

**THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF
MKHUHLU CIRCUIT, BOHLABELA DISTRICT**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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2018

DECLARATION

I **MARIA THOBILE MDHLULI**, confirm that this research for Master of Education, which I have submitted at the University of Venda has not been previously submitted at any other University: it should be known that it is my work and that all reference material has been acknowledged.

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MDHLULI MT

.....

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late parents, my mother who passed away in 1989 and my father who passed away in 2010.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My acknowledgements go to the following contributors:

- The almighty God for the strength he gave me to complete my study.
- My supervisor Dr, Sikhwari M.G for his good work and for submitting my documents in time.
- Dr Masha for editing my work, it was a work well done.
- The Circuit Manager of Mkhuhlu for granting me permission to conduct the study.
- The educators and learners of Mkhuhlu circuit for participating in my study; without them, my study would have been nothing.
- My family, especially my husband and kids for the support they granted me.

ABSTRACT

In South Africa, violence continues to undermine the functioning of schools. Literature has revealed that the subject of school violence is quite varied and covers a wide variety of related areas from sociology to educational psychology; these examine psychological factors such as peer pressure, stress, cognition, emotional development and their relation to school violence. The study was aimed at investigating the effects of school violence in South African rural schools in Mpumalanga Province.

The study used mixed methods approach employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For the quantitative part of the study, the study adopted simple random sampling to select the learners. A 'purposive sample' was used to select the principals and educators for the qualitative part of the study. A sample of 423 learners from the 9 secondary schools in the circuit was selected for the quantitative part of the study. A purposive sample of 9 principals and 18 educators was also be deemed appropriate for the qualitative part of the study. IBM SPSS version 23 was used to analyse quantitative data.

Frequency tables were generated (univariate analysis), and the Chi-square test was used to calculate significant differences in the effects and coping strategies between male and female victims of school-based violence. Qualitative data was analysed thematically and used to support and complement the quantitative data. Principals and educators in schools with high prevalence of school-based violence was prioritised. It was expected that the effects of school-based violence in the study area were described. Causes of violence, its effects and ways to improve coping strategies in the respective schools are also anticipated to be comprehensively covered as expected outcomes.

KEYWORDS: *School violence; violence; bullying; vandalism.*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa has a long history of interpersonal violence that has lived alongside political violence (Van Rensburg, 2010:8). The violence of the post-apartheid period is not a new phenomenon and is not simply a consequence of the political violence of earlier times. Even during the years of apartheid oppression, rates of criminal violence far outstripped political violence, and rates of abuse to women and children were already very high (Farr, Dawes & Parker, 2003:2).

School violence has been a topic of concern throughout the last decade as the public has repeatedly witnessed horrifying shooting incidents in public schools. The impact of the widespread coverage of these violent incidents is hard to measure, but surveys of student and teacher concerns show a pervasive pattern of fear of violence (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker & Goesling, 2002:829). Previous studies report that students are more likely to achieve academically in schools where they feel safe and supported (Walton, 2010:1).

Elliot, Hamburg and Williams (1998:140) are of the perspective that school violence is a global phenomenon that affects one of the core institutions of modern society to some degree in virtually all nation-states. However, most research on violence, particularly studies of delinquency or bullying, have traditionally focused on individual-level variables and psycho-social models of causation, not on system-level variables and socio-structural models of causation (Elliot, Hamburg, & Williams, 1998:140). It has become imperative to determine effective ways to address the effects of violence exposure and prevent the development of violent tendencies in the young. This is a very challenging task in a context of high levels of poverty, few opportunities for youths, and a well-embedded culture of violence (Farr, Dawes & Parker, 2003:2).

In South Africa, the Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation (2001:2), reports that violence continues to undermine the functioning of schools. Schools often

become battlegrounds for gang wars, with learners being targets of rape, sexual harassment and bullying. It is also noted that crime, vandalism, drug dealing and sexual abuse in schools create insecurity and fear among learners and educators and interfere with the learning environment (Meyer, 2005:2).

It was thus deemed necessary that an investigation of literature is done, and an empirical research project is conducted in order to determine the effects of school violence in rural schools today, considering that much research has not focused on these schools.

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the current study was to investigate the effects of school violence in South African rural secondary schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit in Mpumalanga Province.

The objectives of the study will be to:

- investigate the forms of violence prevalent in rural South African public schools
- determine the causes of violence in rural public high schools; and
- investigate the effects of violence on learning

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the forms of violence prevalent in rural public schools in South Africa?
- What are the underlying cause of violence in rural public schools in South Africa?
- What are the effects of violence on learners and educators?

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Schools have become highly volatile and unpredictable places. Violence has become a part of everyday life in some schools". Reports on television and in the print media highlight the escalation of school violence, such as learners assaulting and stabbing

other learners and educators. Student-to-student victimization and bullying remains a national concern for schools and communities across the country (Espelage, Anderman, Brown, Jones, Lane, McMahon, Reddy & Reynolds, 2013:75). Many school environments are confronted with bullying, sexual harassment, and mean-spirited teasing that have become a normative process poisoning the climates of schools, thus depriving children of the right to be educated in an environment that is both physically and emotionally safe.

However, some research indicates that extreme forms of school violence are decreasing in prevalence, school violence in general and its aftermath continue to be significant problems for students, teachers, staff, and schools. Despite the existence of Victimology and victims' rights in South Africa, school-based violence is still prevalent in most schools. Little is known about the outcomes of current policies aimed at violence at schools. This proposed study intends to explore the effects of school-based violence in 9 secondary schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit, Bohlabela District, Mpumalanga Province.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is underpinned by the social-learning theory. This is a behaviourist theory that endeavours to unravel gender socialisation. It discusses the way in which women and men behave as well as learn from each other. The approach also demonstrates the way in which the social environment enables individuals to act in a certain manner (Taale, 2016:46).

The Social-learning theory focuses on socialisation by gender and advances that individuals learn through imitation, observation and modelling. The roles of people as determined by gender are social constructs which find propagation from parents during early years of child development, and these delineate behaviours which are associated with females and males (Brent & Lewis, 2014). Gender is constructed by society, especially the way in which a person interacts with teachers, parents, sports and mass media (Brent & Lewis, 2014). According to Brent and Lewis (2014), socialisation relates to the process in which individuals learn the values, beliefs and norms of society. In schools, learners master wider values of society such as

multiculturalism and diversity through interaction with peers as well as curriculum delivery. This is done through the dissemination of the corridor curriculum and the hidden curriculum. The corridor curriculum deals with the lessons which learner share with each other when out of class while the hidden curriculum relates to the values which are taught indirectly during the process of presenting the standard or official curriculum (Brent & Lewis, 2014).

The activities which transpire at school reflect what happens in society. Communities that are disorderly and disorganised are fertile grounds for violence and crime. It is common to find community members that sell drugs to learners or provide them with drugs to sell at school. In some instances, learners live in environments in which aggression and violence are modelled by significant others such as relatives and parents. Bandura (1977) posits that a behaviour which is violent is easily be imitated and reproduced if the person modelling it is related to the one observing it. As a socialisation agent, the society establishes certain roles and laws that are in favour with either men or women. For instance, it is acceptable for men to display violent behaviour but unacceptable for women to do the same. This kind of expectation is concurrent with the status which men have in society (Taale, 2016:46).

The discussion provided above surrounding the aetiology of violent behaviour amongst learners offers a multi-faceted view of the origin of violence. This implies that violent behaviour is a product of social interactions with various social settings. As such, current research on violence within school settings shares the idea that violent behaviour is a result of social interaction (Packery, 2015:10). Thus, the home setting, school culture and the community setting of learners need to be taken into consideration when attempting to understand the violent behaviour of individuals in and around schools (Packery, 2015:10).

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.6.1 School Violence

This focuses on the behaviour of administrators, learners or educators or even persons outside school who attempt to inflict pain on someone else or cause damage

to the property of the school (Zulu, 2004:70). In this study, school violence is the exercise of emotional and physical power by parents, other learners and educators in a manner which alters the safe environment for learning, and in the process hinders others to maintain well-being.

1.6.2 Violence

According to Burton and Leoschut (2010:2), violence is the use of physical power or force to threaten or cause harm to oneself, another individual, community or group, and has the possibility to result in death, injury, deprivation and psychological harm.

1.6.3 Bullying

According to Meyer and Brown (2009:2), bullying is a behaviour that is repeated and over time and intentionally inflicts injury on another individual. In this study, bullying is referred to as a negative action through which somebody hits or pushes, another person or it can be verbal by threatening, taunting, and calling names.

Espelege, Green and Polanin, (2012), defines bullying as a highly varied form of aggression where there is systemic use and abuse of power which can include physical aggression such as hitting and shoving, and verbal aggression, such as name-calling. It can also include social or relational forms of bullying in which a victim is excluded by peers or subjected to humiliation.

1.6.4 Vandalism

According to Stahl (2000:1), vandalism is the wilful or hateful destruction, disfigurement or injury to private or public property, personal or real, without the agreement of the individual with custody or the owner.

Sanders (1981:138) describes vandalism as the purposeful damaging, violating, defacement or destruction of private or public property by a person who are not the owners of the property.

1.7 SUMMARY

Schools are responsible for teaching and learning; however, teachers cannot teach and learners cannot learn in a violent environment. This chapter provides the background information of the study. Introduces the study, describes the problem formulation, discusses the aims, objectives and imported concept where defined.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Globally, the rate of violence in schools are on the increase to the extent that violence in schools is on the rise. The rates of school violence are higher outside than inside schools. However, schools should provide safe learning environments (Smith, 2002:144). There is an increasing concern in South Africa that schools are widespread sites for violence. School-based violence has been part of the history of South Africa for a long time. Ngqela and Lewis (2012:89) argue that the system of education for black people during apartheid in South Africa served an oppressive instrument and assisted in fostering violence in schools. The Department of Education (DoE) contends that violence is a nagging phenomenon in schools and has gone further to implement various interventions which are meant to redress the situation. However, national data on the extent of the problem is lacking, with scant understanding of the state and causes of the challenge a reality (Burton, 2008:1).

The Bill of Rights in South Africa provides for the protection of the rights of learners and educators who are supposed to learn and teach respectively in environments that are safe and devoid of all kinds of violence. These rights are prone to be violated by the continued existence of school-based violence as well as the observed perpetration of violent behaviour (South African Human Rights Commission –SAHRC, 2008).

The first section of this review identifies the different types and forms of school-based violence and their extent. The following section explores the different causes of school-based violence. The last two sections focus on the impact that school-based violence has on the provisions in the Bill of Rights pertaining to the rights of learners and educators to a safe schooling environment free from all forms of violence and the current initiatives, programmes and responses thereto.

2.2 NATURE OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Broader definitions of violence are widely used. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1999) defines “violence” as “the intentional use of physical and psychological force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation” (WHO,1999). The emphasis on threatened and actual violence justifies the inclusion of feelings of insecurity, which is used in France (Smith, 2002:139).

It is quite difficult to define school-based violence. This may vary from aggression at the lowest level such as bullying to homicide. Violence can take the form of physical confrontation and verbal abuse, which might be very damaging to learners at school (Burdick-Will, 2013:344). School violence is concerned with physical and verbal actions which have the potential to produce pain to the receiver while under the care or school supervision (MacNeil & Steward, 2000:232; Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:89). These kinds of processes prevent subjected individuals from making a difference, either through reducing their current capacity the function or curtailing them from attaining their desired ends. School violence disturbs the otherwise needed safe environment for learning at school (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:89).

Violence comes in many forms. It is essential to be clear of its various forms as it is normally assumed to be a general and unitary social problem. School violence is a complex phenomenon which has a plethora of causes across and within systems. These systems are recognised to constitute a dynamic network with reciprocal influence (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:90). Violence in schools takes varies forms such as sexual of physical assault, initiation or hazing, rape, sexual harassment, murder, rape, stabbing and robberies. In this category also occurs issues of shootings, intimidation, drug trafficking, vandalism, theft of property, bullying, gangsterism, student protests and racially motivated violence (SACE, 2011:6). Emerging problems such as cyber bullying are increasingly taking centre stage (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:1).

There is an array of typologies of school violence. These include educator-on-learner, learner-on-learner, learner-on-learner violence as well as adult-on-learner violence. Peer-on-learner violence is another type of violence which involves youths from outside the institution. In South Africa, the recurrent form of school violence is learner-on-learner although other forms also exist to attract attention (Burton, 2008:38).

The phenomenon of school violence is a worldwide challenge which exists in both poor and rich countries (Meyer, 2005:11). This concern with safety has raised international focus (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:6). While South African education system is faced with a lot of problems, school violence has emerged as the most serious challenge (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:1). The issue of safety in schools is topical in South African schools but independent schools are perceived as safer than public schools. This concerns involving safety in schools are far reaching and the existence of violence in schools are viewed as an extension of the violence that occurs in communities. (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:1).

In 2000, school safety was viewed as the main educational focus internationally, and this dropped to the second position in 2003 as aspects of funding and overcrowding dominated the scene. Ideally, violence in schools have become common place and their impact in student learning quite profound (Burton, 2008:2). The forms of violence which are occurrent in schools are greatly influenced by gender and social dynamics. The forms of violence which are more evident do exist in schools in the townships while the less obvious ones such as initiation or hazing are noticeable in private schools (Burton, 2008:2). SACE (2011:7) posits that boys and girls are exposed to different types of violence. Girls are prone to be victims of sexual assault, rape and harassment. On the other hand, boys tend to be susceptible to bullying and assault (SACE, 2011:7).

Mpumalanga Province is not immune to incidences of school violence either. Meyer (2005a:3) reported that a grade seven pupil in White River, Mpumalanga, was killed when a classmate stabbed him with a penknife. Meyer (2005:3) reported that the province's besieged township educators were, at one-point, demanding guns to

protect themselves from criminals and delinquent learners after a spate of robberies, assault and hostage-taking of educators.

At one-point gang violence, murder and criminal elements reduced school grounds to a state of anarchy, leading educators to propose that they come to work armed. The newspaper - The West, reported that a group of uncontrollable learners were assaulting educators, bunked classes at will, played dice and smoked dagga on the premises during school hours. These are, however, not isolated incidents (Meyer, 2005:18).

The most common forms of school violence in the South African context according to literature are discussed below.

2.2.1 Violence by Learners against Learners

A study by Burton (2008:39) found that classmates are the primary perpetrators of school violence, with the educator-on-learner violent present but uncommon. Relatively high levels of various forms of violence are inflicted on learners in the classrooms and playing fields (Burton, 2008b:33).

2.2.1.1 Bullying

From as early as the 1970s bullying has been recognised as a threat to children's well-being in schools and there has been an increasing coverage of the topic in literature (Pinheiro, 2006:121). Bullying, as a form of violence exists variously. Bullying in schools can be physical as well as psychological or verbal, and this includes racism, teasing, name calling, rumours and ostracism. According to Plan (2008:8), direct bullying involves physical aggressions while indirect bullying concerns affiliation or relational aggressiveness such as cyber bullying, teasing and ostracism.

Schier (2008:18) states that bullying assumes many forms. This might involve name calling, which can occur in person or spray-painting information on the door of a locker. It can also entail distribution of humiliating information, spreading rumours which are vicious and uploading data on the internet. Bullying can be in the form of physical threats such as shoving, spitting on individuals, pushing and isolating a person from a

collective activity. This further relates to the engagement of verbal or physical abuse to demean, manipulate or harm another person. Verbal bullying is the most common type of abuse and can lead to extreme if allowed to go unchecked. Mobile phones and the internet have resulted in the emergence fresh opportunities for bullying in the form of online chat lines, e-mails, text messages, personal web pages, transmission of images and personal web pages (Pinheiro, 2006:123). Bullying in schools takes place in the absence of teachers, as students that are by standers fail to intervene nor to inform teachers and school staff (Pinheiro, 2006:123).

In the bullying process, boys prefer to use taunts, name-calling and threats while girls commonly employ rumour spreading and negative labels to ostracise a counterpart in order to assert their power (Schier, 2008:18). School bullying is distinguishable from the range of forms of violence as it reflects a pattern of behaviours instead of an event that is isolated. Literature indicates that almost the entire list of bullying is gender or sexual- based. This has transformed the manner in which bullying is envisaged to enable focus to be directed at emergent patterns (Pinheiro, 2006:121).

The popularity of websites such as My Space has made cyber bullying a serious problem. Cyber bullying often goes unnoticed by parents and educators for a long period of time, but it can take a particularly vicious tone (Schier, 2008:21). Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan, and Hannan (2015: 3), reported that in more than half of South Africa's provinces, at least one-third of learners are victims of bullying on a weekly basis. Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juana and Hannan (2015:3), also reported that on the whole, provinces where the threat of crime to learners was high also experienced high concentrations of bullying at schools.

