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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR  
DIFFICULTIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A MADANG  
PROVINCE PERSPECTIVE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the**

**degree of**

**Master of Special Education at the**

**University of Waikato**

**by**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Behavioural difficulty is probably the least understood area of special education as it is very problematic to identify a specific cause. Behavioural difficulties are those behaviours that students sometimes exhibit that are inappropriate and unacceptable in the classrooms or schools, as they disrupt the smooth process of teaching and learning.

This study investigated primary school teachers' perspectives of the causal factors of students' behavioural problems and what can be done to minimise this problem. The study was carried out in the Madang Province involving two primary schools. From the two schools, twelve teachers (six from each school) participated in the study. The same participants were involved in both the questionnaire and the semi structured interview. The data gathered for the questionnaire and interview were analysed and transcribed respectively.

The findings discovered that the family and school factors contributed substantially towards students' inappropriate behaviours. Family factors include parental problems, abuse in the families, and the constant struggle to provide the basic necessities due to the high living cost. School factors, on the other hand, include negative teacher attitudes, teacher lack of knowledge and skills to adapt the curriculum to include social skills, lack of teacher support and encouragement, and peer influences. The findings also discovered that teachers were more bothered about externalising behaviours such as disruption and aggression than internalising behavioural problems like withdrawal and depression displayed by students. Further, teachers' limited pre-service and in-

service training and the lack of experience in teaching students with behavioural problems contributed significantly for teachers not attending to students who behave inappropriately.

Based on the findings identified in the study, several recommendations were made on how to intervene to alleviate this problem. Of particular importance is teacher training at both the pre-service and in-service level. Also government support is needed in terms of funding for training, involving specialists and other resources to respond to student behavioural problems effectively and efficiently. The findings may have particular relevance to future studies in this area and provide teachers with effective and workable intervention strategies for students' behavioural problems in the classrooms or schools.

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This thesis is dedicated to the following people.

My deceased parents Saun, and Membung. I wish they were still around to witness and celebrate my achievements.

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## **LIST OF TABLES**

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Teachers' demographic information	46
2. Teacher's knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour difficulties	49
3. Teachers' perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behaviour difficulties	50
4. Teachers' views of intervention strategies for behaviour difficulties	51

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Ecological system in practice in PNG	25
2. Causal factors of behaviour difficulties	52
3. Relationship between severity and prevalence of the types of behaviour difficulties	53

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgement	iv
Dedication	vi
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Table of Contents	ix
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Overview of the Chapter	1
1.1 Rationale of the Study	1
1.2 Special Education in PNG	3
1.3 Statement of the Problem	6
1.4 Significance of the Study	7
1.5 Research Setting	7
1.6 Summary and Outline of Chapters	8
<b>Chapter 2 Literature Review</b>	<b>10</b>
2.0 Overview of the Chapter	10
2.1 Definitions for Behaviour Difficulties	10
2.2 Types of Behaviour Difficulties	12
2.3 Causal Factors of Behaviour Difficulties	13
2.3.1 Family	14
2.3.2 School	17

2.3.3	Peer Group	22
2.3.4	Socio-cultural Background	23
2.4	Intervention Strategies	26
2.4.1	Creating Positive Nurturing Environments, Teacher Demeanour, Planning and Preparation	27
2.4.2	Curriculum Adaptation	28
2.4.3	Communication with Parents	28
2.4.4	Environmental Accommodation	28
2.5	Classroom Management Approaches	30
2.5.1	The Educultural Wheel	30
2.5.2	The Hikairo Rationale	31
2.5.3	Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL B)	32
2.5.4	Antecedent and Consequent Principles	32
2.5.5	Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)	33
2.5.6	Discipline, Democracy, and Diversity (DDD)	33
2.6	Summary	34
<b>Chapter 3 Methodology</b>		35
3.0	Overview of the Chapter	35
3.1	Research Questions	35
3.2	Quantitative Approach	36
3.3	Qualitative Approach	36
3.4	Research Methods	37
3.4.1	Questionnaire	38
3.4.2	Semi-structured Interview	38
3.5	Data Collection Procedure	40
3.6	Data Analysis	40
3.7	Research Setting	41

3.8	Research Participants	41
3.9	Validity and Reliability	42
3.10	Ethical Protocol	43
3.11	Ethical Considerations	43
3.12	Problems Encountered During Data Collection Period	44
3.13	Summary	44
<b>Chapter 4 Results and Discussion</b>		<b>45</b>
4.0	Overview of the Chapter	45
4.1	Quantitative Analysis of Results	45
4.1.1	Teachers' Knowledge and Understanding of the Rights to Education for children with Behaviour Difficulties	47
4.1.2	Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Teaching Children with Behaviour Difficulties	49
4.1.3	Teachers' Views of Intervention Strategies for Behaviour Difficulties	50
4.1.4	Teachers' Views on Causal Factors of Behaviour Difficulties	52
4.1.5	Teachers' Perceptions of Most Severe Behaviours and their Prevalence	53
4.2	Qualitative Analysis of Results	54
4.2.1	Teachers' Knowledge and Understanding of the Rights to Education for Children with Behaviour Difficulties	54
4.2.2	Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Teaching Students with Behaviour Difficulties	60
4.2.3	Teachers' Views of Intervention Strategies for Behaviour Difficulties	71
4.3	Summary	79

<b>Chapter 5 Limitations and Implications of the study, Recommendations and Suggestions for further studies</b>	82
5.0 Overview of the Chapter	82
5.1 Limitations of the Study	82
5.2 Implications of the Study	83
5.2.1 Lack of Awareness on Behaviour Difficulties	83
5.2.2 Lack of Behaviour Management Policies	83
5.2.3 Inadequate Teacher Training	84
5.2.4 Lack of Professional Development	84
5.2.5 Lack of Support for Teachers	84
5.2.6 Lack of Parental Involvement	85
5.2.7 Lack of Curriculum Adaptation	85
5.3 Recommendations	85
5.3.1 Providing Awareness, Education and Training	86
5.3.2 Developing Behaviour Management Policies	86
5.3.3 Practicing Positive Attitudes	87
5.3.4 Teacher Training and Professional Development	87
5.3.5 Working in Partnership	87
5.3.6 Building Support	87
5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies	88
5.5 Personal Goals	89
<b>References</b>	90
<b>Appendices</b>	103
A.1 Letter to Participants	103
A.2 Information to Participants	104

A.3 Participant Consent Form	105
B.1 Letter to Director ERO	107
B.2 Letter to Education Advisor	109
B.3 Letter to Principals	111
C.1 Part A of Questionnaire	113
C.2 Part B of Questionnaire	114
C.3 Part C of Questionnaire	115
C.4 Part D of Questionnaire	116
D. Interview Schedule	117
E. Approval- Ethics Committee	118
F. Approval- Research Unit	119
G. Approval- Education Advisor	120

## *Chapter 1*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Overview of the chapter**

This introductory paragraph is intended to provide the rationale for undertaking the study, based on a statement of the problem with a brief history of Special Education in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It further outlines the purpose of the study and the research questions. The significance of the study is explained and the context of the study is outlined. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis.

#### **1.1 Rationale of the study**

The rationale for this study of behavioural difficulties arose from my experience as a primary school teacher during thirteen years of teaching at primary schools in (PNG) and more recently as a teacher educator. My observations reveal that behavioural difficulties are a constant cause for the disruption to teaching and learning in classrooms. They are a problem that schools and teachers are faced with on a daily basis. Behaviour difficulties affect the teaching and learning process as well as the smooth running of the schools. The types of behaviours range from minor classroom disruptions to more serious problems such as verbal assaults on other children and teachers, smoking, using drugs and alcohol, violent crimes, and getting involved in gang activities during breaks and after school. Further, I have witnessed many students being ‘disciplined’ in the form of suspensions and expulsions by school authorities as a ‘solution’ to the unacceptable behaviours, rather than preventative measures being established. In the PNG context, unacceptable behaviours displayed by students are seen as a discipline issue, rather than a special need that should be addressed through skilled intervention methods.

In 1994, while teaching in a PNG primary school, I witnessed Paul (not his real name), a recently expelled grade seven male student, shouting abusive language to teachers and other students in the presence of his peers, while under the influence of drugs. Paul lived with his grandparents because the parents abandoned him and his two siblings when their parents' marriage broke up. As a young teacher with very little experience at that time, I was not of much help to him, although at times I did offer some advice and guidance. Paul, now aged about 30, is understood to be serving a prison term of five years for armed robbery and burglary.

While incidents such as these are by no means unusual, there appears to be too few responses by authorities to try and keep these problems to a minimum. There is scant evidence that schools offer in-service sessions for considering workable strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviours. Indeed, most in-service sessions have appeared to give emphasis to the 'teaching and learning' curriculum. In addition, teacher training institutions seem to be more concerned about equipping trainee teachers with 'content knowledge' rather than practical strategies for classroom management. During my two years as a lecturer at one of these institutions prior to taking up postgraduate studies, I noticed that special education principles and policies were not advocated with much enthusiasm at teacher training institutions. This may be attributed to the fact that special education was offered as an 'optional' (as opposed to compulsory) paper in the final year of training. This may account for many graduating students going into the field with little knowledge of what special education really is and how to attend to students with special needs. This imbalance in terms of pre-service training contributes to the reasons why teachers are often bereft of ideas about how to deal with unacceptable behaviours within classroom settings.

## 1.2 Special Education in PNG

A fundamental principle of the Constitution of PNG is the right to equal opportunity for all citizens of PNG. In 1993 the Government of PNG and the National Department of Education (NDoE) formulated a National Special Education Policy (NDoE, 1993) to uphold the spirit of the National Constitution. The Policy declared three fundamental features to underpin the development and implementation of Special Education in the country for the current era. These concepts are:

- I. Children with disabilities should have the same right of access to education as other children,
- II. The government of PNG and the NDoE should allocate an equitable proportion of resources, provide special education teacher training and provide specialist teachers to support the education and student with special needs, and
- III. Students with disabilities should attend the regular schools along with students without disabilities, in all cases where that are feasible.

(NDoE, 1993, cited in Simeon, 2003, p.4)

In response to this policy, the Government of PNG had to support and work closely with the non-government organizations(NGOs) or agencies, which work in isolation to provide services for students with special needs. “Special education services were forced to become more integrated and inclusive than the segregated special education services and infrastructure. The inclusive/special policy also ‘provided an alternative for many children with special needs in many remote parts of PNG to be included as normal children in regular classroom’” (Simeon, 2003, p.4). Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education (UNESCO, 1994).

The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and was restated at the Dakar World Education Forum (UNESCO, 2000). Inclusive education means that;

... schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups. (The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, paragraph 3).

Based on these fundamental features the NDoE formulated specific goals of the Special Education Policy. These goals reflect the principles of social justice and equality by affirming respect for the dignity of the individual and community interdependence. The four main goals were:

- I. The constitution upholds the right of every child to basic education. The state will promote equality of access to relevant, quality education for all.
- II. Children with special needs have a right to an education program suitable for their needs.
- III. The specific objectives of special education shall be the development of learning competencies and nurturing of values which will help learners with special needs to become useful and effective members of the society.
- IV. The long-term goal of special education shall be integration or mainstreaming of children with special needs into the normal school system and into the community.

(NDoE, 1993, cited in Simeon, 2003, p.5).

In order to implement the Special Education Policy effectively, the National Department of Education has developed several policy directives to be implemented by all stakeholders. These directives contain a significant amount of detailed, practical information and objectives, which serve as a guide. The policy covers all types of disabilities; including physical impairment, intellectual impairment, sensory impairment and *behavioural difficulties*. The policy directives apply to all levels of education in Papua New Guinea, including higher education (Frost, 2002; NDoE, 1993). The policy included

the guidelines and information on support services in order to assist with the implementation of inclusive practices. The guidelines included information on expectations on assessment, enrolment, curriculum, institution administration and funding.

To achieve these goals, all teacher training institutions, the seven teachers' colleges and the University of Goroka were required to include special education courses as part of their curriculum for pre-service teachers. Special education courses should be developed and taught to all trainee teachers during their training. This includes teaching students with special needs during practicum. Teacher educators (lecturers) at these institutions should take active roles in conducting school-based in-service training on special education, particularly inclusive education. In addition, the policy stated that all established teachers, especially those with lack of knowledge and experience in special/inclusive education should be encouraged to attend in-service trainings (NDoE, 1993).

Apart from providing in-service training to teachers, the personnel at Special Education Resource Centres were given instructions, that they should support teachers to deliver special education programmes in regular schools. Specialist teachers or personnel should assist regular teachers to develop different inclusive programmes. These include curriculum modification, teaching skills and strategies, intervention strategies, and planning individual education plans (IEP) (Frost, 2002; NDoE, 1993).

Although special education was to be implemented in all schools beginning 1994, most schools gave it a low priority due to lack of funding, policy coordination and implementation at the national and provincial levels (Frost, 2002; Simeon, 2003; Vlaardingerbroek, Tottenham, & Leach, 1994). Other problems that hindered the former and current education systems from fully implementing the special and inclusive education in PNG were: poor quality training; teacher attitudes; rigid curriculum; rigid teaching methods; inaccessible environments; exclusion of parents; teachers and schools not supported; lack of teaching aids and equipments; and many students who were 'repeaters' and 'dropouts' (Frost, 2002; Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project (PASTEP), 2000; Simeon, 2003; Vlaardingerbroek, et al., 1994).

The education of most students with special needs was catered for by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) such as charity groups, church agencies, and locally and internationally based disability groups (NDoE, 1993; Vlaardingerbroek, et al., 1994). These organizations established Special Education Resource Centres (SERCs) in certain provinces of the country to provide education to children with special needs. Today there are about 13 different SERCs located throughout the country operating under different organisations. The majority of these centres are run by the Catholic Church while the others are run by NGOs. Of interest to this study was the establishment of 'Boys Towns' in East Sepik and Morobe Provinces, for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

As the trend towards inclusive education in PNG continues, concerns remain for teachers in terms of fully understanding and implementing the special and inclusive education policies. Teachers have been shown to hold more negative opinions towards students with behaviour difficulties, as compared to those with intellectual disabilities. They also appear to demonstrate less willingness to integrate students displaying behavioural difficulties, as compared to students with other types of exceptional needs (that is mobility problems or medical concerns).

Inclusive education gained recognition in 1994 by the United Nations (UN), and was incorporated into the education policies of many countries, including PNG. Nevertheless, the implementation of the policy in PNG schools has been rather slow-moving. Inclusion means providing for the educational opportunities for all students irrespective of their disabilities in the same learning environment (Foreman, 2001). This includes children with behavioural difficulties. In spite of this, many established teachers, particularly those who have been in the field for more than 15 years, seem to have no idea of what the inclusive education policy is all about. They tend to consider children with special needs as those who will demand more effort, time and resources. One suspects that lack of knowledge,

experience and inadequate pre-service and in-service trainings are reasons for such stands being promoted (Mushoriwa, 2001; Williams & Gersch, 2004).

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The Special Education and Inclusive Education policies of PNG call for equal rights to educational opportunities for all students (NDoE, 1993). These rights, however, are not being acknowledged as too many students with behaviour difficulties are being suspended, stood-down, or expelled from school for a raft of reasons. Schools and community members need to desist from these exclusionary actions, by finding ways to help them to seek opportunities for educational success. Addressing these problems early and skillfully is essential in terms of immediate and long-term considerations. It is proposed that the findings of this research will make a significant contribution to primary school teachers, teacher training colleges, provincial education authorities, and the PNG Ministry of Education with new strategies to improve or strengthen their commitment. It is further proposed that benefits from the research will accrue to parents, family members, the community at large and most importantly those children who, because of their challenging behaviours, are at risk of educational failure.

#### **1.5 Research setting**

The research was conducted in Madang, one of the twenty provinces of Papua New Guinea. It is a large region approximately 300 kilometers wide with four large and many offshore islands. It shares a common border with neighbouring provinces of East Sepik, Morobe, and Eastern Highlands. Madang Province has a population of 362 850 (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2005).

According to Chris Bulu, the Provincial Education Advisor (personal communication, May 11, 2007) Madang Province is a host to six tertiary institutions, 7 vocational centres, 2 secondary schools, 5 high schools, 204 primary schools and 317 elementary schools. About three-quarters of the primary schools are run by church agencies. There are about 680

elementary teachers with 26,594 students, and 1,497 primary school teachers with 50,946 students, 41 vocational teachers with 647 students, and 190 secondary and high school teachers with a combined population of 1,944 students. The teachers' college has over 35 lecturers and over 600 students.

The study involved only twelve primary school teachers from two primary schools. One of the schools is government run and located away from town. The other is a church agency school and is within the vicinity of town.

## **1.6 Summary and outline of chapters**

Chapter One outlined the rationale of the study, the statement of the problem, a brief history of Special Education in PNG, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the context in which the research was carried out.

Chapter Two reviews the related literature pertaining to this study. This includes defining and classifying behaviour difficulties, identifying the types of behaviour difficulties, and identifying the causal factors, and the intervention strategies.

Chapter Three explains the methodology of the study, drawing upon a number of central methods and principles in the interpretive paradigm. This chapter explains how these methods were utilised to guide the way in which data were gathered, coded and analysed. The research process is also described and reflected upon. In addition, the limitations and implications of the study are discussed here.

Chapter Four presents and discusses the results of the study. It shows how the study generated a series of themes which developed from the questionnaire and interview questions. Each theme is illuminated by extracts from the data. Further, the initial research questions are returned to and addressed in the light of the results. Discussion is also presented in line with the themes identified. Discussion of each theme is related to existing literature and also highlights new insights that emerged.

Chapter Five discusses some limitations of the study. Also discussed in this chapter are implications for theory, classroom practice, teacher training and government support. Recommendations for further studies are also included. It is intended that the findings of the project will also provide policy makers, organisations, institutions and policy implementers with workable strategies and approaches to help children with behavioural difficulties.

## *Chapter 2*

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Overview of the chapter**

A range of relevant literature from different countries and contexts will be explored regarding behaviour difficulties. Definitions of behaviour difficulties and some of these inappropriate behaviours that exist in schools will be discussed, along with the causal factors. This chapter will also describe critical issues regarding effective intervention strategies and classroom management approaches for responding to students with behaviour difficulties on the one hand, and prevent their occurrence on the other.

#### **2.1 Definitions for behaviour difficulties**

Defining and classifying behaviour difficulties is extremely problematic as there is no universally accepted definition. It is a conundrum to many teachers along with other professionals, as what is interpreted as a behaviour difficulty by one may be seen as falling within the bounds of acceptable behaviour by another (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000). As Conway (2002) suggests, behaviours can be unacceptable depending on their location, frequency, intensity, duration and other factors such as culture and socio-economic status of the student. Conway declares that defining behaviour difficulties is not trouble-free as they occur in diverse forms and can be branded as grave or otherwise, only when one makes a social judgement concerning the behaviour in a social context. He succinctly summarises that “what makes behaviour inappropriate is its appearance in the wrong place at the wrong time, in the presence of wrong people and to an inappropriate extent” (p. 179). Another reason for the term being problematic is that, behaviour difficulty is probably the least understood area of special education, and the area with the most inconsistent educational provisions (Conway, 1994). Despite these reservations, many definitions have

been suggested for behaviour difficulties. For example, early definitions focused mainly on negative behaviours displayed by the child, by pointing out what was wrong, but offering no indication of the direction to take that might limit, minimise, or avoid these negative behaviours occurring.

Bower (1981) has developed a set of criteria that has become known as the ‘educators’ definition of behaviour difficulties. According to Bower, there are five behaviour patterns that characterise students with behaviour difficulties:

1. An inability to make progress in learning which cannot be attributed to intellectual, sensory or health problems.
2. An inability to develop or maintain positive interpersonal relationships with peers or adults.
3. Inappropriate response to environment or social situations.
4. Wide variations in moods.
5. Frequent physical complaints that do not appear to have a medical basis (pp. 115-116).

