 2 |
| 2 | | |

5

3. What position do you hold?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Head-girl | <table border="1"><tr><td>1</td></tr></table> | 1 |
| 1 | | |
| Head-boy | <table border="1"><tr><td>2</td></tr></table> | 2 |
| 2 | | |
| Dining hall prefect | <table border="1"><tr><td>3</td></tr></table> | 3 |
| 3 | | |
| Hostel prefect | <table border="1"><tr><td>4</td></tr></table> | 4 |
| 4 | | |
| Sports prefect | <table border="1"><tr><td>5</td></tr></table> | 5 |
| 5 | | |
| Entertainment prefect | <table border="1"><tr><td>6</td></tr></table> | 6 |
| 6 | | |
| None of the above | <table border="1"><tr><td>7</td></tr></table> | 7 |
| 7 | | |

6

4. (For prefects only) How did you gain this position?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Elected by the students | <table border="1"><tr><td>1</td></tr></table> | 1 |
| 1 | | |
| Appointed by the school head | <table border="1"><tr><td>2</td></tr></table> | 2 |
| 2 | | |
| Appointed by the teachers | <table border="1"><tr><td>3</td></tr></table> | 3 |
| 3 | | |

7

5. In your view, to what extent should learners be involved in the following management aspects of the school?

Please indicate your view on each statement listed below by encircling on the list. Please be as frank and honest as possible.

	always	often	sometimes	never	
Making of school rules and regulations.	1	2	3	4	8
The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.	1	2	3	4	9
Decisions on the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared.	1	2	3	4	10
Decisions on entertainment for the learners.	1	2	3	4	11
Decisions on reducing violence.	1	2	3	4	12
Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.	1	2	3	4	13
Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.	1	2	3	4	14
Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.	1	2	3	4	15
Planning of school timetables and schedules.	1	2	3	4	16
Planning the budget.	1	2	3	4	17
Efforts of resolving conflict in the school, such as strikes.	1	2	3	4	18
Efforts of motivating fellow learners.	1	2	3	4	19
Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.	1	2	3	4	20
Matters of learners welfare, e.g. HIV/AIDS education and control of drug /alcohol abuse and pregnancies.	1	2	3	4	21
Appraisal of the learners.	1	2	3	4	22
Appraisal of the teachers.	1	2	3	4	23
Regular consultation with the principal on matters of learner concern.	1	2	3	4	24
Convening meetings with learners.	1	2	3	4	25
Organising extramural activities.	1	2	3	4	26
Organising of fundraising projects.	1	2	3	4	27
Selection of prefects in any section of the school.	1	2	3	4	28
The demotion of prefects in any section of the school.	1	2	3	4	29
The production of a school magazine.	1	2	3	4	30
The efforts of ensuring that all the learners abide by the dress code.	1	2	3	4	31
The functioning of the disciplinary committee.	1	2	3	4	32
The functioning of guidance and counselling team.	1	2	3	4	33

6. How do you rate the general level of learner participation in the management of your school?

Learners:

Normally don't participate	1
Rarely participate	2
Frequently participate	3
Almost always participate	4

34

7. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

(SA=strongly agree, A= agree, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
The learners frequently meet prefects to discuss matters of concern.	1	2	3	4
The prefects are doing a good job representing the interests of the learners.	1	2	3	4
I am satisfied that the learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school.	1	2	3	4
I believe that the general level of the discipline in the school is sound.	1	2	3	4

35

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37

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8. What would be the ideal extent of learner participation in school management decision making?

The learners must approve all management decisions.	1
Learners should be excluded from decision-making which requires professional expertise.	2
I don't mind whether the learners participate in decision making or not.	3

39

9. Please give your personal views on ways in which the involvement of learners in school management can be helpful or detrimental.

ONLY PREFECTS TO ANSWER QUESTION 10 and 11.

10. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

(SA= strongly agree, A= agree, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
When I was elected prefect my duties were well explained to me.	1	2	3	4
As a prefect I was given guidance on leadership and management.	1	2	3	4
The guidance I received helped me to understand how the school is managed.	1	2	3	4
The guidance I received gave me confidence to participate in aspects of school management.	1	2	3	4
The involvement of prefects in the management aspects of the school has helped to improve discipline in the school.	1	2	3	4

40
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42
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11. Please give your recommendations regarding the orientation and training of prefects.

I thank you for participating in this research

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE B

TO BE COMPLETED BY PREFECT ADVISORS, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND PRINCIPALS

For official use
Only

Record number

INSTRUCTIONS: Please encircle the appropriate number, E.g.

