

**Managing an effective character-based education mentor system for
Grade 8 boys in South African schools**

by

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I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



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19 June 2023

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the importance of implementing a character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools. It is an established fact that teenagers generally face unique challenges during their early teenage years, and many of these challenges can hinder their ability to succeed academically and emotionally.

The aim of this study is to consider how an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys should be managed in South African schools. Furthermore, to investigate methods educators as mentors can utilise to aid character-based management strategies, establishing those which had the best response from the learners in order to make them as effective as possible. The ultimate objective being to develop these Grade 8 boys into good men.

This case study could be regarded as primarily descriptive and exploratory in nature, incorporating the basic characteristics associated with quantitative research and empirical data, which is in essence predominantly deductive and positivistic.

A character-based education mentor system aims to address these challenges by providing a solid foundation for character development, improving academic performance and helping boys to develop important life skills. This system is based on the core values of respect, responsibility and self-discipline, whilst incorporating techniques to instil these values, such as mentor group discussions, one-on-one mentoring, and role-modelling by mentors and senior learners.

From the available research educators play an important role in shaping learners understanding of good character. The learners' understanding of what character is and what is important is mirrored by the educators – there is alignment between educators and learners, and they end up emphasising it even more than staff – resulting in a transfer of values/value proposition from staff to learners.

The findings provide recommendations for developing and implementing an effective character-based education mentor system and highlights the benefits for both learners and educators in South African schools. It is essential that the SGB, senior management, staff, parents and ultimately the boys, all work together in this character-based mentor system

(the Good Man Journey), as they collectively strive to develop these Grade 8 boys into the best possible good men.

AFRIKAANS

Hierdie studie ondersoek die belangrikheid van die implementering van 'n karakter-gebaseerde opvoedingsmentor stelsel vir Graad 8 seuns in Suid-Afrikaanse skole. Dit is 'n gevestigde feit dat tieners oor die algemeen unieke uitdagings in hul vroeë tienerjare in die gesig staar, en baie van hierdie uitdagings kan hul vermoë om akademiese en emosionele sukses te behaal, belemmer.

Die doel van hierdie studie is om te oorweeg hoe 'n effektiewe karakter-gebaseerde opvoedingsmentor stelsel vir Graad 8-seuns in Suid-Afrikaanse skole bestuur moet word. Verder om te ondersoek watter metodes opvoeders as mentore kan gebruik om karakter-gebaseerde bestuursstrategieë te bevorder en daardie wat die beste terugvoer van die leerders het, te vestig om hulle so doeltreffend moontlik te maak. Die uiteindelijke doel is om hierdie Graad 8 seuns tot goeie mans te ontwikkel.

Hierdie gevallestudie kan beskou word as primêr beskrywend en verkennend van aard, wat die basiese eienskappe wat geassosieer word met kwantitatiewe navorsing en empiriese data, wat in essensie oorwegend deduktief en positivisties is, bevat. 'n Karakter-gebaseerde opvoedingsmentor stelsel mik daarop om hierdie uitdagings aan te spreek deur 'n stewige grondslag vir karakterontwikkeling te bied, akademiese prestasie te verbeter en seuns te help belangrike lewensvaardighede te ontwikkel. Hierdie stelsel is gegrond op die kernwaardes van respek, verantwoordelikheid en selfdissipline, terwyl dit tegnieke insluit om hierdie waardes in te lê, soos mentor groepbesprekings, een-op-een mentorering en rolmodelleering deur mentore en senior leerders.

Uit die beskikbare navorsing blyk dit dat opvoeders 'n belangrike rol speel in die vorming van leerders se begrip van goeie karakter. Die leerders se begrip van wat karakter is en wat belangrik is, word weerspieël deur die opvoeders - daar is ooreenstemming tussen opvoeders en leerders, en hulle beklemtoon dit selfs meer as personeel - wat daartoe lei dat daar 'n oordrag van waardes / waardeproposisie van personeel na leerders plaasvind.

Die bevindinge bied aanbevelings vir die ontwikkeling en implementering van 'n effektiewe karakter-gebaseerde opvoedingsmentor stelsel, en beklemtoon die voordele vir beide leerders en opvoeders in Suid-Afrikaanse skole. Dit is noodsaaklik dat die SGB, senior bestuur, personeel, ouers en uiteindelik die seuns, saamwerk in hierdie karakter-gebaseerde mentor stelsel (*The Good Man Journey*), aangesien hulle gesamentlik daarna streef om hierdie Graad 8-seuns tot die beste moontlike goeie mans te ontwikkel.

ISIZULU

Lolu cwaningo luveza ukubaluleka kokufakwa kohlelo lokufundisa ngokuyalelwa kubafundi benga lesi-8 ezikoleni zaseNingizimu Africa. Kuyiqiniso elingephikiswe ukuthi Abafundi babhekana nezinsalelo ezingafani ekukhuleni kwabo besebancane, iningi lalezi zinsalelo zingaphazamisa amandla okuphumelela kwabo ezifundweni kanye nokuphila kwabo.

Inhloso yocwaningo ukubheka umphumela wokufundiswa ngobunjalo ngokweluswa kwabafana bebanga lesi-8 ezikoleni zaseNingizimu Africa. Okungaphezu kwalokho ukubheka indlela abafundisi abangazisebenzisa ukusiza lolu hlelo lokufunda ngokweluswa, ukusungula izindlela ezingaba nomphumela omuhle kubafundi. Inhlosongqangi kube kuwukwakha abafana bebanga lesi-8 ukuba abantu abalungile.

Lolu cwaningo luthathwa njengencazelo nomzamo wokuqala kohlelo ohlanganisa isimo sobunjalo kuhlanguke nophenyo oluhlangene kanye nomphumela wocwaningo, okuwukuthi okuhlukene nokuthembisayo kuphela.

Lesi sifundo sobuntu ngokulekelwa abafundisi senzewe ukubhekana nalezi zinsalelo ngokunikeza isisekelo esiqinile dokukhula kubuwena, ukukhulisa ukuzimisela ekufundeni nokuhlomisa abafana ngezikhali zokubhekana nempilo. Uhlelo lubhekene nokubaluleka kwenhlonipho, ukuzimela kanye nokuhleleka ngokwakho, ukuhlanganisa nobuciko bokufaka ubuhle, okufana nokubonisana emaqenjini, ukusizana ngamunye, nokuhola ngobuqotho kwabafundisi kanye nabafana abadala ezikoleni.

Ngokophenyo olukhona abafundisi badlala indima enkulu ekusizeni abafundi ukuthi bakuqonde kahle ukuba sesimweni esihle. Abafundi bayaqonda ukuthi kuyini ukuba olungile kanti okubalulekile okuvezwa abafundisi, kunokusebenzisana phakathi kwabafundisi

nabafundi, Futhi bagcina sebekugcizelela ngaphezu kwabasebenzi, lokhu okudlulisa ubuhle, ubuhle obusuka kubafundisi kuya kubafundi.

Ucwaningo luphakamisa izincomo zokukhulisa nokwenziwa kohlelo lokufundisa olumayelana nobunjalo obuyimpumelelo ngokohlelo lokululekwa, futhi igqamisa lokhu okuzuzwa umfundisi kanye nomfundi ezikoleni zaseNingizimu Africa. Kubalulekile ukuthi isigungu esilawula isikole(SGB), yilabo abaphezulu ekulawuleni isikole, abafundisi, abazali kanye nabo abafundi, bonke basebenze ngokubambisana kulolu hlelo lokufunda okunokululekwa (uhambo oluhle lwendoda elungile), ngokubambisana basebenze kanzima ukusiza abafundi bebanga lesi-8 ukuze babe amadoda alungile.

KEY CONCEPTS

Managing, mentorship, character-based education, Grade 8 boy, behaviour, positive discipline, core values, empirical survey.

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All recommended changes were indicated through track changes and comments for the student to review, verify and finalise.



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MTech: Ed; BA Hons (English); BA Hons (Philosophy) *cum laude*; BA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APA = The American Psychological Association

APBSA = The Association of Public Boys' Schools South Africa

CIRCLE = The Centre for Innovation, Research, Creativity & Leadership in Education

DOE = Department of Education

HOD = Head of Department

IBSC = International Boys' Schools Coalition

KZN = KwaZulu-Natal

LMS = Learning Management System

MLB = Managing Learner Behaviour

SACE = South African Council of Education

SASA = South African Schools' Act

SGB = School Governing Body

UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WCED = Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This intended study was borne out of some of the outcomes of the researcher's master's dissertation on the topic, 'Managing learner behaviour of Grade 9 boys at a public fee-paying secondary school in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal'.

The researcher's main objective in that study was to research positive discipline strategies for Grade 9 boys. In addition, he attempted to determine how these strategies were managed and if and how there would be fewer disciplinary occurrences by these young men due to the intervention of trained staff.

The researcher contends from the evidence obtained in that study, that through the issuing of a merit (positive reinforcement - an example of one positive discipline strategy), that the number of discipline incidents decreased, and the learners appreciated the positive acknowledgement both personally and publicly. This falls directly in line with Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" on the self-esteem level, where motivation increases when needs are met (Maslow, 1943).

The researcher is of the opinion that the aforementioned study should build on the knowledge that currently exists and it is anticipated that there will be a better comprehension of Grade 9 boys and how to effectively manage their behaviour. This should also potentially benefit educators and learners in classrooms during teaching and learning throughout the country and potentially abroad.

Therefore, leading into the proposed study, the researcher contends that additional investigation is required into the role of the educator and the learner, owing to the fact that the previous study did not delve sufficiently deep, as we strive collectively to holistically develop the young learners through adolescence into adulthood.

The completed study made the following recommendations:

- a comprehensive mentorship programme for managing learners' behaviour needs to be implemented;
- educators require professional development to be effective mentors;
- mentors ideally need to realise that they are role models and being observed continually by the learners;

- peer support learners who act as mentors to the younger learners require continual guidance and support;
- any support staff who are involved with learners as coaches in the boarding establishment also require professional development.

Furthermore, for any intervention of this nature to be effective and potentially make a difference, it is essential that the senior management support whatever managing behavioural mentor system is implemented, as it has the potential to create a far more conducive teaching and learning environment, which should result in a reduction in discipline instances for learners and the mentors.

Therefore, this intended study would research the role of mentoring by educators and senior management of learners through effective character-based education on their pathway to manhood and a 'good real' man. The role of the mentor cannot be underestimated.

The researcher is of the opinion that a conducive teaching and learning culture through an *effective character-based education mentor system*, as with the aforementioned system, requires a collaboration with the full educational community, for it to be successful and make a difference in the learners' lives specifically. Parents are an integral part of the relationship along with a transformational head, a pro-active School Management Team (SMT), a supportive parent body both financially and educationally with buy-in from staff and boys.

From a Basic Education perspective, which was clearly articulated by the Western Cape Department of Education in 2007, where they recommended that "learner management should be an integrated and co-ordinated approach with the ultimate goal to ensure effective teaching and learning" (WCED, p1, 2007). Demirdag (2015) further contends that it is one of the main tasks of the classroom teacher to mentor the needs of their learners in a caring and considerate manner.

The researcher has been privileged to have been involved in education for almost four decades with considerable experience in a multitude of schooling environments, such as public, single sex boys in former established Model C institutions in both the Western and Eastern Cape, as well as three independent schools in New Zealand (Scots College – a Presbyterian school, Rathkeale College – an Anglican faith based school and St Paul's Collegiate – an Anglican faith based school).

Furthermore, the researcher spent 16 years overseas in Australasia and has had significant international exposure to schools in New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, England, America and Canada, where he has experienced best practice first hand with regard in particular to what is best for boys and their holistic education and mentoring. He has always strived to encourage and support boys in their particular milieu to achieve their goals and be the best that they can be. This has largely materialised through his association with the International Boys' School Coalition (IBSC) of which he is currently a trustee representing Africa, and he will be attending a conference in Dallas, Texas, USA in June this year.

For the past 9 years, he has been the headmaster of a public boys' school in Pietermaritzburg. From personal experience and research, it has become apparent that Grade 8 boys need considerable support as they commence their high school education and require nurturing in their immediate school surroundings, which if done effectively should result in a more convivial teaching and learning environment and most importantly a happier boy. *The management of an effective character-based education mentor system* would go a long way to ensure that this became a reality.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

From the researcher's years of experience and research in the field of mentoring of young learners, the issue of learner behaviour is possibly one of the most significant stresses for many educators, with the Grade 8 and 9 year groups (ages 13-15) causing greater concern than others. This is confirmed in a South African context by De Witt and Lessing (2013) that there is considerable anxiety and distress amongst learners in this age group.

The researcher intends to focus on the Grade 8s as Berk (2009) confirms that these boys are at a critical juncture in their pathway, requiring suitable strategies for positive guidance and mentoring. This study covers a crucial stage in their journey towards adulthood and an essential aspect of their overall character development and education, in providing potential positive management and mentoring interventions and strategies that will assist the learner in reaching his full potential. The ultimate goal is to develop the holistic development of the learner by *implementing and managing an effective character-based education mentoring system for Grade 8 boys* as they commence their high school journey.

1.3 LITERATURE/SCHOLARSHIP REVIEW

1.3.1 The concept of character-based education

According to Josephson (2002) there is an increasing number of young people who are growing up without a clear comprehension or commitment to the core ethical values needed to inform and guide their conscience. As a result, they lack internal controls to assist them to differentiate right from wrong and to mobilise the will power to exercise self-control and regularly do the right thing. Furthermore, Cummins and Adams (2019) contend that good character does not occur by chance, but rather that it is developed over a period of time through a continued process of education, role modelling, learning and practice through character-based education. The deliberate education of good character is essential as they face enormous challenges. They are heavily influenced by social media platforms prevalent in today's culture.

According to Singla (2009), a person's 'character' refers to the nature and habits that influence the manner in which a person reacts to desires, fears, challenges, opportunities, failures and successes. Moreover, it is further considered when faced with moral judgements around the so-called 'worthiness' of a person. Therefore, in an ideal scenario, to have a character that is strong, great or honourable is potentially then to be considered as a person who is 'worthy' of respect and admiration. Ultimately, a person's character comprises of all the qualities, values, thoughts, words, actions by which they will be judged.

Cummins and Adams (2019) purport that character-based education engenders ethical, responsible and considerate young learners by modelling and teaching good character. It provides long term solutions which can address moral, ethical and academic matters of increasing concern to society that are essential in ensuring the safety of our schools. Thomas Lickona (2004:9) describes character education as "the deliberate effort to cultivate virtue."

As a follow up to the research conducted, the researcher implemented a Character-Based Education Programme as part of "The Good Man Journey" for all learners at his school in 2019. This programme has continued into 2021. Unfortunately, due to the significant impact of the Covid-10 Pandemic, the progress to date has been severely hampered.

The reason for starting the programme at Grade 8 is because they are at the beginning of the adolescence phase as well as the start of their secondary school learning experience and require considerable support and guidance. It is preferable to have intervention at an early stage with the premise that 'prevention is better than cure'.

1.3.2 The benefits of character-based education

Cummins and Adams (2019) believe that character-based education promotes the intellectual, social, emotional, and ethical development of young people and shares a commitment to help young people become responsible, caring and contributing citizens to society.

Furthermore, according to the publication *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, 2010), there are a number of possible benefits of a quality character education programme:

- It helps learners to develop important human qualities such as justice, diligence, compassion, respect, and courage, and to understand why it is important to live by them.
- It promotes character development through the exploration of ethical issues across the curriculum.
- It develops a positive and moral climate by engaging the participation of learners, teachers and staff, parents, and communities.
- It teaches how to solve conflicts fairly, creating safer schools that are free of intimidation, fear, and violence, and are more conducive to learning, whilst it not only cultivates minds, but can also nurture hearts.
- It is critical for successful schools as it helps children understand the importance of virtues that create a caring, safe school environment and also teaches children the principles of how they can become successful and productive citizens. Without proper values of a caring citizenry, society could suffer considerably.
- It is imperative for the well-being of our society that children are taught universal values and creates an integrated culture of character that supports and challenges learners and adults to strive for excellence.
- It creates schools where learners feel safe because they are in an atmosphere that values respect, responsibility and compassion—not because a guard or metal detector is posted at the door.
- Finally, it educates learners and adults to understand, engage in, care about, and act on core ethical values such as respect, justice, citizenship, fairness, and responsibility for self and others in school as well as part of a larger community (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, CEP pp1 - 2, 2007).

1.3.3 What is the “Good Man” Journey?

Cummins and Adams (2020) surveyed boys internationally about their conception of a "good man" for their study "Character Education in Schools for Boys". The results indicate that boys are moving away from the traditional 'macho' conception of masculinity towards one based largely on having good moral character and focus on characteristics such as:

- being respectful of all in spite (or perhaps because) of difference and being kind and empathetic;
- being honest, humble and brave, and having integrity;
- being sufficiently committed and resilient to "sustain him through challenge" and taking responsibility when he fails;
- being a leader but also willing to work in a team;
- being well-mannered and a 'gentleman';
- being open-minded, intellectually curious and intelligent.

Cummins and Adams (2019) contend that certain fewer positive aspects of the traditional conception of masculinity do not still influence boys' behaviour. Munns, Arthur, Downes, Gregson, Power, Sawyer, Singh, Thistleton-Martin and Steele (2012) note that there may be a tension between boys being academically successful and being seen as 'properly' masculine. They continue that certain boys have learnt ways of being masculine which results in them not always achieving their best academic performance. Others engage in behaviour such as bullying and violence. Similarly, Cummins and Adams (2018:178) report that boys need to be encouraged to reject "false representations of masculinity" or "toxic masculinity.". In a later publication, the same authors stress that unhealthy conceptions of masculinity are often enforced through peer pressure (Cummins and Adams, 2019.)

Cummins and Adams (2019:78) also state that boys still tend to be relatively 'stoic' and uncommunicative. Munns et al. (2006:24) make a similar point in their study "Motivation & Engagement of Boys"; they write that some boys have "restricted relationship repertoires" that inhibit them from forming positive relationships and from effective collaboration with others.

More recently, in light of issues surrounding 'toxic masculinity', there has been interest from various quarters for not only what constitutes 'good' men, but also an emphasis on what are the characteristics of 'real' men and positive masculinity?

Craig Wilkinson (2020:46) of 'Father a Nation' renown, believes that the greatest men, "Champion Men" are men who champion the following virtues:

- choose to build never destroy;
- choose love over power;
- choose to serve not control;
- choose to give more than receive ;
- choose to build friends not make enemies;
- choose character over convenience;
- choose purpose over complacency.

If these virtues are championed, they will be the foundation of true positive masculinity.

The 'Good Man Journey' is a mentoring programme in character education, which pushes boys to think about the sort of man (ideally a 'good' man) they wish to develop into and the values that will usher them in adulthood. The main purpose is to develop and underpin character and to impact on how they deliberate and respond, particularly when confronted with compromising circumstances through their adolescence into manhood. It is the school's hope that its boys would be selfless and to always do the right thing. The programme is compiled using material, ideas and present-day trends from international boys' schools' best practice and specifically tailored for their school.

The researcher's school is a value-based institution where they endeavour to upskill their learners with the doctrine, values and virtues that guide them on their individual 'Good Man Journey'.

1.3.4 The implementation of a character-based education programme

Initially the Grade 12 boys in their individual houses (10 houses of 125 boys with 25 boys in a mentor class) facilitated various character education topics such as respect, masculinity, 'What does it mean to be a good man?' supervised by the educator mentor at the outset. The Grade 12 mentor would receive training prior to delivering the topic to a small group of

younger mentees. The Grade 12 mentor in turn would be upskilling his leadership skills in the process. Depending on the topic, the focus at the year levels would vary. For example, when dealing with the topic of 'Respect' it would be integrated as follows: Grade 8 Respect for School; Grade 9 Self-Respect; Grade 10 Respect for Women and Grade 11 Leadership and Respect. When dealing with the controversial topic of "Bullying" it would be integrated as follows: Grade 8 Verbal Bullying; Grade 9 Physical Bullying; Grade 10 Emotional Bullying and Grade 11 Hazing and Initiation Practices.

1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is now pertinent to consider the problem statement of the study that can be phrased as: "Managing a character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys." It is common knowledge that the provision of quality teaching and learning in South African schools is currently one of the greatest challenges facing the country. Fortunately, principals have the potential to structure and implement such a mentoring programme within the school environment to assist these young men at the very beginning of their high school journey. Here is the ideal opportunity to make an indelible impact on their lives at this significant juncture, as they approach adolescence, with the support and encouragement of educators and parents.

1.5 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

The main research question which guided this study is:

How should an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys be managed in South African schools?

Sub-questions:

The key research questions were steered by the following sub-questions:

- What can educators as mentors do to assist in managing a character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men?
- How can educators develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible?
- Which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys?

1.6. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The key goal is to consider how an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys should be managed in South African schools.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives are to be considered:

- To contemplate by what methods educators as mentors can aid character-based management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men.
- To establish how educators as mentors can improve character-education amongst Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible.
- To discover which character-education strategies have had the best response from the learners.

The outcomes of the aims will provide potential solutions to effective character-based education mentor strategies and how they should be implemented and managed.

1.7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In approaching this study, the researcher will consider two theories: The first to be considered will be Bass and Riggio's (2006) Transformational Leadership Theory as a key aspect of educational management, as the researcher is a headmaster of a secondary boys' school. The second will be the Learner Development Theories and focussing more specifically on Behavioural Theory (Berk, 2009).

The researcher selected these theories for the following reasons:

Transformational Leadership Theory is essential as the overall mentoring structure of the school in question requires further development and change to establish that the learners are being developed and nurtured to their full extent in order to reach their full potential. Steady progress has been made over the past number of years with the implementation of positive discipline strategies and positive reinforcement through mentoring. However, additional mentoring with the establishment of an effective character-based education system would enhance this greatly potentially (Luman, 2018).

The Learner Development Theories are pertinent as the boys are at an essential stage in their journey towards adulthood, as they enter adolescence and they have to deal with a number of external influences which could affect their overall development. However, the Behavioural Theory is where the researcher plans to predominantly focus, as this is

considered to be most critical at this time on their pathway through adolescence to manhood (Luman, 2018).

Luman (2018) contends that prior to change management and intervention strategies being carried out, appropriate theories are required to be explored fully in the implementation of the desired change and system. The first theory considered is that of Transformational Leadership.

It is the opinion Bass and Riggio (2006:5-6) that transformational leadership requires leaders to be prepared to empower others, to inspire others to be courageous and summon others to strive for higher levels of operation. They contend that it requires the following four features:

- inspirational motivation,
- idealized influence,
- individualized consideration and
- intellectual stimulation (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

The preferred management style for principals of schools who wish to embark on significant change or reform, according to Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), is transformational leadership, as change management is considered to be a strength of transformational leaders.

Luman (2018:6) is of the opinion that “principals who are transformational leaders are able to identify and verbalise a school vision; motivate others through example; support a culture of intellectual stimulation and provide support and development to individual staff members.”

Further research by Bogler (2005) indicates that transformational leadership by school principals has been associated with positive outcomes such as improvements in the school environment with regards to wellness and staff relations.

As principal of the school, the researcher would be instrumental from a transformational leadership perspective in ensuring that the changes required by implementing a character-based educational mentoring system, is implemented effectively with the support of staff as mentors. Appropriate professional development and buy-in would be crucial elements to determine the ultimate success of the programme.

The second theory which the researcher feels should be included is that of Behavioural Theory, one of the Learner Development Theories, which explains the procedure of human development and is particularly relevant for the adolescent learner level in this study viz. Grade 8 boy.

“According to Berk (2009), there is considerable agreement that development takes place in various stages and in a variety of spheres such as ‘intellectual, physical, personality, moral and volitional’. The development is decided through both situational and hereditary factors as well as understanding of the realms in education which enables educators to conceive strategies to improve the potential of learners in all of these realms. The potential success of this enablement leads to a holistic learner who should be adequately prepared to take his place in the society; both locally and globally.” (Luman, 2018:7)

The American psychologist, BF Skinner (1963:503), on considering behavioural theories of child development and how much influence the environment affected behaviour, believed that their development is regarded as being “a reaction to rewards, punishments, stimuli and reinforcement.”

It is a well-known fact that parents are aware that children generally respond very well to a system that is based on compensation and consequences: cause and effect. This would be an accurate explanation of the most basic aspect of Skinner’s beliefs, ‘operant behaviour and operant conditioning’, which is based on a system of both positive and negative reinforcement (Luman, 2018: 7). The researcher is of the opinion that a character-based education mentoring would complement this.

Luman (2018: 8) contends that “these theories could be implemented to reflect on all the learning areas that are required for an holistic enablement of learners and protect the quality of education not being compromised”. In this study, we refer in particular to the Grade 8 learners (boys) who are at crucial time in their development and are vulnerable, unsure of themselves, seeking positive affirmation and a secure space or place and this could impact the manner they may behave (Behavioural Theory) (Luman, 2018). The research from this point on will only be focussing on boys in Grade 8 and what is pertinent to them as per the research title.

For the success of a programme of the nature of ‘The Good Man Journey’ by means of character-based education, is largely dependent on the collaborative, proactive contribution

of the key sections of the community viz. the Grade 8 boys, educators and parents (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2012).

In this particular study, the researcher is referring to the educators, who fulfil the following roles in the Grade 8 boys' daily lives as mentors, day housemasters and in some cases boarding establishment mentors and housemasters. There will also be older learners who will act as mentees and will be guided by educators who will act as coordinators. This according to Steyn and Van Niekerk (2012), "sees them operating on different levels but inter-acting, being inter-dependent and having inter-related systems, where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between the different parts "(Luman, 2018: 9).

1.8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

1.8.1 Research approach

The fundamental detail of this research approach is 'explaining phenomena' which in this study will be answering the subsidiary research question that the implementation of an effective character education mentor system for Grade 8 boys as well as explaining and answering, 'Which character- based education strategies have been the most successful with these Grade 8 boys?'

The researcher will be implementing quantitative research methodology once empirical evidence as part of the research process has been collected. Evidence will be gathered, scrutinised and assessed for mathematical proof which will assist in assessing which strategies are effective.

Aliaga and Gunderson (2000:2) describe quantitative research methods very well: "Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (statistics)".

The researcher contends that quantitative methodology is the ideal method as he needs to highlight quantification through the collection of numerical information and thereafter analyse the data. The accurateness of quantitative research is covered in the latter part of the definition according to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000:2), which is closely connected to the final part of the definition: "analysis using mathematically based methods". For the researcher to be in a position to use mathematically based methods, the data must be in numerical form.

Luman (2018: 44) contends that “an appropriate research design should ideally match the type of questions being mooted. It could be implemented as an extensive strategic or practical approach for managing the research.” Furthermore, it should provide the inclusive form and approach which includes the collection and analysis of data.

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012:160), the research design “represents the framework for data collection and data analysis and can comprise of the following five types: experimental design, cross-sectional or social survey design, longitudinal design, case study design and comparative design.” The researcher has chosen the case study design in this instance.

The research design that the researcher wishes to implement for this study is a case study. Fouche and De Vos (2003), believe that case studies can refer to a variety of things which could be as simple as a process, activities, events, programmes for individuals or for a number of people. The case study in this study is Grade 8 and 10 learners as well as educators of the selected school.

The case study design will allow the researcher to use multiple sources to collect data which according to Fouche (2002:275) which is ideal: “The exploration and description of the case take place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context”.

The researcher refers to the research design as a strategy that integrates the various aspects of the study in a sound and methodical manner, thus ensuring that the research problem is addressed. It is the basis for the collection and analysis of data. The design allows the researcher to identify research methods that are suitable for the research problem (Creswell, 2009).

The research design will ensure that the evidence obtained will enable the researcher to effectively address the research problem. The research design is a framework for planning research and ultimately finding solutions to the research questions. According to McCombes (2019), all of the following need to be considered while determining the research design: type of data required; location and timescale of research; participants and sources; variables and hypotheses and methods for collecting and analysing data.

Furthermore, the research design determines the framework for the study and establishes precisely what is and what is not included by defining the formula which the researcher will

use to evaluate the results and draw conclusions. Ultimately, the reliability and credibility of the study is dependent on the methods used by the researcher to collect, analyse, and interpret the data. A hardy research design is essential in determining the success or not of the research (McCombes, 2019).

Research conducted by Bryman and Bell (2016), suggests that research instruments are required to be focussed specifically on fluctuating events which do not commonly exist, into a quantitative form which can be analysed statistically. In this study, the researcher wants to collect data from Grade 10 boys who have experienced the character-education system to date as well as from current Grade 8 boys who will be experiencing a new system for the first time. The motivation behind collecting data from current Grade 10 boys is to backward determine Grade 8 findings from two years prior. This data obtained could potentially be advantageous in providing answers to the researcher's question and sub-questions (Luman 2018:50).

1.8.2 Population and sampling

Purposeful sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2016) is the preferred method for sampling selected as the participants will be learners from Maritzburg College, a former Model C school and a public school based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The learners are of the male sex gender and between the ages of 14-18. The researcher is of the opinion that "the current multi-cultural demography of learners at the school better represents that in society – the society being one of Pietermaritzburg" (Luman, 2018: 48).

The researcher is fortunate in that he has had considerable exposure internationally and in South Africa with pertinent statistics obtained. Educational instruction at the school is in the English medium and provided for Grades 8-12 following the National Curriculum as implemented by the Department of Education. The school as has a large boarding community (480) and day scholars (890) with a total of 1330 learners and 102 educators.

1.8.3 Instrumentation and data collection techniques

According to Luman (2018:51), when a researcher "collects data in quantitative educational research, one must collect them from someone or something. The people (viz. learners) or things (viz. schools) one collects data on or from are known as 'units'." The data that one is collecting from these units are known as 'variables'. "Variables are any characteristic of the

unit in and want to collect (e.g. gender, age, self-esteem) where the label 'variable' refers to the fact that these data will differ between units." (Muijs, 2013: 8)

The researcher, as headmaster of the school in the proposed case study, is required to ensure that he provides a safe and healthy school environment and actual wellness for all the learners as well as all the educators at his school. It is therefore essential that they complete the surveys and that the data is saved through SurveyMonkey. The participants should feel quite comfortable to complete the confidential survey to the best of their ability. Empirical data will also be collected on a diverse selection of boys and benchmarked against confidential surveys conducted with boys from other schools in South Africa and beyond through research data conducted by Circle Education Group as well as data through Ed-Admin – a Learner Management System (LMS). Additional data will also be obtained through a confidential survey which they will complete as will the mentors. The information obtained should reflect all the pertinent information and this evidence will be analysed quantitatively.

1.8.4 Data analysis and interpretation

The study is based on empirical and quantitative data and Ed-Admin and Circle Education Group research should provide relevant, precise and private information which will be suitably examined. The empirical data is obtained from the contents contained and listed in Ed-Admin. The data will then be analysed statistically and information from the online web-based survey questionnaire completed by both the educators and learners will be drawn from SurveyMonkey, which will also be analysed statistically (Luman, 2018).

1.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY/CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Ed-Admin contains only empirical binary data of consistent indicators. This consistency of measure should ensure that the data is dependable. This data is the reflection of the number of misdemeanours and merits recorded by the educators (Luman, 2018). The researcher is also compiling questionnaires which would potentially complement this investigation and will be completed on SurveyMonkey. Thus, the data will have measurement validity as the data obtained have really measured the concept at issue (Bryman & Bell, 2016).

1.10 RESEARCH ETHICS

Before data collection commences the researcher will apply for ethical clearance from the Ethics Panel (CEDU) of UNISA to undertake the empirical survey. Furthermore, permission

to embark on this research and to utilise data obtained from Maritzburg College will in the first instance be requested from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, Maritzburg College School Governing Body and the Parent Body. Researchers have ethical obligations and responsibilities to the respondents of their study. Data handling must and will be respectful with strict confidentiality, and the anonymity of the learners and educators will be adhered to at all times.

1.11. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

It is thus a very specific comparative and historical study (Grades 8 and 10 boys) which may not be a true reflection as the changes at Maritzburg College are implemented. Further research might discover additional contexts and behaviours at play. However, the outcomes can also be benchmarked against international research data provided by Circle Education.

1.12 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

According to Bryman and Bell (2007:162), the conceptual analysis is: “the meaning of words or concepts through clarification and elaboration of the different dimensions of meaning.” Therefore, the terminologies need to be in the viewpoint of the research study participants holistically.

1.12.1 Managing

According to Smit, Cronje, Brevis and Vrba (2007:9): “it is a process that includes four management functions, namely planning, organising, leading and controlling of resources to achieve organisational goals.”

1.12.2 Mentorship

Farren (2006:1) state that mentorship is “a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. It is a learning and development partnership between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn”.

1.12.3 Character-based education

“Character-based education focuses on building the foundational values that will shape the character of our students, rather than merely striving for temporal, performance driven results” (Protos, 2014:1).

1.12.4 Grade 8 Boy

A male learner predominantly between the ages of 13 – 14 who is completing his first year of secondary schooling (Luman, 2018).

1.12.5 Behaviour

“Some commonly used synonyms include ‘activity’, ‘action’, ‘performance’, ‘responding’, ‘response’, and ‘reaction’ but essentially, behaviour is ‘anything that a person says or does’ (Martin & Pear, 2014: 21).

1.12.6 Positive discipline

“a discipline model used by schools, and in parenting, that focuses on the positive points of behaviour, based on the idea that there are no bad children, just good and bad behaviours” (Nelson et al, 2013:3)

1.12.7 Core values

Core values are the guiding principles that influence behaviour and action. These principles can help learners to know what is right from wrong and to assist them determining if they are on the right path in fulfilling their individual goals and are the unwavering and unchanging guide (Talke, 2016).

1.12.8 Empirical survey

An empirical survey is a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation or experience (Bryman and Bell, 2016).

1.13 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Division of chapters

Chapter 1: Orientation – introducing the subject of the research by giving background, statement of problem, aims and clarification of concepts.

Chapter 2: Literature review study providing current understanding of the implementation of an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools.

- Chapter 3: Further literature review focusing on the theoretical framework for the study considering the following theories: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY (Bass and Riggio, 2006) as part of educational management, as the researcher is a headmaster of a secondary boys' school and LEARNER DEVELOPMENT THEORIES looking specifically at Behavioural Theory (Berk 2009).
- Chapter 4: Presents the research methodology selected for this study: research design, population, sampling design, research instrument, data collection methods and analysis of data.
- Chapter 5: Will contain a presentation, analysis and discussion of the research data obtained from the quantitative investigation.
- Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations, limitations and research opportunities for further study.

1.14 CONCLUSION

The researcher has provided background information on the problem that has been identified, which is confirmed in the literature review. It recommends that, "Managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools", with the focus on the mentoring of the learners and staff to ensure positive, comprehensive modes of instruction and studying, is a subject that is pertinent and worthwhile study.

The purpose and objectives have been prescribed for all aspects of the intended study and the process as well as analyses expounded. Character-Education based mentoring is vital for these young adolescents, as they are in the pivotal developmental stage of their journey to adulthood, whilst dealing with a myriad of different issues and facing many obstacles along the way.

It is predicted that the proposed research should add value and contribute to the current available research findings. Furthermore, it should also extend and develop the current perception of these learners and character-based education, through effective mentoring of educators and learners, which should hopefully be beneficial to all concerned both nationally and potentially globally.

CHAPTER 2: LITERARY REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 represents an overview of literature presenting existing and relevant knowledge of character-based education for boys in particular. The research should lead the reader to a better understanding of the problem statement and previous work done in the field of character-based education. The benefits of implementing and managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools are identified, with appropriate models being mentioned and the potential to implement is discussed.

The review of the research literature included information from books, journal articles and professional documents to address the research topic. There are three sections to be discussed in this chapter, namely the concept of character-based education, the need for the mentoring of staff and boys and details on the good man journey involving parents and especially fathers or, if no father available, a suitable male role model.

2.2 CHARACTER – BASED EDUCATION

When considering the notion of ‘character-based education’ it is essential to have a clear understanding of the word ‘character’ as it is key to the particular study. To commence the discussion it is pertinent to consider various interpretations of what is ultimately understood by the term ‘character’.

2.2.1 Definition of character–based education

Britannica Dictionary (2022) in their definition:

the way someone thinks, feels, and behaves: e.g. He rarely shows his true character—that of a kind and sensitive person. This is a side of her character that few people have seen.

The Oxford Dictionary (2022) in their definition:

noun. /'kærəktər/ qualities/features. [countable, usually singular] all the qualities and features that make a person, groups of people, and places different from others to have a strong/weak character.

A reasonable assumption to be taken from these two definitions would be to say that 'character' could be defined as a trait, quality or high moral code. Your character determines what kind of person you are and what types of relationships you form in life. According to Arthur and Kristjansson (2022:7), character is "a set of personal traits or dispositions that produce specific moral emotions, inform motivation, and guide conduct", whereas character education "includes all explicit and implicit educational activities that help young people to develop positive personal strengths called virtues."

Covey (2019:3) says the following on the difference between character and personality:

Our personalities are what others observe when we interact with them, things like our words, deeds and attire. Our character is the sum of our invisible, underlying principles, values and beliefs.

Ryan and Bohlin (2003) defined people of good character as someone who has an understanding about kindness, love kindness, and do those good things.

Pala (2011) defined 'character' to mean a manner in which we are able to distinguish one individual from another or that which differentiates ourselves from other people.

Cummins and Adams (2018:300), in their research *Character Education in Schools for Boys*, defined character as follows:

Character refers to how people live their lives in terms of the fulfilment of their obligations to others, their potential and their fundamental beliefs about what is good and right for them to do. It is a multi-layered idea that refers to the mark and measure of people, a notion that encompasses their characteristics and idiosyncrasies, the extent of their resilience and robustness and their capacity to model and lead through their virtues and qualities. This character is a product of processes that help people to realize their own character while also replicating the character expected of them by others.

According to Singla (2009), a person's 'character' refers to the essence and behaviours that influence the way in which they react to desires, fears, challenges, opportunities, failures and successes. Furthermore, it is considered when faced with moral judgements around the so-called 'worthiness' of a person. Therefore, to have a character who is strong, great or honourable, is potentially considered to be a person who is 'worthy' of respect and acclaim.

Typically, a person's character consists of all the qualities, values, thoughts, words, actions by which they will be considered.

Berkowitz and Bier (2007), in their research *What works in character – education: a research driven guide for educators*, established the following:

- Character education is a cohesive movement creating schools that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people by modelling and teaching good character through emphasis on universal values that we all share;
- It is the intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instil in their students important core, ethical values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others;
- Character education is teaching children about basic human values, including honesty, kindness, generosity, courage, freedom, equality, and respect. The goal is to raise children to become morally responsible, self-disciplined citizens;
- Character education is the deliberate effort to develop good character based on core virtues that are good for the individual and good for society;
- Character education is any deliberate approach by which school personnel, often in conjunction with parents and community members, help children and youth become caring, principled, and responsible;
- (Berkowitz and Bier, 2007: 2-3).

Furthermore, Berkowitz and Bier (2007) purport that character is a psychological concept and therefore the development thereof is an outcome of effective character education. Character is also the amalgamation of psychological traits that impact on the learner's ability to be an effective moral representative.

Payla (2011:1) believes that character education is "a cohesive movement creating schools that foster ethical, responsible and caring young people by modelling and teaching good character through emphasis on universal values that we all share."

It offers lifelong suggestions which speak to moral, ethical and academic issues of increasing stress to the community and crucial to the protection of schools. Furthermore, she feels that "it is the intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts and states to instil in their students important core ethical values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect for self and others (Payla, 2011:1).

Furthermore, Cummins and Adams (2019) contend that good character does not occur by chance, but rather that it is developed over a period of time through a continued process of education, role modelling, learning and practice through character-based education. The deliberate delivery of good character is crucial in today's world as the learners face many situations and unfamiliar perils compared to previous generations. They are inundated with numerous undesirable influences via various social media platforms and other external origins found in the current culture.

Cummins and Adams (2019) purport that character-based education establishes ethical, mature and considerate learners by demonstrating and educating sound character. It furnishes potential options which can deal with moral, ethical and academic matters which are causing further distress to society that are essential in ensuring the safety of our schools. Furthermore, Thomas Lickona (2004:9) considers character education as "the deliberate effort to cultivate virtue."

The literature on character development indicates a broad consensus over the importance of character development. Cummins and Adams (2019) write that character education should be seen as central to the mission of a school, a claim borne out by their survey research which shows that a focus on character qualities and moral values, and the provision of a well-rounded education are regarded by stakeholders such as parents as key markers of school quality. Furthermore, they also find that boys share this consensus - boys who were interviewed for their study on high performance culture in a whole education, recognised the importance of character education and were emotionally invested in their own character development. In surveys conducted for their earlier study, *Character Education in Schools for Boys*, boys called for character education to be explicitly included in their curriculum (Cummins and Adams, 2018).

Even for those who are unconvinced that character is intrinsically important, Arthur, Jones, Kristiansson and Walker (2014) in a meta-analysis of the research literature amongst schools in the UK, demonstrate that character education has a positive effect on academic attainment and other school-related outcomes. In particular, they note that students who benefited from strong character education programs had superior scores in both literacy and numeracy, and exhibited more pro-social behaviours resulting in fewer disciplinary incidents. This was especially true for older (teenaged) students. Furthermore, in some studies, the effect of character education on these outcomes was mediated by variables such as subjective well-being and satisfaction with school (Cummins and Adams, 2019).