According to Mollo (2009:20), various studies in South Africa have indicated that learner-on-learner bullying is very common in South Africa. In a study conducted by Naser *et al.* (2003:137-138), in six primary and secondary schools in Tshwane, it was reported that 42.5% of the learners who were took part in the quantitative study had been bullied at least once a month in the year 2002. Of particular concern in the Naser *et al.* (2003:137-138) study, was the occurrence of frequent bullying, typically defined as bullying that occurs once a week or more. The prevalence of frequent bullying

reported in their investigation was 18.4 percent (2.9% every day and 15.5% once or twice a week) (Neser *et al.*, 2003:137-138).

2.2.2 Violence by Learners against Educators

According to SACE, (2011:19) educators are at risk of experiencing violence and the perception that they are perpetrators of it further expose themselves to violence. In actual fact, it is very likely for educators to be victims of vice. The feelings of educators to be helpless on issues of violence as well as the demotivation which results from violence cause damage to the learning climate (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015: 2).

2.2.3 Violence by Educators against Learners

A number of educators have backgrounds where violence is employed as a strategy to solve conflicts. Until 1996, corporal punishment was used as a legal way of punishing learners in schools. Even though corporal punishment is not allowed, educators experience problems in employing alternative forms of punishment, making them more prone to those forms which infuse violent means (Burton (2008:18). The National Youth Victimization study of 2005 revealed that 51.4% of the participants had encountered canning or spanking at school (SACE, 2011:19). The study also showed that the majority of learners at school are always at risk of violence from principals and teachers (SACE, 2011:19). According to SACE (2011:1), a majority of schools in South Africa are challenging and chaotic. These places a lot of pressure on educators. These tend to be torn between engaging in teaching duties and others which they are anticipated to fulfil.

Burton and Leoschut (2013:30) reported an increase in the use of corporal punishment in a four-year period they assessed. Mpumalanga Province (the focus of this particular study) had the highest increase (rates increased from 43.6% in 2008 to 63.5% in 2012), the Eastern Cape (rates increased from 58.5% in 2008 to 66.9% in 2012), KwaZulu-Natal (rates increased from 48.7% in 2008 to 73.7% in 2012) and the Western Cape (rates increased from 17.1% in 2008 to 22.4% in 2012).

2.2.3.1 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

The definition of *sexual harassment* varies from place to place or from country to country. For example, according to the Canadian Criminal Code of 1985, Section 153, teacher-student dating or sexual relationship is considered as sexual exploitation, whilst in other countries, when consensual; such behaviour is not regarded as sexual harassment (Plan, 2008:9). In this study any sexual behaviour directed at a school-going minor under the age of 18, whether consensual or not, will be regarded as sexual harassment.

Girls are at particular risk when it comes to sexual abuse. The common source of violence in schools is include assault, sexual harassment and rape. These acts are committed by male learners and teachers. The commission of this kind of violence may be to humiliate or punish girls as a result of their sexuality or sex. This may also result from bravado or sexual interest. It may further be done to diminish, intimidate and humiliate girls (Pinheiro, 2006:118). Girls are regularly fondled, degraded verbally and exposed to many kinds of harassment which may cause them to drop out of school at end up (Meyer, 2005:12). According to Ngqela and Lewis (2012:89), sexual harassment of girls happens within the discourse and framework of societies which are dominated by males in township schools. African societies have covertly defined the power of a men in terms of the ability to exert their demands over women even without their consent.

The popularity of the Internet among high school learners has increased sexually tainted bullying. Sexual bullying can range from name-calling to sexual abuse in varying degrees (Schier, 2008:21). In some instances, teachers are the perpetrators of violent acts. Female learners are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment from male teachers (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:2).

Under normal circumstances, girls encounter violence at home, but sexual violence is more profound at secondary school level where they are exposed to an increased number of peers of the opposite sex (Burton, 2008:59). It is however, true that abuse, violence and sexual harassment are not just limited to schools in the townships but also occurent in affluent and prestigious schools (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:91).

Sexual harassment of schoolgirls is a common phenomenon throughout the world and in many cases, teachers are the main perpetrators but in some instances, it is students themselves (Pinheiro, 2006:119). This form of violence may be particularly common and worse in areas where other forms of violence are prevalent. According to Mncube and Netshitangani (2014:3), sexual harassment is rife in schools in some countries, including South Africa. In some studies, in Central and West Africa, some teachers gave justification for the sexual exploitation of learners by indicating that girls put on clothes and behave in a manner that is provocative, and that teachers work away from their homes which raises sexual needs (Pinheiro, 2006:119). In North America and Europe, there is widespread abuse of boys sexually especially by male clerics teachers in schools which are run by churches. This has transpired, notwithstanding the protection services available and the standing systems for reporting abuse since 1990 (Pinheiro, 2006:119).

According to Pinheiro (2006: 120) a study conducted by UNICEF in Central and West Africa established that cases of abuse are prevalent in schools. The Ministries of education are aware of the existence of abuse, which constitutes the central reason for school drop out by girls. In South Africa, a Human Rights Watch study reported that sexual abuse of girls in the hands of learners and educators was widespread and carried out in empty classrooms, toilets, hostels and dormitories (Pinheiro, 2006: 120).

2.2.3.2 Physical and psychological punishment

Canning or corporal punishment is commonly conducted by school administration and teachers who strike learners using some form of implement. This can be done with the use of a water hose and paddle, which is common in Africa and the USA (Plan, 2008:9). The Committee on the Rights of the Child views physical or corporal punishment as a strategy of using force of a physical nature with the intention to cause a measure of pain and discomfort. This involves some form of hitting such as slapping, smacking or spanking the learner. A hand or an implement is used in the infliction of pain. In some instances, pain is inflicted through throwing or shaking the learner, pinching, kicking, boxing ears, pulling hair, scratching, biting, burning or making them stay in positions that are not comfortable. Punishment can also come in the form of forced ingestion or scalding such as forcing them to eat hot spices or using soap to wash the mouths of children (Pinheiro, 2006:116).

There are a number of other forms of non-physical punishment that are degrading and cruel (Pinheiro, 2006:117). In schools, physical forms of corporal punishment may entail feeding learners with unpalatable food substances, forcing them to stay in fixed positions feeding them in restrictive places and compelling them to do excessive exercises (Plan, 2008:9). Corporal punishment is the most common form of punishment. It is an internal phenomenon of punishment which is done by schools the world over (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:2). Corporal punishment embraces the form which humiliates, scapegoats, belittles, scares ridicules and threatens the learner (Pinheiro, 2006:117).

Recent research on corporal punishment as well as reports from the region reveal a constant trend away from the use of corporal punishment in schools (Pinheiro, 2006:117). Of the 223 states and dependent territories tracked by The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, show that 106 states and dependent territories out of 223 have laws which prohibit corporal punishment while the other seven possess regulations banning it from other parts of the country. This is in those locations in which provinces of federal states exhibit own laws or in schools funded by the state. However, in practice, laws which prohibit corporal punishment are less often enforced (Pinheiro, 2006:117).

Studies in Egypt, Lesotho and Togo, and from Indian Ocean Island nations indicate the high use of corporal punishment to punish academic performance that is unsatisfactorily (Pinheiro, 2006:117). Evidence does exist that corporal punishment enhances learner performance and behaviour, despite the physical harm or even death that it may also cause (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:3; The Plan report, 2008:10).

The South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) outlaws the employ of corporal punishment in institutions of learning. However, the 2006 National Youth Offending, the 2005 National Youth Victimization Survey and Resilience Study revealed above half of the participants who attested to the existence of corporal punishment in institutions. This is reflected by the 56% and 51% respectively. Incidence of physical punishment were most likely to be reported by both females and males. The 2008 National School Violence study showed that cases of corporal punishment were more

likely to be experienced by primary school learners (70%) than those at secondary schools (47%) (DSD, DWCPD & UNICEF, 2012:22). The widespread nature of corporal punishment is also located in the rural areas of South Africa (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014c:3). A study conducted in the three provinces of South Africa reported that cases of corporal punishment are still observable in schools (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:3).

2.2.4 Attacks on School Facilities and Vandalism

Vandalism can be defined as the wilfully causing of damage or defacing the property of others. Vandalism includes serious acts such as kicking in a locker door or tearing up a school library book, writing on walls and bathroom doors (Schier, 2008:16). Hate-related writings on the walls using demeaning words or symbols against others due to their ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual preference can be extremely humiliating and demeaning (Schier, 2008:17).

Individuals that carry out vandalism in schools tend to be youngsters of the age range of 11 to 16 who are always suspended from school or that play truant. Singh and Steyn (2014:84) argue that learners with rebellious personality traits and perform badly at school are candidates for vandalism and interpersonal aggression. Learners that resist authority are reflected through inflicting damage to buildings and painting them with graffiti. Aggressive learners may commit acts of vandalism to gain attention in order to make up for their low self-esteem (Singh & Steyn, 2014:84).

2.3 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE

Protective factors render it likely that the learner will stay free from violence while risk factors allow the learner to be either a perpetrator or victim of violence. Characteristics that are internal and external to the individual work to either increase or decrease the possibility of involvement of the learner in acts of violence or the likelihood being seriously harmed in the occurrence of violence (Pinheiro, 2006:131). School violence is influenced by an array of factors inclusive of socio-economic conditions, the region of school location, school type as well as the characteristics of the learners such as ethnicity, age, social class, sex, special education needs and family background

(Smith, 2002:140). The chance of playing victim of violence decreases with age owing to the fact that the potential victims get more skilled and tougher to resist violence. The age with which perpetrators of violence become stronger increases around mid to late adolescence as individuals are exposed to risk-taking and norm-breaking behaviours that are sanctioned by peers (Smith, 2002:140).

School violence is a many-faceted problem, making it difficult for researchers and practitioners to pinpoint and explain its causes (Netshitangani, 2014:1394). Scientists examine numerous causes of school violence. Some note the abundance of increasingly violent movies, TV shows, and video games targeted toward children and adolescents, and some claim music is as influential as the television (Schier, 2008:8). Some people point to antiauthoritarian educational and parenting methods. These groups lament the breakdown of the traditional nuclear family. Conservative sociologists fear that the increase in single-parent households and broken families results in a lack of parental supervision. Abuse of alcohol and drugs and the increase in crime in general have also been blamed particularly in gang-related crime (Schier, 2008:8).

The South African Human Rights Commission Report on School-based Violence (2008) enlists factors that contribute to school-based violence. These include varied settings in which young learners operate such as the family, school environment, and the wide community within which the school is located. The multiple settings that learners experience as well as individuals they come into contact with converge to create a risk areas for violence (Burton & Leoschut, 2012:54).

2.3.1 Factors in the Community that Contribute Towards School-based Violence

The aetiology of school violence stems from the factors in the community and society over which the school has either limited or no control (De Wet, 2007:253). The community which is considered to be disorganised is characterised by increased incidents of violence, use of alcohol, drugs and firearms as well as prevalence of crime. SACE (2011:8) contend that these factors raise the chances and vulnerability of

learners to the commission of violence. Disorganised communities tend to expose learners to high incidences of crime (SACE, 2011:9).

The greatest correlates of disorder in schools pertains to the population of the school and the context of the community. This is a generally accepted position in the discourse on school violence. This is premised on the contention that learners are products of various environments and the intricate interactions which characterise their lives (Burton, 2008:55).

The prevalence and easy access of weapons to learners in South Africa are indicative of widespread availability of these materials in the communities from which learners come from. The same argument holds true for drugs. It is inconceivable that schools can be plagued with extensive usage of drugs when the communities are clean or experience very constrained use of and access to drugs (Burton, 2008:51).

The socio-economic factors which drive the social life have a huge impact on school violence. Violence in the townships of South Africa are hinged on the racial policies of apartheid and their resultant outcomes. Urbanisation and consequent migration of people from rural communities to towns and cities result in overcrowding and pressure on urban resources. The rate of unemployment in towns is steadily rising. Unemployment and desperation which emanates from its influence breed communities which are inherently violent (Kaldine, 2007:245-247). It is also quite common for learners in townships to witness shootings, assaults and stabbings (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:91).

The drugs that are always available in communities as well as the high numbers of adults that are engaged in crime further propel the involvement of youths in violent behaviours (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010:222). Burton (2008) conducted a study and established that primary and secondary school learners who are able to access drugs from the communities are also better positioned to access weapons. The study also found that learners from communities with a lot of fights and crime have experienced victimisation at home and school. 21.4% of learners reported experiencing a lot of fights while 26.2% of them confirmed encountering crime. (Burton, 2008:54).

In 2007, the National Schools Violence Study conducted a study and revealed that learners with an exposure to crime and violence in their locale were more likely to have been victims of one of the many forms of violence at school compared to those learners who had never been exposed to such problems (SACE, 2011:9). Learners that have been introduced to negative contexts or those that experience violence have a weak understanding of the working of the world. Learners' sense of safety is impaired and an increase in the feelings of fear and anxiety are heightened. Learners frequently battle with sleep and this increase strain in their ability to concentrate in their school work (SACE, 2011:9).

Learners in Mpumalanga Province and, particularly in Bushbuckridge Districts, face a number of those that perpetrate violence in schools. These people of violent dispositions impede the learners from accessing quality education and availing them with equal opportunities to schooling as attested to in the constitution of the country (Chabangu, 2014:11).

2.3.2 Poverty and Unemployment

South Africa possesses one of the most unequal opportunities in the world, despite a relatively sound economic performance since 1994. 45% to 55% of the population is belong to the category which is viewed as poor while 20% to 25% are people recognised as falling in the group of those considered to be extremely poor. The racial, gender and spatial dimensions are embedded in the discussion on poverty (Mncube, 2014:417). The Education Development Center in South Africa conducted studies which indicated the existence of vast dimensions of poverty related to violence. These include high levels of poverty, disruption of family, transience of the population, overcrowding and availability of materials of violence such as drugs and guns (Meyer, 2005:12).

In terms of violence related to sex, it is crucial to note that priviledge does not offer protection to individuals. However, it is the extent of poverty that reside in the community which determines the vulnerability of the learner to violence (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:91). Learners from poor environments have to travel long distances to the nearest school, using public transport which is quite dangerous (Naylor, 2002:1).

While corporal punishment was outlawed in schools in South Africa, it is interesting to note that it still continues to exist in township schools. (Motseke 2010; Morrel 2001). This implies that learners are subjected to acts of violence both in their communities as well as in schools where teachers assume responsibility of abusing them (Nggela & Lewis, 2012:91).

The deepseated situation of poverty in black communities that are in townships speaks of unemployment, with the majority of people in these locations being in active economically for lengthy periods of time or even indefinitely (Bennett-Johnson 2004:2). This has encouraged individuals to seek economic and social sustenance through selling drugs and alcohol. The conditions of learners that have patterned their lives on such role models have continued to deteriorate in terms of behaviour. The ultimate result has been the adoption of violent behaviours inclusive of joining gangs and the use of weapons, which ends up being transported to schools (Bennett-Johnson 2004:200).

2.3.3 Gangsterism and Drug and Alcohol Abuse

The presence of weapons at school is sometimes related to gang activity. In the U.S, School shooters are often not gang members, however. Typically, gangs are groups of young people that engage in drug or weapon trafficking and often use violence to defend their turf against a rival gang. Many gangs are ethnically defined, and turf wars may erupt due to racial differences. Occasionally, gang members are students, but sometimes a school experiences gang-related activity even if none of the students belong to a gang. Outside gangs may infiltrate a school to sell alcohol, drugs or weapons to non-members at a school (Schier, 2008:22). Gang activity can be disruptive to the school environment because it may incite fear among learners and increase the level of school violence.

A study by Burton (2008:39) revealed the formation of informal groupings in schools in South Africa. These gangs victimise and terrorise learners with the use of stones and at times threaten them with terror if they refuse to offer them their desires. In limited instances, participants revealed that the school experienced infiltration by gangs from surrounding communities who gained access to schools through holes in

the fence or porous gates to assault learners sexually, threaten, rob and steal. These cases accounted for less than 2% of all the cases but were strong enough to call for solutions in the form of securing the school surroundings and clogging access points (Burton, 2008:39).

In the discussion on crime and violence, the issues of drugs and alcohol take centre stage. In as much as a definitive relationship of cause and effect is difficult to ascertain, a strong correlation occurs in relation to crime and substance abuse. Drugs and alcohol are often used to instil courage for the commission of crime. The aggression associated with over use of alcohol and drugs, might raise the levels of violence in the commission of crime. This may increase to possibility of the occurrence of crime such as assault.

The problem of drugs and alcohol abuse is increasingly becoming an issue in schools despite the fact that learners in primary and secondary schools are legally not allowed to indulge in drugs (Burton, 2008: 46). Drugs, alcohol and weapons appear to be available in a number of schools in South Africa (Burton, 2008:46; SACE, 2011:10). It is unfortunate that school authorities can be complicit in the challenge just like learners. Learners tend to bring alcohol and drugs into the premises of the school, but educators are also found to use learners to procure drugs and alcohol from *taverns* and *shebeens* around schools. Educators and principals report cases of learners that sneak out of school to *shebeens* where they buy alcohol for their own use. The participants confirmed the constant availability of drugs in the immediate surroundings of the school, especially *dagga* or marijuana (Burton, 2008:46).

