# Dealing with increasing aggression in pre-adolescent boys as a result of pedagogical factors: A Biblical approach for Christian teachers and counsellors

by

## Andrew Jason Riddin

A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

## Master of Theology

At the

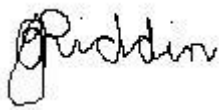## South African Theological Seminary

**12 September 2018**

**Supervisors:**

## Dr Anna-Marie Lockard and Dr Johannes Malherbe

# DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that the work contained in this research report is my own original work and has not been submitted previously, in its entirety or in part, to any institution for a degree.

Signed:

Andrew Jason Riddin

Date:        12 September 2018

# ABSTRACT

Aggressive personalities are relatively easy to spot: competitive natures, in-your-face confrontations and lack of control of emotion are common. The number of people acting in aggressive ways seems to suggest that the aggressive personality is becoming more prevalent.

This is a report of an investigation into the prevalence of aggressive personalities within a particular school in Gauteng. The results of the research indicate that the prevalence of aggression and aggressive behaviour is substantially higher than that of the general population.

Further research was conducted, to determine the factors that may influence this trend, and focussed on pedagogical actions and processes utilised by the teachers in the reference school, as well as through interviews with a number of learners.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF CHARTS, FIGURES & TABLES

# PREFACE

Child counselling is an area of personal interest for the researcher. As a teacher, the researcher comes across many children in need of some form of emotional assistance and/or spiritual guidance. This particular course of study was undertaken in response to a sense of calling to a healing ministry involving children and was born out of a passion for children, and a desire to empower and support children facing many harsh life experiences. The study was undertaken in conjunction with the completion of a number of academic coursework modules provided by the South African Theological Seminary (SATS), relating to Christian child counselling, with special emphasis on play therapy.

The coursework modules provided invaluable knowledge and insight into the processes of play therapy, as well as the opportunity to conduct play therapy sessions to gain practical experience.

Play therapy as a counselling discipline has proven to be a fascinating study, and the results displayed for some of the clients have been remarkable. Ongoing work is needed with some other clients, and this is being done using a multi-disciplinary approach, involving psychologists and social workers.

Prior to commencing this study, the researcher had been exposed to a growing number of sources investigating whether pedagogical practices were influencing the emotional development of boys. Much of what was discussed in the various articles and reports resonated with the researcher. Through the practical application of the play therapy methods learned in the preparatory coursework, a link became apparent between boys' levels of self-esteem, emotional health, and the pedagogical processes linked to their education.

The coursework module "MCC5152 – Entering a Child's World" offered by the SATS, was especially enlightening. It challenged the researcher to examine the manner in which he interacted with the children in his classroom and forced the researcher to examine the pedagogical methods he utilised. Through learning to enter more fully into the child's world, it became apparent to the researcher that there was a

difference in the primary learning styles of boys and girls. This observation led to an increased interest in the question of whether the emotional development of these pre-adolescent boys was being negatively influenced by the pedagogical approaches being utilised.

In taking this interest in the emotional development of the boys, the researcher started making enquiries into the primary disciplinary infractions committed by the boys in the school. It became apparent that bullying (physical, verbal and cyber) was a common theme in the infractions committed by the boys. Amongst the girls, the incidence of bullying was much lower.

By using the insights gained in the above-mentioned coursework module, the researcher began looking for possible causes of this high level of bullying amongst the boys in the reference school. That, in turn, led to a desire to study the matter more fully, resulting in this research report.

The knowledge and skills gained through this process are invaluable, as they not only enable the researcher to provide a more balanced pedagogical experience for his learners but can also be applied throughout the reference school, which can enable consistency between the various educators and grade/class levels.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to one of my recent Grade Seven groups. I have had the amazing privilege of being able to teach this particular group of young people for a period of two years. As we have spent time together in the classroom, we have also spent time journeying in life, as many of them have trusted me with their fears and their joys, their pain and their celebrations, their insecurities, their breakthroughs, and their failures and successes.

They fuel my passion and desire for ministry to children, and they push me to be a better teacher. I am grateful for every moment we get to spend together, and I give glory to God that He is able to use me as His instrument, to bring about life-change in your lives. I thank God that He has brought change in me, through all of you.

I am also grateful to the parents, who have given their consent for me to list their children's first names as a part of this tribute to them.

May you continue to grow from strength to strength as you mature into adulthood.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Akani D | Dylan | Kyle Ma | Nadeem | Ryan S | Tshepang |
| Akani S | Entle | Kyle Mo | Neo D | Sally | Tshepo |
| Angella | Fhumulani | Lebo | Neo M | S'bulele | Tshola |
| Avuyile | Forrest | Lerato | Nkateko | Selly | Tumi |
| Boitshupo | Gomolemo | Lethabo | Nondwe | Shamilla | Tumisang |
| Botshelo | Gugu | Lihleli | Olerato | Shantel | Tyra |
| Bradlee | Ishka | Liyema | Olwethu | Sibulele | Unathi |
| Byron | Jamian | Lwazi | Oratile M | Sibusiso | Uthika |
| Caleb | Jayden | Mathipa | Oratile S | Sifiso | Vuyelwa |
| Cameron | Joan | Mboni | Orefile | Simphiwe | Xhanti |
| Carly | Joel | Mckayla | Phambili | Sinen | Yuko |
| Chulu | Kamohelo | Mia | Phatu | Siyanda | Zenande |
| Dasheya | Katlego | Mihlali | Phenyo | Solomon | Zubair |
| David | Katli | Mkhululi | Rethabile | Temweka | |
| Devaanya | Keanan | Mmalodi | Reuben | Thameen | |
| Dimakatso | Kerianne | Mokgabo | Ricardo | Thapelo | |
| Dodi | Kgomotso K | Mpho | Rubeshan | Thasi | |
| Donovan | Kgothatso | Mvano | Ryan C | Tristan | |

Table 1 Learner names

# A NEW DAY STARTS – ANDREW RIDDIN

A new day starts,
Lively buzzing all round.
Enter the room,
Hear the restless sound.

It takes a few minutes
To create a brief lull.
Greetings come
In the form of a yell.

Chairs scrape on the floor
The chatter resumes.
A call for quiet
A yelling match looms.

At the end of the day
Learning's occurred.
Children excited
The bell has been heard.

Tomorrow we gather,
Repeat all this action,
As learning takes place
We feel satisfaction

These kids are my life
I call them my own
So proud to be with them
As they become better known

My love for this job
Drives me each day
My passion for children
Leading the way

It makes me so proud
To see you grow
Some do it fast,
Others more slow.

My prayer for you all
Is that you become all you could
I'll be watching you grow
Into full adulthood

May you find great joy
In all that you do
May you be content
Wherever you go

Remember this time
It goes by so fast
One day you'll look back
And wish it could last

If I ever have children
I hope they're like you
I'd be blessed beyond measure
With only a few

Be brave and be strong
In all that you face
And know you have
Support in this place

# CHAPTER ONE
# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1    Background

The South African school is a complex environment, with many different factors at play. In addition to being primarily a centre of education where learners are meant to be prepared for adult life, schools are increasingly becoming pillars of social and moral formation within the communities they serve. This is a role that schools have been forced, albeit reluctantly, to undertake, due to a number of socio-economic factors affecting the communities they serve. One of the most urgent factors relates to the ability to earn an income, and therefore, the ability of parents to provide for their children. Peggy Drexler notes the following: "It's been proven time and again that socioeconomic status is by far the most significant indicator of child welfare" (Drexler 2015).

According to data released by StatsSA in 2017, between 2006 and 2015 the mean poverty level of South Africans increased. It was found that approximately 55.5%, or 30.4 million, South Africans were living below the poverty line in 2015 (StatsSA 2017:14). For families in this situation, it may be necessary for both parents in the household to work in order to support the household. Alternatively, they may need to leave their children in the care of grandparents or other relatives. Child-headed households, created because of the death or absence of parents or other significant caregivers, are also severely impacted by the socio-economic situation, because the older children are forced to work in order to provide for their siblings, meaning that they, in turn, miss out on their education.

The above situation is a reality in which many children find themselves. Parents struggling to make ends meet are often in a situation where they simply cannot spend the necessary time with their children, and therefore it becomes the responsibility of schools to teach moral values and social norms to their learners.

For those learners who are fortunate enough to live above the poverty line, the socio-economic factors are different. Here it is found that parents try to make up for

absence due to work pressure, by providing their children with money in order to satisfy their material wants. Drexler (2015) notes that

> …researchers have similarly pointed out that some of the most at-risk students in the modern age are those who seem to have everything going for them, including their parents' resources. Most place the blame not on the money, or excess of it, but on parents who are too indulgent -- materially and emotionally -- or too absent.

These children, despite seemingly limitless resources, also need to learn their moral values and social norms from their schools, because their parents appear to abdicate their responsibility.

Children in the reference school, across all demographics, appear in need of training in how to interact appropriately with their peers. Aggression is a common feature in the resolution of conflict. Aggressive responses, ranging from angry verbal outbursts to full-on physical assault, are seen as justifiable response mechanisms to provocation. This research seeks to identify whether this aggression is compounded through the educational process in general and teachers' pedagogical approaches in particular.

## 1.2 Pre-adolescent aggression

Aggressive violence, especially that attributed as a reaction to "decades of political, economic, and racial discrimination" (Richards 2012:4) is prevalent in many parts of South African society. Simpson (1993), writing before the dawn of democracy in South Africa, suggested that "the legacy of apartheid has bequeathed to South Africa a 'culture of violence'. This has been rooted in the notion that violence in South Africa has become normative rather than deviant and it has come to be regarded as an appropriate means of resolving social, political and even domestic conflict."

Richards (2012:4) points out that aggression is still present in South African society, although the nature of the aggression has changed somewhat since the advent of democracy. The levels of aggression within South African society are noted by citizens of neighbouring countries, to the point where South Africans are

characterised as being "imposing, aggressive and unwilling to listen to local advice" when conducting business in other African countries (Allison 2016).

In addition to social factors such as discrimination, poverty and lack of gainful employment, parenting practices also play a considerable role in mitigating or aggravating aggression in children (Ibid. 4). Various researchers (Baumrind, 1966; Patterson, Debaryshe and Ramsey, 1990, in Richards 2012) have concluded, "Poor parenting practices are thus a conduit through which children can develop aggressive behaviour."

The above observation regarding poor parenting practice is evident in the classroom situation. Anecdotal evidence obtained in casual discussion with a range of teachers demonstrates that learner behaviour is becoming increasingly problematic within the school environment. Research conducted by Rossouw backs this anecdotal evidence, and observes, "One of the most prominent factors (currently) influencing the learning environment in South African schools is the conduct of learners" (2003:414). Furthermore, Rossouw quotes research from Andrews and Taylor, indicating that poor academic achievement by a learner is linked to poor behaviour (Ibid. 414).

As a result of this development, teachers are no longer only striving to provide an academic foundation on which learners can build their lives, but increasingly they also have to build spiritual, moral and emotional foundations, along with basic manners and social etiquette. This lack of basic social aptitude can be attributed to parents who are inconsistent in their use of discipline, or their unwillingness to practice adult authority over their children (Richards 2012:5). Children who do not receive this consistent discipline, or adequate adult authority, are less likely to know which behaviours are acceptable, and which are not (Crosswhite and Kerpelman 2009:616).

Evidence of these conclusions is being noticed by classroom educators in schools. Anecdotal evidence from teachers, suggests that because children are poorly socialised at home, they do not possess the skills to deal with conflict in a socially appropriate manner. This then manifests in aggression. This view is supported by the social learning theory, which suggests that "children who demonstrate aggressive

behaviour without consequence and confrontation, learn that it is a suitable method to adopt in attempting to force specific outcomes from others" (Crosswhite and Kerpelman 2009: 623).

Furthermore, as a teacher, the researcher has personally observed this trend in children. Children of both genders are increasingly getting into trouble because they have lashed out aggressively at other learners, sometimes even going so far as to become involved in physical altercations. In many cases, these aggressive outbursts are the result of a trivial encounter with another learner.

Bullying, a subset of aggressive behaviour, is also becoming a significant factor in schools. Protogerou and Flisher (2012:119) describe bullying as an act

> … which is expressed in an open, direct way (e.g. physically hitting, kicking, punching someone; verbally threatening, insulting, teasing; taking belongings), and/or in a relational, indirect way (e.g. spreading rumours, gossiping, excluding and isolating someone from a group).

Bullies are traditionally seen as being "hot-tempered, impulsive and domineering" (Bernstein and Watson in Protogerou and Flisher 2012:121) and the expression of aggression through bullying, whether physical bullying, or more subtle forms, such as verbal, emotional or cyberbullying, is a symptom of a much deeper behavioural problem, and must be addressed urgently.

As noted above, poor parenting correlates directly to poor behaviour. However, this is not the only factor influencing behaviour, and therefore aggression, of children. The school environment also plays a major role, and Rossouw points out a number of factors, which affect the behaviour of children (including the various expressions and experiences of aggression).

These factors are (Rossouw 2003:425):

- Legally prescribed processes for dealing with poor discipline that do not offer a swift, immediate, adequate response.
- The absence of educators in classes.

- The approach or personality of an educator can create a bad relationship between educator and learners.
- The large number of children in classes.
- The negative influence of learners on each other: learners seek to emulate the behaviour of those who are arrogant and unruly.
- The ratio of male-female teachers: in schools where there are more male teachers, discipline is less of a problem.
- The use of the Outcomes-Based Education curriculum.
- Victimisation of learners by those with a lack of respect for human dignity.

Rossouw's assertion that "the approach or personality of an educator can create a bad relationship between educator and learners" (2003:425) raises the following question: "does the manner in which the teacher approaches or deals with a child, in a classroom environment, influence the experience and expression of aggression in the learners?"

It is this question, which this research project set out to answer.

## 1.3    Delimitation

This particular study is limited to pre-adolescent boys, in a particular primary school. The primary reason for this delimitation relates directly to an increase in research suggesting that current pedagogical practices negatively affect boys' academic achievement.

The literature study for this research report reviews some of this research, and will then be used as a foundation for determining whether the pedagogical practices used in the reference school affect aggression, which in turn, may affect academic achievement.

Girls have formed the subject of much recent research in the educational field, with less research targeting boys. Some reports on the topic include:

- *Boys vs Girls: Are boys more visual-spatial than girls?* (Alexandra Golon)
- *Do gender-specific classrooms increase the success of students?* (Dave DePape)

- *Gender differences in learning style* (Jana Sosnowski)
- *Single-sex classes and equal opportunities for girls and boys* (Molly Warrington & Mike Younger)

This research report hopes to add to the literature in this field, with specific reference to boys.

## 1.4    Research problem and critical questions

This study aimed to investigate whether or not there is a link between the experience and expression of aggression in pre-adolescent boys and the manner in which teachers interact with them in a classroom environment. Furthermore, the study aims to develop a Biblical pastoral response for Christian teachers and counsellors who may find themselves in a situation where increased aggression occurs.

Several critical issues needed to be evaluated in this study. These were as follows:

- The prevalence and causes of aggression in pre-adolescent boys, in both the general population, as well as within the reference school;
- Determining whether pedagogical practices influence aggression, and if so, how, and,
- If pedagogical elements prove to be a factor in the increase of aggression, what changes can be made to the pedagogical practices in order to alleviate the aggressive behaviour and associated discipline issues?
- How can the Christian educator and/or counsellor work with pre-adolescent boys who may display a tendency towards increased aggression?

In examining these questions, it was also necessary to examine the issue of aggression from the psychological, emotional and spiritual perspectives, as these will be influential factors in resolving the problems of aggression and their related complications.

# CHAPTER TWO
# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1   Introduction

Statistically speaking, boys are generally more likely to be perpetrators of direct, physical bullying (Protogerou and Flisher 2012:120). Aggression in boys tends to be more physical, and therefore more visible, and can be seen as a result of evolutionary development, where a high level of intrasex competition between males has existed for many centuries (Furtuna 2014).

Masango, in the HTS Journal of the Reformed Theological Centre of the University of Pretoria, discusses the elements of the frustration-aggression theory, and points out that the basic tenet of this theory is the belief that aggression is one of a range of possible, inevitable results of a build-up of frustration within the individual (Masango 2004:995 – 996).

Masango further notes that from a theological perspective, aggression is viewed as an innate dimension of being created beings in general and fallen beings in particular (Masango 2004:999). Furthermore, he notes that the Protestant Reformation's theology of sin is heavily influenced by the aggressive, "manly" acting-out of various forms of human distortion (ibid. 1000).

In dealing with the topic of this research, it was prudent to evaluate existing literature regarding both the issues of aggression in pre-adolescent boys, as well as literature regarding current pedagogical practices and their influence on boys.

## 2.2   Prevalence and causes of aggression in pre-adolescent boys

### 2.2.1  Background

Observational and anecdotal evidence provided by educators indicates that levels of aggression in pre-adolescent boys are on the increase. Intrinsic and extrinsic factors play a role in this. Anger, the root emotion of aggression, is viewed by researchers as one of the base emotions experienced by human beings, along with sorrow, joy and

fear (Walsh 2008:120). Despite being a part of the normal range of human experiences, anger, and its resulting aggression is often viewed as something negative mainly because "it has come to represent many strong, negative feelings *(and reactions)* in the human body" (Dobson 2006:89, emphasis added).

Aggression, which is the expression of the emotion of anger, is displayed by most children at some point in their development, and across cultures, boys are recognised as being consistently more aggressive than girls (Connor 2002:29). Some aggression, the physical or verbal expression of anger, is, therefore, to be expected when it comes to dealing with boys. It is believed that the purpose of aggression changes with age, and for pre-adolescent and adolescent boys, the primary reason for the expression of anger appears to be used to establish and assert social dominance within the social groups in which the boys move (Ibid. 2002:30).

Ribeaud and Eisner (2010:470 - 471) found that the following school-related factors may have an influence on the experience and expression of aggression in pre-adolescent boys:

- A low level of popularity amongst classmates;
- A poor relationship between teacher and child;
- Being a victim of bullying;
- Being rejected by classmates;
- Best friends who are violent;
- Change of class mid-way through a school year;
- Low academic achievement;
- Low levels of cohesion within the class; and
- A school environment that is perceived to be violent.

Some of these are discussed below.

### 2.2.2 Characteristics of the aggressive personality

Various personality theories describe aggression as a characteristic of specific personality types. When discussed in terms of the context of personality, aggression is associated with being extremely competitive, always being in a hurry and being especially irritable and aggressive (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:257).

8

In the Type A and Type B language coined by Rosenman and Friedman (1959:1173), a Type A personality is likely to exhibit a sustained, aggressive drive for achievement, with a desire to complete daily tasks as speedily as possible.

In the language of the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator, the ENTJ personality is seen as the aggressive one, as the person is both extroverted and judging (Myers-Briggs Foundation n.d).

In the language of the DISC Profile, the D-type person is likely to be more aggressive, as he exhibits a dominant, determined personality (Institute for Motivational Living 2009:7).

In terms of the DISC profile (DiscInsights n.d), individuals, who can be classified as being aggressive, display many of the following characteristics:

- being direct and decisive;
- being leaders rather than followers;
- being risk-takers and problems solvers;
- being self-starters; and/or
- being task-oriented.

Winslow-Sargent (2005) indicates that aggressive children will often display the following characteristics:

- adventurous;
- competitive;
- determined;
- outspoken; and/or
- strong-willed.

Having laid a foundation for discussion, we now need to turn to the prevalence of aggressive personalities in the general population, as well as possible causes for this aggression.

### 2.2.3   General factors influencing aggression in the general public

As noted previously, some aggression is normal in every person. It is an expression of the emotion of anger, which is built into us as part of the normal range of emotions.

Studies have shown that during childhood, levels of aggression fluctuate, at times increasing, and at other times decreasing. Typically, physical aggression tends to increase during pre-primary years, and decrease in the primary school years leading to adolescence. Indirect or relational aggression appears to increase during the primary school years, and decrease in adolescence (Côte et al. 2006:72). Normal development also dictates that as children grow from adolescence into adulthood, aggression decreases steadily (Louber and Stouthamer-Louber 1998:244).