The New Zealand Ministry of Education (cited in Mitchell, 1999) defines behaviour difficulties as behaviour that is of such intensity, frequency, duration and severity that it can jeopardise and threaten the physical safety of the child and others, severely limit the child’s access to ordinary settings, and interfere with the child’s social acceptance, sense of well being and educational performance. Mitchell adds that behaviour difficulties can become extreme and chronic if no appropriate intervention measure is put in place to help the child.

In the PNG context, behaviour difficulties are those “behaviours that students sometimes exhibit that are inappropriate and unacceptable in the classroom or school” (Simeon, 2003, p. 17). These students have difficulties in following rules, expressing themselves, and behaving in a way that is acceptable to teachers and other students.

Students who are said to have behavioural difficulties show evidence of a wide range of characteristics that vary in nature and intensity. This wide range of characteristics reflects the limited consistency in classifying persons with behavioural problems (Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy, 2004). Other terms used interchangeably in this study to refer to behaviour difficulties are: behavioural difficulties, student misbehaviour, inappropriate behaviours, behaviour problems, behavioural problems, disruptive behaviours, unacceptable behaviours, abnormal behaviour, or behaviour disorder.

## **2.2 Types of behaviour difficulties**

Psychiatrists, psychologists and educationists alike commonly classify behavioural problems into two main categories called externalising and internalising behavioural difficulties. Externalising refers to patterns of behaviour and manners of self-presentation that are experienced by others as disruptive, antisocial or confrontational. Examples of such behaviours include aggression, disruption, oppositional behaviour, non-compliance, and negativism. Internalising on the other hand, refers to insufficient amount of behaviour that often involves skills deficit. Behaviours that are illustrative of internalising disorder are depression, social isolation, neglect, phobias, anxiety, and immaturity (Kauffman, 1997).

The literature outlines several types of behaviour difficulties, ranging from aggressive to more trivial behaviours. According to Charles (1999) teachers contend with five broad types of behavioural difficulties. In descending order of seriousness as judged by social scientists, these behaviours are as follows; aggression, immorality, defiance of authority, class disruption, and goofing off.

Aggression refers to behaving in an angry, threatening behaviour or starting fights or attacking someone. Students with these behaviours can physically and verbally attack teachers or other students. Immorality is a behaviour that is normally not acceptable and common acts in the schools and classrooms include cheating, lying, and stealing. Defiance of authority is a type of behaviour where students refuse to do as requested by those in authority, especially the teacher. Sometimes this can be hostile (Charles, 1999). In this

categorisation, Kauffman (1997) included deliberately annoying others, often being angry and resentful, touchy and easily annoyed by others, often being spiteful and vindictive, as examples of defiance. Disruptive behaviour prevents teaching and learning from continuing in its normal way and causing trouble. Examples of this type of behaviour include: talking loudly, calling out, walking around the room, clowning, and tossing objects. Goofing off refers to wasting time or task avoidance. Instead of doing assigned work, students do hindering things like fooling around, getting out of seat, not doing assigned tasks, dawdling, and daydreaming (Charles, 1999; Kauffman, 1997).

These antisocial or externalising behaviours can make teaching and learning a misery. Conway (2001) proposes that the two common categories of student behaviours that concern teachers are inattention and poor work habits, such as not being able to work unassisted and the inability to complete tasks without additional assistance.

### **2.3 Causal factors of behaviour difficulties**

In trying to establish the causes of behaviour difficulties, many are quick to point to the deficiencies or inadequacies within students, or their families, their ethnic groups and the community where they come from. Unfortunately, people are often slower to look further for what causes these challenging and disruptive behaviours (Glynn & Berryman, 2005). Researchers have proposed several theories and conceptual models to explain abnormal behaviour. Regardless of the conceptual model from which behavioural difficulties are viewed, the suggested causes of behavioural difficulties can be classified into two major categories which are biological and environmental factors (Heward, 2000). This notion of biological and environmental factors as causes of behaviour difficulties was also supported by Kirby and Fraser (1997) who propose that there are influences ranging from prenatal and biological to broad environmental factors and conditions that can affect children to behave the way they do. For example, there is growing evidence to suggest that early prenatal trauma functions are biological risk factors for later academic difficulties in the child's education progress (O'Dougherty & Wright, 1990 cited in Kirby & Fraser, 1997).

Biological factors refer to children's inborn temperament due to genetic, neurological, biochemical or a combination of all these factors, which may predispose to behavioural problems. Howarth and Fisher (2005) claim that pupils may have inherited a genetic predisposition to a specific disorder. An example is either Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These disorders may impact on their ability to happily learn and do other relevant activities with their peers and teachers, resulting in a display of challenging and difficult behaviour. Such a notion is supported by Kauffman (1985; 1989; 1997) who proposes that there is some evidence to believe that these factors are more likely to be linked to profound, rather than mild behaviour difficulties. However, Fraser and Moltzen (2000) argue that the evidence is inconclusive. Only on rare occasions is it possible to demonstrate a relationship between specific biological factors and behaviour difficulties.

Apart from the biological factors, environmental factors also contribute to behavioural problems in schools. Environmental factors involve events which affect the way students act. Dodge (1993) identified three causal factors that contribute to behavioural difficulties: an adverse early rearing environment; an aggressive pattern of behaviour displayed when entering schools; and social rejection by peers. Considerable research evidence supports Dodge's contention and the belief that they occur sequentially and in these settings: home, school and community (Conway, 2001; Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Heward, 2000; Smith et al., 2004) and seem interconnected. In other words, how the child behaves and responds to situations depends very much on the type of family that the child grows up in, the experiences that the child has at school, the kind of peer groups that the child associates with and the cultural experiences that the child has.

**2.3.1 Family.** The first environmental factor that puts students at risk of developing problems or manifesting characteristics that could lead to learning and behaviour problems is the family (Conway, 2001; Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Heward, 2000; Smith et al., 2004). The family is the principle source of nurturance and the primary influence in the socialisation of the young (Macfarlane, 2003). The relationship the children have with their

parents and families at home is critical to the way they learn to act. Winzer and Mazurek (1998) contend that the family structure is the mechanism that establishes norms of behaviour and teaches social, moral and psychological lessons explicitly and implicitly to the developing child.

Observation and analysis of parent-child interaction patterns have shown that parents who treat their children with love and care, are sensitive to their needs, and provide praise and attention tend to have children with fewer behavioural problems at school (Heward, 2000). Research has indicated that children with antisocial behaviour are more likely to come from homes where parents are inconsistent disciplinarians, use harsh language and excessive punishment to manage behaviour problems, spend little time engaged in prosocial activities with children, do not monitor the activities and whereabouts of their children, and show little love and affection for good behaviour (Conway, 2006; Heward, 2000; Macfarlane, 2007). In a study looking into the behaviour and school performance of seventh-grade male students as a correlate of different factors during the fourth grade, it was discovered that ineffective discipline and infrequent parental involvement with children was the best predictor of delinquency in the seventh grade (Walker, Stieber, Ramesy & O'Neill, 1991).

Some teachers also believe that the prime cause of behaviour difficulties lies in the home. For example, Croll and Moses (1985) in their study found that teachers believed that 66% of pupils' behaviour problems were results of home factors. Similarly, Hocking (1984) reported that high school teachers believe that 75% of students exhibiting inappropriate behaviours were results of family factors and experiences. Some health professionals have also been too quick to blame parents for the unacceptable behaviours of children. However, they have fallen short of realising that the parent-child relationship is dynamic and reciprocal. In other words, the behaviour of the child affects the behaviour of the parents just as much as the parents' actions affect the child's actions (Heward, 2000).

Such perceptions by teachers and other professionals have an important implication in terms of attributing blame for misbehaviour. If it is believed that home is the ‘root cause’ of the problem, and school plays little part in creating the problems and consequently owns no responsibility for remediation. Parents should play leading roles in rectifying behavioural problems in students. It can be argued that the results of these studies do not reflect a realistic balance of the causes of behavioural difficulties, as there are other aspects that do contribute as well. Other aspects of family experiences which may lead to behaviour difficulties include family conflict, poverty, low economic status, cultural norms and expectations, and lack of parental interest, support and recognition of the value of education.

Additionally the neglect of physical and psychological well-being; lack of supportive care and concern; lack of communication; alcohol and substance abuse; emotional, physical and sexual abuse; stress and damaged relationships; homelessness; low self-esteem; boredom; and lack of motivation for learning can contribute as well (Batten, Withers & Russell, 1996; Smith, et al., 2004; Walker & Sprague, 1999). Of these, poverty is often cited as a significant causal factor. The constant struggle to ‘make ends meet’ (survive) and the need for extra money for decent clothing, uniforms, books and school excursions and other necessities, place a lot of stress on families living in poverty and may create tensions in family relationships, which in turn may lead to conflicts and abuse (Batten et al., 1996). As Bloom (2007) states, the inappropriate behaviour of students in the classroom and school often has very little to do with the lesson, the subject or the individual teacher. Rather, bad behaviour is determined by the lived experiences and expectations that students have built up from early childhood days.

While schools and other relevant authorities cannot be held responsible for the events that take place within individual homes and families, there is a need for them be aware of the real difficulties that some students face within dysfunctional families (Balson, 1982; Blendinger, 1996). As Ashman and Elkins (1998) explain, educators and other professionals need to be aware that “any solution to behaviour problems in schools will depend upon addressing the whole problem, not just one aspect of it” (p. 193).

**2.3.2 School.** School play a central role in a child's life, and it is the place where students spend the largest proportion of time apart from their homes. Therefore, it makes sense to carefully observe what takes place in schools in an effort to find out the other events that may cause behavioural problems. Further, since inappropriate behaviours in students are not identified until they are in school, it seems logical to ask whether schools contribute to behavioural problems observed in students (Bennet, 1991; Bennett, 2006; Heward, 2000).

Kauffman (1985) and Lilijequist and Renk (2007) suggest the following ways in which schools contribute to behavioural difficulties in children. First, school administrators, teachers, and other students are being insensitive to the child's individuality. Second, teachers are having inappropriate expectations for the children. Third, teachers are being inconsistent in managing children's behaviour; instruction offered being in non-functional (irrelevant) skills. Fourth, school personnel are arranging inappropriate contingencies of reinforcement. Fifth, peers and teachers are providing models of undesirable conduct.

Schooling practices are also said to contribute to the development of behaviour difficulties in children. These include: ineffective instruction that results in academic failure; unclear rules and expectations for appropriate behaviour; inconsistent and punitive discipline practices; and failure to individualise instruction to accommodate diverse learners (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Mayer, 1995). Batten et al., (1996) included inflexible organisation and lack of academic and personal support networks in the list of contributing factors. Generally, school factors fall under the following main aspects: the curriculum the schools use, the methods or approaches used in teaching, the classroom environment, and teacher attitudes and tolerance.

A critical issue in both the cause of behaviour problems and their solutions is what teachers teach, 'the curriculum'. The curriculum is a major source of school-related behaviour problems and this is exacerbated for mainstreamed students (Conway, 2001; Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Heward, 2000; Porter, 1996; Smith et al., 2004). One major aspect of the curriculum is the level of the curriculum content taught to students (Conway, 1998).

For example, if the curriculum level is well above the ability level of students, there is little incentive for students to learn. For some children the planned curriculum is too fast, too difficult, or is lacking in purpose. Others become frustrated because they are revisiting work already learned (Jones & Charlton, 1996; McWirther, Wilton, Boyd, & Townsend, 1990; Meral, 2007; Poulou, 2006).

A number of writers have cited an inappropriate curriculum as a major source of pupil disaffection. For example, Jones and Charlton (1996) state, “It is difficult for pupils to engage in, and sustain, good behaviour when their school days are filled with materials and presentations which will fail to arouse their interest and industry” (p. 19). Similarly, Charlton (1996) contends that those:

... who are disinterested in, or disenchanted and dissatisfied with the educational programmes schools offer to them, may well direct their interest and energies away from school tasks towards a variety of maladaptive behaviours such as non-involvement in academic work, truancy, and abuse towards teachers, which facilitate an excitement and involvement unavailable elsewhere in school. (p. 56).

Other curricula aspects that result in students’ disruptive behaviour include a narrow range of subjects, inadequate access to practical subjects or unstimulating learning processes (Batten et al., 1996) and using irrelevant curricula (Conway, 1998), rigid curriculum (Frost, 2002; Simeon, 2003) and the exclusion of the ‘hidden curriculum’ (Macfarlane, 2007). The hidden curriculum refers to unplanned teaching and learning activities. For example, it includes activities such as taking the students out to local communities to watch the local people performing traditional activities like dances. The curricula schools use have a strong influence on the learning of at-risk children for developing behavioural problems, whether to continue staying at school or to leave, and their willingness to participate fully in the educational process (Batten et al., 1996; Stephenson, Linfoot & Martin, 2000).

While Kauffman (1985; 1989) considered curricula irrelevancy was a major risk factor in adolescent behaviour problems, Conway (2002) showed a mismatch between students’

reading abilities and the readability of text books contributes to behaviour problems. An associated factor is the level of academic task presented by the teachers. A study by Kauffman (1985) in secondary school indicated that secondary school students with behaviour difficulties were unable to cope with the regular curriculum topics. He suggested the combination of low student ability and grade level expectations provide an environment for classroom disruption.

An additional aspect to the school factor is lack of academic and personal support networks. Lack of academic and personal support for students may increase the risk of under achievement, and contribute to early leaving of school and unacceptable behaviours (Batten et al., 1996). This factor may also include inappropriate approaches to positive reinforcement by school personnel, teachers, and peers providing models of undesirable conduct.

Another critical issue in both the cause of behaviour problems and their solutions is the way in which teachers teach or how they teach (methods and approaches). These include making learning interesting, being prepared, using a variety of teaching strategies, being enthusiastic and interacting appropriately with students. In a series of studies of high school students in Victoria, Australia, Lovegrove and Burman (1991) found that the best teachers possess the following characteristics: put subjects in ways that could be easily understood, have a nice personality, treat students as people, and make subjects interesting.

Holden and Dwyer (1992, cited in Conway, 2002), in a study in Victoria (Australia) with secondary students, identified boredom as being another reason for leaving school early and for their behaviour problems. The study found that there was a need to relate the curriculum to real life and to their future as citizens. Conway (1998) states concisely that it also relates to the learning and assessment strategies that are used in the classroom. Bradley (1994) found that students are likely to become engaged in learning when learning is activity-based and more imaginative. For example, teaching students 'practical skills' that they can use outside the school and classroom environment, rather than 'theory', as it can

can reduce boredom in class. While teaching the curriculum is important, teachers should also be able to interact with students and treat them with respect.

The physical features of the classroom can also have an effect on behaviour since the classroom ecosystem reflects the interactions of the physical environment, teacher characteristics, the curriculum and how it is taught as well as the multitude of student variables (Cambourne, 2002; Conway, 1998). Poorly maintained classrooms with no stimulating features do not create an encouraging and pleasant learning environment (Conway, 1999; 2001; 2002). These include poor seating arrangements, lack of and insufficient storage places for teaching and learning materials both for teacher and students, and inadequate space for movement (Ashman & Elkins, 2002; Polloway, Patton & Serna, 2005). For example, research has shown that the seating arrangements in the classrooms affect the interactions of students and their learning in the class (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Gordon, Arthur & Butterfield, 1996). Conway (2002) included high noise level, uncomfortable temperatures, over or underestimation of students' learning abilities and frequent disruptions as other aspects of the classroom factor that contribute to behaviour problems. For some students, especially those with ADHD, these may exacerbate inattentive distractible behaviours (Foreman, 2001).

Studies have highlighted teacher attitudes and tolerance as key factors that can trigger certain inappropriate student behaviours (Conway, 2002; Kauffman, 1985; 1997). Conway and Kauffman identified the following teacher attitudes that contribute in one way or another to behaviour problems: being insensitive to the individuality of students; having inappropriate expectations of students; being inconsistent in managing student behaviour; giving inappropriate reinforcement; teaching irrelevant skills; and providing undesirable models of behaviour. For instance, students misbehave when they do not "fit" the teacher's expectations of an "ideal student", or when they are not satisfied with the teacher's demeanour and body language (Kounin, 1970, cited in Charles, 1999), which are effective incentives that show the teacher's enthusiasm and "withitness" (Macfarlane, 2004). Teacher attitude and tolerance are also critical school factors that have a bearing on behaviour difficulties experienced by students.

Other researchers, Bennet (1991) and Eichinger, Rizzo and Sirotnik (1990) while supporting the concepts of Conway and Kauffman, have drawn attention to: poor specification of learning tasks; ineffective time management; few opportunities to review, revise and reinforce learning; inappropriate grouping strategies; a lack of purpose in learning activities; and a lack of focus in lessons, as factors which can precipitate and contribute to difficulties in learning and behaviour problems. A study by Meadow, Neel, Scott, and Parker (1994) found 93% of teachers deliberately used the same behaviour management techniques for students with behaviour difficulties as they used for other students. These teachers saw behaviour difficulties as lying within the students and ignored the reality that they are the outcome of the interactions between students and teachers. Studies have also shown that teachers placed the responsibility of dealing with student behaviour problems at mainstream schools on parents (Croll & Moses, 1985; Hocking, 1984; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000; Williams, 2004).

However, in a Western Australian study on children with special needs in mainstream schools, parents saw that schools played major roles in their children's behaviour problems (Barrie & Tomlinson, 1985). These alternative results, clearly indicate that both schools and the home (families) contribute to behavioural problems in schools. Teachers and parents need to play leading roles in addressing the problems and in developing positive interactions within the school settings and between schools and homes. As Heward (2000) thoughtfully contends:

At best it is not practical, and at worst it is wrong, to blame parents for abnormal behaviour in young children. Instead, professionals must work with parents to help them systematically change certain aspects of the parent-child relationship in an effort to prevent and modify these problems. (p. 301)

The teachers experiencing difficulties are more likely to see the behaviour difficulty as lying within the student and ignore the fact that disruptive behaviours by students are the outcome of interactions between teachers and students. Therefore, these behaviours cannot be dismissed as responsibilities of the students and their parents alone. The Tasmanian Department of Education (1986) succinctly states:

It is too simple to conclude that all disruptive behaviour is caused by problems outside the school. Much of the disruptive behaviour that occurs in schools can be attributed to classroom interactions between the teacher, the individual student and his or her peers. (p. 193)

Glynn and Berryman (2005) state that few of the causes of challenging or disruptive behaviours at school lie solely within the students or within their family ethnic group, but result from the interaction of particular students with teachers and peers in classrooms and schools. This view implies that teachers need to examine their approaches and attitudes to teaching, and their responses to individual students as a starting point.

**2.3.3 Peer group.** Peer group influence can be a significant factor in the development of patterns of behaviours as it influences behavioural difficulties in two ways. First, peer group influence helps students to acquire particular prosocial skills and values which are critical for adaptive social development. Second, peer group may exert pressure toward negative and maladaptive patterns of behaviour and acquiring of antisocial values (Kauffman, 1997; Macfarlane, 2007). Of concern is the second way, because it disrupts the smooth teaching and learning process and contributes to the development and maintenance of an antisocial lifestyle (Macfarlane, 2004; Stanley, 2003). Students who do not have friends with their own age group or who are in frequent conflict with members of their peer group are at risk of developing serious behavioural problems. Serious academic problems, low status or social rejection are associated with hostility, disruptiveness, and aggression in the peer group (Heward, 2000; Vercoe, 1998). Peer influence is also associated with academic failure and a variety of problems later in life, including suicide and delinquency. Young people who are inclined toward antisocial behaviour respond to social isolation by

seeking out on others like themselves. The deviant peer group teaches criminal behaviours, gives a rationale to use them, and solidifies an antisocial identity (Macfarlane, 2004; Stanley, 2003).