Those who sell drugs, the “merchants” sit outside school premises, at the gates or close to perimeter fences hawking illegal substances to learners during school hours or soon after school. The incidents of the reports across the 9 provinces are indicative of an institutionalised problem, in which case young learners are perceived as a reliable source of income and easy prey (Burton, 2008:46).

The rate of access to alcohol and drugs and their impact in the environment of the school are quite apparent in the school data. While the open use of alcohol is evidenced at secondary schools, the existence of the phenomenon is also witnessed

in primary schools (Burton, 2008:46; SACE, 2011:10). UNICEF (2012a 12) observes that there are many studies which show a correlation between the use of drugs and alcohol and crime. Learners become victims of drugs not as a result of their being used at home but through the taking of drugs by people in their social environment exemplified by peers and parents.

2.3.4 Conditions in the Home Environment

The home environment is a main component in the system. This is the place where young learners spent the better part of their time. This period is immediately followed by the time young people spend while at school. It is necessary to understand what transpires in other spheres of life of individuals in order to have an in-depth grasp of the happenings at school. It is the family that serves as a point of departure in the analysis of drug abuse and crime (Burton, 2008:55). The family and home constitute primary agents of socialisation to learners while the media, school and peers provide secondary agents of socialisation (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:90).

The attitudes of parents that are pro-violence and inflame conflict in the family constitute risk factors which play a critical place in the modelling process (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:90). The importance of family is not negated in the life of adolescents, despite the fact that the relations of peers is fore-fronted (Gouws *et al.* 2000:67). Children in black townships in South Africa live in squalid conditions, usually in the absence of parents but with caregivers that, in most instances, do not have proper parenting skills and sufficient resources to meet basic human needs. This creates a situation which is prone to the formation of behaviour which is destructive.

A number of learners in black townships in South Africa belong to single-parent homes owing to the working conditions of their parents who are migratory or parents that have died due to HIV/AIDS (Western Cape Education Department 2005:8). Such learners and others residing in similar environments harbour feelings of helplessness and worthlessness and exhibit a quest for gratification and reassurance which lead to frustrations that tend to generate anger as well as violence (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:90). In the Bushbuckridge region, Mpumalanga province a reasonable number of children comes from child-headed households (Chidziva, 2013:2).

In most cases, the use of drugs and alcohol is strongly associated with criminal behaviour. This is also true with increased access to weapons. However, parents that are anti-social or criminal provide the strongest predictor of the related criminal disposition of learners (Burton, 2008:55). This is generally inconsistent with common reason, which holds that the absence of a father figure or parent predicate offending. This implies that it is even beneficial to be devoid of a parent of father-figure than to have one that serves as a bad model (Burton, 2008:55).

The risk of exposure to school-based violence can be heightened through association with members of the family that have been incarcerated or involved in criminal activities in their lives. Studies reflect a huge correlation between school-based violence and violence in the family. This justifies the need to involve parents/caregivers in initiatives to prevent school crime and teachers cannot adequately address this challenge (SACE, 2011:11).

Research indicate the existence of complex predictors for young learners to engage in crime. These include truancy in school, poverty, large family size, individual characteristics such as low empathy and impulsiveness as well as neglect. According to Burton (2008:56), these might be mediated through variables of parenting. Data obtained from learners in South Africa suggests that it is precisely in this area that the widest problem resides. In order to redress the problem of discipline in schools, it is vital for attention to be targeted at the variables of parenting instead of the schools themselves (Burton, 2008:56).

2.3.5 Factors within Schools that Contribute Towards School-Based Violence

School constitute the most crucial agent of socialisation after the family as learners spend almost half of their daily life at school (SACE, 2011:4). According to Burton (2008), schools are pivotal places in which learners not only gain academic knowledge but also understand a lot about themselves. This pertains the way in which they ought to behave as well as interact with others. This places schools in the position of doubling as negative and positive agents in shaping the lives of learners (SACE, 2011:4). The environment of the school works as a double-edged sword, offering

interventions regarding violent behaviour and also being places where learners are exposed to violence through victimisation and offending (Frank, 2006:38).

The environment of the school exposes learners to violence. The behaviour which is mostly reflected in schools has influence from the environment that is not related to school. The violence that occurs in schools is mainly derived from external factors although can be aggravated or precipitated by factors within the school environment. Learners spend great amounts of time in school or on their way to and from school (Nwankwo, Takisha, Jackson & van Rooyen, 2002:8). The mistrust which at times occurs between schools and the communities tend to weaken the bonds which are desired between learners and teachers, and thereby loosening the levers that teachers can rely on to elicit the efforts of learners. The trust that should entail between teachers and learners play an important role outside of classrooms (Burdick-Will, 2013:346). The trust among principals, teachers, students and parents assists to improve struggling schools but the high rates of violence which emerge in schools logically reflects trust that has been eroded.

It is common knowledge that teachers in primary and secondary schools have teaching as their major function, but the nature of teaching and the behaviours they display may either hinder or inspire violence in schools (Sugut & Mugasia, 2014:125). The taught curriculum may present the source of the problem. This means that the curriculum may not be organised in such a way as to address the needs of girls and boys in terms of their diverse characteristics, interests, backgrounds and abilities. It is observed that the curriculum of secondary schools is centred on bookish and academic activities to the visible neglect of problems and experiences of everyday life. (Sugut & Mugasia, 2014:125).

The benefits of a school climate in which academic success and discipline accrue to learners are associated with and promoted in independent schools which are mostly fee paying. In addition, schools that have less problems of safety and discipline tend to obtain high accomplishments (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:6). It is a protective factor against violence for individuals to be attached to a school and to value education. The belief is that the increased levels of crime and violence in schools in South Africa rob learners of the chance to optimise their

educational and academic potentials (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007:46). A correlation also exists between the educational effort that a learner exerts in studies and the level of success attained, and the related propensity to commit or abstain from crime. The absence of safety in schools may function to perpetuate violence and crime in the wider society in which learners live (Jeffthas & Artz, 2007:46).

The relationship between the organisation of a school and the characteristics of individuals or groups of learners determines the criminal or violence situation that entail. The learner characteristics such as low ability, high truancy and low socio-economic situation have an influence on school violence. The systematic violence in schools may be inflamed by levels of physical punishment that are high and the lack of positive reinforcement or praise in the teaching and learning processes (Burton, 2008:8).

The marks of a successful school encompass effective management of the classroom, student participation and academic influence. These form pivotal characteristics which define successful and non-violent schools. High levels of conflict among learners and learners and educators and weak school bonds raise the possibility that learners will be involved in delinquent behaviours in future. The decrease in the adoption of indiscipline behaviours emanate from learner centred learning, high academic focus as well as the establishment of academic classes. (Burton, 2008:8).

According to Furlong and Morrison (2000:78), several characteristics exist to create conditions that are leaned towards the demonstration of violent conducts. These include schools with bad ethos, large schools, schools with disciplinary challenges and related in ability to deal with issues of sexual harassment (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:91). In one study conducted by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:12) in South Africa, the following were found to cultivate violence in schools; indiscipline, unrestricted access to premises of the school, crime in the community, poverty, lack of recreational facilities, unemployment and overcrowding.

2.4 EFFECTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Schools are intended to be places of academic and social learning. Recurring incidents of violence at school breeds the atmosphere which is full of distrust and fear. It is the administrators, teachers and parents that are ahead in desiring schools to function as safe havens for learning. Violent behaviours disrupt learning processes and attract negative consequences for the learners, the schools as well as the wider community (CDC, 2010:1). According to Burdick-Will (2013:344), these repercussions are explained in terms of psychological theories concerned with self-efficacy and agency. Owing to an attack, the victims experience a constricted sense of agency and general loss of control over their own lives. Victimisation blurs the sense of interpersonal trust as all individuals are perceived as sources of threat instead of support (Burdick-Will, 2013:344).

Research has demonstrated that institutions of learning may be seen as areas of risk or resilience for future offending. The impact of an environment of the school which is violent has been subjected to longitudinal studies in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States of America (US) (Burton, 2008:5). According to Farrington and Welsh (in Burton, 2008:5), the typology of the features of schools that are violent include high rates of truancy, distrust between learners and educators, unclear measures to enforce discipline and low dedication to school work by learners. The studies also attempt to demonstrate the degree to which school practices, organisation and practices determine widespread levels of delinquency.

Violent crimes at school impact negatively on learner achievement as it results in learner stress, reduced levels of concentration and disruption in the learning environment. It is however, difficult to measure the effect of violence at school on learner achievement as achievement and crime can be an outcome of poor selection of learners and a climate at school which lacks trust (Burdick-Will, 2013:347).

2.4.1 Impact of School-based Violence on Learners

School violence is acknowledged as a huge social problem which hampers the well-being and academic achievement of learners as well as impinge on the values of

democracy and the education of people (Smith, 2002:137). School violence affects the education of learners in a severe manner. The occurrence of violence dents the environment of the school and jeopardises the process of education. It further curtails the right of the learner to education as well as the security and freedom of the individual (Neser, 2002:33). School violence thwarts the rights of learners. Involvement in acts of violence has greater effect on adolescents compared to individuals in other age groups due to the actual state of this period of human development (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:87).

Long-standing emotional, psychological and physical implications of violent behaviour results for learners, educators and the rest of the community (Govender & Killian, 2001:1). These involve stress and fear (Boqwana 2009:20). They may also encompass a disorder known as post-traumatic stress (PTSD) (Bach & Louw, 2010:25). According to (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012:89), acts of violence can lead to reduced self-esteem, low school attendance, impaired concentration, suicide and depression as well as disinterest in school work.

School-based violence destroys the positive learning environment schools are intended to provide. In turn, this affects a student's readiness and ability to learn. If a student is more concerned about being bullied or attacked at school than about missing class or failing an exam, that student may avoid certain school activities or stop attending school entirely. Experiencing school violence is extremely stressful, but students who avoid school may not be aware that they do so because they are afraid of being bullied or hurt. Stomach-aches, headaches, fevers, and even more serious illnesses may be symptoms of stress disorders that neither the student nor their caretakers are aware of (Schier, 2008:30). Systemic violence at schools also contributes directly to high levels of truancy and school drop-out rates. Experiences in Brazil show that a lack of trust and a general dislike of fellow learners are cited by children as the major reason for not attending school (Burton, 2008:6).

2.4.1.1 Poor academic performance

In the Regional Consultations for the study conducted by Pinheiro (2006: 130), psychological and physical forms of punishment, inclusive of bullying, verbal abuse, as well as sexual violence emerged strongly as the reasons leading to absenteeism,

lack of motivation for academic performance and school dropout. The impacts of bullying on education has not been extensively researched compared to those related to physical and psychological abuses. However, it is acknowledged that the perpetrators and victims of violence obtain lower test scores than other learners. A relationship also exists in regard to absenteeism, bullying and lack of bonding with other learners (Pinheiro, 2006:130).

One outstanding fact about violent learners and antisocial behaviour is the weak performance of learners at school (Singh & Steyn, 2014:84). Learners who have academic skills that are poor get frustrated and lose motivation to do academic work. These eventually adopt violent and antisocial behaviour. Violent learners end up getting envious of the success of their peers as they constantly fail to concentrate in their own school work (Bemak & Keys, 2000:8). These learners disrupt lessons, get easily bored, join deviant peers, harass other students, play truant and engage in delinquent behaviour (Singh & Steyn, 2014:84). A number of factors contribute towards the underperformance of educators and learners with repercussions including frequent resignations, anxiety, prolonged absenteeism, depression as well as stress (Singh & Steyn, 2014:84).

Empirical research in South Asia show that violence which is done at school, particularly corporal punishment, cause learners to drop out of school (Pinheiro, 2006:130). In South Africa, studies show that learners that are victims of violence are faced with hostility when they report such cases. This leads them to abscond classes for long periods of time, quit school or transfer to other schools. On the other hand, educators or learners that abuse others often remain proceeding with their own work (Pinheiro, 2006:130). In a study conducted by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:13), participants reported that bullying has a negative impact in their education. The study further established that violence at school contributed to bunking of lessons, depression, lost time and chaos as well as poor academic performance (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:13). Pregnancy which resulted from coercion and sexual assault in Caribbean countries, Asia and Africa compels girls to drop out of school and lose educational opportunities for the ultimate compromise in their future endeavours (Pinheiro, 2006: 130:130).

2.4.1.2 Health impacts

School violence has negative impacts on learners such as psychological distress, physical injuries, long term mental and physical health and permanent disability. Physical challenges are the most common and cover wounds which can be mild or severe, fractures, bruises, and loss of life through suicide or homicide (Pinheiro, 2006:128). Violence through sexual assault can lead to early or unwanted pregnancy, infections that are transmitted sexually inclusive of HIV/AIDS (Pinheiro, 2006:128). The violence which is inflicted at the early ages of life has a negative effect on the individual's cognitive development as well as progress in pro-social behaviour. This relates to the ability to interact and relate with other peers in a positive and healthy manner. Individuals that experienced victimisation at an early stage in their lives become at risk of delinquent behaviour or anti-social dispositions at adolescence. They are also at risk of indulging in criminal activities (Burton, 2008:1). Learners that have constantly been exposed to violent behaviours suffer from depression, loss of self-esteem and post-traumatic stress disorder. In most instances, learners that have been victims of violence tend to be suicidal and retaliate in occasions of violence (Schier, 2008:27).

The effects of violence of a psychological nature encompass rapid obstruction of emotional development, ill-health and mental distress. This can lead to ill-health physically also. Various studies have also indicated a correlation between poor mental health and corporal punishment. (Pinheiro, 2006:128).

2.4.2 Impact of School-based Violence on Educators & the School Environment

The school environment which is conducive to effective learning and teaching is one that is safe (Xaba, 2006:565). School violence has negative effects on academic performance and development. It also impedes the possibility of learners to function adequately within and without school environments (Burton, 2008:1).

Research carried out in Britain and the United States offer evidence with regard to school violence on academic achievement. Farrington and Welsh (2003) expose some of the common features of violence in schools, and these involve rates of truancy that are high, diminished levels of trust between learners and educators, hazy forms of discipline and reduces commitment to school work by learners (SACE, 2011:30).

The learners that attend school but cognisant of the presence of bullies will find problem concentrating in class. Similarly, an educator who always have to grapple with the maintenance of class discipline will not find ample time to focus on actual teaching. Schools that tolerate disruptive behaviours from learners effectively construct ideal environments for the use of guns (Schier, 2008:12).

Educators that regularly deal with disruptive behaviours such as physical violence and bullying spend ample time addressing confrontations which are inappropriate and very little time actually teaching in the same vein, learners that bare involved in physical violence, bullying or witness such incidence experience problems in focusing on school business (Schier, 2008:29).

2.5 REPORTING VIOLENT INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

There are plenty of drivers to indicate the dearth of accurate data on incidents of violence in schools. In the majority of cases, learners avoid reporting incidents of violence. Some cases may be considered trivial to warrant reporting, others may be viewed to attract stigma when they are reported to the school principal or educators. The victim may also fail to report acts of violence for fear of revenge attacks or it might to the educators that may be linked to such violent matters (Burton, 2008:3).

In occasions where an educator or principal is made aware of a case of violence, it may also be at the discretion of the authorities not to report the abuses. The principal may be hesitant to submit a public report to preserve the reputation of the school. The principal may shy away from exposing the administrative inability to properly manage educators, learners and other stakeholders closely linked to operations within the school environment. It is also usual to fail to locate mechanisms for the reporting and recording of cases as well as feeding information back to districts and provinces (Burton, 2008:3).

The culture of not reporting and hence the lack of accurate data on incidents of school-based violence is a global problem (Burton, 2008:30). In South Africa, there is a growing trend for learners in primary and secondary schools who do not report cases of sexual abuse as they assume that these are not very pertinent to warrant being

reported on (SACE, 2011:12). According to Burton (2008d:40), the study revealed that 13% of primary school and 33.7% of secondary school learners did not report cases of violence as they felt that the cases were not strong enough to desire reporting (Burton, 2008:44).

Although some schools in South Africa have established interventions for dealing with cases of violence, the provinces that are host to schools which experience school violence are not significant to predict the possibility that learners will report to authorities in and outside school. Burton (2008:42) carried out a study which revealed that many learners fail to report cases of violence to anyone, including the school. Several reasons were noted for the failure by learners to report violent abuses. Generally, five reasons were cited to justify none reporting of abusive cases of violence. These included learners being extremely afraid to report, did not think it was helpful to report, embarrassed to report, threatened and never thought the cases were important enough to be reported. All reasons, however, significant bare implications of a secondary nature (Burton, 2008g:42).