Some children exhibit atypical development with regard to their experience and expression of aggression, and there is a hypothesis that this atypical development in the primary school years has a direct link to increased physical aggression in pre-adolescent and adolescent children (Côte et al. 2006:73). This link appears to be particularly strong in children who experience trauma when transitioning between pre-primary education and formal education (Gr. R and up) (Ibid. 73). It is also important to note that the literature points to a significant difference in levels of physical aggression in boys and girls, especially after the start of formal education, with boys demonstrating higher levels of physical aggression than girls (Côte et al. 2006:74). In normal development, both boys and girls tend to move away from overt physical aggression (hitting in order to obtain the territory or objects of others), to covert, person-oriented aggression (use of mediated words and actions intended to retaliate against another child) as they progress into adolescence (Connor 2002:30).

Aggression can take different forms. For example, Baş and Kabasakal indicate that aggression can be either reactive or proactive (2010:1654). Reactive aggression occurs when actions are undertaken whilst the individual is in a state of anger or frustration or as a result of provocation (Ibid. 1654). Proactive aggression, on the other hand, is an expression of aggression made in order to achieve a specific target or goal (Ibid. 1655).

As can be expected, reactive aggression begins earlier than proactive aggression in children. There does not appear to be a significant gender link in levels of reactive

aggression. Proactive aggression, however, increases significantly more in boys than in girls as age increases (Baş and Kabasakal 2010: 1655).

Despite there being a proven link between personality and aggression (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:357), there are external environmental factors which also influence the experience and expression of aggression of an individual. Many of these external factors influence aggression over a long period of time, and the onset of specific aggressive behaviours is usually gradual and extended over a long period of time (Louber and Stouthamer-Louber 1998:245).

Different theories exist as to what exactly the external stressors are. Dr James Dobson (2006:88 – 89), for example, indicates that the following experiences often result in a feeling similar to anger, and aggressive expression:

- Being rejected: rejection produces strong feelings of anger in some individuals, which can result in aggressive behaviour.
- Extreme embarrassment: this state of being also results in feelings of anger, especially when the embarrassing event is witnessed by others, specifically people known to the individual.
- Extreme fatigue: this state of being can result in actions which appear to be angry, and even hostile.
- Extreme frustration: when small irritations build up and become bigger frustrations, anger is often a result.

Two major modern theories of aggression also shed light on the causes of aggression. These are the Social Learning Perspective and the General Aggression Model. Each will be explored briefly below.

**Social Learning Perspective**

The Social Learning Perspective starts with the idea that "human beings are not born with a large array of aggressive responses at their disposal. Rather they must acquire these as they acquire other complex forms of social behaviour" (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:340). In other words, aggression is viewed as a learned behaviour. Individuals use their direct experiences, or their observations of the behaviours of others, to learn new experiences. Subjects for observation can include

people, characters in movies or television shows or even video games (Ibid. 340). Baron, Branscombe and Byrne (2009:340) note that through this observation, individuals can learn:

> (1) various ways of seeking to harm others; (2) which people or groups are appropriate targets for aggression; (3) what actions by others justify retaliation or vengeance on their part; and (4) what situations or contexts are ones in which aggression is permitted or even approved.

The likelihood of the expression of aggression by a specific person can be linked to their past experiences, attitudes and values, as well as the possibility of reward for either behaving aggressively or not (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:340).

**General Aggression Model**

This model built on the Social Learning Perspective, and according to Baron, Branscombe and Byrne, provides an even more complete theory as to the causation of aggression (2009:340). In this theory, overt aggression is the result of a chain of events triggered by one of two primary inputs. These factors relate either to the present situation (situational factors) in which the individual finds him-/herself or to the people involved (personal factors) (Ibid.340).

Situational factors are extrinsic, contextual, and related to the environment and circumstances in which a person finds him-/herself. Situational factors also include the behaviours and actions of other people and how they affect the aggressive individual. When confronted by these external factors, an aggressive personality responds with a display of overt aggression. The following variables may influence whether the individual reacts with overt aggression: direct provocation from another, exposure to other people's aggressive behaviour, sustained frustration, and almost any event that could lead to a person experiencing discomfort (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:340-341).

Personal factors are intrinsic and relate to the skills, values and attitudes of the individual. The following variables come into play: specific skills relating to the expression of aggression (e.g. ability to fight or use weapons); certain beliefs or attitudes relating to aggression or violence; tendencies to perceive hostile intentions

in the behaviour of others; and a predisposition to aggression (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:341).

### 2.2.4 Prevalence of aggression in the general population

In order to establish the prevalence of an aggressive personality within the general population, reliable methods of testing personality need to be utilised.

Two of the most common personality tests are the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the DISC Profile Assessment (DISC). The MBTI tends to focus on, and highlight, the individual's internal thinking, whilst the DISC Profile focuses on how the personality is expressed through external behaviour (DiscInsights 2013).

When using the MBTI, the respondents are categorised into one of sixteen different personality types. In the DISC model, only four types are used.

In the DISC model, which is used as a measurement tool in this study, the aggressive personality is referred to as the D-type, which can be defined as being dominating or determined.

In the MBTI, the corresponding aggressive personality type is known as the ENTJ, which means that the individual is extroverted, intuitive, thinking and judging (Myers-Briggs Foundation n.d).

The correlation between the results of these two assessment tools establish reliability and validity of the DISC profile when applied to the general population. It is therefore to be expected that the population of the reference school will exhibit similar results. Subsequently, the sample population included in this study should also reflect similar percentages.

## 2.3 Pedagogical factors which may influence aggression

### 2.3.1 Background

Much international research has been conducted into the *problem of boys in the classroom*. The reason for this research lies in the fact that, on average, boys appear to be performing at a lower academic level than girls. Peg Tyre (2006:44), author of the book, "The Trouble with boys", noted in an article for Newsweek, that:

By almost every benchmark, boys across the nation (the USA) and in every demographic group are falling behind. In elementary school, boys are two times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with learning disabilities and twice as likely to be placed in special-education classes… The number of boys who said they didn't like school rose 71 percent between 1980 and 2001.

Other research points out that "boys perform less well than girls on literacy benchmark or standardised tests" (Watson, Kehler and Martino 2010:356).

It is clear that there is some problem when it comes to boys and learning (cf. Yates 1997; Taylor & Lorimer 2002 and Adams 2010).

### 2.3.2   Important pedagogical practices and theories of learning

Pedagogical practices, theories of learning and debate about male/female learning styles have become hot topics in education in recent times (cf. Yates 1997; Oakland and Joyce 2004; Kleinfeld 2009; Adams 2010; Schneider 2013; Sosnowski 2015).

As researchers have attempted to uncover what the problem is, and how it can be solved, attention has shifted to the concept of "differentiated learning" which is defined by Hall (in Huebner 2010) as follows:

an approach to teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent is to maximise each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is… rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum.

Differentiated learning, if applied effectively, means that every learner in a class is able to learn to the maximum of his or her ability. The pace and method of delivery of instruction is tailored to meet the widest range of needs possible. In theory, it should mean that all learners progress through the relevant curriculum at a steady and sustainable pace. If applied consistently and correctly, differentiated learning has the potential to mitigate the underperformance of boys in the classroom, as teaching and learning can be conducted in a manner that is most beneficial to the child.

This discussion regarding differentiated learning has featured prominently in educational debate in developed countries, especially the United Kingdom (cf. McNamara 1999; Flem, Moen and Gudmundsdottir 2000; Piggott 2002; Everest 2003; Department for Education 2008; Times Educational Supplement Magazine 2013), and may be a crucial factor in mitigating the experience and expression of aggression within a South African school context.

### 2.3.3 Learning styles theory

The learning styles theory precedes the differentiated learning theory and has formed the basis of much teacher education. Much of the current pedagogical practice in South Africa revolves around the use of the concept of learning styles.

A learning style is defined as "an individual's mode of gaining knowledge, especially a preferred or best method" (Dictionary.com n.d). Depending on what research one reads, there are anywhere between three and eight learning styles. However, generally speaking, there is a strong consensus that the following three styles are key, and these are generally present in all the major theories regarding learning styles. The three styles are: auditory, visual and tactile (Indiana University n.d).

The theory of learning styles states that every person has a predominant style in which they learn the best. Any teaching or instruction presented in their dominant style will be more easily remembered, and more accurately recalled. Some people are able to learn well using a combination of two or more of the key styles.

Just as individual learners may demonstrate a particular learning style, so too teachers will teach based on what their particular learning style is. So teachers who learn visually will teach in visual ways. The same applies to teachers who learn primarily in auditory or tactile ways. Their approach to teaching will be informed by their learning style.

#### 2.3.3.1 Three prominent learning styles

In order to understand how learning styles influence the current classroom pedagogy, it is important to briefly discuss the main styles used in the classroom.

**a) Visual learning**

When this is the teacher's main teaching method, much of the learning material is written on the board, or in presentations, or the textbook is relied upon heavily as a resource. Learners must write down the information, and must later read over and review what they have written.

Väyrynen (n.d: 12) observes that learners with this style of learning:

- Display a good visual memory of people and places
- Learn through writing down material
- Like to read notes and write summaries
- Like visual stimulation, such as text, charts, maps, pictures or illustrations.

**b)  Auditory learning**

This too is a common style employed by teachers. Teachers will stand in front of the class speaking, and learners must make notes for review and later study.

According to Väyrynen (n.d.:7), learners who learn through the auditory style:

- Can remember names, not necessarily faces
- Learn by reading notes and summaries out loud
- Like to listen and discuss what they hear
- Repeat instructions.

**c)  Tactile learning**

This style is often most prevalent in a preschool classroom and, to a limited extent, in primary school classrooms for subjects such as Creative Arts and Technology. These subjects are often hands-on and therefore an ideal opportunity for learners with this style of learning to thrive.

Väyrynen (n.d.:7) notes that learners with this style:

- Enjoy exploring
- Enjoy physical activity, handcrafts, gardening etc.
- Have a good memory for events, but not faces or names
- Like being outside of the class, getting hands-on experience

- Like to keep busy with doodling, scribbling or drawing
- Like to work in groups.

### *2.3.3.2 Learning style controversies*

It is important to note that theories of learning styles are not without controversy. The methods used to determine learning styles have been questioned, as well as attempts to study differences in learning styles between members of the same group (Mccown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:152). Much of the criticism stems from the notion that "research which stereotypes people fosters instructional practice that reinforces stereotypes rather than addressing the learning needs of each individual" (Gordon 1991 and Yee 1992, in Mccown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:152).

### *2.3.3.3 Problems relating to the use of learning styles*

### a)    Avoidance of a specific style

According to research discussed by Sosnowski (2015), the parts of children's brains which deal with verbal fluency, handwriting and recognising familiar faces, mature several years earlier in girls than it does in boys. This seems to suggest that girls will learn well in both an auditory and visual environment. In boys, the areas of the brain responsible for "mechanical reasoning … and spatial reasoning" appear to mature up to eight years earlier than in girls (Ibid.). This observation points to boys being more tactile learners, since tactile learning allows them to manipulate and move objects in space.

Based on informal discussion with other teachers, it appears that teachers shy away from activities that encourage tactile learning. The motivation for this reluctance appears to lie in the existence of the possibility of a disrupted classroom. Teachers are taught to maintain order and discipline in the classroom and any tactile learning seems to go counter to maintaining an orderly environment within the classroom.

Boys (and in fact, girls who learn tactilely too) are being disadvantaged severely by this lack of hands-on experience as they learn.  A further problem is that boys who demonstrate high intelligence may be labelled as being lazy because they are not producing results in line with their potential.

### b)    Learning by observation and social cohesion

In addition to the negative effect that a lack of tactile learning creates, a tenet of social psychology, called learning by observation, also comes into play.

Learning by observation is a means by which the attitudes of individuals develop (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:154). People acquire attitudes or behaviours by observing others. The individual accepts attitudes expressed by others, because we all tend to compare ourselves to others. This is known as the mechanism of social cohesion (Ibid. 154). This mechanism dictates that "to the extent that our views agree with those of other people, we tend to conclude that our ideas and attitudes are accurate" (Ibid. 154). This is not just a random occurrence where attitudes and beliefs are acquired from random individuals whom we have no connection with. People "adjust their attitudes so as to hold views closer to those of others who they value and identify with" (Ibid. 154).

In light of the above, it is plausible that if boys are exposed consistently and exclusively to either auditory or visual teaching methods, they may gain an attitude which dictates that tactile learning is somehow sub-standard or inferior to auditory and visual learning. Evidence of this has in fact been displayed in the boys in the reference school. This evidence has come from direct observation, as well as anecdotal evidence from other members of staff.

A particular example relates to the construction of projects for the subject Technology. During the Grade Seven year, a project is designed and built every term. One would be forgiven for concluding that boys should take to this task quite naturally. However, many of the boys tend to struggle with this. When questioned about the reason for struggling, they will indicate that they struggle to visualise the finished products and are not certain about the finer details of assembly. It is the author's belief that this lack of ability to visualise and then construct the project stems from a lack of sufficient exposure to tactile learning. Their visio-spatial abilities are stunted, because they have not been intentionally developed.

Negative views expressed by some members of the group may easily be acquired by other members, which then creates a vicious cycle of negativity and decreasing levels of motivation to complete the task at hand.

For boys with the D-type personality, this experience may be even more negative than it would be for boys with other personality types. This is due to the fact that one of the traits of a D-type personality is a high level of competitiveness (Winslow-Sargent 2005). The competitive nature of a D-type would ordinarily drive them to complete tasks and activities as quickly as possible, in order to outshine their peers. The difficulty experienced by learners in completing their tasks, indicates how strongly their lack of tactical learning exposure affects their performance, as not even their dominant, determined personality type can lead to a satisfactory result being produced.

## 2.4   Evaluation of the literature

It is clear that the pedagogical practices of a teacher can have a significant overall effect on learners in their classroom. This effect has an influence on the overall achievement of the learner, as well as the development of the learner's self-esteem and self-image. A teacher who applies the use of varying methods of teaching will empower more and more of the learners in their class, thus boosting overall performance and self-concept. The teacher who consistently uses only one particular style of teaching may produce some learners who doubt their abilities and who may, therefore, have a lower self-concept.

In addition to the pedagogical factors, the literature review also points to inter- and intrapersonal factors which may also have an impact on the learning ability, and therefore the self-concept of the learners. They may be exposed to attitudes and expectations from their families, peers and society in general, which may influence their learning abilities.

It is conceivable that this can result in a feeling of frustration, and eventually, in the expression of aggression from learners. In addition, it is indeed plausible that those who fit into the dominant or aggressive personality category would react in especially negative ways. This reaction could include withdrawal from classroom participation, and the development of a general apathy concerning their education.

This research seeks to determine further links between classroom practice, aggression and overall learner performance.

# CHAPTER THREE
# METHOD OF INVESTIGATION & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

## 3.1 Data sources & data collection

Data for this research was obtained through three primary sources, namely disciplinary records of the reference school, completion of a basic personality profile by volunteer learners, as well as one-on-one interviews with learners selected based on the results of the basic personality assessment.

In addition to the above data collection processes, anecdotal evidence gathered from practising teachers forms a secondary source of data and is used to underscore the primary data sources. One such source is a pre-existing and ongoing mentorship relationship between the researcher and a learner, who shall be referred to as Boy #18 in the discussions and results which follow. Boy # 18 took part in the initial phase of the research but declined to take part in the interviews. He (and his parent) did, however, consent to information from the mentoring relationship being used in the research report.

### 3.1.1 Disciplinary records

The reference school utilises a learner code of conduct, which prescribes certain minimum expectations with regards to appropriate behaviour for learners.

 The Code of Conduct is developed in accordance with guidelines provided by the National and Provincial Education Departments of Education, by the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB).

The SMT (also referred to as the Executive Committee, or Exco), is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal and the various Heads of Department (HODs). The SMT is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. The SGB is made up of

elected parent and staff representatives, who serve for a three-year period and are responsible for the governance of the school (including the development and implementation of policies, such as the discipline policy).

At the beginning of every academic year, learners and parents are issued with a copy of the Code of Conduct and are required to indicate their acceptance of the code by signing the copy. Parents are encouraged to discuss the various elements of the Code with their children as a mean of ensuring higher compliance levels.

Where learners display positive behaviour, they are rewarded through a *credit* system. Transgressions of the Code of Conduct are split into five categories: minor debits, debits, straight detentions, Exco hearings and SGB hearings. Each category carries its own sanctions for the various offences. The text of the Code of Conduct is included as Appendix A.

Examples of minor debits include such things as incomplete homework, books not at school and incorrect school uniform. Minor debits are recorded as a note against a learner's name in a class debit book. Each debit carries a specific number of points, and once a learner reaches a predetermined number of points, he or she will be required to attend a detention class. After three detentions, a formal hearing will be held, convened by the SMT or the SGB, depending on the level of severity of the various transgressions.

Examples of more serious transgressions include assault (physical or verbal); bullying (physical, verbal, emotional); and being in possession of alcohol, drugs or pornography. These transgressions usually result in immediate detention, although severe cases can result directly in an SGB hearing.

The debit books for the period March 2015 – November 2017 were included in the review for this research. Data relating to aggression were extracted and analysed. For the purposes of this study, aggressive acts included any act, whether physical or verbal, intended to harm or hurt another learner. This ranges from using foul language to bullying and physical assault.

Once the review of the debit books was complete, the researcher performed a review of disciplinary hearing records. These records provided a more detailed overview

because they have to be retained by the school for a period of five years. Once again, data specifically related to aggression was extracted from these records.

### 3.1.2  Personality assessment

Following the evaluation of the disciplinary records, learners in the target population were invited to complete a basic personality profile, using an adapted version of the DISC profile. This activity required parental consent, and an initial consent form was provided to parents. Only learners, whose parents gave permission, were allowed to participate. The consent form is included an Appendix B: Informed consent forms.

#### *3.1.2.1 The DISC Profile*

The DISC profile used in this research was created by The Institute for Motivational Living and distributed by Goldisc Limited. The Children's Profile, as it is called, was "designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to understanding personality styles through the DISC Personality System" (Institute for Motivation Living, 2009: i).

The tool is based on the original DISC test, developed by American psychologist William Marston. It is regarded as one of the most widely used assessment and development tools worldwide (Roodt 1997:17). In recent developments of the test, the questions and options have been expanded beyond simple words, in order to ensure clarity for those answering the assessment (Ibid. 17).

Despite being widely used, it is important to ensure the reliability and validity of the tool, especially when translating it into the South African school context. Reliability and validity of a measurement tool are vital requirements in all aspects of assessment. They ensure that the results of an assessment can be trusted, and therefore relied on in academic research.

#### *3.1.2.2 Reliability and Validity*

Karin Roodt (1997:2), a South African psychologist and lecturer, sought to determine the reliability and validity of an electronic DISC administration tool, known as DISCUS. Her research noted the following regarding the reliability of the DISCUS instrument (and therefore the DISC Profile):

The test-retest method was used in the reliability study and was administered to 90 employees from a variety of companies in Kwa Zulu-Natal and Gauteng. The Pearson's product-moment correlation co-efficient was used and correlation scores of 0.728 (Dominance), 0.645 (Influence), 0.730 (Steadiness) and 0.550 (Compliance) were established. The p-value in all the cases was as low as 0.0001. This indicates significance at alpha = 0.001. It can therefore be concluded with 99.9 % level of confidence that the Discus instrument is reliable.

Her research also sought correlations with results from other tools, and subsequently, she concludes that correlation levels for the four DISC elements were at 1% and 5%, when compared with the 16-PF tool developed by RB Cattell (Roodt 1997:2).

Her overall conclusion (1997:11) with regards to the reliability and validity of the DISC tool in the South African context is as follows:

It was found that the Discus instrument is reliable at a significance level = 0.01. In the validity exercise it was found that the majority of the factors of the 16-PF show a significant correlation with all four dimensions of the Discus using the p-values.

These conclusions indicate that the DISCUS tool, and by extension, the DISC profile on which it is based, is a valid and reliable tool, fit for its purpose.

### 3.1.2.3 Comparison with other assessment tools

Roodt recommends that results of the DISC profile be compared to results of similar instruments (1997:11). Therefore, an important part of the research methodology is to determine whether any correlations exist between the results of the DISC profile undertaking by the volunteers in this research project, and results obtained from similar assessment tools. In order to achieve this, a comparison was made between the general results of the DISC profile and the Myers-Briggs MBTI assessment.