2

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(1 - 3)

1. Your gender:

Male
Female

1
2

(4)

2. How many years have you been in this school?

Less than two years
Between two and five years
More than five years

1
2
3

(5)

3. What is your position?

Prefect advisor
Head of department
Principal

1
2
3

(6)

4. How many years have you been in this position in this school?

Less than two years
Between two and five years
More than five years

1
2
3

(7)

5. In your view, to what extent should learners be involved in the following management aspects of the school?

Please indicate your view on each statement listed below by encircling on the list.
Please be as frank and honest as possible.

	always	mostly	sometimes	never	
Making of school rules and regulations.	1	2	3	4	8
The choice of the curriculum that should be taught in the school.	1	2	3	4	9
Decisions on the kind of food that learners must eat and how it is prepared.	1	2	3	4	10
Decisions on entertainment for the learners.	1	2	3	4	11
Decisions on reducing violence.	1	2	3	4	12
Decisions on reducing vandalism to school property.	1	2	3	4	13
Decisions on the suspension and expulsion of learners.	1	2	3	4	14
Monitoring the implementation of management decisions.	1	2	3	4	15
Planning of school timetables and schedules.	1	2	3	4	16
Planning the budget.	1	2	3	4	17
Efforts of resolving conflict in the school, such as strikes.	1	2	3	4	18
Efforts of motivating fellow learners.	1	2	3	4	19
Ensuring that learners abide by school rules.	1	2	3	4	20
Matters of learners welfare, e.g. HIV/AIDS education and control of drug /alcohol abuse and pregnancies.	1	2	3	4	21
Appraisal of the learners.	1	2	3	4	22
Appraisal of the teachers.	1	2	3	4	23
Regular consultation with the principal on matters of learner concern.	1	2	3	4	24
Convening meetings with learners.	1	2	3	4	25
Organising extramural activities.	1	2	3	4	26
Organising of fundraising projects.	1	2	3	4	27
The efforts of ensuring that all the learners abide by the dress code.	1	2	3	4	28
Selection of prefects in any section of the school.	1	2	3	4	29
The demotion of prefects in any section of the school.	1	2	3	4	30
The production of a school magazine.	1	2	3	4	31
Functioning of the disciplinary committee.	1	2	3	4	32
The functioning of guidance and counselling team.	1	2	3	4	33

6. How do you rate the general level of learner participation in the management of your school?

Learners:

Normally don't participate	1
Rarely participate	2
Frequently participate	3
Almost always participate	4

34

7. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

(SA=strongly agree, A= agree, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
The learners frequently meet prefects to discuss matters of concern.	1	2	3	4
The prefects are doing a good job representing the interests of the learners.	1	2	3	4
I am satisfied that the learners are sufficiently involved in the management of the school.	1	2	3	4
I believe that the general level of the discipline in the school is sound.	1	2	3	4

35

36

37

38

8. What would be the ideal extent of learner participation in school management decision making?

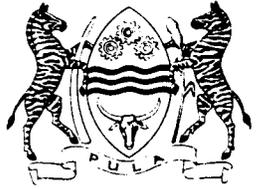
The learners must approve all management decisions.	1
Learners should be excluded from decision-making which requires professional expertise.	2
I don't mind whether the learners participate in decision making or not.	3

39

9. Please give your personal views on ways in which the involvement of learners in school management can be helpful or detrimental.

APPENDIX C

TELEGRAMS: PULA
TELEPHONE: 350800
TELEX: BD



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PRIVATE BAG 001
GABORONE

REF: OP 46/1 LXXXII (21)

5th July 2000

Mr. Victor Y. Mgomezulu
Lotsane Senior Secondary School
Private Bag 50
Palapye

Dear Sir

RE: GRANT OF A RESEARCH PERMIT: MR. V. Y. MGOMEZULU

Your application for a research permit refers.

We are pleased to inform you that you have been granted permission to conduct research entitled "Learner Involvement in Management Aspects of Senior Secondary Schools in the North Central District of Botswana".

The permit is valid for a period not exceeding four (4) months effective July 5, 2000.

The permit is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Copies of any papers produced as a result of the study are directly deposited with the Office of the President, National Assembly, Ministry of Education, National Archives, National Library Services, National Conservation Strategy Agency, National Institute for Research and University of Botswana Library.
2. You conduct the study according to the particulars furnished in the application.

3. The permit does not give authority to enter any premises, private establishment or protected area. Permission for such entry should be negotiated with those concerned.

Yours faithfully,



J. Mosweu

For/PERMANENT SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

cc: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
Clerk of the National Assembly
Director, National Archives
Director, National Library Services
Director, National Conservation Strategy Agency
Director, National Institute for Research
Librarian, University of Botswana Library
District Commissioner, Serowe
Council Secretary, Serowe
Landboard Secretary, Serowe

JM/gt

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Principal

I kindly request your permission and support to conduct research in your school. The intention is to gather information about the involvement of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools. This is the focus of a dissertation I am currently undertaking with UNISA for the fulfilment of the requirements for MEd in Educational Management.