In the absence of accurate information on cases of violence within schools, the authorities inclusive of school governing bodies, principals, educators, district and provincial officers can be constrained in the offering of interventions. It may also be difficult for them to establish the causes of problems and their nature. This renders them unable to provide services and support to those learners that have been victims of violence. Reporting cases of abuse to schools is crucial as this allows data to be captured regarding total learners that have been affected, the forms of violence perpetrated and related interventions possible (Burton, 2008:40).

2.6 SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

While different groups debate the possible causes of school violence, they also disagree on the best approaches to prevent future acts of aggression (Schier, 2008:10). The problem of school violence occurs on different levels. Name-calling, bullying, fistfights, thefts are all examples that occur across the nation on a daily basis (Schier, 2008:11).

In the European Union, the Ministries of education expect all schools to provide learning environments which exude respect. There are a number of countries that have specific legislation regarding the prevention of bullying and school-based violence. Such countries include Finland, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, Sweden and France (Smith, 2002:142). The regulations entail the development of policy or approach to deal with bullying or violence. It is valuable to note that while these policies are pertinent in creating a framework, assigning roles and suggesting possible sanctions, these may offer a complete service without the involvement of other initiatives (Smith, 2002:142).

The National School Safety Framework was developed in South Africa to outline the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in making sure there are safety standards in schools (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:2). The norm is that incidents involving the commission of violent acts on school learners have to be reported to officials who enforce the law (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:2). It is realised that the laws which are designed to protect learners against the commission of extreme cases of violence are least enforced. It is striking to note that even though the South African Schools Act of 1996 is in place, the violent behaviours are still occurrent (Reddy, Zuze, Visser, Winnaar, Juan & Hannan, 2015:2). Schools have tended to rely on traditional methods of enforcing discipline inclusive of the use of security guards, metal detectors, locking doors and windows, locker checks, doing “shake-down” searches and metal detectors. Traditional methods of enforcing law are effective but may also have negative repercussions. These involve a reduction in the available time for teaching, decline in the morale of both learners and teachers and a huge burden financially. In addition, they further present an environment which is characterised by apprehension among learners, educators and parents (Netshitangani, 2014:1396).

The problem of violence continues to exist in South Africa despite efforts by the Department of Education (DoE) and the South African Police Services (SAPS). Initiative in place include the piloting of Firearm-Free Zones for Schools which is being rolled out in tandem with the Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000 and the search and confiscation of fire arms and weapons as mandated by the Education Laws Amendment Act 31 of 2007. While major gains have been made by Safer Schools

Campaign in the country, it is increasingly clear that much more still needs to be done (Netshitangani, 2014: 1394). The CDC (2010:3) suggests a three level strategy in dealing with school violence.

2.6.1 Relationship Level Strategies

In order to improve family relations, the parent-family based forms of interventions are employed. It is recognised that those interventions which start early in the lives of learners and consider the varied factors that influence the family, offer long-term and huge benefits in mitigating violent behaviours (CDC, 2010:3). The other strategy for curbing negative behaviour is mentoring. This is a way attaching a mentee to a mentor who serves as a volunteer person to support and develop the individual through modelling. This technique affords young children and adolescents progressive influences of adults to cultivate desired behaviours (CDC, 2010:3).

2.6.2 Community Level Strategies

Strategies that exist at this point aim to modify the characteristics of the community, inclusive of school settings which either inhibit or promote violence. Schools generally have committed great efforts to create positive outcomes in terms of the behaviour of learners through improving the environment in which the school is located. These entail improvement in the management of practices in the classrooms, educator practices, supervision and monitoring of learners, involving parents to reduce bullying and encouraging learning techniques that enhance cooperation. Proper design of the environment may be employed to reduce fear and crime, in addition to the social conditions in which the school is located (CDC, 2010:4).

A number of nations have adopted the tradition of reigning in parents and the community in the endeavour to mediate expected school behaviour. The long-standing tradition of parent-teachers association is existent in North America (PTA). The association has branches in the entire schools in the community and these are used to support the umbrella body which has a national outlook. These afford parents the lee-way to monitor operations in schools and to intervene according to the way they deem necessary. Other countries as well have organisations that allow parents and

the community at large to deal with a plethora of school-based problems. This is done in collaboration with school principals, educators as well as other authorities in education. Therefore, parents and the community at large have the mandate to participate in the wide range of disciplinary issues through various groups and organisations in the education arena (Pinheiro, 2006:146).

In places where this kind of involvement is not evident, there are mechanisms that are put in place to secure such involvement. Countries such as Tanzania, Lesotho and others in Sub-Saharan Africa have tended to involve committees in the local environment to address an array of challenges related to HIV and AIDS (Pinheiro, 2006:146).

2.6.3 Societal Level Strategies

Techniques that are concerned with the cultural and social environment for the reduction of school violence are difficult and less constantly utilised. Strategies which can be used and have a lasting change entail dealing with norms of the society through public campaigns, reforming the education system at the local level and violence of the media (CDC, 2010:4). Research continues to reveal that paying attention to the systematic behaviour of educators, school principals and learners is also vital in making learners less vulnerable to abuse, just like the part which is played by peers and parents. The engagement of adults in behaviours which promote disrespect for the rights of individuals, safety and comfort of others, ultimately gets emulated by the youth (Pinheiro, 2006:132). However, in America, areas of civil conflict like Sierra Leone and Nepal as well as South Africa, a lot of violence experienced by learners in schools is transported from the communities within which schools are located. Learners may become violent owing to the influences of displacement, social upheaval and low levels of academic performance (Pinheiro, 2006:132).

2.6.4 Laws and Law Enforcement

The shift towards schools which are free from violence is hinged on national laws, regional agreements and international conventions which tackle issues of sexual assault, harassment and physical violence. Pinheiro (2006: 139) argues that a lot of

countries are sluggish in their quest to meet regional and international mandates as well as to enforce their own national laws.

A majority of countries possess laws and policies which seek to avoid sexual harassment at the work place and these are often adopted in education institutions like school. These may work to protect learners as well as educators. According to the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 (2000), harassment is an “unwanted conduct which is persistent or serious and demeans, humiliates or creates a hostile or intimidating environment or is calculated to induce submission ... and which is related to sex, gender or sexual orientation.” In South Africa, measures are being taken to ensure cases of rape are investigated in a way that is sensitive to the concerns of victims. These are expected to yield prosecutions that are successful. In addition, the Department of Education has flighted specific guidelines which apply to relations of a sexual nature involving learners and educators (Pinheiro, 2006:14).

Schools in South Africa have a duty to protect learners from all forms of bullying as enunciated in the Constitution, Children’s Act, Schools Act, Common law and Case law (Mollo, 2009:28). All laws on education which have a direct impact on issues of violence are derived directly from the Constitution. Section 29 of the Bill of Rights is the most prominent of all and guarantees individuals the right to basic education as well as to further education. The state has an obligation to make education available and accessible to all that require it (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw, 2004:79). Every learner is supposed to enjoy the right to human dignity in a safe and secure school environment (Section 10 of the Constitution), the right to security and freedom (Section 12 of the Constitution) as well as the right to privacy (Section 14 of the Constitution). This means that learners must be protected and respected, free from all forms of violence, not be punished or treated in an inhuman, cruel or degrading manner (Mollo, 2009:30).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) 1996 protects individuals from being subjected to corporal punishment or physical canning (Republic of South Africa 1996b). In regard to the enforcement of discipline, SASA mandates the SGBs to devise a code of conduct for learners in consultation with school principals, learners, parents and

teachers (Republic of South Africa 1996). SASA spells out that a code of conduct is meant to construct a purposeful and disciplined environment for learning (Republic of South Africa 1996). The “Code of Professional Ethics” should guide educators as recommended by the South African Council for Educators.

The code of conduct provides that educators (teachers) have to respect the rights, beliefs and dignity and the rights of learners as propagated in the constitution, inclusive of the right to confidentiality and privacy, acknowledgement of individuality and uniqueness of persons, particular requirements of each learner and to guide learners to the accomplishment of their potential. Educators should avoid any form of psychological or physical abuse, avoid the humiliation of the learner, exercise authority with compassion, any form of sexual relations with learners, psychological and physical abuse. Educators are supposed to use appropriate language and engage behaviour that is likely to attract respect from learners, take well thought out steps to ensure the safety of learners. There is no room for educators to be negligent in the discharge of their duties (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:4).

2.6.5 School Policies and other Initiatives

Dlamini (2012:25) identifies three areas which are central in the prevention of violence which is school-based. It is desirable for research to be conducted to establish the impact of peer-led programmes, the effect of available security strategies and assessments of initiatives for crisis response. There is also a demand to ponder the realistic and effectiveness of strategies that are school-based to select and adopt a comprehensive number of evidence-based strategies of preventing violence. Lastly, the formulation of guidelines which are realistic for use by schools to implement and monitor programmes that are based on evidence (Dlamini, 2012:25).

In schools where anti-violence policies exist, the process of implementation of anti-violence policy lands itself fit for monitoring (Mollo, 2009:46). In monitoring the policy, an influential member of staff reviews progress and makes it possible for follow up to be made to indicate the effectiveness of the policy. Schools must provide clarity in regard to the circumstances for the adoption of records for monitoring, the amount of time for their storage and individuals to have access to them. Schools should also be

aware not to use an anti-violence policy to deny the existence of violence. In monitoring the effectiveness of policy, it is crucial to solicit the views of learners on the functions of the policy, areas where problems exist and where further work needs to be done (Mollo, 2009:46).

In South Africa, the South African Police (SAPS) and the Department of Education exhibit vast initiatives for safer schools, inclusive of the piloting of Firearm Free Zones for Schools, as constituted in terms of the Firearms Control Act of 2000. Despite this phenomenon, a lot of violent behaviours are still evidenced in schools (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:1). It is pertinent that schools should craft their own policies to curb violence. The policy development process should consider the views of various stakeholders including school principals, educators, learners and parents. Mollo (2009:41) posits that the thorough and wider consultations occur in the crafting of policy, the high chances for the policy to be implemented successfully. Smith, Smith, Osborn and Samara (2008:4) contend that the policy needs to be comprehensive and clear from the onset for use by educators, school principals, learners and the wider community.

In the Western Cape, schools have implemented the search and seizure techniques and testing methods for drugs in schools as part of intervention measures against violence. One of the schools on the area has established a standing agreement with the police in the vicinity of the school to conduct patrols around the school and to carryout surprise search and seizure activities to curb school violence (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014:6).

2.7 SUMMARY

Reviewed literature has revealed the broad context of the nature of school violence. From the literature review, it is apparent that violence in schools is a global concern, but more worrying is that is endemic and on the rise in many South African schools. This perspective suggests that a lot more needs to be done to address the current situations in schools. There are many factors behind the high levels of school violence in South Africa; among the most important factors are communities where crime is prevalent and dysfunctional family nucleus.

School violence has severe impacts on the learners' educational endeavours, on the educators, the school environment and the society at large. Unlike a host of other overseas countries, South Africa has legislation to protect and ensure safety of learners in the school environment. Preventing school violence is however a difficult task as it takes various forms and occurs at different levels ranging from bullying, alcohol and substance abuse, cyber bullying and sexual harassment among others.

The next chapter (Chapter 3) of the study will look into the research design and methodology to be employed to enhance a better understanding of the phenomenon under study so that schools can ultimately come up with targeted interventions to combat school violence.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the procedures and the methods that were used in this study to investigate the nature, causes and effects of school violence in South African rural schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit in Mpumalanga Province. The chapter starts by presenting the study area then explains the research design, data collection, validity and reliability of the collected data, data analysis as well as the ethical considerations that were observed.

3.2 STUDY AREA

The research was conducted in the Bohlabela District of Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. The study focused on one circuit (Mkhuhlu) because it is closer to the researcher. Financial constraints and time factor inhibited the researcher from targeting schools which could be affected by school-based violence which are far away from the researcher. The accessibility and proximity of the area made it an ideal research area especially the multicultural nature of the population in the area.

Mkhulu circuit is bordered by the R526 road which leads to Kruger National Park on the South, Bushbuckridge to the North and Hazyview town to the West. The number of the learners in the ten research sites ranged from 195 to 820, educators per school from 7 – 22 and support staff 2-4 (Mnisi, 2015:52). Mkhuhlu Circuit is found in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality which is located in the south-eastern part of the Limpopo province and north-eastern part of the Mpumalanga Province. The municipality is one of the two constituents of the former Bohlabela District Municipality. The population of the municipality in the 2011 census was 541,248 (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The municipality is dominated by the Tsonga, Swazi and Sotho people and the principal first language is Tsonga (57%), followed by Northern Sotho with about 25%. There are 28 schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit, which includes 17 primary schools and 11 secondary schools.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are three approaches that are commonly used in social research and these include quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Hanson *et al.*, 2005:225). The generation of data which can be analysed through quantitative measures or strategies denotes or is linked to the qualitative approach (Kothari, 2004:5). According to Shabalala (2016:57), the quantitative research techniques are normally utilised when the population of the study is large. Proponents of quantitative research methodology often emphasise that, through using this strategy, objective information is likely to be gathered since there will be controlled involvement of the researcher. Quantitative research methods are most suitable if the basic aim of the investigation is to describe or predict, build or test a theory (Shabalala, 2016:57).

Qualitative approach in research focuses on subjective analysis of attitudes, opinions and behaviour. The researcher's insights and impressions are critical in this regard. The findings established in such types of investigations are usually analysed through qualitative means. Individual interviews, focus group interviews, projective techniques and in-depth interviews are examples of data gathering techniques that are normally used in qualitative research (Kothari, 2004:5). Both qualitative and quantitative research techniques can be used within a single study (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:59). Sometimes the combination of qualitative and quantitative data assists in understanding complex social phenomenon of interest, hence, mixed-mode designs are often highly desirable (Bhattacharjee, 2012:35).

A variety of scientific methods have been used to investigate violence in schools (Van Rensburg, 2010:45). If one intends to study large populations, for example a large number of learners or educators, quantitative methods are useful (Babbie, 2010:287). In addition, research can focus on an array of variables, such as the types and frequency of violence in schools. On the other hand, qualitative methods are useful when studying a limited number of variables that require rich, in-depth explanations and descriptions, for example experiences of school-based violence (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:50). Both methods (quantitative and qualitative) have their unique disadvantages, which render mixed-methods research a viable alternative (Van

Rensburg, 2010:45), and combining their strengths complement each other, as well as supplement each other's weaknesses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:18).

3.3.1 Mixed Methods Approach

According to Shabalala (2016:59), Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) are some of the proponents of mixed-research methods. These posit that the research has become so complex that it now requires enquiry methods that go beyond the limits of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Creswell (2003) cited in Mamogale (2011:67) observes that one of the reasons why well-established researchers employ mixed methods designs is that such techniques facilitate understanding of a phenomenon in depth. Also, the validity of findings can be confirmed through the use of different data sources. Pragmatism which values both objective and subjective knowledge is often hailed by researchers as a base or foundation of mixed-methods research approaches. Related strategies of inquiry often involve collecting data either concurrently or one after the other (sequentially) so as to best understand and solve the presented research problems. Data gathering also involves gathering both numeric information for example (closed-ended questionnaires) as well as text information (interviews) so that the final database becomes a representation of both quantitative and qualitative information (Mamogale, 2011:66).

This study adopted the mixed-methods research approach, where both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilised. In using such an approach in a single study, data is collected, analysed and integrated to understand the phenomenon of interest in depth (Mamogale, 2011:67). The use of a qualitative investigation will allow for elaborate interpretations of phenomena without depending on numerical measurements. The qualitative method is intended to provide detail and depth to the more generalisable, but also more superficial, view of school violence expected from qualitative research (Shabalala, 2016:60).

According to Van Rensburg (2010:45), quite a significant number of local studies that are based on school-based violence have utilised quantitative techniques which

include surveys among others. Survey researches often accommodate a large number of respondents. Apart from this they cover a broad spectrum of issues (Denscombe, 2007:32). The use of additional data from additional sources such as educators can be a valuable complement to the accuracy of findings (Van Rensburg, 2010:45).

Quantitative methods aim to generalise findings to a broader population (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:145). In order to obtain numerical data on school-based violence, the researcher used quantitative methods. The approach seemed helpful in describing different variables that were related to the phenomena, as experienced by various learners (Van Rensburg, 2010:46). In contrast, qualitative research is a non-numerical process. It is an enquiry system which assists in the detailed analysis of the qualities, characteristics and properties of interest (Henning et al., 2004:3). In this study, qualitative methods were adopted to obtain a deeper insight of how principals and educators handle violence or violent situations in their schools (Babbie, 2010:394).

This study adopted the sequential mixed approach that does not substitute either quantitative or qualitative methods but draws on the respective strengths and weaknesses of each in one study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:3). The use of mixed methods to investigate school-based violence is also supported by Astor, Benbenishty and Marachi (2006:74) who suggested that the use of quantitative surveys needs to be enriched and complemented by multiple other methods. Mixed method approaches that is, integrating in one study more than one method have also been used to investigate similar problem of school-based violence by other researchers. For example, Astor *et al.* (2006:75) reported the quantitative findings of the Israeli National School Violence Study to identify nine schools for in-depth quantitative and qualitative case studies. Their findings also strongly support the advantages of a mixed method study for cross cultural comparisons (Astor *et al.*, 2006:75).