2.2.2 The need for character-based education

Arthur and Kristjansson (2022), from the work done at the University of Birmingham and The Jubilee Centre for Character Education in Schools, have come up with the following reasons as to why Character-Based Education is so important:

- Character is fundamental: it is the basis for human and societal flourishing; character is largely caught through role-modelling and emotional contagion: committed leadership, school culture and ethos are therefore central;
- Character should also be taught: direct teaching of character provides the rationale, language and tools to use in developing character elsewhere in and out of school;
- Character is sought freely to pursue a better life;
- Character is educable: it is not fixed and the virtues can be developed. Its progress can be measured holistically, not only through self-reports but also more objective research methods;
- Character depends on building virtue literacy;
- Good character is the foundation for improved attainment, better behaviour and increased employability, but most importantly, flourishing societies;
- Character should be developed in partnership with parents, families, employers, and other community organisations;
- Each child has a right to character education;
- The development of character empowers pupils and is liberating.
- (Arthur and Kristjansson, 2022:7)

Character education is the incorporation of core values or virtues, and the related growth of personal characteristics which fosters wellness, motive and achievement. Character education is everything that happens within a school: in the curriculum, co-curricular activities, pastoral care, leadership, relationships and school culture more generally.

Arthur and Kristjansson (2022:8) suggest that virtues that constitute good character are:

those character traits that enable human beings to respond appropriately to situations in any area of experience. These character traits enable people to live, cooperate, and learn with others in a way that is peaceful, neighbourly, and morally justifiable. Displaying moral and other virtues in admirable activities over

the course of a life, and enjoying the inherent satisfaction that ensues, is what it means to live a flourishing life.

Arthur and Kristjansson (2022:9) continue that the building blocks of character are made up of:

- Intellectual virtues which are the character traits necessary for discernment, right action and the pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding. Examples: autonomy; critical thinking; curiosity; judgement; reasoning; reflection; resourcefulness.
- Moral virtues which are the character traits that enable us to act well in situations that require an ethical response. Examples: compassion; courage; gratitude; honesty; humility; integrity; justice; respect.
- Civic virtues which are the character traits that are necessary for engaged responsible citizenship, contributing to the common good. Examples: citizenship; civility; community awareness; neighbourliness; service; volunteering.
- Performance virtues which are the character traits that have an instrumental value in enabling the intellectual, moral and civic virtues. Examples: confidence; determination; motivation; perseverance; resilience; leadership; teamwork.

Cummins and Adams (2018) support this view and contend that character is how our learners live their lives, as well as how they apply their flexible expertise. Moreover, it is their ability to claim and honour their purpose in everything they do to thrive in their world. Learners build and measure character in at least three different ways:

- integrated, vertical growth of civic, performance and moral character elements that cannot be easily separated from each other;
- horizontal progress along a scope and sequence of learning that responds to the developmental phases of their lives; and
- achievement of success relative to social expectations defined by graduate outcomes.

Furthermore, Cummins and Adams (2018) believe that one needs to consider how one might measure the vertical growth of civic, performance, and moral character. There is a complicated relationship between all three of these elements. From research conducted, any behaviour that places values into action combines elements of all three of civic, moral, and performance character at the same time. People seek to belong, achieve their potential

and do good and right at the same time. There is also a sequence to the pattern of their development that suggests a causal relationship between civic, performance and moral character. The more one feels as though they belong, the more they are likely to fulfil their potential and are more likely to be doing good and right in their world.

Arthur and Kristjansson (2022) believe that character virtues can be 'caught' through a positive school community, formational relationships, and a clear ethos. They can also be 'taught' through the curriculum using teaching and learning strategies, activities, and resources. Finally, they can be 'sought' through chosen experiences that occur within and outside of the formal curriculum.

Myers (2020) contends that student disconnection, a reality in many classrooms, is associated with ethical, emotional, social, and cultural perspectives that can be effectively addressed with the integration of character education which emphasizes the importance of honesty, fairness and responsibility.

School climate, culture and environment play a significant role in the holistic development of boys at school. The way in which schools put together each of the dimensions of what they do into a coherent and functioning model has a notable effect on the evolution of boys individually and together in pursuit of the mission to produce good men, Cummins and Adams (2018) argue. They also maintain that a good school becomes fit for purpose by building high standards across all aspects of school life, and embedding and sustaining these standards within the habits and routines of its daily life, all of which emerge from its desired skills and understandings based on 21st Century civic, performance and moral character competencies.

Cummins and Adams (2018) contend that a great school, a school of character, identifies the 'secret sauce' of aspirations, an affinity and road to success, and applies this to a culture of inspiration, challenge and support that promotes the drive for excellence by young people of character. Furthermore, it creates the sense of belonging to and engagement in school that keeps them in their routine and keeps them focussed on their educational purpose.

In relation to academic outcomes, Munn, Sharp, Lloyd, MacLeod, McCluskey, Brown, and Hamilton (2011) write that there is no conflict between academic and social competence. Rather, it is only when boys possess the social skills and emotional intelligence to interact with peers and adults alike, and when they develop the ability to build productive relationships with teachers, that they can achieve positive academic outcomes.

In their study *Character Education in Schools for Boys*, Cummins and Adams (2018) interviewed boys who testified to the importance of interactions with peers – more so even than relationships with teachers – in developing character. Their accounts show that boys draw inspiration and support from peers, whether as direct recipients of support or as observers, and they also stressed the need for a community that promotes a positive surrounding.

In their discussion of the role of school leaders as leaders for character, Cummins and Adams (2018) list six components of character leadership which align with their six corridors of a 21st Century framework for education.

TABLE 2.1: THE SIX CORRIDORS OF A 21ST CENTURY FRAMEWORK rubric adapted from Cummins and Adams (2019)

COMPONENT	LEADERSHIP ACTION
1. Strengthening	Leading through character adds to the value of a school and draws on the leadership capability of disciplined and purpose-driven practice.
2. Informing	Leading through narrative creates shared purpose in a school and draws on the leadership capability of creating and communicating vision.
3. Orientating	Leading through transformation commits the school to growth and draws on the leadership capability of understanding and managing change.
4. Focussing	Leading through expectation concentrates the school on the solutions for the future derived from the best possible thinking. It also draws on the leadership capability of problem-solving and decision-making.
5. Aligning	Leading through intent draws the school together by building trust and draws on the leadership capability of values-based leadership style.
6. Enriching	Leading through teams enhances the school by empowering people and draws on the leadership capability of team cultivation.

Cummins and Adams (2018) propose that this rubric is intended for leaders to reflect on their practice and to provide a prospective community of practice among leaders with a framework against which they can assess the effectiveness of their practice.

In addition to the aforementioned, Lickona, Schaps and Lewis (2010) maintain that there are a number of positive benefits to be gained from a character-education programme (cf. Chapter 1.3.2). They believe that it assists learners to develop important human traits such as justice, diligence, compassion, respect and courage, and to have a clear understanding of why it is important to live by these qualities. Character development is also promoted through the exploration of ethical issues across the curriculum and through this a positive and moral climate is developed by engaging all members in the community. A successful character-education programme also teaches one how to solve conflicts fairly, creating safer schools that are free of intimidation, fear, and violence, and are more conducive to learning. Furthermore, there is a considered focus and understanding of the importance and relevance of virtues that creates a caring, safe school environment and also teaches learners the principles of how they can become successful and productive citizens. Along with virtues and just as important are universal values that need to be taught for the overall well-being of our society, which by doing so creates an integrated culture of character that supports and challenges learners and adults to strive for excellence. Learners will ultimately feel safe because they are in an atmosphere that values respect, responsibility and compassion and in conclusion, the programme educates learners and adults to understand, engage in, care about, and act on core ethical values such as respect, justice, citizenship, fairness, and responsibility for self and others in school and the community (Lickona, et al., 2010: 1-2).

A School for tomorrow, through its research institute CIRCLE (The Centre for Innovation, Research, Creativity and Leadership in Education) have been engaging in a process of educational research into excellence in education with a group of leading boys' schools in South Africa from 2019-2021. There is a strong sense of historical identity, deep traditions and indisputably strong cultures in boys' schools in South Africa as well as an emerging debate about the strengths and weaknesses of 'brotherhood' and the nature of an education of the character of contemporary masculinity and the competencies that will help boys thrive in the new world environment. From the perspective of boys, success at school (and the character that enables it) is rarely, if ever, seen in the light of this contemporary masculinity.

Instead, it is most frequently seen by boys as a necessary habit of identifying fault and seeking improvement through brave and persistent correction. While they do seem to prefer and work from areas of strength, what seems most memorable is when they seek to tackle perceived deficits. Character is almost always seen in this light: something which they show that reveals, amongst other things:

- how well they face up to the trial and test of their own inadequacy;
- how they find support for the quest through the fellowship of other boys;
- how they draw on inner strength defined through determination and endeavour to create solutions, and;
- how they measure their success by the win they achieve in the end and the recognition they gain for this in the eyes of their fellows and within their school's traditions. (a School for tomorrow, 2022).

Cummins (2022), in his paper 'Thriving Boys? – Telling the story of the secret of boys in boys' schools in South Africa', states that boys in South African boys' schools know that character matters. Some can identify and complement the traditional type of character that is most frequently spoken about (and worth preserving) with a more contemporary set of competencies that speak to emerging positive masculinities and (more broadly) local, regional, and global citizenship. One notes the dominance of performance character in the worldview of boys, i.e. strong performance equals good character. This is more predominant than their view of welcoming and belonging equals good character and/or good person equals good character. It is evident that boys defined the hard work of performance in the following ways:

- the importance of getting things done and seeing things through;
- the value of working hard, especially through adversity;
- strength was expressed predominantly through toughness;
- a balance between playing to existing strengths and working hard through times of adversity to achieve success in the long term and satisfaction in the moment (Cummins, 2022).

Educators do play an important role in shaping learners understanding of good character. The learners' understanding of what character is and what is important is mirrored by the educators – there is alignment between educator and learners, and they end up

emphasising it even more than staff – resulting in a transfer of values/value proposition from staff to learners.

Clayton (2021) established that the integration of character education in classrooms can create safe, caring and inclusive learning environments that support and sustain the academic development of every child whilst also stimulating and fostering personal development and self-regulation which enhances academic achievement.

Character education is one approach for redesigning and establishing teaching and learning environments that are effective, efficient, relevant and rigorous (Riekie, Aldridge and Afaric, 2017). Hao, Yuhuo, and Wenye's (2018) (in Clayton, 2021) cross-cultural meta-analysis examined 69 independent studies with a total of 196 473 participants and discovered that character education promotes cultural values that significantly moderate the relationships between engagement and academic achievement.

Clayton's (2021) findings proved that character education integration was advantageous to increasing student engagement and enhancing intrinsic motivation by optimizing classroom experiences, behaviour and engagement. This view is further supported by Lin (2015), stating that character education increased students' ability and engagement, with the capacity to translate students' academic effort into greater success.

In conclusion from the available empirical evidence, it is evident that there is a definite requirement to emphasize the need of character-based education to assist learners in developing good character, which implies knowing, showing consideration and being decisive on core ethical values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness and compassion. It is not surprising that an important predictor of academic tenacity is learners' feelings of social belonging in school, as well as their perception of the quality of their relationships with other learners and with teachers.

2.2.2.1 The impact of Covid – 19 over the past two years on the behaviour of learners

At the researcher's current school, our investigation into the behaviour of our learners going back to April 2021 indicates a significant increase in serious misconducts, suspensions, suspended expulsions, expulsions and or voluntary withdrawals. Hence the researcher's interest in phrasing the aforementioned question 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2.

From the literature provided in 2.2.2 and the lack of mentoring and focus on character-based education through the Covid -19 pandemic period, it is suggested that there is a dire need for the programme to be resuscitated urgently. This is further supported by recent research survey conducted by TeamTeach UK (2021) entitled *Hidden Educational Challenges during the pandemic: the impact of Covid-19 on pupil behaviour*, with 70% of the respondents confirming that Covid-19 has negatively impacted pupil behaviour, suggests behaviour has deteriorated.

The pandemic has led to a number of behaviour trends, with responses outlining that there has been an increase in anxiety driven behaviour, isolation and loss of social skills and lack of engagement and poor mental health. Over 40% indicated that they had observed the emergence of new behaviour trends in pupil behaviour such as violence and aggression towards staff, apathy and refusal of good behaviour and obsessive compulsive disorders (OCD) tendencies (TeamTeach, 2021).

This decline in behaviour standards experienced by over two thirds of respondents indicates an enormous issue that will potentially continue to impact upon learners, educators and schools beyond the end of the pandemic. Similarly, the rise in new behaviours reported by over 40% of respondents indicates that the pandemic is the driving force behind these changes in pupil behaviour (TeamTeach, 2021).

The aforementioned data is supported by research conducted by Hoofman and Secord (2021), seeing an escalation of suicide risk for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender youth as well as those youth questioning their sexual orientation (LGBTQ) associated with increased social isolation. Furthermore, there was also a 66% increase in domestic violence for LGBTQ youth as well as an increase in anxiety and depression particularly in adolescents as a result of COVID-19 itself and as a consequence of school changes (Hoofman and Secord, 2021).

It is very interesting, but not surprising bearing in mind Luman's (2018) research topic, that one of the recommendations going forward is positive management training. TeamTeach (2021) researchers mentioned that managing behaviour has for a considerable period been recognised as an important criterion for successful teaching, with its value increasingly emphasised during the pandemic. Furthermore, there will be a need to increase pastoral and behavioural support within the school, but also to work together with other out-of-school

services – such as early intervention, mental health, and social services – which can all assist in reducing the effects of Covid-19 on the learner and classroom behaviour.

Finally, it is crucial that educators and parents are provided with positive behaviour management skills in order to manage increased new behaviour trends (TeamTeach, 2021), whilst Clayton (2021) established that character education improved attendance and reduced violence and the disciplinary issues that impacted academic performance.

2.2.2.2 Possible causes for the decline in behaviour

Recent research conducted by UNESCO (2021) sheds some light on the possible causes for the decline in behaviour in assisting the researcher and the school to have an understanding of this decline. Its findings suggest that school closures are the cause of adverse consequences not only on school going children, but also on the broader society as well, with the impact at its worst for the most at risk learners and their families. Parents are struggling to manage the demands of online learning, distance and home schooling whilst trying to meet the requirements of their jobs. Appropriate and safe childcare is a problem with a rise in substance abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as exposure to violence all seen as contributors (UNESCO, 2021).

2.2.3 Strategies which could be utilised to manage an effective character –based mentor system

Reichert and Hawley (2013) believe that relational teaching acknowledges that the starting point for our teaching is located in the relationships between educator and learner whilst the formation of a successful association is a prerequisite for good learning. Educators therefore need to know their boys and respond to them accordingly as individuals and in their groups. These relationships and the learning needs that emerge from them are best attended to through educators' expertise and unwavering commitment to supporting learner development and the growth of competency by balancing adaptability and creativity, with high expectations and clear standards.

The literature on relational teaching emphasises that each learner has unique needs. It is therefore important that educators have an holistic understanding of each boy's individual circumstances (Cummins and Adams 2019): effective educators should know their learners both in the academic arena as well as in the co-curricular aspects of school which requires

that they show a real interest in the learners. Relatedly, Reichert and Hawley (2013) urge educators to treat learners with respect and to demonstrate care.

Once educators are familiar with their learners' circumstances, they are in a position to give attention to those circumstances and to tailor their teaching accordingly. In particular, educators are urged to be especially attentive to the challenges faced by educators from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds, whom schools often fail to effectively integrate (Cummins and Adams, 2019).

The American Psychological Association (the APA) (2015:21) writes that "the more teachers know about the cultural backgrounds of students" and other aspects of their social context, the better they will be to effectively manage classroom interactions. Moreover, where educators share a common characteristic with a learner, for instance a similar cultural background, educators may have an enhanced ability to empathise with that learner. Reichert and Hawley (2013) write that these common characteristics can therefore be used to strengthen rapport with learners.

The importance of personalisation in teaching is recognised by stakeholders such as parents, according to survey data from Cummins and Adams (2019), who report that schools that cater to students' individual needs are more likely to be regarded as high-performing schools. Conversely, parents are often critical of lower-performing schools for their failure to provide the same level of individualised attention.

Darling-Hammond (2020) suggests that the science of learning indicates that humans learn more effectively when they are not anxious, fearful, or distracted by other pressing concerns; when the learning is connected to their prior knowledge and experience; when they are actively engaged; and when they have a reason to care about the content they are learning and can use it to deepen their understanding to solve real questions or problems. Finally, Cantor, Osher, Berg, Steyer and Rose (2018:9) note that "there is no single 'ideal' developmental pathway for everyone; instead there are multiple pathways to healthy development, learning, academic success, and resilience".

Cummins and Adams (2019) state that further to the aforementioned, learners' beliefs and perceptions about intelligence and ability, both generally and in relation to themselves personally, affect their cognitive functioning, confidence and learning. These views may be shaped by educators' and peers' presumptions, comments, and behaviours. Whilst prejudicial emotions such as anxiety and distress can restrict learning, emotion also

activates learning as it affects excitement and attention (Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007) and therefore should be considered in creating instruction that is mentally stimulating. Simultaneously, compatible structures, assistance and declarations that permit the learner to know what to expect and how to be successful, decrease cognitive load and free up the mind for learning other demanding material (Paas, Renkl and Sweller, 2003).

Cummins and Adams (2019) contend that there are various modes of learning which call for different manners of teaching. Educational goals increasingly emphasize the problem-solving and interpersonal skills needed for 21st century success, which cannot be developed through passive, rote-oriented learning focused on the memorization of disconnected facts. Today's goals require paths to deeper understanding supporting the transfer of skills and use of knowledge in new situations (Goldman and Pellegrino, 2015).

From intensive research conducted by Berkowitz and Bier (2007) in *What works in character-education: a research-driven guide for educators*, the following strategies were found to be effective in managing a character-based mentor system as suggested by Solomon, Battistich and Watson (2001):

TABLE 2.2: Effective Strategies for Managing a Character-Based Mentor System (some of our previous research partially adapted from Luman 2018)

STRATEGY	DETAIL
1. Professional development	All effective programmes build in structures for on-going professional training experiences for those implementing the character education system
2. Peer interaction	All effective programmes incorporate peer interactive strategies. Peer discussion (in their mentor groups) ideally involves role-play and cooperative learning. This is an essential part of the programme as the older boys act in peer support and mentor roles
3. Direct teaching	It is quite common to include direct instruction about character. As Thomas Lickona has long reminded the field, 'Practice what you preach, but don't forget to preach what you practice'

4. Skill training	Many common strategies are forms of promoting the development of and often the direct teaching of social-emotional skills and capacities. These fall into both the categories of <i>intrapersonal</i> and <i>interpersonal</i> skills (e.g. self-management and conflict resolution, respectively)
5. Explicit agenda	More than 50% of the programmes either make it explicit that character is the focus or make a focus on morality, values, virtues, or ethics explicit
6. Family and/or community involvement	This common strategy involves the inclusion of families, especially parents, and community members and organizations. This includes parents as consumers (i.e. offering training to parents) and parents and community as partners (i.e. including them in the design and delivery of the character education initiative). It is essential to involve fathers as much as possible especially during these teenage years of adolescence
7. Provide role models and mentors	Many programs incorporate peer and adult role models (both live and literature based) and mentors to foster character development. The researcher's current programme provides both educators and learners as mentors as well as fathers potentially
8. Integration into the academic curriculum	It is important to integrate character education into the academic curriculum, especially in this age of 'No Child Left Behind'. It is clear that character education also encourages academic learning and success
9. Multi-strategy approach	Effective character education programmes are rarely single-strategy initiatives

Adapted from Berkowitz and Bier (2007)

Furthermore, it is recommended that one selects successful researched and applied approaches that relate to the school's goals viz. 'What Works in Character Education' –

which is a suitable practical tool for educators. The majority of character education is well planned, but due to a dearth of information in some cases educators are not necessarily having the impact that they would desire.

Berkowitz and Bier (2017) believe that leadership support is absolutely essential, as is the same mind set and approach as that of the learners. Furthermore, they should have an excellent understanding of all aspects of character education and be fully committed to the best possible outcomes for their learners. It is also a key requirement that they demonstrate model character and quality character education as instructional leaders in the implementation thereof.

One needs to assess character education to ensure that it is having an effect and provide relevant data for further improvement. The 11th Principle in CEP's *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* is "evaluate the character of the school, the school staff's functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character." (cf. para. 3.2).

Berkowitz and Bier (2017) argue further that it is a key requirement that educators review outcomes as well as the implementation processes and consider those outcomes for possibly improving practice. To this point, Marshall, Caldwell & Foster (2011) have created well suited outcomes to the requirements for character education and is described comprehensively in *Character Evaluation Resource Guide* published by CharacterPlus (www.csd.org).

A common body of knowledge from principals contends that when considering school culture, the culture of staff needs to be considered as well. It is essential that prior to one wanting to introduce character education and to improve the whole culture of the school and the learners, the culture of the staff requires attention to ensure that they are modelling appropriate behaviour and culture.

In this regard, learners should ideally have a connection to the school which should be developed as best as possible. Berkowitz and Bier (2017) state that there is evidence that the success of character education depends considerably to what extent learners feel connected, attached, or part of their schools. Their perception of the school as to how caring it is, is essential in determining the overall effectiveness of character education and therefore school leadership is required to ensure that this is promoted and observed.

James Comer, developer of the School Development Project (Comer, 2017), contends that it is important to note that this is a long-term investment programme. It is highly unlikely that any positive impact on school culture will be evident within three years and in fact only likely to be observed after five to seven years (Comer, 2017).

Further to Comer's research, Berkowitz and Bier (2017) recommend that a number of programmes are compiled and that parents are provided with suitable training along with the community, as they are an essential component for successful academic and character outcomes. Many programmes in the past and currently do include other adults from the community in assisting to design, monitor, plan and the implementation of character education, which also results in their buy-in of the various programmes.

Finally, Nyambe and Wilmot (2015) found that character education, which teaches skills that empower students' social and organization competence, is more effective in the learning environment when it is used as a school-wide intervention, whilst Clayton (2021) established that character education improved attendance and reduced violence and the disciplinary issues that impacted academic performance.

2.2.3.1 Managing Relational Breakdowns with Boys

Spilt, Koomen and Thijs (2011) contend that personal relationships with the learners provide educators intrinsic satisfaction and purpose to their profession. Educator–learner relationships are often mentioned as one of the major reasons for remaining in the profession (Hargreaves, 1998; O'Connor, 2008). This is supported by Hargreaves (2000) who conducted in-depth interviews with 60 teachers and found that relationships with students were the most important source of enjoyment and motivation. Having focused on successful strategies for building relationships with boys (cf. par.2.2.3) in order to increase learner engagement and achievement, attention now turns to managing the inevitable relational breakdowns, which include defiance and blatant misbehaviour.

According to Reichert and Hawley (2013), boys expect their teachers to be not only pedagogically and relationally masterful but also to be the managers of the relationship: initiating contact, offering support when problems arise, and repairing breaches when they arise. Spilt et al. (2011) state that the formation of personal, supportive teacher–student relationships demand emotional involvement from teachers. For the learner, it is evident that the emotional quality of the teacher–learner relationship is an important consideration in their school connection, wellbeing, and academic success, which is supported by Spilt et al.

(2011). However, in striking contrast to their positive relational accounts, in which they often reflected on and acknowledged the difficulties they initially posed to teachers, the boys expressed minimal interest or responsibility for relational breakdowns in these negative accounts (Reichert and Hawley, 2013).

In moments of breakdown, boys and teachers, in their 'memorable' but negative accounts, tended to ascribe to the other responsibility for what happened. Reichert and Hawley (2013) highlight the role of the educator in being the 'relationship manager' to repair the rupture and to restore the working alliance. Spilt et al. (2011) established that secondary educators experienced greater detachment from their learners and stereotyping, which was repeatedly mentioned as a source of negative emotion (Hargreaves, 2000). Furthermore, Hargreaves (2000) established the value that educators attach to personal relationships with learners in the school context, and demonstrate how conflictual or alienated relationships exert a threat to not only teachers professionally but also their personal well-being.

In view of the aforementioned, Reichert and Hawley (2013) contend that despite potential alienation, such findings lend a special weight to educators' abilities to persevere with particular boys, especially when social circumstances are most pressing, even when there is minimal sign of success. Educators, as do learners, carry their relational histories with them into the classroom. They too are subject to unexamined or under-examined reflexive responses to a variety of challenges posed by the learners in their charge. Educators' responsibility to serve as relationship managers requires a measure of self-analysis and self-awareness, a willingness to reset, to reassess present practice, and to improvise - qualities often absent from educators' negative accounts and causing potentially further pressure on them.

Reichert and Hawley (2013) found in the positive accounts that boys often presented strong opposition and resistance in class and were defiant about changing those behaviours when confronted. Educators who succeeded in dissolving resistance and aggression assumed the responsibility of relationship manager. Whether from past experience or learnt theory, such educators did not expect learners to assume mutual responsibility for an improved working relationship in the classroom. Educators as relationship managers were able to convey to resistant boys that:

- (1) they were effectively in charge,

(2) they were positively concerned about the boys despite their inferior performance or troublesome behaviour, and that

(3) they, the teachers, were confident better work and better behaviour were possible—even when no such work or behaviour was yet evident.

According to Reichert and Hawley (2013), one should also consider that these boys are in the final stage of childhood, viz. adolescence, which indicates the beginning of puberty and the pathway to adulthood. Hegemonic masculinity then presents some boys as inferior to others. Bullying is another manner in which young men maintain their control over less 'masculine' boys. In this bullying situation, adolescent boys are driven to be dominant by committing to more adventurous and risky ventures. Bullying is often motivated by cultural norms and stereotyped notions of what a young man should be. Gendered sexuality in adolescence refers to the role gender takes in the adolescent's life and how it is informed by and impacts others' perceptions of their sexuality. This can lead to 'gay bashing' and other forms of discrimination if young men seem not to display relevant masculinity.

Cummins and Adam (2019) consider the male gender role not to be genetically settled, because it is a consequence of the embodiment of culturally defined gender norms and ideologies. It is a significant moment as developmental psychologists confirm change in relations with parents, peers and even their own self-identity. It is a period of uncertainty and disruption as they feel influenced due to advocated hegemonic masculinity as well as social circumstances leading them to become more self-conscious.

De Visser and Smith (2007) purport that although men are not required to engage in male only behaviour to be considered masculine, performing more masculine behaviours increases the prospect that they will be considered more masculine, otherwise known as building 'masculine capital'. There has been discussion around the notion that boys' emotional steadfastness leaves them unable to recognize their own and others' emotions, which leaves a danger of developing psychological torment and shallow interpersonal skills. Boys, during their adolescence years, are pressured to act masculine in order to meet the demands of hegemonic ideals, but the potential of undergoing everlasting psychological damage consequently lurks in the background.

According to Fenton and Peti (2018), when students realise and understand that they are valued, respected, and appreciated, their levels of motivation and achievement grow.

Furthermore, abilities that are associated with respectful climates build trusting relationships which increase their will and determination.

In conclusion, Cummins and Adams (2019) suggest that a sense of social belonging allows learners to rise above the concerns of the moment and is linked to long-term learner motivation and school success. Specifically, adolescent learners, who feel they have better relationships with teachers and peers, experience a greater sense of belonging in school. Consequently, they are more motivated and engaged in class and produce better results, despite what their prior levels of motivation and performance may have been.

2.3 MENTORING

2.3.1 The concept of mentoring and the need for it in South African Schools

In considering the concept of mentoring and the need for it in South African schools, it is pertinent to note that one is considering mentoring for both the educator and the learner. The mentoring of the educator can occur through another educator who is more senior and/or a peer. The mentoring of a learner can occur through an educator and/or an older learner in the form of peer support. This will now be discussed accordingly.

The South African Department of Education (2004:8) defines mentoring as:

a sustained developmental relationship between an experienced person such as a teacher with long service and an inexperienced (newly qualified) teacher, the mentor provides guidance and support to a mentee with a respect to a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Mentoring facilitates induction into a new profession and career achievement, as well as allows the mentee to acquire new skills and learn how to solve problems. It also supports capacity building within the organisation by providing opportunities for contextualised learning (Department of Education, 2004:25).

Msila (2012:47) establishes the following in his article "Mentoring and School Leadership: Experiences from South Africa":

Mentoring is a relatively new concept in South African schools, and in this investigation the researcher found that the mentor-mentee relationships can be fraught with challenges. Among others, in line with existing research, the findings revealed that the personalities of the mentor and mentee are very crucial in

ensuring the effectiveness of the mentoring experience. Moreover, the results bring to light that mentors who have received effective training will be more efficient than mentors who did not. Furthermore, future schools will require the services of effective mentors who will understand the agenda of change in schools.

Ekechukwu and Horsfall (2015), as well as Kutsyuruba and Godden (2019), indicate that mentoring can be viewed as the professional development of younger teachers, which promotes the continuous and lifelong development of teachers.

The process of mentoring has emerged as a professional development technique in education to improve teachers' professional skills through career development (Akhalq, Chishti and Iqbal, 2016).

It is a considered and well-established fact that the provision of quality teaching at South African schools is one of the greatest challenges facing schools presently (Botha, 2020b) and therefore there is a significant demand for quality new beginner teachers to enter the system. Consequently, QuanBaffour and Arkon-Achemfour (2013) stress the fact that School Management Teams (SMTs) in South African schools must focus on the effective mentoring of beginner teachers to improve their career choice decision and pleasure to retain them in schools.

According to research conducted by Botha and Hugo (2021), authors such as Lo, Ramayah and Kui (2013) have the firm opinion that beginner teachers who are supported and mentored will experience greater pleasure in their chosen career and will be more committed to the profession. This statement is supported by Richter, Kunter, Ludtke, Klusmann and Anders (2013), who established that mentoring improves a mentee's support system by providing them with an experienced person who provides advice through the preliminary stages of their educational career, which should result in increased productivity and job satisfaction.

Considering the previous statement, Tahir, Said, Ahmad, Daud, Sumitono and Yusof (2014:394) indicate that the "process of mentoring enables mentees to become equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge which will improve the academic progress of learners".

Botha and Hugo (2021) propose that research conducted by Hugo (2015) and, more recently, by Mullen and Klimaitis (2021), found that there was indeed an urgent requirement for a mentoring programme to improve job satisfaction among teachers when transitioning from one school to another and on entering the profession for the first time.

When considering the mentoring of learners, Sunnambala (2021) offers the following argument as to their role and need. He believes that mentors have the power to impact on their learners who are currently on their journey to adulthood and need an adult to assist them in goal setting and improved academic performance; personal life goals as well as extra-curricular goals; unlocking their potential and building human connections; as well as providing a safe place and person to talk to, who they can trust and feel cared for.

Sunnambala is supported by Tierny and Grossman (2000) that youth in school-based mentoring programmes turned in higher quality class work, did better academically (especially in science and written and oral communication), and completed more of their assignments than their peers who did not have mentors. Blakely, Menon and Jones (1995) established that teachers of students in the BELONG mentoring program reported that students participating in mentoring were more engaged in the classroom and also seemed to place a higher value on school than students who did not have mentors.

The benefits of mentoring of both educators and learners will be discussed further in 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.1.2 respectively.

2.3.1.1 The mentoring of educators

Teaching is an interpersonal, emotional and social profession and mentoring is similar in that it requires face to face interactions and therefore the personal relationship between the mentor and mentee is essential for the mentor process (Hudson, 2010).

In "Mentors: They Simply Believe," Lasley (1996) argues that the essential characteristic of mentors is the ability to communicate their belief that a person is able to overcome present challenges and of achieving success in the future. This is an essential quality for mentor teachers working in school-based programmes, whilst good mentor teachers build on the chance to declare the human potential of their mentees. This can be done in confidential conversations as well as in public settings. Good mentors are willing to share their own personal battles and irritations and how they managed to master them, doing so in a sincere and caring manner that builds trust.

A five-factor model of mentoring for effective teaching has previously been identified, namely, Personal Attributes, System Requirements, Pedagogical Knowledge, Modelling, and Feedback (Hudson, 2010). There are mentoring attributes and practices associated with each factor, which have been justified statistically with empirical evidence in previous works (see Hudson, 2007, and Hudson, Skamp and Brooks, 2005).

When one considers personal attributes, it includes the mentor being supportive of the mentee and being comfortable discussing various practices and being a good listener. The mentor's personal attributes are utilised to encourage the mentee's personal reflection on practices and to instil confidence and positive attitudes (Hudson, 2010).

On considering system requirements, Hudson (2010) believes that the mentor needs to verbalise the aims, policies and curricula requirements of the system for effective teaching as well as a sound content knowledge which meets the demands of the system. Mentors can provide pedagogical knowledge as required.

Hudson (2010) as well as Skamp and Brooks (2005) believe that a mentor's enthusiasm can be contagious, displaying positive teaching attributes whilst modelling ideal teacher-student rapport as well. This will encourage learning.

Finally, Hudson (2010) suggests that comprehensive written and oral feedback is essential in order for the mentor to strive to be the best that they can be.

Msila (2012:49) established that mentoring is "the single most powerful thing that a principal can do to enhance personal survival and effectiveness in any school". Furthermore, he proposed that South African Schools' educator mentors are an essential part of a school's resources to attend to the professional development of competent educators.

Mukeredzi, Mthiyane and Bertram (2015) support Msila (2012) and contend that mentoring is the single most effective action in order to promote competence and quality amongst educators in South African schools.

2.3.1.2 The mentoring of learners viz. Grade 8 boys

Luman (2018) contends that boys in the middle years of schooling have highly particular needs as they are going through a huge amount of physical, emotional and social growth. They typically test their own abilities and the boundaries around them, trying to find how and where they fit in the world. He continues that educators have the ability to best cater for

them, keep them focussed, and develop their love of learning and connectedness to the school. Furthermore, the intervention of a suitable male role model and mentor plus the teaching of positive verbal communication will definitely assist towards achieving this goal. Effective mentorship and role-modelling can have a positive effect in building men of hope and integrity, men who can think ahead, plan efficiently and be accountable for their actions (Luman, 2018).

At the researcher's school, the mentor – mentee system was implemented in 2014 and has now been in place for almost ten years and is a continual work in progress. Good relationships are being established as the educators (mentors) have now known some of their learners for five years and should have established an excellent understanding, rapport and knowledge of each of their mentees.

The school utilises both educators and older learners (peer support) to mentor, in this instance, Grade 8 boys. West (2001:4-5) notes that "boys are strongly influenced by peers", seek acceptance by other boys and "look up to older boys". These tendencies can be harnessed to provide effective mentoring programs. He suggests examples of where an older boy can mentor a younger underachieving boy (peer support programme) in academic endeavours, viz. additional Mathematics support or language skills etc. A similar process could also be utilised in the co-curricular programme of the school where the older boys assist with coaching also increases skills and confidence. At the researcher's school the older boys present diverse topics to be discussed during the character education mentor lesson such as respect, courage and wellness and the younger boys appreciate the interaction (cf. survey feedback on character education programme).

2.3.2 The requirements of a successful mentoring programme

The process of mentoring has emerged as a professional development technique in education to improve teachers' professional skills through career development (Akhalq et al., 2016).

Considering this, Smit and Du Toit (2016) state that a mentoring programme promotes an educator's professional development and assists them to progress to their full potential. In promoting professional development amongst newly qualified educators, mentors enable these educators to acquire additional skills, ensuring that they are more effective in their roles (Kutsyuruba and Godden, 2019).

From their research findings, Botha and Hugo (2021) believe that mentoring is essential in developing the skills of educators. Authors such as Khan, Abbasi, Waseem, Ayaz and Ijaz (2016) confirm that when a business concern focuses on improving their employees' skills, this results in an improved employee performance, and ultimately they are more productive.

Furthermore, Botha and Hugo (2021) suggest that mentoring also increases the productivity of teachers which is supported by Van der Weijden, Belder, Van Arensbergen and Van den Besselaar (2015:280) who stated that "mentors play a significant role in the personal and professional development of academic leaders, as well as on their productivity and performance".

Heiney-Smith and Denton (2015) contend that coaching, mentoring and support of inexperienced educators by more experienced educators will assist them to potentially become accomplished educators and should positively influence learners' academic achievements. This is further supported in research conducted by Tahir et al. (2014) as well as Kutsyuruba and Godden (2019), who argue that it is essential to improve the teaching performance of beginner educators. Botha and Hugo (2021) confirm from their research that due to the support and guidance of a more experienced educator (a mentor), will result in a positive outcome on the quality and teaching performance of inexperienced educators.

For a mentor programme to be successful and effective, it is essential that one has capable mentors who are suitably trained and guided at all times by more experienced senior mentors. James Rowley in *The Good Mentor* (1999) included several qualities that are required of a good mentor.

The good mentor is accepting of the beginning teacher and highly committed to the task of helping beginning teachers find success and satisfaction in their new profession. Successful programmes require formal mentor training as a prerequisite to mentoring and specific descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers. Furthermore, they require mentors to maintain simple logs or journals that record meetings and other professional development activities involving the mentor and mentee (Rowley, 1999).

Rowley (1999) continues that good mentors are willing to coach beginning teachers to improve their performance and skill level. The mentor training program should equip mentors with the knowledge, skills and dispositions prerequisite to effective coaching. Such training helps mentors value description over interpretation in the coaching process; develop multiple methods of classroom observation; employ research-based frameworks as the

basis for reflection; and refine their conferencing and feedback skills. For this to be successful, it is essential that the mentors and mentees are allocated sufficient time and opportunity to participate in the pre-meetings, classroom observations, and post-meetings that provide appropriate support.

The good mentor should ideally be effective in different interpersonal contexts and have the ability to see that each mentoring relationship occurs in a special, interpersonal situation and adjust their mentoring communications to meet the needs of individual mentees. They require a thorough in-depth understanding of their own communication styles and a willingness to objectively observe the conduct of the mentee (Rowley, 1999).

The good mentor should be a model of a life-long learner and be open in their desire to seek more effective solutions to their own particular issues. They model this commitment by their willingness to learn from colleagues and in their pursuit of professional development. They lead and attend seminars whilst developing and experimenting with new practices, whilst sharing any new knowledge, information and best practice (Rowley, 1999).

Finally, Rowley (1999) believes that a good mentor needs to communicate hope and optimism and always display a positive attitude in their mentoring of their mentees without resorting to negative talk. Scandura and Pellegrini (2004) claim that for mentoring to be effective, advantageous and beneficial, the mentoring relationship should be characterised by an empowering and a participative decision-making relationship rather than one that is directive and autocratic.

Hudson (2010) supports many of these qualities mentioned by Rowley (1999) with professional development on effective mentoring enhancing their skills apropos lifelong-learning. Mentoring has for many years been considered as a method to professionally develop teachers (Blank and Sindelar, 1992).

2.3.3 The role of the mentor

Mentoring is a key component of the study as the mentors need to implement the character-based mentor system. Lagace-Roy and Knackstedt (2007) believe that effective mentors wear different hats and make use of diverse skills to guide, support and motivate their mentees, and a good mentor may well need to coach or counsel other mentors. It is important to understand that a mentor does not need to be expert in all areas but he/she should display the following roles and attributes.

Table 2.3 Role of the Mentor

ROLES	ATTRIBUTES
Spend time with the mentee	Be an active listener to concerns and genuine attempt to understand
Help mentee set realistic goals	Respect confidentiality
Challenge and stimulate mentee	Share experience and wisdom
Build self-confidence	Be non-judgemental
Encourage the mentee to make the most of his/her abilities	Respect the direction the mentee wishes to take, not imposing one's opinions, interfering or taking control
Assist the mentee in developing self-awareness	A successful leader and people person
Establishing a non-judgmental and risk-free environment	Dedicated to professionalism and setting a good example
Act as a role model	Open to innovative ideas and approaches

Adapted from Lagace-Roy and Knackstedt (2007)

Table 2.3 indicates how important their roles and key attributes are, required for a successful mentor – mentee relationship.

From a practical perspective, how would the actual character-education lesson be arranged for the mentor and mentee and what are their respective roles. An example follows (Talke, 2021).

The Role of the Educator (Mentor):

- Facilitate the Character Education Lesson process
- Determine the group/mentor/mentee setup
- Follow programme with Grades 8 - 11
- Provide guidance for activities to be completed in the class. Hand out, check and collect Character Education Journal for reflection
- Provide guidance for activities to be completed in the class

Lesson Structure:

TOPIC: RESPECT (different aspect for each grade)

Grade 8: Respect for school

Grade 9: Respect for self

Grade 10: Respect for women

Grade 11: Respect for leadership

- Character Education Topic as per programme e.g. respect, bullying, social awareness, etc.
- provide stimulus: quote, video clip, short article, etc.
- write in silence: your feelings, thoughts on the topic in the reflection page
- reflection of actions going forward

Role of the learner mentor (Grade 11 or Grade 12):

A learner mentor is an older boy who guides a less experienced learner (junior) by building trust and modelling positive behaviours.

- academic, sporting, cultural and citizenship support and guidance
- positive goal setting support
- assists in making good choices
- guides him through the positive rites of passage and coming to terms with the hierarchy at the school
- to be dependable, engaged, authentic and tuned into the needs of the mentee
- referral of learner to educator mentor as required

Role of the learner mentee (lower grades to Grades 11 and 12 i.e. juniors)

- get to know your mentors
- know and abide by the school credo and culture, core values, core traditions, rites of passage and support structures
- communicate, listen and ask questions
- identify personal concerns and challenges
- seek guidance with setting goals and selection of subjects (Talke, 2021).

2.3.4 The role of the mentee

According to Lagace-Roy and Knackstedt (2007), the roles and attributes of a mentee are essential for development and growth and provide the foundation for a successful mentoring relationship. A mentee should evaluate whether the mentoring relationship is effective and useful. Below is a table reflecting some roles and attributes of a mentee.

Table 2.4 Role of the Mentee

ROLES	ATTRIBUTES
Committed to spend time with a mentor	Being an active listener
Set realistic goals	Be open-minded
Committed to accept responsibility for personal growth	Be introspective
Dedicated to enhancing leadership, professional, career and personal competencies	Able to assert self and express needs
Take an active role for development to occur	Show an eagerness to take on new challenges
Dedicated to providing and accepting constructive feedback	Have an ardent desire to learn
Committed to achieving outcomes	Have the confidence to take risks

Adapted from Lagace-Roy and Knackstedt (2007).