### 3.1.2.4 DISC profile used

The DISC profile used in this research contained 21 questions and was adapted for use in the reference school. The adaptations included:

- Administration via an electronic data submission tool, known as CPS (classroom performance system). This system displays the questions and their possible answers on a screen, using a data projector. Learners each have a remote control, and can input their answers via the remote control. Answers are recorded directly on the CPS database, and can be exported into spreadsheets for further analysis.

- Minor changes to wording, in order to promote a better understanding of the question.

The adapted questionnaire is included as Appendix C.

### 3.1.3 Learner Interviews

The final step in obtaining data was to invite learners to attend one-on-one interviews. The primary target population were the boys who demonstrated a dominant personality type in their DISC assessments. Other boys were however allowed to participate, provided their parents completed the required consent form. A second, separate consent form was utilised for the interviews (see Appendix B).

Learner interviews consisted of 15 questions, aimed at determining individual factors associated with experiencing and expressing aggression, as well as pedagogical factors, which influenced the individual boy's experiences in the classroom.

Answers to questions were recorded on paper as the interview progressed, but the interviews were also video-recorded for further analysis outside of the interview situation.

The list of questions, as well as a summary of responses, is included as Appendix D.

## 3.2   Ethical Considerations

Due to the nature of the research, where participation of minors and the use of privileged data are a factor, certain ethical considerations need to be taken into account. Various permissions needed to be obtained, informed consent had to be obtained from the parents/guardians of the minor children who took part, and steps had to be taken to protect the identities of the minors involved.

### 3.2.1 Permissions required

This research was conducted in a government school in Gauteng Province. Therefore, the first permission required was that of the Gauteng Education Department (GDE). The GDE has specific rules in place which govern research within a school, all of which had to be adhered to. These rules included stipulations about the time frames within which research at a school would be permitted, as well as assurances that all participants would have their identities protected.

GDE approval was initially granted for the 2014 academic year (commencing in February).

This approval was later extended to the 2016 academic year, as the researcher required more data.

Once permission was obtained from the GDE, the School Governing Body (SGB) and Principal had to provide permission as well. Consent was granted.

All consent letters are included as Appendix E: Permission Letters. Once these permissions were obtained, a schedule could be drawn up for the investigation.

### 3.2.2 Informed consent

After receiving consent from the relevant education authorities, learners were invited to participate in the research. This was done in stages, as follows:

1. Letters were sent to parents of all learners within the parameters of the research (i.e. all boys in Grade 6 & 7 in the reference school), explaining the nature of the study and how their child could participate. Parents were informed that participation was on a voluntary basis and that the child could end his participation at any point in time. An assurance of confidentiality was also given in this letter.
2. After completion of the initial stage (the DISC profile), parents of learners who were identified and invited to attend the interview phase were required to complete a second consent form. This second consent form indicated the nature of the interviews, as well as informing parents that the interviews would be recorded for further analysis. An assurance of confidentiality was given in this regard.

All letters were co-signed by the school principal, as an indication that the school had given permission for the research to take place.

Only learners who returned a completed and signed consent form were allowed to participate.

3. Once signed consent forms had been returned, DISC assessments were scheduled. All learners attending had the process explained to them verbally, with the assurance that they could end their participation at any time, and that their results were confidential.

4. Learners who participated in the interview phase were verbally instructed as to the process to be followed and were asked to confirm their agreement to participate. They were also reminded that the interview would be recorded and asked to confirm their willingness to be recorded.

### 3.2.3  Protection of minors

Data obtained from the disciplinary records, as well as individual responses obtained during interviews, have been reported anonymously, referring to participants only as Boy # 1, Boy # 2 etc. The order in which the numbers are assigned does not correspond to the order in which the participants were interviewed. This is done in order to further protect the identities of the learners.

In addition to using information obtained from learners as source data, the researcher has also chosen to dedicate the study to a group of children, listing only their first names on the dedication page.

It should be noted that none of these learners was directly involved in the research (they were the sources of some anecdotal evidence, but did not participate in the interviews, and were not included in the review of the disciplinary records). All names have been used only with the express written permission of the parent/guardian of the child concerned. Where a parent/guardian refused permission, the child's name was not included in the dedication.

### 3.2.4  Feedback to parents and learners

Upon completion of the DISC profiles, learners and parents were provided with feedback, in the form of a letter, explaining the four DISC elements, as well as

information about the learner's dominant DISC element. Information for this was adapted from the prescribed coursework book *Different children, different needs*, written by Drs Charles Boyd and Robert Rohm in 2004, which is a biblical parenting book, based on the instruction contained in Proverbs 22, that parents should instruct their children in the way they should go. It seeks to help parents in "encouraging, exhorting and empathising with children according to their unique needs and character."

The feedback provided gave general information about the particular personality type that was identified, as well as specific steps that parents (and learners) could take to develop their personalities further.

Examples of the feedback letters are included as Appendix F.

# CHAPTER FOUR
# RESEARCH FINDINGS

## 4.1   Introduction

As noted above, data was collected from a number of primary sources, as well as from secondary sources. The findings of the research are discussed in relation to the following critical questions:

- The prevalence and causes of aggression in pre-adolescent boys, in both the general population, as well as within the reference school;
- determining whether pedagogical practices influence aggression, and if so, how; and
- if pedagogical elements prove to be a factor in the increase of aggression, what changes can be made to the pedagogical practices in order to alleviate the aggressive behaviour and associated discipline issues?

## 4.2   Findings regarding the prevalence of aggression within the reference school

### 4.2.1   Analysis of the Disciplinary records

During the period for which debit book records are available, the following statistics stand out:

|  | Total | Boys | Girls |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total debits issued** | 8955 | 5802 (64.8%) | 3153 (35.2%) |
| **Debits for aggressive acts** | 310 | 246 (79.4%) | 64 (20.6%) |

Table 2: Debits issued (2015 - 2017)

Based on the above, it becomes abundantly clear that the boys are involved in a significantly higher proportion of aggressive acts than girls are. This is to be expected since boys tend to be more aggressive than girls.

The aggressive acts conducted by the boys can be graphically displayed as follows:



**Number of Aggressive acts leading to debits**

Hurting others deliberately: 1
Use of dangerous weapons: 3
Vandalism: 4
Threatening others: 4
Pushing and Shoving: 13
Assault: 15
Abusive language: 21
Fighting: 24
Mocking others: 27
Severe, ongoing bullying: 37
Isolated bullying: 47
Throwing objects: 50

■ Number of Aggressive acts leading to debits
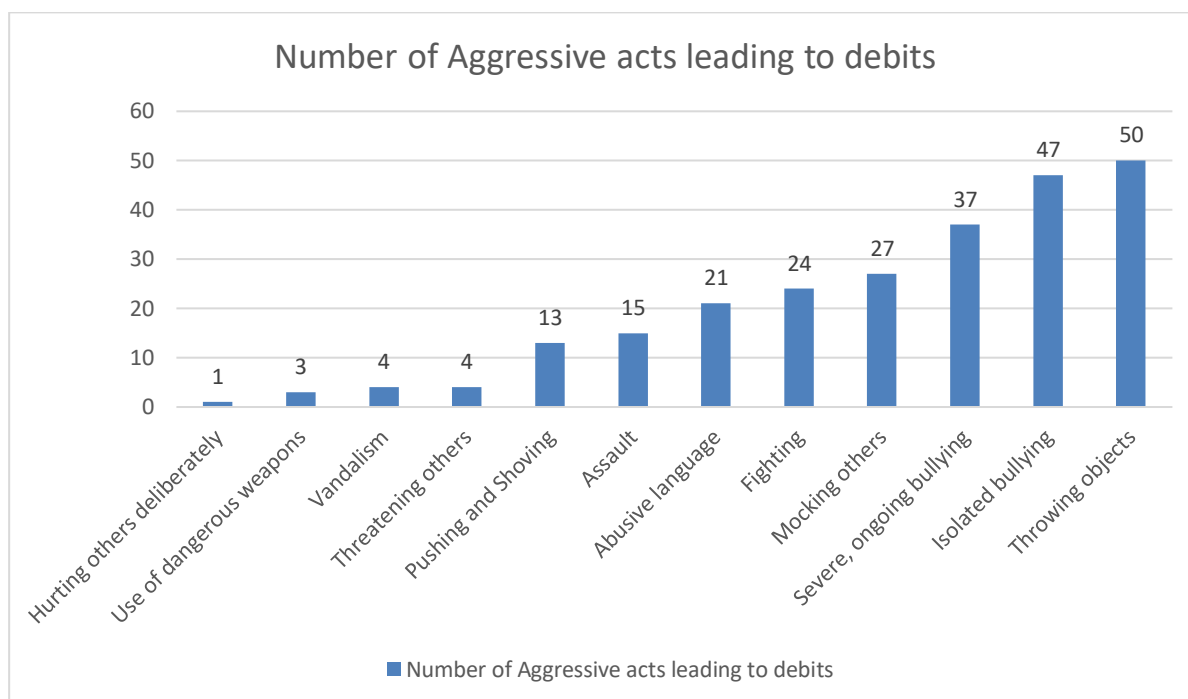
*Chart 1: Number of aggressive acts resulting in debits*

The acts of aggression for which debits have been issued to boys include a wide range of behaviours. The highest number of malicious aggressive acts consist of 50 incidents of learners throwing hard objects at others, with the intention of causing harm. Isolated incidents of bullying, which did not result in a disciplinary hearing or suspension, numbered 47 cases, whilst suspensions relating to incidents of assault, severe bullying or fighting, numbered 37 cases.

There is also a high incidence of verbal teasing/mockery, totalling 48 incidents.

The aggressive behaviour indicated in the school disciplinary records only makes up 3.5% of the overall debits issued, which is a positive sign, indicating that aggressive acts are significantly lower than the incident average for the school. However, as noted below, the prevalence of D-type personalities (which are the naturally aggressive personalities) within the target population of the reference school, is a cause for concern.

### 4.2.2   Phase One: DISC Profile Completion

In order to determine the prevalence of aggression within the pre-adolescent boys at the reference school, all eligible learners (Grade Six & Seven males, aged 11 – 13),

were invited to participate in Phase One of this study. Phase One consisted of a personality assessment, using the DISC Personality Profile. Learners were invited to attend, and, together with their parents, completed informed consent forms agreeing to participate in the study. Out of a possible 131 participants, 86 boys took part. This represents 65.6% of the possible participants.

The purpose of the Personality Assessment was to determine which boys are predominantly the D-type (or Dominant-type) personality. The boys were divided into three groups, based solely on which date was suitable for them to attend a session to complete the DISC Assessment. This was administered using an electronic survey response system and participants were required to answer 21 questions. The first question was regarding the age of the respondent, and the remaining 20 were personality related.

### 4.2.2.1 Results of the DISC survey

The following charts demonstrate the various personality types, per age and per grade.
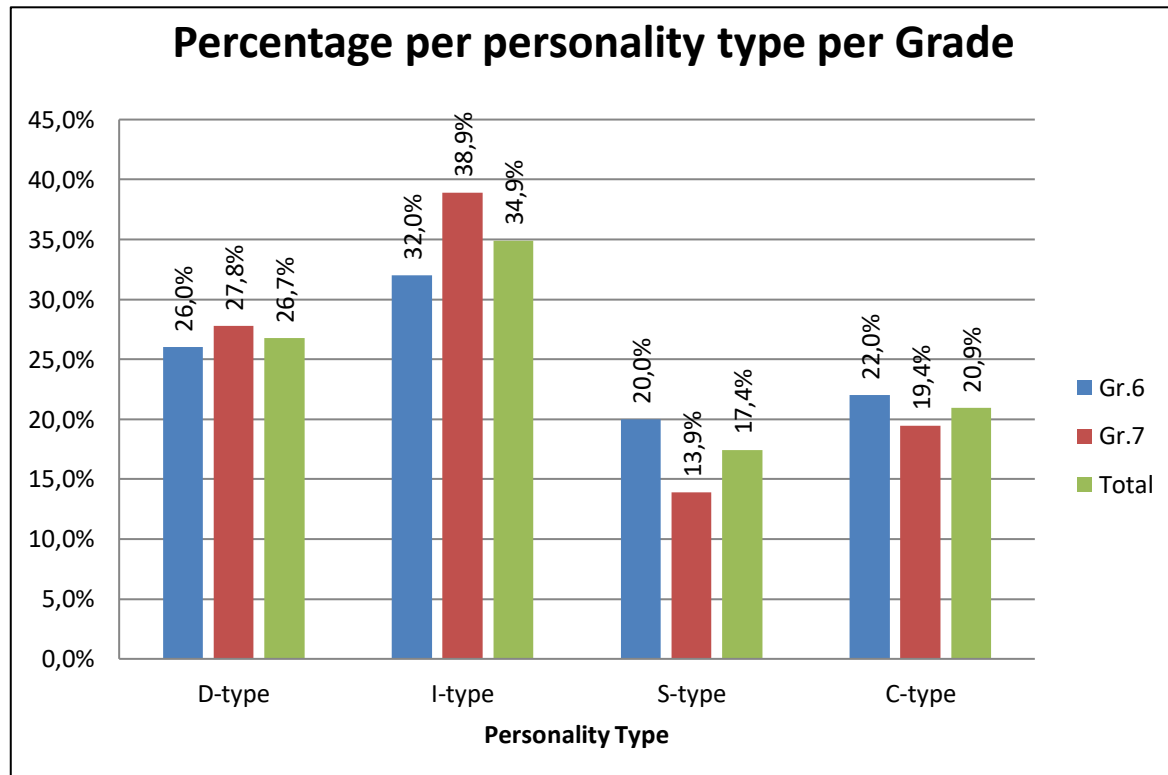


*Chart 2: Percentage per personality type per age group*

30
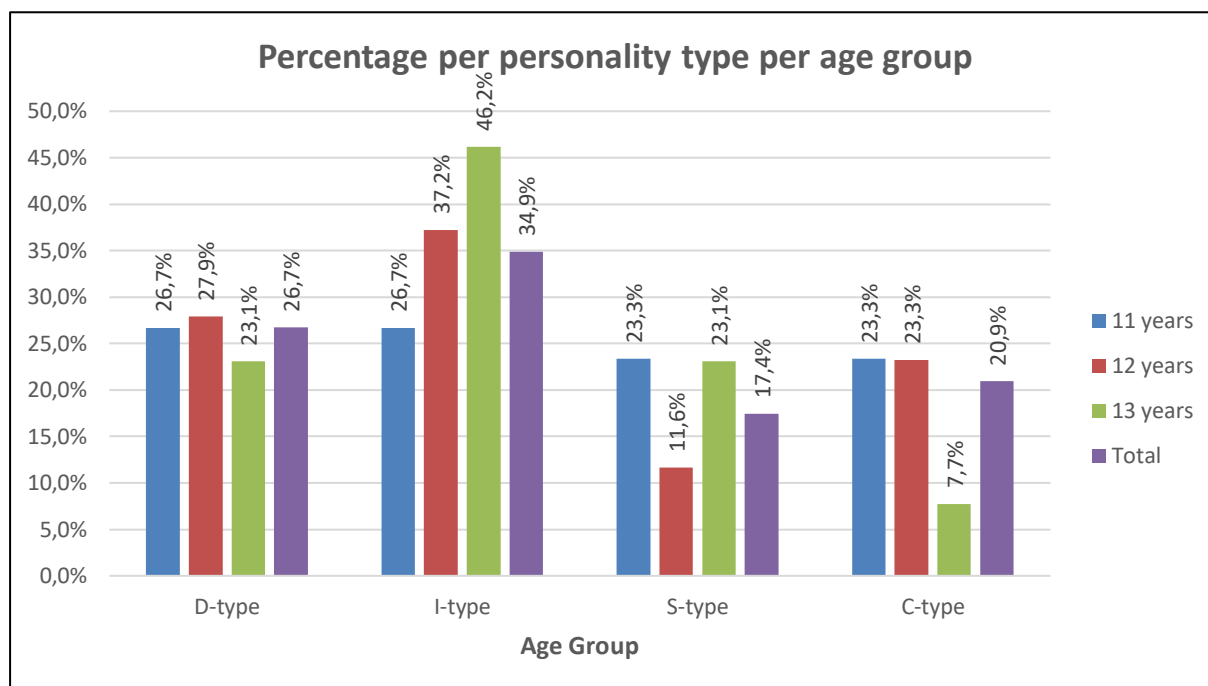
*Chart 3: Percentage per personality type per Grade*

According to The Institute for Motivational Living, the publishers of the particular DISC Profile used in this assessment, approximately 3% of the general population displays the D-type personality. No specific data is available to differentiate between male and females (Institute for Motivational Living 2009:7). The Myers-Briggs Foundation estimates that between 1.8% and 5% of the general population display the ENTJ personality. With specific reference to males, they estimate that between 2% and 5% of the male general population exhibit the ENTJ personality type (n.d). Based on this, one would expect there to be anywhere between 2 and 6 boys (between 2% and 5%) in the eligible group who exhibit the Dominant personality type.

The survey consisted of multiple-choice questions, representing the four personality types. The highest score determines the primary personality type expressed by the child.

Twenty-three of the respondents (26.7%) displayed the D-type personality, with the average score being 7.8/20. This is significantly higher than the figures for the general population.

Within this group, the lowest score was 6/20, and the highest was 15/20. The low scores indicate that the child primarily expresses two or more personality types,

31

whilst the high scores indicate that the child primarily expresses the D-type personality. This is an average of 23.7% more people in the sample group with D-type personalities than in the general population. If this data is extrapolated to include all eligible males in the reference school, this works out to a possible 35 boys (out of 131) with the D-type personality, (compared to an estimate of between 2.6 and 6.6 per 100 males in the general population).

This discrepancy between the general population and the group who took part in the study is significant, and taken purely at surface level, may indicate that the experience of these boys leads to a heightened experience and expression of aggression.

The 23 boys who demonstrated a D-type personality after completion of the DISC Profile were all invited to attend Phase Two of the research, which involved individual interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to determine individual aggressive tendencies and triggers. The interviews primarily provided data on the causes of aggression, but also shed some further light on the prevalence of angry and aggressive actions and reactions. Seventeen boys (19.8% of the overall research participants, and 13.0% of the total eligible participants) took part in the interview phase.

### 4.2.3 Phase Two: Interviews

The interviews followed the completion of the DISC profiles. The interviews were aimed at determining both prevalence and cause of aggressive expression amongst the subjects.

Four of the interview questions are relevant to determining the prevalence and the results of these are discussed briefly below.

In order to protect the identity and confidentiality of the participants, where responses of specific respondents are discussed, they will be referred to as Boy #1, Boy #2, Boy #3 etc.

When asked how often they experienced frustration (question 1), seven of the participants (41.2%) indicated that they experienced frustration multiple times per day.

When asked how often they experienced anger (question 2), the figure is similar, with six boys (35.3%) indicating that they experience feelings of anger multiple times per day. Out of those six, four indicated that they regularly skip feelings of frustration, and go directly to experiencing anger.

Question 5 asked whether the participants had ever got into trouble as a result of their anger. Fifteen boys (88.2%) indicated that they had got into trouble as a result of their expression of their anger. Their punishments came in a number of different forms, from verbal reprimand to school demerits, to detention.

Lastly, question 6 asked whether the participants had ever experienced a desire to hurt another person physically due to their anger and whether they actually followed through with their desire. Eight participants (47.1%) indicated that they regularly wanted to harm another physically when they were angry, but did not follow through. Six (35.3%) experienced a desire to harm another physically and actually followed through. Only three (17.6%), had never experienced the urge to harm someone else physically when angry.

## 4.3    Findings relating to causes of aggression in the sample population

As noted above, the experience and expression of aggression are related to a number of factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual. The boys who took part in the interview phase of the research all share a common intrinsic factor, namely their D-type personalities. This means that by nature, they already display many of the characteristics of an aggressive personality and are likely to react in an aggressive manner should they experience sufficient external stimulation. Since it is the contention of this researcher that classroom pedagogical practices may have an influence on levels of aggression experienced and expressed, the next discussion will focus on the extrinsic factors specifically related to the school environment, which contribute to the experience and expression of aggression.