The use of this strategy ensured certain advantages as opposed to a single approach (Denscombe, 2007:118, 136):

- A more comprehensive account of school-based violence was formed by incorporating the strategies of quantitative (survey) and qualitative (personal interviews) research.
- By conducting the survey before personal interviews, data generated used to inform the choice of themes to be discussed with principals and educators. Thus, the views of learners were supplemented and corroborated by the narratives of principals and educators.
- There was a consistent and good use of triangulation between the views and experiences of learners, principals and educators, as well as between the quantitative and qualitative methods as mentioned above.

Above all, the use of this design that is two-phased in nature made it uncomplicated to implement and to report on. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods provides a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:3).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a strategy which transcends the research approach and underlying philosophical assumptions to specify the selection of respondents, data gathering techniques and data analysis that will be employed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). It is a “blueprint” which directs the answering of specific research questions or testing specific hypotheses (Kumar, 2011:95; Bhattacharjee, 2012:35). Cooper and Schindler as cited in Shabalala (2016:50) state that, a research design assists the researcher to decide on the research methodology that is most suitable for a particular investigation. Several descriptions of a research design have been advanced by different authors (Shabalala, 2016:50). In qualitative studies the difference between study designs and methods of data collection is far less clear. Quantitative study designs have more clarity and distinction between designs and methods of data collection. In qualitative research there is an overlap between the two. Some designs are basically methods of data collection. For example, in-depth interviewing is a design as well as a method of data collection and so are oral history and participant observations (Kumar, 2011:104). There are different types of research designed. Selltiz *et al.* (1976) as cited

in Shabalala (2016:51c) notes differences in exploratory, descriptive, and designs which permit inferences about causality. Concurrent to this observation are Green and Tull (1981) in Shabalala (2016:51), who emphasise that a research design can be exploratory, descriptive, or causal.

In using quantitative and qualitative research designs the researcher has to decide whether the phenomenon under study will be explored, described or explained (Babbie, 2010:91). Descriptive studies provide explicit details of a situation, social setting or relationship (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:80-81). This research seeks to examine the nature and extent of school-based violence in secondary schools in the Mkhuhlu Circuit of Bohlabela District. Exploratory research is suitable when phenomena which are persistent and relatively new to the researcher are studied (Babbie, 2010:92 b). Exploratory studies have a relatively short duration, conducted when there is little knowledge about a prevailing situation or problem. They may be descriptive or comparative studies (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:26).

Due to the fact that there was little that was known concerning the prevalence, extent and nature of school-based violence and how principals and educators manage it in rural schools, an exploratory design proved to be the most suitable. While descriptive studies are often linked to surveys, explorative investigations are normally conducted through qualitative methods like interviews, observations and documentary analysis amongst others (Van Rensburg, 2010:46). Specifically, a qualitative approach is warranted when the nature of research questions requires exploration (Dodge, 2011:47). Qualitative research questions assist the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject of interest (Dodge, 2011:47). For the current study, I explored participants' experiences of school violence in South African rural schools by asking the following *what* questions:

- What are the forms of violence prevalent in rural public schools in South Africa?
- What are the underlying causes of violence rural public schools in South Africa?
- What are the effects of violence on learners and educators? And
- What measures are currently in place to combat violence in rural public schools and how effective are they?

Descriptive studies focus of explaining the characteristics of a particular individual or group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occurs or its association with something else. Studies that ascertain whether specific variables have something in common are examples of descriptive research studies (Kothari, 2004:37). The chose design for this study included explorative and descriptive aspects. The mixed methods approach necessitated a more suitable design. In using the mixed-method design, the researcher has to decide on whether the inquiry will operate within one dominant paradigm or not, and whether the data will be gathered simultaneously or sequentially (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:20). The latter is referred to as the time orientation, and together with the level of mixing (partial versus full) and emphasis (equal versus dominant status), forms the basis of mixed methods design (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009:266-267). The quantitative approach dominated this research while the qualitative aspect was used to complement and enrich certain aspects of the quantitative component.

The design used in this study is referred to as a partially mixed sequential dominant status design, as the respected phases were completed in their entirety before being mixed during data presentation (Van Rensburg, 2010:47). Quantitative data (survey among learners) was gathered before qualitative da (interviews with principals and educators). The nature, causes and effects of school-based violence together with the coping strategies of learners were investigated exclusively by quantitative methods in order to ensure a large sample for statistical testing. The design was divided into two phases. The overall purpose of this design was for the qualitative data to help explain or build upon initial quantitative results from the first phase of the study as also applied by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:3).

3.5 POPULATION

A population is a group of people or objects that have characteristics that are of interest to the researcher. According to Bhattacharjee (2012:66), the unit of analysis may be a person, group, organization, country, object, or any other entity that one desires to draw scientific inferences from. Shabalala (2016:50) defines a population as a full set of cases from which a study sample is drawn. The cases may include objects and people from which the sample is to be selected.

The chosen research strategy had implications on the selection of the study population, gathering of data as well as its analysis. The population comprised all adolescent learners, their educators and principals from the eleven secondary schools found in the Mkhuhlu Circuit of Bohlabela District in Mpumalanga Province. All these schools were composed of educators and learners who came from different backgrounds, cultures and ethnic groups.

The target population was comparatively too large to successfully examine under the time and budgetary confines of the study. The researcher therefore employed a survey technique in sampling respondents and gathering information about the nature, causes and effects of school violence in rural schools of Mkhuhlu Circuit. The study targeted to separate groups of people since it employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. A survey (using questionnaires) was used to collect data on the comprehensive account of school-based violence by learners, and both random sampling (for learners) and 'purposive sampling' methods (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005) were used to select the principals and educators in order to obtain a deeper understanding of how they deal with violence in their schools for the qualitative part of the study.

3.6 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Sampling involves the selection of study units from a chosen population. These study units make up a sample. Therefore, a sample is a representation of the entire population (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:40). Social science research basically focuses on behavior traits within defined populations. It proves difficult to investigate complete populations due to cost constraints, therefore a representative sample is selected from the population of interest for observation and analysis (Bhattacharjee, 2012:65). Bhattacharjee (2012:65) stresses the relevancy of selecting a sample which is a true representation of the population so that the information obtained may be valid and generalizable.

Sampling may employ non-probability or probability techniques (Shabalala, 2016:53). In probability sampling every unit in the population has an equal chance (non-zero probability) of being chosen to participate in the study (Bhattacharjee, 2012:67). Non-

probability sampling is defined by Jackson (2008) in Shabalala (2016:53) as a sampling technique in which members of the population do not have an equal chance of being selected for participation in the study. According to Jackson (2008) in Shabalala (2016:53), non-probability sampling can either be convenience sampling where the researcher acquires respondents wherever he or she can find them, or quota sampling where the sample is like the population but is selected because it is convenient to select it.

3.6.1 Random Sampling for the Survey

Random sampling was used with regard to the selection of the learners for the survey. In random sampling every element in the population has the same probability of being selected (McBurney & White, 2007). For the learner survey this study adopted random sampling methods of selecting the learners (Jele, 2012). Simple random sampling techniques were used to select the learners who participated in the study. In this technique, all possible subsets of a population (more accurately, of a sampling frame) are given an equal probability of being selected (Bhattacharjee, 2012:67).

The sample size was determined through the use of the sample size calculator software developed by Raosoft Business Incorporated (RaosoftInc, 2004; Kinyua & Mwangi, 2015). The Raosoft sample size calculator takes into consideration four factors in determining sample size. These factors include the margin of error, the confidence level, the population and the response distribution. The Raosoft calculator is based on the normal distribution statistical method given by the formula:

$$X = Z \left(\frac{c}{100} \right)^2 r(100 - r)$$

$$n = \frac{NX}{(N - 1)E^2 + X}$$

$$E = \sqrt{\frac{(N - n)X}{n(N - 1)}}$$

Where n is the sample size, E is the margin of error, N is the population size, r is the fraction of responses of interest and Z (c/100) is the critical value for the confidence

level c. Using the Raosoft online sample size calculator and entering the target population of 150, with a margin of error of 5 percent and 95 percent confidence level the recommended sample size generated was 109. All eligible participants in all the eleven schools were randomly to meet the sample target of 109.

To select the 109 learners, the list of all learners in the schools were entered into a Microsoft Excel 2013 spreadsheet, then used the Excel's RAND() function to generate random numbers for each of the learners on that list. This was then followed by sorting the list in increasing order of their corresponding random number, and then selecting the first ten learners on that sorted list (Bhattacharjee, 2012:67).

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling for the Qualitative Study

In qualitative studies, purposeful sampling strategies (part of non-probability sampling) are often used. This is mainly due to the fact that qualitative research methods are often preferred when the focus is on specific participants, perceived to be adequately knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:41). A 'purposive sample' (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005) was used to select the principals and educators who had knowledge and experience concerning the issue under study. Purposive sampling of participants was based on Lewis-Beck *et al.* (2004) who identify them as individuals that provide in-depth and proficient information about a particular issue of interest.

The selection criteria was based on each school's potential to contribute to the body of knowledge. The selection of participating schools was uncomplicated, since the overall study intended to investigate the nature, causes and effects of school violence, all eleven secondary schools from this school circuit were included. The selection of participants for this study was based on a strategy referred to as, "purposeful selection".

Purposive sampling was used to select the principals and senior educators in the schools. The principals were selected since they are the heads of the institution with extensive knowledge of the school and senior educators were selected because they are experienced and are expected to have taught for at least ten years in their

respective schools and also know the background of the school well. One principal or senior educator from each school was selected, and that brought a total of eleven participants which were interviewed.

3.6.3 Sample

Sampling is the inclusion or exclusion criteria for certain components from a population (Bhattacharjee, 2012:67). Based on the above-mentioned criteria, a sample of at least 109 learners was deemed appropriate for the study. A purposive sample of at least eleven principals and senior educators was deemed appropriate for the qualitative part of the study (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:3). Principals and educators in schools with high prevalence of school-based violence were prioritised. The learners were randomly sampled for the eleven secondary schools in the circuit and the principals and educators were purposively selected from the eleven schools in the Mkhuhlu Circuit of Mpumalanga Province.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The main objective and significance of the study were revealed to the study participants before they were engaged. After obtaining their consent the researcher administered the questionnaire to selected learners in the chosen schools. Educators assisted in this endeavour. Gathered information pertaining to learners' experiences of violence was obtained through the survey technique. The strategy was considered appropriate given the large number of learners targeted and the numerous variables included in the instrument (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:155). It also saved time, as all learners attended to the questionnaire items within a day, thereby minimising costs (Denscombe, 2007:31).

Qualitative data was obtained through conducting one on one interviews. Interviews, as opposed to surveys, are based on in-depth discussion of issues rather than the use of standardised questions. In essence, it is a conversation in which the researcher allows the respondents to explicitly and elaboratively express their views and opinions about phenomenon of interest (Babbie, 2010:318, 320). In this study, interviews were necessary for the exploration of school-based violence management and means of

eradicating it. Personal interviews were conducted by the researcher and data was captured using a tape recorder, upon interviewees' consent.

3.8 INSTRUMENTATION

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data on learners' and educators' experiences of school violence respectively.

3.8.1 Survey Instrument

Invented by Sir Francis Galton, a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions (items) intended to capture responses from respondents in a standardized manner. Questions may be unstructured or structured. Unstructured questions ask respondents to provide a response in their own words, while structured questions ask respondents to select an answer from a given set of choices (Bhattacharjee, 2012:74). A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is distributed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own (Kothari, 2004:100).

In quantitative research, an instrument is constructed and administered in a standardised manner and according to predetermined procedures (Golafshani, 2003:598). In this regard, a self-administered questionnaire was used in the form of a booklet and was developed with the aid of various sources of literature. The aim of the survey and other relevant information was explained on the front cover of the booklet. Instructions on how to answer each question were also provided (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:159). The questionnaire started with biographical information before moving to questions more relevant to the study, which were grouped in categories A to D. Section A dealt with biographical questions, which were in line with the guideline that a good sequence starts with non-threatening questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:160).

Questions regarding the incidence, types, frequency, causes and management of school-based violence were formulated by the researcher after an extensive literature search. As the respondents were of school-going age, special consideration was given to the wording of the questions. Correspondingly, care was taken to avoid ambiguity, vagueness, double-barrelled and leading questions in the instrument (Denscombe, 2007:163). The questionnaire comprised of dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, filter and contingency questions, scales, and open questions (Babbie, 2010:263-265; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:161-162; 167). Since the questionnaire was developed for the broader study (see Appendix 1), only questions relevant to the present investigation were used (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Sections, Themes and Questions in the Survey Instrument

Section	Themes	Questions to be used
A	Biographical data	Gender, age, grade, after school supervision, gang activity, leisure activities
B	Nature, cause and extent of school-based violence	Incidence, frequency, types, victimisation, perpetration, causes
C	Effects of violence and status of management	Effect on learners, effect on learning, effects on the school, status of management
D	Reactions to violence, coping, conflict resolution	Coping strategies, conflict resolution training, management competence

In order to ensure adequate measurement of more complex school-based violence constructs, Likert scales were used. This is a measurement which presents respondents with a series of statements to which they indicate their level of agreement or disagreement (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:167). For example, the frequency of violence was measured by the categories *never, seldom, often and very often* (see Appendix 1).

It has been suggested that, in order to ensure quality data, a self-administered questionnaire should not exceed 30 minutes to complete by a child or adolescent (Maree & Pietersen, 2007b:159). The questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes to complete, and this was first confirmed by the pilot study.

3.8.2 Personal Interviews

The interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. A personal interview method requires a person known as the interviewer asking questions generally in a face-to-face contact to the other person or persons (Kothari, 2004:97).

The structure of the interview questionnaire used by the researcher took the form recommended by Hair, Babin, Money, and Samuel (2004) as cited in Shabalala, (2016:63), which follows a four-part sequence. The authors recommended that interview questions be divided into four, with each question focusing on the aims of the study. Their proposed sequence was used in this research. Part 1 consists of questions which focused the forms of violence prevalent in rural public schools of Mkhuhlu Circuit. Part 2 consists of questions focusing on the causes of violence in public high schools of Mkhuhlu Circuit. Question 3 consists of questions that prompted principals/educators to elaborate on the effects of violence on learning. Part 4 consists of questions that would enable the researcher to draw insight from the experiences of educators about the current strategies in place to combat violence in school and their effectiveness. These open-ended questions would elicit responses from educators to determine whether they had the capacity to effectively deal with school violence and, if so, which interventions worked best.

Having decided on how interviews would be structured, the researcher looked at the research objectives and then formulated questions that would help achieve these objectives. The researcher constructed open-ended questions. The interview questionnaire comprised four research questions. Open-ended questions that gave recipients an opportunity to express their views. Such questions gave respondents an opportunity to answer in their own words. Semi-structured interviews, with a clear list of topics related to school-based violence were discussed between the researcher and the participants. This granted the necessary flexibility for broad, in-depth discussion of topics in no particular order (Denscombe, 2007:176). The interviews covered the problematic nature of school-based violence and the causes of such behaviour among other issues.

Semi-structured interviews were deemed suitable in this study as the purpose was to corroborate existing data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:87). This allowed for the discussion of themes which supplemented the quantitative data without sacrificing richness and depth of data which is associated with structured interviews. An interview schedule (see Appendix 2) was used to allow for the interview to keep to the themes under discussion.

The personal interviews with principals and educators were conducted within three months. The interviews were conducted with the availability of participants in mind. In order to create as little disruption as possible in the participants' routines, interviews took place in isolated venues in the school buildings during school hours (Denscombe, 2007:190). After an introduction, the researcher explained the purpose and scope of the study and sought permission for the interviews to be voice-recorded. The interviews took approximately 15 minutes each to complete.

3.9 PRE-TESTING

Before the collection of data can be started, it is necessary to test the methods and to make various practical preparations. According to Degu and Yigzaw (2006:60), pre-tests or pilot studies allow for the identification of potential problems in the proposed study. Pre-tests:

- Usually refer to a small-scale trial of a particular research component; and
- Carrying out a preliminary study, going through the entire research procedure with a small sample (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:60).

Wherever possible, it is advisable and desirable to conduct a pilot study before the actual data collection is done (Shabalala, 2016:66). For the sake of this study, the main purpose of the pilot study was to identify any weaknesses in the interview questions. First of all, the researcher wanted to establish whether all the questions in the interview were understood. Secondly, problems may be caused by the sequence in which words have been used. Pre-testing, as argued by Cooper and Schindler (2006) in Shabalala (2016:66) discovers such content, wording, and sequencing problems prior to the full study.