Table 2.4 comments: Mentees (educators and learners) need to learn to communicate directly, succinctly, and sincerely across a variety of different media and formats, exercising an understanding about asking and answering questions, and using a positive and supportive tone towards their audience which is appropriate to the intention and execution of their message within their context. Boys learn best when communication is conducted by, with, and towards them within a constructive and well-formed narrative about their learning, growth, and development. Effective mentors understand the need to maintain clarity, appropriate tone, and care in all communications with students, parents, families, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

Effective communication with boys is grounded in relationality, as stressed by Reichert and Hawley (2009, 2011). Research conducted by prominent clinical psychologists, including Reichert, Thompson, and Cox, provide further insight into the communication strategies that

have been adapted to boys in clinical settings in and outside of schools. Incorporating material from his report to the IBSC (International Boys' Schools Coalition), *Locating Significance in the Lives of Boys* (2011), and reflecting on his clinical practice over three decades in counselling boys, Adam Cox discusses effective communication strategies with boys, focusing on establishing a trusting relationship that leads to 'deepening the conversation' about authenticity, purposeful work and motivation in *Cracking the Boy Code: How to Understand and Talk with Boys* (2018). Much of this material is equally relevant to educators of boys, especially with an emphasis on boys' holistic development. This is essential if the mentor – mentee relationship is to be effective going forward.

2.3.5 The role of the principal

The role of the principal is paramount in ensuring that the mentoring system works effectively in managing the character-based mentoring system. Khumalo (2018) argues that the theory of mentoring is pertinent to the education system and school leadership with empirical evidence, indicating a correlation between great school leadership and performance. Every school is as good or bad as its leader and you do not have great schools without great leaders, with recent studies revealing that there is a positive relationship between good leadership and performance in schools (Ash, Hodge and Connell, 2013; Weinstein and Munoz, 2014).

Cummins and Adams (2019) suggest that the culture of boys in a school reflects the character and qualities of its leaders. The quality and impact of leadership in a school for boys is enhanced by a narrative that flows from a model of leadership that places values into action in a manner grounded by research. Wise teachers understand that the character capital of a boys' school is directly proportional to the amount of character leadership that is shown by them and all their colleagues.

In their study *The way: the character of an excellent 21C education*, Cummins and Adams (2019) discuss the role of school leaders in the development of character among their students. While focusing on those holding formal leadership roles, the findings and conclusions are also relevant to our understanding of teacher's leadership. School leaders were asked to discuss what their purpose was as leaders for character. They conceived of their roles in one of three ways:

1. The majority of leaders saw themselves as individual influencers who exerted their influence through relational gestures such as role modelling positive character traits,

- interacting personally with students and faculty, and playing a role in disciplinary practice.
2. About a quarter were programme leaders who saw their role as leading the delivery of formal character programmes. One principal felt that his purpose was to fully implement the mission of the school and it was incumbent upon him to constantly seek ways to enable everyone to exercise the school's values.
 3. The remaining leaders saw themselves as cultural leaders whose task was to articulate the norms of the school community (Cummins and Adams, 2019).

Additionally, in Cummins and Adams' (2019) work it becomes clear that relationality is central to the role of not only classroom educators but also of school leaders. In their response to a questionnaire about their daily leadership practice, the four most nominated practices were relationship building, communication and listening skills, role modelling core values and nurturing and enhancing community. Leaders also stress the importance of visibility - that is to say, making their presence felt, for instance by supporting staff, greeting students and parents and role modelling positive character traits (Cummins and Adams, 2019).

In conclusion, Cummins and Adams (2019) believe that effective leaders are those who are capable of fulfilling a number of roles which include that of strategy and leadership; directing as a mission-orientated servant leader; performance and systems: motivating as an evidence-based high-performance leader; education: influence as a research driven instructional leader; and finally culture: inspiring as a growth-minded change leader.

2.3.6 The benefits of a successful mentoring programme

Jocovy and Gerringer (2007), in their research findings in *The ABCs of School Based Mentoring*, contend that there is compelling evidence that school-based mentoring produces many positive outcomes for youth. Recent research into school-based mentoring outcomes indicates that these programmes can: improve academic performance; improve the quality of class work; increase in work ethic and completion of assignments; a reduction in disciplinary incidents and suspension; an increase in learner's perceptions of their academic ability; and a reduction in truancy.

Furthermore, this research also indicates that youth participating in school-based mentoring programs are more likely than non-mentored peers to report having a non-parental adult who they respect. That is someone who they can talk to about personal issues and problems, who cares about them and the choices that they make and what one would also call a peer support mentor (Herrera, Schwartz, Rhodes and Chan, 2011).

Additional research into school-based mentoring outcomes established that mentored students developed more positive attitudes toward school, were more likely to trust their teachers, and developed higher levels of self-confidence and a greater ability to express their feelings (Jocovy and Geringer, 2007).

It is essential that school management teams include mentoring programs to improve the work environment, where educators are provided the opportunity to seek guidance from an experienced teacher who supports them in their new profession. Through mentoring, factors affecting job satisfaction amongst educators can be addressed effectively. Researchers established that the inclusion of a mentoring programme would assist educators to manage their classrooms in a more effective way which would then result in improved academic performance of the learners (Botha and Hugo, 2021).

From Botha and Hugos' (2021) research, mentees are provided with the opportunity to observe their mentors who set an example of how to behave, manage and engage learners and educators in a teaching environment. This will provide the educators with opportunities to gain a better theoretical and practical understanding of schools and an ideal classroom environment.

Munns et al. (2011:36) write that mentoring improves relationship quality and academic interest, self-efficacy and ultimately performance, and reduces the risk of substance abuse, especially for minority and at-risk youth. However, they caution that "not all mentoring programs are equally effective". The most effective mentoring is supported and structured by the school rather than ad hoc and involves sustained interaction between mentor and mentee.

In conclusion, from the anecdotal and empirical evidence available, it is clear that there are many benefits for mentoring of educators and learners and crucial for the success of every school.

2.4 THE GOOD MAN JOURNEY

The 'Good Man Journey' is a mentoring programme in character education which pushes boys to think about the sort of man (ideally a 'good' man) they wish to develop into and the values that will usher them in adulthood. The main purpose is to develop and underpin character and to impact on how they deliberate and respond, particularly when confronted with compromising circumstances through their adolescence into manhood. It is hoped that the boys would be selfless and to always do the right thing. The programme is compiled using material, ideas and present-day trends from international boys' schools' best practice and specifically tailored for their school (cf. para.3.3). The researcher's school is a value-based institution where they endeavour to upskill their learners with the doctrine, values and virtues that guide them on their individual 'Good Man Journey'.

2.4.1 The concept of a good man

Good men are required to instil and role model the values and virtues of the character-based mentoring system at home and support the school and mentor for it to be a success. It is a three-way partnership, viz. parent (father/a male role model), teacher/mentor and boy. Reichert, in his book *How to raise a boy: The Power of Connection to build Good Men* (2020) purports that the manner in which we treat boys not only shapes their behaviour, but actually builds their brains, and to raise good men we must ensure that they receive the nurturing their human needs and natures require. Furthermore, he contends that a boy who is secure and feels safe will develop into a strong man, because if he feels 'felt' and 'well held' he is better prepared to resist pressures and recover from adversities.

Brott, in an article "Healthy Men; why do girls live longer than boys?" (2019), argues that children with emotional and behavioural problems are predominantly male: 91% of children aged four to seven with 'severe emotional disturbances' were boys and among those 16 and older, 65% were boys. At the later stages of adolescence, boys who subscribe most to conventional masculine norms are the ones most unhappy, sad, anxious and even suicidal.

Therefore, from research conducted, it is essential that to curb this situation, boys are regarded as 'relational learners' who depend on a connection with a teacher or coach to engage. The responsibility lies with an adult, teacher or coach by default as well as with parents at home. Parents who utilise their son's sense of being known and loved can reinforce his ability to overcome challenges to overall healthy development (Reichert, 2020).

Reichert (2020) further argues that what differentiates a boy's ability to be a unique self from another is the balance of stress and support that he receives in his life and their mentoring by an appropriate male role model is essential in the pathway to being a good man.

Cummins (2021) contends that boys' expertise in character and competency is shaped through processes of character apprenticeship, where, as novices, they are coached and mentored by experts who help them to know the way, show the way, and go the way. Boys learn best about becoming a good man through the coaching and mentoring relationships they have with each other, their families, their teachers, and the world at large. Successful educators understand the importance of continuing, throughout their careers, to take on both the roles of the novice who articulates, reflects and explores, and the expert who models, coaches, and scaffolds.

Successful teachers build coaching and mentoring relationships with their peers that model the character apprenticeship relationships they have with their boys.

2.4.2 The key characteristics of a good man

"The Good Man Project" was conducted by Celia Lashlie in 2001 to facilitate discussion within and between boys' schools in Australasia, with a focus on developing a working definition of what makes a good man in the 21st century - a definition that is hoped would influence the direction taken by boys' schools in the future education of their students. Lashlie, while attempting to provide a definition of what a good man is, from these discussion with boys and came up with the following values: trustworthy, loyal and a sense of humour stood out above the others (Lashlie,2008).

Lashie (2008) then came up with the following characteristics of a good man which could be categorised under various themes:

Table 2.5: The characteristics of a good man

THEME	ATTRIBUTES
Trusting	honest, loyal, listens, is principled, knows who he is, brings sense to a situation
Courageous	to be who he is, knows who he is, expresses his feelings, expresses his emotions, asks for help, leads from the front, self-confident, pursues his uniqueness, can challenge

	convention respectfully, self- reliant, controls anger, enjoys his own physicality, can enjoy his own company
Respectful	for self, others, sets a good example
Compassionate	generous, humble, empathetic, shows love, listens, forgiving
Commitment	to belonging (school, group), hard-working, motivated, dreams and goals, is involved, follows through on promises, perseverance
Sense of Humour	Can laugh at himself, brings humour to a situation, does not sulk, can have fun without alcohol

(Lashlie 2008:221- 223)

More recent and important characteristics that should be considered, according to Baldoni (2021), are that a good man is not a bully and is a father and husband who is present. He proposed further traits such as being resourceful, accountable, strong, smart and brave, because in the current climate masculinity and good men are under severe criticism, but society is in dire need of good men. Furthermore, he proposes that men need to look at not only being a good man, but also that men are being good humans. There is often confusion as to what makes a real man and Baldoni (2021) alleges that in his opinion a bully is not a real man.

2.4.3 The need for the good man journey

The researcher's school is a value-based school and it seeks to educate their boys with a clear understanding of the principles, values and virtues that guide them on their 'Good Man Journey'. The 'Good Man Journey' inculcates the relevance of virtue and character based upon the school's values. Furthermore, it strives to develop and reinforce character within boys to hopefully impact on how they think and behave, particularly when confronted with difficult situations that will challenge them as they transition through adolescence into manhood. Too often in the world one currently lives in, one sees leaders, politicians, sports stars etc. behaving inconsiderately and displaying a complete lack of integrity, respect and self-control. The preference is that boys will ideally always consider the demands of others ahead of their own and have the moral courage to stand up for what is right (Talke, 2021).

2.4.4 The role of parents in the good man journey?

The literature notes that the student-teacher relationship is not the only relationship which teachers must take care to cultivate. Marsick, Watkins & Boswell (2013) emphasise the importance of teachers working to build relationships with parents, which is supported by Cummins and Adams (2019), who regarded effective parent-school communication as an important gauge of the calibre of a school. Moreover, parents both in high-performing schools and especially in lower-performing schools urged teachers and school administrators to be more transparent with parents.

Cummins and Adams (2019) believe that boys' needs can be best addressed when educators understand their family environment and use it to inform their situational judgment about how best to influence the totality of the learning environment. Boys learn best when their parents and families are powerful and respected contributors to the success of their boys and their interactions, learning and well-being. Successful educators understand working in constructive partnership with parents, family, and other community members towards helping boys grow in a sense of belonging, work towards achieving their potential, and do what is good and right in their interactions, learning and well-being in the totality of the learning environment.

Research by Wilkinson (2020) indicates that successful educators work to build partnerships with parents and families that enhance a shared understanding of boys, their growth in character, and their interactions, learning, and well-being. On a daily basis they strengthen these relationships especially by involving them in the learning experience within appropriate boundaries, sharing news with them first, emphasising positives, flagging any problems immediately, working through difficulties by devising and implementing constructive strategies, and dealing immediately and successfully with reasonable concerns by keeping the focus on partnering for the boy's benefit at all times.

Sheridan (2022) proposes that educators need to work on building partnerships with parents and families that enhance a shared understanding of boys, their growth in character, and their interactions, learning, and well-being. It is necessary for educators to regularly strengthen these relationships especially by including parents and families in the learning experience, within appropriate boundaries. This would involve sharing news with them first, emphasising positives, flagging any problems immediately, working through difficulties by devising and implementing constructive strategies, and dealing immediately and successfully with reasonable concerns by keeping the focus on partnering for the boy's benefit at all times.

The partnership between the school (educator/mentor), the parents (ideally the father) and the boy (learner) is essential in striving to ensure that collectively they will see the boy being the best version of himself in all that he does ultimately.

2.4.5 The role of fathers or a suitable male role model in the good man journey

According to Wilkinson (2020), it is essential that fathers are part of their son's good man journey and that they are present in their lives. Anecdotal and empirical evidence supports this assertion as teenagers traverse the very difficult waters of adolescence and the very real requirement for a male role model, if their father is not in their lives.

Research reveals that young men are learning how to embrace emotional vulnerability, but that they most often grapple with emotions on their own or with the support of women in their lives. Young men, by and large, do not seek emotional support from their fathers and therefore the fathers need to reach out.

Wilkinson is supported by West (2001) who focuses in particular on the role of fathers, who exert a significant influence on their children, noting that boys with absent fathers achieve inferior academic outcomes amongst other concerns such as truancy and increased disciplinary matters. He offers the following suggestions to involve fathers more significantly in their son's lives:

- research to ensure a better understanding of the roles that fathers play in boys' lives (school to assist with Boys Focus Group; Father and Sons' Functions);
- encourage fathers of boys to stay in their children's lives after divorce. This could be done through seminar(s) or a fathers' group (Boys' Focus Group);
- provide talks by well-known figures on better fathering (school to assist);
- activities for fathers and boys could be planned, perhaps with a reading, quiz or sporting focus (Father & Sons Function organised by school);

The researcher's school has a Boys' Focus Committee who meet regularly to discuss what is required and review current activities. The school arranges regular 'Father and Son' interaction evenings and these have been well supported by fathers with over 500 attending. The format of the occasions varies from providing advice on how to deal with teenage boy issues with guest speakers to fun activities involving sport, and appear to be becoming more

and more popular and necessary, especially after the impact of Covid-19. A recent meeting focussed on social media issues as well as the threat of vaping.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Whilst considering all the available literature and research on the management of an effective character-based mentoring system, one needed to bear in mind that the focus of this study is the Grade 8 boy learner. This chapter highlighted the requirement of a suitable and effective mentoring system that would assist both the educator and the learner from a mentor and mentee perspective. Several propositions were presented, and the literature review focused on the need for effective character–education based mentor strategies to be utilised in the classroom, which would ultimately be for the benefit of the Grade 8 boy learner.

Chapter 3 will present the theoretical framework that will be implemented for the research.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 covered the background to the study, the research problem, the aims and objectives of the study, the research methodology and design, and provided a layout of the chapters.

Chapter 2 presented a critical review of literature with existing and relevant knowledge of how best to manage a character-based education mentor system at a public school for Grade 8 boys. The research findings provided an understanding of the research problem and earlier findings in character-based education and the mentoring of the boys as well as novice educators. The needs and benefits of character-based education as well as a suitable mentoring system are identified, with the role of parents and father in particular, or a good male role model, being crucial in their good man journey.

In Chapter 3, the case study covered the theoretical and conceptual frameworks utilized by the researcher to gather, analyse and interpret data. According to Hugo (2018), researchers use frameworks of associated ideas, gained from the literature review, to provide a guide from further research is conducted and these are known as 'theoretical' or 'conceptual' frameworks (Leshem and Trafford, 2007). Hugo (2018) states further that Maxwell (2005:33) considered a "conceptual framework may also be called the theoretical framework for the study". A distinction will be drawn between the two later in the chapter and will become clear upon clarification.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.2.1 Introduction

According to Du Plessis (2012), a theoretical framework is the essential guide which aided the content presented in the study. Furthermore, it aids the researcher's study and confirms the potential structure and the foundation from which the content is arranged.

According to Joubert, Hartell and Lombard (2015) in Botha (2018), the theoretical framework is the manner which the researcher familiarizes oneself with the pertinent literature content, which permits the researcher to draft theories which direct the case study and arrange

knowledge and data obtained which enable the researcher to respond the research questions extensively.

Luman (2018) states that the researcher must ensure that the theoretical framework illustrates a clear comprehension of theories and concepts pertinent to the topic and relates to the general areas of content under consideration. Furthermore, the theoretical framework indicates which main variables have potential impact on an occurrence of interest and accentuates the necessity to investigate how those major variables may differ and under what conditions. Furthermore, according to Hugo (2018), the theoretical framework associates the researcher with an existing body of knowledge and steered by a pertinent theory or two, provides grounds for the hypotheses and selection of research methods.

Mahlangu (2016:4) contends that “theoretical frameworks are developed *a priori*, or before data collection in quantitative designs”. In this instance it serves as a method to analyse data in order to comprehend the process of managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools.

The researcher is of the view that the theories chosen are pertinent to manage and monitor change, character-education and mentoring in the teaching environment. With this in mind, the following theories were considered: transformational leadership theory; learner development theory (looking specifically at behaviour theory); and systems theory. They will now be discussed in depth with practical reference to the researcher’s current study.

3.2.2 Theoretical Framework Theories

3.2.2.1 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory is, according to Luman (2018), essential as the overall mentoring structure of the school in question requires further development and change to establish that the learners are being developed and nurtured to their full extent in order to reach their full holistic potential. Steady progress has occurred during the last number of years with the implementation of positive discipline methods and positive reinforcement through mentoring. However, additional mentoring with the establishment of an effective character-based education system would potentially enhance this greatly (cf.par.1.7).

According to Berkowitz (2017) and supported by Bush (2014) and Hallinger (2003), transformational leadership is one of the key and most persuasive leadership models in the

administrative educational sphere. Berkowitz (2017) continues stating that these leaders inspire supporters to:

commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support (Bass and Riggo, 2005:4).

Berkowitz (2017) argues that for a number of decades, Leithwood, Jantzi, and their associates advocated the implementation of transformational leadership practices in the management of schools and illustrated the benefits of these practices, which often resulted in a more functional school management team. Furthermore, they argued that a major leadership function of school management was to develop a healthy and inspirational working environment where teachers were committed and driven to realise the mission and goals of the school (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2006). This was supported by Bass and Avolio (1994), who proposed that transformational leaders were of the opinion that their juniors intrinsically desired achievements and success and encouraged them to champion the school's goals, inspiring them to assume further commitments.

Kwan (2020) states that *The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*, developed by Bass and Avolio (1994), is still one of the most generally used research instruments where transformational leadership is represented by four elements. These elements are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. When one considers 'idealized influence', one is referring to teachers acting as role models which illustrate morally good conduct. Individualized 'inspirational motivation' refers to the ability of a leader to articulate, appeal and inspire vision and or mission to supporters. 'Intellectual stimulation' involves the championing and development of the followers' inspiration and finally 'individualized consideration' is basically focussing on the supporters' individual requirements and issues.

Marks and Printy (2003) developed a variety of units to calculate the effectiveness of transformational leadership as well as shared instructional leadership. Furthermore, they researched the effects of instructional and transformational leadership practices on student learning even though they are often considered as different approaches. Kwan (2020) argues that there is certain literary research support purporting mutual benefit as stated by Marks and Printy (2003). From the research conducted in 22 schools in the United States,

Marks and Printy (2003: 385) confirmed “the coexistence of both transformational leadership and instructional leadership”, labelling this pattern as “integrated leadership”. They further maintained that transformational leadership was a “necessary, although insufficient condition” (Marks and Printy, 2003: 385) for instructional leadership.

In 1978, James M. Burns, in *Leadership* (1978: 259) stated that “transformational leadership is characterized by a leader who works with subordinates to identify needed change, create a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and execute the change in unison with committed members of a group”. Anderson (2017) contends that transformational leadership is the leadership style that most researchers recommend in schools today.

Furthermore, according to Burns (2003) as stated by Anderson (2017:6), transformational leadership is “a style of leadership that transforms follower attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours,...where the leader inspires followers to be motivated to rise above and beyond current levels of achievement and performance to even higher levels.”

Anderson (2017) in his paper “Transformational Leadership in Education: A Review of Existing Literature”, raises concerns as to whether school leaders have the appropriate skills, leadership techniques, and the requisite skills to implement the competent functioning of schools, suggesting that they require additional professional development in transformational leadership styles which have proven to raise performance in the educational environment.

Berkowitz (2017) believes that transformational leadership theory has the ability to enhance essential perceptions on education currently. Bush (2014) contends that transformational leadership theory deals mainly with the way in which leaders expend their manner of influence on their supporters, and therefore it is more likely a ‘descriptive-functional theory’. Berkowitz (2017) continues that principals’ transformational leadership may therefore present to be the commencement in having the comprehension of the various aspects, such as what the role requires and what the aims and objectives drive leaders.

Anderson (2017) supports Leithwood (1994) in that teachers value transformational leadership styles from principals, and consider these principals to be role models who instil confidence in their staff. These teachers generally feel more optimistic about their domains when principals display this form of leadership, especially when it displays ‘individualized consideration’, which permits teachers and principals to have a more beneficial and positive relationship (Hauserman and Stick, 2013). Furthermore, Anderson (2017) argues that

teachers rate principals highly who implement transformational leadership practices as they provide teacher support and encourage self-review, and according to Ling and Ibrahim (2013) are perceived to be respectful, very inspirational, and competent student disciplinarians, determined to produce students who are accountable. Anderson (2017) continues stating that teacher loyalty is boosted when principals epitomise transformational leadership, particularly the principles of intellectual stimulation and vision building.

What is of critical importance, according to Anderson (2017) and Baggett (2015), is that learner achievement is incidentally affiliated to teacher commitment to school aims and objectives when principals participate in determining direction, arranging support, and the professional development of their staff. Transformational leadership encourages leaders to do so, while at the same time offering psychological self-guided improvement to teachers who feel that they are valued for their contributions.

Anderson (2017) and Espinoza (2013) believe that certain transformational leadership methods, for example mentoring, inspires learner achievement. This mentoring can impact significantly in a positive way on educator dedication, fulfilment, and their effectiveness, which then has an indirect influence on student performance. Furthermore, Anderson (2017) has established that educator's enthusiasm and attitude towards improving teaching techniques and improved systems in managing classrooms, has been found to be categorically impacted by transformational leadership principles.

According to Brown, Brown and Nandedkar (2019:12), "transformational leaders motivate and inspire their followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes, and simultaneously develop a follower's leadership potential". Judge and Piccolo (2004) contend that these leaders' skills are essential as they motivate their subordinates to extend themselves in order to attain excellence and review their basic values whilst displaying significant collegiality in the best interests of the community (Brown et al. 2019).

Brown et al. (2019:12) state that a transformational leadership style is "correlated with the leader's moral and ethical orientation, being more inclined with doing what is 'morally right' and protecting the rights and dignities of individuals". According to Aronson (2004), transformational leaders display higher levels of integrity, extensive moral development and substantial indications of ethical behaviour, a view supported by Brown et al. (2019).

Peterson and Seligman (2004) contend that transformational leadership includes challenging obvious ways of working (i.e., providing intellectual stimulation) and thus may encourage followers.

Bakker, Hetland, Olsen and Espevik (2022) argue that in addition to promoting strengths use, transformational leadership behaviour also promotes followers' personal initiative by indirectly increasing their work engagement. Transformational leaders use charisma tactics to communicate an appealing vision of the future and articulate high-performance expectations (Antonakis, Fenley and Liechti, 2011).

Kwan (2020), in her empirical study "Is Transformational Leadership Theory Passé? Revisiting the Integrative Effect of Instructional Leadership and Transformational Leadership on Student Outcomes", with evidence drawn from 177 schools, confirmed the moderating effect of transformational leadership through the identification of a disparity in the effect of instructional leadership on student outcomes. This corresponded with differing levels of transformational leadership enactment in schools, with the implication that the effect of instructional behaviours on student outcomes is considered to be situationally dependent on the extent of transformational behaviour enactment. However, Kwan (2020) continues that despite its lack of a direct impact on student outcomes, transformational leadership serves as a necessary, although at times insufficient condition, for the effective implementation of instructional monitoring measures.

Berkowitz (2017) suggests that despite considerable pressure, the educational administration community should not abandon transformational leadership, but address its shortcomings and look toward future challenges as the community contemplates the promises the theory holds for the education field. Furthermore, transformational leadership theory is currently an inseparable part of how educational administration scholars consider ideal school leadership.

Bakker et al. (2022:3) argue:

When leaders are transformational, they acknowledge the unique knowledge, abilities, and skills of their followers (i.e., individual consideration). Therefore, when enacting transformational leadership, leaders are most likely to identify their followers' strengths. By expressing elevated expectations and confidence in their followers and acting as a positive role model (i.e., projecting inspirational

motivation and idealized influence), such leaders encourage followers to use their personal strengths and be at their individual best.

Peterson and Seligman (2004) contend that transformational leadership involves testing various well-known methods of operating such as 'intellectual stimulation', which would hopefully encourage supporters to utilise their skills differently. This would enable them to be unique and act as per their various beliefs, inclinations and requirements. This is further supported by Kernis and Goldman (2006), stating that these leaders would for all intents and purposes be involved and display appropriate psychological and interpersonal operations, which enables employees to experience those skills, expertise and notions of self-confidence, which would in turn develop workplace engagement.

Bakker et al. (2022: 8) established that:

Transformational leadership is important for follower work engagement and performance because it encourages agentic follower behaviours such as strengths use and personal initiative. When leaders are idealized, show individual consideration, and/or are motivating and intellectually stimulating, they inspire their followers to use their strengths and take personal initiative.

This is further supported by Jovanovic and Ciric (2016: 3):

Teachers who practice transformational leadership style convince, inspire and motivate students towards the achievement of excellent results and that will not happen with the transactions, i.e., with the rewarding and punishing but influencing on internal values and motivation of students and their modelling in accordance with the mission, vision and values of the school.

According to Luman (2018) and the current researcher, one of aims of this research is to establish whether transformational leadership is a suitable approach to enable a positive transformation in the mentoring system with the implementation and management of the character-based education system, as change is a key criterion leaders are facing. In the context of education, Steyn and Van Niekerk (2012) propose that the principal, by default, participates in many management matters so that various objectives can be achieved and would be instrumental in ensuring that change does occur.

In closing, Luman (2018:6) is of the opinion that:

principals who are transformational leaders are able to identify and verbalise a school vision; motivate others through example; support a culture of intellectual stimulation and provide support and development to individual staff members.

This is further supported by Jovanovic and Ciric (2016), stating that the transformational leadership of teachers impacts positively on the learning outcomes of their learners, and in essence focusses on the progression of superior teaching and learning in schools.

Finally, Jovanovic and Ciric (2016:500) argue this particular style of leadership by the principal increases “job satisfaction; creates positive school climate; enhances performance at school; involves in problem solving and decision making; develops quality at all levels; increases school members' commitment, capacity; engagement in meeting goals and improves teachers' acceptance, motivation, commitment and professional growth.”

3.2.2.2 Learner Development Theory

Luman (2018) suggests that Learner Development Theories are pertinent as the boys are at an essential stage in their journey towards adulthood, as they enter adolescence, and they must deal with several external influences which could affect their overall development.

Ormrod (2012) states that learning theory establishes how learners receive, process and retain knowledge during learning. He contends that learning can be enhanced if they imitate experiences of fellow learners who are achieving at the top level as he believes that they learn best through.

Luman (2018) contends that according to Grace (2012), there are six stages of moral development that exist with educators mainly focussed on Stage 3: the good boy orientation stage. The child believes that by being well behaved he would be meeting the expectations of his parents and educators inasmuch as what is considered to be displaying good behaviour. The motivation is provided in Stage 4: law and order orientation, which implies being respectful to authority, obediently following the rules and fulfilling expectations.

Pamela Roggeman (2022:2), Dean of University of Phoenix's College of Education, comments on the role learning theory plays in preparing teachers in “judgement of each learning theory with supported evidences”:

Effective educators need to be able to pivot and craft instruction that meets the needs of the individual student to address the needs of the ‘whole child’. Sound

knowledge in multiple learning theories is a first step to this and another reason why great teachers work their entire careers to master both the art and the science of teaching.

Roggeman continues that there are five primary educational learning theories: “behaviourism, cognitive, constructivism, humanism, and connectivism” (2022:2). However, behaviourism is where the researcher plans to predominantly focus as this is considered to be the most critical at this time on the learners’ pathway through adolescence to manhood (cf.par.1.7).

3.2.2.3 Behavioural Learning Theory (Behaviourism)

Lovell (2011) states that the behavioural learning theory or behaviourism is a popular concept that focuses on how learners learn and argues that all behaviours are learned through interaction with their immediate society and/or environment. Baulo and Nabua (2019) believe that behaviourism is key for educators because it impacts on how learners react and behave in the school and classroom environment and implies that educators can have a direct and immediate influence on how their learners behave. They also contend that behaviourism assists educators to have an empathetic comprehension of what that learner’s home and family situation might be and how that could impact on their behaviour as well as enabling them to strive to possibly improve the situation.

A practical example of behaviourism is positive reinforcement. A learner gets a reward if they get 100% on their spelling test or a significant improvement from the previous test. In the future, they will work harder in an attempt to obtain the reward, for example a merit award (Luman, 2018). At the researcher’s school this reward or merit system was implemented several years ago with the impact being palpable in that the number of disciplinary incidents decreased significantly, due to the implementation of positive reinforcement. This links in with Maslow’s (1943) ‘Hierarchy of Needs’ on the Self Esteem level.

According to Luman (2018), Maslow is of the opinion that development is a response to rewards, punishments, stimuli and reinforcement (Grace, 2016). Parents are aware that their children do respond to a structure that involves rewards and consequences, which is indicative of the most elementary aspect Maslow (1943) was proposing. Luman (2018) continues, stating that associations of feelings controlled by conditioning is one of the important aspects to human behaviour, because when former behaviours have been rewarded, they are more likely to repeat those behaviours voluntarily, believing that they are

doing what they 'want' to be doing. Grace (2016) conversely contends that they select certain behaviours to avoid repetition of negative reinforcement, and may behave accordingly, but may feel that their individuality is being controlled.

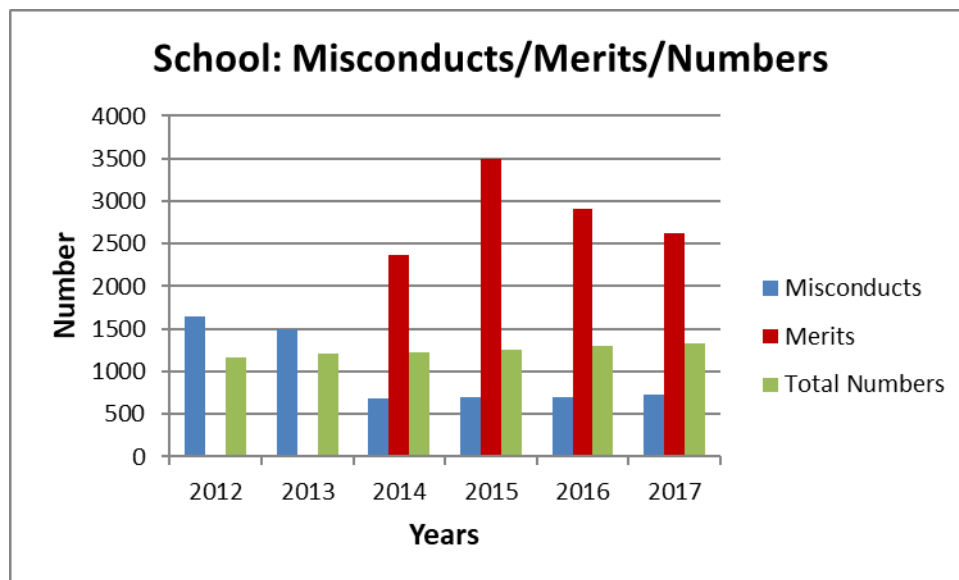
The following table and graph represent an example from Luman (2018) after the implementation of the positive discipline system, viz. Managing Learner Behaviour System (MLB) and the impact that it had both on the learners and educators.

Table 3.1: Misconducts v Merits and total learners in school

	Misconducts	Merits	Total
2012	1645	0	1167
2013	1496	0	1204
2014	677	2375	1224
2015	702	3500	1253
2016	694	2904	1301
2017	723	2625	1323

Luman (2018)

Graph 3.1



Luman (2018)

Luman (2018) proposes that the above table and graph clearly illustrate how the number of misconducts and merits issued to the whole school prior to the implementation of the MLB system in 2014 were impacted upon, and the misconducts (incidents of misbehaviour), decreased significantly. This potentially implies that through the implementation of positive reinforcement strategies and acknowledgement, such as merits, the number of misconducts reduced. The positive action taken by the educators also contributed to the overall impact

and improved the working relationship in the classroom with fewer misconducts being issued.

Luman (2018) established that Grade 8 and Grade 9 boys are in a critical stage of their development on their individual and unique 'Good Man Journey' and hence the need for much needed focus on behavioural theory. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that boys tend to be highly emotional and struggle to remain 'stable', which could possibly have an impact on their behaviour during this difficult stage of their journey to adulthood. Of further consideration is their emotional intelligence, which is also considerably under-developed in most cases, at this stage. In conclusion, assisting the boys as they grow older into 'teenagehood and approach manhood', to reconsider their actions before acting and to be courageous enough to stand up for themselves and what they believe in, will assist them to know that they have not only the right, but also a commitment to strive to be their best version of themselves that they can be.

3.2.2.4 Systems Theory

Bertalanffy (1969) was the original founder of the General System Theory (GST) which strived to present options to regular prototypes of organization, and that theories which had been launched in the area of sociology from a 'modern systems approach', such as information, communication and feedback were important.

Chen and Stroup (1993:448 - 449) determined the following as the essence of systems theory:

A 'system' is an ensemble of interacting parts, the sum of which exhibits behaviour not localized in its constituent parts. It could be physical, biological, social, or symbolic; or comprised of one or more of these, whilst change is seen as a transformation of the system in time, which conserves its identity. Growth, steady state, and decay are major types of change, whilst goal-directed behaviour characterizes the changes observed in the state of the system. The system is seen to be actively organized in terms of the goal and can be understood to exhibit 'reverse causality', whilst 'feedback' is the mechanism that mediates between the goal and system behaviour. Time is a central variable in system theory and provides a referent for the very idea of dynamics. The 'boundary' serves to delineate the system from the environment and any subsystems from the system as a whole. System-environment interactions can

be defined as the input and output of matter, information, and energy, but it can be open, closed, or semipermeable to the environment.

Luman (2018) proposed that a systems theory outlook would permit a more thorough comprehension of universal nature and society in its entirety. This understanding of elements, interconnections, and objectives of people, organisations, and communities would assist in having an appreciation of the bigger concept of the relationships and function of the society. From an educational perspective, the systems theory is utilised to comprehend the reciprocal relationship between the members of the educational community, and how they relate to one another in order to holistically educate the learners.

Glogowski (2016) considers the family systems theory to be a theory of human behaviour, which suggests that the family is an emotional entity and incorporates systems thinking to relate the intricate interactions in that entity. It is the very essence of a family that the participants are acutely connected emotionally. This view is supported by Luman (2018) from a school perspective as the House system, in which every boy is placed at the case study school, is a bigger replication of the family unit which illustrates a 'home from home' circumstance. Every boy is managed by a teacher mentor and also an older boy, who acts as a peer supporter and as a mentor, a system which is replicated in the boarding house if they are boarders. The boys have regular contact with their mentors and a specific co-ordinated character-based mentor programme for each grade on a weekly basis is followed, where their issues and problems are frequently being managed and attended to if and when the need arises. Furthermore, from the researcher's case study and anecdotal evidence, the school consists of the educators, learners (boys), parents, the SGB (School Governing Body) and the wider school community which includes Old Boys or former learners. The efficient operation of the character-based mentoring system and the ultimate success thereof is fully reliant on the functional co-operation and positive involvement of all members acting as a collaborative team.

The researcher is the current principal of the case study school and has been directly involved in coordinating change in the positive management of learner behaviour. The management of an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys is presently being managed and coordinated by the principal and a deputy headmaster with the support of the executive and Housemasters, who are representatives of middle management, but the ultimate drivers are educators as the mentors.

3.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.3.1 Introduction

The term 'conceptual framework' is defined by Maxwell (2005:33) as the framework of "concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs your research". Mahlangu (2016: 5) states that a conceptual framework is:

A researcher's understanding of how the research problem will best be explored, the specific direction the research will have to take and the relationship between the different variables.

Kivunja (2018:4), supported by Ravitch and Riggan (2017), states that:

A conceptual framework is the total, logical orientation and associations of anything and everything that forms the underlying thinking, structures, plans and practices and implementation of your entire research project. It comprises your thoughts on identification of the research topic, the problem to be investigated, the questions to be asked, the literature to be reviewed, the theories to be applied, the methodology you will use, the methods, procedures and instruments, the data analysis and interpretation of findings, recommendations and conclusions you will make.

According to Caliendo and Kyle (1996), as well as Miles and Huberman (1994) and Mertens (2005), researchers can obtain many benefits by using a conceptual framework. In the first instance, Caliendi and Kyle (1996) contend that it is probable that researchers would have their research confirmed as 'quality research', due to the fact that it was clear from which outlook the research was conducted and what fundamental premise guided the research design. Miles and Huberman (1994:18) put forward the argument that "relevant theories and/or concepts are presented and organised into a structure which shows the boundaries of the present study and presents... the main dimensions to be studied – the key factors or variables – and the presumed relationships among them". This is further supported by Caliendo and Kyle (1996), who contend that it is specifically the utilisation of frameworks that they apply on research which differentiates scholarly work from journalism. Mertens (2005) states that the use of a framework purports that researchers comprehend fully what they are studying and where a framework is used, they will address the research with defined fundamental premises emanating from their theoretical view (Mertens, 2005).

According to Rossman and Rallis (2012: 121), “conceptualizing your study is the most important step in your research process, because it directs the kind of data you will collect and where and how, and it guides your analysis”. Miles and Huberman (1994: 18) contend that “the conceptual framework is often described as a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that support and inform one’s research”. A number of general descriptions refer to the conceptual framework as a discernible product that describes, either environmentally or in story form, the key objectives of what is to be studied (that is, the key factors, concepts, or variables) and the assumed relationships amongst them (Maxwell 2005; Creswell 2007). Conceptual frameworks can “act like maps that give coherence to the enterprise” (Shields and Tajalli 2006: 313) and have the ability to connect all features of observed research, which includes “problem definition, purpose, literature review, methodology, data collection, and analysis” (Shields and Tajalli, 2006:313). In conclusion, the main objective of the conceptual framework is to inform the researcher’s design; to help one assess and refine one’s goals; to help develop realistic and relevant research questions and finally select relevant research methods (Maxwell 2005; Creswell 2007). Hughes (2019:28) contends that while these general understandings about conceptual frameworks are significant and beneficial, there are at least four major distinctions which need to be considered to distinguish conceptual frameworks from theoretical frameworks:

- a conceptual framework is based primarily upon the remaining lower levels of the theory-to-experience hierarchy, the experiences, concepts, constructs, and propositions;
- conceptual frameworks determine how a given researcher formulates his/her research problem – and how s/he goes about investigating the problem, and what meaning s/he attaches to the data accruing from such an investigation. Thus, it is important for the conceptual framework to include the nature and source of the data;
- a conceptual framework may also be characterised as a set of ideas that are linked to phenomena of interest, identification of subjects, and research parameters (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012). Yet, it involves a consideration of the theoretical perspective(s) from which one approaches the construct (for example, student development theory, student identity theory, and critical race theory) and provides a lens for understanding. In that sense, it can build upon the theoretical framework. It informs not only the development of the research design while helping the researcher

decide what to study and what not to study, but it can also help student researchers justify those decisions to dissertation committees. Essentially, it puts everyone on the same page;

- while theoretical frameworks are formulated similarly for quantitative and qualitative research, conceptual frameworks may be formulated differently according to the central methodology of the study. Thus, they should be described and displayed separately as demonstrated in the text and illustrations below (Hughes, 2019:28).

Shields and Rangarajan (2013:1) aptly describe conceptual frameworks as similar to plays in sports, “conceptual frameworks are like plays. They are abstract, directive and depend on the situation on the ground.”