General observation of the learners and anecdotal evidence from teachers and learners in the reference school indicate that the results of Ribeaud and Eisner's study (2010:470-471, discussed in Chapter Two), are also applicable to the reference

school. Additionally, a number of the factors identified by Ribeaud and Eisner appears to be substantiated in the interviews conducted in Phase Two. Some specific questions and their responses are discussed briefly below:

### 4.3.1 *Question: Do other people make you angry sometimes? Please, could you tell me what they do that makes you angry?*

This question was included in the interview in order to determine what factors generally play a role in activating anger in the participants. Altogether, the boys being interviewed provided 30 specific ways in which other people make them angry. From the responses given, the following seven broad categories emerged:

- Breaking confidence (sharing secrets with others/starting or spreading rumours);
- Conflict with authority figures (parents/teachers/older siblings);
- General irritation (the boys were not able to define this more clearly; they indicated it was just when people irritate/annoy them);
- Name calling;
- Noise when working;
- Physical conflict or provocation (pushing/shoving/hitting etc.); and
- Teasing.

The highest-ranking cause was physical conflict, with 8/30 (26.7%) responses belonging to this category. This should come as no surprise. Many of the boys in this age group are just starting adolescence and therefore are exhibiting an excess of testosterone in their bloodstreams. They will already be attempting to assert themselves within their social groups. For boys with the D-type of personality, any physical conflict or confrontation will be like adding fuel to a fire or waving a red flag at a bull: aggression is almost inevitable.

The second and third highest-ranking categories are teasing (7/30, 23.3%) and general irritation (6/30, 20%).

### 4.3.2 Question: "Do you ever feel angry because you feel your teachers don't understand you?"

This question was included to determine what, if any, teacher behaviour influenced the experience and expression of anger. The responses were almost evenly split between yes and no.

Eight participants (47.1%) indicated that they didn't experience anger because they didn't feel their teachers did not understand them. The remaining nine participants (52.9%) indicated that they did feel their teachers do not understand them and this made them angry.

For Boy #5, this was actually an issue relating to language. The specific teacher he mentioned did not understand what he was saying, because he struggled to pronounce words in English, which was not his first language. This caused him to become angry.

Boy #10, who suffers from a chronic stutter, once got angry with a teacher who would not give him the opportunity to tell her something important: another child was hitting him and the teacher got frustrated with his stutter, so told him he was lying.

### 4.3.3 Question: "Think about being in class each day. Is there anything about being in class that makes you frustrated or angry?"

This question was asked to determine what daily experiences within a classroom setting, caused frustration or anger. Here again, a range of responses (23 different answers) was received, which could be divided into eight broad categories, namely:

- Classmates causing distraction (through non-verbal behaviours such as tapping on a desk, kicking a chair in front of them, etc.);
- Classmates distracting them by talking when they shouldn't be;
- Classmates teasing you in class;
- Classmates who refuse to follow instructions from authority figures;
- Teachers blaming a child for something someone else did;
- Teachers giving too much work;
- Teachers not explaining the work; and
- Teachers picking on children.

The highest-ranking cause of anger was classmates causing distraction through talking. Seven of the responses (30.4%) given fitted into this category.

The second highest cause of anger is teachers picking on children, which received four responses (17.4%), whilst classmates both distracting through non-verbal means and teasing each other, ranked third. Both received three mentions (13%) out of the responses given.

### 4.3.4 Question: "Please think about the way teachers teach the lessons. Is there anything they do that makes you feel frustrated or angry?"

This question was asked in order to zoom in on teacher-specific behaviour, which may cause an increased frustration or anger level. Seven of the boys (41.2%) indicated that they did not experience any activity by the teacher, that caused them to become frustrated or angry. However, the remaining ten (58.8%) all indicated that they had experienced actions on the part of teachers which increased their anger and frustration.

When asked for specific examples, the following were recalled:

- Boy #1: "When you go up to their desk and they reject you, you feel like you can't go ask them again".
- Boy #2, Boy #3, Boy #17 all shared a variation of the theme "When a teacher does not explain work properly but wants us to do it".
- Boy #4: "When people shout, for no reason. The class can be cooperating, but they lose it when they ask a question".
- Boy #10: "Only sometimes with some teachers, they sometimes speak really fast and if I ask them to repeat they say I should be listening".

The responses given indicate clearly that the actions of teachers do play a role in the aggression of pre-adolescent boys. In addition to the above, it must also be noted that the attitude and expectations of teachers in relation to their learners, as well as certain demographic factors within a school's teaching cohort, may have a significant effect on the learners in the school. These effects may also affect the experience and expression of frustration and aggression in the learners.

## 4.4    Findings relating to teacher beliefs and expectations

Most teachers develop general beliefs about their learners. These beliefs are informed by their experience of the children, their experience of siblings of the children and experiences other teachers have had of the child. These beliefs can inform the way in which the teacher deals with a child (Mccown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:293). The problem with this comes when the beliefs held by the teacher turn out to be inaccurate. This means that the teacher's evaluation and judgement of the child's behaviour and performance are tainted by a stereotype, rather than on the child's actual behaviour or performance.

Enter Boy #18. As noted elsewhere, Boy #18 was a participant in the initial phase of the survey, but not in the interview stage. However, based on the mentoring interaction between the author and this subject, his experiences are pertinent to this study and therefore included. It must again be noted that the following is not based on empirical data collected during the interview phase of the research, but rather is anecdotal data, interpreted in the light of the empirical data.

When the mentoring relationship commenced, Boy #18 had a negative reputation, which preceded him. Many teachers who had taught him prior to 2014 had formed specific beliefs about him. Many of these beliefs were formed based on what they had heard about the child, and not out of their own experience of him. These beliefs then informed how they treated him. Unfortunately, his behaviour reinforced their beliefs. As a result, his reputation still followed him to a certain extent, and some of his teachers continued to hold their mistaken beliefs about him.

Linked closely to teacher beliefs, are teacher expectations of learners. A close link exists between the expectations a teacher has of a child and the manner in which the child behaves. This phenomenon is also referred to as a self-fulfilling prophecy, and according to Mccown, Driscoll and Roop, occurs in three distinct phases (1996:294).

These phases are:

- The teacher develops expectations of the learner;
- The teacher starts treating the learner differently, based on the expectations; and

- The learner starts to act according to the expectations.

Boy #18 also provides an example of this situation. During his Grade Four year, his behaviour declined steadily. Many of the Grade Five teachers expected this behaviour to continue in Grade Five. It did and, in fact, it got worse. He was behaving as they expected him to, because they treated him according to their expectation, which was built primarily on second-hand knowledge. Then, because he behaved the way they expected him to, their beliefs and expectations were confirmed.

At the start of the mentoring relationship, the author had heard all the stories about the boy and had read the Learner Profile before meeting the boy for the first time. At the first meeting, the author made the conscious decision to not have any expectation or belief about the boy. He sat the boy down and told him that he would have the opportunity to determine how he was treated. He could continue to live up to his poor reputation, or he could use the opportunity to build a new reputation. He made the choice to change. He made a complete 180° turn and improved his behaviour in leaps and bounds.

One of the dangers inherent in this approach appears when the teacher realises that his/her expectation and belief about a child are wrong and attempts to make adjustments. If the expectations are revised to include better behaviour or achievement, it may take some time for this to become apparent in the actions of the teacher towards the learner, and even longer for the learner to adjust his or her behaviour to meet the new expectations. If the teacher then attempts to interact with the child based on the original expectation, the child may end up being conflicted, and uncertain of how to act or what is actually expected. For boys with the D-type personality, this could lead to increased experiences of aggression, as they do not have clear boundaries within which to act.

## 4.5   Findings relating to teacher demographics

The findings discussed here are based on the literature review carried out in the initial phases of this research project. These findings also rely on anecdotal evidence obtained by the author.

### 4.5.1 Teacher age

According to research conducted for Stellenbosch University, the average age of working teachers is increasing, whilst the average age of the general working population is decreasing (Van der Berg and Burger 2010:7). An analysis of the results of South African Grade Four learners who participated in the 2006 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) clearly demonstrated that teacher age is an important factor in terms of learner achievement.

The analysis revealed that children taught by teachers under the age of 25 (which constituted 0.93% of the total participants), and those taught by teachers aged 60 and over (which constituted 0.11% of the total participants), achieved the best results. Learners with teachers aged between 30 and 59, performed considerably worse than their peers with older teachers (Van Staden and Howie n.d: §5).

Age is important, because it should correlate directly with teaching style. Older teachers may not always be in a position to improve their skills, and therefore may be stuck using teaching methods which are ineffective for children of the current generation. For those who are able to improve their skills, there may then be an improvement in their ability to teach using differing learning styles, which may then have a more positive effect on the learners and their overall performance. Observation by the author of experienced older teachers in practice, indicates that this is in fact true, as the teachers are able to more readily adapt their teaching practice.

This factor appeared in the interviews conducted during Phase Two of the research study. The boys who raised the issue of getting angry when teachers just hand out the work and do not explain are specific examples of this situation. The teachers are highly skilled and good at what they do, but their practice is not always conducive to keeping the frustration and aggression levels of the learners in check.

### 4.5.2 Teacher gender

Teacher gender is not specifically related to classroom pedagogy. However, it may be a significant factor in learner achievement and associated aggression levels in D-type males.

In South Africa, as in the United Kingdom and the United States, female teachers outnumber male teachers, by a significant ratio. The latest available information puts the female teacher population of South Africa at 71% (Department of Education 2005:58), whilst data for the UK and USA put female teachers at 73.3 and 76% respectively (Department for Education 2014:7 and National Centre for Education Statistics n.d).

With the rise of feminism and the ideal of bridging the gap between boys and girls, the number of female teachers in schools has been advantageous. The literature paints a clear picture of the focus shifting to girls, which has resulted in more women in higher and further education and more parity in terms of salaries earned.

According to some critics though, feminism as an ideology is to be blamed for the decline in boys' scholastic achievement (Kimmel 2006:65-66). Still, other critics state that because of the significant advance in gender equality in many developed countries, there is once again a gender gap between boys and girls. Boys were previously seen to be advantaged over girls, but now critics are claiming that the roles have been reversed and girls are being seen to benefit, with boys now lagging behind (Kleinfeld 2009:113).

There is much discussion and debate about the merits of both sides of this argument. South Africa, has not yet had the same major advance of the feminist movement as some other countries have experienced. However, based on feedback from the interviews conducted for this research, it seems that the gender demographics of teachers within schools may play a significant role in the achievement of boys and therefore also to the hypothetical increase in aggression.

The reason that the author contends that this is an issue is that, in South Africa, despite significant advances in equality and non-discrimination since the birth of democracy in 1994, much of our culture is still driven by patriarchal dominance (Coetzee 2001:300). Women still lag behind men in many aspects of our common lives (Oliphant 2015). Rural women especially have seen little benefit from anti-discrimination laws and policies. The issue, therefore, is not so much the feminist "agenda" but rather the mere presence of female teachers in the schooling environment.

The nature of South African society, with its diversity of cultures and traditions, means that there are still members of the population who cling to a patriarchal worldview. Learning by observation plays a role here, as children acquire the attitudes of their families and close relatives. If they are exposed to strong patriarchal views in the home, they are likely to acquire and exhibit those attitudes outside of the home.

This becomes problematic when pre-teen and teen boys start asserting their own personalities. They have learnt particular views about women in the home and they then attempt to live out those attitudes and beliefs for themselves. This can result in conflict between male learners and female teachers. Continued conflict will result in increased levels of aggression, which may be directed at both the teachers and fellow learners.

# CHAPTER FIVE
# DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Children spend a large proportion of their lives in school. In addition to academic knowledge gained, they will also gain norms and values and they will have their personalities moulded and developed through their experiences, and through the way in which they engage with other people.

Teachers, therefore, play a key role in shaping the learners in their care. They have the power to direct and redirect behaviours and attitudes, as the young life is shaped. This influence is second only to that of the parents.

It would, therefore, be prudent to examine changes that may be made to current pedagogical practices, which can help to direct a learner positively. We look at these changes specifically in light of helping pre-adolescent boys to manage and/or counter the rise of aggression.

Some of the factors identified above can only be dealt with through policy changes, which need to be effected by educational authorities. Other factors can be addressed by engaging with teachers and learners through an educational process. Still others can be changed through the modelling of Christian disciplines.

For the Christian educator and counsellor, when a Biblical approach is combined with changes to pedagogical practices and policy changes, the transformative power of Christ can indeed make a difference, not only to the lives of individuals but also to the common life experienced in a school environment.

## 5.1 Pedagogical practices which may counter increasing aggression

### 5.1.1 Background

As noted elsewhere in this report, the following pedagogical factors have been linked to an experience of increased aggression in pre-adolescent boys within the reference school:

- The ineffective application of the knowledge of learning styles;
- Teacher beliefs about, and expectations of, learners; and
- Teacher demographics.

Within each of these, there are elements, which can be changed relatively easily and others that would require a substantial policy and ideological shift before they can be changed.

The following will be discussed as possible solutions:

- Use of the theory of multiple intelligences;
- Continuous professional development for teachers;
- Balancing teacher demographics, and
- Specifically for Christian teachers, the use of a vocational discernment process for prospective teachers.

Each option has unique potential for improving the overall efficiency of the entire education system; however, for the purposes of this discussion, the focus here will be limited to their application with regards to the management of anger and aggression in pre-adolescent boys.

### 5.1.2 Use of the theory of multiple intelligences

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences developed as an objection to the "assumption in many of the learning theories that learning is a universal human process that all individuals experience according to the same principles" (UNESCO n.d).

Traditional views of intelligence measured intelligence using linguistic and logico-mathematical symbolisation (numbers and letters) (McCown, Driscoll and Roop

1996:140). Traditional teaching styles are based on this theory, with classwork and assessment designed to measure intelligence based on this view. Learners are expected to excel through demonstrating their mastery of linguistic and logico-mathematical symbols (i.e. how well they can read, write, and correctly perform mathematical functions). The bulk of schooling focuses on these skills. Even in creative subjects, such as Art and Music, learners are often evaluated based on their ability to understand and implement the instructions, rather than on their creative ability.

The developer of the theory of multiple intelligences, Howard Gardner, asserted that not all people display intelligence in the traditionally accepted ways and that intelligence was not related to just one intellectual function (McCown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:140).

He further observed that intelligence is also viewed differently in different cultural settings. For example, "in the Anang culture in Nigeria … the capacity to perform songs is highly valued and is considered a sign of intelligence" (Ibid. 1996:141).

### 5.1.2.1 Intelligence Profiles

Gardner's Theory specifies seven different intelligence profiles with further profiles being added since the initial publication of Gardner's work. This has led to further complexity and debate regarding the theory of intelligence profiles. In essence, though, it is believed that each individual will demonstrate a preference for one particular profile. We are not limited to the one profile, however, and will generally operate using a blend of the profiles (McCown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:141).

The initial intelligence profiles are:

| Intelligence | Core Components |
|---|---|
| Bodily-kinaesthetic | Object manipulation, control of body movements |
| Interpersonal | Motivations, temperaments, moods, desires of other people |
| Intrapersonal | Own feelings, strengths, weaknesses, intelligences and desires |

| Intelligence | Core Components |
|---|---|
| Linguistic | Sounds, rhythms, meanings of words, functions of language |
| Logico-mathematical | Logical or numeric patterns; long chains of reasoning |
| Musical | Rhythms, pitch, timbre, musical expression |
| Spatial | Visio-spatial relationships |

**Table 3: Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Profiles**

As can be seen from this table, intelligence can be displayed in a number of different ways. Limiting intelligence to linguistic or logico-mathematical systems severely handicaps individuals who may not be intellectually gifted in this way.

This can be seen when these learning styles are used as the primary basis for teaching and learning and, in the author's opinion, increases aggression in pre-adolescent boys.

### 5.1.2.2 Learning Style vs Multiple Intelligence

As discussed above, much teaching is conducted using the theory of learning styles and is delivered in primarily audio-visual methods. Assessment of this learning often relies on a learner's ability to use and manipulate linguistic and logico-mathematical symbols. Since this audio-visual learning capacity develops earlier in girls than in boys, the performance of boys in assessments based on learning styles is likely to be significantly lower than for girls.

For aggressive boys, who are driven by built-in competitiveness (as described in both the DISC and the Myers-Briggs assessments), being outperformed by anyone is likely to be a source of increased frustration and eventually aggression. This is especially true during the pre-adolescent years and the early years of adolescence when they are attempting to assert themselves and find their place in the world. The competitiveness is only likely to plateau when they reach middle adolescence and their development starts to match the development of girls.

### 5.1.2.3 Using the theory of multiple intelligence to counter aggression

If the theory of multiple intelligences were used as a basis for teaching, instead of learning styles, it would mean that a wider approach to learning is utilised. It would

mean that lessons would be presented using a variety of techniques and that more learners would be able to benefit from these lessons.

To some degree, these are already accommodated within the school system. Provision is made for various intelligences through the provision of a range of different subjects. For example, linguistics are dealt with through having to learn two official languages, logico-mathematical learners are catered for in Mathematics and Technology. Spatial and musical learners are catered for in Creative Arts, and inter- and intra-personal learners are catered for in Personal and Social Well-being and Life Orientation. This allows learners to excel in specific subjects, but it does not allow for them to excel across the board. This means that there is room for aggression to flourish, as boys may perform well in one or two subjects, but achieve mediocre or below-par results in others. This can keep frustration bubbling below the surface, just waiting for the right time to erupt.

If the theory of multiple intelligences is to be effective in contributing to the management of aggression, then multiple intelligences need to be addressed across all subjects. Boys need an opportunity to excel in whatever they try, in order to remove the fuel for the fires of aggression. Other outlets for natural aggression need to be utilised alongside the variety of academic subjects already catered for. These activities can include various sporting codes, for both teams and individuals, as well as other extra-curricular activities, such as Scouts, hiking clubs, mountain climbing clubs etc.

### 5.1.3   Continuing professional development of teachers

In South Africa a number of professions are regulated by statutory bodies. People wishing to practice in these professions are required to be members of these statutory bodies. The purposes of the statutory body are to ensure that members adhere to a common code of practice, which seeks to ensure that industry specific best practices are upheld and maintained. Examples of these professions include medical and health practitioners; legal practitioners; financial practitioners; engineering practitioners; educational practitioners.

One of the ways in which the statutory body ensures that its members maintain best practice, is to require members to attend compulsory training, known as Continuing

Professional Development (CPD). These short courses are intended to train practitioners in innovations in their industry, and how to apply them.

Continuing Professional Development in the field of Education is one of the newest areas of CPD in the South African context. Teachers are required to earn a specific number of points within a three-year cycle. Completion of the required programmes will ensure continued registration with the statutory body (South African Council of Educators (SACE)). CPD courses are available through various institutions, but the courses often appear to be conducted in a haphazard and uncoordinated way, often during school holidays. Teachers, therefore, are often reluctant to attend workshops and will usually only attend if the topic is really of interest to them. It is worth noting that the South African Theological Seminary (SATS) is a registered CPD provider, and therefore teachers can undertake well-structured formal courses, in their own time, and therefore gain the valuable CPD points.

The danger of poor CPD for teachers is that practising teachers are not often exposed to innovations in education, which may make our practice better. It also has the potential of triggering friction between various generations of teachers. New teachers come out of university with knowledge of some of the innovations in teaching and their colleagues, who have been teaching for longer, do not have this knowledge.

### 5.1.3.1 Why do beliefs need to be changed?

In terms of dealing with the management of pre-adolescent aggression, CPD offers a unique solution: it allows teachers to be trained and retrained, which can then help to reshape their beliefs about learners. Moreover, if their beliefs about learners can be reshaped, remoulded or redirected, then their expectations of learners can be too.

One of the fundamental assumptions of any teacher is often that girls will be quiet and studious; boys will be loud and disruptive. We manage our classrooms based on these assumptions. Our strategy is to keep the boys quiet, and if we can succeed in that, teaching and learning can take place. This basic belief also colours what we expect from our children. We expect girls to perform well, because they are supposed to be able to sit and work quietly, completing all their work, neatly and on

time. When it comes to the boys, though, we expect "typical" boy behaviour: boisterous chatting, difficulty in concentration, incomplete and untidy work.

These beliefs of teachers are partly the fault of the society in which we live and the gender stereotypes we hold and partly the fault of teachers, as we continue to perpetuate the beliefs whenever we discuss general behaviour.