Pre-testing was used to identify sensitive questions that the respondents would be uncomfortable answering. The researcher also wanted to identify questions that are often not answered. Lastly, it was important for the researcher to establish whether the questions were viewed as too lengthy. This was important because most respondents are reluctant to participate in the study if the interview or questionnaire is

lengthy. The pilot study was carried out on learners and experienced educators who were not members of the sample which would be used in full study.

3.10 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

The validity of a study, which is also known as construct validity, relates to the degree to which an instrument measures that which it is intended to measure (Bhattacharjee, 2012:56). Validity of a study can be increased through the use of two sources and methods of collecting data (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:6). It was made sure by applying triangulation which is informed by the employ of mixed methods. Triangulation involves an analysis of issues from different perspectives. This may entail the use of different sources of data, different researchers and different methods (Denscombe, 2007:134). In the context of this study, the triangulation of methods was employed, involving the use of data from interviews to complement data from the survey. Triangulation of sources was evidenced through the collection of data from educators, principals and learners (Denscombe, 2007:136).

The extent to which the measure of a construct is dependable or consistent is referred to as reliability (Bhattacharjee, 2012:56). It deals with the extent to which the same kind of data can be collected in a repeatable manner from the study of a similar phenomenon (Babbie, 2010:150). The reliability of the survey was ensured through triangulation and subjecting the questionnaire items to a test by means of conducting a pilot test. This distinction between reliability and validity is not existent in qualitative research. As validity and reliability are related, this implies that there can be no validity without reliability (Golafshani, 2003:601). It was assumed that the interview results were reliable since the validity in the qualitative stage is made sure through triangulation. Instead of reliability, the concept of trustworthiness has been suggested for use (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:113):

- Using different sources of data, that is learners, educators and principals allows for the verification of data by availing a general codified response. This pertains to the incidence of violence.
- Verbatim or direct quotations were used carefully to strengthen arguments and to keep the context intact; and

- Due care was taken to protect the identities of participants by making reference to them as educators, learners and principals. The principals were referred to as 'A', 'B' and so on. It was quite difficult to breach confidentiality and anonymity owing to the use of eleven secondary schools in the circuit of Mkhuhlu.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

3.11.1 Survey Data

Data analysis involves the process used to reduce the amount of data that is collected in order to produce information that is meaningful (Hardy & Bryman, 2004:4). Before analysing quantitative data, the responses of participants were coded in regard to levels of measurement. The management of data capture was done through the use of Microsoft Excel 2103 which allowed it to be transferred into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data analysis was then conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0). The analysis of uni- and bivariate was enabled.

Univariate analysis involves investigating a single variable for the objective of description. Bivariate analysis concerns an analysis of two variables with the intention to test the existence of a relationship (Babbie, 2010:426; 436). Frequency tables were generated in the description of the nature, extent and the management of violence at school. This relates to Univariate analysis. The number of times the diverse attributes of a variable are observed in a sample relates to frequency distributions. This enables comparisons to be made between different variable (Babbie, 2010:428).

In bivariate analyses, statistical tests of significance conducted on the coping strategies component in order to explore independent variables (e.g. gender; age; ethnicity) differences. Chi-square tests were used to calculate significant differences in the use of coping strategies between male and female victims of school-based violence (Babbie, 2010:483). A 95% level of significance was used, which is most commonly used in social research (Fielding & Gilbert, 2006:270).

3.11.2 Qualitative Data

3.11.2.1 Transcribing the data

Data was transcribed immediately after the interviews. The transcriptions were initially handwritten and later typed, and details such as dates and location of interviews were included. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:433) indicate that the final form should include the date, place, and participants' identity or code. Schumacher and McMillan (1997:433) also state that the final records should contain accurate *verbatim* data as well as the interviewer's notation of nonverbal communication with initial insights and comments to enhance the search for meaning.

3.11.2.2 Analysing the data

Seale (1999:112) states that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. Furthermore, Seale (1999:112) adds that the most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of discovering significant classes of things, persons, events and the properties that characterize them. Qualitative analysis is the analysis of qualitative data such as text data from interview transcripts. The emphasis in qualitative analysis is "sense making" or understanding a phenomenon, rather than predicting or explaining. A creative and investigative mind-set is needed for qualitative analysis, based on an ethically enlightened and participant-in-context attitude, and a set of analytic strategies (Bhattacharjee, 2012:113).

Data analysis consisted of identifying emerging themes throughout the data collection process. The emphasis was on the conceptualisation of the data and generating conceptually abstract thematic categories from the data. This approach required the researcher to analyse the data above on an empirical level, and to work towards a condensed, abstract and emerging interpretation of what is central in the data (Shabalala, 2016:69). The conceptual analysis described the specific and distinctive recurring qualities, characteristics, discourses and concerns expressed. The researcher selectively analysed aspects of human actions and events that illustrate recurring themes.

Data from interviews was analysed according to Tesch's method (Chauke, 2013).

Tesch's method is where you develop categories and themes as follows:

Step 1: Data is transcribed verbatim from the audio tape.

Step 2: Transcription is read for better comprehension.

Step 3: Ideas about possible categories are written down as these came to mind.

Step 4: Similar topics are clustered together.

Step 5: Lists of topics are abbreviated into codes.

Step 6: Codes are written next to the appropriate segment text.

Step 7: Related topics are grouped together to reduce the number of categories.

Step 8: Interrelationships between categories are identified.

Step 9: Final decision is taken on the abbreviation of categories.

Step 10: Findings from interviews are compared with those from documented analysis.

Then following this method, the researcher read and re-read the verbatim transcripts until specific codes emerge. These codes allowed the researcher to develop themes and categories. These themes and categories enabled the researcher to organise data; which gave rise to patterns and trends.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study the researcher ensured that the Ethics policy of the University of Venda was adhered to. In doing so the researcher ensured that all the participants were intellectually and mentally sound. The manner in which the research was conducted, and the manner in which the questions were designed ensured that the participants were not embarrassed. All the procedures used in this study were neither stressful nor upsetting to the participants. The researcher ensured that at all times the participants were not deceived. All of the participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. The participants were also made aware that anonymity and confidentiality would be ensured. The researcher clearly indicated to all the participants how the research data would be stored and disposed of once the research was complete. The researcher conducted the study seeking permission from the appropriate authorities of the Mpumalanga Province Department of Basic Education. The following were observed:

3.12.1 Voluntary Participation and Harmlessness

All the participants were made aware that their participation in the study was voluntary, that they had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without any unfavourable consequences, and that they were not to be harmed as a result of their participation or non-participation in the project (Bhattacharjee, 2012: 137).

3.12.2 Informed Consent

The informed consent form (See annexure B) clearly described their right to not participate and right to withdraw, before their responses in the study could be recorded (Bhattacharjee, 2012:138). For subjects under the age of 18, this form was signed by their parent or legal guardian. The researchers retained these informed consent forms (to be safely kept for at least three years) after the completion of the data collection process in order to comply with the norms of scientific conduct (Bhattacharjee, 2012:138).

3.12.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

To protect subjects' interests and future well-being, their identities were protected throughout the study. This was done using the dual principles of anonymity and confidentiality. Anonymity implies that the researcher or readers of the final research report or paper cannot identify a given response with a specific respondent. Further, anonymity assures that subjects are insulated from law enforcement or other authorities who may have an interest in identifying and tracking such subjects in the future (Bhattacharjee, 2012:138).

3.13 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research methodology employed in the study was discussed and the reasons for using it were given. The area and site where the study was conducted was clearly defined, that is secondary schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit, under the Bohlabela Region in Mpumalanga Province. The method of sampling used was also discussed, then the procedures of data collection, which were initiated by the description of data

collection instruments as well as the procedure followed. Data analysis and ethical consideration was considered

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the study. Quantitative findings are presented in form of tables and figures whereas qualitative findings are presented in form of narratives and direct quotations. The quantitative data covers all the three objectives of the study, namely the forms of violence prevalent in rural public schools, the causes of violence in rural public high schools and the effects of violence on learning in secondary schools of Mkhuhlu Circuit found in Mpumalanga Province. Qualitative data compliments the quantitative data and enriches particular themes like causes of school-violence, management and coping strategies and effects of violence on school activities. The first section of this chapter describes the demographics of the respondents.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

The survey drew 201 participants from 9 schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit found in Mpumalanga Province. Respondents were evenly distributed across the 9 schools, with each school contributing approximately 20 learners (5%).

In terms of gender, Figure 4.1 shows that the respondents were predominantly female, 65 (66.1%) and 127 (33.9%) were male. 76 (39.6%) grade 10 learners formed the greater part of the sample, whereas the other grades were evenly distributed in the study population, with Grade 9s, having 35 (18.2%); Grade 11s, with 30 (15.6%); Grade 12s, with 28 (14.6%) and Grade 8s, with 23 (12.0%) (Figure 4.2).

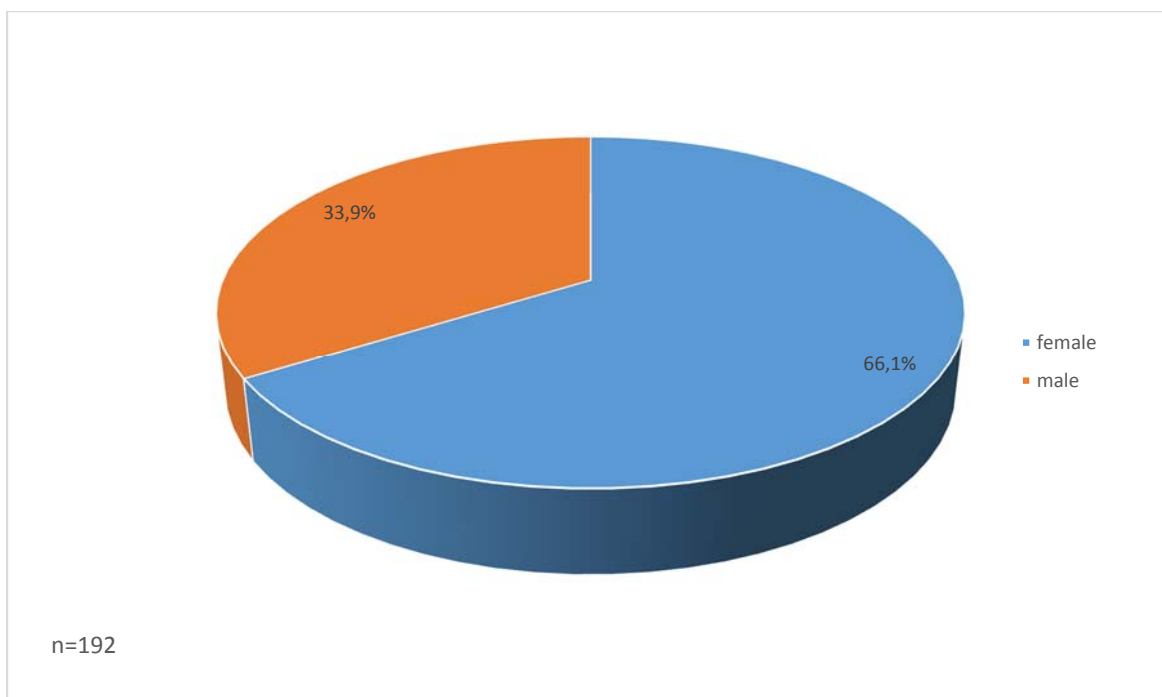


Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution of Survey Respondents

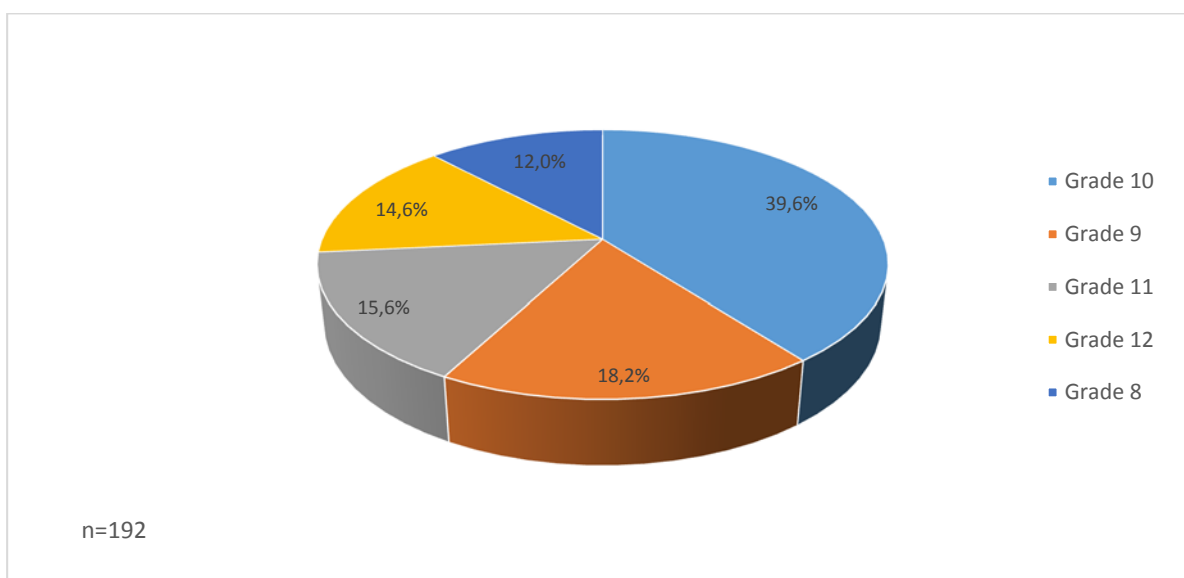


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Survey Respondents by Grade

Figure 4.3 shows that the respondents' ages ranged from 13 to 22 years and the majority of the respondents were in the range 14 to 19 years.

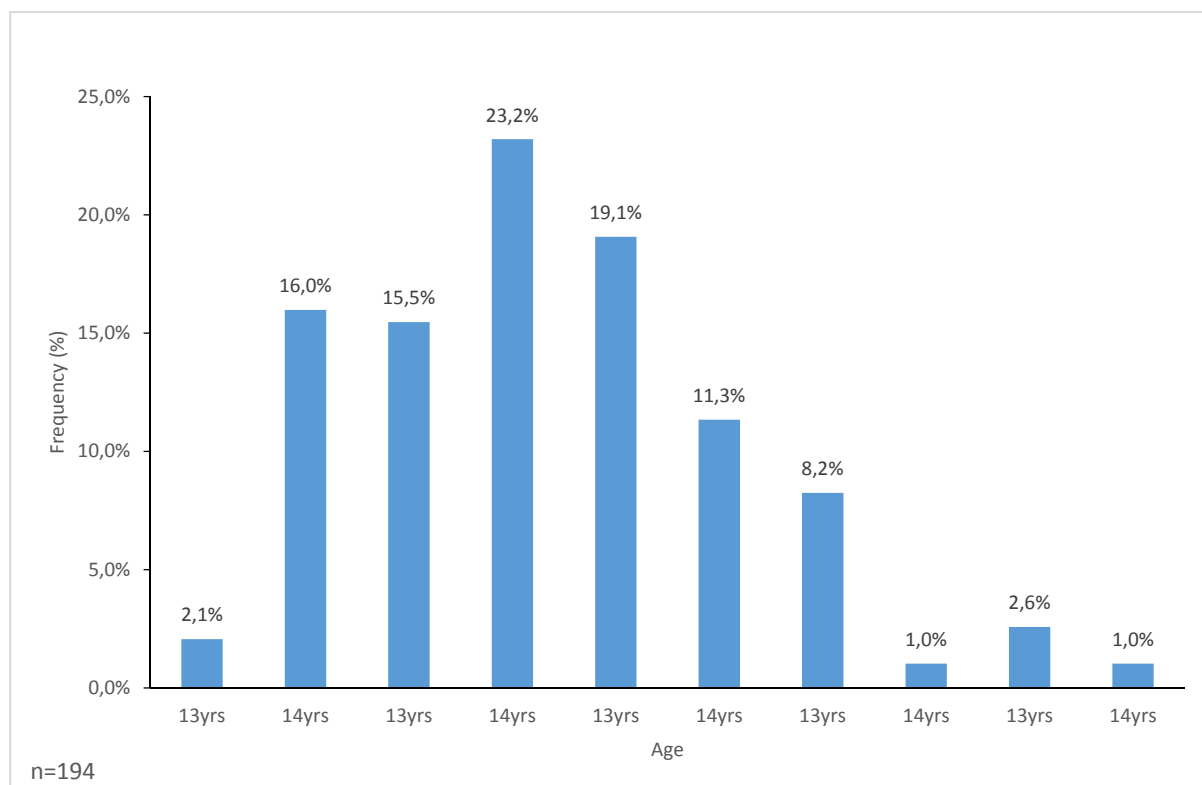


Figure 4.3: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents

4.3 NATURE, CAUSE, EXTENT, PREVALENCE AND SEVERITY OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Findings of the survey indicated that at least half (50.8%) of the learners have been victims of some form of violence at school. The most common form of school-based violence was reported to be corporal punishment (45.5%), followed by bullying (26.8%), being chased from class (22.3%) and sexual harassment was the least (5.4%).