Educators, therefore, need to encourage the establishment of positive, reciprocal peer relationships which are critical for adaptive social development. This is vital as children who are unable to establish positive relationships with their peers are at risk because the peer group is important in forming positive social relationships, and in acquiring particular prosocial values (Macfarlane, 2003).

**2.3.4 Socio-cultural background.** The fourth factor that contributes to behaviour difficulties of children in schools is a lack of information about and consideration of the students' socio-cultural background. These include their values, beliefs and languages and the integration of these factors with the culture and activities of the school (Kauffman, 1989; Macfarlane, 1997; 2004; 2007) This is evident when students regard school as alien, uncaring and an unsafe place, or when they continually find little or no evidence of their culture being reflected in the curriculum and pedagogy, or the knowledge they have is never being called upon (Glynn & Berryman, 2005). Moreover, "failing to support the development of students' understanding and ability to act in a cultural context risks marginalising and alienating young people and rendering them incompetent, with the consequent threat to the stability of the society as a whole" (Bruner, 1996, p. 56).

Teachers need to know how to gather information about students' socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and can use this information to make instruction relevant and meaningful. Information can be gathered through reading about it, talking to people and experiencing it (Macfarlane, 2007). Lack of interest in the background of others (students and family) will stultify communication and the working relationship between the two groups (Macfarlane, 2004). The Te Whariki document (Ministry of Education, 1996) extols this as being of great importance, since different cultures have different child-rearing patterns, beliefs, and traditions where varying values may be placed on different knowledge, skills and attitudes. Furthermore, this is vital as what the student's school or

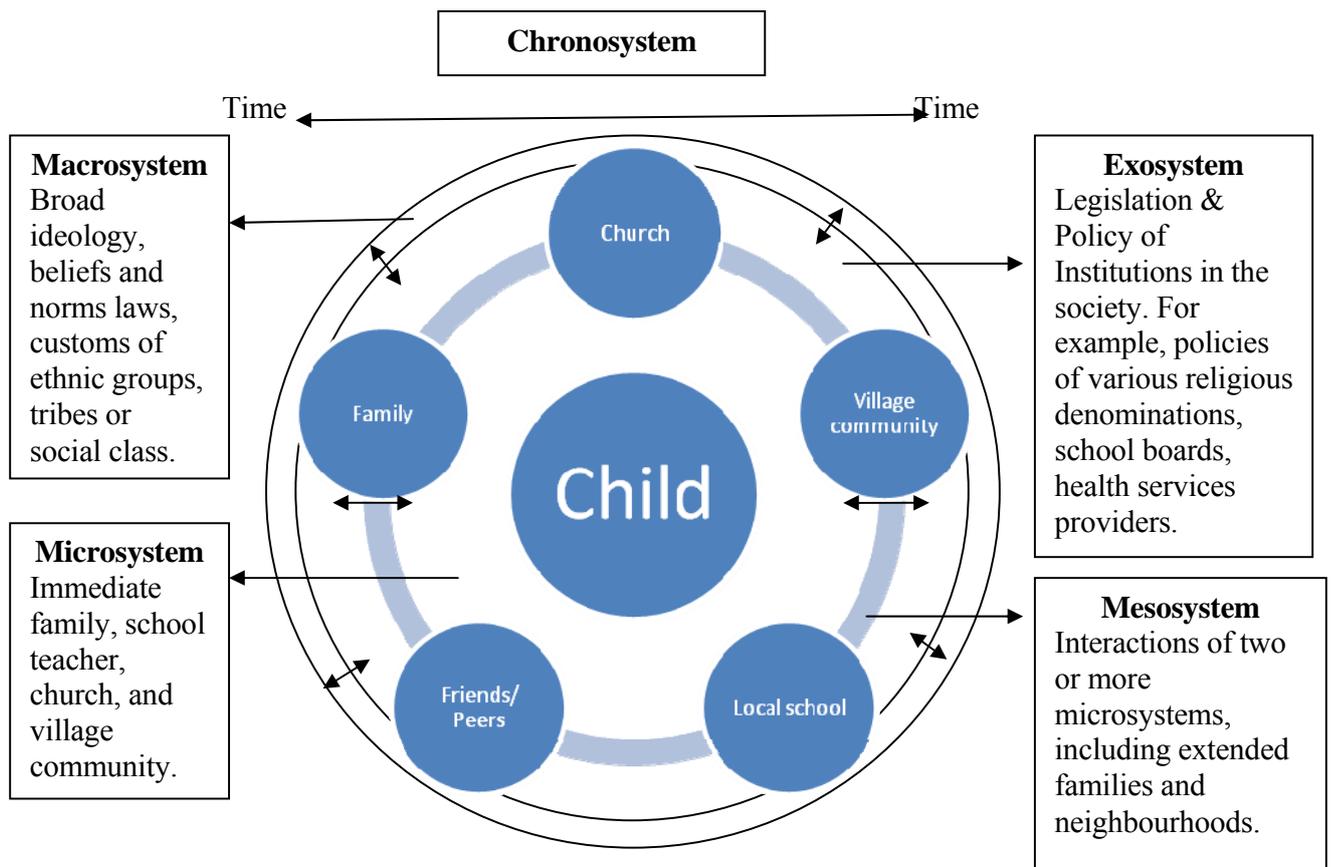
teachers views as an unacceptable behaviour may be a behaviour that is acceptable, or encouraged and reinforced by parents and family (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Glynn & Berryman, 2005).

Whichever way one may like to look at them, it soon becomes obvious that both biological and environmental factors can certainly have an impact on a child's learning and behaviour development to some extent

The exposure to these factors may lead to the development of antisocial attitudes and coercive behaviour styles that produce negative outcomes. As Walker and Sprague (1999) assert, the risk factors provide a fertile breeding ground for the development of antisocial attitudes and coercive behavioural lifestyles. For example, living in poverty can lead to lack of school readiness, which leads to low academic achievement, which finally means school failure and dropout and serious behaviour related problems. The longer "a blind eye" is turned on unacceptable behaviours, the more likely it is for many young children to develop aggressive, self-centred, and dysfunctional behavioural styles.

All these experiences and situations are interwoven together and can have a great impact on the child's behaviour and development (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Macfarlane, 2007). That notion can be better explained in conjunction with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development (Santrock, 2004). The Bronfenbrenner ecological theory focuses on the following environmental systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem and how these different environmental systems can affect and influence the development of a child through the various activities that are taking place within those spheres interchangeably. To place this theory in the PNG context requires the following explanation (see Figure 1 below). The microsystem involves the child and his personal and individual contact with his family, the teacher or the local school, the child's friends and peers. The mesosystem according to Bronfenbrenner, contains two or more microsystems. Examples are the relationship of family experiences to school experiences, school experiences to church experiences, and family experiences to peer experiences. The exosystem does not involve the child, but is, influenced by other

social factors, such as legislation and policy (other social settings). The macrosystem according to Bronfenbrenner is the culture in which the children live in. The chronosystem refers to the behaviour patterns, beliefs and values of the culture which is passed from generation to generation and is believed to change in persons or environments over time. In other words, it is the patterning of events and transitions over a period of time.



**Figure 1. Ecological system in practice in PNG (after Bronfenbrenner, 1979, cited in Santrock, 2004).**

## **2.4 Intervention strategies**

There are no “quick-fix” solutions or “cook book recipes” as to how one goes about responding to behavioural difficulties. However, the need for intervention strategies that focus on eliminating unacceptable behaviours, maintaining leadership, preserving dignity, and recapturing the instructional moment quickly is very real (Mendler, 2005).

Some students with chronic disorders may need medical treatment. Often such treatment is greeted with some controversy because of the belief that the treatment only attends to the symptoms and does not equip the child with coping strategies once the treatment is discontinued (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000). While the use of medication is optional, there are other psychosocial approaches available for responding to behaviour difficulties. Behavioural strategies such as contingency management, parent training, clinical behaviour therapy and cognitive-behavioural treatment are amongst those that are frequently practiced. According to Glynn and Berryman (2005) these strategies have been found to have positive effects when used with children. Kirk, Gallagher and Anastasiow (2003) identified three additional effective strategies: positive reinforcement; functional analysis; and ecological assessment. All these strategies and a selection of other intervention approaches identified thus far in this review of literature require further explanation and this is presented in the next section.

Conversely, most students exhibit behaviours in the classroom that are neither chronic, nor require medication – their behaviours are considered mild to moderate. In this context, teachers are advised to draw from a range of conventional strategies that are economical (they do not cost much) and effective (they are known to work). This range of strategies includes scanning the room, making eye contact, using a pause while waiting for children to come back on task, physical proximity, and teaching from a number of vantage positions in the classroom (Kounin, 1970, cited in Charles, 1999; Macfarlane, 2004). Inherent in these strategies are workable, systematic Skinnerian ideas based on positive reinforcement, shaping, and extinction.

### **2.4.1 Creating positive nurturing environments, teacher demeanour, planning and preparation.**

Many teachers would find planning and creating a positive nurturing classroom environment challenging. In order to establish a nurturing environment, teachers need to establish an environment where the students feel that they are being valued and appreciated by the teacher (Martinez, 2004; Smith et al., 2004). The positive nurturing environments include: teacher appearance, teacher preparedness, curriculum adaptation, regular communication with parents, and environmental adaptations. These aspects of classroom management shall now be considered.

Apart from valuing and appreciating students' diversity, teachers need to present themselves professionally in front of the students. Dressing appropriately depending on the situations and levels that they are teaching in or modelling what they want are examples of professionalism (Glynn & Berryman, 2005; Macfarlane, 2007). As Mendler (2005) puts it, "We must set an example by reflecting the type of behaviour we expect, in other words, walking the talk" (p. 10), and teach the desired behaviour (Canter & Canter, 1993, cited in Charles, 1999). Furthermore, teachers should also encourage and model positive self-talk in the classroom (Hendley, 2007). Such aspects can greatly affect the students, especially in modelling the teachers' dress ethics and behaviour in classrooms.

Other standard operational procedures include teachers planning their work in advance before going into classrooms. Planning work in advance is essential and important because only when teachers have set work planned for the class, will they have the confidence to deliver the lesson effectively (Crawford, Saul, Mathews & Makinster, 2005). Apart from planning ahead, teachers need to find out what support services are available for them to seek help from should the need arise, whilst at the same time using teaching strategies that would encourage students to learn effectively with one another in an inclusive setting. Such teaching strategies include cooperative learning and peer tutoring (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Glynn & Berryman, 2005; Smith et al., 2004).

**2.4.2 Curriculum adaptation.** Any curriculum for students with behavioural difficulties should include social skills (Macfarlane, 2007; Wood, 2006). Gresham (2002) suggests that social skills curricula for students with behavioural difficulties should be based on carefully and individually targeted behaviours and should facilitate the generalisation and maintenance of social skills. Adapting the curriculum is critical to the success of many students with behavioural difficulties who are educated in the regular classroom, as they will be required to employ positive social skills in various settings with different people and in changing circumstances (Gresham, 2002; Macfarlane, 2007; Wood, 2006). Moreover, to be successful there should be repeated practice opportunities as well as consistent correction and feedback on the performance of students (Gresham, 2002).

**2.4.3 Communication with parents.** Establishing a linkage between home and school is important because through effective communication with parents, teachers are better positioned to communicate with the parents regarding matters of concern about their child. These links will further enhance the teachers' ability to involve parents in their child's learning and development (Beattie, Jordan & Algozzine, 2006; Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Martinez, 2004). Kauffman, Mostert, Trent, and Pullen (2006) stress that to be most effective in managing behaviour, "teacher and parent need to be united in their expectations and discipline" (p.138).

**2.4.4 Environmental accommodation.** Setting up a creative nurturing environment includes teachers taking into account the physical environment of the classroom by organising the classroom layout in a way that would cater for all the students' needs. For example, organising the classroom in seating arrangements to cater for teaching strategies like cooperative learning and peer tutoring. Appropriate spaces for other activities like reading, maths, drawing, and other activities should also be provided in the classroom (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Thorburn, 1997). Other factors to consider include: flexible scheduling and programming, the ability to increase or decrease program restrictiveness, and appropriate materials (Zionts, 2005). Good organisation of these areas can positively influence the efficiency and attractiveness of the classroom, thus catering for a nurturing

environment that is conducive to learning (Beattie et al., 2006). Creating a comfortable and safe environment and structuring the classroom in a visually organised and uncluttered manner can facilitate learning and decrease problem behaviour (Hendly, 2007).

Catering for the needs of students with behaviour difficulties requires a great deal of knowledge and skills. Teachers and other school personnel must be prepared and competent to implement these strategies. For instance, rather than reacting spontaneously and often inconsistently to disruptive situations (Smith et al., 2004), teachers should have a management system to help avoid behavioural problems. They should remain vigilant at all times (Macfarlane, 2007). Some behavioural strategies to be used according to Heward (2000) include: positive reinforcement, shaping, contingency contracting, extinction, response cost, and time out.

These strategies and programmes should not be implemented as isolated events but incorporated into the overall instructional and school or classroom management plans (Foreman, 2001; Heward, 2000; Macfarlane, 2007; Smith et al., 2004).

When designing and implementing school or classroom behaviour management strategies and programmes for students with unacceptable behaviours, teachers and other school personnel must be careful not to create an environment that is coercive (Macfarlane, 2007; Sidman, 1989). Instead, they should strive to create environments that not only are effective in decreasing antisocial behaviour, but also increase the frequency of teacher-student interaction (Heward, 2000). Often the best way to help students with behaviour difficulties is to “demonstrate flexibility and respect” (Ayres & Hedeem, 1996, p. 48).

The vast majority of unacceptable school or classroom behaviours can be prevented with the use of proactive behaviour management strategies. Proactive strategies, according to Heward (2000) are “pre-planned interventions that anticipate behaviour problems and stop them before they occur” (p. 314). These strategies include structuring the school or classroom physical environments, establishing clear rules and expectations for appropriate behaviour, scheduling and sequencing lesson activities, and using positive reinforcement

(Hendly, 2007; Heward, 2000; Macfarlane, 2007). Hendly (2007) and Macfarlane (2007) identified similar strategies like, teaching and modelling desired behaviours, being consistent when teaching new and appropriate behaviours, setting the consequences for inappropriate behaviours, and the validation of students' feelings.

However, there are no guarantees in behaviour management and preventative strategies must be backed up with competencies to redirect or suppress behaviours that are of a more serious nature (Macfarlane, 2007).

Teachers who are most successful in working with students with behavioural difficulties are those who cooperate with colleagues, students, parents and other people who are not directly involved with this issue and therefore can offer new perspectives.

## **2.5 Classroom management approaches**

Besides the intervention strategies, there should be workable approaches that could be applied in classrooms, schools and homes. Some of these approaches include the Educultural Wheel (Macfarlane, 2004), The Hikairo Rationale (Macfarlane, 1997), Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) (Sutherland, 2006), The Antecedent and Consequent principles of changing behaviour (Glynn & Berryman, 2005; Wearmouth, Glynn & Berryman, 2005) and use of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) (Hendley, 2007). Many of the approaches mentioned are regularly embedded in other approaches which can be used to address behaviour difficulties in schools and classrooms.

**2.5.1 The Educultural Wheel.** The Educultural Wheel (Macfarlane, 2004) is an approach which emphasises the notion that if teachers want to extend learning and improve behaviour of students, strong relationship foundations have to be put in place. Teachers also need to be connected with their students in order to open the way to helping them understand themselves, their culture and the culture of others. In essence, this approach proposes that educators who are culturally sensitive will be more able to understand and respond to the learning and behaviour needs of the students who make up today's diverse

classrooms. The term ‘educultural’ is used when referring to five concepts that are likely to have an effect on students’ learning and teachers’ teaching. These concepts are: *whanaungatanga* (relationships), *rangatiratanga* (leadership), *manaakitanga* (caring), *kotahitanga* (working together), and *pumanawatanga* (atmosphere). These concepts are the bases from which teaching strategies and techniques evolve and lead to the development of useful programmes for teachers to consider.

**2.5.2 The Hikairo Rationale.** Another approach which is often applied in New Zealand schools is the Hikairo Rationale (Macfarlane, 1997; 2007). This is a culturally responsive approach to working with students who present with challenging behaviours. According to Macfarlane, the Hikairo Rationale is based on a phenomenon that grows out of the past, but functions in the present. It is an approach where students’ culture is used to help them achieve success and is based on the concept of the development of a socio-cultural consciousness (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The seven dimensions of the Hikairo Rationale are: *Huakina Mai* (Opening Doorways); *Ihi* (Assertiveness); *Kotahitanga* (Unity/Bonding); *Awhitanga* (The helping process or Interventions); *I Rungai te Maanaki* (Pastoral Care); *Raranga* (The weaving process); and *Oranga* (A vision of well-being). These dimensions do not work in isolation, but interact together in a variety of ways.

The dimensions of the Hikairo Rationale embrace the notion of teacher metaphorically opening the doorways for students and families, being assertive when responding to students’ aggressive behaviour and developing a bonding relationship with students through honest discussions (Macfarlane, 1997). The approach is strengthened through the helping process or interventions, the pastoral care process, the weaving of systems, and the search for a vision of well-being. Macfarlane proclaims that the Hikairo Rationale is an eclectic approach that is designed to generate hope in teachers while embracing the rights of all individuals and groups.

**2.5.3 Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL B).** RTL B is part of a multisystematic approach used in New Zealand schools. The system was adopted from a Canadian programme called Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) (Sutherland, 2006). According to Sutherland, RTL B is a cognitive, self control and problem solving approach that can be adapted to a wide range of setting for students who present challenging behaviours. The primary role of the use of RTL B is to provide itinerant specialist support and work to students and teachers in order to improve educational outcomes for students with mild learning and behavioural problems (Ministry of Education, 2007). This can include direct teaching, the demonstrating of practice, and the provision of teaching strategies so that students receive appropriate learning programmes and behaviour management on an ongoing basis. RTL B emphasises the achievement of behaviour standards through verbal reinforcement, ignoring attention seeking, redirection, distraction, and positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour (Kellem, Rebok, Ialongo & Mayer, 1994, cited in Sutherland, 2006).

**2.5.4 Antecedent and consequent principles.** Glynn and Berryman (2005) emphasise the use of the ten operational principles, (four antecedent and six consequent) that teachers can draw upon to generate strategies or procedures to respond to behaviour problems in their classrooms. The four antecedent principles are: planning ahead, changing setting, giving clear instructions, and modelling what you want. The six consequent principles are: contingent positive consequences, getting in early, a little and often, using positive ways and using effective sanctions principles to respond to student behaviours.

Glynn and Berryman (2005) stress the need to understand students before responding to their inappropriate behaviours. This implies to having an advance plan to follow should any inappropriate behaviour occur. Such a plan would include: using positive consequences for appropriate behaviour displayed by the student; addressing inappropriate behaviour immediately; and using positive reinforcement to reduce unacceptable behaviour. In essence, it is part of a teacher's role to assist students overcome behavioural difficulties while simultaneously assisting them to overcome learning difficulties.

**2.5.5 Positive behaviour support (PBS).** Positive Behaviour Support is a proactive approach that involves the assessment and re-engineering of environments that aims to increase social, personal and professional qualities in their lives (Hendly, 2007). This approach, according to Hendley, incorporates the use of functional behaviour assessments to determine the purpose that behaviour serves for students. PBS is systematically designed to prevent challenging student behaviours. Interventions should focus on enhancing the quality of life for students by teaching appropriate skills in real-life settings.

