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Educators' perspectives on a code of conduct for learners at selected high schools

This philosophical study draws on Gadamer's hermeneutics, which is predominantly concerned with the understanding and interpretation of texts. From this methodological perspective, I conducted a conceptual and documentary analysis of the code of conduct of a public high school in Elsies River, Cape Town. Through this analysis, I focused on the teachers' perspectives of the school's code of conduct with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of how the discipline policy is perceived, understood and implemented by the teachers of the school.

The code of conduct helps with the discipline, environment, culture and values of the school. The importance and purpose of the code of conduct is to promote positive discipline and constructive learning at the school. I discuss various understandings of the concept of a code of conduct, the history and the translation of a code of conduct into high schools, specifically into my research site: a high school in Elsies River, Cape Town. This is followed by an analysis of the concept of discipline within the code of conduct to gain a deeper understanding of the different perspectives of discipline. The main reason for conducting this research was to construct the meaning of teachers' perspectives of the code of conduct. Furthermore, should the interpretation of the code of conduct not be understood by all the role players in an institution, the rules, ideals and consequences as set out in the school improvement plan may not be realised.

Key concepts: code of conduct, discipline, hermeneutics, educators, public high school