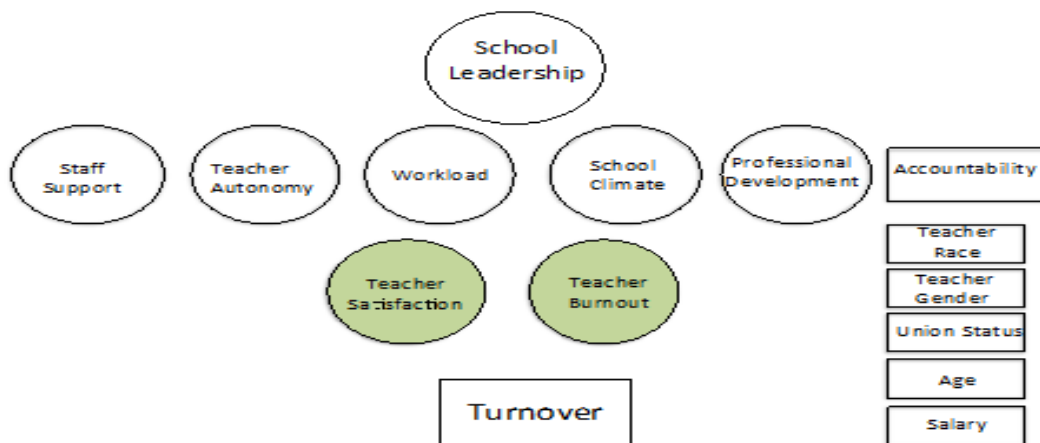
Hughes (2019:29) maintains that there are at least eight steps to consider when developing a conceptual framework for quantitative educational research:

- state the theories being considered, their proponents, opposition, and disciplinary basis (primary and secondary sources);
- illustrate relevant concepts and constructs in an initial concept map;
- indicate literature sources of concepts and constructs (if appropriate for illustration);
- distinguish between dependent, independent, confounding, and control variables that either measure or reflect the concepts and constructs;
- identify the propositions or relationships among constructs being investigated;
- construct a narrative that accompanies the illustration: (i) to identify literature sources from pioneers, proponents, and opponents of each relevant concept/construct (including relevant primary and secondary sources); and (ii) to speak in-depth about components of the conceptual framework that are under investigation;
- modify concept map after preliminary and subsequent statistical analysis as warranted (with accompanying narrative, as noted above).

(Hughes, 2019: 29)

Hughes states that conceptual frameworks for quantitative educational research indicate a distinct research question, problem and literature review.

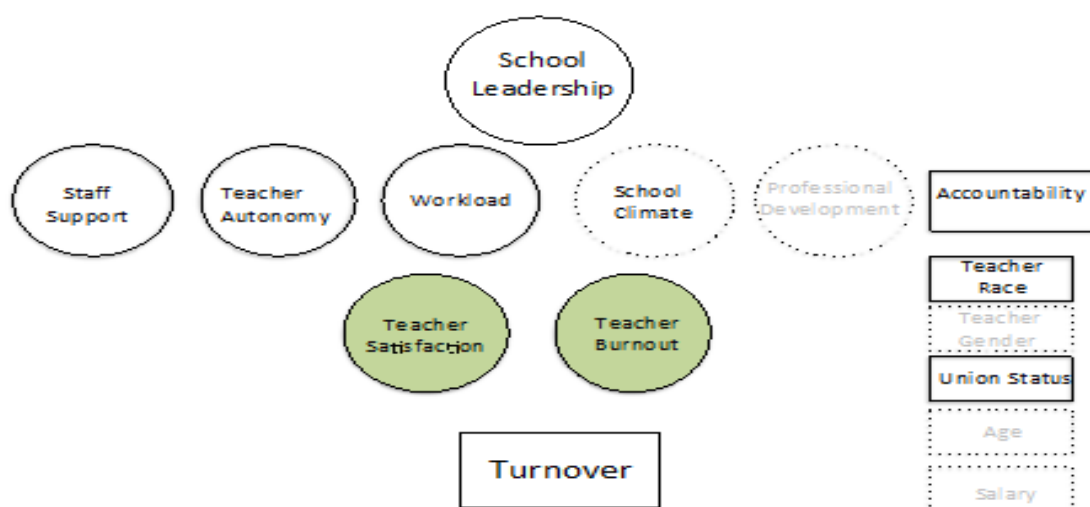
Fig. 3.1. Initial concept map towards a quantitative study



Source: Wolf R and Davis TE 2014 in Hughes (2019)

Figure 3.1 illustrates the first step in a conceptual framework for a quantitative study. “These quantitative scholars performed a preliminary statistical analysis that found that some of the correlations were not statistically significant” (Hughes, 2019:29).

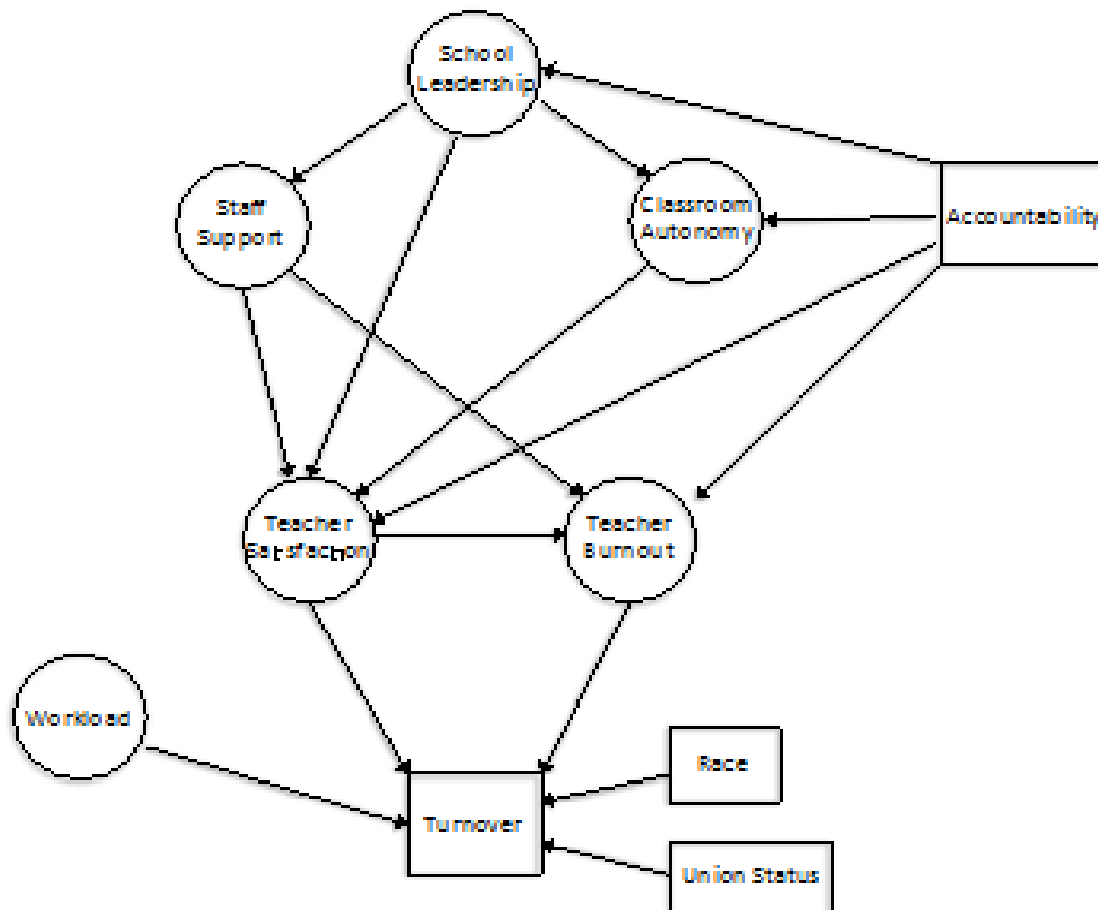
Fig. 3. 2. Modification of the concept map after a preliminary statistical analysis



Source: Wolf R and Davis TE 2014 in Hughes (2019).

Figure 3.2 “contrasts the statistically significant constructs in bold with the greyed out concepts that were not statistically significant” (Hughes, 2019:30).

Fig. 3.3. Final modified conceptual framework for a structural equation model of teacher turnover



Source: Wolf R and Davis TE 2014 in (Hughes, 2019).

In Figure 3.3, “the authors estimated a structural equation model showing specific directional relationships” (Hughes, 2019:30).

Kivunga (2018) continues that the conceptual framework is the logical conceptualisation of the complete research, which implies that the conceptual framework needs to consider the following questions about the research:

1. What are the aims of the research?
2. What are the clear objectives, needs, significance and breadth of the research?

3. How will the research be conducted using which methodology, methods, participants, and how will the data be gathered and analysed?
4. Which process or theoretical framework will be involved in order to analyse the data with which software and what skills are required?
5. Which paradigm (positivist or interpretivist; critical or pragmatic) is best suited for the research?
6. How will the findings of the research be reported? Would it be in a research, seminar or conference paper; chapter in a book; book or thesis?

Maxwell asserts that a conceptual framework is “something that is constructed, not found”, and points out that “the overall coherence” of a conceptual framework “is something that you build, not something that exists ready-made” (Maxwell, 2005: 35). According to Maxwell there are four possible sources which can be used to derive a conceptual framework:

- the researcher’s own experiences and knowledge,
- existing theory and research,
- exploratory research,
- thought experiments.

Maxwell (2005) established that in his opinion only ‘thought experiments’ was not an option for establishing a framework to guide this phase of the researcher’s study. He contends that a researcher’s empirical understanding is at times ignored as a significant conceptual origin, but fortunately the researcher has considerable experience in this area. Furthermore, ‘conducting exploratory research’, Maxwell’s (2005) third source, was a much-needed aspect and at the researcher’s own school, boys and educators were included as a distinct part of the framework to guide the research outcomes. In the literary review, ‘existing theory and research’ was an essential phase of the study.

3.3.2 Conceptual Framework Theories

According to Mouton (2002) research is organised and integrated into three types of conceptual frameworks, viz. typologies, models and theories:

- typologies – is a conceptual framework where phenomena are arranged in terms of similar attributes which they may have in common with others;

- models – is a conceptual framework which offers a structured depiction of phenomena by indicating various norms amongst variables;
- theories – a conceptual framework which provides an explanation of events or phenomena.

For this case study the researcher utilised the theory type conceptual framework i.e. – a framework which provides an explanation of events or phenomena - and the worldview of a positivist paradigm. This positivist approach to research implies the thorough process of determining hypotheses, of empirical testing of these hypotheses, various quantitative methods for the collection of data, intense analysis to gauge the results, and finally the capacity to arrange them in a collection of predictions.

3.3.3 Content Of The Conceptual Framework

3.3.3.1 What is the purpose of the research?

The main research question which guided this study is:

How should an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys be managed in South African schools?

It is essential that principals need to lead the background research into the hypothesis and be instrumental in providing the structure and implementation of such a mentoring programme within the school environment. From research conducted nationally and internationally, it should assist these young men at the very beginning of their high school journey and provide an ideal opportunity to make an indelible impact on their lives at this significant juncture, as they approach adolescence, with the support and encouragement of educators and parents (cf. par.1.4).

As principal of the school, the researcher would be instrumental from a transformational leadership perspective in ensuring that the changes required by implementing a character-based educational mentoring system is implemented effectively with the support of staff as mentors. Appropriate professional development and buy-in would be crucial elements to determine the ultimate success of the programme (cf. par.1.7).

Thereafter, the system will be driven by the educator (mentor) and senior learner (mentor /peer support), within the House system, with oversight by their Housemasters and Deputy Headmaster: pastoral care. The mentors see their 25 learners (structured vertically five per

grade viz. Grade 8 to Grade 12) daily and the programme has a major focus each week throughout the year. They meet with the 25 learners once a week during a dedicated period where the discussions and learning occur.

3.3.3.2 Why is it necessary to conduct this research?

From the researcher's 36 years of experience and research in the field of mentoring young learners, the issue of learner behaviour is possibly one of the most significant stresses for many educators, with the Grades 8 and 9 groups (ages 13-15) causing greater concern than others (Luman, 2018). This is confirmed in a South African context by De Witt and Lessing (2013), that there is considerable anxiety and distress amongst learners in this age group (cf. par.1.2)

The researcher is focusing on the Grade 8s as Berk (2009) confirms that these boys are at a critical juncture in their pathway, requiring suitable strategies for positive guidance and mentoring. This study covers a crucial stage – a bridge towards adolescence - in their journey towards adulthood and an essential aspect of their overall character development and education, by providing mentoring interventions and strategies that will assist the learner in reaching his full potential. The ultimate goal is the holistic development of the learner by managing an effective character-based education mentoring system for Grade 8 boys as they commence their high school journey (cf. par.1.2).

3.3.3.3 What are the aims of the research?

The key aim of this research is to consider how an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys should be managed in South African schools.

- What can educators as mentors do to assist in character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men?
- How can educators develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible?
- Which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys? (cf. par.1.5)

3.3.3.4 What are the major objectives of the research?

- To contemplate by what methods educators as mentors can aid character-based management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men.

- To establish how educators as mentors can improve character-education amongst Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible.
- To discover which character-education strategies have had the best response from the learners.

The outcomes will provide potential solutions to effective character-based education mentor strategies and how they should be managed.

3.3.3.5 Which research methodology will be implemented?

The researcher implemented quantitative research methodology once empirical evidence had been collected. The researcher contends that quantitative methodology is the preferred method as he needs to highlight quantification through the collection of numerical information and thereafter analyse the data. The accurateness of quantitative research is covered in the latter part of the definition according to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000:2), which is very similar to the latter part of the definition: “analysis using mathematically based methods”. For the researcher to be in a position to utilise mathematically based methods, the data needs to be in numerical form (cf. par.1.8.1).

The research design implemented for this study is a case study. Fouche and De Vos (2002:140) believe that case studies refer to “a process, activity, event, programme or individual or multiple individuals”. The case study in this study is Grade 8 and 11 learners as well as educators of the selected school (cf. par.1.8.1).

In this case study the researcher collected data through confidential surveys from Grade 11 boys who have experienced the character-education system to date as well as from Grade 8 boys who are experiencing a new system for the first time. The motivation behind collecting data from current Grade 11 boys is for them to reflect back to when they were in Grade 8 so as to confirm findings from three years previous. Data will also be obtained through confidential surveys from all the mentors (educators) (cf.par.1.8.1). This data could potentially be advantageous in providing answers to the researcher’s aims and objectives (Luman 2018:50).

3.3.3.6 Population and sampling

‘Purposeful sampling’ (Bryman and Bell, 2016) is the preferred method for sampling selection as the participants will be learners and educators at a public school based in Pietermaritzburg, KZN, South Africa. The learners are males and range between the ages

of 14-18. The researcher is of the opinion that the “current multi-cultural demography of learners at the school better represents that in society – the society being one of Pietermaritzburg” (Luman, 2018: 48) (cf. par.1.8.2).

The researcher is fortunate in that he has had considerable international exposure in similar type schools as well as in South Africa with pertinent statistics available. Educational instruction at the school is in the English medium and provided for Grades 8-12 following the National Curriculum as implemented by the Department of Education. The school has a large boarding community (480) and day scholars (890) with a total of 1330 learners and 102 educators (cf. par. 1.8.2).

3.3.3.7 Instrumentation and data collection techniques

The researcher is the headmaster of the school in the proposed case study, and is required to provide a safe and healthy school environment and actual wellness for all the learners, as well as for all the educators and admin staff at his school. It is therefore essential that they complete the confidential surveys and that the data is saved through SurveyMonkey (‘a cloud-based survey tool that helps users create, send and analyse surveys’). The participants should not feel any discomfort in completing the confidential survey competently as they are familiar with regular on-line surveys. Empirical data will also be collected on a diverse selection of boys (Grade 8 and Grade 11) and benchmarked against confidential surveys conducted with boys from other schools in South Africa and beyond through research data conducted by Circle Education Group as well as data through Ed-Admin – a Learner Management System (LMS). Additional empirical data will also be obtained through a confidential survey for all the educators (mentors). The information obtained should reflect all the pertinent information and this evidence will be analysed quantitatively (cf. par. 1.8.3).

3.3.3.8 Data analysis and interpretation

The data gathered would be analysed by means of ‘inferential and descriptive statistics’, which include ‘frequencies and percentages’ so that they may answer the research questions. The descriptive method would be used to indicate the distribution of a sample across an extensive scope of variables (Luman, 2018).

Ed-Admin is the school’s LMS (Learner Management System) which is a browser-based application that streamlines and simplifies education management for institutions at all levels. Learner information (data) involving all aspects of school life, which includes academic performance, pastoral care (behaviour record), and their co-curricular contribution

(both sporting and cultural) is recorded on this platform. The schools' administrators and senior management have the authority and rights to design summative assessments by exporting data and/or queries to Excel. The current case study is based on empirical and quantitative data and Ed-Admin has the capacity to provide accurate and confidential secondary data, which can be analysed on completion. This data would then be classified as empirical binary data obtained from Ed-Admin, which is then classified as a secondary data collection tool. Thereafter the data would be analysed statistically. Primary data obtained off Survey Monkey from the survey questionnaire, which has been completed by both the mentors and the learners in Grades 8 and 11, would then be analysed statistically and supported with narrative discussion (Luman, 2018) (cf. par.1.8.4).

3.3.3.9 Data presentation

Primary and Secondary Data was collected and processed through Ed-Admin and Survey Monkey and presented in both table and graph formats. Both these sets of data provided appropriate evidence required to respond to the main research question. The data was chosen, compiled, analysed and explained in a methodical manner, as the researcher intended to derive further understanding from the case study by comparing the outcomes with the knowledge sourced from the literature review and several theories. This knowledge will be provided in various reporting formats which will include tables and graphs with explanatory notes. Potentially, new questions may arise from the data and these will be collated and covered when the data is presented (Luman, 2018) (cf. par.1.8.4).

3.3.3.10 Research Paradigm

This study's main aim is essentially descriptive and investigative, consolidating the very fundamental features linked with quantitative research, and is therefore mainly deductive and positivistic in essence. Positivism generates hypotheses that can be empirically tested and permits reasoning and may be evaluated against proven research in the current environment in which we find ourselves (Luman, 2018). According to Wiles, Crow and Pain (2011), the deductive approach expands on the hypothesis or hypotheses established on 'a pre-existing theory' and then formulates the research approach to test it. Furthermore, they contend that this approach is most suitable in situations where the research is focussed on determining whether the perceived occurrence concurs with previous proven suppositions. Luman (2018) purports that the deductive approach might then be regarded as more appropriate to the positivist approach, which allows for conceptualisation of hypotheses and the 'statistical testing of expected results' to an approved level of probability.

According to Bryman and Bell (2016), quantitative research study generally concludes with the verification or repudiation of the tested hypothesis: it will address the demands of the researcher's paradigm, which in this instance is a positivist one. Furthermore, they contend that many quantitative researchers attempt to establish 'cause and effect relationships' that permit them to make 'probabilistic predictions and generalisations'. In conclusion, Luman (2018) claims it requires a deductive approach to the association between theory and research where the focus tends to be on the evaluation of the theories. There is also the consolidation of the application and standards of the 'natural scientific model and positivism', which comprises of an opinion of social reality as an 'external objective reality'.

3.4 Conclusion

In Chapter 3, the study described the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that the researcher implemented so that he could gather, analyse and interpret data. In the theoretical framework discussion, attention was focussed on the various theories to be implemented with major focus on transformational leadership theory, learner development theory (with significant focus on behaviourism) as well as systems theory. These would all be applied to varying levels. Finally, the researcher also focussed on the conceptual framework, possible theories that could be utilised and the potential content of the framework.

Chapter 4 will present the research methodology utilised in the case study and explain the comprehensive research design as well as the population studied, and the sampling techniques applied during the data collection process. Furthermore, there will also be discussion on the procedures used during the design of the data collection tools and the platform utilised.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that were used to collect, analyse and interpret data. In the theoretical framework discussion, various theories to be implemented, with major focus on transformational leadership theory, learner development theory (with significant focus on behaviourism), as well as systems theory were examined. In conclusion, the researcher focussed on the conceptual framework, possible theories and the potential content of the framework.

Chapter 4 presents the research methodology selected for this study: research design, population, sampling design, research instrument, data collection methods and analysis of data. It also presents the justification for using the quantitative research method and how it was used to gain information. Finally, reliability and validity are explained, concluding with a discussion of the ethical procedures that were followed in this study.

4.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

4.2.1 Introduction

According to Hugo (2018) and Joubert, Hartell and Lombard (2015: 33), "the research design is your specific plan to investigate the research problem by performing specific tasks," and that the researcher should therefore reflect on the type of design and method that will best answer the research questions. Luman (2018: 44) contends that "an appropriate research design should ideally match the type of questions being mooted. It could be implemented as an extensive strategic or practical approach for managing the research." Furthermore, it should provide the inclusive form and approach which consists of the collection and analysis of data (cf. 1.8.1). In the end, a study design is a rational method for amassing data on desired knowledge. It should make sense, which indicates that it should offer the information under investigation. Additionally, it should be the most straightforward, efficient approach to acquire that information and acceptable to all parties, using the right methodology.

A case study using questionnaires is the research design the researcher wants to use for this investigation. Case studies can relate to "a process, activity, event, program, or individual or multiple individuals," according to Fouche and De Vos (2003: 138).

Case study research has many definitions. Sturman (1997: 61) defines a case study as a “generic term for the investigation of an individual, group or phenomena”, while Stenhouse (1985: 645) defines a case study method as involving “collection and recording of data about a case or cases and the preparation of a report or the presentation of the case”. Smith (1990: 129) state that the case study method is “an approach to research which utilizes ethnographic research methods to obtain and portray a ‘rich’ descriptive account of meanings and experiences of people in an identified social setting”. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:316) state that a case study design “focuses on one phenomenon, which the researcher chooses to understand in depth regardless of the number of sites or participants for the study”.

The case study design will allow the researcher to use multiple sources to collect data which, according to Fouche (2002:275), is ideal: “the exploration and description of the case take place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context” (cf. 1.8.1).

The case study surveys in this research will focus on Grade 8 and 11 learners as well as educators acting as mentors of the selected school (cf. 1.8.1). The reason for this is to include as wide a range of responses (multiple sources) as possible which would add gravitas prior to making any recommendations from the findings.

4.2.2 Research paradigm and approach

Hugo (2018: 105) states that a paradigm is defined as “a model or pattern containing a set of legitimated assumptions and a design for collecting and interoperating data”. Furthermore, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2012: 40) described a paradigm as “a framework, viewpoint or worldview based on people’s philosophies and assumptions about the world and the nature of knowledge, and how the researcher views and interprets material about reality and guides the consequent action to be taken.” Whilst Neuman and Robson (2014: 94) in Hugo (2018: 105) state that paradigms “include basic assumptions, the important questions to be answered or puzzles to be solved, the research techniques to be used, and examples of what good scientific research is like.” This is further supported by more recent research by Park, Konge and Artino (2020: 690), who contend that “research paradigms guide scientific discoveries through their assumptions and principles. Understanding paradigm-specific assumptions helps illuminate the quality of findings that support scientific studies and identify gaps in generating sound evidence.”

Since 1945 positivism has been the prevalent paradigm in social science, according to Neuman and Robson (2014), because it permits the researcher to collect quantitative data through surveys and statistics. In addition, this enables them to conduct rigorous, precise, and objective research (Hugo, 2018: 107). Neuman and Robson (2011: 95) stated that positivism "tests ad hoc hypotheses by carefully analyzing data from measurements." De Vos et al. (2012: 6) explain that positivism permits researchers to "adopt a distant, detached, neutral, and non-interactive position" when conducting research. Joubert et al. (2015) assert that positivism is typically linked to quantitative research.

More recent research by Park et al. (2020: 690) define positivism as "the hypothetico-deductive model of science that builds on verifying a priori hypotheses and experimentation by operationalizing variables and measures; results from hypothesis testing are used to inform and advance science." Park et al. (2020: 690) continue

Studies aligned with positivism generally focus on identifying explanatory associations or causal relationships through quantitative approaches, where empirically based findings from large sample sizes are favoured—in this regard, generalizable inferences, replication of findings, and controlled experimentation have been principles guiding positivist science.

According to Park et al. (2020), positivism generates hypotheses (or research questions) that can be empirically tested and permits explanations that can be measured against commonly accepted knowledge of the real world. This position generates a corpus of research that other researchers can replicate to achieve the same results. Therefore, the emphasis is on measurable outcomes that lend themselves to data analysis.

In addition, Park et al. (2020) have demonstrated that positivist researchers can precisely measure selected quantitative details about thousands of people and use statistics to gain an in-depth understanding of how people create meaning in their daily lives. In light of this, the researcher chose the positivist paradigm for the study.

4.2.3 Rationale for choosing quantitative research method

As previously mentioned, the research design for the quantitative approach is a case study with surveys and questionnaires. The surveys, as stated in Damtae (2019: 105), were added for the following reasons, which provides further motivation for choosing the quantitative research method:

The survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population and from sample results;

the researcher can generalize or make claims about the population based on the finding from the sample (Creswell, 2003);

the other advantages of survey designs are:

the economy of the design;

the rapid turnaround in data collection;

the advantage of identifying attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals (Babbie, 1990; Fowler, 1988);

surveys answer questions that have been raised;

solve problems that have been posed or observed;

assess needs and set goals;

inform whether specific objectives have been achieved;

establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made;

analyse trends across time and generally describe what exists, in what amount and in what context (Isaac and Michael, 1997).

These reasons are bolstered by Luman (2018), who argues that a quantitative approach is the most appropriate in this instance because the researcher wishes to emphasize quantification through the accumulation and analysis of numerical data. Goddard and Melville (2004) cite a number of acknowledged statistical standards for the approach's validity, such as the number of respondents required to establish a statistically significant result. Although this research method is influenced by positivism, it can be used to investigate a vast array of social phenomena, including emotions and subjective perspectives (Luman, 2018). The quantitative approach is most effective when a large number of respondents are available, when data can be effectively measured using quantitative techniques, and when statistical methods of analysis are applicable (May, 2011).

Maree (2012: 71) in Hugo (2018: 108) defines quantitative research as a “formalised, systematic, objective and nomothetic approach to research where numerical data and statistical analysis are used to generalise results from a sample group to the population.”

This is consistent with the findings of Joubert et al. (2015), cited in Hugo (2018: 108), who assert that quantitative research is conducted when a description is attached to a goal. As stated by Neuman (2014: 192) in Hugo (2018: 108), "following the principles of positivism, survey research rests on the assumption that social reality is made up of stable, objective facts."

The researcher considered the population, the research problem, and ethical considerations before deciding on a deductive quantitative research approach based on the objectives and purpose of the study.

Hugo (2018) asserts that the deductive method develops hypotheses or hypotheses based on a pre-existing theory and then formulates a research strategy to test them. This method is best adapted for situations in which the research project seeks to determine whether observed phenomena are consistent with expectations based on previous research (Wiles et al., 2011). Consequently, the deductive method may be deemed compatible with the positivist method, which permits the formulation of hypotheses and the statistical testing of expected results to an accepted level of probability, thereby meeting the researcher's goals and objectives in response to the formulated research questions.

Moreover, Hugo (2018) argues that a quantitative research study typically concludes with the confirmation or rejection of the tested hypothesis, thereby meeting the positivist paradigm's requirements. The majority of quantitative researchers seek to identify cause-and-effect relationships that permit them to make probabilistic predictions and generalisations (Bryman and Allen, 2011).

Survey research enables researchers to "precisely measure features of social reality, convert it into quantitative data, and then use statistics to test causal relationships that exist in reality" (Neuman and Robson 2014: 192). Hugo (2018) argues that the survey research approach consists of the steps a researcher must take in order to answer the research question by obtaining information from individuals with knowledge of the researched topic.

Hugo (2018) argues, in conclusion, that the quantitative research method involves a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, with an emphasis on

verifying the theories. Lastly, it incorporates a view of social reality as an external objective reality, consolidating the practices and norms of the natural scientific paradigm and positivism and incorporating a view of social reality as an external objective reality.

For the aforementioned reasons and explanation, the researcher chose the quantitative research method.

4.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

4.3.1 Population of the study

The researcher intends to focus predominantly on the Grade 8's age as Berk (2009) confirms that these boys are at a critical juncture in their lives, as they require suitable strategies for positive guidance and mentoring. They are at a crucial stage in their journey towards adulthood and an essential aspect of their overall character development and education, and therefore require positive management and mentoring interventions and strategies that will assist them to reach their full potential. The ultimate goal is to develop the holistic development of the learner by managing an effective character-based education mentoring system for Grade 8 boys as they commence their high school journey (cf.1.2). Even though the Grade 8 boys are the major focus of the research, Grade 11 boys will also be surveyed to backward determine the impact of the system on them as well as the educators for the same reason. The educator (mentor) feedback will also be critical as they are responsible for the implementation and management of the character-based mentor system.

Taherdoost (2018) recommends that the following stages should be applied when considering sampling:

- Clearly define the target population – this has already been determined. It is the Grade 8 boys and the Grade 11 boys of the selected school as well as the educator (mentors)
- Select the sampling frame – these are the Grade 8 and Grade 11 boys and mentors
- Choose the sample technique – non-probability or non-random in the form of convenience sampling technique was utilised and is often preferred with case study research design
- Determine the sample size – ideally all Grade 8, Grade 11 boys and all the mentors
- *What is of importance here is not the proportion of the research population that is sampled, but rather the absolute number of the sample chosen in relation to the*

population's complexity, the researcher's objectives, and the types of statistical manipulation that will be used in data analysis. Despite the fact that the larger the sample, the less likely it is that the results will be biased, diminishing returns can rapidly set in when samples exceed a certain size, which must be weighed against the researcher's resources (Gill, Johnson and Clark, 2010).

- Collect the data – this happens after the target population, sampling frame, sampling technique and sample size have been established viz. ideally all Grade 8, Grade 11 boys and all the mentors
- Assess the response rate - this is the number of cases agreeing to take part in the study and are taken from the original sample. The response rate is important because each non-response is liable to bias the final sample.

In quantitative research, the sample size and selection method can be used to determine the validity of the study's findings. According to De Vos et al (2012), the sample size is crucial for determining the dependability of a study's results. Individual respondents are more likely to influence the results when the sample size is significantly less than 30. In such situations, the larger the sample size, the more trustworthy the results. In this case study, the categories are all greater than 40, ensuring that the results will be more precise.

“Non-probability or Non-random” (Taherdoorst, 2018) is the preferred method for sampling selected as the participants will be male learners from Grade 8 and Grade 11 and educators (mentors) from a public boys’ school based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa (cf. 1.8.2). The complete population size of the study in this case are:

1. All the male learners in the selected school ($N_1 = 1\ 260$)
2. All Grade 8 male learners in the selected school ($N_2 = 270$)
3. All Grade 11 male learners in the selected school ($N_3 = 260$)
4. All the educators involved in the mentoring programme ($N_4 = 70$)

The learners are between the ages of 14 and 18 years and the educators (102 in total) are male and female of varying ages and levels of experience as mentors. The researcher is fortunate in that he has had considerable exposure internationally and nationally in South Africa with pertinent and relevant data obtained. Educational instruction at the school is in the English medium and provided for Grades 8-12 following the National Curriculum as

implemented by the Department of Education. The school has a large boarding community (480) and day scholars (780) with a total of 1260 learners and 102 educators (cf.1.8.2).

4.3.2 Samples for the study

Bryman (2012) contends that a sample is a representative subset of a larger population. According to De Vos et al. (2012), a sample consists of the elements of the population considered for inclusion in the study. It could also be viewed as a subset of population-based measurements. The sample could thus be viewed as a small subset of the total number of individuals comprising the subject of the study.

Respondents were recruited from a public fee-charging institution in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, for this particular study.

The final sample size of all respondents and the questionnaire response rate were as follows:

Table 4.1: Total number of respondents

Respondents	Number (valid n)	
Learners	Grade 8 (N ₂)	Grade11(N ₃)
	109	47
Educators (N ₄)	54	

4.3.3 Sampling techniques

As sampling is regarded as one of the most crucial aspects of a research programme, it is essential to have a thorough comprehension prior to selecting a methodology and conducting the study. 'Non-probability or Non-random' in the form of the 'convenience sampling technique' (Taherdoorst, 2018) was the sampling method selected for the study. It is mainly used to ensure that the different groups of a population acquire sufficient representation in the sample. The advantage of this technique is that the resulting samples were distributed in the same way viz. Grade 8 separate from Grade 11, and the educators separate from the learners. This method is most suitable as the relevant information is

available that allows for the ready identification of members of the population in terms of the criteria.

In this instance, all three samples (Grade 8, Grade 11 and educators) had varying degrees of what could be considered reasonable to good response rates and adequate representation when one draws comparisons with other similar studies, viz. Grade 8: 45%, Grade 11: 19% and Educators 77%. A similar sequential systematic process was followed with all groups:

Step 1: A letter was sent requesting voluntary participation to all three samples.

Step 2: A response indicating consent/assent was returned to the school by the parents/guardians and by the learners.

Step 3: Those learners whose parents granted permission and gave their assent were supervised by the educators (mentors).

4.4 INSTRUMENTATION

According to Maree (2012), instrumentation is related to reliability and is used to collect data when conducting research. It is essential that the instrument is “fair, reliable and valid, and can be administered to all the respondents without disadvantaging certain racial or gender groups” (Maree, 2012: 86).

Furthermore, Bryman and Allen (2011: 40) argue that research instruments need to be “aimed specifically at converting phenomena that do not naturally exist into a quantitative form which one can analyse statistically.” In this particular case study, the researcher gathered primary data from Grade 11 boys' behaviour records at the chosen school prior to the implementation of a new Managing Learner Behaviour (MLB) system, as well as from Grade 8 boys who would be experiencing a new character-based mentoring system. The purpose of selecting current Grade 11 boys is to determine the number of misconducts (negative behaviour) and merits (positive affirmation and behaviour) from Grade 8 two years prior, as well as the potential positive impact of a character-based mentoring system. This information could be useful in proving or disproving the researcher's hypotheses and would be indicative of a cross-sectional study and possible causality.

The researcher made use of questionnaires and surveys as primary sources as well as obtaining secondary sources from research conducted by international organisations such

as CIRCLE, 'Towards Transformation: A Report on The South African Boys' Education Project' *a School of Tomorrow* and CIRCLE ABSA research Project: Excellence in South African Boys' Education (2019 -2022).

4.4.1 Questionnaires

According to Taherdoost (2016), A questionnaire is one of the most commonly used data collection instruments, with the primary goal of obtaining pertinent information in the most reliable and valid manner. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions designed to elicit information from a respondent, whereas a survey is a research method used to collect data from a pre-defined group of respondents in order to obtain information and insights on various topics of interest. The difference between a survey and a questionnaire is that a questionnaire is any written set of questions, whereas a survey is both the set of questions and the process of collecting, aggregating, and analysing responses to those questions. In other words, 'questionnaire' refers to content, whereas 'survey' encompasses content, method, and analysis (SurveyMonkey, 2022).

According to Creswell (2012: 382), a questionnaire is a set of questions or “a form . . . that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher” which requires the participant to “choose answers to questions and supplies basic personal or demographic information” (2012: 382), and researchers can “develop their own questionnaire, modify an existing one, or use one that they have located in the literature” (Creswell, 2012: 383).

Brink (2007:147), suggests the following advantages of using questionnaires:

- Questionnaires are a quick way of obtaining data from a large group of people;
- Questionnaires are less expensive in terms of time and money;
- Subjects feel a greater sense of anonymity and are more likely to provide honest answers.

De Vos et al. (2012: 186) define a questionnaire as "a document containing questions and or other types of items designed to solicit information suitable for analysis." According to Botha (2018), a questionnaire is a common method for gathering information from subjects. Botha (2018) continues by stating that a typical questionnaire contains as many statements as questions and that its purpose is to collect facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people with first-hand knowledge of the issue, allowing the respondent to write down his/her responses in reply.

To ensure the success of the research, a well-designed questionnaire was created for each population (Grade 8, Grade 11, and educators) with the assistance of an expert in the pertinent educational field. Crawford (2010) states that a well-designed questionnaire should aid in answering the researcher's key questions and the study's aims and objectives as well as provide accurate data and be simple for respondents to complete. This appeared to be the case in this investigation.

4.4.2 Surveys

Survey research permits researchers to "precisely measure features of social reality, convert it into quantitative data, and then use statistics to test causal relationships that exist in reality" (Neuman, 2014: 192). The survey research approach consists of the steps a researcher must take in order to answer the research question by obtaining information from individuals with knowledge of the researched topic.

Due to its applicability to the research topic, a survey strategy was selected for obtaining quantitative data in this study. A survey strategy is frequently associated with a deductive approach and provides the researcher with a highly cost-effective means of accumulating vast quantities of data to address the who, what, where, when, and how of any topic or issue. Quantitative research projects typically employ surveys, which involve sampling a representative portion of the population to generate quantitative data that can be empirically analysed. Bryman and Allen (2011) state that surveys are most frequently used to examine causal variables between various types of data.

Comparing online surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone and mailed surveys, Couper (2005) concludes that online surveys are frequently less expensive, quicker, and independent of time and place. Their drawback is their reliance on Internet connectivity. The advantages of using the survey method are as follows: it is simple to administer; it is cost-effective; it can be implemented electronically; data can be collected from a large population; and it can accommodate a large number of structured questions, resulting in a flexible data analysis.

According to Luman (2018), a researcher conducting quantitative educational research must capture data from an individual or entity. The individuals or entities (e.g., schools) from which one collects data are known as 'units'; in this case, they are units of analysis. The information collected from these elements is referred to as variables. Muijs (2013) argues that variables are any characteristic of the unit we are interested in and wish to collect (e.g., gender, age,

self-esteem), with the term 'variable' referring to the fact that these data will vary between units.

In this case study, the variables were the difference in age, i.e. Grade 8 and 11 learners, and the educators, who were of both sexes and varied ages and levels of experience. As they progress along the path to becoming a good real man, teenage boys should ideally be mentored by suitable male role models, according to the vast body of literature on the subject. Obviously, this does not imply that female educators cannot be effective mentors.

The participants should not feel threatened by the procedure, as they are accustomed to completing surveys on a variety of topics, including wellness and well-being, and they are generally regarded seriously. Secondary data was collected on every male in the school, with a focus on Grades 8 and 11 using the Ed-Admin Learner Management System (a system that records the personal details, absences, grades, extracurricular activities, infractions, and merits of selected learners). This secondary data will reflect all infractions (negative behaviour) and merit rewards (positive behaviour), and this evidence will be statistically analysed, with this data serving as a proxy for merits and infractions. In addition, learners from grades 8 and 11 as well as their teachers completed an online survey on SurveyMonkey, providing the researcher with primary data from three distinct sources. Furthermore, additional secondary data from a survey conducted by the Circle Education group with learners from the same school would also be analysed.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The researcher obtained written permission from the KZN Department of Education Circuit Manager (Annexure C), the SGB Chair of the chosen school (Annexure D), the Grade 8 and 11 learners of the chosen school (Annexure J), and the educators of the chosen school (Annexure I).

According to Bryman and Allen (2011), data collection and analysis are dependent on the methodological approach employed, and the procedure utilised at this stage of the research contributed to the overall reliability and validity of the study (Saunders et al., 2007). Regardless of the project's methodology, the collected data can be divided into two categories: primary and secondary.

Participants were required to complete an anonymised, confidential survey on the web-based system SurveyMonkey (see Annexes J and I) in order to collect empirical primary

data. These were performed independently by learners in their mentor class group period and did not take longer than 15 minutes to complete. Educators also independently completed a survey. Additional empirical secondary data on the number of merits and infractions issued to learners were extracted from the online Ed-Admin LMS.

According to Botha (2018) and Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2009), a researcher's typical duties include developing measuring instruments, designing and constructing surveys, analysing data, and triangulating data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), objectivity refers to the collection and quality of data produced in a single study that can be interpreted reasonably, whereas Neumann (2014) argues that a researcher must be fair, honest, truthful, and impartial for the study to be regarded as credible.

To ensure the credibility of the case study's findings, the researcher undertook and maintained an objective stance and high degree of trust throughout the research process.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.6.1 Data analysis

According to Botha (2018) and Maree (2012), data analysis is the process of analysing data to derive answers to hypotheses or research objectives. According to Brink (2007), data analysis is the process of categorising and organising the data in an orderly, coherent manner so that patterns and relationships can be discerned, allowing the researcher to summarise the data and explain the findings in meaningful terms. In addition, Brink (2007) indicates that statistical strategies are recommended for all quantitative data research during the data analysis phase.

Botha (2018) argues that the data must be prepared so that it can be quantified, which can be accomplished in a relatively uncomplicated manner, for instance, by compiling statistics on the number of detentions and merits received by the learners. For other variables, Bryman and Bell (2016) believe that quantification will necessitate encoding the information and converting it into numbers to facilitate quantitative analysis, particularly if computer processed. In addition, these codes serve as tags that are affixed to information about the learners, leading to the actual analysis (Botha, 2018).

In order to answer the research questions, the collected data will be analysed by means of inferential and descriptive statistics, which includes frequencies and percentages (Luman,

2018). De Vos et al. (2012) use the descriptive method to illustrate the distribution of a sample across a wide range of variables.

Ed-Admin is the Learner Management System that is the school's web-based administrative programme. Ed-Admin has multiple levels of access permission from full administration rights down to editing/viewing permissions for each specific function of the programme, and it includes a mobile app for access by parents, learners and educators. One of the functions of Ed-Admin is to store the behavioural data for access in a number of forms, data being entered by educators via the online portal or the educator app on mobiles. Educators cannot edit data once it has been submitted. The Housemasters (middle management) then input these entries into the system. Controlling the reliability of the data collected and the decisions made is a system in which educators can only recommend actions to the Housemasters, who make decisions based on predefined levels of disciplinary infraction and associated actions. The data used here has been extracted from the system by an administrator without modification to the data originally submitted, so the data summaries accurately reflect the original entries.

As the study relies on empirical and ultimately quantitative data, Ed-Admin provides excellent, accurate, and confidential empirical binary data drawn from the items enumerated and entered on Ed-Admin, a secondary data collection tool that will be statistically analysed.

The data from the survey questionnaire completed by both educators and learners were obtained from SurveyMonkey and was analysed statistically as well.