### 5.1.3.2 The role of Continuing Professional Development

As with any field of research, educational research is constantly changing the dynamics of teaching. The sad thing, though, is that often much of this research never reaches those for whom it is intended. Some of it may make its way into educational textbooks and so a new generation of teachers may be exposed to it. The vast majority is never filtered down to the people who can use it most: practising teachers.

CPD offers the opportunity for teachers to learn and broaden their theoretical knowledge in order to improve our classroom practice. In this learning programme, as with any other well-structured learning programme, stereotypes can be challenged, viewpoints can be broadened, and beliefs can be restructured.

Challenging beliefs about behaviour through well-researched and presented CPD is crucial for changing the way in which teachers engage with their learners. The author believes it is a vital necessity, if teachers are to both counter and help manage frustration and aggression in pre-adolescent boys. If the beliefs teachers have about these boys are not challenged, then they will continue to treat them according to the stereotypes. It is the author's belief that should this continue, not only will aggression in pre-adolescent boys become increasingly prevalent, but it is likely to become increasingly more violent as well. This is due to the fact that what we believe about learners is translated into how we treat them, which in turn reflects in the way in which they behave.

CPD offers a chance to unlearn some of our stereotypes, in light of solid research and experience of others, and therefore offers a chance for learners to be treated more as individuals than as particular societal stereotypes.

### 5.1.4 Balancing demographics of teachers

Compared to other possible solutions, this is perhaps the most challenging option in terms of dealing with pre-adolescent aggression. This is mainly due to the difficulty experienced in attracting more men into the teaching profession in general, and primary education specifically. Teaching is not seen as a glamorous career, and for young men who have a view to getting married and having a family, the financial viability of a career in teaching will be a negative factor for anyone considering it as an option, especially if they hold to the belief that the husband must be the bread-winner.

#### *5.1.4.1 How can a balance be created?*

In order for a balance in teacher demographics even to be an option, there needs to be a major shift in the public perception of teachers and our profession. Teachers are often viewed as lazy (work "half-day jobs" and have ridiculous amounts of holiday time). Teachers are often also painted as incompetent, because a parent's little darling is not performing according to the parent's expectations.

In addition to public perception, there also needs to be action at a governmental level. Teacher salaries and working conditions need urgent attention if we are to attract more of any kind of person, let alone qualified, committed professionals, into the profession. Administrative loads also need to be lightened, as teachers are currently burdened by administrative tasks, imposed by faceless bureaucrats and which are often perceived as having little or no educational significance.

Assuming the nearly impossible "how" could be achieved, what effect would a balance of demographics have on managing pre-adolescent aggression?

#### *5.1.4.2 Effects of creating balance in teacher demographics*

Creating a balance of demographics within teaching will have an effect on two levels of schooling. Firstly, it will provide for more male role models, and, secondly, it may help with shifting the dynamic of the cultural patriarchy which still exists today.

Role models are important because of the concept of learning through observation. Boys can relate to a male role model, and as such, they can learn behaviour and attitudes through observing their male teachers.

In some cultures, males are still seen as superior to females, and therefore female teachers are not respected as highly. Having more male teachers would have an instant impact on discipline and behaviour, as cultural dictates will require and expect this. This could help to alleviate frustration and aggression, as male teachers can model more appropriate ways to deal with female teachers, which lessens the impact of the patriarchal culture.

Furthermore, having men with non-patriarchal, non-sexist attitudes and values in the classroom may aid in shifting patriarchal cultural values, as young men see their role model teachers treating women with respect, dignity and equality.

### 5.1.5 Vocational discernment for prospective Christian teachers

Many teachers are in the profession because they view it as a vocation, a calling of sorts. For many Christian teachers, this sense of calling is attributed directly to our relationship with God, and entering the profession is therefore seen as an entry into a form of ministry, and service.

In most other areas of full-time ministry, especially in many mainline denominations, there is an institutional procedure to assist prospective candidates for ministry in discerning their calling. This discernment process is seen as vital because it helps to confirm that God is truly calling a person into that particular field of ministry. The corporate body of Christ actively participates in the discernment process. Why, then, are teachers often left to discern their calling on their own, without the support of the body of Christ?

Teachers who are called by God will model godly lives, including a belief in the value of every learner. Called teachers will work harder to see the positive in each child because they believe God created that child in the image of God.

#### *5.1.5.1 How would a discernment process influence aggression in pre-adolescent boys?*

A teacher, who is teaching in response to a calling from God, has two distinct advantages over those who teach simply as a career. (a) They have direct access to God through prayer, and (b) they can lean on biblical foundations when interacting with their learners.

## a) Prayer

The importance of prayer in the classroom environment cannot be underestimated. However, a teacher who not only models prayer for their learners, but who also prays regularly for them, places the learners before the throne of God. God is able to move in ways in their lives which humans are not able to. He can help to calm volatile situations and to start producing self-control in the aggressive boys.

## b) Biblical Foundations

The biblical foundations for management of anger, as with other human urges, are also vital. Teachers who live according to these biblical principles and who base their teaching careers on biblical foundations are a unique role model to the learners in their care. Modelling biblical tools for management of aggression and using them as the basis for dealing with aggression are likely to produce better results than more secular practices.

### 5.1.5.2 What could a discernment process entail?

When a person believes they have heard a call from God, it is wise to test that calling. For teachers, the testing process could include such elements as one-on-one discussion with a trusted mentor, psychological assessments of ability and gifting, as well as supervised exposure to children in a ministry setting, such as in a children's church. More experienced Christian teachers can give feedback into how the prospective teacher interacts with children, and ministers and pastors can give input into the character of the prospective teacher.

Once a teacher starts training, they should be assigned an experienced mentor, who can continue discussions around discernment throughout the training process. Equally important is a mentor who can journey with the teacher through their first year or two of actual teaching to provide guidance and support.

## 5.2 Biblical responses to increasing levels of aggression

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do, flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23 NIV[1]).

The heart is believed to be the source of all our emotions. An untrained, unguarded heart will produce abundant sin. It is in light of this that we need to learn how to manage and channel anger and aggression. Protestant Christianity believes in the principle of *sola scriptura*, which means that we believe the Bible is the ultimate source for guidance on how to live our lives. It is therefore vitally important to explore anger from a biblical perspective, and seek to identify principles which can be followed for the management of childhood aggression.

### 5.2.1 Background

Human emotions have been variously described as "disturbances of the mind", "instinctive, irrational feelings" and "precious vehicles for a healthy and mature development" (Van der Ven 1998: 283). Negative emotions (such as anger, fear and sorrow) are often discouraged in society, mainly due to the fact that we are uncomfortable with these emotions, perhaps because we see them as some sort of character flaw.

Some researchers have linked the development of emotion to the development of a sense of right and wrong, in other words, a moral compass (Van der Ven 1998:284). Therefore, anger can be viewed as an expression of emotion against something which the individual considers wrong.

A core element of Christianity is a belief that we are created in the image of God ("So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27)). This means that we are able to see something of who God is, by looking at ourselves. Included in this, are our emotions. Emotions are an important part of who we are and influence almost all aspects of life.

When it comes to managing anger, we need to draw a distinction between the feeling of anger and its expression through acts of aggression.

---

[1] Unless otherwise stated, all scriptures are taken from the New International Version.

It is important that both be addressed and that children learn how to manage and cope with their anger. When anger (or any other strong emotion) is repressed and internalised, it can produce profound spiritual and psychological issues at a later stage in life (Dobson 2006:93). Scripture is clear: "In your anger, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry" (Ephesians 4:26).

### 5.2.2  Sinful vs righteous anger

Dr James Dobson points out that anger on its own is not necessarily sinful. After all, it is a God-given element of who we are. Anger becomes sinful when it seeks to harm someone else. Expressions of anger and aggression, which do not desire to bring harm to someone else, can, under certain circumstances, be viewed as righteous anger. Conversely, expressions of anger and aggression which to seek to harm another can be seen as sinful anger (2006:85-87).

Jesus, clearing the Temple, is probably the most well-known example of righteous anger (Matthew 21:12 – 13; Mark 11:15 – 17; Luke 19:45 – 46 and John 2:13 – 16). According to Tenney, in the Expositor's Bible Commentary, this event could actually have occurred on two separate instances. This is based on an analysis of the narrative and chronology of the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John. It is noted that "there are some significant differences between this account (in John) and the other by the Synoptics" (Tenney 1994:302).

Therefore, we have at least two different instances of Jesus acting on His anger through the expression of aggression. If we apply Dr Dobson's distinction, then this anger could be classed as righteous anger. The Temple has been turned into a commercial environment, where the focus is on making a profit, rather than on worship (Tenney 1994:302). Jesus does not appear to have any intention of harming other people. His anger is aimed at restoring the sanctity of the holiest place in Judaism, the place where Jews came to meet with God. He is defending the integrity of the place in which the God of the universe is worshipped.

### 5.2.3  Traditional Christian responses to anger and aggression

The traditional Christian response to anger (or, in fact, any other strong emotional reaction)  often revolves around one scripture: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

The Online Dictionary defines meekness as the quality of being "humbly patient or docile, as under provocation from others; overly submissive or compliant; spiritless; tame" (Dictionary.com n.d). In light of this definition, the question needs to be raised: Was Jesus meek, in his expression of outrage at the commercialisation of the Temple? In order to better understand this, we need to return to the original language of the New Testament, Greek.

The word used in the original Greek is πραεῖς, which can be transliterated as *praus*. HELPS™ Word-studies defines the adjective *praus* as "exercising *God's strength* under *His control* – i.e. demonstrating power without undue harshness". A further adjective, derived from *praus*, is the word πρᾷος, or *práos*, which is defined as "the necessary balance of exercising power and avoiding harshness" (HELPS™ Word-studies).

In requiring meekness from each other, Christians sometimes do each other a disservice because of our warped understanding of the concept of meekness. In our view, meekness equates to weakness and docility, qualities which are not generally encouraged. We apply this definition of meekness in situations where strong emotion is expressed and this may lead to a situation where emotion, in general, may be stifled and internalised, rather than expressed in healthy ways.

Repression of strong emotions can lead to psychological harm and may manifest in other ways, such as depression, in later life. It may even lead to psychosomatic disorders, where the person experiences physical symptoms of their internal struggle (Dobson 2006:93).

What is often overlooked, is that coupled with this submission or compliance, is self-control. People who are truly meek, are so because they exercise self-control over their anger and other emotions and do not react as their emotions demand they should. This understanding is more closely aligned with the definition of the word *praus*. It is the expression of strong emotion without any undue harshness. Self-control is included in the list of godly characteristics commonly known as the Fruit of Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and demonstrating self-control is one of several ways in which we know that the Spirit of God is at work within us, transforming us to become more Christ-like.

It could be argued that for a person with an aggressive personality type, the management of anger can be quite a feat. People who do not respond well to provocation of any form, or who lose their tempers easily for whatever reason, do not naturally know how to control their anger; it is something which has to be learnt.

The type of self-control required is something that often comes from years of experience and spiritual growth. It requires intense introspection and a deep willingness to live as mature Christians.

If this is difficult for an adult, as it generally is, how much more difficult will it be for a child?

Dr Dobson concurs. He writes: "in this competitive atmosphere *(in which children find themselves)* it is unrealistic to expect a … child to exhibit all of the characteristics of a mature Christian" (2006:100). How, then, do we train our children to manage their aggression in a way that edifies them and gives glory to God? To live by the principles of Scripture in all areas of their lives, including their emotions? It is the author's belief that two elements are needed: modelling and mentoring. We briefly discuss each below.

### 5.2.4  Modelling

"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:60). This Proverb sums up this point perfectly. If a child is taught the right thing from a young age, then they will live according to those values for the rest of their lives. However, as anyone who has ever worked with children will be able to testify, children are often notoriously difficult to tell what to do. For some, who are auditory learners, this approach may be fruitful. However, it is only likely to be fruitful for simple, straightforward patterns of learning.

The social learning perspective, together with the theory of learning by observation and social cohesion, will play a greater role in teaching children how to behave. Children's behaviour is likely to be influenced through their relationship with others (Baron, Branscombe and Byrne 2009:154). The learning process is natural, almost unconscious, and children follow the example of those they observe. They learn both the behaviour and the emotional tone from their parents, their teachers and their peers (Lepper n.d).

Van der Ven (1998:186-187), in his discussion of the pioneering work of Piaget, notes that children between the ages of three and six accept social rules because they are accepted and "recommended" by older people that are observed by the young child. From the ages of seven to ten, the child operates out of mutual concern and cooperation for others. Moreover, at around eleven years of age, a child follows rules because they can determine that the rules bring value to a given situation. This value could be in the form of positive rewards offered and received because of sticking to the socially acceptable behaviour patterns. This enables the child to internalise their motivation for behaving in particular ways.

When children learn through modelling, reinforcement is vitally important. Reinforcement can either be positive or negative, where positive reinforcement provides a pleasing consequence for specific behaviour, and negative reinforcement involves removing an unpleasant consequence when the desired behaviour is present (Mccown, Driscoll and Roop 1996:184–185). Children are deeply curious and observant and therefore will easily pick up on social cues with regard to behaviour (Lepper n.d). Bullying is a prime example of this. According to the American Society for the Positive Care of Children, bullying behaviour can be caused as a result of a bully receiving "rewards', or positive reinforcement, through their bullying behaviour. They learn that they will gain popularity, attention or power over others. The positive reinforcement legitimises the bullying behaviour in the mind of the bully (American Society for Postive Care of Children n.d. 3).

Modelling behaviour is nothing new. Jesus himself modelled behaviour that He wanted his disciples to imitate. The primary example of this is when Jesus washed His disciples' feet at the Last Supper (John 13:1-17). Jesus uses his practical actions to demonstrate an eternal truth to His disciples. A truth which later became a cornerstone of the Christian church.

In dealing specifically with anger, it is important to model healthy ways of expressing and dealing with the anger and any possible resulting aggression. If children observe an adult losing their temper, and lashing out verbally or physically at the cause of their anger, they will conclude that this is acceptable and will, therefore, react in similar ways themselves. They need to see people taking steps to deal with the anger in such a way that it does not cause harm to anyone.

### 5.2.4.1 Coping mechanisms that should be modelled

Scripture provides a number of methods in which we can deal with anger. A few of these are briefly discussed below.

**a)    Prayer**

Dr Dobson mentions this point specifically in terms of dealing with anger. He notes that sources of frustration and anger should be brought to God in prayer (2006:95). This should be the first step for any Christian, especially one who knows that they have difficulty in controlling anger. Scripture tells us to cast our cares on the Lord, and He will sustain us (Psalm 55:22; 1 Peter 5: 7). Prayer must be modelled and seen to be a part of the daily life of an adult being observed by a child. Prayer helps us to deal with frustration over a longer period, especially if the source is something that the person comes into contact with on a regular basis.

In South Africa, we are in the fortunate position that religious practices in government schools are permissible (within the boundaries prescribed by the South African Schools Act). This means that prayer can be modelled by the Christian teacher, as a means of coping with anger and aggression.

**b)    Withdrawing from the source of anger**

Despite this being one of the most effective methods of defusing an aggressive environment, this is perhaps the single most difficult thing for an aggressive person to do. The culture in which we find ourselves, tells us that to back down is to be a coward. If a man walks away, he may be deemed to be somehow less masculine. Aggressive boys need to see that it is acceptable to walk away; it does not make you any less of a man.

By removing ourselves from the source of our anger, we immediately defuse a stressful and tense environment and it gives us an opportunity to calm down and then reflect on the situation. Withdrawal from the crowds was an essential element of Jesus' routine and if it was something that as important for Him, then surely, it must be important for us too.

**c)    Dealing with unavoidable conflict**

Despite the best conflict management skills, there will be situations in our lives when avoiding conflict is impossible. In addition, for aggressive boys, these situations are likely to be more common than for other people.

Nevertheless, these battles should not be fought in anger or aggression. We need to learn to pick our battles. Aggressive boys need to see other people who have learnt this skill putting it into practice. Seeing people picking their battles tells the boys that they too can pick their battles and do not need to get worked up over every little thing that would normally irritate them. This is the start of self-control.

**d)     The example of Jesus**

Jesus, during what must have been some of his most stressful times of ministry, models both prayer and withdrawal. We read of Him withdrawing to a quiet place to pray (cf. Matthew 14:13, 23-24; Mark 1:35, 3:7, 6:31-32, 9:2; Luke 5:16, 6:12, 9:18; John 7:10). We also read of Jesus displaying considerable self-control and restraint. Examples of this include when He was being tempted by Satan (Matthew 4), when He was arrested in the garden (Luke 22) and when He was hanging on the Cross (Mark 15). In all three of these situations, He could have called on the armies of Heaven to rescue Him, but He remained restrained and did not retaliate. If it is something Jesus found to be beneficial, then surely, it will be beneficial for us?

As noted above, strong role models are vitally important in teaching children about dealing with their anger and aggression. However, the impact of a good role model may eventually fade if the child is not in regular contact with that role model. This is where the second element of biblical anger management comes in: mentoring.

## 5.2.5  Mentoring

Mentorship, also known as discipleship, is a common theme in Scripture. Some of the most common examples include:

- Barnabas and Paul
- David and Solomon
- Elijah and Elisha
- Jesus and His disciples
- Moses and Joshua

- Paul and Timothy

Mentorship is about providing an on-going relationship in which the person being mentored grows and develops. Boys who struggle with aggression can find support in dealing with their aggression through the safe space of a mentoring environment.

### 5.2.5.1 Principles of mentoring

The Dallas Theological Seminary (n.d.) suggests the following principles for mentoring:

- Mentoring must focus on the needs of the mentee.
- Mentoring requires an authentic relationship to exist between both parties.
- Mentors do not need to be unlimited sources of wisdom or knowledge, as they must act as guides, not advisors.
- Mentorship is a fluid process. As the needs of the mentee changes, so the relationship should adapt.
- Mentorship is an active process, with both the mentor and the mentee needing to take active roles.

Boys seem to be especially receptive to mentoring relationships. Steve Farrar, in his book *Mentoring Boys*, makes the assertion that:

> Every son wants to be mentored by his father. He wants to have a special place in his father's heart. He wants to respect and emulate him. Down deep, he wants to know his father and be as close to him as possible (2006:18).

Whilst it is no teacher's intention to take over the parenting role in which mentoring should naturally occur, the natural relationship that develops between a teacher and his learners may lead to the boy seeking out a teacher for mentorship if his father is unable or unwilling to provide mentorship to that boy. The ideal mentoring relationship would be a partnership between home and school, but this may not always be practical or desirable.

As noted above, mentoring should be a fluid process. This recognises that different methods work for different people and the method should be chosen based on the temperament of the mentee (remember, it is about their needs) and the purpose of the mentoring relationship.

The Dallas Theological Seminary (n.d.) suggests the following as possible configurations of the mentoring relationship:

- A formal, scheduled relationship, where both parties agree to a pre-arranged schedule of meetings.
- Discipleship meetings, where spiritual formation is the agenda.
- Group mentoring, where a group with the same needs meet regularly.
- Informal, organic relationships, where there are no scheduled meetings and the content of the meetings varies from meeting to meeting.

Mentoring that is done well, has the potential to develop into a long-term relationship, with significant benefits for the mentee, and even for the mentor.

### 5.2.6   Modelling and mentoring in practice

The author is currently in a number of informal mentoring relationships with a number of boys. Boy #18, discussed above, is one such boy. Meetings are initiated at the request of either the mentor or mentee. The mentoring relationship has continued long after Boy #18 left primary school and began his high school career.

Whilst in primary school, the focus of the mentorship activities was dominated by Boy #18's aggression. Discussions would focus on why he reacted in particular circumstances and ways in which he could correct the behaviour in the future.

Through this relationship, the author has been able to model prayer, withdrawal and choosing our battles as tools for dealing with aggression. The mentoring relationship provides support to the modelling, because Boy #18 can talk about specific struggles, and obtain guidance for dealing with them.

The mentoring relationship is producing ongoing results. During his remaining time in primary school, his incidents of aggressive behaviour diminished and he managed to

learn to control and manage his own anger. Since leaving primary school, continued growth is occurring, because he makes it a point to regularly share what he is going through.