The participants in this research consist of 20 respondents per school, namely one head-boy, one head-girl, two (boy and girl) dining prefects, two hostel prefects (boy and girl), one sports prefect, one entertainment prefect, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 5, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 4. The following staff members are also requested to participate in the research: two prefect advisors, one head of department and you, the principal.

All participants will be given a questionnaire to answer.

This research is in no way intended to question your management style. The focus is on general practices of school management with specific regard to the involvement of the learners.

Please rest assured that the information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be used with highest confidentiality. In this connection, no names are required.

For purposes of administering the questionnaire, I request your permission to allow Mr/Mrs -----to do it on my behalf. I will provide the necessary information to him/her so that s/he can manage the exercise well. A copy of the letter with instructions is attached for your information.

My study leaders and their contact phone/fax numbers are as follows: Professor G.D.Kamper, (phone- 00-27-12-429-4300) and Professor A.G. Kruger (phone -00-27-12-429-4593). Both share fax number -00-27-12-429-3444.

My own contact particulars are as follows:

Victor Y. Mgonezulu
P.O.Box 10291
Palapye
Phone 421633

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

I have secured permission from the Office of the President to conduct research in the senior secondary schools of this region

Yours sincerely,

Victor Yobe Mgonezulu

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Head of Department / Prefect advisor,

I kindly request you to respond to the following questionnaire on the involvement of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools. This is the focus of a dissertation I am currently undertaking with UNISA for the fulfilment of the requirements for MEd in Educational Management.

This research is in no way intended to question the management style of your school. The focus is on the general practices of school management with specific regard to the involvement of the learners.

Please rest assured that the information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be used with highest confidentiality. In this connection, no names are required.

I request your co-operation with the facilitator of the investigation at your school. Your participation is highly appreciated!

Yours sincerely,

Victor Yobe Momezulu

APPENDIX F

RESEARCH WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Prefects and Learners

You are kindly requested to respond frankly and honestly to the questionnaire that will be given to you.

Your help is needed to gather information on the involvement of learners in management aspects of senior secondary schools.

Please rest assured that the information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be used with highest confidentiality. In this connection, no names are required.

Your participation is highly appreciated!

Yours sincerely,

Victor Yobe Mgonezulu

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

Dear Mr/Mrs-----

As telephonically arranged with you, I kindly request your assistance in applying the following questionnaires in your school.

The questionnaire in light green is meant to be answered by the learners and the one in white is meant to be answered by the principal and the teachers.

The participants in this research consist of 20 respondents per school, namely, one head-boy, one head-girl, two (boy and girl) dining prefects, two hostel prefects (boy and girl), one sports prefect, one entertainment prefect, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 5, four non-prefect learners (two girls and two boys) from Form 4. The following staff members also participate in the research: two prefect advisors, one head of department and the principal.

The selection of the respondents should be done as follows:

- **Dining prefects:** List the boys and girls in alphabetical order. Choose the first boy and first girl on the alphabetical list.
- **Sports and Entertainment prefects:** Separately list them alphabetically and choose first one from each list.
- **Non-prefect learners in Forms 4:**

Boys: Select the 15th and 25th boy from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 4 learners.

Girls: Select the 10th and 20th girl from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 4 learners.

▪ **Non-prefect learners in Forms 5:**

Boys: Select the 15th and 25th boy from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 5 learners.

Girls: Select the 10th and 20th girl from the alphabetical name list of any **one** class of Form 5 learners.

- **Head of department:** Choose any member to respond to the questionnaire.
- **Prefect advisors:** Choose the first two on the alphabetical list.
- **Other respondents:** The principal, the Head-boy and the Head-girl. In the absence of the principal, the deputy principal should be used.

NOTE: The learner respondents should be assembled in a classroom at a convenient time. The other respondents should be given the freedom to answer the questionnaire at their own convenient time but they should be given a definite period, such as three days.

The following instructions about the completion of questionnaire should be given to them:

- ◆ They should use a pen.
- ◆ They must attempt all questions.
- ◆ When in doubt about anything, they should ask the facilitator for clarification.
- ◆ No consultation is allowed.

Please collect and return all the completed questionnaires to the following address not later than the 31st of July 2000:

Victor Y. Mgonezulu

P.O.Box 10291

Palapye

Phone: 421633

Your assistance is highly appreciated!

Yours sincerely,

Victor Yobe Mgonezulu.