QuestionPro is a web- and mobile-based software for the creation, administration and analysis of online surveys, enabling the presentation and visualisation of results from such surveys. Designed to meet needs across academic or professional research, it is appropriate for quantitative research across preselected focus groups, as carried out in this study. The questions in this particular survey were designed using a six-point Likert scale in order to encourage the participants to consider their responses carefully, being required to decide in a direction rather than avoiding to commit themselves. Secondary data provided by Circle Education from the survey completed by the learners, was analysed statistically and with narrative discussion.

According to Saunders et al. (2007), the time horizon is the timeframe within which a project is intended to be completed, independent of a particular research strategy or methodology. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the research onion specifies two kinds of time

horizons: cross-sectional and longitudinal. The cross-sectional time horizon has already been established, requiring the collection of data. In the researcher's case study, secondary data was obtained from Ed-Admin LMS in a very brief amount of time, and primary data was obtained from questionnaires completed by learners and educators on SurveyMonkey in about 15 minutes, which is indicative of a cross-sectional study.

4.6.2 Data presentation

According to Botha (2018) and Neuman (2014), the simplest method to describe numerical data of a variable is with a frequency distribution, which allows researchers to summarise data using histograms, bar charts, and pie charts. As previously mentioned, all data will be collected, stored, and processed using the web-based Ed-Admin LMS database application and displayed in Microsoft Excel table and graph format. The evidence required to answer the research query will be provided by the data obtained from the three research platforms Ed-Admin, SurveyMonkey, and QuestionPro. The data will be selected, classified, compared, synthesised, and interpreted in a systematic manner, as the researcher intends to derive meaning from the study by comparing the findings to information from the literature review and various theories. This information will be presented using tables, diagrams, and narrative descriptions. The data may generate new concerns, which will be added to the data findings and discussed in the data presentation.

4.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity, as defined by De Vos et al. (2012: 172), refers to “the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration and that truthfulness, accuracy, genuineness and soundness are synonyms for validity.” This, according to Luman (2018), implies that the design of the measuring instrument (surveys and questionnaires) must be valid in order for the accumulation of data to result in an accurate conclusion and that the questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure.

In the first instance, the researcher corroborated evidence by retrieving documents from Ed-Admin LMS. Participants then completed a survey questionnaire on SurveyMonkey that provided additional data evidence. Due to the school's involvement with CIRCLE, IBSC, and 'Thriving Schools of South Africa 2022,' a survey was conducted using QuestionPro (a software designed to collect quantitative data), which corroborated evidence obtained from an international and provincial background. Fourthly, an external auditor examined the entire study, the accuracy of the transcripts, the relationship between the research questions and

the data, and the level of data analysis from raw data to data interpretation. Consequently, the research procedures were transparent and well-documented, allowing others to examine and comprehend them. The researcher is firmly of the opinion that the final study should be able to withstand scrutiny from others. The following measures were taken to ensure the validity of the questionnaires:

- According to Taherdoost (2016: 30), content validity is defined as "the degree to which items in an instrument reflect the content universe to which the instrument will be generalized" and thus concentrates on whether the complete content of a conceptual definition is represented in the measure. The questionnaires should therefore assess the efficacy of the character-based mentor system and provide suggestions for its enhancement. This was supported by academic and educational specialists in the field.
- According to Taherdoost (2016:29), face validity refers to "subjective assessments of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instrument to determine whether the items in the instrument appear to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous, and clear" The items are intended to measure variables that influence the character-based mentor system, and they appear to do so. In addition, according to Taherdoost (2016), face validity is a subjective impression that has been evaluated by other educational experts and statisticians in the field.
- Reliability, according to Taherdoost (2016:33) concerns "the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consistent results with repeatability". This refers to when an instrument measures the same thing more than once and results in the same outcome, thus indicating the stability or consistency of the measurement. The researcher sought advice from academic experts and a statistician, whose contributions increased the level of acceptable reliability.

Susanne (2012) asserts that credibility is a sign that the results (findings) of a study are valuable. In addition, quantitative researchers evaluate reliability by examining how threats to the internal validity and validity of instruments have been mitigated. Furthermore, Susanne (2012) argues that quantitative researchers must take into account these hazards to internal validity.

Moreover, according to Creswell and Clark (2017), objectivity can also be defined as the correct distance between a researcher and respondents that minimises bias. Objectivity is

applied to measurements, data collection, and analysis in order to establish reliability and validity, and is implemented through the use of an instrument and the selection of convenient samples.

This study followed the subsequent practices of triangulation, member verification, and external audit, as recommended by Creswell and Clark (2017).

Thus far in this chapter, the methodology and procedures of research are described in depth. Because each step of the research procedure has been documented and described, a third party should be able to replicate the steps used in this case study.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Using a public fee-paying secondary school in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, as a case study, the study's purpose, aim, and objective was to determine how to best manage an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 males in South African schools. The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards and protocols of the University of South Africa. Permission to conduct this study was granted by the UNISA College of Education Research Committee (see Annexure B) and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (see Annexure C). Respondents were informed that their participation in this study was voluntary and that they could disengage from the study without repercussions, and that all information collected from them would be kept strictly confidential.

4.8.1 Informed consent

Everyone who participated in the study had their rights and privacy respected. In addition, they were not compelled to participate, as is required in all quantitative research studies, and their permission was obtained to use the gathered data.

The initial step in obtaining informed consent was to submit for ethical approval (Annexure A) from the UNISA College of Education Research Committee to conduct research under the supervision of a University of South Africa appointed research study leader. After receiving ethical approval to conduct research (see Annexure B), the researcher obtained written approval from the KZN Department of Education (see Annexure C) and the SGB Chair of the case study school (see Annexure D).

Formal informed consent letters were emailed to the educators, learners, and parents of the participants in order to obtain their informed consent. These documents included and detailed the following data (Appendices F and G):

- The researcher's background, credentials and capabilities on the research topic.
- The introduction and background to the proposed study.
- The purpose and aims and objectives of the study.
- The potential benefits of the study for the participating school and schools in general.
- The research plan, procedures and scope of the study.
- The researcher's and participants' roles are clearly outlined.

If the participants were willing to be part of the study, they had to complete a signed consent or assent letter and return the signed document (Appendix E and G).

4.8.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Tracy (2013) confirms that participants have a right to confidentiality; researchers should protect collected research data and ensure that participant identities are anonymous, and identifiers are not exposed prior to sharing the data with other researchers, assistants, readers, or audiences. The researcher assured all participants that their names and any information regarding their participation would not be made public or written down. All participants' anonymity and confidentiality would be assured at all times.

4.8.3 Ethical measures and consideration

According to Botha (2018) and Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2009), the most common ethical criteria are informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, protection from injury, and access to research results, and it is imperative that these criteria are always carefully considered.

According to Maree (2012) and Botha (2018), ethical measures necessitate agreement between the researcher and all participants regarding the use of collected data and how the findings will be reported. Furthermore, Letherby and Bywaters (2007) state that in any research study, it is standard practice to observe ethical issues such as voluntary participation in the study, and that no individual should be forced to participate.

Luman (2018) argues that to ensure sound methodology and scientific validity, authorisation must be sought from the UNISA College of Education Research Committee prior to data collection, as all research requires ethical approval.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the methodology used to collect data on the management of an effective mentor system for character-based education in South African schools for Grade 8 boys. Quantitative methods were used to analyse the data, and measures to ensure the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments were established by asking questions, conducting a detailed analysis of the results, and interpreting the findings.

Chapter 5 will outline the results of the quantitative data collection, which is based on the survey methods described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 details the research methodology implemented in this study, as well as the methods needed to ensure the accuracy and veracity of the data gathered and establish the trustworthiness of the research findings. This chapter centres on the presentation and analysis of quantitative data obtained from surveys conducted on three quantitative research platforms: Ed-Admin Learner Management System, SurveyMonkey, and QuestionPro. These surveys were conducted with learners and educators from the designated school and one of the platforms, QuestionPro, to establish national and international benchmarks for the institution.

The main research question which guided the study as described in Chapter 1 is **How should an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys be managed in South African schools?** From this main question, the study was steered by the following sub-questions:

- What can educators as mentors do to assist in managing character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men?
- How can educators develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible?
- Which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys?

The data was chosen, categorised contrasted, assessed, summarised and analysed in a methodical way as the researcher obtained understanding from the case study by juxtaposing quantitative data findings with information from the literature review and various theories. This information is presented using tables, diagrams, and analysis in writing.

5.2 THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS

Prior to collecting data, the researcher obtained written permission from the KZN Department of Education Circuit Manager (Annexure C), the SGB Chair of the sampled school (Annexure D), as well as the Grade 8 and 11 learners (Annexures J and I) and educators (Annexure H) from the sampled school.

Before data collection could commence, approval was obtained from the UNISA College of Education Research Committee, as all research requires authorisation. This procedure ensures that sound methodology and scientific rigor are applied.

During the preliminary phase of the investigation, additional empirical data from the online platform Ed-Admin LMS were collected. These included the learner's misconducts, merits, and age, as well as the gender of the mentor educators.

5.3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.3.1 Introduction

The study was conducted at the chosen institution. This section includes information about the participants and the results of the collected data. Three research platforms, namely Ed-Admin, SurveyMonkey, and QuestionPro, were utilized to collect data which were then analysed and presented.

5.3.2 Biographical data of participants (Learners and Educators)

5.3.2.1 SurveyMonkey survey of learners and educators

The learners who completed the survey were all boys between the ages of 14 and 18.

Table 5.1: Total number of learners and educators at selected school

	Learners	Educators
2012	1155	78
2013	1204	82
2014	1224	86
2015	1253	94
2016	1301	95
2017	1320	96
2018	1332	98
2019	1332	100
2020	1345	103
2021	1291	106
2022	1273	103

Table 5.1 reflects the total number of learners and educators since 2012, but the focus of this survey is on 2022, which reflects 1273 learners and 103 educators.

Table 5.2: Survey Respondents

Respondents	Number
Grade 8 Learners	109
Grade 11 Learners	47
Educators	54
Total (N)	210

Table 5.2 reflects the total number of respondents. The total number of learners who participated in the study was 156, of whom 109 were in Grade 8 and 47 in Grade 11. The majority of boys at Grade 8 are U15 years of age and the majority at Grade 11 are U17 years of age. 54 educators participated giving the total number of participants as 210, which is a good return of 36% according to Ramshaw (2022).

In the second phase of the study, participants (Grades 8 and 11 students and mentor educators) were required to complete an anonymous, confidential survey on SurveyMonkey (see annexures J and I). Learners independently accomplished these tasks during their mentor class group period. The final number of respondents in each category is listed in the following table.

Table 5.3: Gender of the educator mentors

Male	29 (54%)
Female	25 (46%)
Total (N)	54

Table 5.3 above indicates that the total number of mentors was 54 with the majority of mentors being male 29 (54,0%) which is ideal as far as forging male role models for young men who require this guidance and interaction in their formative years (cf. par. 1.8.2).

5.3.2.2 QuestionPro survey of learners and educators

The learners who completed the survey were all boys between the ages of 14 and 18. The total numbers of learners who ultimately responded and participated in the study was 265 (out of a potential 1273 - 21% which is a good return according to Ramshaw, 2022), of whom 43 were in Grade 8, 48 in Grade 9, 102 in Grade 10, 58 in Grade 11 and 11 in Grade 12.

Table 5.4: Survey Respondents

Respondents	Number
Grade 8	43
Grade 9	48
Grade 10	102
Grade 11	58
Grade 12	11
Total (N)	265

5.3.3 Presentation of data obtained from Research Platform 1: Ed-Admin LMS

5.3.3.1 Introduction

All data on misconducts and merits is recorded in and obtained from Ed-Admin, a commercially distributed school administration programme used by over 500 schools internationally, in, among others, Australia, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Kingdom, Italy and Hungary. Ed-Admin is web-based, with multiple levels of access permission from full administration rights down to editing/viewing permissions for each specific function of the program, and it includes a mobile app for access by parents and educators. One of the functions of Ed-Admin is to store their merits and misconducts for access in a number of forms, which is entered by educators via the online portal or the educator app on mobiles. Educators are unable to edit previously entered data. These entries are then entered into the system by the Housemasters (middle management). Educators can only recommend actions to Housemasters, who act based on established levels of violations of discipline and associated actions, thereby ensuring the reliability of the collected data and the decisions made. The data chosen here has been obtained from the system by an administrator without any alterations to the data originally uploaded, so the data summaries are precise depictions of the original entries. According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delpont (2012) and Taherdoorst (2016), reliability is when an instrument repeatedly measures the same object and provides the identical outcome, indicating the reliability or uniformity of the measurement. In this specific instance, Ed-Admin fulfils this criterion.

5.3.3.2 Misconducts and Merits issued to all learners

The purpose of including all learners is to demonstrate the number of misconducts and merits issued to the entire school prior to the implementation of the Managing Learner

Behaviour system in 2014, and how this led to a significant reduction in misconducts through 2019 and 2022. It implies that through positive reinforcement strategies and recognition, infractions can be reduced. Aside from 2022, the number of misconducts was highest in 2019 (2,804), while the number of merits issued was only marginally higher (2,878). The character-based mentoring system was implemented but lacked momentum due to the introduction of Covid-19 and the implementation of lockdown in 2020 and 2021.

Table 5.5: Misconducts vs merits and total learners in school

	Misconducts	Merits	Total
2012	1380	-	1167
2013	680	-	1204
2014	622	2375	1224
2015	1234	3500	1253
2016	1226	2904	1301
2017	1578	2625	1323
2018	1474	3629	1332
2019	2804	2878	1332
2020	1694	1218	1345
2021	1537	2639	1291
2022	4097	1830	1273

However, the major cause for concern in this current study is the significant number of misconducts for 2022 and the relatively low number of merits in comparison – the second lowest since implementation in 2014. 2020 was low as the learners were hardly at school due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. It is pleasing to see the reversal in 2021 with misconducts reducing by 10% (1694 to 1537) and merits increasing by 116% (1218 to 2639). However, of serious concern are the significant 166% increase in misconducts in 2022 (1537 to 4097) and the reduction in merits by 2639 to 1830 – a reduction of 30%. The possible explanation for these significant changes will be discussed in this chapter.

Graph 5.1: Misconducts vs merits and total learners in school

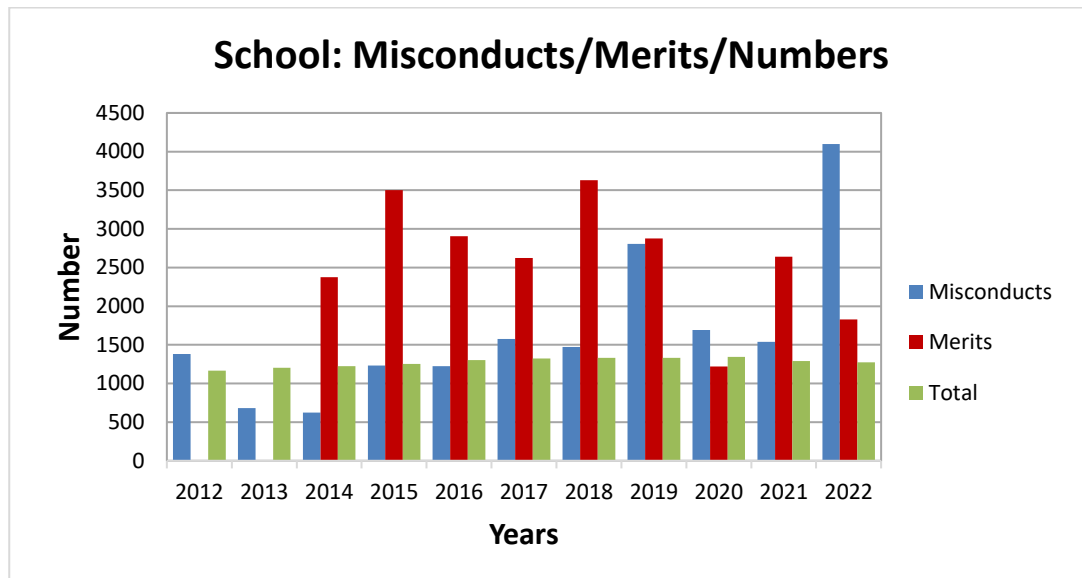
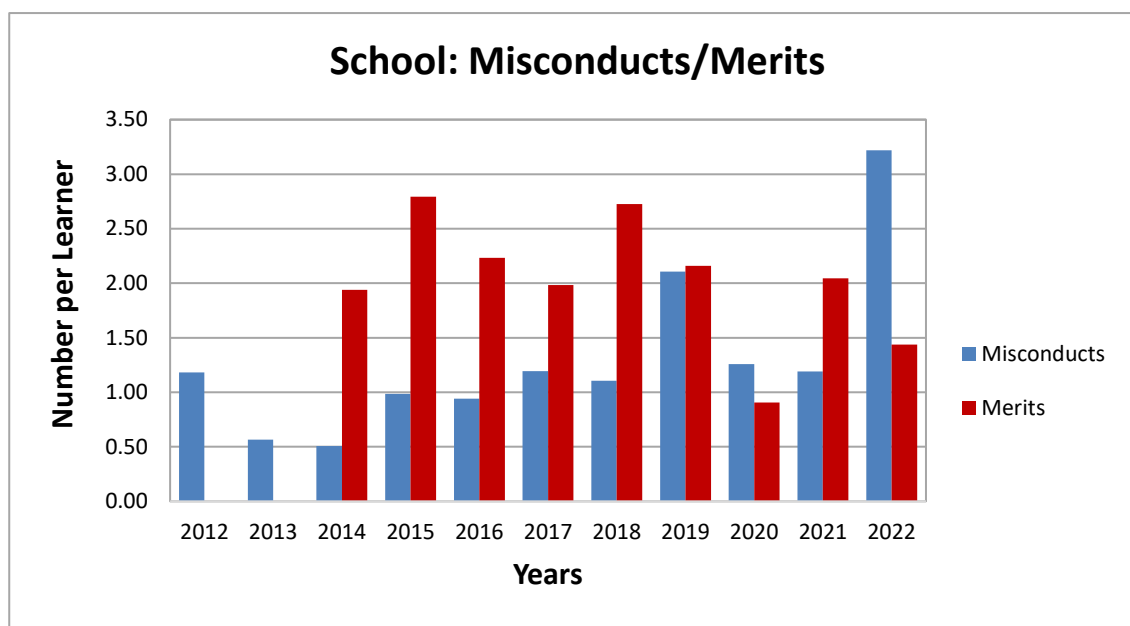


Table 5.6: Misconducts vs merits per learner total in school

	Misconducts	Merits
2012	1.18	0
2013	0.56	0
2014	0.51	1.94
2015	0.98	2.79
2016	0.94	2.23
2017	1.19	1.98
2018	1.11	2.72
2019	2.11	2.16
2020	1.26	0.91
2021	1.19	2.04
2022	3.22	1.44

Graph 5.2: Misconducts vs merits per learner

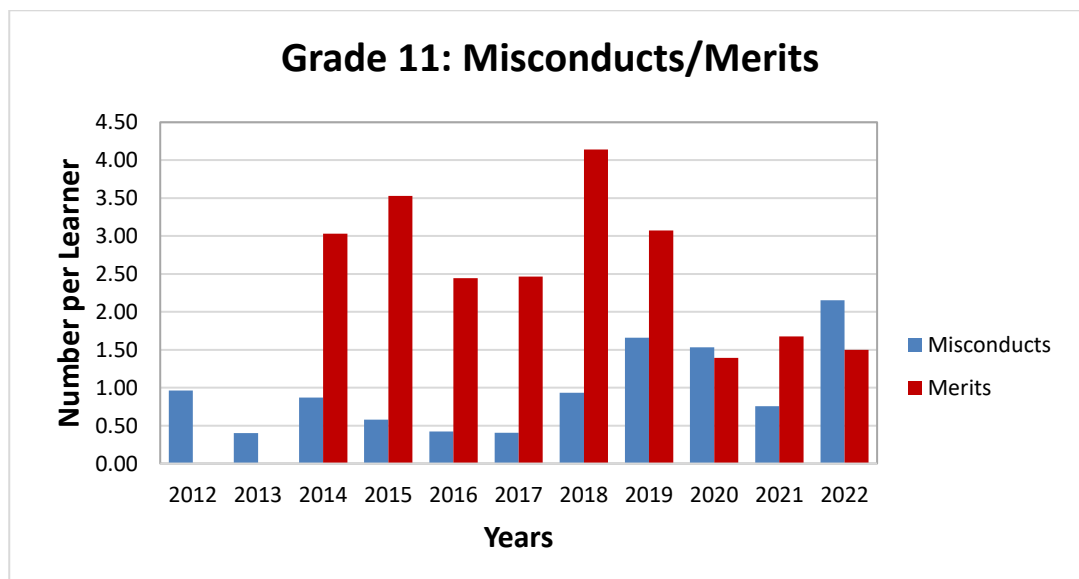
When one considers and compares Tables 5.5 and 5.6 as well as Graphs 5.1 and 5.2, in 2018 only 1474 misconducts (on average 1.11 per boy) and the highest number of merits 3629 (on average 2.72 per boy) were issued to a total of 1332 learners, the second highest roll to date. In 2019 the total number of misconducts increased to 2.11 per boy, the highest apart from 2022, and the number of merits decreased only slightly to 2.16 per boy. In 2022, the misconducts were at the highest at 3.22 per boy and merits down to only 1.44 per boy. Both of these figures are a cause for concern, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

5.3.3.3 Grade 11 learners merits and misconducts

When considering the biographical details, there are 248 boys at Grade 11 ranging in age from 22 boys at 15, (the vast majority 83%) 206 at 16 and 20 at 17.

Table 5.7: Misconducts and merits per learner at Grade 11

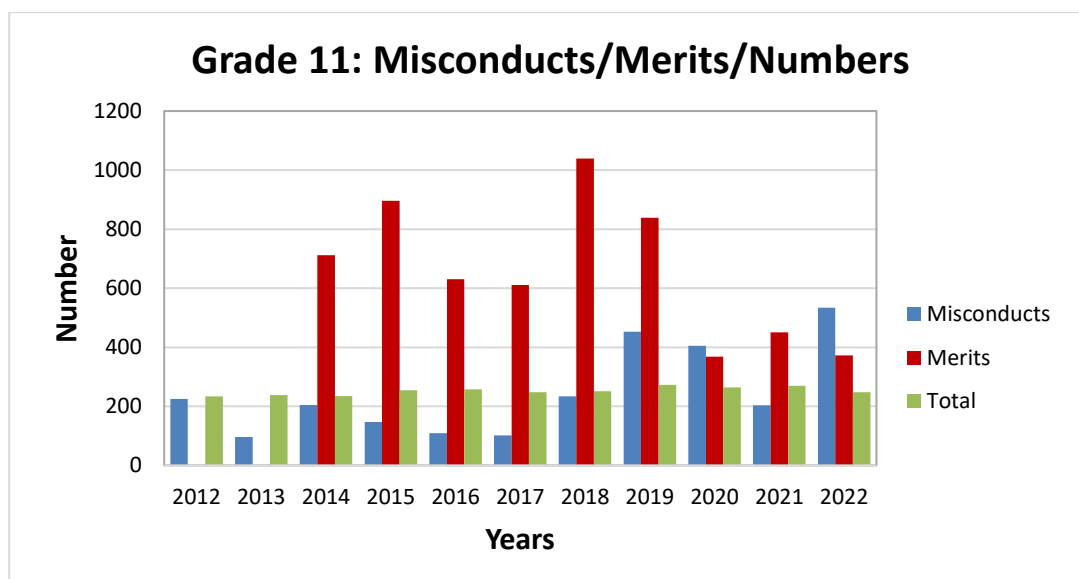
	Misconducts	Merits
2012	0.96	
2013	0.40	
2014	0.87	3.03
2015	0.58	3.53
2016	0.42	2.45
2017	0.41	2.46
2018	0.93	4.14
2019	1.66	3.07
2020	1.53	1.39
2021	0.75	1.68
2022	2.15	1.50

Graph 5.3: Merits and misconducts per learner at Grade 11

In Table 5.7 and Graph 5.3 where a comparison is drawn between the two, in 2019 1.66 boys received misconducts where 3.07 received merits. In 2022, the misconducts have increased to 2.15 per boy and the merits decreased to 1.50 respectively.

Table 5.8: Grade 11 Misconduct, merit totals and total numbers at Grade 11

	Misconducts	Merits	Total Roll
2012	225	0	234
2013	96	0	238
2014	204	712	235
2015	147	896	254
2016	109	631	258
2017	101	611	248
2018	234	1039	251
2019	453	839	273
2020	405	368	264
2021	203	451	269
2022	534	372	248

Graph 5.4: Grade 11 Misconduct, merit totals and total numbers at Grade 11

In Table 5.8 and Graph 5.4 where a comparison is drawn between the years, the total number of learners in 2019 was 273 compared with 248 in 2022, a reduction of 25 boys. However, in 2019, 453 misconducts were issued (1.66 per boy) whereas 839 merits (3.07 per boy) were issued. In 2022, the misconducts have increased to 2.15 per boy and the merits decreased to 1.50 respectively.

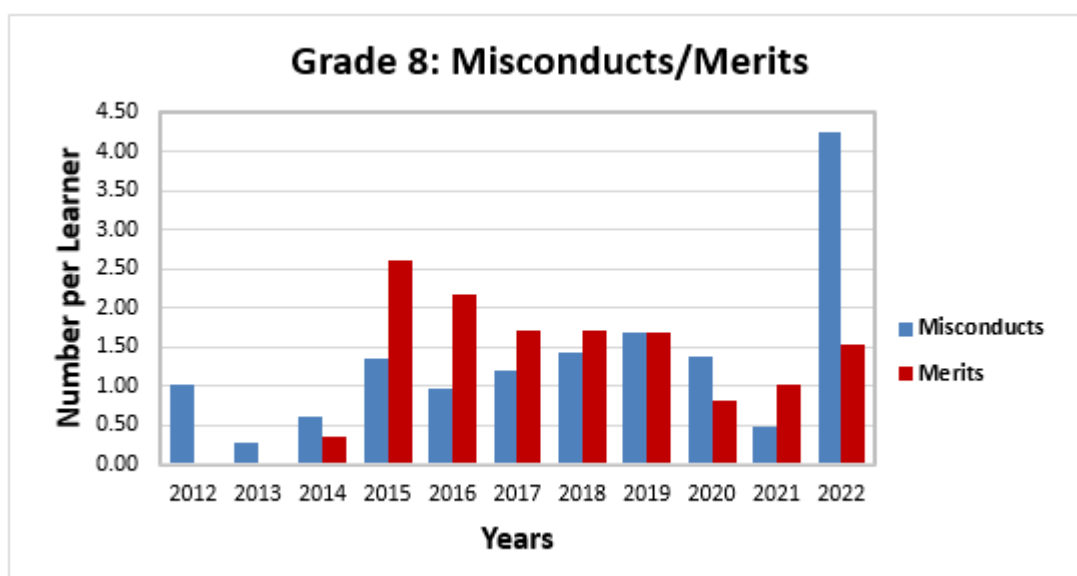
5.3.3.4 Grade 8 learners merits and misconducts

When considering the biographical details, there are 240 boys at Grade 8 ranging in age from 22 at 12, (the vast majority 85%) 205 at 14 and 20 at 13.

Table 5.10: Grade 8 misconducts and merits per learner

	Misconducts	Merits
2012	1.02	0
2013	0.28	0
2014	0.60	0.35
2015	1.36	2.61
2016	0.96	2.17
2017	1.19	1.71
2018	1.44	1.71
2019	1.70	1.70
2020	1.39	0.81
2021	0.48	1.01
2022	4.25	1.53

Graph 5.6: Misconducts and total merits per learner at Grade 8



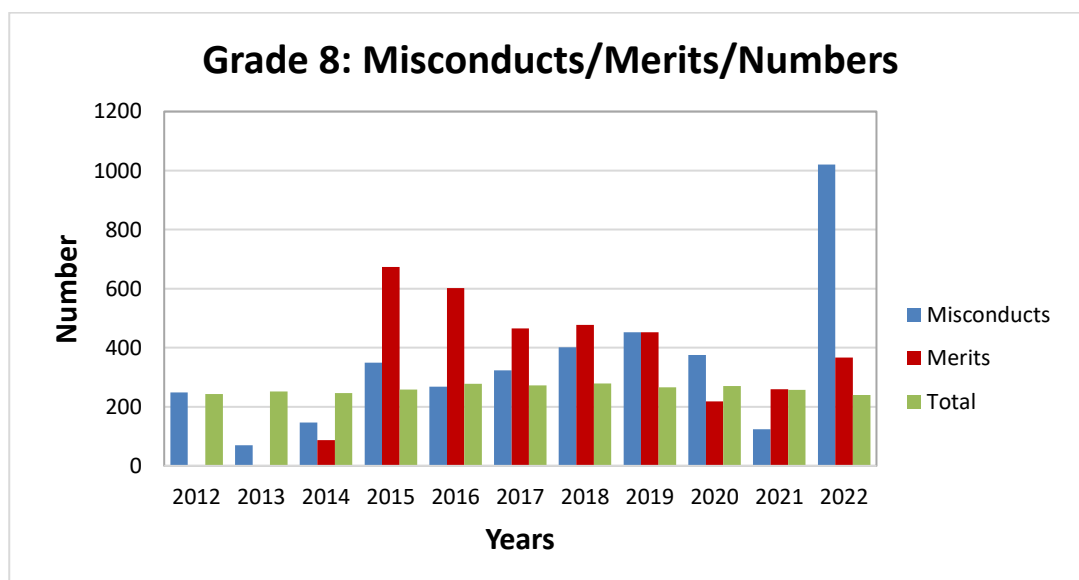
In Table 5.10 and Graph 5.6 a comparison is drawn between the years: in 2019 there were 1.70 misconducts per boy whereas there were 1.70 merits per learner, which is very low. In

2022, the misconducts have increased considerably to 4.25 per boy (the most out of all the Grades) and the merits decreased to 1.53 respectively.

Table 5.11: Grade 8 misconducts, merits and total numbers

	Misconducts	Merits	Total Roll
2012	249	0	243
2013	70	0	252
2014	147	87	246
2015	350	674	258
2016	268	602	278
2017	323	465	272
2018	402	477	279
2019	453	452	266
2020	376	218	270
2021	124	259	257
2022	1021	367	240

Graph 5.7: Grade 8 misconducts, merits and total numbers



In Table 5.11 and Graph 5.7, where a comparison is drawn between the years, the total number of learners in 2019 was 266 compared with 240 in 2022, a reduction of 26 boys. However, in 2019, 453 misconducts were issued (1.70 per boy) whereas only 452 merits

(1.70 per boy) were issued. In 2022, the misconducts have increased exponentially to 4.25 per boy and the merits decreased to 1.53 respectively, which is a major cause for concern as they have never had the most misconducts going back to 2014. This is further argument for the dire need for intervention strategy at Grade 8 such as the character-based mentor system as suggested.

5.3.3.5 Summary

From the primary data provided on Ed-Admin, one can deduce that since 2019 there has been a decline in behaviour in both grades as the number of misconducts issued at Grade 8 increased from a total of 453 to 1021 in 2022; at Grade 11 the increase was 453 to 534. Sadly, the number of merits issued has decreased in both Grades: Grade 8 from 452 to 367 and Grade 11 from 839 to 372. There could be a number of reasons for these dramatic changes such as the lack of positive affirmation (issuing of merits) by the educators, lack of parenting, the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown over the past two years with limited supervision. Further data analysis to follow will hopefully shed more light on this situation. What is certain is that there is a dire need for the better management and implementation of the character-based mentor system.

5.3.4 Presentation of data obtained from Research Platform 2: SurveyMonkey

5.3.4.1 Introduction

SurveyMonkey, a reputable and reliable online application survey platform, was used to collect additional data. The survey was completed by a diversity of participants, including Grade 8 and Grade 11 boys as well as teachers (mentors). The researcher intends to collect data from Grade 11 boys who have previously experienced the character-education system and Grade 8 boys who will be experiencing the system for the first time. The intention of collecting data from current Grade 11 boys is to establish the outcomes of Grade 8 three years previously. This information may be beneficial in resolving the researcher's question and sub-questions (refer to section 1.8.1).

By asking questions, reviewing the results, and interpreting the results, the validity as well as accuracy of the measuring instruments were confirmed (Luman, 2018).

According to Taheerdoorst (2016) and De Vos et al. (2012), reliability is when an instrument repeatedly measures the same object and produces the same result, indicating the stability or consistency of the measurement.

According to Taheerdoorst (2016) and Luman (2018), surveys are one of the simplest research tools to evaluate for validity and reliability.

5.3.4.2 Grade 8 learners

Q1 Please select your grade from the drop-down: N = 109

Q2 Can you recommend any suggestions that may make the character-based education mentor system more effective? 71 answered 38 skipped

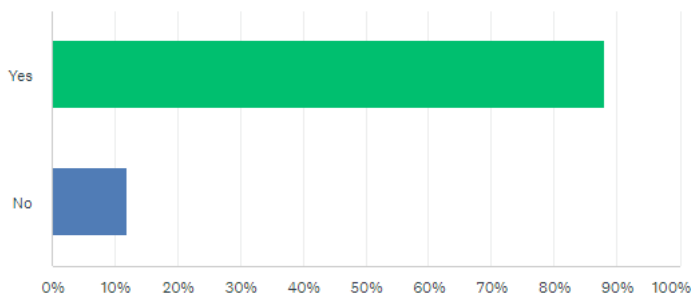
Some of the key responses which could be taken into consideration in the future are recorded:

- *Have another mentor lesson - 2 a week (more time is required for an effective system)*
- *Have a theme for the week that we discuss in mentor lesson instead of just doing little or talking about different things (there is currently a theme of the week)*
- *Group Form activities related to character development discussions, opinion based discussions (this is currently happening as themes are confirmed – clearer communication required)*
- *I personally think we must do it in our Forms in the different Houses (as above)*
- *I think that mentors should have some one on one sessions with their mentees in their class*
- *Make mentor classes in Forms so that Grade 8s can talk freely without having to worry about higher Formers (older boys are their mentees as well – need to work on confidence to speak freely)*
- *To be paired up with a higher Former in your mentor class and talk together (is meant to be the current procedure viz. Grade 11 or 12)*
- *We should let all the Forms sit down together and get to know each other better (that is the plan – better facilitation required by the mentor)*
- *We should act out the situation and comment on how we should have handled it*

Graph 5.8: Q3

Do you think that the introduction of character – based education mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys at your school? Please answer YES or NO.

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0



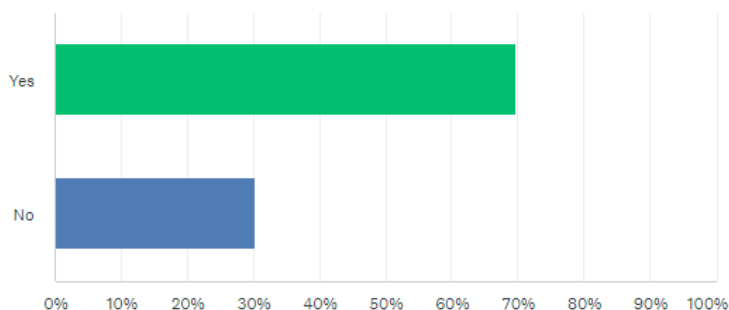
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.07%	96
No	11.93%	13
TOTAL		109

A significant majority 88% of the boys answered YES and only 12% NO. A very affirming response to the system which indicates that it is a positive initiative.

Graph 5.9: Q4

Have you personally bought into the mentor system? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0



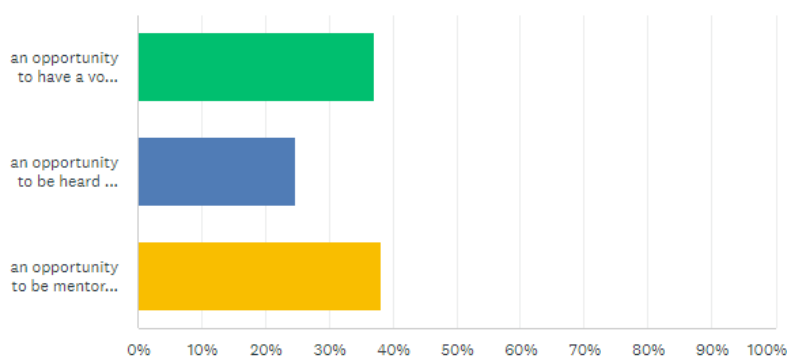
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	69.72%	76
No	30.28%	33
TOTAL		109

A large majority 70% of the boys answered YES and only 30% NO. This is a very reaffirming response to the system and that the mentor system is working.

Graph 5.10: Q5

What do you like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:

Answered: 105 Skipped: 4



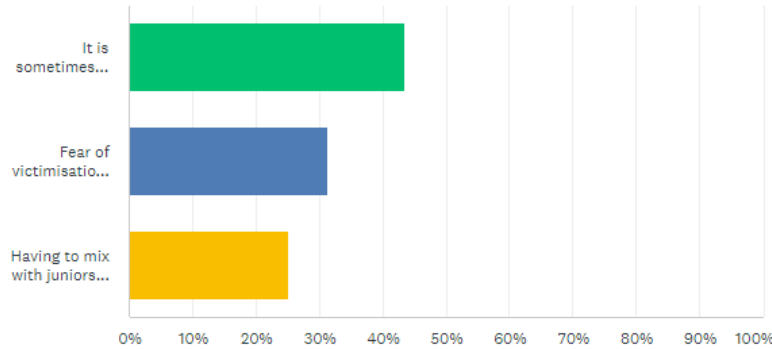
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ an opportunity to have a voice on important issues amongst my peers	37.14% 39
▼ an opportunity to be heard on important issues	24.76% 26
▼ an opportunity to be mentored by older boys	38.10% 40
TOTAL	105

In answering what they liked about the mentor system, 40 (38,1%) chose option C: an opportunity to be mentored by older boys; 39 (37,1%) chose option A: an opportunity to have a voice on important issues amongst my peers and 26 (24,7%) choose option B: an opportunity to be heard on important issues.

Graph 5.11: Q6

What do you not like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:

Answered: 99 Skipped: 10



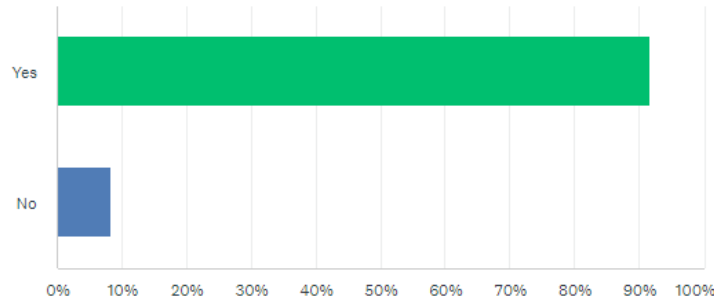
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
It is sometimes awkward speaking about some of the issues	43.43% 43
Fear of victimisation for speaking openly	31.31% 31
Having to mix with juniors and or seniors	25.25% 25
TOTAL	99

In answering what they did not like about the mentor system, 43 (43,4%) chose option A: it is sometimes awkward speaking about some of the issues; 31 (31,3%) chose option B: fear of victimisation for speaking openly and 25 (25,2%) choose option C: having to mix with juniors and or seniors.

Graph 5.12: Q7

Are your teachers being supportive during these mentor sessions? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 107 Skipped: 2



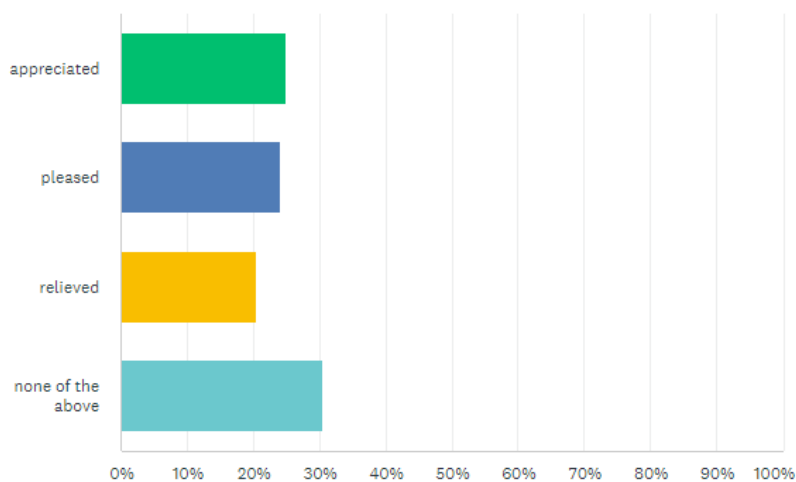
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	91.59%	98
No	8.41%	9
TOTAL		107

An overwhelmingly positive response where 98 (91,6%) indicate that their teachers are being supportive whereas only 9 (8,4%) said they were not. This feedback is very encouraging.

Graph 5.13: Q8

How does it make you feel? Select one of options A, B, C or D that best fits:

Answered: 108 Skipped: 1



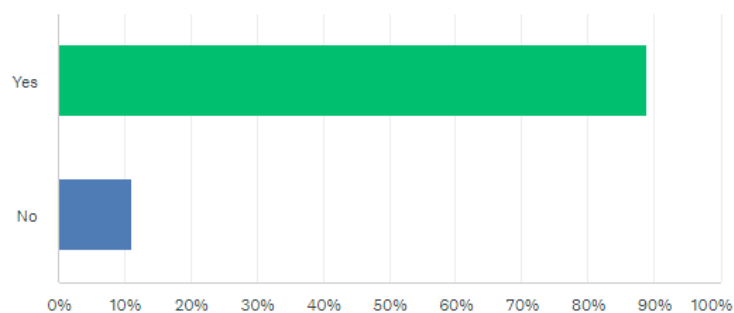
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ appreciated	25.00%	27
▼ pleased	24.07%	26
▼ relieved	20.37%	22
▼ none of the above	30.56%	33
TOTAL		108

The response was very mixed: 33 (30,6%) were indifferent – none of the above; 27 (25%) appreciated; 26 (24%) pleased and 22 (20,35) were relieved.