Table 4.1 shows that male teachers (22.8%) are the main perpetrators of school-based violence, followed by female teachers (20.3%), non-school staff (23.6%), male schoolmates (17.1%), other school staff (9.8%) and female school mates (6.5%).

According to the survey, incidents of violence occur regularly in the schools. Almost a fifth (20.2%) of the learners indicated that such incidents occur on daily basis, 13.3% said on weekly basis, 17.0% said on monthly basis, 19.1% said once every few months and only 13.8% said once in a while. With regards to corporal punishment, the majority of the learners (81.9%) indicated that corporal punishment is sometimes practiced.

Gangs seem to be prevalent in the study area, with 81.1% of the respondents indicating that there are gangs in their communities and 40.4% of the respondents indicating that gangs had done something bad to them or their family members, and only 6.1% of the learners confirming that they were part of a gang (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Nature of School Violence

Have you been victim of any form of violence in schools?	yes	no				
n=195	50,8%	49,2%				
What form of violence have you experienced?	bullying	chased from class	corporal punishment	sexual abuse		
n=112	26,8%	22,3%	45,5%	5,4%		
Who did this to you?	male schoolmate	female schoolmate	male teacher	female teacher	other school staff	non-school staff
n=123	17,1%	6,5%	22,8%	20,3%	9,8%	23,6%
How often did these incidents occur?	daily basis	weekly basis	once a month	once every few months	once in a school year	once in a while
n=94	20,2%	13,8%	17,0%	19,1%	16,0%	13,8%
Do learners get corporal punishment at your school?	never	sometimes	often			
n=166	11,4%	81,9%	6,6%			
Are there criminal gangs in your community	yes	no				
n=95	81,1%	18,9%				

Have they done anything bad to you or your family?	yes	no
n=178	40,4%	59,6%
Are you part of the gang?	yes	no
n=1764	6,1%	93,9%

Table 4.2 shows the learners' grade and gender as risk factors associated with being victims of school-based violence. A Chi-square test, as shown in Table 4.2, indicated no significant association between the learners' grade and being victims of school-based violence. However, a significant association was observed between gender and being a victim of school violence ($P < 0.05$), with a significant higher proportion of males (61.5%) being victims of school violence compared to females (42.1%).

Table 4.2: Gender and Grade—as Risk Factors to being a Victim of School-based Violence

Responses	Proportion of learners who have been victims, (count)% (n=188)			p-value	Significance	Proportion of learners who have been victims, (count)% (n=186)		p-value	Significance
	Grade 8-9 (n=56)	Grade 10-11 (n=104)	Grade 12 (n=28)			Males (n=65)	Females (n=121)		
Have you been victim of any form of violence in schools	(23)41.1 ^a	(51)49.0 ^a	(18)64.3 ^a	.134	n.s	(40)61.5 ^a	(51)42.1 ^a	.012	*

*= P < 0.05, **= P < 0.01, ***= P < 0.001; n.s=not significant; Proportions with similar superscripts are not statistically different from each other; () = count and outside bracket is the percentage

An unpaired test was conducted to compare the mean ages of the learners who indicated that there were victims of school-based violence against those who indicated that they have not been victims. A two-tailed P value (0.7100; considered not significant) indicated that there was no significant differences in the mean ages of victims and non-victims.

Figure 4.4 shows a comparison of forms of violence by gender. According to Figure 4.4, a higher proportion of males are victims of bullying and other forms of violence compared to females and more females are victims of corporal punishment and sexual abuse than males. However, a Chi-square test, as shown in Table 4.3 indicated no significant association between gender and forms of violence [$\chi^2 (3, n = 106) = 7.547$, $p > .05$].

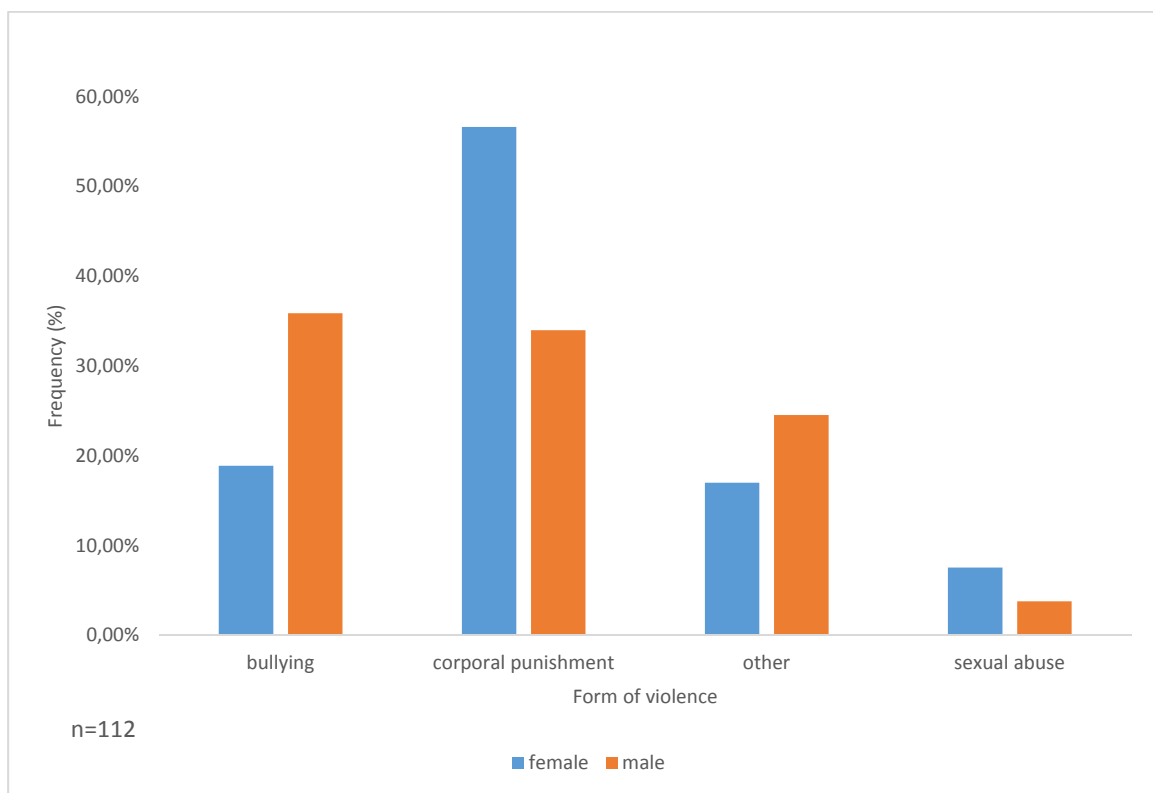


Figure 4.4: Forms of Violence by Gender

Table 4.3: Chi-Square Test Results-gender vs form of Violence

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.547	3	0.056
Likelihood Ratio	7.647	3	0.054
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.008	1	0.928
N of Valid Cases	106		

Learners were asked to indicate if and how they had been subjected to any form of violence by other learners or educators in the current school year (Table 4.4). Nearly three-quarters (71.8%) indicated that they had been verbally abused by other learners and nearly two-thirds (65.1%) had been made fun of in a way by other learners.

Learners reported whether and how they have been victimised by other learners within the year leading up to the survey (Table 4.10). Nearly half (49.4%) reported that they were verbally assaulted by other learners, while more than four in five (40.5%) were reportedly made fun of. More than a quarter (26.5%) cited being threatened with a weapon, while more than one in eight (13.5%) were injured with a weapon.

A significant proportion (40.9%) of the learners reported that an educator had hit, kicked or slapped them and also a significant proportion (40.5%) indicated that an educator had called them with a bad name.

Table 4.4: Incidents of Violence

Incident type	yes		no		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Have you been hit, kicked or slapped by other learners?	68	35,6	123	64,4	191	100,0
Have you been called a bad name to hurt you by other learners?	140	71,8	55	28,2	195	100,0
Have you been made fun of in a bad way by other learners?	127	65,1	68	34,9	195	100,0
Have you been sexually abused by other learners?	15	7,7	180	92,3	195	100,0
Have your belongings been broken or damaged by other learners on purpose?	67	34,7	126	65,3	193	100,0
Has another learner injured you with a weapon?	24	12,3	171	87,7	195	100,0
Has a teacher hit, kicked or slapped you?	79	40,9	114	59,1	193	100,0
Has a teacher called you a bad name to hurt you?	79	40,5	116	59,5	195	100,0
Has a teacher made fun of you in a bad way?	65	34,0	126	66,0	191	100,0
Have you been sexually assaulted by a teacher	11	5,6	184	94,4	195	100,0

Learners were also asked if they had committed any sort of violence or incited other learners or educators (Table 4.5). About a quarter (24.6%) of the learners indicated that they had verbally abused other learners by calling them with bad names and at least one in five of the learners (21.9%) had made fun of another learner in a bad way. Of concern was the finding that about 4.1% of the learners had threatened another learner with a weapon and 2.1% had committed some form of sexual abuse.

Table 4.5: Incidents of Violence Committed by Respondents

Incident	yes		no		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Hit, kicked or slapped another learner?	24	12,4	169	87,6	193	100,0
Called other learners a bad name to hurt them?	47	24,6	144	75,4	191	100,0
Made fun of another learner in a bad way?	41	21,9	146	78,1	187	100,0
Sexually abused another learner?	4	2,1	187	97,9	191	100,0
Broke or damage another learner's belongings on purpose?	19	9,9	172	90,1	191	100,0
Threatened another learner with a weapon?	8	4,1	185	95,9	193	100,0
Hit, kicked or slapped a teacher?	15	7,8	178	92,2	193	100,0
Called a teacher a bad name or hurt him/her?	24	12,6	167	87,4	191	100,0
Sexually assaulted a teacher?	7	3,6	186	96,4	193	100,0

Among reasons cited as the major causes of violence in the schools, jealousy among the learners, was the most cited cause (64.2%). Gangs from inside the school (57.9%), alcohol use (57.9%), problems between girlfriends and boyfriends (48.2%), problems at home (48.2%), jealousy of other learners' possessions (49.2%) and jealousy because other learners do better in school (49.2%) were among the other reasons highly cited by the learners (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Reasons for Violent Behaviour

Reason	yes		no		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gangs from outside the school	7	3,6%	186	96,4%	193	100,0%
Gangs from inside the school	113	57,9%	82	42,1%	195	100,0%
Alcohol use	113	57,9%	82	42,1%	195	100,0%
Problems between girlfriends and boyfriends	94	48,2%	101	51,8%	195	100,0%
Problems at home	94	48,2%	101	51,8%	195	100,0%
Jealousy of other learners' things like cell phones etc?	98	49,2%	101	50,8%	199	100,0%
Jealousy because other learners do better in school?	98	49,2%	101	50,8%	199	100,0%
Jealousy because other learners are more popular than them?	129	64,2%	72	35,8%	201	100,0%

According to the survey, threats by learners against one another (always -25.3% and often -16.5%) is the most prominent and frequently occurring form of abuse/violence. Other forms of violence in which at least one in five of the learners reported to be prominent or always occurring are learners being hassled (30.6%), bullying (learner to learner, 28.2%), gang violence (27.6%) and name calling, insults and teasing (22.1%).

Table 4.7: Frequency of Violent Incidents

Violent incidents	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Name calling, insults and teasing	43	22,1	19	9,7	97	49,7	3	1,5	33	16,9	195	100,0
Physical fighting	32	16,1	33	16,6	79	39,7	22	11,1	33	16,6	199	100,0
Threats by student	49	25,3	32	16,5	53	27,3	18	9,3	42	21,6	194	100,0
Sexual comments	32	16,5	18	9,3	51	26,3	21	10,8	72	37,1	194	100,0
Inappropriate touch	30	15,2	21	10,7	80	40,6	22	11,2	44	22,3	197	100,0
Students are hassled	52	30,6	16	9,4	50	29,4	19	11,2	33	19,4	170	100,0
(I saw) students being beaten	34	18,3	24	12,9	74	39,8	18	9,7	36	19,4	186	100,0
Racial comments	31	17,3	14	7,8	54	30,2	32	17,9	48	26,8	179	100,0
Drugs sales on school grounds	26	14,0	15	8,1	32	17,2	42	22,6	71	38,2	186	100,0
Intruders caused problems	21	11,9	25	14,1	71	40,1	25	14,1	35	19,8	177	100,0
Gang violence	50	27,6	19	10,5	50	27,6	21	11,6	41	22,7	181	100,0
Robbery or theft over R50	28	15,1	11	5,9	74	40,0	25	13,5	47	25,4	185	100,0
Threaten with weapon	12	6,7	14	7,8	69	38,3	43	23,9	42	23,3	180	100,0
Bullied by other students	51	28,2	24	13,3	58	32,0	28	15,5	20	11,0	181	100,0
Assaulted with a knife	7	3,8	17	9,1	54	29,0	22	11,8	86	46,2	186	100,0

4.4 CONSEQUENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Educational

In terms of educational/academic effects of school-based violence, the majority of the learners (64.6%) reported that they had failed at least one learning area and more than half (54.3%) reported that they missed days of school as a consequence of school violence related factors (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Educational Consequences of Violence

Consequence	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Missed days of school?	95	54,3	80	45,7	175	100,0
Failed learning areas/Subjects?	104	64,6	57	35,4	161	100,0
Felt like you were unable to learn?	76	49,4	78	50,6	154	100,0
Dropped out of school?	9	5,9	143	94,1	152	100,0

The majority of the learners (more than 70%) reported that school based violence disrupted classes, damages school property and brings fear in learners (more than 70%) and more than 60 % of the learners reported that violence made schools unpleasant (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Effects of School-Based Violence on the School

Effect	Yes		No		Uncertain		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
It disrupts the classes	160	79.6	36	17.9	5	2.5	201	100.0
There is damage of school property	151	77.8	35	18.0	8	4.1	194	100.0
It makes the school an unpleasant place	114	61.6	57	30.8	14	7.6	185	100.0
It causes some learners to be scared	133	71.5	33	17.7	20	10.8	186	100.0

Psychological and emotional well-being

On the psychological and emotional distress of school-based violence, more than half of the learners (59.0%) reported that they have experienced emotional distress. The majority of the learners (91.3%) did not receive psychological support in the form of counselling and the main reasons for not receiving counselling was that that the service was not available and/or it was too expensive (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Psychological & Emotional Consequences of Violence

Did you feel emotional distress?	no	yes		
n=195	59,0%	41,0%		
Did you seek counselling, psychological support?	yes	No		
n=161	8,7%	91,3%		
If not, why not?	did not get it	service unavailable	was expensive	
n=171	38,0%	19,9%	42,1%	
If yes, who provided the service?	the school	community	government service	the school
n=128	21,9%	19,5%	43,8%	21,9%

Social well-being

Figure 4.5 shows that among some of the social effects of school-based violence according to the learners, losing friends (35.6%) and feeling unsafe in the community (31.9%) are the main social effects of school violence.

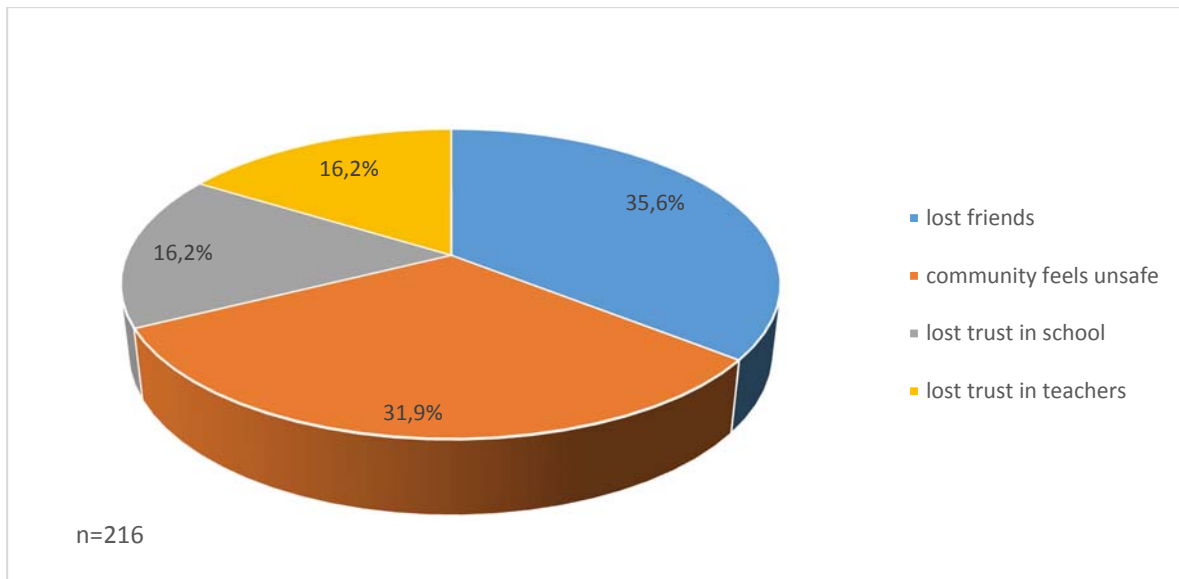


Figure 4.5: Social Consequences of School Violence

4.5 REACTIONS TO VIOLENCE, COPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The learners were asked for their views on how their schools deal with school violence (Table 4.11). Among measures the forty percent or more of the learners indicated that the schools often/always ensure that: security guards protect the school during school hours (10.0%-often and 48.4%-always); the school does enough to protect learners from people outside (8.4%-often and 36.3%-always); the school protects the learners from violence from other learners (15.8%-often and 29.5% always) and only learners and school staff are allowed on the school grounds (10.8%-often and 38.4%-always).