**2.5.6 Discipline, democracy, and diversity (DDD).** Another useful approach that aims at reducing rather than completely eliminating behaviour difficulties in schools is the use of Discipline, Democracy, and Diversity (DDD) (Macfarlane, 2007). DDD is a cluster of concepts to support students and teachers that focuses on illustrating the links between behavioural theory and competent teaching practice. Discipline refers to teaching and modelling responsible individual and collective behaviours that encourage students to turn out to be self-motivated and self-regulated learners. Democracy concerns the putting into practice skilful and respectful approaches to meet the needs of students experiencing behavioural problems. Diversity is about establishing an inclusive and safe environment: one that kindles the development of knowledge, creativity, acceptance, and participation, and encourages the expression of feelings and way of behaving (Macfarlane, 2007).

Each of these six quite distinct approaches has a common consideration- the potential to develop good teaching practice. However, Hendley warns that if teachers do not understand and value their students in class, behaviour problems will more likely become frequent and learning amongst students will be greatly affected. Furthermore, whilst these approaches offer a range of useful ideas and concepts, their success depends very much on teachers themselves and their confidence in applying these approaches in their classrooms. It may be argued that lacking confidence, skills and knowledge on how to use these approaches could limit teachers' effectiveness to attaining an orderly and thriving learning environment.

## **2.6 Summary**

In this literature review several areas of interest have been explored. These were establishing a definition of behaviour difficulties, identifying the types of behaviour difficulties and classifying them and discussing the factors that contribute to behaviour difficulties. Also in this chapter, some of the strategies and approaches that could be used to effectively respond to students with inappropriate behaviours were identified and discussed. These issues thus led to the research questions for this thesis as outlined in the next chapter.

## *Chapter 3*

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview of the chapter**

This chapter explains the research methods and the methodology used in this study. The first part of this chapter outlines the research questions. This is followed by a discussion of the methodology, including a discussion of the quantitative and qualitative means of enquiry adopted for this study and their relevance. There is an explanation on the two types of data collection instruments, survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The method used to collect the data, and the procedures and the method of sampling to select research participants will also be looked at. There is also a discussion of the ethical considerations that guided the study, and the problems that were encountered during the data collection period.

This research has employed an interpretive paradigm. An interpretive paradigm is characterised by a concern for individuals and focuses on how people interpret and make sense of the world around them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

#### **3.1 Research questions**

The key question to be answered in the research is: *What are the factors that contribute to behavioural difficulties in PNG primary schools and what strategies can be applied to improve students' behaviour to successfully implement the Special Education Policy?* Secondary questions relating to the proposed project are:

- i. What are the responsibilities of teachers in primary schools in dealing with students with behavioural difficulties and how have these responsibilities affected the learning of other students?

- ii. What are the responsibilities of principals and senior teachers in primary schools regarding effective classroom management of behaviour difficulties?
- iii. What are the responsibilities of teacher training institutions with regard to the provision of behaviour management courses in their training programs?
- iv. In what ways can the existing policies, programs and practices for behaviour management courses be built upon and how could they be improved?

### **3.2 Quantitative approach**

A quantitative research approach, according to Mertler (2006), relies primarily on the collection and analysis of numerical data. The quantitative method allows measuring responses by a particular set of people and sometimes studying the relationship of these responses to another set. An instrument widely used in quantitative research is a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and is often comparatively easy and straightforward to analyse statistically (Cohen et al., 2000).

### **3.3 Qualitative approach**

A qualitative approach, on the other hand, gathers more in-depth information of individual cases and situations (Bell, 1991). Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2002):

... is an enquiry useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. To learn more about this phenomenon, the researcher asks the research participants broad and specific questions in order to collect detailed information and analyse the information for description and themes. From the data, the researcher interprets the meaning of the information drawing on personal reflection and past research. (p. 58)

Qualitative research is useful for expanding further on the quantitative research data (Cohen et al., 2000). Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) believe qualitative research plays a discovery role in order to gain the richness of data, and discover the main ideas and relationships related to the research topic. Additionally, Bouma (1996) and O’Leary (2004) emphasise that when exploring issues on a more in-depth scale, qualitative research provides useful information to the researcher to either support or contradict the findings from the quantitative data. Moreover, according to Best and Kahn (1998), qualitative data are useful within the research setting because the participants have more freedom to express their thoughts, perceptions and experiences about the research topic. Qualitative researchers also use a variety of data collection techniques such as in-depth open-ended interviews; direct observations and written documents, with the researcher being the primary instrument of data collection (Cohen et al., 2000). Each technique allows the researcher to generate more data.

The focus of my research was to determine teachers’ perceptions of behaviour difficulties and classroom management. In order to gather the teachers’ experiences in teaching students with behaviour difficulties, the factors they consider vital to support these difficulties within the classroom, and the impediments that exist when it comes to including these students in schools, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in this study. The first phase (quantitative) involved the use of a questionnaire, while the second phase (qualitative) involved the use of semi-structured interview.

### **3.4 Research methods**

Two research instruments were used to collect data in this study in order to answer the research questions presented earlier in this chapter. These were a four-part survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview.

**3.4.1 Questionnaire.** In this study a four-part questionnaire of both open and closed ended questions was employed. The first part of the questionnaire identifies general demographic information about each participant and consisted of 7 categorical responses (yes or no) and filled-in responses (see Appendix C 1). The next part of the questionnaire elicits views and perceptions about behaviour difficulties and consisted of 10 questions using a five-point Likert Scale (see Appendix C 2). A Likert Scale provides a range of responses to a given question or statement whereby individual respondents are asked to respond on a ‘agree-disagree continuum’ (Cohen et al., 2000; Guthrie, 1996; Mertler, 2006). The third aspect of the questionnaire elicits views and opinions about types of behaviours and their prevalence and was made up of five ranking questions, whereby the participants were requested to place in order a series of statements in terms of a particular criterion (see Appendix C 3). The fourth set of questions provided the participants five open-ended questions where individual participants provided their own opinions about the causal factors of behaviour difficulties and the intervention strategies (see Appendix C 4). As Guthrie (1996) explains, open-ended questions allow the respondent to answer a question in a way he or she chooses. The open-ended questions introduce a qualitative aspect into the design. I thought it would be wise to use them here as these type of questions may often reveal unexpected thoughts and feelings (in written form) from participants (Mertler, 2006). It was intended that the information collected from the research would enable me to better understand teachers’ opinions of the causes of behaviour difficulties and their experiences of teaching children with unacceptable behaviours.

The questionnaires were completed first at each of the two selected schools for the study and took about 20–35 minutes, followed by the interviews two days later. The participating schools are described in section 3.7.

**3.4.2 Semi-structured interview.** Semi-structured interviews, according to Merriam (1989) and Kumar (1996) are a useful research instrument because of the following reasons: the information gathered could triangulate, confirm or challenge the data; the

interview can complement and support the data by exploring issues in more depth; the interview can investigate reasons for unexpected or unusual responses being gained from the questionnaire; and the participants can bring a fresh viewpoint to the research topic under investigation.

The intention of using a semi-structured interview in this study was to elicit descriptive and in-depth data from participants, who would respond to questions put forward by the interviewer in their own words. Ten semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix D) were used to obtain more information regarding the area of study. The interviews lasted between 30 and 50 minutes. In the main, the prepared interview comprised open rather than closed questions in order to elicit the maximum amount of data. The aim was to create and maintain an atmosphere in which the respondents felt that they were fully understood and safe to communicate fully without fear of being judged, criticised or subsequently identified and disadvantaged (Cohen et al., 2000; Gall et al., 1996; Merriam, 1998). Probing was used to get additional information or to make the questions clearer. The probes, however, differed from participant to participant and in some cases probing was not used at all. It was for these reasons that I used the same participants for both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview.

This phase of the research project incorporated some of the basic characteristics of a qualitative research approach. This is where the researcher conducts research in the natural settings of the participants after visiting the project site and research participants (Conrad & Serlin, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Merriam, 1998). I visited the two research sites (schools) and the participants before collecting the data. Another characteristic is that the data collected provided verbatim accounts of the participant's personal viewpoints and lived experiences (Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Merriam, 1998). For instance, the participants of this research, when interviewed, freely shared their opinions and experiences of dealing with behaviour difficulties in their classrooms and the school at large. I then attempted to make meaning out of the information supplied by respondents.

### **3.5 Data collection procedure**

Ethics review and approval were obtained from relevant authorities and each participating institution prior to commencing the research (see Appendix B 1-3). The research was conducted over a period of four weeks, with at least two weeks at each school. Before the commencement of data collection, I explained the purpose of the research and obtained informed consent of participants to be involved in the research (see Appendix A 1-3). The research was conducted in the two participating schools at different times. I conducted the research in School One first before moving onto School Two. In each school the six participants participated in the questionnaire, then the interview. There was equal representation of both gender groups. The participants' teaching qualifications and their years of teaching experiences were other determining factors when volunteers were invited to be participants in the research. After the research was completed, a formal get-together was held to acknowledge and value the participants' considerable contributions. Their professional integrity and anonymity were also reaffirmed at that gathering.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The analysis of data collected was done using both the descriptive and interpretive approaches. The results for the quantitative data (questionnaire) were analysed using the descriptive approach and arranged in tables (see Table 1-4 in Chapter 4). The analysis of the interview results, on the other hand, were done using the interpretive approach allowing for more in-depth information to be presented. Some results were presented in graphs (see Figure 2 & 3 in Chapter 4).

The interview in this study involved three processes. These were interaction, transcription, and interpretation (May, 1996). The first process was taken into account during data collection as discussed above. The interviews were transcribed and read thoroughly several times, while taking note of initial perceptions and at the same time identifying influential factors in the perceptions held. The data were categorised according to the research questions described in 3.1 and also according to the themes to be discussed

in the chapters that follow. Pseudonyms were used to report direct quotations to make the identities of respondents anonymous. For instance, the initial 'T 1/ S 1' refers to a quote by teacher 1 of school 1.

### **3.7 Research setting**

The research was carried out in two selected primary schools in Madang Province. There are six districts in this province. Due to time limitations and the cost involved only two schools within the Madang District participated in this project. School One was a Church Agency school with 35 teachers and 1025 students and is located in the vicinity of town. School Two was a State school, located about five kilometers away from the town. It had a teacher-student population of 28 and 814 respectively. Primary schools in Madang were chosen because there is a teachers' college and a university there offering Special Education courses to pre-service and experienced teachers to implement the Special Education Policy that was introduced more than a decade ago.

### **3.8 Research participants**

Madang Province has a teacher population of 2,408 distributed among the four different levels of education, teaching in different locations in the six districts. The primary level has a total of 1,497 teachers, followed by elementary level with 680 teachers. The high/secondary level and vocational level have 190 and 41 teachers respectively.

From the 1,497 primary school teachers I decided to have only twelve participate in the research project because of the time and cost involved. Each of the participants was from a different grade. The participants were asked to consider gender balance, qualification and experience. There were six male and six female participants (three from each school). The same participants were asked to take part in the questionnaire and also the interview. However, one participant in School One could not attend the interview after taking part in the questionnaire, so had to be replaced by another teacher. All participants gave their consent to participate in the research before data was collected.

### **3.9 Validity and reliability**

Two central issues that underpin the quality of data collected in research are validity and reliability. Validity is an important key factor for both quantitative and qualitative research. As Cohen et al., (2000) put it: “If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless” (p. 105). According to Cohen et al., (2000), in quantitative research, valid data might be improved through “careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of data” (p. 105). Validity in qualitative research, on the other hand, may perhaps be addressed through “honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher” (p. 105). As Gronlund, (1981, cited in Cohen, et al., 2000), puts it, validity should be “viewed as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute state” (p. 105). Since achieving 100 per cent validity is probably impossible, researchers should strive towards minimising invalidity and maximising validity (Cohen et al., 2000). In this study, validity was addressed through careful sampling, use of appropriate methodology and instrumentation, and appropriate statistical treatment for the level of data. Reliability on the other hand refers to the extent to which there is consistency in terms of research results under the same conditions (Burns, 1997). Since qualitative research involves the collection and interpretation of data that reflect specific and unique situations (Cohen et al., 2000), it is difficult to “ascertain the consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents as reliability is concerned with precision and accuracy” (p. 117). Primarily, this implies that each time a qualitative research project is carried out, the researcher has to deal with the complexity of different research environments and participant perspectives. Consequently, it is argued that qualitative studies cannot be assessed for reliability in terms of replicating research methodologies to come up with similar results (Burns, 1997).

### **3.10 Ethical protocol**

This study was undertaken within the guidelines and procedures as outlined by the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee and the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations (2000). Initial permission to undertake this study was obtained from the Research and Monitoring Division within the Education Department in Port Moresby (PNG) as well the Provincial Education Advisor in the Madang Province and the principals of the two participating schools. Schools and teachers that were involved in the study were informed by the letters from the National and Provincial Education authorities on the research (see Appendix F & G). Every participant who was involved in the study was made aware of what was expected of him or her. The participants' rights and obligations in the conduct of the research, and assurance of the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were also made known to them. The participants were further advised verbally and in writing that they had the right not to be involved, to withdraw part of the data, or completely withdraw for any reason at any stage of the data collection. Nevertheless, complete withdrawal was only allowed after taking part in the questionnaire. Every effort was made to ensure that there was no pressure placed on teachers to participate. Each participant's identity was kept confidential throughout the whole data collection process. Instead, pseudonyms were used during the collection, transcribing and the analysis and reporting of the data.

### **3.11 Ethical considerations**

There was some general feeling among the participants that the research was aimed at evaluating their individual capabilities of classroom management especially in dealing with unacceptable behaviours. It was, however, intended to find out alternative and workable strategies or approaches for dealing with unacceptable behaviours displayed by students in classrooms and schools rather than resorting to suspensions, expulsions and other coercive discipline methods.

### **3.12 Problems encountered during the data collection period**

Although the data collection dates were convenient, a few problems were encountered. Firstly, with the country going to the polls for a general election at the time of data collection, there were a lot of politically related activities organised at the schools, for example, political parties and aspiring leaders visiting the schools spelling out their policies and what they intended to do when elected. These factors made the participants not meet deadlines for the questionnaires and not attend interviews at scheduled times. Nonetheless, with the assistance from the principals and senior teachers of the schools, I was able to collect the questionnaires and conduct the interviews. Secondly, a few participants were somewhat reluctant to take part in the interview as their comments and opinions were to be recorded. However, after I re-emphasised the importance of the study and that all information provided would be kept confidential and anonymity of participants was assured, they participated in the interview.

### **3.13 Summary**

This chapter delineated the research methodology and methods used in the research. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to ensure there were validity, reliability, and triangulation of data. The quantitative approach involved the use of survey questionnaires to collect data, while the qualitative approach involved semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth information from the participants. The participants were from two selected schools within the Madang District. Gender, qualification, and experience were taken into account when participants were called for.

All formal ethical procedures and requirements were met before the research was executed and the research was conducted in an ethical manner. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants and the confidentiality of information provided were maintained throughout the research project. Minor problems encountered during the data collection period were highlighted in the chapter as well.

In the next Chapter, the results from the study will be presented and discussed.

## *Chapter 4*

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Overview of the chapter**

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of data obtained from the twelve participants from the two participating schools, and discusses these results in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

In the analysis, results are presented in two parts. Part one is the analysis of quantitative results from the questionnaire presented in the form of tables and graphs. This part commences with demographic information from the participants. Part two is the analysis of qualitative data from open-ended questions and interview questions. The analysis was carried out in accordance with the themes identified and presented later in this chapter. A discussion of the results will ensue, and this too will be carried out thematically.

#### **4.1 Quantitative analysis of results**

The responses were presented in tables and figures. Most of the results presented in this section derive from the questionnaire. These include: demographic information of participants; their knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour problems; their perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behavioural difficulties; their views of intervention strategies; their views and opinions of the causal factors of inappropriate behaviours; and what they think of the severity and prevalence of these behaviours.

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to obtain information about participants' professional and demographic backgrounds. Teachers were asked to provide information for seven variables. These were: gender; year graduated from teachers'

college; number of years of teaching experience; teaching qualification attained; pre-service training on behaviour difficulties; in-service training on behaviour difficulties; and previous experiences of having taught a student with behaviour difficulties. Two important findings emerged from these results. These relate to training and experience. These two factors contributed greatly to the perceptions, views, and attitudes teachers held about teaching students with behavioural problems. Only five of the twelve participants had some form of pre-service training on behaviour difficulties, while two indicated they had had in-service training on behaviour difficulties while teaching. Notwithstanding this, all the participants had experienced teaching students with behaviour difficulties.

Table 1 offers a tabular presentation of these details.

**Table 1. Demographic data for combined school 1 and 2 teacher surveys N=12**

<b>Demographic Parameter</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>School 1</b>	<b>School 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gender	Male	3	3	6
	Female	3	3	6
Year graduated	Before 2000	2	1	3
	After 2000	4	5	9
Years of teaching	Less than 10	3	4	7
	10 or more	3	2	5
Qualification	Certificate	1	2	3
	Diploma	5	4	9
Training on BD	Yes	3	2	5
	No	3	4	7
In-service on BD	Yes	2	1	3
	No	4	5	9
Experience on BD	Yes	6	6	12
	No	0	0	0

**4.1.1 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour difficulties.** Four items (questions 1-4) of the questionnaire concerned the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the rights to formal education for children with behavioural problems. These were: whether or not students with behavioural difficulties should have formal education in regular schools, whether or not students with behaviour problems should be taught in regular classrooms, whether teachers have a responsibility to help students with behavioural problems, and whether or not it is the responsibility of parents alone to deal with students' inappropriate behaviours. A 5- point Likert type classification ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used to measure participants' knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour difficulties. (The same 5- point Likert scale was used for the items presented in the subsequent tables).

Significant information drawn from these results shows that none of the participants disagreed about the rights to formal education for children with behavioural problems. All the participants agreed that teachers have a responsibility to help students with behaviour problems and more than half the participants agreed that students with behavioural problems should be taught alongside other students. Nevertheless, there were mixed responses regarding whether it was the responsibility of parents alone to deal with behaviour problems of children.

Of the twelve participants, eleven of them agreed that all children, regardless of their inappropriate behaviours have the rights to formal education in a regular classroom. While eleven of the total respondents agreed in principle to this policy, that all children should have access to formal education in regular schools, the twelfth respondent was undecided about the rights of children to education and placed himself in the 'sometimes' category.

The question of whether to accept and teach children with behavioural difficulties alongside other children in regular classrooms drew mixed responses. Nine of the participants felt it was appropriate for children with behavioural difficulties to be taught alongside other children in the regular classrooms, while two respondents opposed this idea. Only one respondent was undecided and placed himself in the ‘sometimes’ category. The next question was regarding teachers’ responsibilities towards students with behavioural problems. The results showed that all of the participants supported the statement that teachers have a responsibility at school as part of their job to help and support students with unacceptable behaviours.

The question of “only parents’ responsibility” to attend to students’ unacceptable behaviours drew mixed responses from the respondents. Of all the research participants, only four felt that only parents have the responsibility for dealing with the behavioural problems of their children. This view, however, was opposed by five of their colleagues. These teachers believed that dealing with behavioural difficulties of students should not be a responsibility of the parents alone; rather it should be a responsibility for teachers and other stakeholders as well. Three of the participants responded with ‘sometimes’ to this statement indicating that they were undecided as to who was to be responsible for misbehaviours by students.