Graph 5.14: Q9

Do you think that your behaviour improves when you receive positive comments and merits from your teacher? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 108 Skipped: 1



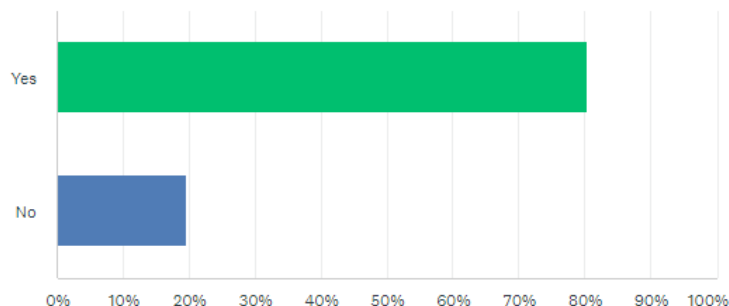
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	88.89%	96
▼ No	11.11%	12
TOTAL		108

Another very affirming response in that 96 (89%) felt that their behaviour improved if they received merits and only 12 (11%) felt it did not. This suggests emphatically that teachers must make use of positive reinforcement.

Graph 5.15: Q10

Would you recommend a similar character -based mentor system to other schools? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 107 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	80.37%	86
▼ No	19.63%	21
TOTAL		107

A significant majority 86 (80,3%) would recommend the character-based mentor system to other schools and only 21 (19,7%) would not, which is a very reaffirming response that the system is worthwhile and a success.

5.3.4.3 Grade 11 Learners

Q1 Please select your grade from the drop-down: N = 47.

Q2 Can you recommend any suggestions that may make the character-based education mentor system more effective? 37 answered, 10 skipped

Some of the key responses which could be taken into consideration in the future are recorded:

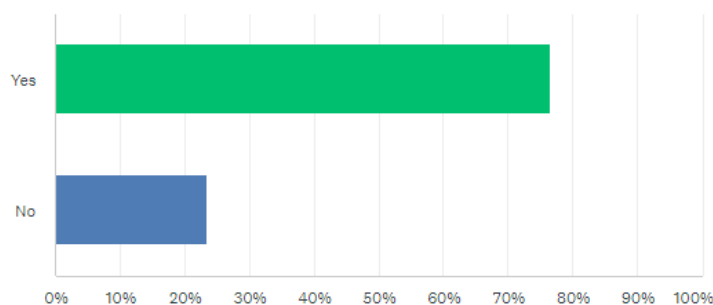
- *To allow more important conversations speaking about serious matters even those that are considered grown up business*
- *Give the boys more time to talk to one another, and fewer videos*
- *Focus less on learning core values and rather practice them*

- *Make the lessons more enthusiastic for the learners to take part in. Allow more interaction during the lessons instead of just asking questions based on a video, the lesson can be a practical exercise to build bonds, relationships, understanding etc.*
- *More engaging methods of teaching*
- *To create a confidential way in which students can bring problems forward and let people talk about it*
- *Make the character education lessons more practical instead of just pouring information onto students. Allow students in the lesson to participate in activities that will let them learn the set principles and also allow them to grow*
- *Being more relevant to the boys and current issues involving the school and boys*
- *Force the boys to focus more. Create a more relaxed environment in the mentor classes*

Graph 5.16: Q3

Do you think that the introduction of character-based mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys at your school? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



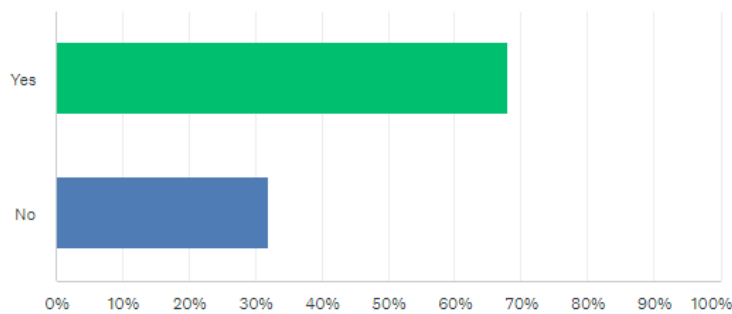
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	76.60% 36
No	23.40% 11
TOTAL	47

A significant majority, 77% of the boys, answered YES and only 23% NO. A very affirming response to the system indicating that it is a positive initiative and must be a work in progress.

Graph 5.17: Q4

Have you personally bought into the mentor system? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



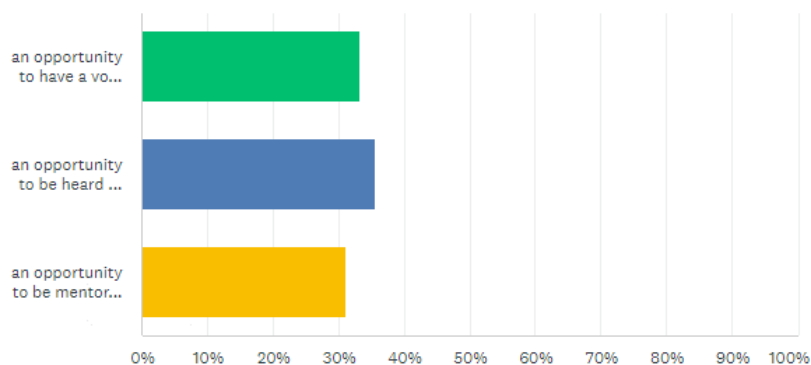
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	68.09%	32
No	31.91%	15
TOTAL		47

A large majority 68% of the boys answered YES and only 31% NO. This is a very reaffirming response to the mentor system but there is more to be done to increase the numbers.

Graph 5.18 Q5

What do you like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:

Answered: 45 Skipped: 2



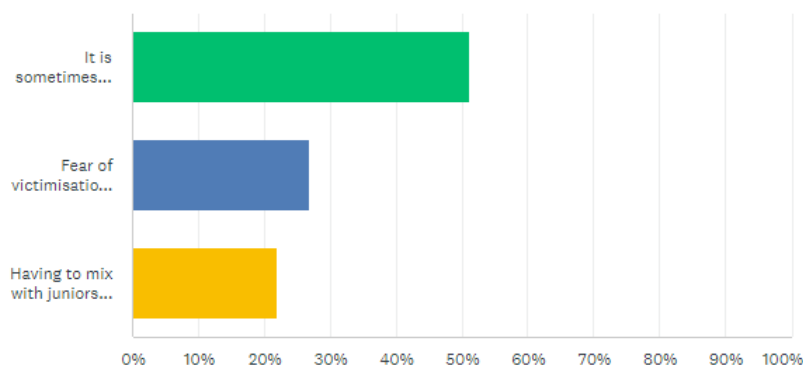
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
an opportunity to have a voice on important issues amongst my peers	33.33%	15
an opportunity to be heard on important issues	35.56%	16
an opportunity to be mentored by older boys	31.11%	14
TOTAL		45

In answering what they liked about the mentor system, 14 (31,1%) chose option C: an opportunity to be mentored by older boys; 15 (33,3%) chose option A: an opportunity to have a voice on important issues amongst my peers; and 16 (35,6%) choose option B: an opportunity to be heard on important issues – a range of support.

Graph 5.19: Q6

What do you not like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:

Answered: 41 Skipped: 6



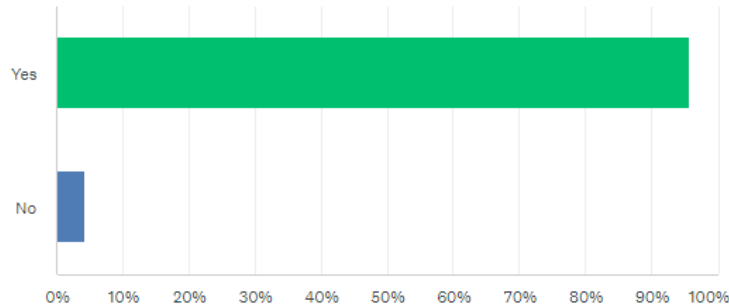
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It is sometimes awkward speaking about some of the issues	51.22%	21
Fear of victimisation for speaking openly	26.83%	11
Having to mix with juniors and or seniors	21.95%	9
TOTAL		41

In answering what they did not like about the mentor system, 21 (51,2%) chose option A: it is sometimes awkward speaking about some of the issues; 11 (26,8%) chose option B : fear of victimisation for speaking openly; and 9 (21,9%) choose option C: having to mix with juniors and or seniors, indicating that A was probably the most difficult of all.

Graph 5.20: Q7

Are your teachers being supportive during these mentor sessions? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1



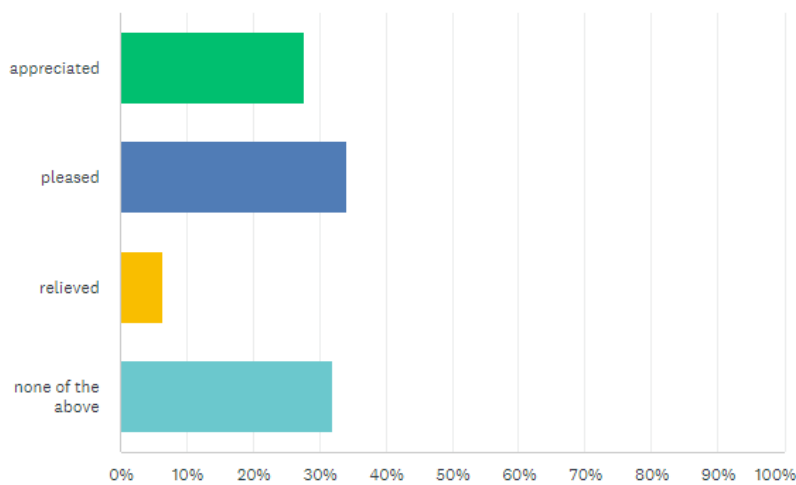
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	95.65%	44
No	4.35%	2
TOTAL		46

An overwhelmingly positive response, 44 (95,6%) indicate that their teachers are being supportive whereas only 2 (8,4%) said they were not, which is very pleasing to note indeed. This is critical if the system is to be a success.

Graph 5.21: Q8

How does it make you feel? Select one of options A, B, C or D that best fits:

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



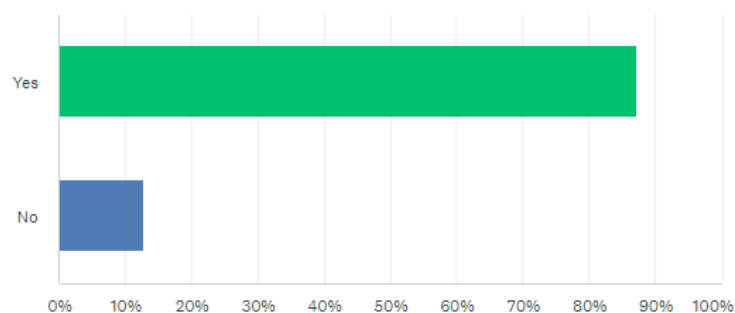
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ appreciated	27.66%	13
▼ pleased	34.04%	16
▼ relieved	6.38%	3
▼ none of the above	31.91%	15
TOTAL		47

The response was very mixed: 15 (31,9%) were indifferent – none of the above; 13 (28%) appreciated; 16 (34%) pleased; and only 3 (6,3%) were relieved.

Graph 5.22 Q9

Do you think that your behaviour improves when you receive positive comments and merits from your teacher? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



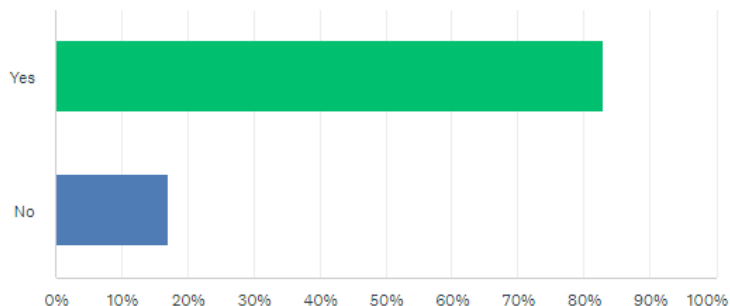
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	87.23%	41
▼ No	12.77%	6
TOTAL		47

Another very affirming response in that 41 (87%) felt that their behaviour improved if they received merits and only 6 (13%) felt it did not. Teachers need to bear this in mind and employ positive reinforcement at every opportunity.

Graph 5.23: Q10

Would you recommend a similar character -based mentor system to other schools? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.98%	39
No	17.02%	8
TOTAL		47

A significant majority 39 (83%) would recommend the character-based mentor system to other schools and only 8 (17%) would not which is a very reaffirming response. This is very pleasing to see and is a work in progress.

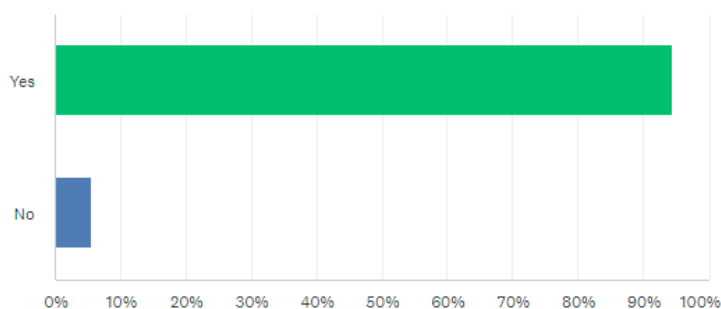
5.3.4.4 Educators as mentors

A total of 54 out of a possible 70 (N= 54) mentors completed the survey which is an excellent response rate of 77% (according to Ramshaw, 2022).

Graph 5.24: Q1

Do you think that the introduction of character-based mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys at your school? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



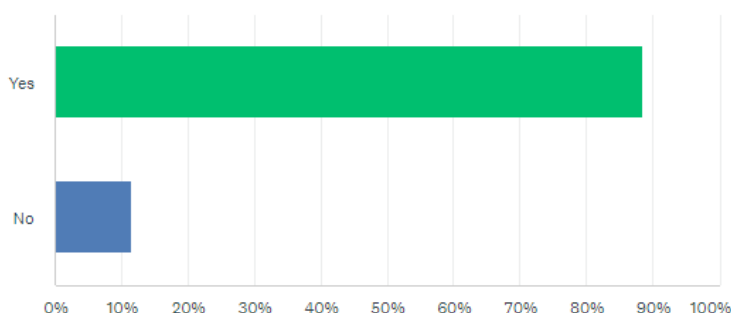
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.44%	51
No	5.56%	3
TOTAL		54

Of the 54 respondents an overwhelming significant majority 51 (94%) felt that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys, whilst only a very small number of 3 (5,5%) felt that it had not. This is significant as the educators are the people driving the system. The success or otherwise depends on them ultimately.

Graph 5.25: Q2

Have you found the system to be beneficial in your mentoring relationship with the boys? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 52 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.46%	46
No	11.54%	6
TOTAL		52

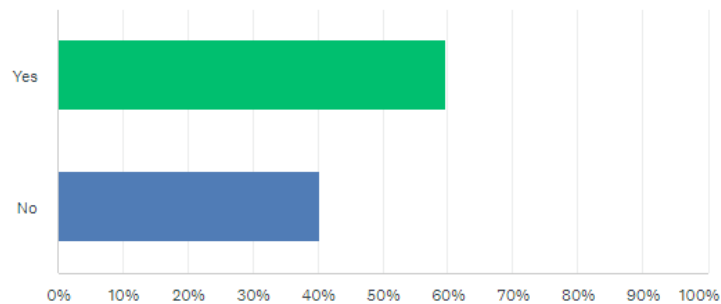
Of the 52 respondents an overwhelming significant majority 46 (88,5%) found the system to be beneficial in their mentoring relationship with the boys, whilst only a very small number

of 6 (11,5%) felt that it had not. This is key for the success of the programme that there is such positive affirmation.

Graph 5.26: Q3

From your experience as an educator, do you think that the boys have bought into the system? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 52 Skipped: 2



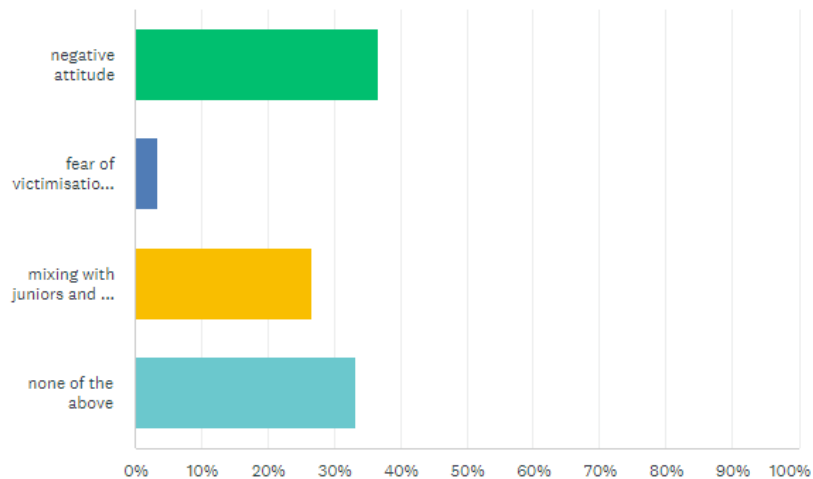
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.62%	31
No	40.38%	21
TOTAL		52

Of the 52 respondents, a reasonable majority 31(60%) felt that the boys have bought into the system whereas 21 (40%) felt that the boys have not bought into the system but there is obviously more work to be done which is ultimately up to the educator.

Graph 5.27: Q4

If your answer to 3 was NO, what do you feel the reason may be that some boys may not as yet have bought into the system? Select one of A, B, C or D which best fits:

Answered: 30 Skipped: 24



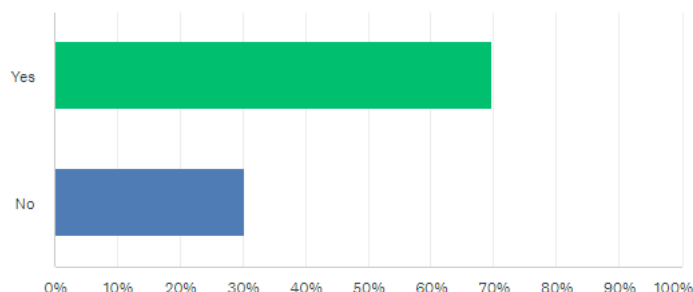
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
negative attitude	36.67% 11
fear of victimisation/bullying	3.33% 1
mixing with juniors and /or seniors	26.67% 8
none of the above	33.33% 10
TOTAL	30

Of the 30 respondents (only 21 should have responded if one considers the response in Q 3), 11 (36,7%) believed the boys had a negative attitude; 10 (33.3%) felt none of the reasons provided were suitable; 8 (26,7%) felt mixing with juniors and /or seniors was the issue and only 1(3,33%) felt fear of victimisation/bullying. The fact that only one educator felt fear of bullying is very positive response indeed that the mentor system is working and that boys are respecting one another and possible differences!

Graph 5.28: Q5

Have you experienced an improvement in behaviour in the classroom through positive reinforcement and acknowledgement and mentoring? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 53 Skipped: 1



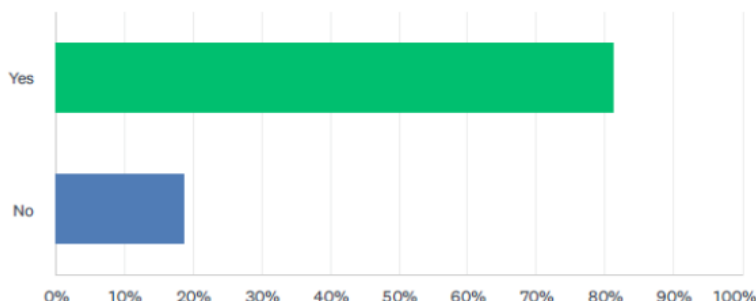
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	69.81%	37
No	30.19%	16
TOTAL		53

Of the 53 respondents, a significant majority of 37 (70%) believed that they experienced an improvement in behaviour in the classroom through positive reinforcement and acknowledgement and mentoring, whilst only 16 (30%) felt that they had not. This is also very pleasing to observe as it suggests that the system is making positive inroads.

Graph 5.29: Q6

Q6 Would you recommend a similar character-based mentor system to other schools? Please answer YES or NO

Answered: 53 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	81.13%	43
No	18.87%	10
TOTAL		53

Of the 53 respondents, an overwhelming majority of 43 (81,1%): 10 (18,9%) would recommend a similar character-based mentor system to other schools, which strongly suggests an encouraging endorsement of the system.

Q7 Can you recommend any suggestions that may make the character-based mentor system more effective? – (36 answered)

- *It is very valuable. **More time** allowed for individual mentoring and not only class mentoring would be incredibly advantageous (more time to be allocated has often been raised both by the mentors and the boys in their survey)*
- *An **extension of the allocated time** so that the content can be effectively discussed*
- ***Divide the classes up into respective age groups.** Then specifics can be aimed at that age group (this is done in Grades when looking at the character-education topics)*
- *It needs to **be as practical as possible**, rather than theoretical; real life scenarios are required*
- *Teachers to enforce the character-based education mentor system more*
- ***More practical mentoring**, which sees boys acquire and learn skills. The theory and 'talk' is lost on some boys, but getting busy with their hands and learning things through doing is often remembered. **Using role-play** is a good way to highlight a point*
- **COMMUNICATING WITH BOYS** (some useful tips)
 - *Genuinely observe. Be attentive to what your mentee is saying and refrain from composing your response.*
 - *Be observant of nonverbal cues and read in between the lines.*
 - *Use questioning with caution; avoid probing. Before asking inquiries, allow him time and space to express his thoughts and emotions.*
 - *Silence is not always negative; it may indicate that he is at ease.*
 - *Follow his lead when it comes to eye contact.*
 - *Because fidgeting can help boys manage stress and anxiety, it is unwise to expect them to remain still.*

- *Provide him time to assimilate the information/emotions.*
- *Recognize his emotions; do not disregard them.*
- *Use verbal (oh, yes, mmm) and nonverbal (head inclination, forward lean) cues to demonstrate that you are listening, while allowing him space and time to speak.*

PS I discovered this on the internet, and it was very helpful to me as a female who sometimes misinterprets 'male' signals. And I believe it would be a good idea for male staff/mentors to explain/chat/discuss some of the non-verbal cues or how the male thinks about emotions, etc. (extremely helpful suggestions for female staff to consider).

- ***Pupils need to perceive a benefit to themselves.*** *At present many oblige the teacher by participating - as an act of compliance rather than actually believing that it is enhancing their characters and lives (boys have suggested from their surveys that they have and do perceive the benefit of the system and have made their own recommendations).*
- ***It is a fantastic initiative.*** *The best registration and mentoring system that I have ever experienced (positive feedback).*

5.3.4.5 Summary

From the empirical data obtained from the three separate surveys, viz. Grade 8, Grade 11 and the mentors, a number of common themes became evident.

- The majority of all three groups felt strongly (Grade 8: 70%; Grade 11: 77% and Mentors: 94%) that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a positive initiative.
- 70% of Grade 8 and 68% of Grade 11 had personally bought into the system which is encouraging. 60 percent of the mentors believed that the boys had invested into the system, and 70 percent of them reported seeing an improvement in classroom behaviour as a consequence of positive reinforcement, praise, and mentoring, which is encouraging. Both Grade 8: 89% and Grade 11: 87% overwhelmingly concur that their behaviour improved through the aforementioned as well, which suggests that this is an essential part of the effective classroom management practice.

- Further substantiation is that 88% of mentors found the system to be beneficial in their mentoring relationship with the boys, which is extremely positive. Both Grade 8: 92% and Grade 11: 96% confirmed that their teachers were supportive which is very reaffirming and a crucial aspect if the system is going to work.
- A convincing majority of all three groups felt strongly (Grade 8: 80%; Grade 11: 83% and Mentors: 81%) and would recommend the character-education based mentor system to other schools.

5.3.5 Presentation and discussion of data obtained from Research Platform 3: QuestionPro

5.3.5.1 Introduction

The researcher's school is one of 20 leading boys' schools (both public and independent) in South Africa which has participated in an educational research project spanning four years from 2019 – 2022, looking into excellence in education. Through this research project, we have gained a deeper and broader understanding of excellence in boys' education, benchmarked against boys' schools both nationally and internationally. *A School for tomorrow*, through its research institute CIRCLE (The Centre for Innovation, Research, Creativity and Leadership in Education), has led the project which is titled 'Thriving Schools in South Africa' and we refer to the recently conducted survey 'Thriving Students Survey 2022' on the QuestionPro survey (using 6-point agreement Likert scale) platform (arranged by Prof Cummins) for further primary statistical data in answering the main research and sub-research questions. Questions and responses that are relevant to the topic of the case study have been included in this section.

5.3.5.2 Grade 8 – Grade 12 learners

Example for completing the survey:

Use the following six-point Likert scale to indicate whether you agree that school management should be involved in promoting the job satisfaction of teachers:

1 – Disagree strongly

2 – Disagree

3 – Disagree slightly






4 – Agree slightly

5 – Agree

6 – Agree strongly

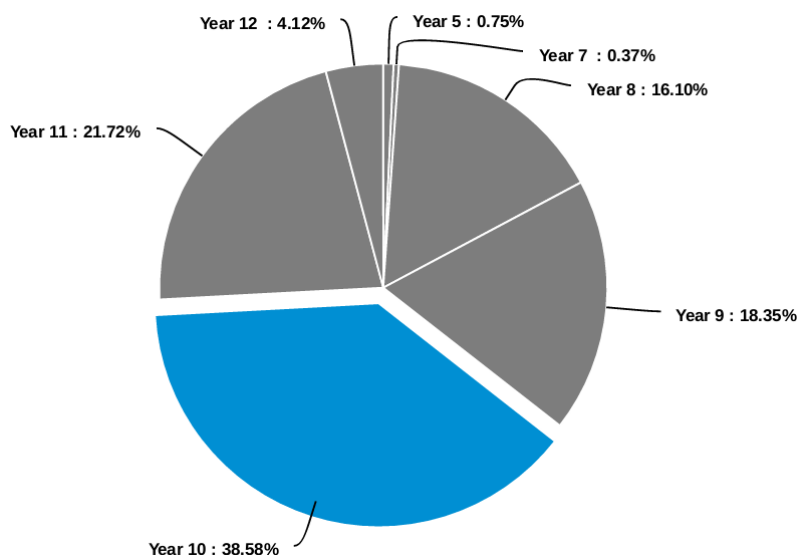
Example: Do you agree that school management should be involved in promoting the job satisfaction of teachers?		
(If you agree strongly that school management should be involved, <u>then mark 6</u> as follows):		
1.	DISAGREE STRONGLY	
2.	DISAGREE	
3.	DISAGREE SLIGHTLY	
4.	AGREE SLIGHTLY	
5.	AGREE	
6.	AGREE STRONGLY	X

Table 5.12: Survey Respondents (N=267)

Year 8	43	16.1%	
Year 9	49	18.35%	
Year 10	103	38.58%	
Year 11	58	21.72%	
Year 12	11	4.12%	
Total	267	100 %	

Graph 5.30: Participants

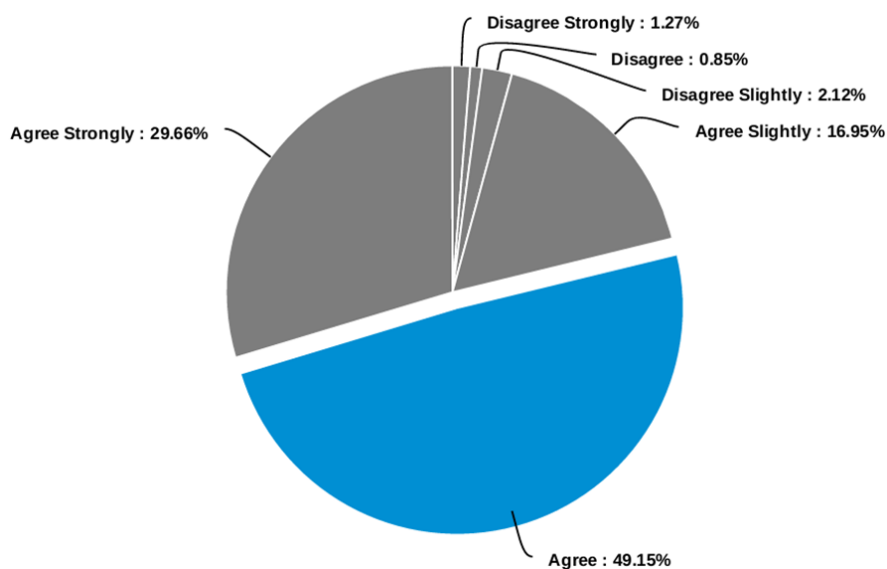
I am currently a student in:



21% (267/1273) of the total school responded, of which 16% (43) were in Grade 8 and 22% (58) in Grade 11: 38% (101) of the total group which is a satisfactory sample according to Ramshaw (2022).

Graph 5.31: Core values

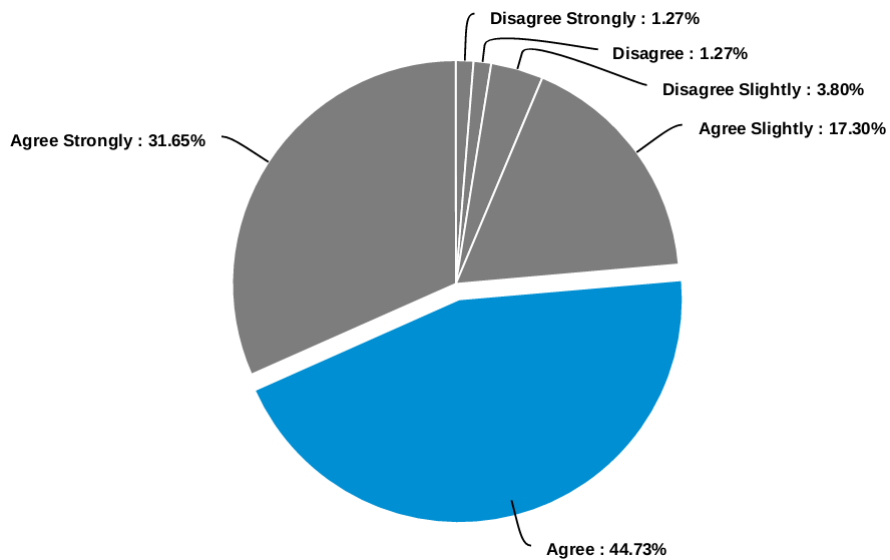
Q1: I recognise, understand and seek to live out the core values of the school



The core values of the case study school are: honesty, respect, integrity, self-discipline and commitment. A number of these are pertinent when managing the character-based mentor system and it is very pleasing to see that a large majority, 79,3% boys, are striving to live out these values, whereas only a very small minority of 2,5% are not, which is very promising.

Graph 5.32: Resilience and perseverance

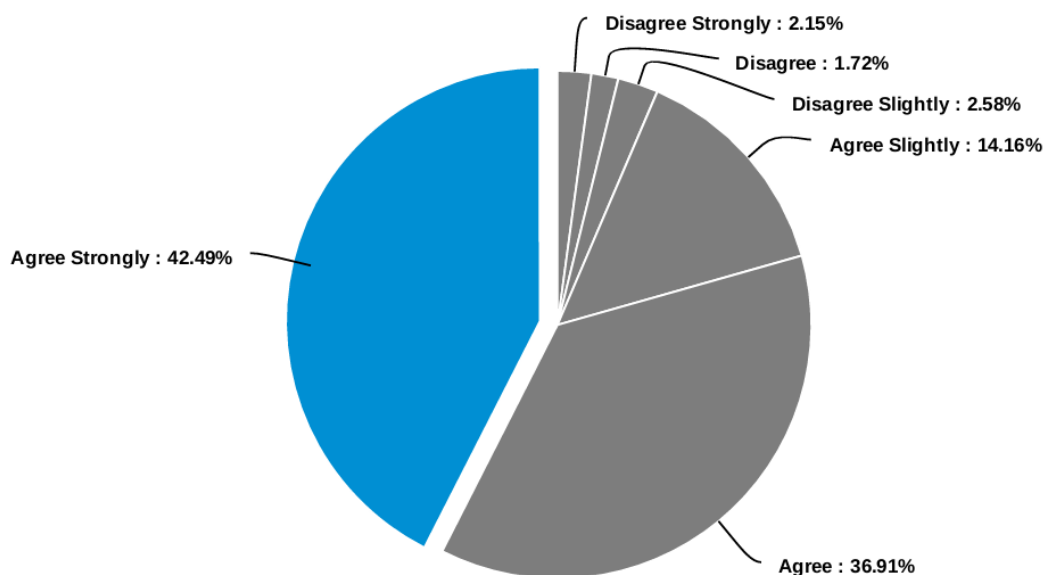
Q2: I am learning how to be resilient, to show perseverance and not to give up when the going gets tough



Of the respondents, a very large majority of 77% are striving to persevere and be resilient when under pressure which is a positive character trait, whereas only a very small minority of 2,5% were not which is very pleasing to observe.

Graph 5.33: Moral Code

Q3: I am developing a personal moral code – a strong sense of what I believe is right and wrong in the world



Of the respondents a strong majority, 80%, are developing a strong moral code – a strong sense of what is right and wrong in the world, which aligns with the aims and objectives of character-education mentoring, whereas only a very small minority of 4% were not, which is very reassuring.

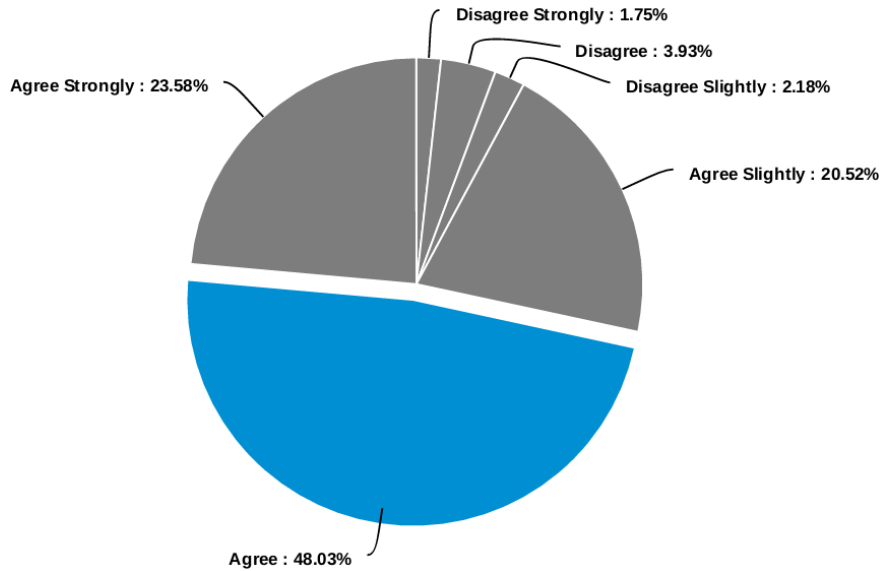
Q: Is there anything else you would like to add in connection with these statements and your ratings about Building Culture: Character, Resilience & Moral Code?

- *I would like to add that I try my best to show **respect** to all staff and other learners*
- *This school has taught me to be **independent** of my parents and do things on my own **when it gets tough***
- *I am working on myself and creating a **new moral code***
- *I agree that my school does its best to live out its **moral and true identity***
- *Sometimes when things get tough but being at a school full of traditions and a great brotherhood has given me a reason to come to school and participate, i **love my school***
- *My school has taught me the above statements very well, **I am proud** to say I have been taught **these values***
- *The school's **ethos and way of life** provides a metric whereby we **can become better humans**, I see that the manners and fundamentals learnt here when applied lead to a **greater sense of contribution to society***
- *Implementing better **Christian values** in the school*
- *I think that the **school has core values but very little people live up** to or try strive to achieve them. My moral code has been built up through my parents and religion and my school is open to many religions*

There are a number of pertinent comments which should be taken into consideration going forward for a more effective system.

Graph 5.34: Expectations

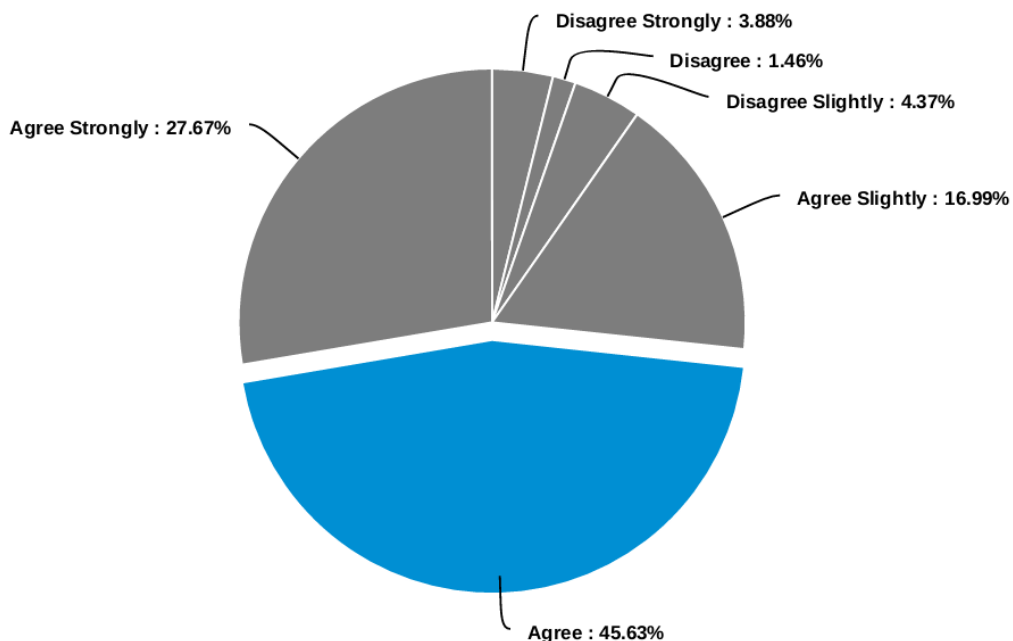
Q4: I try to earn my place at school every day by living up to the expectations of my community.



Of the respondents, a large majority, 72%, are striving to earn their place daily and living up to expectations which is very reaffirming for the system, whereas only 7% do not.

Graph 5.35: Knowledge, skills, character and learning habits

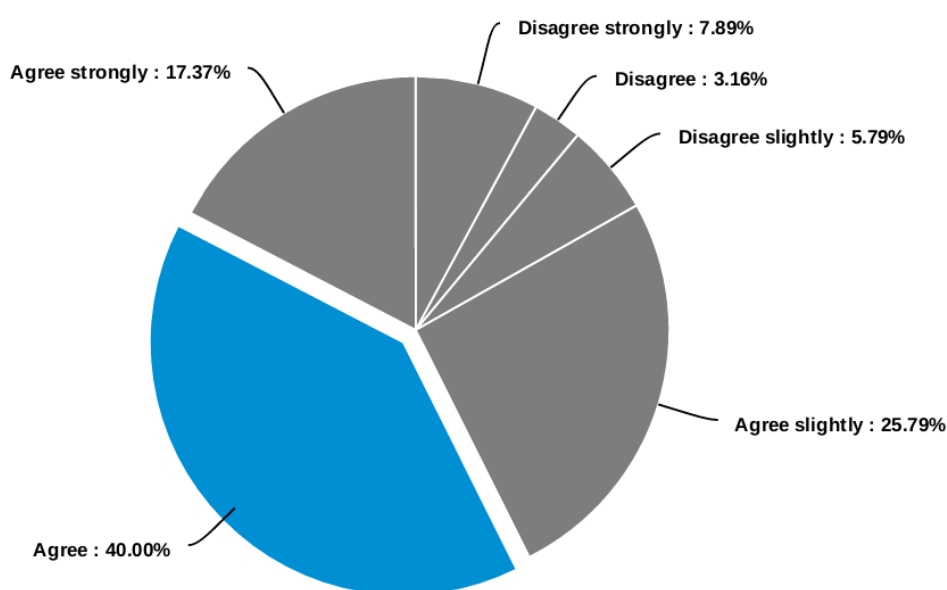
Q5: I am confident that I am gaining the knowledge, skills, character dispositions and learning habits to meet the expectations of my school and the challenges of the future



Of the respondents, a strong majority, 73%, are confident that they are gaining the knowledge, skills, character dispositions and learning habits to meet the expectations of the school and the challenges of the future, whereas only 5% feel they are not.

Graph 5.35: Pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services

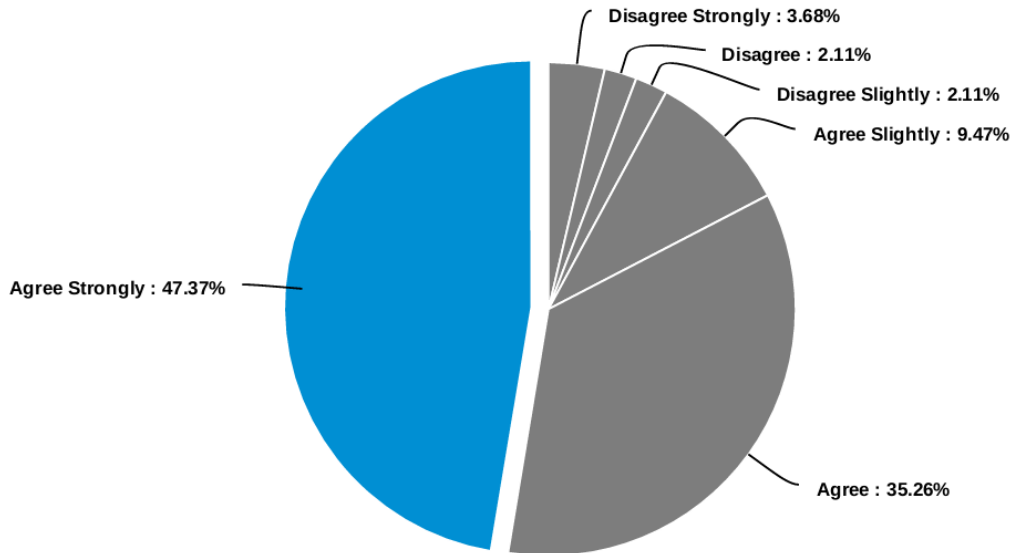
Q6: The school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services are helping me grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness I need to thrive now and in the future



Of the respondents, a slight majority of 57% believe that the school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services are helping them to grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness they need to thrive now and in the future, whereas 19% feel the school is not. This is an essential aspect of the character-education based mentor system.