# CHAPTER SIX
# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent decades, educational policy-makers around the world have recognised that girls have often lagged behind in terms of academic progress and achievement. Steps were taken to correct this situation, attempting to create a healthy balance for both boys and girls. Unfortunately, there appears to have been an over-correction, and a general lack of understanding of how boys and girls learn. This in turn has led to a decline in academic performance and a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour in boys (Tyre 2006:44).

This research paper sought to determine whether there is a discernible and distinct link between a perceived increase in aggression in pre-adolescent boys and the pedagogical practices employed in teaching these boys. The focus was specifically on pre-adolescent boys in a primary school in Gauteng, South Africa.

## 6.1 Conclusion

### 6.1.1 Conclusions regarding pedagogical change

Changes to pedagogical practice are important, not only for dealing with the challenges of education in general, but also for dealing with specific situations which teachers may be faced with.

One of these situations is the earlier rise of aggression in boys. If left untreated, this can lead to a severe social problem, as the violent expression of aggression may end up as normative behaviour. Social change is required in order to prevent further social decay.

Dealing with anger in pre-adolescent boys is important for the overall well-being of society, and, as such, change is needed in the education of these boys. The previous chapter has reviewed some possible solutions, including pedagogical changes, which can counter and manage aggression. It is important to note though, that these

measures on their own are not a cure-all for aggression. Rather, they must be combined with solid biblical principles for the management of aggression if they are to be successful. God created each of us with emotions and God will help us to learn to control them if we do it according to His principles.

In addition to teachers helping to change pedagogical practices to assist with anger management, Christian counsellors also need to be equipped to deal with anger and aggression in pre-adolescent boys.

### 6.1.2 Conclusions regarding biblical approaches to the management of aggression

Providing aggressive children with tools to manage their aggression is an important endeavour. Without proper tools, they will grow into adolescence and adulthood without the ability to control themselves. This has the potential of leading to a generation of men who are unable to control themselves and their expression of aggression may become increasingly violent over time. The principles of Scripture are a solid foundation on which to build, as they have proven to be true and reliable over many centuries. Lifestyle evangelism (demonstrating your love of God in your interactions with others) can be a powerful tool to model biblical approaches to the management of aggression (and still remain with the precepts of the South African Schools Act if in a government school).

Modelling desirable behaviour begins in the home and continues in every facet of life. People observe others and adjust their behaviour accordingly. What is learnt in the home builds a foundation on which future development occurs. Mentorship, whether in the home or out, builds on this foundation.

Teachers are in a unique position to be able to both model and mentor boys and thus to build on the foundation already laid.

### 6.1.3 Conclusions regarding the research conducted for this study

The research conducted for this study supports the hypothesis that current pedagogical practices do, in fact, influence levels of aggression in some of the pre-adolescent boys in the reference school.

The major results of the research came from the two separate phases, namely, the personality assessment and the individual interviews conducted with the boys who identified as having a dominant personality. The dominant personality has a natural tendency towards aggression and was therefore of special interest to this research.

### 6.1.3.1 Prevalence of dominant personalities

The first result came as somewhat of a surprise. The researcher expected the number of boys displaying the dominant personality type to closely match that of the general population. This would have meant that between two and five per cent of the male population would have a dominant personality type. However, in the sample group who took part in the personality assessment, 26.7 per cent of the participants displayed the dominant personality type.

This result did, however, confirm the anecdotal evidence, which stated that aggression in boys in general was increasing.

### 6.1.3.2 Significant lack of aggressive behaviour, despite a large number of dominant personalities

The second major result was also intriguing. Given that a dominant personality tends to be naturally aggressive, the relative number of incidents of uncontrolled aggression within the sample population was low. An examination of the disciplinary records of the reference school, as well as anecdotal evidence, seem to support this fact: that the physical expression of aggression by pre-adolescent boys in the reference school is low. Given the high number of dominant/aggressive personalities within the group, it would be expected that manifestations of aggression would be considerably higher. This indicates that whilst the boys do experience higher levels of aggression, they do not necessarily act on that experience. This means that their intrinsic coping mechanisms are functioning well.

It must, however, be noted that this could be a result of the fact that these are generally pre-adolescent boys who have not entered puberty. Once puberty commences, with the attendant increase in testosterone levels, physical expressions of aggression may actually increase.

### 6.1.3.3 Pedagogical factors DO play a role in the experience and expression of aggression

The third major result emerged out of the second phase of research, the one-on-one interviews. This result indicated that there are in fact pedagogical factors, as well as other school-related factors, which play a role in the experience and expression of aggression in pre-adolescent boys. Factors such as being teased by peers also played a role, but one of the most common causes of frustration and/or anger within the school environment was attributed directly to teacher behaviour. It was very interesting to note that a significant source of frustration was due to teachers expecting learners to complete work when it had not been explained. This approach may lead to poor performance, which in turn may lead to increased feelings of frustration or anger. Left unchecked, this could turn into a vicious, unending cycle, with frustration and anger building to a point of severe physical/verbal aggression.

### 6.1.3.4 Non-pedagogical, school factors also play a role

The final major result of this study is the role played by culture. In cultures where patriarchy is the dominant ideology, boys who are taught by females may experience frustration and anger. This is because they have to defer to a female when it has been inculcated since early childhood, that according to their culture, a woman is seen as inferior to a male. Having to accept classroom discipline from a woman may lead to both passive and active resistance, which in turn can affect academic achievement. This too can then become a vicious cycle where frustration, anger and aggression may result in severe physical/verbal aggression, not only towards other learners, but also even possibly to the teacher concerned.

### 6.1.3.5 Overall research conclusion

The overall result of the research confirms the original hypothesis: aggression in pre-adolescent boys *is* increasing, and some of the increase can, in fact, be attributed to current pedagogical practice.

Current practices, which may limit teaching methods to audio-visual learning styles, will cause frustration in some pre-adolescent boys since they are seen to be less intelligent, because they are not learning in a way which is conducive to them.

Approaches to the actual act of teaching and learning need to receive urgent attention if the increase in aggression is to be addressed adequately. Individual teachers can make some of the adjustments in individual schools. Other changes, however, need to be addressed through changes in policy and social attitudes and values. These changes will not be easy to bring about, but if individual teachers and schools start to make these changes, they can eventually lead to widespread change in the entire system as others will note the results of the positive changes.

Christian teachers and child counsellors are in a unique position to minister to boys who experience increased destructive levels of aggression. Some discussion has already been had of biblical models of anger management, which can be applied in dealing with these boys. Both teachers and counsellors can apply these models.

Child counsellors also need to be resourced and equipped. The final task of this study is to make some recommendations for child counsellors specifically, in their efforts to equip pre-adolescent boys to suitably manage their experiences and expressions of aggression.

## 6.2    Recommendations

Given the increase in violence in South African society in general, the role of child counsellors is becoming increasingly important. Anecdotal evidence from within the reference school indicates that children are experiencing exceptionally high levels of trauma, often never disclosing this to anyone. Well-trained counsellors, who are able to facilitate wholeness in children, are a vital element in promoting the overall well-being of our society in general.

In dealing with aggression in pre-adolescent boys, child-counsellors can play a particularly important role, because they have the opportunity to work not only with the child, but often also with the parents. This is an opportunity that teachers do not necessarily always have.

The child counsellor can help the parents to understand how their child experiences and expresses aggression, and in so doing, can collaborate with the parents to help the child learn to manage his anger.

The following are aspects that child counsellors can focus on concerning anger management. These are similar to what teachers can do, but because the child-counsellor has the opportunity to educate and train parents, these are worth mentioning here too:

- Modelling of anger control methods;
- Biblical anger management;
- Learning styles and multiple intelligences; and
- Ongoing monitoring.

### 6.2.1 Modelling of anger control methods

Parents of children with the dominant personality type may not always know how to deal with their children, especially with regard to experience and expression of anger. This situation may be aggravated if one or both of the parents display the dominant personality type since conflict is almost inevitable with so many strong personalities in one house.

The child counsellor can fulfil two important functions here. Firstly, they can help parents understand that children learn through observation of modelled behaviour. Parents may not always realise the impact that their behaviour has on the behaviour of their child, so they need to be given specific instruction on why modelling is an important behaviour management tool.

Secondly, the child counsellor can teach the parents what kind of behaviour to model to help their child manage his anger and aggression. The child counsellor can model this behaviour for the child in their brief sessions, but more importantly, they can model it for the parents, who then need to assume the responsibility to continue modelling the expected behaviour.

The value in this is that the parents gain valuable knowledge regarding how to help their children control their anger. This is important, especially in pre-adolescent boys, because, as noted above, when the boys enter puberty, they are likely to become more aggressive. If parents can help them to learn to manage their aggression successfully before the onset of puberty, the teenage years can be a less turbulent time for both teens and parents. Child-counsellors should encourage parents to work

with teachers in this regard, so that the modelling which occurs in the home can be reinforced in the school. This will help to embed the behaviour in the child's mind, and he is more likely to act accordingly.

### 6.2.2 Biblical anger management

Christian child-counsellors, working with Christian families, have the added facet of the biblical principles for the management of anger, and where appropriate, these principles should be taught to both the child and parent, with examples being modelled through such tools as role-play.

In order for this to be successful though, it is essential that a Christian child counsellor has more than a superficial knowledge of Scripture. Indiscriminate use of Scripture is a dangerous practice, and cherry-picking specific verses may prove to be more harmful than beneficial.

Therefore, it is important that if the Christian child counsellor intends to use Scripture and prayer as tools in counselling, that he or she has at least a basic knowledge of exegetical skills. Proper use of basic exegetical skills enables the counsellor to ensure that they are not using proof-texts as the basis for their training of children and parents.

Exegesis at its core revolves around understanding what a text meant to the original recipients and what it can mean for its modern recipient. A theological qualification is not necessary in order to achieve this, but the ability to use, and have access to, biblical reference material such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries or atlases, is more than sufficient.

Before any scripture is used in counselling, it should be prayerfully considered and simply exegeted in order to ensure that it will truly speak to the client, and have meaning in their situation.

### 6.2.3 Learning styles and multiple intelligences

It is one thing for teachers to know about, and use, learning styles and multiple intelligences, but it is also important for child counsellors to know about them. The teacher can change the way they teach, to focus more on multiple intelligences rather than on learning styles. However, the individual child and his parents may not

even be aware of how the child learns. The parents may expect him to learn in the same way that they did, and this may lead to unrealistic expectations of what the child should be achieving, from both parents and child. Failure to meet these expectations can result in increased experiences of frustration, anger or aggression.

If the child and his parents know what the primary intelligence profile of the child is, they can use this to their advantage in the home. They can tailor homework and projects in such a way that it matches the intelligence profile of their son.

The child counsellor can take a leading role in this too. They can conduct appropriate assessments to determine the intelligence profile of the child and then provide ideas and tools to both the child and parents for use in the home.

### 6.2.4 Ongoing monitoring

Teachers are limited in their ability to provide ongoing support for the child, because we only get to see his behaviour at school. Ongoing monitoring needs to include what takes place in the home and the steps that parents are taking to assist their child.

The child counsellor is in a unique position to provide this ongoing monitoring, because he/she can gain deeper insight through discussion with the parents and joint evaluation of the outcomes of any interventions which have been made.

This continuing support, which will occur for the duration of the counselling relationship, is valuable because the boys are able to see their progress through the eyes of their parents and the counsellor. This can provide motivation for continued improvement and personal growth.

# CHAPTER SEVEN
# EPILOGUE

Education is a vital element of our society. It not only provides academic training for future careers, but it also helps to mould and shape personalities and attitudes.

Teachers play an important role in the holistic development of learners and are often expected to provide training in basic social skills, manners and how to interact with other people in healthy ways.

It is therefore essential that teachers know how deeply they can influence the learners, both in action and in word. They must be made aware of the power of their beliefs about children and how those beliefs manifest through a teacher's expectations of children.

Having the right expectation of a child will produce good results. The child will see value in what they do, and therefore, will more likely produce work of a higher standard.

Boys, in general, are now at the wrong end of the shift in educational focus. They need people to realise that in order to have balance in education, boys need to be taught in new and unusual ways. The traditional method of utilising learning styles has been shown to be ineffective.

Pre-adolescent boys, at the wrong end of the shift in educational focus, need special care if they are to survive their school years and become productive and healthy adults. Since there appears to be an increase in the number of boys with the dominant personality, anger management must be a key feature of their development and teachers need to know how to deal with this as effectively as possible. Teachers need to work with parents, and where relevant, child counsellors, in order to build a positive environment for the better, holistic development of boys.

Co-ed classrooms are a prevailing reality in our schools and this is not a negative thing. In fact, it provides a unique opportunity for teachers to challenge themselves, by providing education using a range of different techniques, which challenge and grow all members of their classes and not just the few who benefit from a particular learning style.

It is hoped that this research will provide tools for those who wish to make a difference in the lives of the boys they teach and that this will help to restore some balance to the largely skewed educational environment which is now leaving boys trailing behind girls in their development and achievement. It is hoped that gifted teachers will be able to take whatever steps they are able to, to help to restore a balance within their classrooms.

It is perhaps fitting, therefore, to conclude this paper, with a blessing from the apostle Paul:

> I pray that out of his glorious riches He (God) may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.
>
> Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:16-21).

# WORKS CONSULTED

Adams, T. 2010. The trouble with boys. Online article. Accessed from: www.guardian.co.uk, 3 July 2015.

Allison, S. 2016. Imposing, aggressive and unwilling to listen: How South Africans are perceived in Africa. Online article. Accessed from: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-03-17-imposing-aggressive-and-unwilling-to-listen-how-south-africans-are-perceived-in-africa/#.WzuDGdX7S01, 2 July 2018.

American Society for the Positive Care of Children. n.d. Causes of bullying. Online article. Accessed from: http://americanspcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Bullying-Causes-of-Courtesy-of-nobullying.pdf, 28 September 2018.

Baron, R.A., Branscombe, N.R. and Byrne, D. 2009. *Social Psychology* (12th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education Inc.

Baş, A.U. and Kabasakal, Z.T. 2010. Teachers' views and knowledge about reactive and proactive aggression. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences 2*: 1654 – 1659.

Biblica, 2011. *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Nashville, USA: HarperCollins Christian Publishing

Boyd, C.F. and Rohm, R.A. 2004. *Different children, different needs: understanding the unique personality of your child*. Colorado Springs, USA: Multnomah Publishers.

BusinessTech. 2017. South African crime stats: everything you need to know. Online article. Accessed from: https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/207087/south-africa-crime-stats-2017-everything-you-need-to-know/, 3 April 2018.

Coetzee, D. 2001. South African education and the ideology of patriarchy. *South African Journal of Education* 21(4):300 – 304.

Connor, F. 2002. *Aggression and antisocial behaviour in children and adolescents: research and treatment*. New York, USA: Guilford Press.

Côte, S.M., Vaillancourt, T., LeBlanc, J.C., Nagin, D.S. and Tremblay, R.E. 2006. The Development of physical aggression from toddlerhood to pre-adolescence. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* 34(1): 71 – 85.

Crosswhite J.M. and Kerpelman, J.L. 2009. Coercion Theory, Self-control, and Social Information processing: Understanding potential mediators for how parents influence deviant behaviour. *Deviant Behaviours* 30(7): 611 – 646.

Dallas Theological Seminary, The. n.d [2015]. Mentoring. Online article. Accessed from: www.dts.edu, 8 July 2015.

Department for Education (UK). 2008. *Personalised learning: a practical guide.* Sherwood Park, UK: DCSF Publications.

_____ 2014. School workforce in England: November 2013. Online article. Accessed from: www.gov.uk, 3 July 2015.

Department of Education (RSA). 2005. Teachers for the future: meeting teacher shortages to achieve education for all. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Dictionary.com. n.d [2015]. Definition: Learning Style. Online article. Accessed from: http://dictionary.reference.com, 30 June 2015.

DiscInsights, 2013. DISC profile compared to the Myers-Briggs Test. Online article. Accessed from: www.discinsights.com, 30 June 2015.

Dobson, J. 2006. *Emotions: can you trust them?* Ventura, CA: Gospel Light Publications.

Drexler, P. 2015. Rich Kids – Serious challenges to bringing up kids who have it all. Online article. Accessed from: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/our-gender-ourselves/201507/rich-kids, 3 April 2018.

Everest, C. 2003. Differentiation, the new monster in education. Online article. Accessed from: www.theguardian.co.uk, 30 June 2015.

Farrar, S. 2006. *Mentoring Boys: what every son wants and needs from his dad.* Vereeniging, South Africa: Christian Art Publishers.

Flem, A., Moen, T. and Gudmundsdottir S. Towards inclusive schools: a study of how a teacher facilitate differentiated instruction. Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research 20 – 23 September 2000. Edinburgh, Scotland. Accessed from: www.leeds.ac.uk, 30 June 2015.

Furtuna, D. 2014. Male aggression: why are men more violent?. Online article. Accessed from: https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/homo-aggressivus/201409/male-aggression, 13 August 2016.

HELPS Ministries. n.d. {2018]. HELPS™ Word-studies. Online article. Accessed
from: http://biblehub.com/greek/4239.htm, 4 July 2018.

Huebner, T.A. 2010. What research says about…? Differentiated learning.
*Educational Leadership* 67(5): 79 – 81. Online article. Accessed from:
http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership-
feb10/vol67/num05/Differentiated-Learning.aspx, 4 July 2018

Indiana University. n.d [2015]. Three learning styles. Online article. Accessed from:
http://blc.uc.iupui.edu, 30 June 2015.

Institute for Motivational Living, The. 2009. *The Children's Profile: Personality Style
Identification for Children ages 9 to 13*. New Castle, PA: The Institute for
Motivational Living.

Kimmel, M. 2006. The war on boys. *Dissent* 65 – 70.

Kleinfeld, J. 2009. The state of American boyhood. *Gender Issues* 26:113 – 129.

Lepper, J.W. n.d [2015]. How young children learn. Online article. Accessed from:
https://web.stanford.edu, 6 July 2015.

Louber, R. and Stouthamer-Louber, M. 1998. Development of juvenile aggression
and violence. *America Psychologist* 53(2):242 – 259.

Masango, M.J. 2004. Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa. *Hervormde
Teologiese Studies* 60(3): 993 – 1006.

Mccown, R., Driscoll, M. and Roop, P.G. 1996. *Educational psychology: a learning-
centred approach to classroom practice* (2nd ed.). Pretoria, South Africa:
UNISA Press.

McNamara, S. 1999. *Differentiation: An approach to teaching and learning.* Boston,
MA: Pearson Education Inc.

Myers and Briggs Foundation. n.d [2015]. How frequent is my type? Online article.
Accessed from: www.myersbriggs.org, 29 June 2015.

National Centre for Education Statistics. n.d [2015]. Fast facts: teacher trends. Online
article. Accessed from: http://nces.ed.gov, 3 July 2015.

Oakland, T. and Joyce, D. 2004. Temperament-based learning styles and school-
based applications. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 19(1/2):59 – 74.

Oliphant, P. 2015. South Africa falling short in gender equality standards. Online
article. Accessed from: www.mg.co.za, 3 July 2015.

Piggott, A. 2002. Putting differentiation into practice in secondary science lessons.
*School Science Review* 83(205): 65 – 72.

Protogerou, C. and Flisher A. n.d. [2015]. Bullying in Schools. South African Medical Research Council. Cape Town, South Africa. Available at: http://www.mrc.ac.za/crime/Chapter9.pdf.

Ribeaud, D. and Eisner M. 2010. Risk factors for aggression in pre-adolescence: Risk domains, cumulative risk and gender differences. *European Journal of Criminology* 7(6): 460 – 498.

Richards, B. 2012. Exploring the association between parenting practices and aggressive behaviour in children. University of Cape Town. Cape Town, South Africa. Available at: http://www.psychology.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/117/Bernadette.Richards.pdf.

Roodt, K. 1997. Reliability and Validity Study on the Discus Personality Profiling System. Online report. Accessed from: https://www.discusonline.com/sample-reports/roodt-report.pdf, 3 April 2018.

Rosenman, R.H. and Friedman, M. 1959. Association of specific behaviour patterns in women with blood and cardiovascular findings. *JAMA*. 169(12):1286 – 1296.

Rossouw, J.P. 2003. Learner discipline in South African schools – a qualitative study. *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*. 68(4): 413 – 435.