The participants’ responses to the questions on the knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for students with behaviour problems are summarised in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour difficulties**

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Sometimes	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1.Children with behaviour difficulties have the right to formal education.			1	2	9	12
2. It is appropriate to teach children with behaviour difficulties with other students.		2	1	4	5	12
3.Teachers have a responsibility to help children with behaviour difficulties.				6	6	12
4. It is only parents’ responsibility to deal with inappropriate behaviours of their children.		5	3	2	2	12

**4.1.2 Teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching children with behaviour difficulties.**

Two questions (6 & 10) were used to elicit the perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behavioural problems. The questions asked whether or not students with inappropriate behaviours disrupt the teaching and learning process, and whether or not students who behave inappropriately should be suspended or expelled from school. The significant point here is that nearly all the participants agreed that students with behavioural difficulties are responsible for the disruption to teaching and learning in the classrooms and schools. However, there were conflicting responses regarding the suspension and expulsion of students who misbehave in classrooms or schools. In relation to the first question ten of the respondents believed that disruptions to learning in schools and classrooms are caused by students with unacceptable behaviours. The other two teachers were somewhat undecided as indicated by their ‘sometimes’ responses.

The question of whether or not to suspend or expel students with behaviour difficulties, like some earlier questions, drew mixed responses. Of the twelve participants, only three thought that students who display disruptive and challenging behaviours should be suspended or expelled from regular schools. These views were opposed by seven of their colleagues who, suggested that these students be retained at school. Two of the respondents, however, were undecided on their positions, thus indicating ‘sometimes’ as their responses. The results to the questions on teacher’s perceptions and experiences of teaching students with inappropriate behaviours are shown below in Table 3.

**Table 3. Teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching children with behaviour difficulties**

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Sometimes	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
6.Children with behaviour difficulties disrupt learning.			2	5	5	12
10. Suspend or expel children with behaviour difficulties.	2	5	2	2	1	12

**4.1.3 Teachers’ views of intervention strategies for behaviour difficulties.** The participants’ views regarding intervention strategies to tackle inappropriate behaviours by students were gauged using four questions. These explored whether parents and teachers should work collaboratively to address behavioural problems; whether or not behaviour difficulties and classroom management should be a compulsory program during teacher training; whether or not behaviour difficulties and classroom management should be emphasised during school in-service programs; and whether or not schools should employ specialists to deal with behaviour problems.

In regards to the first question, all the twelve participants agreed that both parents and teachers should work collaboratively to support and help students with behaviour problems. Similarly, there was unanimity on the question of making behaviour difficulties and

classroom management a mandatory course for pre-service teachers during their training and placing an emphasis on behaviour difficulty management during school in-service sessions.

While the participants were adamant about the aforementioned options, the notion of schools employing specialists to deal with student behavioural problems drew mixed responses. Seven respondents supported the idea of schools employing specialists, like behavioural psychologists, to help deal with behaviour problems in schools and classrooms, while two of their colleagues held opposing views. The other three respondents were undecided. The results to questions on intervention strategies are reported in Table 4 below.

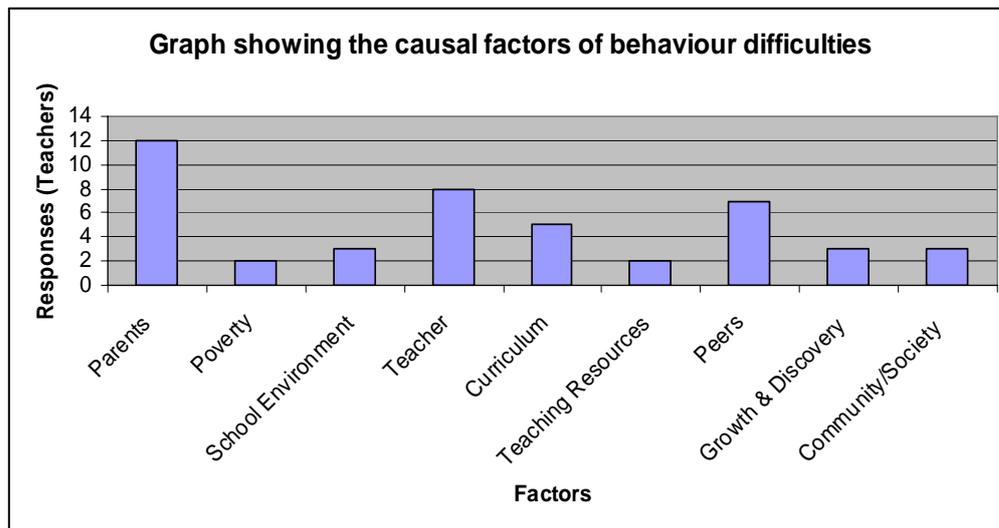
**Table 4. Teachers’ views of intervention strategies for behaviour difficulties**

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Sometimes	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
5. Parents and teachers work collaboratively.					12	12
7. Behaviour difficulty management a compulsory course at teachers’ colleges.				3	9	12
8. Emphasis on behaviour difficulty and classroom management in school staff professional development.				5	7	12
9. Employ behaviour specialists at schools.		2	3	3	4	12

**4.1.4 Teachers' views on the causal factors of behaviour difficulties.** This section is concerned with the part of the project where teachers were asked to express their views and opinions on the causes of behavioural difficulties, and how severe and prevalent these behaviours are in their classrooms or schools.

In relation to the question on causal factors of behaviour difficulties, the research participants identified the following factors as important: parents, teachers, school environment, teaching resources, peers, poverty, growth and discovery, and the community or society they live in. Interestingly, all the participants in this study believed that parents are a prime contributing factor to unacceptable behaviours displayed in classrooms or schools by students. Teachers and peers were also considered to contribute to unacceptable behaviour. The curriculum and variable access to teaching resources were contributing factors also. The factors that were thought to have little contribution to inappropriate behaviours by students were growth and discovery and poverty.

The factors that are responsible for the occurrence of behaviour difficulties are shown in Figure 2 below.

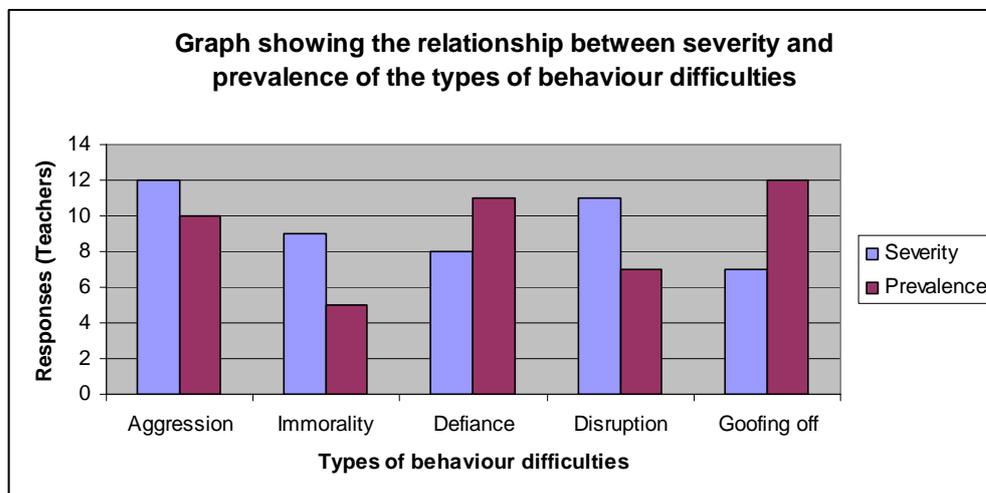


**Figure 2. The causal factors of behaviour difficulties**

**4.1.5 Teachers’ perceptions of the most severe behaviours and their prevalence.** Here the participants were asked to rank (1-5) these five kinds of behaviour: aggression, immorality; defiance; disruption; and goofing off from the most severe (1) to the least severe (5). Similar ranking was sought in terms of the prevalence of these behaviours.

All the participants thought that the most severe type of behaviour was aggression. This was followed by disruption (11) and immorality (9). The least severe types of behaviours were defiance of authority (8) and goofing off (7).

With regard to how prevalent these behaviours were, all 12 participants believed that ‘goofing off’ was the most common type of unacceptable behaviour experienced in the classrooms. ‘Goofing off’ was followed by defiance of authority (11) and aggression (10). The least common types of unacceptable behaviours were class disruptions (7) and immorality (5). The relationship which exists between the various types of inappropriate behaviour and the results from this study are presented below in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. The relationship between the severity and prevalence of the types of behaviour difficulties**

## 4.2 Qualitative analysis of results

The responses were collated and are presented here in three themes. The three themes were developed from the questionnaire and interview schedule based on the main research questions (see 3.1). The first theme is the ‘teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the right to formal education for children with behavioural problems’. The second theme is the ‘teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behavioural difficulties’ and it comes in two sections. The first section considers teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching students with unacceptable behaviours in schools and classrooms. The second section considers teachers’ perceptions of the causal factors of behavioural difficulties; how severe these behaviours are; and how prevalent they are in the classrooms and schools. The third and final theme is the ‘teachers’ views of intervention strategies’.

**4.2.1 Teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the rights to education for children with behaviour difficulties.** This theme has emerged from responses to questions 1- 4 of the questionnaire schedules. The teachers were asked whether children with behavioural difficulties have the same right to formal education as other children (see 4.1.1). Eleven out of the twelve participants agreed that, regardless of the behaviour problems, students have the rights to formal education as these two responses indicate. A male teacher stated:

It is the child’s constitutional rights to attend schools as stated in the Constitution of PNG and also the Education Philosophy of the country. Schools should abide by this and to try and help these children to change the unacceptable behaviours. (T1, S1)

A female teacher expressed similar sentiments and added:

Regardless of the behaviour difficulties the students have, they must be accepted to learn alongside other students, as education is a right, not a privilege. (T4, S2)

Another female teacher, while supporting the issue of inclusion, cautioned, however, that students have an obligation to follow school policies, as she commented:

Although students have a right to education, they must oblige to school policies and behave appropriately. If they cannot, then they should not be accepted as they may disrupt the learning of other students and be of bad influence to other students. (T6, S1)

This view was further supported by another colleague who stated:

Children don't just have rights. They have responsibilities too. People who are talking about the rights to education for children forget to mention that they have responsibilities too. Children have responsibilities to their parents, first and foremost, their teachers, others in authority, then their communities. (T2, S2)

Another aspect of interest was to find out the teachers' views on whether or not students with behaviour problems should be taught alongside other students. The majority (9) of the participants supported this and the data outlined in Table 2 endorses this claim. Interestingly, many of them were female teachers. Below are what two participants had to say, and these responses reflect the view of several other teachers when they said:

Students with behavioural problems are part of us. Therefore, they should be taught alongside other students whether the teachers like it or not. (T6, S2)

Teachers should accept and allow every child to sit inside the classroom irrespective of what they think. It is part of teachers' duty to find ways to remedy the problems they have. (T 6, S2)

As indicated in Table 2, two of the teachers opposed this when they said:

Students with behavioural difficulties should not be taught together with other students as their unacceptable behaviours might influence other students. They should be taught away from the normal schools by specialised teachers. (T5, S2)

It was important to obtain the participants' views on whether or not teachers have a responsibility to help students with behaviour difficulties. As indicated in Table 2 above, all participants agreed unanimously that teachers do have a prime responsibility to help these students. This view was further emphasised in the interviewees' answers and the views of three participants illustrate this. A male teacher stated:

Since teachers are regarded as the 'second' parents of students and because they spend more than half of every school day with teachers, we must do everything we possibly can to help them. (T3, S2)

In a similar manner two female teachers said:

Besides teaching and assisting students with their academic work, teachers should also have other responsibility of teaching social skills like respect, love and care for others and their properties, so that the students can become good citizens in their communities when they leave school. Just the same as we tell our own children to behave in appropriate manners, we must tell the same things to the students we teach too. (T4, S1)

Teachers help to shape lives and prepare students to become resourceful, respectful, and responsible citizens of a community. If we cannot help these students, then it shows clearly that we are incompetent. (T6, S1)

In the next section the participants' responses as regards to parents' responsibilities towards behaviour difficulties are considered. As pointed out in Table 2, there were mixed responses from both the open-ended questions and the interview responses. Two male teachers thought addressing behaviour difficulties is often the responsibility of parents alone, as they stated:

Teachers are trained and employed to teach what is planned in the curriculum, not to deal with inappropriate behaviours of students. Dealing with inappropriate student behaviour is the work of the parents, as I do not have the knowledge and skills to deal with students who display inappropriate behaviours. I was not taught how to attend to behavioural problems at the college. (T2, S2)

My job is to worry about the learning of the students in the classroom, not dealing with students with unacceptable behaviours. That is the responsibility of the parents and the school administration. I do not have time for that, as 'my plate is already full'. (T3, S1)

When asked to elaborate on what he meant by "my plate is already full," he identified tasks such as planning and preparing lessons; preparing teaching aids; student assessment; writing reports; and attending to other delegated duties as things that have filled his plate.

Gender did not play a role in the placement of responsibility as a female teacher made a similar comment when she said:

It is the responsibility of parents to deal with students' unacceptable behaviours. Some children come to school and act in inappropriate manners because of problems back at home. (T5, S1)

Colleagues provided divergent opinions on the idea of responsibility as these teachers clearly stated. A male teacher said:

It should be a 'shared' responsibility, because students with unacceptable behaviours are likely to influence other students to follow them and interrupt the learning of others. Therefore, parents, teachers, and other school authorities should share the responsibility of dealing with unacceptable behaviours of students, so as to minimise it. They should come together, talk it over and find amicable solutions. (T1, S1)

However, a female teacher began by asking:

Why pointing fingers and shifting blame here and there? Schools and parents should equally shoulder the responsibilities as most of what students learn and try to imitate come from schools and homes. All concerned parties need to come together to find ways of helping these students, instead of pointing fingers at each other. (T 4, S2)

The other three participants were undecided as to who was to be blamed and who should take the responsibilities.

## **Discussion**

The discussion that now follows is arranged according to the questions that were put to the participants. First, the significant points arising from the results of the study will be identified. Then, the findings will be related to relevant literature reviewed earlier.

The importance of giving children with behavioural difficulties access to formal education was overwhelmingly supported by most of the teachers in this study. These respondents stated that children with behavioural difficulties should have the rights to formal education in regular schools just like other children. These teachers believed that schools should accommodate this population of children as they have the same right to be educated alongside other children in regular classrooms. This finding is consistent with the PNG Inclusive Education Policy (NDoE, 1993) and the PNG Education Philosophy (NDoE, 1986) which declare education as a right, rather than a privilege. Other international organisations like UNESCO (2003) and Inclusion International (1998) also emphasise the right to formal education for all children.

The entire group in this study stated that teachers do have a primary responsibility to help students with inappropriate behaviour at school, besides performing the tasks required of them as teachers. The required tasks include the implementation of the suggested curriculum and other delegated responsibilities. However, as seen in this study, this is not the case in many PNG schools and teachers blame the lack of skills and knowledge, training, resources, support from school authorities and a lot of “extra work”. This is consistent with studies by Poulou (2006) in Greece and Meral (2007) in Turkey, where teachers felt ineffective in attending to behavioural problems due to lack of training, skills and knowledge. Similarly, a New Zealand study of teachers found a lack of knowledge, skills, resources, and support as reasons for teachers providing conspicuously little attention to this population of students (McWhirter, Wilton, Boyd & Townsend, 1990).

The present study was set in a way to identify demographic variables that may partly account for the participants’ perceptions towards students with behaviour difficulties and concerns about including these students in regular classrooms, and the teachers’ sentiments

when interacting with them. Interestingly, it was found that female participants were more positive in their responses towards helping students with behaviour problems in their classes than were their male counterparts. This finding is consistent with previous studies which suggest that female teachers have a greater tolerance level for carrying out the inclusive education, as well as more positive attitudes and feelings towards students with special needs (Avramidis, et al., 2000; Eichinger, et al., 1999; Thomas, 1985).

Irrespective of gender, some writers suggest that teachers are generally expected to make every effort to feel responsible to help students with behavioural difficulties, as inappropriate behaviours are seen as by-products of the interaction and experiences that take place within the school. Teachers, therefore, need to give some serious thought to the different intervention strategies presented by various theorists (Glynn & Berryman, 2005; Hendly, 2007; Macfarlane, 1997; 2004; Sutherland, 2006). While these writers agree in principle that there are no quick-fix remedies to adopt when students present challenging behaviours, they are adamant that the personality of teachers is a critical determining factor in the “business of teaching”, where the right attitudes, skills, knowledge, experience, and relationships are required (Jensen, 1995, cited in Macfarlane, 2007).

As seen in the results concerning the allocation of responsibility (Table 2), a significant difference was found regarding the suggestion that only parents have the responsibility to deal with inappropriate behaviours of their children. Four of the participants believed that only the parents should be responsible for finding solutions to the inappropriate behaviours of their children. Their reasons for taking such a stand include: parents are the cause of students’ misbehaviour; the teachers lack skills and knowledge to deal with inappropriate behaviours; there is lack of support from school administrations; and “their plates are already full”, a phrase commonly used by teachers to refer to their workloads of preparing lessons and teaching aids, student assessment, and report writing. Their viewpoints were, however, opposed by five of their colleagues, who believed that dealing with students’ behaviour difficulties should be a “shared responsibility” with parents. As stated above, these teachers believed behaviour difficulty to be a by-product of the teaching and learning process and the home. Therefore, teachers should work in

partnership with parents to provide support and deal with behaviour difficulties, rather than apportion blame on each other. The end result is that these students should become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of the society in which they live in. This idea was supported by Heward (2000) who states: “It is not practical, and it is wrong to blame parents for students’ inappropriate behaviours” (p. 301). Instead, they should work in partnership in an effort to prevent and modify these problems. A study by Barrie and Tomlinson (1985) in Western Australia also found out that both schools and homes contribute to behaviour problems in schools, and therefore both need to play leading roles in finding amicable solutions.

**4.2.2 Teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behaviour difficulties.** The second theme is about participants’ perceptions and experiences of teaching students with behaviour difficulties. The theme will be looked at in two parts. Firstly, there is a focus on the teachers’ perceptions and lived experiences of teaching students with unacceptable behaviours in their teaching profession. Secondly, the discussion looks at the teachers’ views and opinions about the severity and prevalent types of behaviours as observed in the classrooms.

This first part of the section examined teachers’ perceptions and experiences of teaching students with unacceptable behaviours in regular classrooms or schools. The responses to these perceptions and experiences are shown in Table 3 (see 4.1.2).