Graph 5.36: Diversity

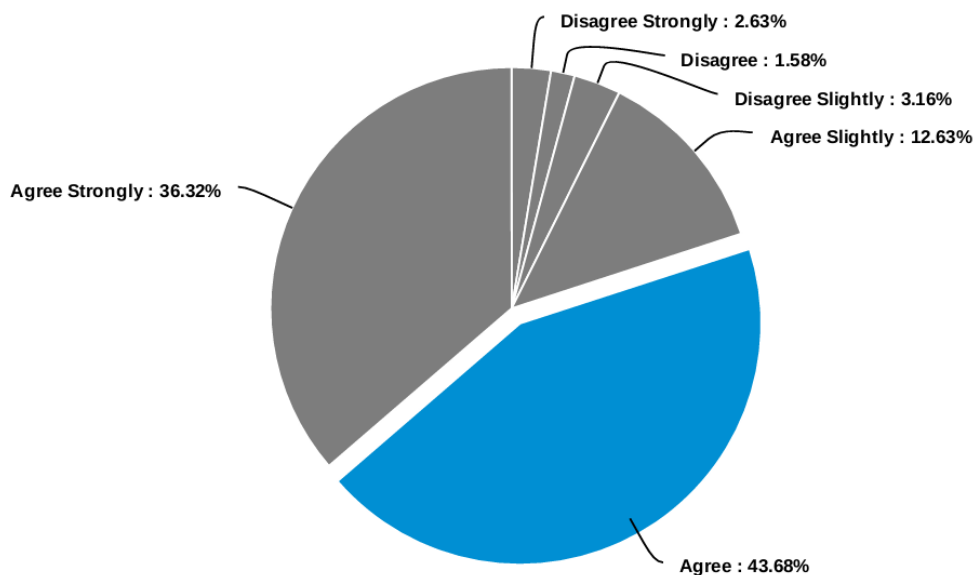
Q7: I have a circle of school friends from diverse backgrounds, perspectives and or year groups



Of the respondents, a large majority of 82% have a circle of friends from diverse backgrounds, whereas only 6% do not, which is positive from a transformation perspective.

Graph 5.37: Respect

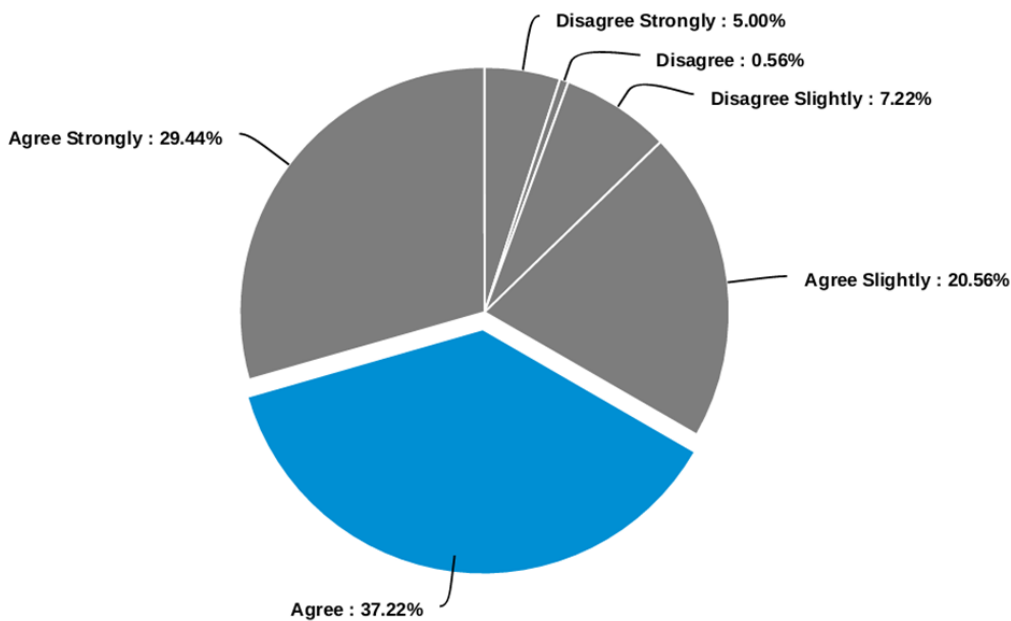
Q8: I try to treat members of the school community and guests with respect and make sure that no one is left out of left behind because of who they are, regardless of personal background, culture, language, religion, gender, appearance or ability



Of the respondents, a large majority of 80% treat all comers with respect no matter what their background, religion, gender etc. is concerned, whereas only 5% feel that they do not. This is very promising from the case study perspective.

Graph 5.38: Bullying , harrassment

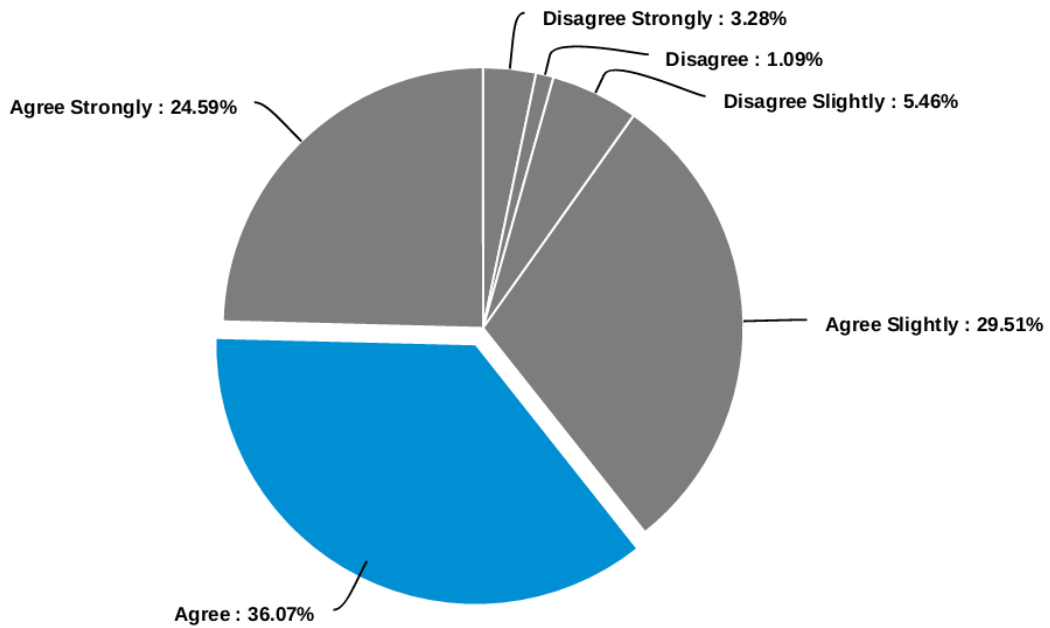
Q9: I will stand up when I see bullying, harassment or other wrongdoing



Of the respondents, 66%, a reasonable majority, will stand up when they see bullying, harassment or other wrongdoing, whereas only 5% feel that they will not, which is very pleasing as this would be one of the key aspects of the system. It is at times difficult for the boys to stand up against their peers, so this is positive.

Graph 5.39: Relationships

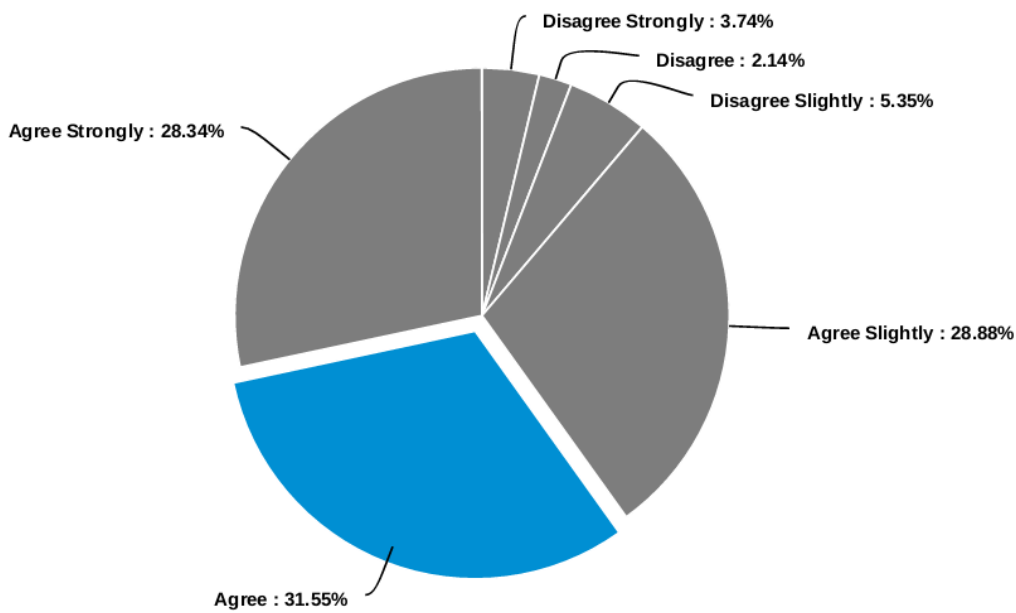
Q10: I build, maintain, solving conflict within and grow relationships through teams that are focused on improved outcomes for all learners inside and outside the classroom



Of the respondents, a reasonable majority of 61% strive to improve relationships both inside and out of the classroom, whereas only 4% feel that they do not, which is a positive trait and complements the system.

Graph 5.40: Culture

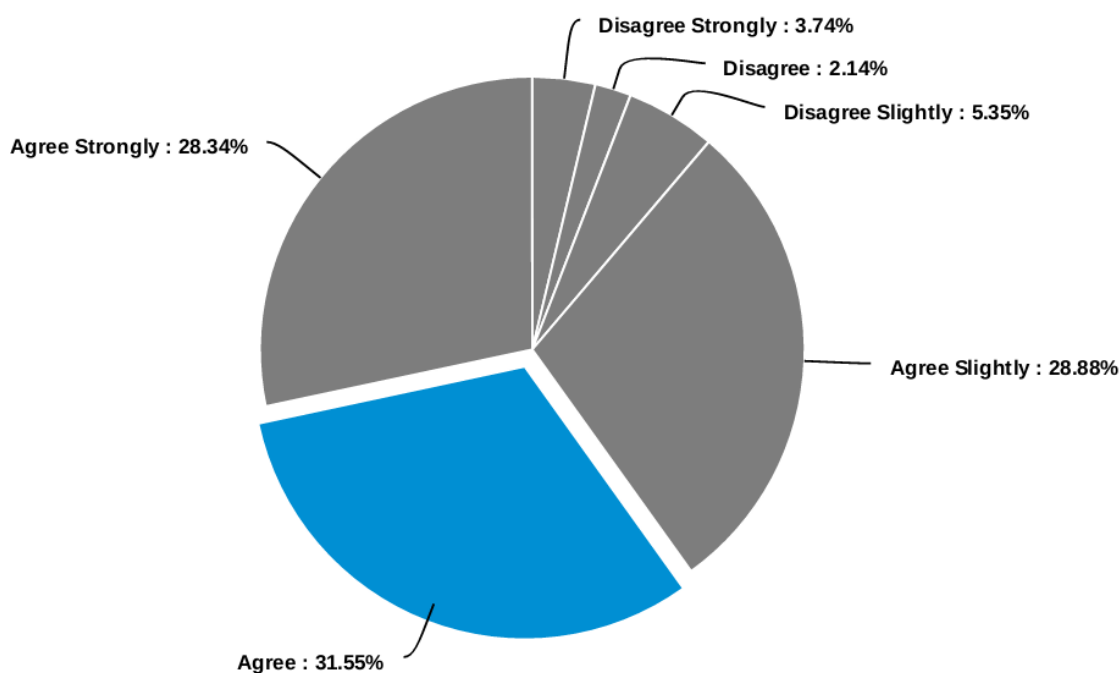
Q11: I enjoy working in teams and contribute actively to build a positive and healthy culture of cooperation and competitiveness within them



Of the respondents, 60%, a reasonable majority, contribute positively to build a healthy culture of cooperation and competitiveness, whereas only 11 (7%) feel that they do not, which is another important aspect of the system.

Graph 5.41: Teachers support and role modelling

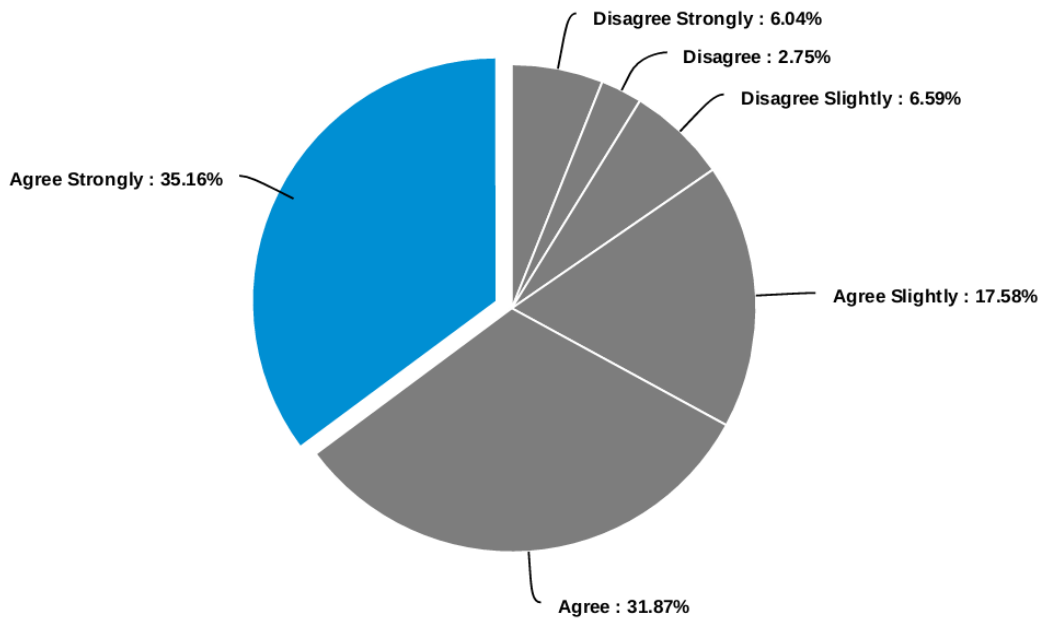
Q12: I value the role of modelling of my teachers and their support and encouragement across all my endeavours



Of the respondents, 60%, a reasonable majority, value the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers, whereas only 17 (9%) feel that they do not. This is an absolutely essential aspect of the character-based education mentoring system, as the boy, teacher and parent all need to be working in unison, ideally collaborating for the best outcome for the boy.

Graph 5.42: Adult confidant

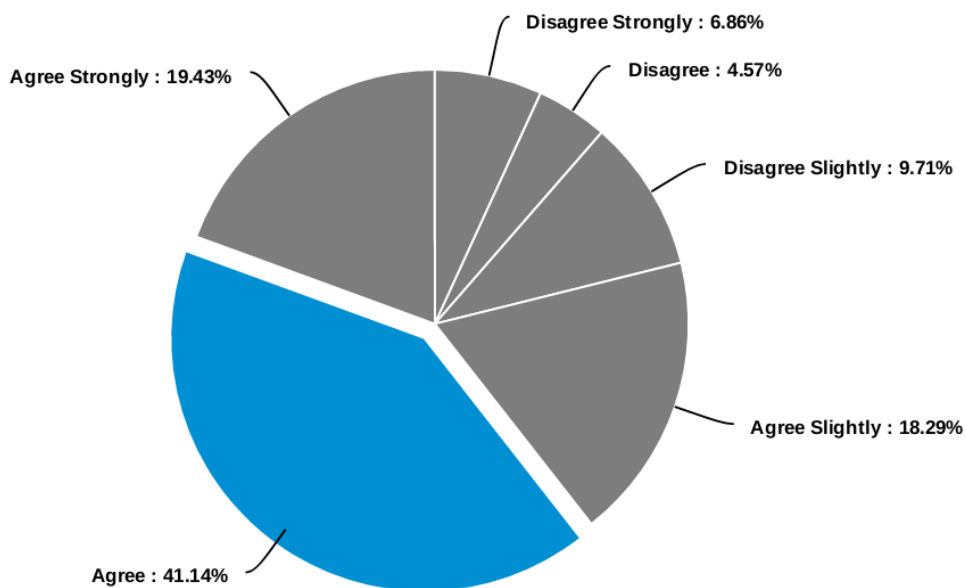
Q13: There is at least one trusted adult I know at the school whom I could go to for help with a school problem or a personal concern



Of the respondents, 67%, felt that they have someone they trust and can confide in at the school, whereas only 9% felt that they do not, which is very promising and a good indication that the mentor system is functioning.

Graph 5.43: Student Voice

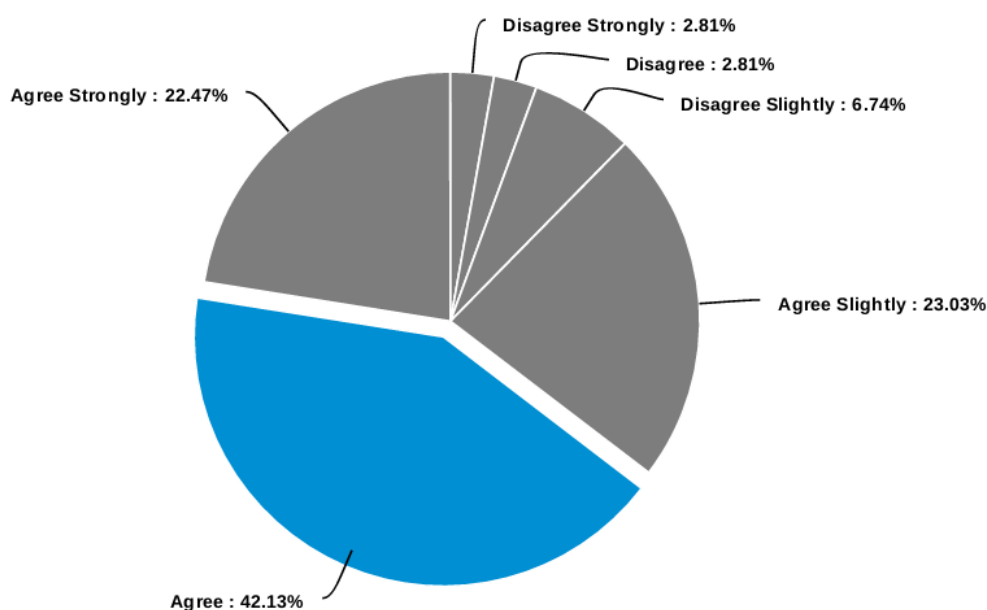
Q14: The school consults regularly to provide feedback to help teachers grow and improve outcomes for students



Of the respondents, 60%, a reasonable majority, believe that the school consults students regularly to provide feedback and help both teachers and themselves outcomes improve, which is reaffirming, whereas only 11% felt that the school does not.

Graph 5.44: Culture of collaboration

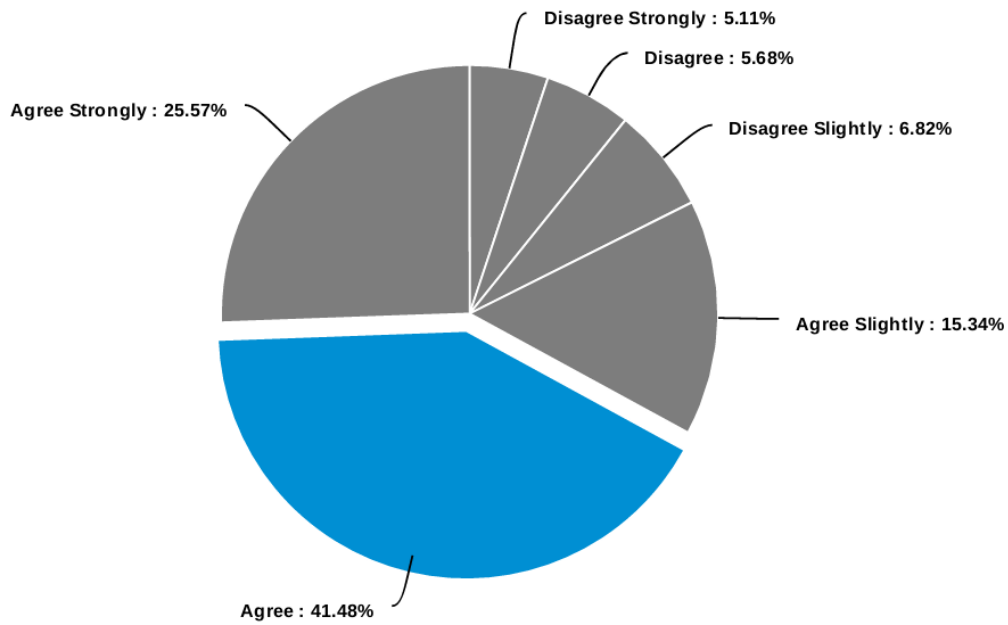
Q15: At our school, there is a strong culture of collaboration and improvement in the classroom, co-curriculum and in student advisory, pastoral care, wellness and support services



Of the respondents, 65%, a pleasing majority, believe there is a strong culture of collaboration and improvement in all areas of the school (classroom, co-curriculum, student advisory, pastoral care, wellness and support services), which is very pleasing, whereas only 5%, a very small minority, felt that there was not.

Graph 5.45: Traditions and culture

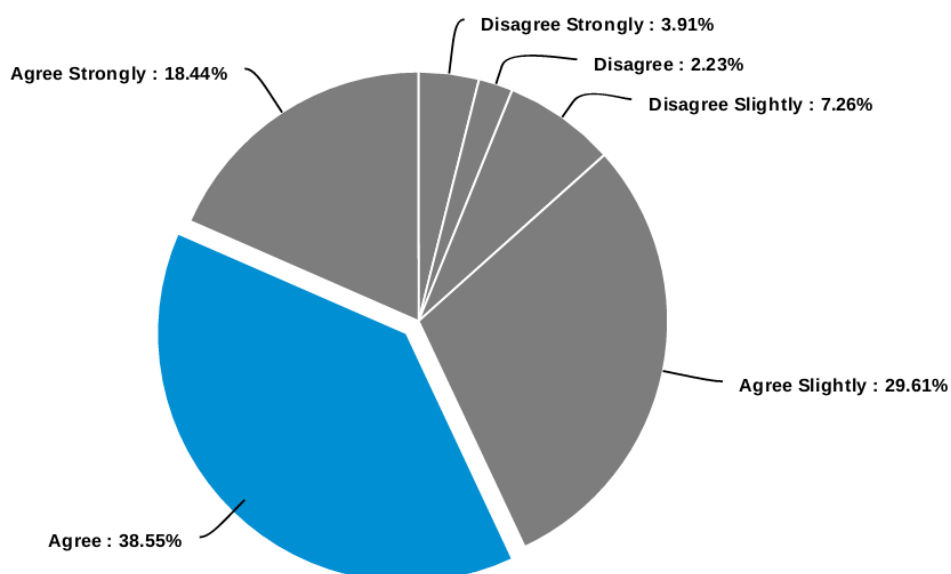
Q16: At our school, we are all custodians of the honourable traditions and culture of our community



Of the respondents, 67%, a pleasing majority believe that they are all custodians of the honourable traditions and culture of the community. This is another key aspect of character-based education mentor system as sometimes this can be a tool for bullying and victimisation, i.e. in maintaining honourable traditions or there being confusion as to what is an ‘honourable tradition’ in the first place. It is refreshing to see that only 11%, a small minority did not believe so.

Graphs 5.46: Positive teaching relationships

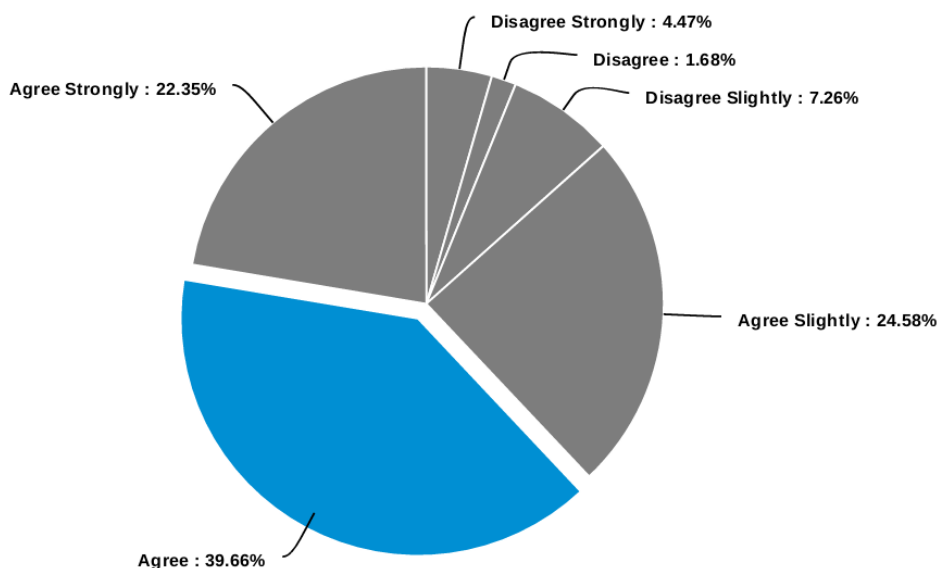
Q17: Teachers at our school build positive relationships to inspire, challenge and support all students to progress steadily and successfully



Of the respondents, 56%, a slight majority, believe that teachers build positive relationships to inspire, challenge and support all students, but there is work to be done in this key area. However, only 6% believed that they did not, which is also pleasing.

Graph 5.47: Positive leadership by teachers

Q18: Teachers are our school exercise positive leadership in a variety of settings and responsibilities



Of the respondents, 62%, a pleasing majority, believe that teachers exercise positive leadership in a variety of settings and circumstances, which is positive indication. Only 7%, a very small minority, did not feel the same.

Q: Relate a memorable occasion in your school life when you felt that you were really experiencing what it is or might be like to perform and achieve at your best, thrive in your school endeavours and prepare for your future. This occasion or experience should be especially memorable and significant, in some large or small way, in your journey at the school to become the best you can be.

- *At my time at school I have flourished and improved on my self-image. I have a stable friend group and teachers care about me*
- *The choir When we were singing in the finals it felt so good*
- *My school makes me feel at home and I have never had a problem fitting in I have achieved a lot and I can proudly say I'm a college boy*

- Best school ever! has all one needs
- When I was getting shouted at by some people and the a matric (gr12) came and told them to leave me alone
- I have learned to pay attention to my School and also admire for everything I get and want to honour my school and live by its noble traditions
- I felt like I had represented and made my school proud when we won the ATKV competition for non-Afrikaans boys choirs
- School Unity. It is not a story of how i feel that i am achieving my best academically or sport wise. But the whole school gathering together to support and cheering you on.
- When I went on a school camp. Great experience all around and was a good time for bonding with peers
- Arriving at college I immediately thought I was in the right place during borver week I quickly made friends around me who are of good standing.
- My college experience
- Vietnam It was tough we faced mental and physical challenges but we has to push through the pain we had to persevere to become part of something – (Vietnam is part of the Grade 8 orientation programme)
- When we did the vietnam at school it taught us many things like communication and working together and helping each other and never give up
- Vietnam helped us become stronger students and we saw great leadership skills from other peers. Vietnam made us make friends from other places.
- I loved Vietnam and I enjoy that college is the only school that has so many traditions.
- The day we became brothers 4am the day before school Vietnam A challenge we started as mere strangers but grew and overcame as brothers
- At the start of 2021 we took our first step onto the only college in kzn. We went through a activity as a group called Vietnam. This is an experience that I will never forget and will stay with me until I die.

- BORVER WEEK I achieved my best when I got my tie at the end of Borver Week. I had dreamt of that moment when I was finally accepted as a College boy. (Borver Week is the orientation programme for all Grade 8s)
- My school has taught me a lot of self respect, knowledge and self discipline. It has printed in me their core values, honesty, integrity, courage, self discipline, and commitment.

Q: Give one example of something the school does or something that happens in the school that you think really “boosts” students’ willpower and ability to perform and achieve at their best, to thrive in their school endeavours, and to prepare for their futures.

- The school sports culture is a good boost for my well being
- Motivation is something that college is known for Prefects motivate us
- The Leadership of the School is Really Motivational and the Teachers are one of the best Teachers, but one thing I like about it is the Facilities and opportunities
- The school provides extra lessons, peer tutoring which helps us improve our marks and achieve marks at our full potential
- The RCL allows boys to speak up about issues, the social awareness forum allows us to deal with contentious issues and allows us to discuss sensitive matters in a civil matter that leads to greater discussions and boosts student belief
- Congratulating students on their academic or sporting achievements really inspires more people to try and do even better than them, in hopes of achieving the same or even greatest rewards, this creates healthy competition.
- I think school talent shows are important within the school as they allow for students to perform and show what they are good at, activities that are not official in the school.
- The brotherhood within the boarding houses
- Our Deputy Headmaster, XXXX speeches. Sir always boosts our pride and confidence before matches on Saturday, he makes everyone excited to go and

watch and cheer for our boys (Friday Sport Assemblies were mentioned a lot by the boys)

- *I think that badges and special blazers makes people strive for good academics and high sporting achievements.*
- *Shouting (is the practice of war cries that are 'shouted' at sport matches. A huge tradition when the boys sit on the stands. Creates an incredible sense of brotherhood in a positive manner. Mentioned by a large number of students)*
- *When I completed Vietnam with my peers. We felt like we could do anything after that and after that experience, we felt as if we bonded as brothers. And that a memory I will not forget.*
- *It provides wonderful facilities in this school and it's the best school in the world mainly because of the resources we have and the education we provide is second to none. Our school is glorious and we will try and make it victorious because we care and love our school.*

Q: Give one example of something the school does or something that happens in the school that you think detracts from or has a negative impact on students' willpower and ability to perform and achieve at their best, thrive in their school endeavours, and prepare for their future.

- *I think bullying is a big problem in this school. The school does state that it is anti-bullying but they seem to do nothing to enforce it. The higher grade students still do it and right now I think they forget the difference between tradition and bullying*
- *Disrespect in the school is making people lose hope by others thinking they can do what they want which is spreading around.*
- *When higher grades treat lower grades as if they are useless/worthless and mean nothing.*
- *bullying of younger student as opposed to disciplining.*
- *Students coming to the school and trying to change the system or won't buy into it and would rather challenge the system than go with the flow*

- *Applying too many traditions that are not necessary.*
- *The schools hierarchy*

5.3.5.3 Summary

From the empirical data obtained from the QuestionPro survey which involved 267 respondents (21% which is a good statistical return according to Ramshaw, 2022) a number of common themes became evident pertaining to the main research question and its sub-research questions.

- 82% of boys have a circle of friends from diverse backgrounds, whereas only 6% do not, which is positive from a transformation perspective.
- 80% of boys treat everyone with respect no matter what their background, religion, gender etc. is concerned, whereas only 5% feel that they do not. This is very promising from the case study perspective.
- 80% of boys are developing a strong moral code – a strong sense of what is right and wrong in the world, which aligns with the aims and objectives of character-education mentoring, whereas only a very small minority of 3% were not, which is very reassuring.
- 79% of boys are striving to live out the core values (honesty, respect, integrity, self-discipline and commitment) of the school which is very reaffirming as these are pertinent when managing the character-based mentor system.
- 77% of boys are striving to persevere and be resilient when under pressure which is a positive character trait, whereas only a very small minority of 2% were not, which is very pleasing to observe.
- 72% of boys are striving to earn their place daily and living up to expectations which is very reaffirming for the system, whereas only 7% are not.
- 73% of boys are confident that they are gaining the knowledge, skills, character dispositions and learning habits to meet the expectations of the school and the challenges of the future, whereas only 5% feel they are not.
- 67% of boys, a reasonable majority, feel that they have someone who they trust and can confide in - a good indication that the character-based education mentor system is functioning, whereas only 9% feel that they do not, which is very promising.
- 67% of boys, a pleasing majority, believe that they are all custodians of the honourable traditions and culture of the community. This is another key aspect of the

character-based education mentor system, as sometimes this can be a tool for bullying and victimisation i.e. in maintaining 'honourable traditions' or there being confusion as to what an 'honourable tradition' is in the first place. It is refreshing to see that only 11%, a small minority, do not believe so.

- 66% of boys, a reasonable majority, will stand up when they see bullying, harassment or other wrongdoing, whereas only 5% feel that they will not, which is very pleasing as this would be one of the key aspects of the system.
- 61% of boys strive to improve relationships both inside and out of the classroom, whereas only 4% feel that they do not, which is a positive trait and complements the system.
- 60% of boys, a reasonable majority, contribute positively to build a healthy culture of cooperation and competitiveness, whereas only 7% feel that they do not, which is another important aspect of the system.
- 60% of boys, a reasonable majority, value the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers, whereas only 9% feel that they do not. This is an absolutely essential aspect of the character-based education mentoring system, as the boy, teacher and parent all need to be working in unison, collaborating ideally for the best outcome for the boy ultimately.
- 64% of boys, a pleasing majority, believe there is a strong culture of collaboration and improvement in all areas of the school (classroom, co-curriculum, student advisory, pastoral care, wellness and support services), which is very pleasing. Only 5%, a very small minority, feel that there is not.
- 62% of boys, a pleasing majority, believe that teachers exercise positive leadership in a variety of settings and circumstances, which is a positive indication. Only 7%, a very small minority, do not feel the same.
- 56% of boys, a slight majority, believe that teachers build positive relationships to inspire, challenge and support all students, but there is work to be done in this key area. However, only 6% believe that they do not, which is also pleasing.
- 57% of boys believe that the school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services are helping them to grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness they need to thrive now and in the future, whereas 19% feel the school is not. This is an essential aspect of the character-education based mentor system and requires further attention.

5.4 TRIANGULATION OF THE DATA FROM THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

5.4.1 Introduction

Bhandari (2022) defines triangulation as the use of multiple datasets, methods, and/or theories to answer a research question by gathering and comparing multiple data sets. It is a method used to improve the validity and credibility of research findings and reducing any potential research biases. The researcher in this case study was able to gather data on the research topic using three unique, yet mutually beneficial quantitative research platforms: Ed-Admin, SurveyMonkey, and QuestionPro. These platforms facilitated and guaranteed substantiation via cross-verification of the data gathered, which involved multiple populations, including all Grade 8–12 learners, Grade 8 and 11 learners, and educators from the case study school. According to Hammond and Willington (2013), respondent validation is a form of triangulation in which the researcher's and respondent's perspectives of the data are compared. Multiple methods of data capture, sampling, and interaction with multiple perspectives on theory strengthen and validate the findings of the study.

5.4.2 First sub-research question: What can educators as mentors do to assist in managing a character-based education management system to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men?

From the data and evidence obtained from the literature review and through the various research instruments, the following were confirmed:

- From the primary data provided on Ed-Admin, one can deduce that since 2019 there has been a decline in behaviour in both grades as the number of misconducts issued at Grade 8 increased from a total of 453 to 1021 in 2022; at Grade 11 the increase was 453 to 534. Sadly, the number of merits issued has decreased in both grades: Grade 8 from 452 to 367 and Grade 11 from 839 to 372. There could be a number of reasons for these dramatic changes such as the lack of positive affirmation (issuing of merits) by the educators, lack of parenting, the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown over the past two years with limited supervision. What is for certain is that there is a dire need for the better management and implementation of the character-based mentor system (cf. par. 5.3.3.5).

- More time allowed for **individual mentoring** and not only class mentoring would be incredibly advantageous, as well as additional allocated time so that the **content** can be effectively discussed (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q7).
- It needs to be as **practical as possible**, rather than theoretical which sees boys acquire and learn skills. The theory and 'talk' is lost on some boys, but getting busy with their hands and learning things through doing is often remembered. Using role-play is a good way to highlight a point whilst utilising real life scenarios (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q7). Management should be instrumental in seeing this implemented.
- Teachers should **enforce** the character-based education mentor system more (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q7). Management is to assist in this regard and manage to ensure it is being implemented accordingly.
- Teachers are to continue to **build positive relationships** to inspire, challenge and support all students, and **exercise positive leadership** in a variety of settings and circumstances so that learners have someone they can **trust and confide** in at the school (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Qs 34, 36, 49 & 51).
- Teachers **should increase** the issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement is essential and must be applied by all mentors. Management is to encourage and ensure that this is happening by checking the data on Ed-Admin intermittently (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4).

Comment: This is significant as it links back to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" as mentioned in Chapter 1. The fourth level of Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" is when individuals feel comfortable with what they have accomplished. This is the 'Esteem' level where there is the need to be "competent and recognised, such as through status and level of success" (Maslow, 1943: 370). Grade 8s are in dire need of the upliftment of their self-esteem at this stage in their lives.

5.4.3 Second sub-research question: How can educators develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible?

From the data and evidence obtained from the literary review and through the various research instruments, the following were confirmed:

- All three groups surveyed on SurveyMonkey suggested that **more time** needs to be allocated to the character education lesson to make it more effective. Management will need to ensure that this occurs to make it as meaningful as possible (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4).
- From the educators' survey on SurveyMonkey the following suggestions around **communicating with boys** are essential to ensure the programme is as effective as possible:
 - Genuinely observe. Be attentive to what your mentee is saying and refrain from composing your response.
 - Be observant of nonverbal cues and read in-between the lines.
 - Use questioning with caution; avoid probing. Before asking inquiries, allow him time and space to express his thoughts and emotions.
 - Silence is not always negative; it may indicate that he is at ease.
 - Follow his lead when it comes to eye contact.
 - Because fidgeting can help boys manage stress and anxiety, it is unwise to expect them to remain still.
 - Provide him time to assimilate the information/emotions.
 - Recognise his emotions; do not disregard them.
 - Use verbal (oh, yes, mmm) and nonverbal (head inclination, forward lean) cues to demonstrate that you are listening, while allowing him space and time to speak (cf. par. 5.3.4.4. Q7).
- **Professional development of mentors** is required to ensure that they identify these signals to ensure **better and more effective communication** occurs with their mentees. Time should be allocated for this professional development by management.
- Teachers should increase the **issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement, as it is essential and must be applied by all mentors.** Management to encourage and ensure that this is happening by checking the data on Ed-Admin intermittently (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4).

5.4.4 Third sub-research question: Which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys?

From the data and evidence obtained from the literature review and through the various research instruments, the following were confirmed:

- From the SurveyMonkey survey, 70% of Grade 8 and 68% of Grade 11 had personally bought into the system which is encouraging. 60% of the mentors felt that the boys had bought into the system and 70% of them had experienced an improvement in behaviour in the classroom through **positive reinforcement, acknowledgement and mentoring which is pleasing.** Both Grade 8: 89% and Grade 11: 87% overwhelmingly concur that their behaviour improved through the aforementioned as well, which suggests that this is an essential part of the effective classroom management practice. The **issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement is essential** and must be applied by all mentors as much as possible. Management is to encourage and ensure that this is happening by checking the data on Ed-Admin intermittently (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4)
- From the QuestionPro survey 60% of boys, a reasonable majority **value the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers.** This is an absolutely essential aspect of the character-based education mentoring system, as the boy, teacher and parent all need to be working in unison, collaborating ideally for the best outcome for the boy ultimately (cf. par.5.3.5.3).
- From the QuestionPro survey, 57% of boys believe that the **school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services** are helping them to grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness they need to thrive now and in the future. This is pleasing to observe, but as an essential aspect of the character–education based mentor system it requires further attention (cf. par. 5.3.5.3).
- From the data obtained from the QuestionPro survey the figures suggest that the syllabus for character-education is having an impact on the boys (cf. par. 5.3.5.3).
 - 82% of boys have a circle of friends from **diverse** backgrounds;
 - 80% of boys treat everyone with **respect** no matter what their background, religion, gender etc.;

- 80% of boys are developing a **strong moral code** – a strong sense of what is right and wrong in the world, which aligns with the aims and objectives of character-education mentoring;
- 79% of boys are striving to live out the **core values** (honesty, respect, integrity, self-discipline and commitment) of the school, which is very reaffirming as these are pertinent when managing the character-based mentor system;
- 77% of boys are striving to **persevere and be resilient** when under pressure which is a positive character trait;
- 72% of boys are striving to **earn their place daily and living up to expectations**;
- 67% of boys, a reasonable majority, feel that they have someone who they **trust and can confide in** - a good indication that the character-based education mentor system is functioning;
- 66% of boys, a reasonable majority, will **stand up when they see bullying, harassment or other wrongdoing**, whereas only 5% feel that they will not, which is very pleasing as this would be one of the key aspects of the system.