Schneider, A. 2013. How boys' learning styles differ (and how we can support them). Online article. Accessed from: www.goodtherapy.org, 30 June 2015.

Simpson, G. 1993. Explaining endemic violence in South Africa. Online article. Accessed from https://www.csvr.org.za/publications/1799-explaining-endemic-violence-in-south-africa, 30 June 2015.

Sosnowski, J. 2015. Gender differences in learning style. Online article. Accessed from: http://everydaylife.globalpost.com, 30 June 2015.

Stats SA. 2017. Poverty trends in South Africa: An examination of absolute poverty between 2006 and 2015. Online report. Accessed from: http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-06/Report-03-10-062015.pdf, 28 August 2017.

Taylor, D. and Lorimer, M. 2002 (December). Helping boys succeed. *Educational leadership*, 68 – 70.

Tenney, M.C. 1994. John. In Barker, K.L. and Kohlenberger III, J.R (eds.). *The Expositors Bible Commentary  Abridged Edition: New Testament*. 290 – 375, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

Times Education Supplement, The. 2013. Using differentiation in mixed-ability classes. Online article. Accessed from: http://newteachers.tes.c.uk, 30 June 2015.

Tyre, P. 2006 (30 January). The trouble with boys: they're kinetic, maddening and failing at school. *News Week Magazine,* 44.

UNESCO. n.d [2015]. Most influential theories of learning. Online article. Accessed from: www.unesco.org, 18 July 2015.

Van der Berg, S. and Burger, R. 2010. *Teacher pay in South Africa.* Stellenbosch, South Africa: Stellenbosch University.

Van der Ven, J.A. 1998. *Formation of the moral self.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Van Staden, S. and Howie, S. n.d [2015]. South African teacher profiles and emerging teacher factors: the picture painted by PIRLS 2006. Online article. Accessed from: www.cepd.org.za, 3 July 2015.

Väyrynen, S. n.d [2015]. Observations from South African Classrooms: Some inclusive strategies. Online article. Accessed from: www.education.gov.za, 30 June 2015.

Walsh, J. 2008. The Psychological Person: Cognition, Emotion and Self. In E. Hutchinson (ed), *Dimensions of human behaviour* (3rd ed.) 109 – 152. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.

Watson, A., Kehler, M. and Martino, W. 2010. The problem of boys' literacy underachievement: raising some questions. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 53(5):356 – 361.

Winslow-Sargent, L. 2005. Determining your child's personality type. Online article. Accessed from: www.focusonthefamily.com, 29 June 2015.

Yates, L. 1997. Gender equity and the boys' debate. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 18(3):337 – 347.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

The following Disciplinary Code is used by the reference school. The code is printed in the learners' homework diaries and at the beginning of the academic year, learners and parents are required to read the code and sign it, to signify acceptance of the code of conduct. Learners are held to account on the basis of their signature on the document.

**Category One: Minor debits**

Offences in this group carry either -3 or -5 points per offence.

When a learner has accumulated -10 points, a warning letter is generated. This letter informs the parents of the offences committed and warns that a detention is imminent.

At the request of the learners, we will consider the possibility of the learner attending a voluntary detention, in order to work off their points. This will only be considered at the point when a warning letter has been issued and it is the sole responsibility of the child to inform the detention supervisor of their intention to attend the detention.

When the learner has accumulated -15 points, they will be given a detention.

Attending the detention will credit them with +15 points.

| Description | Points | Description | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chewing gum | -3 | Hair not tied up | -5 |
| Homework: Assessment not signed | -3 | Hair too long | -5 |
| Homework: Incomplete /Unsatisfactory work | -3 | Incorrect earrings | -5 |
| Homework: Not done/Not at school | -3 | Incorrect jewellery | -5 |
| Incorrect PE/Sports kit | -3 | Incorrect uniform item | -5 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Talking in class | -3 | Late for class | -5 |
| Absence from break detention | -5 | Late for practice/extra-lesson | -5 |
| Absence from extra-mural activity | -5 | Late for school | -5 |
| Absence from sport/cultural practice | -5 | Library book overdue | -5 |
| Activity preparation not done | -5 | Nails painted | -5 |
| Assessment not submitted | -5 | Nails too long | -5 |
| Book not up to date | -5 | No stationery / textbook / exercise book | -5 |
| Books not covered | -5 | Not following instructions | -5 |
| Boys' sideburns extending below ears | -5 | Not paying attention in class | -5 |
| Cell phone ringing during class | -5 | PE/Sports kit not at school | -5 |
| Copying homework | -5 | Reader/Novel not at school | -5 |
| Diary not at school | -5 | Sleeping in class | -5 |
| Diary not signed | -5 | Talking continuously in class | -5 |
| Disruption of lesson | -5 | Talking during exam study time | -5 |
| Documentation not returned | -5 | Untidy uniform | -5 |
| Documentation not signed | -5 | Wearing a beanie when not allowed to | -5 |
| Eating in class | -5 | Wearing armbands/bracelets | -5 |
| Gel in hair | -5 | Wearing make-up | -5 |
| Graffiti on own property | -5 | | |

**Table 4: School Code of Conduct - Minor Debits**

**Category 2: Serious debits**

Offences in this group carry either -10 or -15 points per offence.

When a learner has accumulated -20 points a warning letter is generated. This letter informs the parents of the offences committed and warns that a detention is imminent.

At the request of the learners, we will consider the possibility of the learner attending a voluntary detention, in order to work off their points. This will only be considered at the point when a warning letter has been issued and it is the sole responsibility of the child to inform the detention supervisor of their intention to attend the detention.

When the learner accumulates -30 points, they will be given a detention.

Attending the detention will credit them with +30 points.

| Description | Points | Description | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bullying: Intimidation / Threats / Victimisation | -10 | Unshaven | -10 |
| Cell phone ringing during assessment | -10 | Absence from assessment without medical certificate | -15 |
| Constant disruption of class | -10 | Discourtesy to learner council | -15 |
| Damaged textbook | -10 | Dishonesty | -15 |
| Discourtesy to peers | -10 | Disrespectful behaviour | -15 |
| Disruption of assembly | -10 | Entering a prohibited area | -15 |
| Dyed/Highlighted hair | -10 | Improper conduct at a school fixture/event | -15 |
| Incorrect hairstyle | -10 | Leaving class without permission | -15 |
| Littering | -10 | Physical Contact: Holding hands/hugging | -15 |
| Neglect of work | -10 | Refusing to assist a peer or staff member | -15 |
| Out of class without permission | -10 | Spitting | -15 |
| Throwing objects in class | -10 | Vandalising property of others | -15 |

**Table 5: School Code of Conduct - Debits**

**Category 3: Straight Detentions**

Offences in this category carry -20 points each, and will result in an immediate straight detention.

No voluntary detentions will be considered for offences in this category.

Attending the detention will credit them with +20 points.

| Description | Points | Description | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Being in an out of bounds area | -20 | Misuse of school property | -20 |
| Blasphemy/Disrespect of a culture/religion | -20 | Physical contact: Kissing | -20 |
| Bunking class/detention | -20 | Rude/Offensive remark to staff member | -20 |
| Disorderly conduct: pushing and shoving | -20 | Severe neglect of work | -20 |
| Failure to attend afternoon detention (without a valid reason) | -20 | Use of cell phone in class | -20 |
| Insubordination to staff member | -20 | Use of foul/obscene language | -20 |

**Table 6: School Code of Conduct - Straight Detentions**

**Category 4: Executive Committee (Exco) Hearing (with or without suspension)**

Receiving three detentions in category 1 – 3 will result in an Exco hearing (with the Principal and members of the school management team). This will not include any voluntary detentions, only

A specific list of offences will result in a direct Exco hearing.

Offences in this category carry either -25 or -30 points per offence.

Learners committing offences in this category may be suspended pending the hearing.

The Exco will determine a suitable sanction, and also whether or not points will be credited to the learner after the conclusion of the hearing.

| Description | Points | Description | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accompanying smokers (cigarette or e-cigarette) | -25 | Bullying: On social media | -30 |
| Attempting to leave school without permission | -25 | Bullying: Physical altercations | -30 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Discourtesy to school staff | -25 | Bullying: Through written interaction | -30 |
| Discourtesy to visitors | -25 | Bullying: Verbal | -30 |
| Dishonesty in an assessment | -25 | Bunking: Entire school day | -30 |
| Disruption of a school event/show | -25 | Defamation of character | -30 |
| Inappropriate physical contact | -25 | Disruption of the school day | -30 |
| Interfering/tampering with the property of others | -25 | Fraud: Dishonesty in a formal statement | -30 |
| Possession and/or use of matches | -25 | Fraud: Falsifying information | -30 |
| Possession of cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) | -25 | Inciting physical/verbal confrontation | -30 |
| Vandalism of school property/furniture/facilities | -25 | Invasion of privacy | -30 |
| Accompanying those in possession of alcohol/drugs | -30 | Leaving school without permission | -30 |
| Being in possession of alcohol/drugs | -30 | Obscene/foul language to a staff member | -30 |
| Bringing alcohol/drugs to school/school event | -30 | Writing/Distributing obscene letters/electronic messages | -30 |

**Table 7: School Code of Conduct - Exco Hearings**

**Category 5: School Governing Body (SGB) Hearing (with or without suspension)**

Receiving three Exco hearings will result in an SGB hearing.

A specific list of offences will result in a direct SGB hearing.

Offences in this category carry between -40 and -150 points per offence.

Learners committing offences in this category may be suspended pending the hearing. This will be at the sole discretion of the Principal.

The SGB will determine a suitable sanction (including, but not limited to, suspension, and expulsion), and also whether or not points will be credited to the learner after the conclusion of the hearing.

| Description | Points | Description | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Disruption of school day through illegal action | -40 | Endangering the safety of others | -75 |
| Smoking cigarettes/e-cigarettes on school grounds | -40 | Possession of any illegal substances | -75 |
| Theft from peer/staff member | -40 | Possession of pornography | -75 |
| Accompanying alcohol/illegal drug users | -50 | Testing positive for any illegal substance | -75 |
| Dangerous and reckless behaviour | -50 | Assault resulting in grievous bodily harm | -100 |
| Dangerous pushing/shoving | -50 | Being under the influence of alcohol/drugs at school functions | -100 |
| Dishonesty in an exam | -50 | Being under the influence of alcohol/drugs in school uniform | -100 |
| Drinking/using illegal drugs in public in school uniform | -50 | Being under the influence of alcohol/drugs on school grounds | -100 |
| Drinking/using illegal drugs on school property/at a school event | -50 | Distribution of pornography | -100 |
| Failure to attend an Exco or SGB hearing | -50 | Intimate physical contact at a school event | -100 |
| Inciting violence | -50 | Intimate physical contact on school grounds | -100 |
| Involvement in fighting | -50 | Assault with a weapon | -150 |
| Punching | -50 | Distribution of illegal substances | -150 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Slapping | -50 | Possession of a weapon on school grounds/at school events | -150 |
| Use of cell phone during assessment/exam | -50 | Sexual assault | -150 |
| Being the aggressor in a fight | -75 | Sexual harassment | -150 |

**Table 8: School Code of Conduct - SGB Hearings**

# APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Masters Research project**

My name is Andrew Riddin. I teach Gr. 6s and 7s at ███████ School. I am also currently in the process of completing a Masters' degree in Child Counselling.

I am conducting research to investigate a perceived increase in aggression in boys, from an earlier age. I am focussing on whether or not the school environment contributes to this perceived increase in aggression.

Part of my research involves doing personality assessments on as many learners as possible. It is in this regard that I wish to ask for your assistance.

I would like to assess all boys in Gr. 6 and 7 at ███████ School, to determine their primary personality traits. However, in order to conduct this research, I must obtain permission from parents. No child is allowed to take part without parental permission.

I would like to request your permission for your son to take part in the research. Participation will be voluntary, and will be dependent on receiving permission from both you the parent, and your son.

The research will take the form of a 15 – 20 minute electronic questionnaire, during which time your son will be asked questions for his responses to a range of scenarios.

All information gained through this process will remain completely confidential. Only my research supervisor and I will have access to the data. The school will not have access to the data gathered from individuals, only the final report, which will not contain names of any individuals who take part.

**If you, and your son, are happy to take part in this project, I would be very grateful if you, AND YOUR SON, could sign the attached consent form, and return it to me as soon as possible.**

I need as many children as possible to take part in this research, in order to get as varied a response as possible. Therefore, if you have got any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Your kind co-operation is greatly appreciated!

Yours sincerely,

_____       _____
Mr A.J. Riddin                               Mr. ███████
Researcher                                     Principal
Email: ███████

**Figure 1: Informed Consent Letter - Initial**

**CONSENT BY PARENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____ in Gr. _____, hereby give consent for my child to take part in a personality assessment for the Research Project to be conducted by Mr A.J. Riddin for his Masters' Thesis.

My contact details are:

Email: _____          Tel: _____

I am aware that:

- Participation is voluntary.
- All information obtained is confidential, and my child's name will not be reported in the final thesis.
- My child can stop participating at any time.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

Parent signature: _____

**CONSENT BY CHILD FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

I, _____ in Gr. _____, hereby agree to participate in a personality assessment for the Research Project to be conducted by Mr A.J. Riddin for his Masters' Thesis.

I am aware that:

- I can choose to take part.
- Everything in this project will be private. My teachers and family will not be told what I answer.
- I can stop participating at any time.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

Child's signature: _____

**Figure 2: Reply Slip – Initial participation**

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Masters Research project**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing your son to take part in the first round of my Research Project. I had a total of 86 boys volunteering, which constitutes approximately 65% of the boys in Gr. 6 & 7.

The personality model I used indicates four different dominant personalities. They are classified as DISC, which stands for:

<u>D</u> – Determined Type
<u>I</u> – Influencing Type
<u>S</u> – Soft-hearted Type
<u>C</u> – Conscientious Type

The dominant personality type is determined by the learner achieving a score of 7 out of 20 in a particular category.

Your son has been identified as having a D-type of personality. I have included a breakdown of the main characteristics of the dominant personality of your son. This gives a brief overview of the main traits of the personality type.

The D-type is the personality type that I would like to work with further, in order to examine the validity of my research hypothesis.

I would therefore like to request your permission to work with your son on a one-on-one basis. This will take the form of a verbal interview, requiring a time period of 60 minutes per child. Interview will take place after school, at a time convenient for both parents and children. These interviews will be more in-depth, and therefore more personal, than the Phase One personality assessments. Children can stop the interview at any time if they feel uncomfortable.

The results of these interviews will be used to as the main data source for my research. In order to do this, the interview will be video recorded for the purposes of further analysis. The video and all related notes made during the interview will be completely confidential. As the researcher, I will be the only person who has access to it. My supervisor will have access to anonymous data gained from the interviews, but will not have access to any names of learners who take part.

Once again, both you, and your child, will be required to give consent for participation in the interviews. If you are happy to consent, please complete the attached reply slip, and return it to me as soon as possible. Please also include your contact details on the reply slip, so that I can contact you to arrange interview sessions.

Yours sincerely,

_____                    _____
Mr A.J. Riddin                                             Mr. ███████
Researcher                                                 Principal
Email: ███████████████

**Figure 3: Informed Consent Letter - Interviews**

**CONSENT BY PARENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____ in Gr. _____, hereby give consent for my child to take part in Phase Two (Interviews) of the Research Project to be conducted by Mr A.J. Riddin for his Masters' Thesis.

My contact details are:

Email: _____        Tel: _____

I am aware that:

- Participation is voluntary.
- The interview will be video recorded for further analysis.
- All information obtained is confidential, and my child's name will not be reported in the final thesis.
- My child can stop the interview at any time.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20____.

Parent signature:          _____

**CONSENT BY CHILD FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

I, _____ in Gr. _____, hereby agree to participate in Phase Two (Interviews) of the Research Project to be conducted by Mr A.J. Riddin for his Masters' Thesis.

I am aware that:

- I can choose to take part.
- The interview will be video recorded for Mr Riddin to work with later.
- Everything in this project will be private. My teachers and family will not be told what I answer.
- I can stop the interview at any time.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20____.

Child's signature:          _____

**Figure 4: Reply Slip - Interview participation**

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Masters Research**

I have been studying towards my Master's degree in Child Counselling, and am almost ready to submit my final research report.

A number of Grade Six & Seven learners took part directly in the research, and I gained valuable insights through my work with them. The other Grade Six and Seven learners have also inspired me though. Through observing them, and interacting with them, I have gained valuable insight, which contributed to my understanding of both my subject matter and the learners themselves.

As a gesture of gratitude, I would like to dedicate the research report to all of them, and include their first name in the final report.

I would like to request your permission, to include only your child's name in the final report. No other identifying information is included, as it is a requirement of the Department of Education that neither a school's name, nor any other identifying characteristics may be used.

Please complete the attached reply slip, and return it to me as soon as possible, as I need to finalise and submit my research report.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A.J. Riddin                                    Mr. ████████
Gr. 7 Educator                                    Principal
Email: ████████████████

---

**CONSENT BY PARENT FOR INCLUSION OF CHILD"S NAME IN RESEARCH REPORT DEDICATION**

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____ in Gr. _____,

hereby give*/do not give* consent for my child's name to be included in the dedication of the research report of

Mr A.J. Riddin.

I am aware that:

- Participation is voluntary.
- All information obtained is confidential.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20___.