In the first question, the participants were asked to give their opinions on whether or not students with behavioural problems disrupt the teaching and learning process. Almost all the respondents believed that disruptions in learning in classrooms and schools are caused by students with unacceptable behaviours. This was also revealed when the teachers were interviewed. A male teacher said: “I spend a lot of teaching time talking to disruptive students or attending to their problems, leaving the other students unattended.” (T2, S1). A female colleague who was of the same opinion, nevertheless, identified male students as being more disruptive than female students. She said:

I have experienced a lot of male students to be more disruptive than female students. They annoy and bully other students and destroy properties. Sometimes they are involved in fights. (T5, S2)

The other two female teachers were somewhat undecided as indicated by their 'sometimes' responses. One teacher when interviewed responded that "students do behave in unacceptable ways, but they do what is required of them." She saw student engagement in classroom as important (T4, S1). The other teacher who was undecided expressed her thoughts in a similar manner when she said:

It is true that students with behavioural difficulties disrupt learning in the class. However, they do it on purpose. For example, they are not happy with the teacher's approach, the explanations are not clear, the kind of work given to them is irrelevant, or because they have a problem. (T6, S2)

It was important to gauge the participants' personal views and opinions on the subject of suspension and expulsion of students with behavioural problems and this question, like some earlier ones, drew mixed responses (see 4.1.2). Of the twelve participants, three thought that students who display disruptive and challenging behaviours should be suspended or expelled from regular schools. Two teachers expressed their views by stating:

Students who misbehave should be suspended or expelled as schools do teach or encourage students to misbehave. They must face the consequences for their actions. If this is not done, these students will influence the other students. As the saying goes, 'one bad apple spoils the others'. (T1, S2)

Schools are not places where they can do whatever they wish to do. It is a place to learn. If they think they can do whatever they wish, then school is a wrong place for them. They should be sent away, or schools will be seen as breeding grounds for criminals. (T3, S1)

Conversely, these views and thoughts were opposed by seven of the twelve respondents. Two male respondents thought they should not be suspended or expelled

because suspension or expulsion will only worsen the inappropriate behaviours. They explained this issue by stating:

Students with inappropriate behaviours should not be suspended or expelled. Instead, they should be allowed in school, while teachers and school authorities try to come up with ways to make students change their inappropriate behaviours. If we send them away, we are destroying their lives, which make them feel like unwanted citizens, which may lead them to getting involved in bigger problems such as criminal activities. (T2, S1)

Students who misbehave should not be sent away. Teachers have a responsibility to try and help these students. One way is by finding out the problems they have and provide help accordingly. If it means modifying the curriculum, then do so, as there is no law stopping it from happening. For example, involve them in more practical subjects, as the skills learnt in these subjects will be helpful when they leave school. (T4, S1)

When considering whether students should be suspended or expelled from school, gender was not considered to be important as two female teachers agreed with their male counterparts. They explained their views in this way:

First, it is against the Education Philosophy and Constitution of the country. Second, we add to the social problems the country is facing. Instead, school authorities and teachers should retain them at school and find other ways of dealing with them so that they feel accepted. If we don't, then it shows clearly that we are incompetent. (T5, S2)

Students who behave inappropriately should not be sent away because teachers and school authorities are here because of the students. Our bread and butter come from working with these students. We are not here to build empires and castles. (T4, S1)

Two of the respondents, however, could not position themselves, thus indicating 'sometimes' as their responses indicated:

These students should not be sent away as the law (policy) says so. However, they have an obligation to follow and respect the school policies or rules. If they cannot behave

accordingly, then the school authorities can discipline them the way they think is best.  
(T3, S2)

Schools should not discipline students by way of suspensions or expulsions as they have a constitutional right to formal education. Nonetheless, they can be disciplined in ways for them to change their inappropriate behaviours and attitudes. This is so that they feel encouraged and responsible in what they do and try to behave appropriately. (T2, S1)

These teachers considered legal positions, school policy and alternative approaches to discipline. Perhaps the “sometimes” indicates the understanding of the complexity of some of the issues that those involved face.

The focus of this section of 4.2 is now on the participants’ views and opinions on the causes of behavioural difficulties, and their severity and prevalence in their classrooms or schools (see 4.1.4; 4.1.5).

All the twelve participants believed that parents are a prime contributing factor to unacceptable behaviours displayed in schools or classrooms by students and this was clearly disclosed as these responses indicate:

Parents are the real cause of behavioural problem, because children come to school with problems of homes in their minds. While at school, they behave inappropriately to release their frustrations or to get the attention of their friends and teachers. (T3, S1)

Children steal from others because they are hungry. They sleep in class because they stayed up till late or there was problem at home. Because of all these, I think parents contribute a lot to behavioural problems of children. (T5, S2)

Maybe students misbehave because they are being mistreated by parents and other family members, their needs are not met, or they are not disciplined. Parents just do not

seem to have time for their children. There is a lack of attention, love and care for them by their parents. (T6, S1)

Teacher ineffectiveness was highlighted as a contributing factor when teachers acknowledged that they also contribute to behavioural difficulties in schools and classrooms. Examples of this viewpoint are shown in these statements:

Teachers should not blame parents for the unacceptable behaviours of children. Teachers should be blamed also. Sometimes teachers' approaches to students are not good. Teachers are not being fair to all, or like some students and dislike others, or offer more assistance to certain students and not to others. That is why they behave badly to show their frustrations. (T6, S2)

Some students misbehave because some things are not done to the expected standard. These include: the way lessons are organised and presented; the materials and resources used to support our teaching; how classrooms are managed; the assessment approaches used; the feedback provide; lack of praise and encourage of good work and behaviour and so on. (T5, S1)

Sometimes, students behave inappropriately because teachers give irrelevant or more difficult tasks to them and expect them to complete the tasks successfully or have high and unrealistic expectations. (T2, S2)

The other factors contributing to behavioural difficulties, according to the responses from the participants, were curriculum and peer influences. In reference to curriculum being a contributing factor, one teacher commented:

Most of what is suggested in the curriculum to be taught to students nowadays are foreign materials. The teachers and students either have very limited idea about them, or nothing at all. The suggested materials are totally irrelevant. As a result, the work planned for students becomes boring, difficult or confusing. (T4, S2)

There was a suggestion made that the curriculum was inflexible. Teachers use the suggested teachers' guides and resource books as little bibles as they see modifying the suggested curriculum is a crime (T4, S1).

The influences of peers were also acknowledged as being a contributing factor as these teachers stated:

Students misbehave, because they want to show their peers what they are capable of doing, or to get the attention of their peers. They want to be popular. If they do not, then they get kicked out of their peer group. (T5, S1)

Students misbehave because of the pressure put on them by their peer group. Older members of the group usually give orders to the young ones to get involved in inappropriate acts. In most cases, these orders are carried out without having a second thought of the consequences (T3, S2).

It was of interest to discover what types of unacceptable behaviours the teachers consider to be severe. An additional point of interest was how prevalent these behaviours were in the classroom.

In order of severity, the respondents considered aggression as the most severe type, followed by disruption and immorality. The least severe types of behaviours were considered to be defiance of authority and goofing off.

With regard to how prevalent these behaviours were, all of the participants believed that goofing off was the most common type of unacceptable behaviour experienced in the classrooms or schools. Goofing off was followed by defiance of authority and aggression, with the least common types of unacceptable behaviours being class disruptions and immorality.

## **Discussion**

Section 4.2 now makes links to the literature review. It focuses on some of the teachers' lived perceptions and experiences while teaching students with behaviour

difficulties alongside other students. Teachers are said to play a leading role in meeting the academic needs of behaviourally diverse students.

Disruption to the teaching and learning process in the classroom is a common problem encountered by teachers and students alike. This is usually the work of students who are labelled as students with behaviour difficulties. As found in this research, ten participants thought students with behaviour difficulties are responsible for the disruption to teaching and learning, as they spent a lot of time attending the disruptive behaviour and less time implementing what they had planned to teach students. As Mendler (2005) contends, these students present instructional and behavioural challenges never before tolerated in the mainstream school settings. The findings here also suggested that teachers were bothered more by externalising than internalising behavioural problems in the students. Examples of externalising behaviours are disruption, aggression, goofing off, immorality, and defiance of authority. These patterns of behaviour and manners of self presentation are seen or experienced by others as being disruptive, antisocial, and confrontational in ways that impede the smooth process of teaching and learning. Further, this study found that the teachers' personal teaching efficiency and effectiveness contributed significantly to the prediction of how bothersome externalising behavioural problems were perceived in the classrooms.

A recent study by Liljequist and Renk (2007) examining the relationships among teachers' perceptions of students' behavioural problems and their own efficacy and psychological symptoms confirms this suggestion. Liljequist and colleague found out that teachers were more concerned about externalising than internalising behavioural problems in students.

However, the teachers did state that some students misbehave on purpose. Some of the possible reasons for student misbehaviours given by the respondents included: negative teacher attitudes and approaches; teacher inconsistencies in behaviour management styles due to lack of behaviour management skills; teaching styles; lesson presentation methods;

lessons being teacher centred; peer influences; and students' own problems. The literature has identified these as key factors that can trigger inappropriate student behaviours (Conway, 2002; Kauffman, 1985; 1997).

The teachers were in disagreement over whether suspension and expulsion of students with behaviour problems should be encouraged as ways to reduce inappropriate behaviour in schools. Only three participants thought that suspension and expulsion should be encouraged in schools. One teacher said students who misbehave should face the consequences of the inappropriate behaviours and cited the proverb “one bad apple spoils the barrel”, meaning that a student with inappropriate behaviour can ruin everyone or everything around him or her.

Nonetheless, these views were opposed by seven of their colleagues. These teachers thought that suspending or expelling students who exhibit inappropriate behaviour is “coercive” and will be “detrimental” for these students, their families, and their communities. Instead of using coercive methods of discipline like suspension or expulsion, teachers and school authorities should retain these students at schools and work closely with parents and other stakeholders to find the real causes of why students misbehave and come up with ways to help these students. This is so that they feel encouraged and responsible in what they do, and therefore they try to behave appropriately.

The literature also disapproves of the use of coercive methods of discipline to deal with student behaviour problems as these methods are detrimental to these human beings (Glasser, 1990; Kohn, 1996). Kohn and Glasser call for punitive or coercive methods of discipline to be replaced with nonpunitive and noncoercive methods like student involvement in resolving classroom problems and teacher-parent collaboration to solve behavioural problems. Similarly, Macfarlane (2007) stated that punitive or coercive methods of discipline like stand-downs and suspensions should be the last resort, as these approaches do not work in the long-term. Instead, schools should help students “toe the line and keep them on track”. Schools must reflect on whether they have taken into account

what has been done with the students previously, and if they have done everything they could or should do overall.

An analysis of some causal factors of behaviour difficulties that exist within the PNG context as found in this study is indicated in Figure 2. The results show the causal factors in the following descending order: parental problems; teacher attitudes and teaching approaches; peer group influences; curriculum organisation; school environment and community or society; teaching resources and poverty; and growth and discovery.

As indicated above, parental problems were considered the main causal factor towards behavioural difficulties. Some parental problems identified in this study include separation, verbal abuse, lack of support and encouragement by parents who place students at risk and contribute greatly to behaviour difficulties observed in schools. It can also be noted here that poverty, due to the high cost for access to basic services like seeking medical attention, paying school fees, and other necessities, or in other words, the ‘struggle to make ends meet’ (Batten, et al., 1996) also forces students to behave inappropriately. This is relatively consistent with an Australian study (Conway, 2006) that cited unstable relationships between parents or caregivers; death of a parent; inadequate parenting skills; family discord, violence, separation, or family breakdown; and parents with serious mental, alcohol, or drug problems as factors that contribute to student behavioural problems.

The second contributing factor to behaviour difficulty according to this study was the negative attitude teachers had towards students with unacceptable behaviour. The literature also states that negative teacher approaches and attitudes towards students with behavioural problems do results in discrimination and prejudices in the classroom and the school as a whole (Bennet, 1991; Kauffman, 1985; 1997). In Romania, a recent study (UNESCO, 2001a) revealed that negative attitudes of teachers contribute to students developing inappropriate behaviour.

The third factor identified was peer group influence. Peer group influence forces students into consuming intoxicated drugs, engaging in criminal acts and behaving

inappropriately. Peer group influence as a contributing factor to students behaving inappropriately is supported in the literature (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000; Heward, 2000; Macfarlane, 2003; 2007; Stanley, 2003; Vercoe, 1998).

The fourth factor as seen in this study that manifests itself as a contributing factor is the curriculum. The teachers believed that the school curriculum is extensive, demanding and rigid, leaving little room for teachers to be flexible to adapt or experiment and try out new approaches. As a result, the curriculum has been unable to meet the needs of this population of students thus leading them to behave inappropriately. This view is consistent with several experts in the field who contend that the school curriculum does contribute to behaviour problems in students (Batten, et al., 1996; Bennett, 2006; Charlton, 1996; Conway, 1998; 1999; 2002; Frost, 2002; Jones & Charlton, 1996; Kauffman, 1985; 1989; Macfarlane, 2007; Simeon, 2003).

Finally, the training needs of pre-service and in-service teachers are not being adequately met. This contributes to the increase in behaviour problems. The studies by Poulou (2006) in Greece and Meral (2007) in Turkey also support this claim that teachers receive limited training to effectively work with students with behavioural problems. Further, there are little or no training and capacity building opportunities available for teachers to respond to inappropriate behaviour by students. However, when training opportunities are available, they seem to be fragmented, uncoordinated, inadequate, unequal, and often inappropriate to the needs of the teachers and most importantly students with behaviour problems. This was evident in the schools I worked in as a primary school teacher and also as a teacher educator during practice teaching times.

Most severe and prevalent types of behaviour difficulties are discussed next. There is growing concern by teachers at the level of behaviour difficulties in this context. While it was found in this study that the prevalent type of behaviour were in descending order of aggression, disruption, immorality, goofing off, and defiance, this results differ from Charles (1999). He claimed that behaviour difficulties are judged in the following descending order of seriousness: aggression; immorality; defiance; disruption; and goofing

off. The reasons for the differences in these orders could not be verified. However, it seems logical to assume that the seriousness of the types of behaviours varies from context to context. There may also be a cultural difference. Other types of behaviour problems identified in this context include, swearing, and showing of obscene gestures, graffiti, bullying and delinquency. Although behaviours like the use of obscene gestures, graffiti, and bullying were not identified in other contexts like Australia, it is interesting that other types of inappropriate behaviour do exist elsewhere. This is an indication that most types of behavioural problems are similar in many contexts, however, these behaviours vary in level of seriousness and from place to place.

In the context of this study, it was indicated that male students were more frequently and continuously involved in behavioural problems than female students. This is similar to a study in Australia (Conway, 2006) where boys were more frequently labeled as having a behaviour problem than girls. A study of referrals to specialist behaviour settings in a large school in NSW (Conway, 2006) found that boys were more commonly referred for behaviour assistance than girls, and this was said to be consistent across grades. Similarly, in New Zealand, the Education Ministry data for July 2006 (Macfarlane, 2007) showed that male students represented the majority of stand-downs and suspensions because of various inappropriate behaviours at schools. It was also found that a good number of male students who misbehave come from “well educated and working class families” compared to those from average and socio-economically disadvantaged families. This claim is in direct opposition to the Australian context where many students with behaviour problems come from low socio-economic status and backgrounds (Ashman & Elkins, 1998). The information obtained in this study did not include socio-economic status.

The prevalent type of behaviour problem encountered by teachers as revealed in this study was goofing off. This was the position of this group of research participants. While goofing off was followed by defiance and aggression in order of prevalence, according to the points of view of the participants in this research, the least common types of behaviour difficulties were disruption and immorality. Other more specific prevalent behaviours identified in this study include swearing, stealing, showing of obscene gestures, graffiti and

bullying. This is quite consistent with an Australian study by Vinson (2002) who identified swearing, disobeying, clowning around, refusing to cooperate, confronting, and disrupting as the six most common behaviour problems encountered in regular classroom that disrupt the teaching and learning process. An earlier study of behaviour difficulties of students in Western Sydney, teachers identified distractions, problems with listening, physical aggression, demands for teacher attention, inability to remain on task, and disruption of others as common problems in the classrooms (Stephenson, et al., 2000). This is an indication that prevalence levels in any context may be relatively consistent, as seen in context of this study and Australia.

**4.2.3 Teachers' views of intervention strategies for behaviour difficulties.** The views of teachers as to what can be done to limit or minimise behaviour difficulties in schools or classrooms were recorded.

Of particular interest were the participant's views as to whether or not parents and teachers should work collaboratively to assist students with behavioural problems. As reported the entire group agreed in principle that there should be collaboration between parents and the teachers to better assist students who behave inappropriately (see in 4.1.3). This was also indicated in their unanimous interview responses as these excerpts suggest:

Although this does not happen as it should be, I strongly feel that teachers and parents should work in partnership so that children can behave well, care for each other, and learn happily in school. (T5, S2)

Parents and teachers should work in partnership, collaborate with each other to overcome inappropriate behaviours displayed by students in schools. This, I think is important, as in the long run, it will paint a bad image of the schools they attended and the parents they have. (T3, S1)

Instead of pointing fingers and blaming each other, parents and teachers should work together to help these students. (T4, S2)

Opinions regarding behaviour difficulties and classroom management to become a mandatory course at teaching training institutions were sought. As already reported, all the participants agreed in principle that behaviour difficulties and classroom management should be a compulsory course or paper offered to pre-service teachers during their pre-service training. Similar views were echoed in the interview responses as these excerpts demonstrated.

Behavioural difficulty management should be a compulsory course offered for teacher trainees. Teachers' colleges are not doing enough. They seem to equip trainee teachers with the knowledge and skills of teaching better lessons. I don't think the teachers' colleges place emphasis on classroom discipline and management. As a result, new graduates find it very challenging to attend behavioural problems in the classrooms. (T2, S2)

I strongly believe that behavioural difficulties in schools and classrooms can be effectively minimised if behaviour difficulties and management be a compulsory course at teacher training institutions. Furthermore, teachers' colleges should have specialist lecturers to teach this course. (T4, S2)

We should address behavioural difficulties at the early stage. If we are ignorant about this, the child will be greatly affected and will become a bad citizen in the community, province and the country. Since teachers are the starters of children's life long educational development, behaviour difficulty and classroom management courses must be offered in Teacher Training Colleges. As the saying goes: "Plant the right seed in a child and it will be there forever". (T1, S1)

Of interest was the degree of importance placed on behaviour difficulties and classroom management during professional development sessions in schools. Again, the participants agreed unanimously to this and the interview responses from the participants further confirmed this as these comments indicate:

To be honest with you, many teachers, including myself, do not know how to deal with unacceptable behaviours in the classrooms and schools. All we know about is to discipline them by way of smacking, sending them out of the classrooms, sending them home to come back with their parents. We need to be in-serviced on areas like: the causes of

behavioural problems; how to approach them; and what to do with students who continuously misbehave. (T2, S1)

Schools should invite specialists or teachers' college lecturers to provide in-service training to teachers in the schools. Teachers are just good at punishing children for doing things wrong. I tried all sorts of punishment, but they are not so helpful. The children continue to misbehave and sometimes make me lose my temper. I think teachers need help in this area as unacceptable behaviours in the school are on the increase. (T5, S1)

Professional development is important for teachers to effectively attend to students with behavioural difficulties. Teachers are not attending to them. Instead, we are just ignoring them and blaming the previous teachers for these students' inappropriate behaviours. Therefore, authorities at both the provincial and national level should make funding available for professional development in this area. Similarly, schools should make times available and encourage teachers to participate fully. (T3, S1)

The feasibility of employing specialists in behaviour difficulties in schools to help with managing inappropriate behaviours was employed (see 4.1.3). While there was a mixed response drawn from the respondents, their position was made known during their interview, as these interviewees suggested in the following statements:

It is a very good idea to have specialists at schools as teachers have very limited knowledge and skills to look into this matter. As a result, they sometimes treat students unfairly. (T4, S2)

Employing specialists like behaviour psychologist is the way to go. This is because teachers continue to avoid students with behavioural difficulties. The teachers' common reasons for doing this are that they don't have time; and they lack the knowledge and skills to attend to children who misbehave. Employing specialists is also vital because they can also help to conduct in-services on behaviour difficulty management to teachers. (T3, S1)

Schools should employ behaviour specialists to deal with children with behaviour problems, because they have the knowledge and the know-how. Furthermore, because they are neutral people, I believe they will be fair and treat all students the same. However, they should not work in isolation. They should work in consultation with parents, teachers, school counselors and Board of Management. (T1, S1)

Two of the respondents, however, did not agree with the views of their colleagues and stated these:

This is a crazy idea. If this happens, what are the teachers going to do? At teachers' colleges we were taught how to prepare and teach lessons, as well as manage the classroom. If we cannot manage the classroom, then it shows that we are incompetent. (T5, S1)

It is not a good idea, because it will compromise the work of teachers. For example, it might compromise the teachers' chances of promotion. Further, why not use the money intended to pay the specialists for more awareness and professional development on behaviour difficulties for teachers? (T6, S2)

Three of the respondents were undecided about whether to support the idea of employing specialists to help deal with behavioural difficulties or not. There was some uncertainty expressed when these female teachers stated:

It is good to have a trained person on behavioural difficulties to help these children. However, what about the teachers? Aren't they capable of doing that? (T5, S2)

It is a good idea that is worth trying. I support it. However, my fear is that students, especially male students might, turn it on teachers for neglecting them. (T3, S2)

## **Discussion**

In section 4.1.3 the participants' views on intervention strategies for responding to behavioural problems was discussed. From this point, the discussion follows the themes analysed and presented from the interview data.