Comment: This is significant as it links back to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" as mentioned in Chapter 1. The fourth level of Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" is when individuals feel comfortable with what they have accomplished. This is the 'Esteem' level where there is the need to be "competent and recognised, such as through status and level of success" (Maslow, 1943: 370). Grade 8s are in dire need of the upliftment of their self-esteem at this stage in their lives.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter began with a concise introduction to the purpose of the study, delineating the primary and secondary objectives as well as the quantitative research methodology. The participants' biographical information was then presented, followed by a presentation and discussion of the data acquired from Ed-Admin for the Grade 8 and Grade 11 learners, the entire school from 2012 to 2022, and the mentor educators. SurveyMonkey data from Grades 8, 11, and Mentors were followed by QuestionPro data from Grades 8 through 12. Unquestionably, improved management and implementation of the character-based mentor system, which will be discussed further in Chapter 6, are urgently required.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS TO THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a summary of the conducted case study, research findings and recommendations, study contributions, possible future research, research constraints, and final recommendations. Following a discussion of the research findings and conclusions that emerged from the literature review and empirical investigation, the summary offers an overview of chapters one through to six of the case study. Furthermore, inferences are drawn from the literature review and the empirical study, and recommendations are provided regarding how to manage an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys. The chapter culminates with an overview of the research's contributions, possible future study avenues, limitations, and concluding remarks.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The rationale of the study (cf. par. 1.6) was to provide potential positive management and mentoring interventions as well as effective strategies that would assist the learner in reaching his full potential. The ultimate goal is to advance the holistic development of the learner by managing an effective character-based education mentoring system for Grade 8 boys as they commence their high school journey.

The rationale led the researcher to formulate the following research question: How should an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys be managed in South African schools (cf. par. 1.5)?

From the above-mentioned research question, the following research sub-questions were formulated:

- What can educators as mentors do to assist in managing character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men?
- How can educators develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible?
- Which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys?

This chapter's purpose is to provide a summary of the most significant aspects of the case study's respective chapters. In Chapter 1, the research paradigm is defined, and an introduction to the research is provided by presenting the historical context (cf. par. 1.1) and purpose of the study (cf. par. 1.2). The preliminary literature review (cf. par. 1.3) demonstrated empirical evidence promoting the hypothesis that the notion and advantages of character-based education mentor strategies as well as the role of the good man journey might have accomplished the intended impact on teaching, learning, and improved pastoral care of Grade 8 boys; however, the research question required further examination (cf. par. 1.4). The research problem was presented and discussed (cf. par. 1.5), and the research's aims and objectives were defined (cf. par. 1.6). A concise discussion of the theoretical framework (cf. par. 1.7) that examined Transformational Theory and Learner Development Theory, with a primary emphasis on Behavioural Theory was presented. The focus was then transferred to research design and methodology, utilising a quantitative research approach that included population and sampling, instrumentation and data collection techniques, as well as data analysis and interpretation (cf. par. 1.8). Thereafter was a discussion of the research's reliability and validity (cf. par. 1.9), research ethics (cf. par. 1.10), the limitations and delimitations of the study (cf. par. 1.11), the planning (cf. par. 1.13), and ultimately the definition of key concepts (cf. par. 1.12). These included Managing (cf. par. 1.12.1); Mentorship of boys by educators and senior boys (cf. par. 1.12.2); Character-based Education (cf. par. 1.12.3); Grade 8 Boy (cf. par. 1.12.4); Behaviour (cf. par. 1.12.5); Positive discipline (cf. par. 1.12.6); Core Values (cf. par.1.12.7); and Empirical survey (cf. par. 1.12.8).

Chapter 2 provided a literature review on character-based education, mentoring, and the good man journey in a school for boys. The research enhanced the reader's understanding of the problem statement and previous study in these three areas. All three advantages were described in detail, along with their possibility for enhancement. The chapter commenced with a definition of the terminology used throughout (cf. par. 2.1). Each of the following concepts was elaborated upon: character-based education (cf. par. 2.2), mentoring (cf. par. 2.3), and the path of the good man journey (cf. par. 2.4). While reviewing the available literature and research on the management of an effective character-based mentoring system, one must keep in mind that the Grade 8 boy learner is the focus of this case study. The chapter emphasized the need for a suitable and effective mentoring system that would benefit both the educator and the learner from a mentor and protégé standpoint. Several propositions were presented, and the literature review centred on the need for effective

character-education based mentor strategies to be implemented in the classroom, ultimately for the benefit of Grade 8 boy learner.

Chapter 3 outlined the theoretical and conceptual framework of the case study. The study described the theoretical and conceptual frameworks used by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data. Researchers use frameworks consisting of linked ideas, obtained from the literature, to provide a frame of reference within which to conduct investigations and these structures are called 'theoretical' or 'conceptual' frameworks. Four theoretical frameworks were discussed, viz. Transformational Leadership Theory (cf. par.3.2.2.1); Learner Development Theories (cf. par. 3.2.2.2) and Behavioural Learning Theory or Behaviourism (cf. par. 3.2.2.3), as well as Systems Theory (cf. par. 3.2.2.4). As far as conceptual framework is concerned, research is organised and integrated into three types of conceptual frameworks, viz. typologies, models and theories (cf. par. 3.3.2). The researcher employed the theory type (a conceptual framework that provides an explanation of events or phenomena) as his chosen conceptual framework and the positivist paradigm's worldview for this study. This positivist approach to research entails a rigorous process of formulating hypotheses, empirical experimentation to test these hypotheses, quantitative methods of data collection, intensive analysis to measure the results, and the ability to codify the results into a set of predictions (cf. par. 3.3.2). The researcher employed these frameworks in order to collect, analyse, and interpret data.

Chapter 4 presents the research methodology and design selected for this study: research design (cf. par. 4.2), population (cf. par. 4.3.3.1), sampling design (cf. par. 4.3.3.2), research instrument (cf. par. 4.4), data collection methods (cf. par. 4.5) and analysis of data (cf. par. 4.6). It also presented the justification for using the quantitative research method (cf. par. 4.2.3) and how it was used to gain information. Thereafter, reliability and validity (cf. par. 4.7) were explained with a discussion of the ethical procedures (cf. par. 4.8) dictated by UNISA and KZN Department of Education that were followed in this study.

The emphasis of Chapter 5 was on the empirical analysis of data collected from respondents during quantitative research (cf. par. 5.2). This chapter elaborated on the empirical design of the study and provided guidelines for data collection and analysis, as well as methods for data analysis presentation and discussion (cf. par. 5.3). This consisted of the research tools Ed-Admin LMS SurveyMonkey and QuestionPro. The triangulation of the data obtained from the research instruments was described in relation to the three research sub-questions (cf. par. 5.4) and a chapter conclusion (cf. par. 5.5).

A summary of an integrated interpretation of the research is provided in Chapter 6. In addition, it includes the findings of the literature review, which are reported in Chapter 2, as well as the findings and recommendations of the empirical study and data analysis, which are presented in Chapter 5. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's contributions, limitations, future research opportunities, and concluding remarks.

6.3 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

6.3.1 Introduction

In this section, the sub-research questions (cf. par. 1.6) were taken into account when discussing the study's findings. This discussion allowed the researcher to compare findings from Chapters 2 (theoretical framework) and 3 (conceptual framework) with findings from Chapter 5 (analysis of research data) to identify correlations between the literature reviewed and the empirical data collected from respondents. This allowed the researcher to provide recommendations on how to effectively administer the character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys.

The subsequent findings are based on the literature review and the analysis of the empirical data gathered from the various platforms.

6.3.2 Findings with regard to research aim 1

Research aim 1 was to determine what educators as mentors could do to assist in managing character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men (cf. par. 1.5).

6.3.2.1 Character- Based Education

FINDING: From the available research, educators (mentors) play an important role in shaping learners' understanding of good character. The learners' understanding of what character is and what is important is mirrored by the educators – there is alignment between educators and learners, and they end up emphasising it even more than staff – resulting in a transfer of values/value proposition from staff to learners (cf. par. 2.2.2). 57% of boys believe that the school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services are helping them to grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness they need to thrive now and in the future (cf. par. 5.3.5.3). This is an essential

aspect of the character-education based mentor system and requires further focus and attention from the leadership of the school going forward.

6.3.2.2 The mentoring of boy learners in a boys' school

FINDING: The mentor – mentee system was implemented in 2014 at the case study school and has been in place for almost nine years. It is an on-going process and ideally required for a minimum period of five years to have the best benefit for the learner. Several of the educators (mentors) have known some of the learners they mentor for at least five years, establishing an excellent awareness, rapport, and knowledge of their mentees (cf. par. 2.3.1.2). Moreover, the learners have at least one adult (a confidant) whom they can trust (cf. par. 5.3.5.3). Recent research conducted by Arthur et al. (2022) revealed that secondary school teachers recognised that all relationships have a strong positive impact on the development of a learner's character.

6.3.2.3 The Good Man Journey

FINDING: The case study school implemented 'The Good Man Journey' in 2018. 'The Good Man Journey' is a mentoring programme in character education, which pushes boys to think about the type of man (ideally a 'good' man) they wish to develop into and the values that will usher them into adulthood. The main purpose is to develop and underpin character and to impact on how they deliberate and respond, particularly when confronted with compromising circumstances through their adolescence into manhood (cf. par. 2.4.3). The programme was compromised during 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown and had to be aggressively revived in 2022 due to significant increases in misconduct behaviour issues, particularly at Grade 8, the focus of this case study (cf. par. 5.3.3.5). There has been renewed vigour and is being well received by both the boys and mentors and this needs to be maintained as the boys follow their own unique good man journey.

6.3.2.4 The link between the behaviour management system and the effective mentoring of boys

FINDING: There is clear empirical data that indicates an improvement in behaviour in the classroom through positive reinforcement, acknowledgement and mentoring which is pleasing (cf. par. 5.3.3.5; 5.4.3.5). Both Grade 8 (89%) and Grade 11 (87%) (cf. par. 5.4.3.5) overwhelmingly concur that their behaviour improved through the aforementioned as well, which suggests that this is an essential part of the effective classroom management practice.

Educators must be encouraged to continue to utilise the system to its full potential in order to get the best out of the boys ultimately.

6.3.3 Findings with regard to research aim 2

Research aim 2 was to establish how educators could develop a character-education mentor system with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible (cf. par. 1.5).

6.3.3.1 Learners and Mentors

FINDINGS:

- All three groups surveyed (Grade 8, Grade 11 and Mentors) suggested that *more time* needs to be allocated to the character education lesson to make it more effective (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4).
- Mentors needed to increase the *issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement* and must be applied by all mentors (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4). It can be deduced that certain mentors utilise this technique as a positive reinforcement discipline management strategy more than others which has definite benefits and this needs requires additional attention.
- *Professional development of mentors* is required to ensure that they are familiar with communication signals from their learners to ensure more effective communication occurs with them. Time is to be allocated for this professional development by management (cf. par. 5.4.3). This is further supported from recent research conducted by Arthur et al. (2022) that school leadership must coordinate staff training and have a senior staff member appointed to drive and maintain the programme.

6.3.3.2 Mentors

FINDINGS:

- 94% of mentors felt that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a *positive initiative* for the boys (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q1). This is indicative of significant support by the educators who ultimately drive the programme.
- 88 % found the system to be *beneficial in their mentoring relationship* with the boys (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q2). Very pleasing support which is important for the effective implementation.

- 81% would *recommend a similar character-based mentor system* to other schools, which strongly suggests an encouraging endorsement of the system. However, a number felt that they needed to implement the character-based education mentor system more, which is a good sign (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q6). Management needs to ensure that more time is allocated accordingly.
- 70% believed that they experienced an *improvement in behaviour in the classroom through positive reinforcement and acknowledgement* and mentoring (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q5). As previously mentioned, this needs to be implemented and monitored further.
- The mentor lessons need to be as *practical as possible using role-play*, which sees boys acquire and learn skills. The theory and 'talk' is lost on some boys, but being physically active and learning things through doing is often remembered (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q7).
- For the specific character-based focussed mentor lessons, *arrange the learners in Grades with specific focus in each Grade on that particular topic*. This suggestion has been taken on board and implemented. For example, when dealing with the topic of 'Respect' it would be integrated as follows: Grade 8 Respect for School; Grade 9 Self-Respect; Grade 10 Respect for Women and Grade 11 Leadership and Respect; with the Grade 12s acting as the peer tutors across the grades (cf. par. 1.3.4).

6.3.3.3 Learners

FINDINGS

6.3.3.3.1 Grade 8

- From the primary data provided on Ed-Admin, one can deduce that since 2019 there has been a *decline in behaviour* both in Grade 8 and Grade 11, as the number of misconducts issued at Grade 8 increased from a total of 453 to 1021 in 2022, which is a cause of concern. Usually, the Grade 8s have the least number of misconducts and now they have the most. Sadly, the *positive affirmations* in the form of merits decreased from 452 to 367. The ratio 367:1021 a very poor reflection of the situation as it should ideally be the other way around (cf. par. 5.3.3.5). There is considerable work to be done with this grade of boys to turn them around into making a positive contribution. A whole staff focus will be required by ensuring they are being rewarded for good behaviour and every form of improvement or success.

- 88% of the boys felt that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme had been a *positive initiative* for them, which is very pleasing (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q3). This comment is important for the previous point and needs to be borne in mind.
- 70% of the boys had personally *bought into the system* which is a good start but would ideally want this figure to increase (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q4).
- An overwhelmingly positive response of 91% of the boys indicated that their *mentors were being supportive* during the mentor sessions, which is very reaffirming for the mentors (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q7).
- Another very affirming response was that 89% of the boys felt that their *behaviour improved if they received merits*. Positive affirmation is essential for more productive and enjoyable educational experience for both learner and mentor (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q9).
- A significant majority of 80% of the boys would *recommend the character-based mentor system* to other schools which suggests that the system is having a positive impact on them (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q10).
- Respondents made the following *practical suggestions* for improvement (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q2):
 - *There should be **more lessons (more time)** allocated to the mentor lesson (other groups have suggested this as well: Mentors and Grade 11)*
 - ***Use the grades** for more effective discussions with seniors supporting (this is done when following the character education programme)*
 - ***Role play** the various situations and then comment on how they felt*

6.3.3.3.2 Grade 11

FINDINGS

- From the primary data provided on Ed-Admin, one can deduce that since 2019 there has been a *decline in behaviour* both in Grade 8 and Grade 11 as the number of misconducts issued at Grade 11 increased from a total of 453 to 524 in 2022, which is a cause of concern. Sadly, the *positive affirmations* in the form of merits decreased significantly from 869 to 372, considering that 2021 was a Covid-19 year. The ratio

372:524 not an ideal situation as it should be the other way around (cf. par. 5.3.3.5). A whole staff focus will be required by ensuring they are being rewarded for good behaviour and every form of improvement or success.

- 77% of the boys felt that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme had been a *positive initiative* for them, which is very pleasing (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q3). This comment is important for the previous point and needs to be borne in mind.
- 68% of the boys had personally *bought into the system* which is pleasing, but would ideally want this figure to increase (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q4).
- An overwhelmingly positive response of 96% of the boys indicated that their *mentors were being supportive* during the mentor sessions, which is very reaffirming for the mentors (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q7).
- Another very affirming response was that 87% of the boys felt that their *behaviour improved if they received merits*. Positive affirmation is essential for more productive and enjoyable educational experience for both learner and mentor (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q9).
- A significant majority of 80% of boys would *recommend the character-based* mentor system to other schools which suggests that the system is having a positive impact on them (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q10).
- Respondents made the following *practical suggestions* for improvement (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q2):
 - *Make the character education lessons **more practical** instead of just pouring information onto students. Allow students in the lesson to participate in activities that will let them learn the set principles and also allow them to grow*
 - *Give the boys **more time** to talk to one another*
 - *Be **more relevant** to the boys and discuss **current issues** involving the school and boys*

6.3.4 Findings with regard to research aim 3

Research aim 3 was to establish which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys (cf. par. 1.5).

6.3.4.1 Learners and Mentors

FINDINGS

- From all three groups of respondents: Mentors (94%), Grade 8 (88%) and Grade 11(77%), it has been established that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been an overwhelmingly *positive initiative* for the boys and management will need to build on that momentum (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q1; 5.3.4.2 Q3 & 5.3.4.3 Q3).
- From all three groups of respondents: Mentors (81%), Grade 8 (80%) and Grade 11 (83%), it has been established that they would *strongly recommend a similar character-based education mentor system programme to other schools* (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q6; 5.3.4.2 Q10 & 5.3.4.3 Q10). This is a very reaffirming statistics which indicates the value and need for the programme.
- From mentors and both groups of learners, it has been established that the learners' *behaviour does improve* through the *issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement* and must be applied by all mentors (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4). Inferring from the positive discipline management strategies and the proactive actions of the mentors, this strategy appears to be beneficial with the learners overall. Moyo, Khewu, and Bayaga (2014) corroborate that the effective management of positive learner behaviour has the potential to create a pleasant work environment with fewer disciplinary issues.

6.3.4.2 Grade 8

FINDINGS

- The introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been an *overwhelmingly positive initiative* for the Grade 8 boys (88%) (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q3). This is very reaffirming for management as it confirms that the programme is a success.
- The Grade 8 boys *would strongly recommend* (80%) a similar *character-based education mentor system programme* (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q10). This is a very positive affirmation indeed for other schools to implement.
- The Grade 8 boys very strongly confirmed (89%) that their *behaviour does improve* through the *issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement*

(cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q9). This is essential data for the mentors and educators in general and they need to ensure they make full use of the programme.

- The Grade 8 boys confirmed very strongly (91%) that their teachers are *being supportive* in the mentor sessions (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q7). This is very comforting for the mentors to know that they are appreciated and valued.
- Of equal importance and significance is that the Grade 8 boys felt fairly strongly (67%) that they had an adult educator whom they could trust, indicating a healthy and supportive relationship (cf. par. 5.3.5.2 Q36). This is also comforting, however, in an ideal world you would want every boy to have someone in whom he could confide. Further attention is required in this instance as far as increasing the level of trust between learner and his mentor or educators.

6.3.4.3 Grade 11

FINDINGS

- The introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a *very positive initiative* for the Grade 11 boys (77%) (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q3). This is very reaffirming for management as it confirms that the programme is a success.
- The Grade 11 boys *would strongly recommend* (83%) a similar *character-based education mentor system programme* (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q10), indicating a very positive affirmation indeed for other schools to implement.
- The Grade 11 boys very strongly confirmed (87%) that their *behaviour does improve* through the *issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement* (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q9). This is crucial data for the mentors and educators in general and they need to ensure they make full use of the programme.
- The Grade 11 boys confirmed very strongly (96%) that their teachers are *being supportive* in the mentor sessions (cf. par. 5.3.4.3 Q7). This is extremely positive and reaffirming for all educators that they are appreciated and valued.
- Of equal importance and significance is that the Grade 11 boys felt fairly strongly (67%) that they had an adult educator whom they could trust, indicating a healthy and supportive relationship (cf. par. 5.3.5.2 Q36).

6.3.5 CONCLUSIONS

The literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, as well as the quantitative data obtained from the various respondents in Chapter 5, correlate with the sub-research questions structured in Chapter 1 (cf. par. 1.6). This demonstrates that this case study has successfully answered the primary research question.

How should an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys be managed in South African schools?

Recommendations with regard to the findings will be made in the next section of the case study.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

6.4.1 Introduction

The key objective was to consider how an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys should be managed in South African schools, and to contemplate by what methods educators as mentors could aid character-based management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men. Furthermore, to establish how educators as mentors could improve character-education amongst Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible, as well as to discover which character-education strategies have had the best response from the learners.

As a result of the outcomes of the empirical and quantitative case study data collected through "non-random" convenience sampling, recommendations can now be formulated. The following recommendations suggest that the researcher achieved the primary objective of the study, which was to determine how South African schools should manage an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boy learners (cf.par. 1.6).

6.4.2 Recommendation with regard to research aim 1

Research aim 1 was to determine what educators as mentors can do to assist in managing character-based education management strategies to further develop Grade 8 boys into good men (cf. par. 1.5).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

6.4.2.1 Educators play an important role in shaping learners' understanding of good character. The learners' understanding of what character is and what is important mirrors the educators' character resulting in a transfer of values/value propositions from educators to learners (cf. par. 2.2.2). 57% of boys believe that the school's pastoral care, student support, wellness and well-being services are helping them to grow as a person and to develop the character, competency and wellness they need to thrive now and in the future (cf. par. 5.3.5.3). This is an essential aspect of the character–education based mentor system and requires further attention and focus by school management for more effective implementation.

6.4.2.2 The mentor – mentee system was implemented in 2014 at the case study school and has been in place for almost ten years. Good relationships have been and continue to be developed, as a number of the mentors have known their mentees for five years, establishing an excellent rapport, understanding and knowledge of their mentees (cf. par. 2.3.1.2). Furthermore, the learners have at least one adult (a confidant) whom they can trust (cf. par. 5.3.5.3). School management is responsible for the implementation and management of the character-based mentoring system and to ensure the effectiveness of the programme. They need to provide support and encouragement both for learners and mentors, coordinate professional development opportunities, provide on-going staff development as well as appropriate resources, and an induction programme for new educators.

6.4.2.3 Every boy at the case study school is on a 'Good Man Journey'. The main purpose is to develop and underpin character and to impact on how they deliberate and respond, particularly when confronted with compromising circumstances through their adolescence into manhood (cf. par. 2.4.3). The programme was compromised during 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown and had to be aggressively revived in 2022 due to significant increases in misconduct behaviour issues particularly at Grade 8 – the focus of this case study (cf. par. 5.3.3.5). It is crucial that the momentum gained in 2022 is built on in 2023 and beyond and both mentor and learner need to be encouraged, guided, supported and mentored by school management to ensure that every boy is the 'best' good man he can ultimately be.

6.4.2.4 From findings, empirical data indicates (cf. par. 5.3.3.5; 5.4.3.5) that the behaviour in the classroom has improved by ensuring positive reinforcement, acknowledgement and mentoring, which is pleasing. Both Grade 8 (89%) and Grade 11

(87%) (cf. par. 5.4.3.5) overwhelmingly concur that their behaviour improved through the aforementioned as well, which is also confirmed by the mentors (70%) (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q9). This data indicates that this is an essential strategy for effective classroom management practice in managing the character-education mentor system. Once again it is imperative that school management support and encourage accordingly. This is supported strongly and recommended by research conducted recently by Arthur et al. (2022), that school leadership needs to establish a clearly defined strategic approach to character education being incorporated into school development plans, into the curriculum and regularly reviewing and evaluating the programme.

6.4.3 Recommendation with regard to research aim 2

Research aim 2 was to determine how educators could develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible (cf. par. 1.5).

6.4.3.1 From findings, empirical data obtained indicates that all three groups surveyed (Grade 8, Grade 11 and Mentors) suggested that more time needs to be allocated to the character education lesson to make it more productive and effective (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4). School management need to ensure that sufficient time is allocated to do justice to the programme.

6.4.3.2 Once again all three groups firmly believed, and empirical data supports this, that by increasing the issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement, the number of discipline incidents would reduce (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 Q9 & 5.3.4.3 Q9 & 5.3.4.4 Q5). One can therefore infer that a number of mentors are employing a positive reinforcement discipline management strategy, but that there is more to be done to increase the number of mentors applying the strategy. School management are to encourage the use of this aspect of the character-based mentoring system.

6.4.3.3 On-going professional development of mentors is required to ensure that they are familiar with communication signals from their learners, to ensure more effective communication occurs with them in the implementation of the system. Time should be allocated for this professional development by school management and appropriate support and guidance (cf. par. 5.4.3).

6.4.4 Recommendation with regard to research aim 3

Research aim 3 was to determine which character-education strategies have had the most success with the Grade 8 boys (cf. par. 1.5).

6.4.4.1 From all three groups of respondents: Mentors (94%), Grade 8 (88%) and Grade 11(77%), it has been established that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been an overwhelmingly positive initiative for the boys (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q1; 5.3.4.2 Q3 & 5.3.4.3 Q3). School management are to ensure an effective programme is implemented and maintained.

6.4.4.2 From all three groups of respondents, Mentors (81%), Grade 8 (80%) and Grade 11(83%), it has been established that they would strongly recommend to other schools a similar character-based education mentor system programme (cf. par. 5.3.4.4 Q6; 5.3.4.2 Q10 & 5.3.4.3 Q10). This is positive and school management need to ensure that the programme remains sustainable and effective.

6.4.4.3 From mentors and both groups of learners, it has been established that learners' behaviour improves through the issuing of merits, positive reinforcement and personal acknowledgement and must be applied by all mentors (cf. par. 5.3.4.2 & 5.3.4.3 & 5.3.4.4). By inference, that through positive discipline management strategies and the proactive implementation by the mentors, this strategy indicates to be successful overall with the learners. School management is to ensure that all mentors are implementing this strategy at all times within the character-based mentor system programme.

6.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings from the research not only offer answers to the research questions and met the research objectives, but furthermore, also provided potential solutions to effective character-based education mentor strategies and how they should be implemented and managed. This study covers a crucial stage in the Grade 8s' journey towards adulthood and an essential aspect of their overall character development and education, in providing potential positive management and mentoring interventions as well as strategies that will assist the learner in reaching his full potential. The ultimate goal is to nurture the holistic development of the learner by managing an effective character-based education mentoring system for them as they commence their high school journey. It is projected that this study will build upon the existing body of knowledge in order to increase the depth of understanding of Grade 8 boys and a conducive teaching and learning culture, through an effective character-

based education mentor system, which may benefit learners and educators in South Africa and around the world.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

From the researcher's years of experience and on-going research in the field of mentoring, plus the findings of this particular case study, for any system to work the school requires the support and commitment of all stakeholders (parties): SGB, principal, SMT, staff, parents and most importantly the learners. It is reasonably common knowledge that the provision of quality teaching and learning in South African schools is currently one of the greatest challenges facing the country. Fortunately, principals have the potential to structure and implement such a character-based mentoring programme within the school environment to assist these young men at the very beginning of their high school journey. Here is the ideal opportunity to make an indelible impact on their lives at this significant juncture, as they approach adolescence, with the support and encouragement both of educators and parents.

This section of the study proposes future research emanating from this study on the following topics:

- Implement on-going professional development of senior management on the character-based education mentor system so that they can lead, guide and support the educators, learners and parents;
- Education, guidance and support of parents (mentoring sessions for them) on character-based education mentoring topics;
- On-going professional development of educators on positive discipline techniques as a key part of the mentoring system to see the benefit both in the classroom and in their learners;
- On-going education of the learners and listening to their voices as they experience and see the benefit of the mentoring system for themselves, and can become 'disciples' themselves, i.e. the older grades mentoring the younger grades;
- As suggested by Arthur et al. (2022:30-32) in their research "Teaching Character Education: What Works" the recommendation to adopt the following character inventory :

1. Character caught – through a positive school community, formational relationships and a clear ethos
2. Character taught – through the curriculum using teaching and learning strategies, activities and resources
3. Character sought – through chosen experiences that occur within and outside of the formal curriculum

However, in closing the following should be borne in mind by the findings of Watts, Fullard and Peterson (2021:26) that there is “no blueprint for developing character within and across the curriculum and no ‘one size fits all’ whole school approach which will work in every school and for all pupils.”

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was restricted to one public fee-paying secondary school for the sake of convenience and the empirical research employed was the method of a case study approach with co-ordinated multi-stage sampling. The study had some limitations during the quantitative phase:

- A significant proportion of the Grade 11 learners did not complete the questionnaire primarily due to the fact that they did not have the opportunity to do so;
- A very small proportion of educators (mentors) did not complete the questionnaire.

6.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The purpose of this study was to consider how an effective character-based education mentor system of Grade 8 boys should be managed in South African schools and to determine what educators could do to assist in management strategies to further develop them into good men. Furthermore, it investigated how educators could develop character-education with Grade 8 boys to make it as effective as possible and which character-education strategies have had the most success.

The study revealed the following solutions:

- Respondents of all three groups surveyed confirmed that they thought the character-based mentoring system was a good initiative and the majority supported it;
- A substantial overall majority of the respondents of all three groups surveyed confirmed that the learners’ behaviour improved when they were issued with merits,

and the data supports this. Positive affirmation is essential for a more productive and enjoyable educational experience for both learner and mentor;

- Positive discipline strategies influence outcomes and will reduce discipline occurrences supported by data provided;
- School management are to provide the impetus, guidance, content and direction of the character-based mentor system and ensure that mentors issue merits;
- School management to provide on-going professional development of staff as mentors and role models for the learners;
- School management, Housemasters and mentors to provide guidance and support for learners (Grades 11 and 12) who are also mentors of younger learners (Grades 8 -10).

In conclusion, it is critical that the SGB, the school executive, staff, parents and ultimately the boys, all work together in this character-based mentor system (the 'Good Man Journey'), as they collectively strive for these young Grade 8s to develop into the best possible good men that they can be.

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UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2022/09/07

Ref: **2022/09/07/07481101/10/AM**

Name: Mr CJ LUMAN

Student No.:07481101

Dear Mr CJ LUMAN

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2022/09/07 to 2027/09/07

Researcher(s): Name: Mr CJ LUMAN
E-mail address: LUMANC@MCOLLEGE.CO.ZA
Telephone: 0828044731

Supervisor(s): Name: PROF RJ LUMADI
E-mail address: lumadri@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 012 429 2123

Title of research:

Managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools.

Qualification: PhD EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2022/09/07 to 2027/09/07.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2022/09/07 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



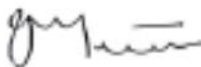
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2027/09/07**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2022/09/07/07481101/10/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof Mpine Makoe
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
qakisme@unisa.ac.za



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LUMAN C J MR
P O BOX 392
PITHEMBITZBURG
1200

STUDENT NUMBER , 0748-110-1

ENQUIRY NAME , MR P MCGKARD
ENQUIRY TEL , 0861670411

DATE , 2022-05-22

Dear Student

I wish to inform you that your registration has been accepted for the academic year indicated below. Kindly activate your Unisa mylife (<https://myunisa.ac.za/portal>) account for future communication purposes and access to research resources.

DEGREE , PhD (EDUCATION) (90019)

TITLE , Implementing and managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools

SUPERVISOR , Prof EI LEMADO (lumadr@unisa.ac.za)

ACADEMIC YEAR , 2022

TYPE , THESIS

SUBJECT REGISTREED , TYPFM01 PhD - Education (Education Management)

A statement of account will be sent to you shortly.

You must re-register online and pay every academic year until such time that you can submit your dissertation/thesis for examination.

If you intend submitting your dissertation/thesis for examination you have to submit an Intention to submit form (available on the website www.unisa.ac.za) at least two months before the date of submission. If submission takes place after 15 November, but before the end of January of the following year, you do need not to re-register and pay registration fees for the next academic year. Should you submit after the end of January, you must formally re-register online and pay the full fees.

Please access the information with regard to your personal librarian on the following link.
<https://bit.ly/3ha8q9r>

Yours faithfully,

Prof M E Mthata
Registrar





ANNEXURE C

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MARITZBURG COLLEGE

“Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”

27 July 2022

Ms F Dlamini

Circuit Manager Department of Education

Email: fortunate.dlamini@kzndoe.gov.za

Mobile: 0722774435

Dear Mrs Dlamini

I, Christopher John Luman, am doing research under supervision of Professor R I Lumadi in the Department of Educational Management towards a DED at the University of South Africa.

The aim of the study is to implement and manage an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys. Maritzburg College has been selected because I am familiar with the structures that have been implemented over the past 9 years and they make for an appropriate case study. The benefits of the study will provide both educators with tools that will enhance teaching and learning and the learners should also have a more positive overall educational experience.

There are no potential risks to any of the learners or educators.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback will be provided through circulars, email correspondence, mentor groups and staff meetings.

Yours sincerely

C J Luman

Professor R I Lumadi

Department of Education Leadership and Management



ANNEXURE D

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MARITZBURG COLLEGE

“Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”

27 July 2022

Mr S Colenbrander

Chairman Maritzburg College SGB

Email: steve@colenbrander.co.za

Mobile: 0824573833

Dear Mr Colenbrander

I, Christopher John Luman, am doing research under supervision of Professor R I Lumadi in the Department of Educational Management towards a DED at the University of South Africa.

The aim of the study is to implement and manage an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys. Maritzburg College has been selected because I am familiar with the structures that have been implemented over the past 9 years and they make for an appropriate case study. The benefits of the study will provide both educators with tools that will enhance teaching and learning and the learners should also have a more positive overall educational experience.

There are no potential risks to any of the learners or educators.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback will be provided through circular, D6, mentor groups and staff meeting.

Yours sincerely

C J Luman

Professor R I Lumadi

Department of Education Leadership and Management



ANNEXURE E

“Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”

20 August 2022

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Christopher John Luman and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor RI Lumadi, a professor in the Department of Education Leadership and Management towards the degree of DED at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled “Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

This study is expected to collect important information that could be of benefit to both the learners and educators, not only at Maritzburg College, but also possibly nationally and internationally as it should increase the body of knowledge on the topic.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited to participate because you are currently an educator and mentor at Maritzburg College involved with Grades 8 and 11 learners. There will be approximately 70 participants involved i.e. all mentors in the House system.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your involvement in the study will be to complete an anonymous survey on the management of learner behaviour at Maritzburg College on Survey Monkey. The completion of the survey would not take more than 15 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The benefits of the study will provide educators with tools that will enhance teaching and learning and the learners should also have a more positive overall educational experience.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

There are no negative consequences for you by participating in the research project.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Your anonymity is confirmed as the survey is conducted on Survey Monkey where no record will be kept of participants' names.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet in the school safe for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Hard copies will be destroyed and electronic copies permanently deleted.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There are no payments or incentives for participating in the study.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education, Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

Research findings will be disseminated through circulars, staff meetings and mentor groups.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Chris Luman on 082 804 4731 or by email lumanc@mcollege.co.za.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor Lumadi on 071 532 2761 or by email lumadri@unisa.co.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

C J Luman

Yours sincerely

Professor R I Lumadi

Department of Education Leadership and Management

CONSENT/ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of data on SurveyMonkey.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print)

Researcher's signature

Date



ANNEXURE F

Dear Parent

Your son is invited to participate in a study entitled “Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”.

I am undertaking this study as part of my DED research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to implement and manage an effective character-based education mentor system. I request permission to include your son in this study because he is currently a learner in either Grade 8 or Grade 11. I expect to have other Grade 8 and 11 boys participating in the study.

If you allow your son to participate, I shall request him to complete an anonymous confidential survey which will be done during a mentor class period which will not take any longer than 15 minutes.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study which can be identified with your son will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. His responses will not be linked to his name or your name or the school’s name in any written or verbal report based on this study. Such a report will be used for research purposes only. There are no foreseeable risks to your son by participating in the study. Your son will receive no direct benefit from participating in the study; however, the possible benefits to education are the improved mentoring of your son to be the best that he can be. Neither your son nor you will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Your son’s participation in this study is voluntary. Your son may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect him in any way. Similarly you can agree to allow your son to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study and you and your son will also be asked to sign the assent form which accompanies this letter. If your son does not wish to participate in the study, he will not be included and there will be no penalty. The information gathered from the study and your son’s participation in the study will be stored securely on a password locked computer in my locked office for five years after the study. Thereafter, records will be erased.

The benefits of this study are that it will provide educators with tools that will enhance teaching and learning and the learners should also have a more positive overall educational experience.

There are no potential risks to your son and there will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

If you have questions about this study please ask me or my study supervisor, Prof Lumadi, Department of Education and Management, College of Education, University of South Africa. My contact number is 0828044731 and my e-mail is lumanc@mcollege.co.za. The email of my supervisor is lumadri@unisa.co.za. Permission for the study has already been given by the KZNDOE, the SGB and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA.

You are making a decision about allowing your son to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him to participate in the study. You may keep a copy of this letter.

Sincerely

Name of your son:

_____	_____	_____
Parent/guardian's name (print)	Parent/guardian's signature:	Date:
_____	_____	_____
Researcher's name (print)	Researcher's signature	Date:

**ANNEXURE G****“Managing an effective character- based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”****Dear Grade 8/Grade 11 Learner****August 2022**

I am doing a study on managing an effective character-based education mentor system of boys as part of my studies at the University of South Africa. The school governing body has given me permission to do this study at Maritzburg College. I would like to invite you to be a very special part of my study. I am doing this study so that I can find ways that your teachers and mentors can improve relationships and encourage positive behavior. This may help you and many other learners of your age in different schools.

This letter is to explain to you what I would like you to do. There may be some words you do not understand in this letter and you may ask me or any other adult to explain them. You may take a copy of this letter home to think about my invitation and talk to your parents about this before you decide if you want to be in this study.

You will be asked to complete an anonymous confidential survey on SurveyMonkey. You have completed this type of survey before, for example the wellness survey. It should not take more than 15 minutes to complete.

I will write a report on the study, but I will not use your name in the report or say anything that will let other people know who you are. Participation is voluntary and you do not have to be part of this study if you don't want to take part. If you choose to be in the study, you may stop taking part at any time without penalty. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to. No one will blame or criticise you. When I am finished with my study, I shall present a short talk about some of the helpful and interesting things I found out in my study. You will be invited to come and listen to the presentation.

The benefits of this study are that it will provide educators with tools that will enhance teaching and learning, and the learners should also have a more positive overall educational experience.

There are no potential risks to you and there will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

If you decide to be part of my study, you will be asked to sign the form on the next page. If you have any other questions about this study, you can talk to me or you can have your parent or mentor call me on 0828044731 or talk to me at school. Do not sign the form until you have all your questions answered and understand what I would like you to do.

Researcher: C J Luman

Phone number: 082 804 4731

Do not sign the written assent form if you have any questions. Ask your questions first and ensure that someone answers those questions.

WRITTEN ASSENT

I have read this letter which asks me to be part of a study at my school. I have understood the information about the study and I know what I will be asked to do. I am willing to be in the study.

Learner's name (print): Learner's signature: Date:

Witness's name (print) Witness's signature Date:

(The witness is over 18 years old and present when signed.)

Parent/guardian's name (print) Parent/guardian's signature: Date:

Researcher's name (print) Researcher's signature: Date:



ANNEXURE H

Dear Prospective Participant

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by Christopher John Luman under the supervision of Professor RI Lumadi, a professor in the Department of Education Leadership and Management towards the degree of DED at the University of South Africa.

The survey you have received has been designed to study the implementation of a character-based education management system of boys at Maritzburg College. You were selected to participate in this survey because you are a mentor of Grade 8 and Grade 11 boys. By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings.

It is anticipated that the information we gain from this survey will help us to improve learner behaviour through effective mentoring measures. You are, however, under no obligation to complete the survey and you can withdraw from the study prior to submitting the survey. The survey is developed to be anonymous, meaning that we will have no way of connecting the information that you provide to you personally. Consequently, you will not be able to withdraw from the study once you have clicked the send button based due to the anonymous nature of the survey. If you choose to participate in this survey it will take up no more than 15 minutes of your time. You will not benefit from your participation as an individual, however, it is envisioned that the findings of this study may improve the relationship between learner and educator. We do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by completing the survey. The researcher undertakes to keep any information provided herein confidential, not to let it out of his possession and to report on the findings from the perspective of the participating group and not from the perspective of an individual.

The records will be kept for five years for audit purposes where after it will be permanently destroyed. Electronic versions will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the survey.

The research was reviewed and approved by the College of Education at The University of South Africa. The primary researcher, Christopher John Luman, can be contacted during office hours at 033 3425577, Maritzburg College. The study leader, Professor RI Lumadi, can be contacted during office hours at 012 9970320. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the College of Education Ethics Research Committee, Dr Claassens. Alternatively, you can report any serious unethical behaviour at the University's Toll Free Hotline 0800 86 96 93.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate by continuing to the next page. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time prior to clicking the send button.



ANNEXURE I

EDUCATORS SURVEY QUESTIONS

TOPIC: **“Managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools”**

1. Do you think that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys at Maritzburg College? Please answer YES or NO.
2. Have you found the system to be beneficial in your mentoring relationship with the boys? Please answer YES or NO.
3. From your experience as an educator, do you think that the boys have bought into the system? Please answer YES or NO.
4. If your answer to 3 was NO, what do you feel the reason may be that some boys may not as yet have bought into the system? Select one of A, B, C or D which best fits:
 - A negative attitude
 - B fear of victimisation/bullying
 - C mixing with juniors and /or seniors
 - D none of the above
5. Have you experienced an improvement in behaviour in the classroom through positive reinforcement and acknowledgement and mentoring? Please answer YES or NO.
6. Would you recommend a similar character-based mentor system to other schools? Please answer YES or NO.
7. Can you recommend any suggestions that may make the character-based education mentor system more effective?



ANNEXURE J

LEARNERS' SURVEY QUESTIONS

TOPIC: "Managing an effective character-based education mentor system for Grade 8 boys in South African schools"

1. Do you think that the introduction of the character-based education mentor system programme has been a positive initiative for the boys at Maritzburg College? Please answer YES or NO.
2. Have you personally bought into the mentor system? Please answer YES or NO.
3. What do you like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:
 - A an opportunity to have a voice on important issues amongst my peers
 - B an opportunity to be heard on important issues
 - C an opportunity to be mentored by older boys
4. What do you not like about the mentor system? Select one of options A, B or C that best fits:
 - A It is sometimes awkward speaking about some of the issues
 - B Fear of victimisation for speaking openly
 - C Having to mix with juniors and or seniors
5. Are your teachers being supportive during these mentor sessions? Please answer YES or NO.
6. How does it make you feel? Select one of options A, B, C or D that best fits:
 - A appreciated

B pleased

C relieved

D none of the above

7. Do you think that your behaviour improves when you receive positive comments and merits from your teacher? Please answer YES or NO.
8. Would you recommend a similar character-based mentor system to other schools? Please answer YES or NO.
9. Can you recommend any suggestions that may make the character-based education mentor system more effective?