

Creating Safe and Well-organised Multicultural School Environments in South Africa through Restorative Discipline

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ABSTRACT The new Constitution of South Africa specifies that all schools should be open to all races. Consequently, black learners migrated to white schools in the hope of being educated in safe, disciplined and equitable environments. However, reports on racially motivated incidents suggest that race relationships at some multicultural schools in SA are neither sound nor conducive to teaching and learning. Appropriate disciplinary strategies which could heal and restore relationships are therefore needed. This conceptual paper proposes restorative discipline (RD) as an appropriate response to the disciplinary and safety challenges in multicultural schools. Firstly, it situates multiculturalism within the SA educational context and then focuses on the restoration of relationships and dialogue as two principles of RD. It also considers the extent to which SA school policies promote RD principles, and makes recommendations to enhance RD practices in SA schools.