On the question of responding to student's inappropriate behaviours in a collaborative manner, all twelve participants were in agreement. They assert that since teaching students with behaviour problems requires a team approach, teachers, parents and other stakeholders

need to engage in active collaborative and creative problem solving solutions to deal with behaviour problems. The research literature (Ayres & Heeden, 1996; Conway, 1999; Macfarlane, 2007; Martinez, 2004) also calls for school authorities, teachers, parents, and students to engage actively and collaboratively to address student behavioural problems rather than only the teacher and the concerned student(s) being involved. As Ayres and her colleague stress, it is important for the different stakeholders to bring together varied perspectives and ideas as it then can infuse new perspectives towards helping this population of students. Further, parents, teachers, and administrators engaging actively and collaboratively to address behaviour problems can also establish a shared vision of goals for these students, assist in understanding their reasons for behaving unacceptably and teach them a positive alternative. As Macfarlane (2007) succinctly asserts, to be proactive is better than being reactive. Proactive preventive measures help students to learn new ways of communicating and getting their needs met. This is very important, as too often teachers tend to react to students with behavioural difficulties only after they have been involved in unacceptable behaviour. Instead, teachers need to be vigilant about delinquent behaviours at all time and work collaboratively to identify appropriate skills and how to deal with inappropriate behaviour in positive and supportive ways (Ayres & Heeden, 1996; Macfarlane, 2007).

Promoting collaborative relationships between regular and special education teachers through joint training sessions and consultations is another worthwhile undertaking for school psychologists, whose goals are to increase educators' knowledge about disabilities and their repertoire of useful intervention strategies (Martinez, 2004). The lack of parental support and cooperation in establishing school rules and regulation or in developing policies to effectively respond to behavioural problems were also noted by teachers. The teachers called for more consistency and commitment from all concerned parties, rather than apportioning blame to each other.

Teachers also expressed the need for developing school policies to respond to students' inappropriate behaviour. Several of the participants in this study stated that schools do not have a behaviour management policy to deal with student behaviours.

Instead they use their classroom rules to manage inappropriate student behaviour. As a result, they claimed that many of their decisions have been challenged by the students, parents, and even the school management, who they claim should be on their side. Often this happened when parents, in particular, approached educational authorities at all levels (local, provincial and national) calling for the teacher (s) concerned to be reprimanded, disciplined or sacked.

The question of whether or not management of difficult behaviour should be a compulsory course offered to pre-service teachers at their respective training institutions, found unanimous support. This appeared to be so they could become confident, not only in implementing the suggested curriculum, but also in conducting themselves as confident practitioners. It was stated that teacher training institutions were equipping pre-service teachers with content knowledge and placing less emphasis on areas like classroom discipline and behaviour management which are equally important. As the results demonstrated, teachers provided conspicuously little attention to students with inappropriate behaviours due to lack of knowledge, skills, resources, and support. Many teachers took a liberal or laissez-faire position (Macfarlane, 2007; Porter, 1996) in responding to inappropriate behaviours displayed by students. Liberal or laissez-faire positions suggest that teachers make little or no effort to respond to unacceptable behaviour. The findings from this study clearly indicate that there is a great deal that PNG educational authorities and teacher training institutions can do to promote acceptable behaviour in schools.

In a New Zealand study of teachers in regular education classes (McWhirter et al., 1990), the results also demonstrated that the teachers lack knowledge, skills, resources and support to effectively respond to the needs of students with special needs, including behavioural difficulties. In Brisbane, Australia, Cambourne (2002) in a study of newly graduated teachers found that a significant number of them felt that they do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to cater for the needs of students with special needs they face in their classrooms. This lack of appropriate training has repeatedly been seen as a barrier to appropriately and effectively responding to the needs of this population of

students (Connelly, 2004; Conway, 1999; Foreman, 2001; Loreman, Sharma, Forlin, & Earle, 2005; Meral, 2007; Williams, 2004).

While these studies refer to teacher training of pre-service teachers in special needs in the regular classroom, it is assumed this group of children will include those with behavioural issues.

Loreman and colleagues (2005) and Macfarlane (2007) assert that teachers who are well trained become more confident practitioners in preventing and intervening with disruptive behaviour (Porter, 1996). Furthermore, teacher training colleges or institutions should adapt their curriculum to take on board behaviour difficulties and classroom management and adequately prepare novice teachers to effectively respond to inappropriate behaviours displayed by students.

Regarding professional development, seven out of the twelve respondents indicated that there should be staff development programs for general education teachers to help them respond positively and effectively to students with behaviour problems. This is because the teachers seem to lack the skills and the 'know-how' to deal with them. It was also indicated that teachers were not vigilant about delinquent behaviours displayed by students as they lack knowledge, skills, resources, support and experience.

The literature also stresses the importance of in-service training for teachers as general educators receive limited preparation to meet the academic needs of students with disabilities (Loreman et al., 2005; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000). It may be assumed that this applies to students with behavioural issues. Furthermore, both pre-service and in-service training programs were often seen as being mainly about developing knowledge and skills, whereas the question of attitudes and values is considered as less important. In this present study, several variables were also discovered in the teachers' attitudes and approaches towards students with behavioural problems. For example, teachers with more experience teaching students with behavioural problems and female teachers were more

supportive and hold more favourable attitudes to students with behavioural problems, compared to their colleagues with less experience and who are male.

For in-service and pre-service teachers, training focused on promoting the acceptance of students with behaviour difficulties and the provision of specific strategies to assist students to work in inclusive settings is imperative (Macfarlane, 2007) and may encourage positive feelings toward inclusion. Furthermore, helping general education teachers understand the benefits of inclusion for students with behaviour difficulties may encourage them to seek information, collaborate with colleagues and learn techniques throughout their careers that will help them achieve successful inclusive classrooms (Macfarlane, 2007). Such an understanding better prepares teachers to accept the responsibilities of educating students with behavioural difficulties alongside other students in regular classrooms. As Loreman and his colleagues (2005) state, such acts may initially enhance teacher anxiety but subsequently may stimulate them to look for suitable and meaningful strategies to respond to students with inappropriate behaviour. It is also possible that through staff development or in-service programs teachers become aware of the resources made available by government authorities and various non-government organisations. This also applies to the procedures to follow, and how to respond and react to inappropriate student behaviour and thus reduce anxiety levels and modify negative attitudes towards positive directions.

Concerning the question about schools employing specialists like behaviour psychologists to help deal with behaviour difficulties, seven of the respondents thought it is a worthwhile idea. They see employing a specialist like a behaviour psychologist as important because teachers continue to avoid students with behavioural difficulties. The main reason for teachers avoiding students with behavioural problems is the lack of knowledge and skills or training. The specialists can also help to conduct in-service sessions on behaviour difficulty management to teachers. Although it may be one of the most daunting tasks for school psychologists to influence and change attitudes and behaviours of school personnel (Macfarlane, 2007) promoting positive attitudes toward behaviour difficulties is critical considering that teachers who hold more favorable attitudes

toward inclusion frequently implement instructional strategies that promote successful inclusion (Hutchinson & Martin, 1999; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000). The use of specialist behaviour teachers occurs widely in New Zealand and Australian schools. In New Zealand, they are called Resources Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000), In Australia, different states have different names for this role. For example, in New South Wales, they are called Support Teachers and in Tasmania, they are referred to as the Statewide Behaviour Support Team (Conway, 2006). As Conway (2006) states the skills employed by specialist behaviour teachers meet the needs of all students, not just the targeted students with behaviour difficulties. Furthermore, the specialist behaviour teachers in these two countries have assisted teachers to maximise students learning, improve behaviour and develop social skills and collaborate successfully with the concerned students' parents, families, school staff and other agencies.

Although the services of specialists are not available in many primary schools through the PNG because of funding problems, some schools do have school counsellors who have the task to help students with inappropriate behaviours through counselling and finding amicable solutions to their problems. One school involved in this study trialed the use of counsellors two years ago and it is said to be a success. As a teacher educator, I have personally observed the use of counsellors to be quite successful when supervising pre-service teachers during practicum times.

### **4.3 Summary**

One aim of this study was to determine primary school teachers' perceptions and concerns about inclusive education, along with their sentiments when interacting with students with behaviour difficulties. While there was negligible difference in the area of attitudes and feeling when interacting with students with behaviour difficulties between the two schools, the data clearly indicate that female teachers held more positive views towards teaching and assisting students with behavioural problems alongside their peers.

A significant difference was also found with, male teachers being less concerned about teaching and assisting students with behavioural problems as compared to female teachers. The reasons for the more positive outlook from female teachers are not clear, but it is possible to speculate on the basis of demographic and contextual information.

Other results of this study, discussed below, indicate that for teachers who had undertaken further training, negative perceptions and attitudes towards students with behavioural difficulties were less prevalent.

This study also set out to identify demographic variables that may account for differences in participants' perceptions towards behaviour difficulties, concerns about inclusive education, and sentiments when interacting with students with behavioural problems. A number of demographic differences were evident. Female teachers were more positive in their views towards including students with behavioural problems in regular classrooms as well as having greater tolerance level for implementing inclusive education compared to their male colleagues. It also, however, highlights the need for the perceptions and attitudes of male teachers to be vigorously addressed.

Another demographic variable produced results with implication for practice. The results indicate that previous experiences with students with behavioural problems indicated positive views upon interaction and less concern regarding inclusive practices. This experience did not significantly alter attitudes about including students with behavioural problems in mainstream classes. However, it does demonstrate that past experiences with students with behavioural problems is helping with reducing feelings of anxiety with respect to interacting, teaching and assisting students with inappropriate behaviours. The logical implication of this is that pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development programs should consider the value of introducing meaningful opportunities for interaction between teachers and students with unacceptable behaviours.

The result of this study also points to the value of training. Where study participants had some extra training, their perceptions and attitudes towards behaviour difficulties were

more positive, there were fewer concerns about teaching them alongside other students, and there were more positive sentiments on interacting with these group of students. Similarly, there was a noticeable trend in attitude and tolerance, with fewer concerns and an increased level of positive sentiments associated with an increase in knowledge of behaviour difficulty either through an understanding of disability discrimination or education law or policy.

It is self evident that teachers who are well trained become more confident practitioners. As highlighted above, more positive results were recorded when teachers perceived they were more confident about teaching students with unacceptable behaviours in inclusive classrooms. The findings in this study clearly indicate that attitudes towards being prepared to teach and assist students with unacceptable behaviours is closely related to acceptance of inclusion, level of concern and more positive sentiments on interacting with these students. It makes sense that the best way to make teachers feel more confident is to provide them with training which addresses their needs and concerns and enhances their abilities to teach all students.

This study also provided information about what should be included in such training programs. In the context of this study, it was identified that many teachers were not fully implementing the educational (anti-discrimination) acts and policies, although they are aware of the existence of these educational documents.

## *Chapter 5*

### **LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

#### **5.0 Overview of the chapter**

This chapter examines some of the limitations and implications of the study. Also discussed here are some recommendations and suggestions for further studies. The chapter ends with my personal goals to achieve based on the result of this study.

#### **5.1 Limitations of the study**

In this study the following three limitations were identified:

1. Several research participants were not aware that behaviour difficulty was an area of special need, even though they were teaching students with behavioural problems. As a result, they provided conspicuously little attention to the questions being asked and provided little feedback.

2. Since the research was a small scale study, it was conducted in only two primary schools in the Madang Province, one of the twenty provinces in PNG. Data collected and analysed were based on the perspectives and experiences of the participants involved in the study. Therefore, the results may vary from what could be gathered from other primary schools and provinces.

3. Data were collected during the time the country was preparing go to the polls for a general election. There were politically related activities at the schools which made it quite difficult for the researcher to conduct the research as scheduled. This had an impact on the findings, as the participants were sensed to be precipitated in their responses to the questionnaire and also in the interview because they seemed a little preoccupied with the activities taking place.

## **5.2 Implications of the study**

This research has investigated causal factors that stalled the teacher assistance for students with behavioural problems. In this study, numerous issues have become apparent and have implications for various stakeholders including teachers, parents, school authorities, curriculum developers, and policy makers. These include lack of awareness on behaviour difficulties, inadequate teacher training and professional development, rigid curriculum, a lack of behaviour management policies, lack of support for teacher, and a lack of parental involvement.

**5.2.1 Lack of awareness on behaviour difficulties.** Many teachers lack the knowledge and skills to respond to students with inappropriate behaviours as indicated in the data collected. Similarly, because teachers were lacking in knowledge to help students with inappropriate behaviours, parents and families were not aware of approaches to undertake in order to help these students due to lack of awareness about the issue. The increase in inappropriate student behaviours and lack of proper assistance provided can be seen as a consequence of lack of sufficient awareness.

**5.2.2 Lack of behaviour management policies.** The study also revealed that most schools do not have behaviour management policies to respond effectively to student behavioural problems. Although student behavioural problems were of grave concern for most teachers in this study, having a policy to counter-act them was not a priority for

school authorities. Thus, it is important that schools develop behaviour management policies to counter this problem.

**5.2.3 Inadequate teacher training.** Although all teacher training institutions in the country offer special education programs for pre-service teachers, a factor that affects the pre-service training as seen here is teacher educators' lack of experience and skills for assisting the graduating students to respond to students with special needs, including behavioural difficulties. Further, as stated in the literature, teacher education is seen as being mainly about developing content knowledge and skills, whereas the question of attitudes and values is considered less important.

**5.2.4 Lack of professional development.** Professional development in schools tends to be fragmented, inadequate and often inappropriate to support teachers to respond to behavioural problems. School based in-service sessions seemed to focus on how to better implement the suggested curriculum whereas social skills were neglected. Moreover, professional development was often seen as being mainly about equipping the teachers with content knowledge and skills, whereas areas like attitudes and values, strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviours, classroom management, discipline and many other areas were considered as less important.

**5.2.5 Lack of support for teachers.** Supporting teachers is a vital aspect for effectively responding to behavioural problems in students. This study has seen that there is little support for teachers from those in authority and also parents to deal with inappropriate behaviours. Support can be about many things. One way is making better use of available resources. This includes, for instance, making use of the human resource through greater cooperation between teachers, the school administration, support staff, parents and the students themselves.

**5.2.6 Lack of parental involvement.** Teacher and other school authorities are often isolated from, and in opposition to, the parents, families and communities of students with behavioural problems. Therefore, partnership with parents and families is increasingly seen as essential to the effective and efficient approach of responding to student behavioural problems.

**5.2.7 Lack of curriculum adaptation.** Curriculum adaptation is often lacking to accommodate the diverse abilities and interests of a heterogeneous group of students, including those with behavioural problems. In the context of this study, much of the teaching and learning is based on rote learning, meticulous following of text books, teachers' guides and other resource materials. Students are not being encouraged and motivated. As a consequence, it is not surprising that students with behavioural difficulties and other special needs are not adequately supported nor are most capable learners adequately challenged. Education authorities should seriously consider including social skills into the curriculum to help students with behavioural problems.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

There are no guaranteed quick-fix solutions or cook book recipes as to how to go about responding to behavioural difficulties. Although this study was conducted in just two schools and one province, similar views and opinions would possibly have been expected elsewhere. Based on the responses received in this study, several recommendations for stakeholders to respond to students behavioural problems are offered below.

**5.3.1 Providing awareness, education and training.** Education authorities at the national, provincial and district levels need to conduct awareness campaigns on behavioural problems emphasising the roles and responsibilities of parents, families, and teachers in responding effectively to inappropriate behaviours. Providing awareness raising and training to teachers, both at the pre-service and in-service level and other school personnel about their roles and responsibilities in dealing with students with behavioural problems is an essential task of the education authorities. Helping teachers understand the causal factors of behavioural problems and providing intervention strategies will go a long way to help these teachers to better plan to attend to students with inappropriate behaviours in their classrooms. Further, providing awareness raising and training on student behavioural problems may encourage them to seek information, collaborate with colleagues and learn techniques of effectively responding to inappropriate student behaviours throughout their careers.

**5.3.2 Developing behaviour management policies.** Schools should be encouraged and assisted to developing policies and procedures for dealing with difficult behaviour in schools. It is an important and necessary measure that must be undertaken. However, the development of these policies and procedures should be done in consultation with the community so that these policies are appropriate for the students concerned. Consultation with parents, caregivers and family, both with policy and with strategies, is essential for achieving continuity, ownership and consistency for all students including those with behaviour difficulties (Fraser & Moltzen, 2000). Kauffman, et al., (2006) further stress the importance of parents' involvement for the following reasons. Firstly, a child's teacher and other educators hold a limited number of reinforcers for the student, while parents have a large and variety of reinforcers for the student and most importantly parents know what provides reinforcement and what does not. Secondly, parents' involvement minimises the chances of students manipulating differences between adults (parents and teachers).

**5.3.3 Practicing positive attitudes.** Influencing and changing the negative attitudes of teachers, especially those with a lot of teaching experience, and promoting positive attitudes towards students with behavioural difficulties are two of the most daunting tasks for school authorities. School authorities might provide training that promotes the acceptance of students with behavioural problems and provide specific strategies to respond to student behaviour problems.

**5.3.4 Teacher training and professional development.** Training of pre-service teachers and professional development of in-service teachers is not sufficient per se. Therefore, it is of vital importance to link training of pre-service and in-service teachers to their likely work places. The concerns that need to be addressed both through pre-service and in-service training includes: lack of knowledge; lack of skills; lack of resources; and lack of support. Furthermore, pre-service and in-service training is important as some general education teachers are often unable or unwilling to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of individual students. This occurs, even though adapting instruction is critical to the success of many students with disabilities who are educated in the regular classroom. Furthermore, professional development in this area, like any other areas of concern, should be coordinated, held regularly, and evaluated.

**5.3.5 Working in partnership.** There is a growing need for parents and family members to work alongside teachers and vice-versa in order to support them to develop ways to analyse their practices of responding to behavioural problems of students. Further, in working collaboratively and examining existing practices it is also necessary to consider whether aspects of these practices are in themselves acting as barriers to effectively responding to behavioural difficulties.

**5.3.6 Building support.** Building support here means providing ‘beyond and above’ what the teacher alone is able to provide. This means the provision of a variety of teaching and learning resources or materials and additional resource personnel needed to help students

with behavioural difficulties. School authorities should encourage and provide the necessary support to teachers to successfully respond to inappropriate student behaviours. Teachers also need support for their work in terms of information and background materials to better attend to these students. Also locally improvised teaching and learning materials can enhance considerably the quality of teaching and learning and provide satisfaction of the work done for students and teachers. Therefore, school administrators and educational authorities should 'walk the talk' by making available funding for training and capacity building opportunities for teachers and other resource personnel to respond to student behavioural problems well.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for further studies**

While this was a small scale study and could have been the first study on behaviour difficulties in a PNG context, it does present some emerging implications for practice which may be supported by further work examining data collected and presented. The main implications relate to training and experience. Clearly, in this context, training and contact with people with behavioural problems is important, and pre-service teacher training and in-service staff professional development programs should consider the mandatory inclusion of these aspects in their programs, especially as the practice of inclusive education and behavior difficulty management becomes more prominent in schools.