Parent signature:        _____

* Delete whichever is not applicable

**Figure 5: Consent to include learner names in report dedication**

# APPENDIX C: ADAPTED DISC PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE



**Figure 6: DISC assessment - Question 1 - 6**

**Figure 7: DISC assessment - Question 7 – 14**

**Figure 8: DISC assessment - Question 15 – 21**

# APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions were posed to all candidates who participated in Phase Two of the Research Study at the reference school. A summary of the learner responses is also included. The summary was drawn from the transcripts of the interview videos:

1. **How often do you become frustrated?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Once in two days |
| #2 | Happens a lot. I'm one of those people when things don't go my way, sometimes I get very frustrated. |
| #3 | About once a day. |
| #4 | Once or twice a day. |
| #5 | Daily basis |
| #6 | Not often, not every day |
| #7 | Not much. |
| #8 | Quite often, conflict between me and siblings, or parents. |
| #9 | Most of the time |
| #10 | Not much |
| #11 | At least once per day. |
| #12 | A lot. More than once a day. |
| #13 | Not often. |
| #14 | Once or twice a week. |
| #15 | Sometimes, not a lot. Probably once a week. |
| #16 | About two times a week. |
| #17 | When they get too close to my face. Once a day. |
|  | Seldom: Once or twice a week = 6 (35.3%)<br>Regularly: More than once a week = 4 (23.5%)<br>Frequently: More than once per day = 7 (41.2%) |

**Table 9: Interview Question One - Results**

2. **How often do you become angry?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Maybe once a day. |
| #2 | Not often. |
| #3 | About once a week. |
| #4 | Quite a rare thing, maybe once every three days. |
| #5 | Almost every time I get frustrated it becomes anger. |
| #6 | Not often |
| #7 | Not much, except when people irritate me a lot. |
| #8 | Not too often. 3 out 10 times of frustration lead to anger. |
| #9 | When someone really gets on my nerves |
| #10 | A lot. Skip frustration and go straight to anger. |
| #11 | Depends on the situation. E.g. If they hitting me. |

| #12 | When they start teasing me. About 4 times a week. |
|---|---|
| #13 | Quite a bit. Skip frustration, go straight to anger. Sometimes daily. But don't stay angry for long. |
| #14 | Can become angry quite often, but don't like to show it, unless I'm really angry. |
| #15 | A lot. Skip frustration and go straight to anger. Every day. |
| #16 | Once or twice in a few weeks, normally over weekends. |
| #17 | When someone starts hitting me or blaming me when I didn't do anything. About once a week. |
| | Seldom: Once or twice a week = 8 (47.1%)<br>Regularly: More than once a week = 3 (17.6%)<br>Frequently: More than once per day = 6 (35.3%) |

**Table 10: Interview Question Two - Results**

### 3. Do other people make you angry sometimes? Please could you tell me what they do that makes you angry?

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Making a noise when doing work. Playing soccer at home and my friend comes up and he just kicks the ball away. |
| #2 | Yes. If I tell my friends a secret, and they tell my secret to others. |
| #3 | Tease and irritate. Calling me names, teasing you, say you can have food, but they never give it to you. |
| #4 | When we playing soccer and out of nowhere they tackle you when you don't have the ball. When you have to repeat yourself over and over again.<br>When people kick my chair or tap me when I'm working. |
| #5 | People make fun of me. When people force me to give them my food. |
| #6 | No, People make me sad more than angry. |
| #7 | Push me around, make fun of my name. |
| #8 | Yes. Teasing me, kicking me and running away. When I'm not allowed something at home. |
| #9 | Keep on doing something that irritates me. |
| #10 | Tease me. They laugh at me. Spread rumours. |
| #11 | Anger: Hitting me or dissing me or making fun of my name.<br>Frustration: When they annoy me. Sometimes they make fun of my name, and then they say they just joking which annoys me. |
| #12 | Call me names. |
| #13 | If someone touches my things or comes into my space, I get angry. |
| #14 | When they call me or other people names. |
| #15 | Somebody will shout at me, or someone coming to me and kicking my bag. |
| #16 | Diss my parents. Insult me. Diss my culture. |
| #17 | Push me and blame me for things I didn't do. |
| | Total causes: 7 categories, with total of 30 individual instances<br>Highest = Physical conflict 8/30 (26.7%)<br>2nd highest = Teasing 7/30 (23.3%)<br>3rd highest = general irritation 6/30 (20%) |

**Table 11: Interview Question Three - Results**

**4.**  **Do you sometimes get angry at yourself? Please would you tell me why you get angry at yourself?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | No. |
| #2 | No. |
| #3 | No. |
| #4 | Yes. When I become too rough playing a game, or when I make a mistake, or when I've worked on something for a long time, but still keep getting it wrong. |
| #5 | Yes, when I do stuff that I know is wrong. I got a hiding because I left clothes on the floor, and I knew I was wrong. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | Yes, sometimes. Make weird mistakes. |
| #8 | Yes. When I play tennis or play my saxophone, I get frustrated if I keep making a mistake even if I'm trying very hard. |
| #9 | Yes. If I do something and I know its wrong. |
| #10 | Do something wrong in a sport. When people tease me when I stutter, get angry at myself because I stutter. |
| #11 | Yes. If I make a decision and later I realise I made a bad decision. |
| #12 | Yes. When I make stupid mistakes. |
| #13 | No. |
| #14 | Sometimes, when I know I've done some wrong. |
| #15 | No. |
| #16 | When I do something I know I'm not supposed to do. |
| #17 | No. |
|  | No = 7 (41.2%) Yes = 10 (58.8%) |

**Table 12: Interview Question Four - Results**

**5.**  **Have you ever gotten into trouble because of your temper? How did that make you feel?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Sometimes. When you see it from outside, it is not as angering as it should have been. Need to step out of the situation. |
| #2 | Yes. I come home angry and then my mother asks me what's wrong, and I will get angry because I don't want to tell her. I shout at her, and she then takes something away from me. Makes me feel even angrier sometimes. |
| #3 | Yes. Me and Temweka got in a fight he started, kept hitting and punching me. Then I got angry and fought back. Felt embarrassed. |
| #4 | Yes. E.g. Got too violent and hurt the person. |
| #5 | Yes. We broke a street lamp and my cousins blamed me. Felt very angry. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | Yes, many times. People irritate me and I get cross and fight. The teacher shouts at me, makes me feel more angry. |

| #8 | Only once that I can remember. I for a detention for retaliating to a girl kicking me. |
|---|---|
| #9 | No. |
| #10 | Yes. Was at home and was still angry from something at school. I kicked a ball through a window. |
| #11 | Yes. E.g. This year, one of the boys in class, he was busy bumping me, even after I asked him to stop. I then hit him. |
| #12 | Yes. E.g. The day I was in your class and Ricardo was teasing me. Made me feel bad. |
| #13 | Yes. E.g. a few weeks after I broke my arm, I had an argument with my sister and was banging my arm against the door. My mom was angry at me because she thought I might break my arm again. |
| #14 | Yes, I started throwing things at people because they were frustrating me. |
| #15 | Yes. E.g. Darian made me angry and I kicked his bag and shoved him them we started fighting. |
| #16 | Yes. I lost my bank card and the bank took money off my account for a new card. I got so angry because of that that I threw away the new card and then had to get another one. |
| #17 | Yes. I was at my old school, this boy kicked me and then I kicked him back. One of the teachers shouted at me. |
| | No = 2 (11.8%)<br>Yes = 15 (88.2%) |

**Table 13: Interview Question Five - Results**

6. **Have you ever felt so angry that you feel you could physically hurt someone? Have you ever hurt someone?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Once or twice. Got into trouble. He told his parents, they told mine. He ripped my homework because I didn't want to play with him. |
| #2 | Yes. Yes. Can't think of specific example. |
| #3 | Yes. Yes, today. |
| #4 | Yes. Yes, doesn't happen often. |
| #5 | Yes. I slapped a girl who was dissing me. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | No. |
| #8 | Yes. Yes. |
| #9 | Yes. No. Example: person kept stealing my stuff. People making fun of me and my family, especially my cousin, whose mother is dead. |
| #10 | Yes. No. |
| #11 | Yes. Most of the time I can stop myself getting angry, so it doesn't end in hurting someone. |
| #12 | Yes. When they call me fatso. Yes. Darian kept on pushing me around, so I hit him. |
| #13 | No. |
| #14 | Yes, but then think why? And then leave. Never actually hurt someone. |
| #15 | Yes. No. Can control anger. |
| #16 | Yes. Never hurt anyone. |

| #17 | Yes. No. |
|---|---|
| | No = 3 (17.6%)<br>Yes, but not acted = 8 (47.1%)<br>Yes and acted = 6 (35.3%) |

Table 14: Interview Question Six - Results

**7.  Do you ever feel angry if you get an assessment back, and you didn't get good marks?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Especially when I think I did well. |
| #2 | Yes. |
| #3 | No, just disappointed. |
| #4 | Yes. Its internal anger. |
| #5 | No, I just feel disappointed. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | Frustrated, because I make silly mistakes. |
| #8 | Yes. Depends on subject. |
| #9 | Yes. I feel I should have done better. |
| #10 | Yes. |
| #11 | Yes. |
| #12 | Yes. |
| #13 | Not angry or frustrated, just a bit sad. |
| #14 | Yes. |
| #15 | Yes. Felt sad and depressed. |
| #16 | No. |
| #17 | Yes. Feel disappointed. |

Table 15: Interview Question Seven - Results

**8.  Do you ever blame someone when you don't get good marks? Who do you blame?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Blame myself for not studying hard enough. |
| #2 | Not really, except myself. |
| #3 | No, only myself. |
| #4 | No, except myself. |
| #5 | No, except myself. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | No. |
| #8 | Only in a group situation, where someone else doesn't contribute or pull their weight. |
| #9 | Angry at myself |
| #10 | No, except if myself counts, then yes. |
| #11 | No, just myself. |
| #12 | No. |
| #13 | No, its my fault |
| #14 | Usually blame someone else, but then move to blaming myself. |
| #15 | No. |

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #16 | No. |
| #17 | No. |

Table 16: Interview Question Eight - Results

9. **Do you sometimes feel like other people laugh at you behind your back when you get bad marks in something at school? How does this make you feel?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Usually they will make a big deal because I'm learner council. I feel frustrated, they shouldn't make such a big deal. |
| #2 | Yes. I'm academic head, so people expect me to do my best. Feel sad sometimes, but I get over it. |
| #3 | Yes. Feel embarrassed because I feel like I've failed. |
| #4 | No. |
| #5 | Yes, feel more frustrated |
| #6 | Yes. Pretend I don't see them. Makes me feel frustrated. |
| #7 | No, I don't think they know what my mark is. |
| #8 | Not really. People think of me as quite smart sometimes, |
| #9 | Yes. Makes me feel emotionally hurt. Not angry, just hurt. |
| #10 | Yes. Get frustrated and angry because they laughing at me. |
| #11 | Sometimes, because they used to me getting good marks. Makes me feel a little left out. |
| #12 | Yes. Makes me feel bad. |
| #13 | No. |
| #14 | Yes. Feel upset, but then think happy thoughts. |
| #15 | Yes. Feel sad, because maybe they will be giggling and sometimes I will get angry and shout at other people, even if they weren't maybe talking to me. |
| #16 | No. My mother taught me that sometimes people are going to talk, so I don't worry. |
| #17 | Yes. Angry |
| | No = 4 (23.5% <br> Yes = 11 (64.7%) <br> Uncertain = 2 (11.8%) |

Table 17: Interview Question Nine - Results

10. **Have you ever felt that other people might think you are stupid because you didn't get good marks?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Sometimes people from another class come at the exact moment you get a mark back, and sometimes they think you do badly just because of one bad mark. Think people judge too quickly. |
| #2 | No. |
| #3 | Yes. Feel frustrated because I'm not stupid, might just not have been paying attention in that class. |
| #4 | Yes. Makes me feel useless. |
| #5 | Yes. Makes me feel bad. |
| #6 | No. |

| #7 | Yes, if people don't like you. |
|---|---|
| #8 | No. |
| #9 | Yes. Makes me feel angry. Because it makes me feel like I can't do everything they can do. |
| #10 | Yes. Makes me feel upset. Not angry, just down. |
| #11 | Yes. Makes me feel a little bit pressurised. |
| #12 | Yes. Makes me feel even worse. |
| #13 | No. |
| #14 | Not really. |
| #15 | No. |
| #16 | Yes. Feel unwanted. |
| #17 | No. |

**Table 18: Interview Question Ten - Results**

**11. Do you ever feel angry because you feel your teachers don't understand you?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Yes. Kids get frustrated, and the way teacher talks to child makes me feel angry, because he is putting them down. Made me angry when it happened to me. |
| #2 | Yes. Whole class talking often. That teacher will look at me first, and blame me. Felt that I was being picked on. |
| #3 | Yes. Teacher didn't believe me when I was finished with something. |
| #4 | No. |
| #5 | Yes. Teacher doesn't understand the way I talk, teacher singles me out. |
| #6 | No. |
| #7 | Yes, sometimes I want to ask a question and they say put your hand down, that really frustrates me. |
| #8 | No, feel more sad and only slightly angry. |
| #9 | Yes. Example: when teacher says "stop doing that" or "pay attention". They don't understand that I have a problem. |
| #10 | Yes. Eg. In Gr 3 I was angry because someone was hitting me. I asked the teacher to go to the bathroom and she said no. I went back and the boy kept hitting me. I told the teacher and she said I was lying. |
| #11 | Once or twice. E.g. In one class I would be really good, and in another class I would talk a lot and fool around. |
| #12 | No. |
| #13 | No. |
| #14 | Yes. When I try to go to a teacher and ask why can't I do this or that, and they say no without giving a reason. |
| #15 | No. |
| #16 | No. |
| #17 | No. |
| | No = 8 (47.1%) Yes = 9 (52.9%) |

**Table 19: Interview Question Eleven – Results**

**12. Think about being in class each day. Is there anything about being in class that makes you frustrated or angry?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | When teachers pick on other kids. Makes them feel embarrassed. When a teacher just says open your book and do this activity, without explaining. |
| #2 | Not really. |
| #3 | People talking to you and then you get blamed. |
| #4 | When people around you are talking, and distract you. |
| #5 | Yes. Boys tease me. |
| #6 | No nothing. |
| #7 | People that talk a lot, but I also talk. |
| #8 | Not with the teacher, but with learners making a noise, and they don't listen when you tell them to stop. |
| #9 | Children talk too much, noise gets to me. |
| #10 | When class looks at me and laugh at me. Teachers, when I get punished for someone else doing something wrong. |
| #11 | This term I'm class captain, and when I tell them to be quiet and they don't listen. |
| #12 | When teachers give me too much homework on days when I have a lot of sport. When they talk during exams. |
| #13 | When my classmates they make a noise and start pushing your chair to get attention. Teachers when they shout at you when you misunderstood a question. |
| #14 | If I know I'm right, and they think I'm wrong, I would try to prove that I'm right or wrong. |
| #15 | When they talk about me, and I hear my name and see them talking. Teacher not really. |
| #16 | Yes. E.g. When I'm saying something, and then someone in the class really has to comment. |
| #17 | Mainly when the teachers don't believe me when I did something or didn't do something. |
|  | Total causes: 8 categories, with total of 23 individual instances<br>Highest = Distraction due to learners talking when they should be working 7/23 (30.4%)<br>2nd highest = Teacher picking on kids 4/23 (17.4%)<br>3rd highest = Distraction through other means (knocking on desk/pushing chair etc) / Kids teasing 3/23 (13.0%) |

**Table 20: Interview Question Twelve – Results**

**13. Please think about the way teachers teach the lessons. Is there anything they do that makes you feel frustrated or angry? (Do not name names, just give examples)**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Teachers don't understand that some children need help, and when you go up to their desk and they reject you, you feel like you can't go ask them again. |
| #2 | We write many assessments, and the teacher will tell us to just read and then give us the assessment without explaining it. |
| #3 | Yes. When they don't explain things fully, and you don't understand. |
| #4 | When people shout, for no reason. The class can be cooperating, but they lose it when they ask a question. |
| #5 | Yes, teachers leaving class in the middle of a period. |
| #6 | Nothing. |
| #7 | No. |
| #8 | I get strong emotions if I do my work and then people criticise it when I know I've worked hard. |
| #9 | No, not actually, I understand what their method is. And all of their methods work well. |
| #10 | Only sometimes with some teachers, they sometimes speak really fast and if I ask them to repeat they say I should be listening. |
| #11 | No, not really. |
| #12 | No. |
| #13 | When a teacher doesn't hear what you are saying because the pupils are laughing at that teacher, and the teacher gets angry at you. Feel angry, then nothing. |
| #14 | Not really, except in Grade 4, there was a teacher that nobody understood. |
| #15 | No problem with how they teach, I think I understand. |
| #16 | No. Understand what all teachers are doing. |
| #17 | When teachers give us worksheets and don't explain what to do. |
| | No = 7 (41.2%)<br>Yes = 10 (58.8%) |

Table 21: Interview Question Thirteen - Results

**14. What do you feel can be done differently in a class?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Don't single out people. Teachers need to be more kind and explain more thoroughly. |
| #2 | Stop focusing only on those who are struggling. Feel like I'm neglected when they only focus on weak kids. |
| #3 | They can explain more, and allow children to come to them and ask questions when they don't understand. |
| #4 | If they go individually, help individual kids, not just shout in the whole class. |
| #5 | People stop making fun of me, and teachers finish teaching us. |
| #6 | Nothing. |

| #7 | People must be more quiet in class. |
|---|---|
| #8 | Not really. Everyone is their own person, and different people get angry with different things. |
| #9 | Keep record of the people make noise, and separate from those who don't. |
| #10 | Maybe they can have like a another teacher in, but she watches the class while they doing work, and the main teacher actually marks |
| #11 | No answer. |
| #12 | No answer. |
| #13 | No answer. |
| #14 | No answer. |
| #15 | No answer. |
| #16 | No answer. |
| #17 | No answer. |

**Table 22: Interview Question Fourteen - Results**

15. **What can teachers do to help you become less angry or frustrated in class?**

| Participant | Answer |
|---|---|
| #1 | Involve me more in stuff. I feel left out. They can see I understand the work, and then exclude me when they concentrate on other people. Feeling of being left can influence marks, because I keep too myself when I feel left out, so I don't always concentrate on whats happening. |
| #2 | More attention. |
| #3 | Not blame you when you haven't done anything wrong. |
| #4 | Sometimes I go to teachers after school to tell them stuff that has happened. |
| #5 | Help me with my work. Help me to get better marks, so extra classes. |
| #6 | Nothing. |
| #7 | Try and calm me down, give me something fun to do, like colouring in. |
| #8 | Maybe teach us methods of keeping aggression down, remind us that we are our own people and that we all have our own ways of dealing with things. Or maybe even having a test where someone makes you angry, and the teacher can watch how you handle the reaction. |
| #9 | Keep me away from the naughty children. |
| #10 | N/A |
| #11 | I think I like the stress ball idea that you have. |
| #12 | Give less work. |
| #13 | They could move me closer to the front, so that they can hear me, or maybe let me sit alone, so that nobody next to me is annoying me. |
| #14 | Talk to you, ask you what's wrong, and help you. |
| #15 | Talk to me and I will be calmer. |
| #16 | They could teach you how to talk to them Go to them when you don't understand. |
| #17 | Not sure. |

**Table 23: Interview Question Fifteen - Results**

# APPENDIX E: PERMISSION LETTERS



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2014/271

## GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

| | |
|---|---|
| Date: | 22 January 2014 |
| Validity of Research Approval: | 10 February to 3 October 2014 |
| Name of Researcher: | Riddin A.J. |
| Address of Researcher: | ██████ |
| | ██████ |
| | ██ |
| Telephone Number: | ██████ |
| Email address: | ████████ |
| Research Topic: | Towards a Biblical model for Child Counsellors: Equipping pre-adolescent boys to deal with aggression with special reference to a school in Gauteng |
| Number and type of schools: | ONE Primary School |
| District/s/HO | ██████ |

### Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

*Making education a societal priority*

**Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research**
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

**Figure 9: GDE Approval for initial research**

**GDE AMENDED RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER**

For administrative use:
Reference no. D2016 / 364 A
Enquiries: Diane Buntting 011 843 6503

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

| | |
|---|---|
| Date: | 8 January 2016 |
| Validity of Research Approval: | 8 February 2016 to 30 September 2016 |
| Previous GDE Research Approval letter reference number | D2014 / 271 dated 22 January 2014 |
| Name of Researcher: | Riddin A.J. |
| Address of Researcher: | █████████████ |
| Telephone / Fax Number/s: | █████ |
| Email address: | ████████ |
| Research Topic: | Towards a Biblical model for Child Counsellors: Equipping pre-adolescent boys to deal with aggression with special reference to a primary school in Gauteng |
| Number and type of schools: | ONE Primary School |
| District/s/HO | ██████ |

**Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research**

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

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

**CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE**

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB.) must be presented with a copy of this letter.

2016/01/12

1

*Making education a societal priority*

**Figure 10: GDE Approval for extension of research period**

103

# APPENDIX F: FEEDBACK LETTERS

The following feedback letters were provided to learners and parents, for all learners who took part in the study.



**Figure 11: Feedback letter - D-type**

**Figure 12: Feedback letter - I-type**

# What's Your Personality?

**True Colours** — *know yourself and others*

The "S" style means the "Soft-hearted" style. A "S" person is very patient, kind and friendly. They are respectful, like to help others, and really dislike being in charge. The motto of the "S" person is: "Let's do it together".

If you are a "S" person, then you:

- Are loyal to your friends
- Like to cooperate with others, and work in teams
- Like things to stay the same. You don't like change
- Don't wait for someone to ask you to do something, you just do it

- Are humble. You don't like being in the spot-light.
- Have a small group of very close friends.
- Like to do things step-by-step, and you plan things carefully

If you would like to know more about how to work with your child and their unique personality, please feel free to make an appointment with Mr Riddin.

Descriptions adapted from:
"The Children's Profile", published by The Institute for Motivational Living, and from
"Different children, different needs", written by Dr Charles Boyd

**Figure 13: Feedback letter – S-type**

# What's Your Personality?

True Colours
Know yourself and others

The "C" style means the "Conscientious" style. A "C" person loves doing tasks and like to be organised. They can focus on tasks for long periods at a time and like to take time to figure out solutions to problems. The motto of the "C" person is: "Let's do it right".

If you are a "C" person, then you:

- Want everything you do to be perfect
- Pay attention to all the details, never miss a thing
- Take your work seriously, and make sure you do things when they need to be done
- Do not like taking risks. Everything must be planned

- Focus more on facts than feelings and think things through before acting
- Can read people easily (figure what they feeling and thinking)
- Do things the right way, and can easily decide what is right and wrong.

If you would like to know more about how to work with your child and their unique personality, please feel free to make an appointment with Mr Riddin.

Descriptions adapted from:
"The Children's Profile", published by The Institute for Motivational Living, and from
"Different children, different needs", written by Dr Charles Boyd

**Figure 14: Feedback letter - C-type**