It would be of great interest to research teacher training programmes especially on behaviour management strategies and approaches offered to pre-service teachers. Similarly, it would be an interesting area to conduct a study on staff development programmes for in-service teachers. This is important as conclusions from this and other research about the modification and accommodation practices of general education teachers' are discouraging. Furthermore, many pre-service training programs have not prepared general education teachers, especially beginner teachers, to make substantive alterations to accommodate individual students in their classrooms.

## **5.5 Personal goals**

Based on the results of the study and the implications highlighted here, the following are my first two goals to achieve upon the completion of my studies and return to PNG. My immediate goal after returning to PNG will be to try and introduce 'behaviour difficulty management' as part of the Special Education paper offered to pre-service teachers at Madang Teachers College. From my personal experience, this area of Special Education has not been seriously addressed, although it is seen as a real challenge for teachers in the field (schools). I also intend to write a 'Teachers' Resource Book' on Behaviour Difficulty Management for teachers (both pre-service and in-service) to respond to inappropriate behaviours. The highlights of the book will be behaviour difficulty intervention strategies and the development of behaviour management policies. Another goal I wish to achieve in the near future is to conduct school-based in-service sessions for primary school teachers. The areas of interest during the in-service sessions will be behaviour difficulties, intervention strategies and approaches to take and encourage teachers to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to develop behaviour management policies.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A (1)

#### Sample letter inviting teachers to participate in the research project

6/44 Wellington Street  
Hamilton East,  
Hamilton, NZ

4<sup>th</sup> April, 2007

Dear Sir / Madam,

#### **Re: Requesting teachers to participate in this research project**

Regarding the above, I would like to invite you to participate in this research project.

My research is titled: *Teachers' perceptions of behaviour difficulties and management in primary schools in the Madang Province of Papua New Guinea*. The study consists of an investigation into primary school teachers' views and ideas about behaviour difficulties and management. The research is focused on finding ways of meeting the needs of students with behavioural disorders. It is therefore, not focused on the students themselves. Additionally, it is not concerned with critiquing the approaches used by schools.

I trust that my thesis when completed will eventually assist the schools and the Education department developing behavioural disorders and management policy and implementing it.

In this research you are asked to complete a questionnaire and participate in a semi structured interview at a prearranged time and place. The questionnaire should take approximately 15- 20 minutes, while the interview may take up to 30 minutes. The interview will be tape recorded and data transcribed later.

Your willingness and cooperation to take part in this research project is very much appreciated. However, you are free to withdraw at any time you wish to.

Thank you

Yours faithfully

Gabriel J. Saun

Email: [gjs11@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:gjs11@waikato.ac.nz)

Ph: (+ 64) 7 856 8771 (Home) or (+ 64) 21 02338111(Cell phone)

## **Appendix A (2)**

### **The Information to Participants**

#### **The University of Waikato School of Education**

1. The study consists of an investigation into primary school teachers' views and opinions on behaviour difficulties and management in Papua New Guinea.
2. There are many international literatures that suggest that teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding of behaviour difficulties and management also lead to an increase in unacceptable behaviours by students. This study seeks to understand the views and ideas held by teachers that might develop and implement behaviour management programmes in primary schools.
3. The study comes in the form of a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. You are required to take part in completing the questionnaire and also participate in the interview.

#### The Researcher Contact Details

Gabriel John Saun

School of Education

The University of Waikato

Private Bag 3105

Hamilton, New Zealand

Email: [gjs11@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:gjs11@waikato.ac.nz)

Ph: (+ 64) 7 856 8771(Home) or (+64) 21 02338111(Cell phone)

## Appendix A (3)

### The Participant Consent Form

#### The University of Waikato School of Education

This form should be read in conjunction with the attached 'Information for Prospective Participants.'

I understand that participation in this research will involve the following:

I will be involved in a study on teachers' perceptions of behaviour difficulties and management.

Data gathered for this project will not be made available to any third party apart from the researcher, his two supervisors and an authorised person who will assist in transcribing and analysis of data collected.

I will not be identified in any way other than the use of pseudonyms in data records or reports of the findings.

My participation in this research will not in any way affect my professional progress.

I may withdraw completely from this research at any time

If I have any concerns about my participation in this research project, or the way in which the research has impacted upon me, I may contact the researcher's supervisors.

1. Associate Professor, Angus Macfarlane  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag 3105  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext 8578  
Email: [macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz)

2. Dr Rosemary De Luca  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext. 7907  
Email: [deluca@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:deluca@waikato.ac.nz)

3. Mr. James Agigo  
Director, Research and Evaluation  
Department of Education  
P.O. Box 446  
Waigani, NCD  
Papua New Guinea  
Phone: 675 301 3529  
Email: [James\\_Agigo@educationpng.gov.pg](mailto:James_Agigo@educationpng.gov.pg)

4. Mr. Chris Bulu  
Education Advisor  
P.O.Box 2070  
Madang  
Madang Province, PNG.  
Phone:  
Email:

**Consent form for participating in the research**

Gabriel Saun has explained the topic and the purpose of the research to me. I understand that:

I will take part in a survey questionnaire and an interview

I may choose not to any answer questions that I feel uncomfortable with.

My comments and responses will be treated with confidentiality throughout the process.

My participation will be kept anonymous.

Signed..... (Interviewee)

School.....

Date.....

## Appendix B (1)

### Sample letter seeking approval to conduct research in Papua New Guinea

6/44 Wellington Street  
Hamilton East,  
Hamilton, NZ

4<sup>th</sup> April, 2007

The Director  
Research & Evaluation Unit  
Policy, Research and Communication Division  
P.O.Box 446  
Waigani  
National Capital District  
Papua New Guinea

Dear Sir,

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MADANG PROVINCE**

I am a Papua New Guinean currently enrolled as a postgraduate student at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. I am currently studying for a degree of Master of Special Education. Part of the requirement for this qualification is the completion of a research thesis.

My research is titled: *Teachers' perceptions of behaviour difficulties and management in primary schools in the Madang Province of Papua New Guinea*. The study consists of an investigation into primary school teachers' views and ideas about behaviour difficulties and management. The research focus is on finding ways of meeting the needs of students with behavioural difficulties. It is not focused on the students themselves. It is also not concerned with critiquing the approaches used by schools. I trust that my thesis once completed may eventually assist the schools and the Education Department to develop behavioural difficulties and management policy and implement it.

The specific objectives for the study are:

To investigate primary teachers' views on behavioural difficulties and management in schools/classroom

To identify the causes of behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms

To explore how behavioural difficulties can be managed in schools/classroom

I am therefore seeking your permission to conduct the research in two primary schools in the Madang Province. The primary schools I intend to involve in my study are Sagalau Primary School and Bahor Primary School. Upon receiving your approval, I will then write to the Provincial Advisor for Education of the province and the principals of the selected schools seeking their permission.

The twelve individual participants (six from each school) will be involved in a survey questionnaire and an interview. Before the collection of data begins each participant will be informed about the study and asked for their written consent. They will also be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that they can decline to answer specific questions.

All data collected will be dealt with strict confidentiality, although the anonymity of participants is not guaranteed absolutely, due to the number of participants being involved and the research site being small.

The research will be supervised by Associate Professor Angus Macfarlane and Dr Rosemary De Luca. Please do not hesitate to contact them should you require more information. Their contact details are:

1. Associate Professor, Angus Macfarlane  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag 3105  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext 8578  
Email: [macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz)

2. Dr Rosemary De Luca  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext. 7907  
Email: [deluca@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:deluca@waikato.ac.nz)

Also enclosed is a copy of my research proposal

Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much for your time and action

Yours faithfully,

-----  
Gabriel John Saun  
Postgraduate student  
Email: [gjs11@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:gjs11@waikato.ac.nz)  
Ph: (+ 64) 7 856 8771(Home) or (+64) 21 02338111(Cell phone)

## Appendix B (2)

### Sample letter seeking approval from provincial authority to conduct this research

6/44 Wellington Street  
Hamilton East,  
Hamilton, NZ

4<sup>th</sup> April, 2007

The Provincial Education Advisor  
Division of Education  
P.O.Box 2070  
Madang  
Madang Province

Dear Sir,

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MADANG PROVINCE**

I am a former primary school teacher from the Madang Province, enrolled as a postgraduate student at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. I am currently studying for a degree of Master of Special Education. Part of the requirement for this qualification is the completion of a research thesis.

My research is titled: *Teachers' perceptions of behaviour difficulties and management in primary schools in the Madang Province of Papua New Guinea*. The study consists of an investigation into primary school teachers' views and ideas about behaviour difficulties and management. It is anticipated at finding ways of meeting the needs of students with behavioural difficulties. It is not focused on the students themselves. It is also not concerned with critiquing the approaches used by schools. I trust that my thesis once completed may eventually assist the schools and the Education Department to develop behavioural difficulties and management policy and implement it.

The specific objectives for the study are:

- 1) To investigate primary teachers' views on behavioural difficulties and management in schools/classroom
- 2) To identify the causes of behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms
- 3) To explore how behavioural difficulties can be managed in schools/classroom

I am therefore seeking your permission to conduct the research in two primary schools in the Madang Province. The primary schools I intend to involve in my study are Sagalau Primary School and Bahor Primary School. Upon receiving your approval, I will then write to the principals of the selected schools seeking theirs.

The twelve individual participants (six from each school) will be involved in a survey questionnaire and an interview. Before the collection of data begins each participant will be provided a written consent. They will also be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that they can decline to answer specific questions.

All data collected will be dealt with strict confidentiality, although the anonymity of participants is not guaranteed absolutely, due less number of participants being involved and the research site being small.

The research will be supervised by Associate Professor Angus Macfarlane and Dr Rosemary De Luca. Please do not hesitate to contact them should you require more information. Their contact details are below.

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2. Dr Rosemary De Luca  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext. 7907  
Email: [deluca@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:deluca@waikato.ac.nz)

Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much for your time and action

Yours faithfully,

-----  
Gabriel John Saun  
Postgraduate student  
Email: [gjs11@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:gjs11@waikato.ac.nz)  
Ph: (+ 64) 7 856 8771(Home) or (+64) 21 02338111(Cell phone)

## Appendix B (3)

### Sample letter seeking approval from principals to conduct research in schools

6/44 Wellington Street  
Hamilton East,  
Hamilton, NZ

4<sup>th</sup> April, 2007

The Principal  
----- Primary School  
C/- P.O.Box 2070  
Madang  
Madang Province

Dear Sir,

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MADANG PROVINCE**

I am a former primary school teacher from the Madang Province, enrolled as a postgraduate student at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. I am currently studying for a degree of Master of Special Education. Part of the requirement for this qualification is the completion of a research thesis.

My research is titled: *Teachers' perceptions of behaviour difficulties and management in primary schools in the Madang Province of Papua New Guinea*. The study consists of an investigation into primary school teachers' views and ideas about behaviour difficulties and management. The research is focused on finding ways of meeting the needs of students with behavioural difficulties. It is not focused on the students themselves. It is also not concerned with critiquing the approaches used by schools. I trust that my thesis once completed may eventually assist the schools and the Education Department to develop behavioural difficulties and management policy and implement it.

The specific objectives for the study are:

- 1) To investigate primary teachers' views on behavioural difficulties and management in schools/classroom
- 2) To identify the causes of behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms
- 3) To explore how behavioural difficulties can be managed in schools/classroom

I have chosen your school, .....Primary School as one of the schools to conduct my research. For your information, I have already obtained permission from the Principal Research Officer, in Port Moresby and the also the Education Advisor, in Madang to involve your school. I am therefore seeking your permission to involve six of your teachers in the research.

The six individual participants will be involved in a survey questionnaire and an interview. Before the collection of data begins each participant will be provided a written consent. They will also be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that they can decline to answer specific questions.

All data collected will be dealt with strict confidentiality, although the anonymity of participants is not guaranteed absolutely, due less number of participants being involved and the research site being small.

The research will be supervised by Associate Professor Angus Macfarlane and Dr Rosemary De Luca. Please do not hesitate to contact them should you require more information. Their contact details are below.

1. Associate Professor, Angus Macfarlane  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag 3105  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext 8578  
Email: [macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:macfarlane@waikato.ac.nz)

2. Dr Rosemary De Luca  
School of Education  
University of Waikato  
Private Mail Bag  
Hamilton, NZ  
Phone: 64 7 838 4500. Ext. 7907  
Email: [deluca@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:deluca@waikato.ac.nz)

Enclosed, please find letters of permission form the Research Officer, in Port Moresby and the Education Advisor in Madang.

I would be grateful if you respond promptly.

Thank you very much for your time and action

Yours faithfully,

-----  
Gabriel John Saun  
Postgraduate student  
Email: [gjs11@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:gjs11@waikato.ac.nz)  
Ph: (+ 64) 7 856 8771(Home) or (+64) 21 02338111(Cell phone)

## Appendix C (1)

### Teacher Questionnaire

**General Instructions.** This questionnaire invites you to share your personal views and experiences regarding behaviour difficulties and management.

#### Part A. Personal Details

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Year you completed teacher training? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of years of teaching experience? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Teaching qualification attained? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Did your training include any course (compulsory or elective) relating to behaviour difficulties? Yes  No

If yes, state the nature of the course

6. Have you had any in-service training or attended any short courses or workshops on behaviour difficulties? Yes  No

If yes, state the nature of the training/course/workshop

7. Did you have any other experiences on behaviour difficulties prior to commencing your teaching career? Yes  No

If yes, please state the nature of these experiences

## Appendix C (2)

### Part B. Teachers' views about behavioural difficulties and management at schools/classrooms

For this section, you are asked to response by indicating what you think of the following statements

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Sometimes
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Every child, regardless of his/her ability or disability, has the right to formal education in regular classrooms					
2	Students with behavioural difficulties should be taught in the regular classroom environment					
3	Teachers have a responsibility to help students with behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms					
4	It the responsibilities of parents to deal with the behavioural difficulties of their children					
5	Parents and teachers should work collaboratively to help students with behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms					
6	Students with behavioural difficulties disrupt learning in schools/classrooms					
7	Behaviour difficulties and management should be a compulsory course at Teacher Training Institutions					
8	School staff development training (in-service) should emphasise the importance of behaviour difficulties and management					
9	Schools should employ specialists (e.g. behaviour psychologists ) to help with behaviour difficulties in schools/classrooms					
10	Students with disruptive behaviours in schools/classrooms should be suspended/expelled from schools					

### Appendix C (3)

#### Part C

The literature outlines several types of behaviour difficulties, ranging from aggressive to more trivial behaviours.

In the grid below, choose the type of behaviour that you most dread and give an example.

Also, choose the type of behaviour that you encounter the most and give an example.

Most Dread

Less dread

Most Common

Less Common

	1	2	3	4	5
Type					
			Dreaded 1,2,3,4,5		Common 1,2,3,4,5
Aggression (angry or threatening behaviour that often result in fighting)					
Immorality (behaviour that is morally wrong)					
Defiance (behaviour that shows you clearly refuse to do what someone tells you to do)					
Disruption (a situation in which something is prevented from continuing in its normal way because of problems/ difficulties)					
Goofing (spending time doing silly things)					

State reasons for your choices

## **Appendix C (4)**

**Part D Open-Ended Questions.** Please provide short answers for the following questions

1. What are some of the characteristics of students with behavioural difficulties in schools/classroom?
2. What are some of the causes of behavioural difficulties?
3. Who should address behavioural difficulties observed in students?
4. How can behavioural difficulties be addressed by teachers in schools/classrooms?
5. General comments- add any general comments you want to make about behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms

## Appendix D

### Teacher Interview Schedule

1. The Inclusive Education Policy states that *all* children regardless of any disabilities, difficulties or special needs have a fundamental right to formal education in any regular school. This includes children with behaviour difficulties. Do you agree or disagree? Please elaborate on your position.
2. Do you agree or disagree that behavioural difficulties is a main concern for teachers in schools/classrooms. Explain why.
3. Identify and name some of the behaviour problems that you encounter in your classroom or school? Name a least five (5) of them.
4. What do you think are the factors that cause/contribute to behaviour difficulties in your classroom and the school?
5. Does your school have a behavioural difficulty management policy? Tell me more about how it is implemented
6. Is it implemented effectively? Please explain more your view.
7. Is there a staff member/teacher who is responsible for dealing with behavioural difficulties in the school? Tell me of his/her role and responsibilities.
8. Do you address behavioural difficulties in schools/classrooms? Explain how you do this.
9. Have the approaches you used in dealing with unacceptable behaviours been helpful? Explain further how these approaches have been helpful.
10. What are your personal views about students with unacceptable behaviours attending schools? Should they be allowed to stay school or be sent away? Please explain why you think so.

## Appendix E

Dean's Office  
School of Education  
*Te Kura Toi Tengata*  
The University of Waikato  
Private Bag 3105  
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4465  
Ext 8283  
www.waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Gabriel Saun  
**Cc:** Associate Professor Angus Macfarlane  
**From:** Dr Rosemary De Luca  
For School of Education Research Ethics Committee  
**Date:** 2 May 2007  
**Subject:** Research Ethics Approval

---

Thank you for submitting the revisions to your research proposal:

An Investigation into the Teachers' Perceptions of Behaviour Difficulties and Management in Primary Schools in Madang Province of Papua New Guinea.

I am pleased to advise you that your application has received ethical approval.

The Committee wishes you all the best with your research.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Rosemary De Luca'.

**Dr Rosemary De Luca**  
**Chairperson**  
For School of Education Research Ethics Committee

## Appendix F

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



### Department of Education

*Office of the Deputy Secretary Administration and Policy*

TELEPHONE: (675) 301 3529 3526  
TELEGRAMS: TLX NE22193  
TELEEX: NE22193  
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FINCORP HAUS  
P.O. Box 446  
WAIGANI 131  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
File: PR1-1-2  
Date: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2007

Dear Gabriel Saun

Your research proposal titled: *"Teachers perceptions of behaviour difficulties and classroom management in primary schools in Madang Province in Papua New Guinea"* has been approved in principle prior to Research and Evaluation Steering Committee (RESC) next meeting. The approval in principle is given due to the urgency of your data collection and presentation of final report for the award of your nominated degree program. Use this letter as an approval for your data collection in your appointed institutions and provinces.

While your research is approved in principle to collect data in educational institution/s it is also subject to approval by the Provincial Research Committee (where applicable) and/or the Provincial Education Advisor or the principals or head teachers of your nominated institutions. It is your responsibility to ensure such is obtained prior to the field work.

In serious case of breach of ethical issues and DOE research guidelines the Department of Education reserves the right to inform the researchers home institution or sponsors directly and take necessary actions as deem necessary.

Failure to observe the above conditions may lead to the withdrawal of research approval.

I thank you and wish you good luck in your study

**Luke Faifa**  
Deputy Secretary Policy and Administration  
and Chairman of Research and Evaluation Steering Committee

*cc. Director - REU*

**Appendix G**

**MADANG PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION**  
**Division of Technical & Corporate Services**



**EDUCATION ADVISOR'S OFFICE**

Phone: 852 1652 / 852 1614  
Fax: 852 3207 / 852 3038

P.O. Box 2070  
Madang,  
Madang Province  
Papua New Guinea  
Date: 28<sup>th</sup> / 05 / 07

**TO: THE PRINCIPAL OF [.....]**

**FROM: ADVISOR EDUCATION**

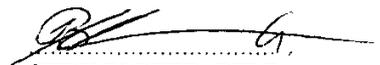
**SUBJECT: RESEARCH INTO PRIMARY SCHOOL BY MR.SAUN.**

Find forwarded is a formal request letter done on behalf of Mr.Saun to you in pursuant to the subject as above.

Mr.Saun who is currently completing his studies needs to carry out a Research in order to do up a Write Up as one of the major component of his Case Study.

Please assist him with is attempt to complete his studies. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated by him.

Thank you,

  
**CHRISTOPHER BULU**  
[ Advisor Education]