Less than twenty percent of the learners (26.4%-never and 57.1-sometimes) reported that Learners know how to deal with anger without getting violent.

Table 4.11: Perceptions on Schools' Management of School-based Violence

Perception	Never		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Violent learners get punished	3	2	78	50	1	6.	3	2	1	10
	3	1.		.0	0	4	5	2.	5	0.0
		2						4	6	
Learners know how to deal with anger without getting violent	4	2	10	57	1	8.	1	8.	1	10
	8	6.	4	.1	5	2	5	2	8	0.0
		4							2	
Only learners & school staff are allowed on the school grounds	3	1	62	33	2	1	7	3	1	10
	2	7.		.5	0	0.	1	8.	8	0.0
		3				8		4	5	
Learners are searched for weapons on a regular basis	6	3	72	38	2	1	2	1	1	10
	0	2.		.9	5	3.	8	5.	8	0.0
		4				5		1	5	
Security guards protect the school during school hours	4	2	35	18	1	1	9	4	1	10
	4	3.		.4	9	0.	2	8.	9	0.0
		2				0		4	0	

Teachers patrol the playgrounds during breaks	7	4	54	29	1	9.	3	1	1	10
	8	1.		.0	7	1	7	9.	8	0.0
		9						9	6	
Prefects have control over the behaviour of the learners	2	1	89	47	2	1	4	2	1	10
	9	5.		.3	2	1.	8	5.	8	0.0
		4				7		5	8	
The school protects the learners from violence from other learners	2	1	75	39	3	1	5	2	1	10
	9	5.		.5	0	5.	6	9.	9	0.0
		3				8		5	0	
The school protects learners from violence from teachers	4	2	68	37	2	1	4	2	1	10
	5	4.		.4	8	5.	1	2.	8	0.0
		7				4		5	2	
Violent learners get corporal punishment	1	6.	11	61	1	5.	5	2	1	10
	3	8	6	.1	1	8	0	6.	9	0.0
								3	0	
The school does enough to protect learners from people outside	3	1	73	38	1	8.	6	3	1	10
	2	6.		.4	6	4	9	6.	9	0.0
		8						3	0	

According to the survey, more than half of the learners feel that detention (57.6%) and being given work to do at school (52.9%) are ideal punishments for learners' violent behaviour.

Table 4.12: Punishment for Violent Behaviour

Punishment form	Yes		No		Uncertain		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Detention	10	57.	5	28.	24	13.6	17	100.
	2	6	1	8			7	0
Corporal punishment	86	48.	7	42.	15	8.5	17	100.
		9	5	6			6	0
Suspension	76	42.	7	41.	29	16.3	17	100.
		7	3	0			8	0
Doing work on the school ground	92	52.	5	32.	26	14.9	17	100.
		9	6	2			4	0

When asked to give their own suggestions about other effective possible forms of punishment for violent behaviour, the majority of the learners (72.5%) had no idea. One in ten learners (10%) were for the idea that expelling perpetrators of violence was ideal punishment, whereas less than ten percent felt involving police (6.67%), detention (3.33%), warn/talk to perpetrators (3.33%), suspend them (2.50%) and corporal punishment (1.67%) were ideal and effective forms of punishment.

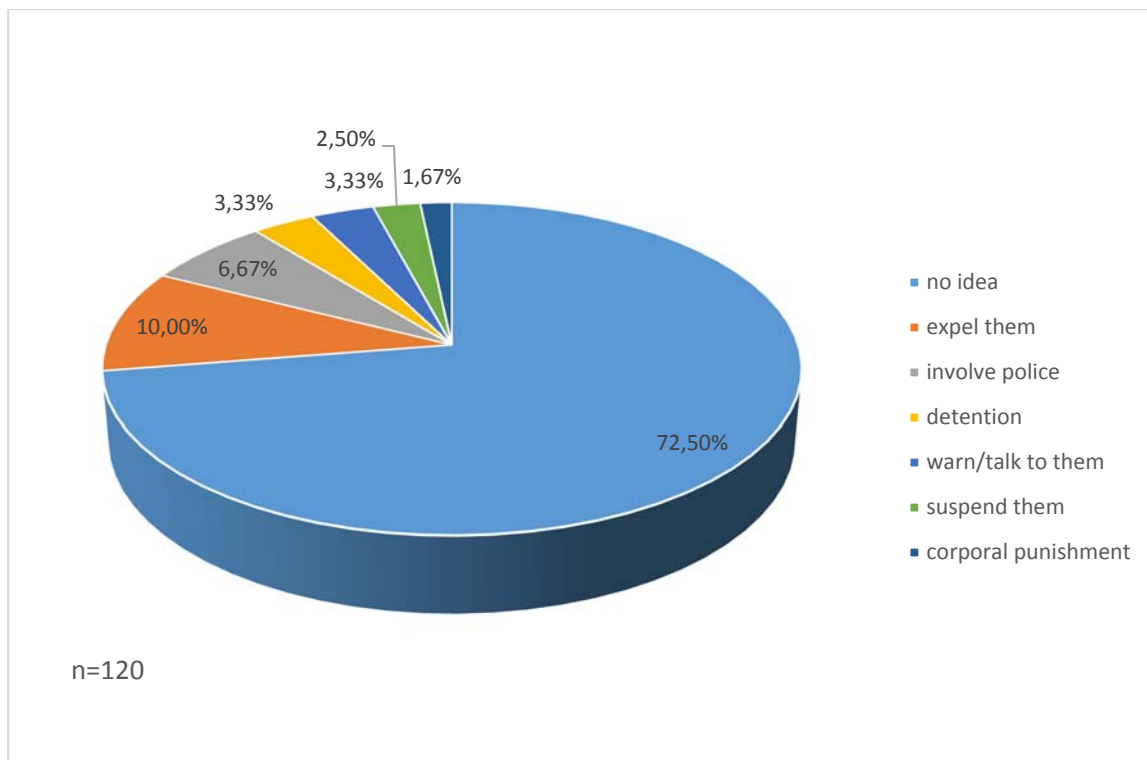


Figure 4.6: Other Forms of Punishment for Violent Behaviour

Learners were asked to give a general impression of how frequent some violent prevention strategies were implemented at schools (Table 4.13). The following were among the strategies which at least two in five of the learners (40%) reported to be always/often (adequately) implemented:

Principal/Vice-principal monitoring (45.8%-always, 11.5%-often); detentions (26.2%-always, 20.9%-often); teachers enforce classroom rules (38.8%-always, 5.1%-often); teachers create a positive school atmosphere (25.8%-always, 15.3%-often); teach conflict resolution strategies (32.4%-always, 15.1%-often) and use classroom activities to promote peaceful (32.4%-always, 10.4%-often).

Among the poorly (rare/never) implement strategies by the schools were with approximately two in five learners reporting them as rare/never were: expulsions (13.7%-rare and 30.2%-never) and train a few mediators at the school (11.5%-rare and 26.4%-never).

Table 4.13: Frequency of Implementation of Violence Prevention Strategies

Prevention strategy	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Suspensions	57	29.1	8	4.1	83	42.3	7	3.6	41	20.9	19	10.0
Detentions	50	26.6	40	20.9	46	24.1	12	6.3	43	22.5	19	10.0
Enforce school code of behaviour	34	18.5	22	12.2	74	40.0	16	8.7	38	20.6	18	10.0
Teachers enforce classroom rules	76	38.8	10	5.5	67	35.2	11	5.9	32	17.5	19	10.0
Principal/Vice-principal monitoring	88	45.8	22	11.5	43	22.4	10	5.4	29	15.3	19	10.0
Parent involvement	50	26.6	26	13.3	78	40.0	13	6.7	28	14.4	19	10.0
Teachers create a positive school atmosphere	49	25.8	29	15.3	61	32.1	22	11.6	29	15.3	19	10.0
Teacher monitors outside the classroom	55	28.4	15	7.8	56	29.5	26	13.6	29	15.3	18	10.0
Teach conflict resolution strategies	60	31.6	28	14.7	49	25.8	19	10.0	29	15.3	18	10.0

Police involvement with the school	66	3	10	5.	69	3	15	7.	32	1	19	10
		4.		2		5.		8		6.	2	0.
		4				9				7		0
Expulsions	29	1	32	1	41	2	25	1	55	3	18	10
		5.		7.		2.		3.		0.	2	0.
		9		6		5		7		2		0
Teach violence prevention strategies	37	1	23	1	77	4	16	8.	37	1	19	10
		9.		2.		0.		4		9.	0	0.
		5		1		5				5		0
Use classroom activities to promote peaceful	59	3	19	1	68	3	3	1.	33	1	18	10
		2.		0.		7.		6		8.	2	0.
		4		4		4				1		0
Teach anger management strategies	31	1	24	1	59	3	12	6.	47	2	17	10
		7.		3.		4.		9		7.	3	0.
		9		9		1				2		0
Train a few mediators at the school	36	1	9	4.	68	3	21	1	48	2	18	10
		9.		9		7.		1.		6.	2	0.
		8				4		5		4		0
Teacher in-service on violence prevention	32	1	20	1	69	3	10	5.	51	2	18	10
		7.		1.		7.		5		8.	2	0.
		6		0		9				0		0

The learners were given a list of coping strategies they would or have used to cope after being victims of verbal/emotional or physical violence. At least two in five of the learners (20%) indicated that they resort to: reminding themselves to focus on the good things in their lives (24.6%); reminding themselves that things will get better (23.6) and doing things that makes their bodies tired (like sport) (23%).

More than half of the learners indicated that they do not: use alcohol and/or drugs to help me forget (69.7%); stay at home and do not go to school (60.3%); find reasons to laugh about it (55.7%) and stay at home and avoid friends and family as much as possible (52.2%).

Table 4.14: Coping Strategies to School-Based Violence

Reaction after incident	Never		Someti mes		Often		Total	
	n	%	N	%	N	%	n	%
Talk about it with a friend	5	24	13	66.	1	8.	2	10
	0	.9	4	7	7	5	0	0.0
							1	
Find reasons to laugh about it	1	55	73	36.	1	8.	2	10
	1	.7		3	6	0	0	0.0
	2						1	
Stay at home and do not go to school	1	60	59	29.	2	10	1	10
	2	.3		6	0	.1	9	0.0
	0						9	
Find someone who can offer me advice	2	11	13	69.	3	18	2	10
	4	.9	9	2	8	.9	0	0.0
							1	
Use alcohol and/or drugs to help me forget	1	69	39	20.	2	10	1	10
	3	.7		0	0	.3	9	0.0
	6						5	
Stay at home and avoid friends and family as much as possible	1	52	67	33.	2	14	2	10
	0	.2		3	9	.4	0	0.0
	5						1	
Get into more arguments than usual	9	47	80	39.	2	12	2	10
	5	.3		8	6	.9	0	0.0
							1	
Experience difficulty sleeping	7	36	96	48.	3	15	1	10
	2	.2		2	1	.6	9	0.0
							9	
Remind myself to focus on the good things in my life	2	10	12	64.	4	24	1	10
	1	.6	9	8	9	.6	9	0.0
							9	

Manage to find an outlet to express my emotions	4 7	23 .4	11 4	56. 7	4 0	19 .9	2 0	10 0.0
							1	
Remind myself that things will get better	3 3	16 .9	11 6	59. 5	4 6	23 .6	1 9	10 0.0
							5	
Do something that makes my body tired (like sport)	5 7	28 .5	97	48. 5	4 6	23 .0	2 0	10 0.0
							0	
Think of ways to get back at the person	9 3	46 .3	70	34. 8	3 8	18 .9	2 0	10 0.0
							1	

When asked if there was anything else they do to deal or cope with hurt, Figure 4.7 shows that the majority (73.3%) do not have any method or strategy besides those given in Table 4.14. Approximately one in ten (9.5%) reported that they talk to family and other strategies like praying, drinking alcohol etc. were unpopular (with less than three percent of the respondents).

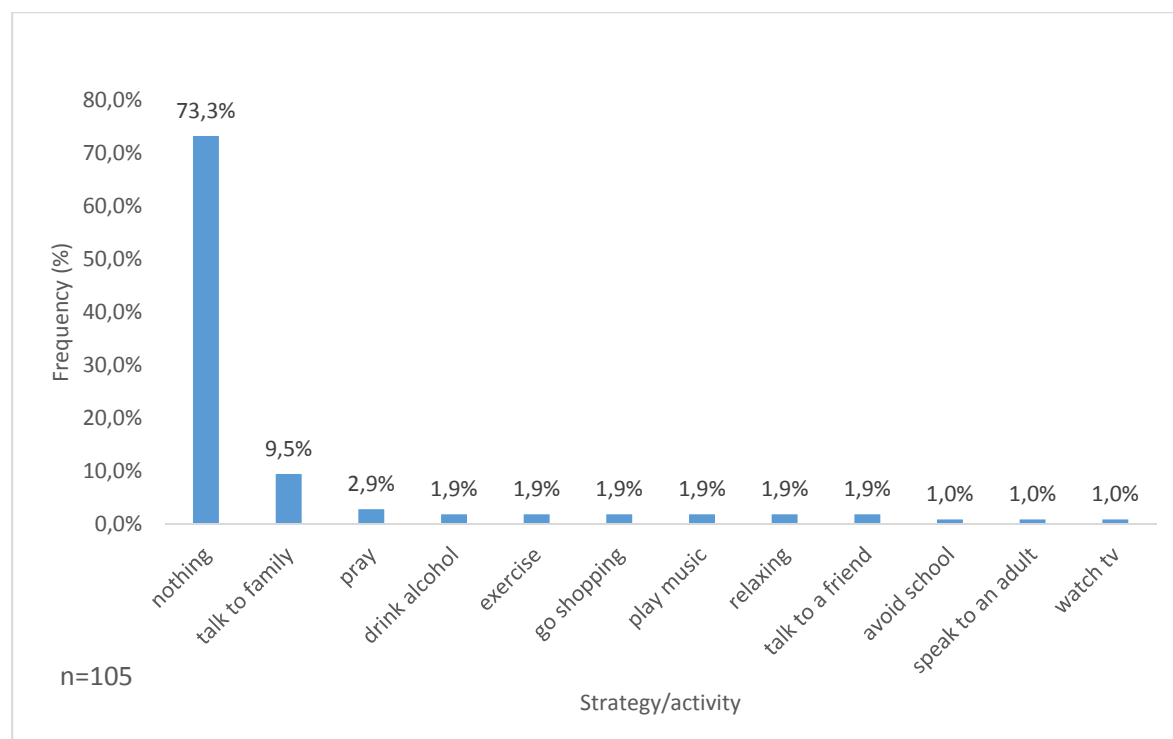


Figure 4.7: Strategies to Deal with Hurt (Open Ended)

With regards to training on conflict resolution, at least half (51.2%) of the learners indicated that they have been trained on conflict resolution and the majority (51.0%) indicated that they had received the training from people outside of the school. An overwhelming majority (81.4%) felt that the training is effective in preventing violence. With regards to school principals dealing with violence, Table 4.15 shows that more than half (59.3%) of the learners felt that the school principals sometimes deal with violence. At least a third (34.7%) felt school principals adequately deal with school violence, whereas only six percent felt school principals are unable to deal with school violence.

Table 4.15: Training to Deal with Conflicts

Have you ever been trained to deal with conflict and other difficult situations at school?	yes	No	
n=170	51.2%	48.8%	
If “Yes”, where did you get the training?	it's taught in class	people from outside	from outside organisation
n=98	19.4%	51.0%	29.6%
Do you think such training would be effective in preventing violence?	yes	No	
n=145 (%)	81.4%	18.6	
What do you think about the ability of the school (principal/teachers) to deal with violence in your school?	deal with it well	sometimes deal with it	not able to deal with it
n=167	34.7%	59.3%	6.0%

4.5.1 Suggestions on how to Deal with School Violence

When asked to give their own suggestions on how to deal with school violence, the majority (60.9%) had no suggestions, whereas a significant proportion (18.4%) were for the idea that involving the police would help and other suggestions like expelling perpetrators were unpopular (less than 10%).

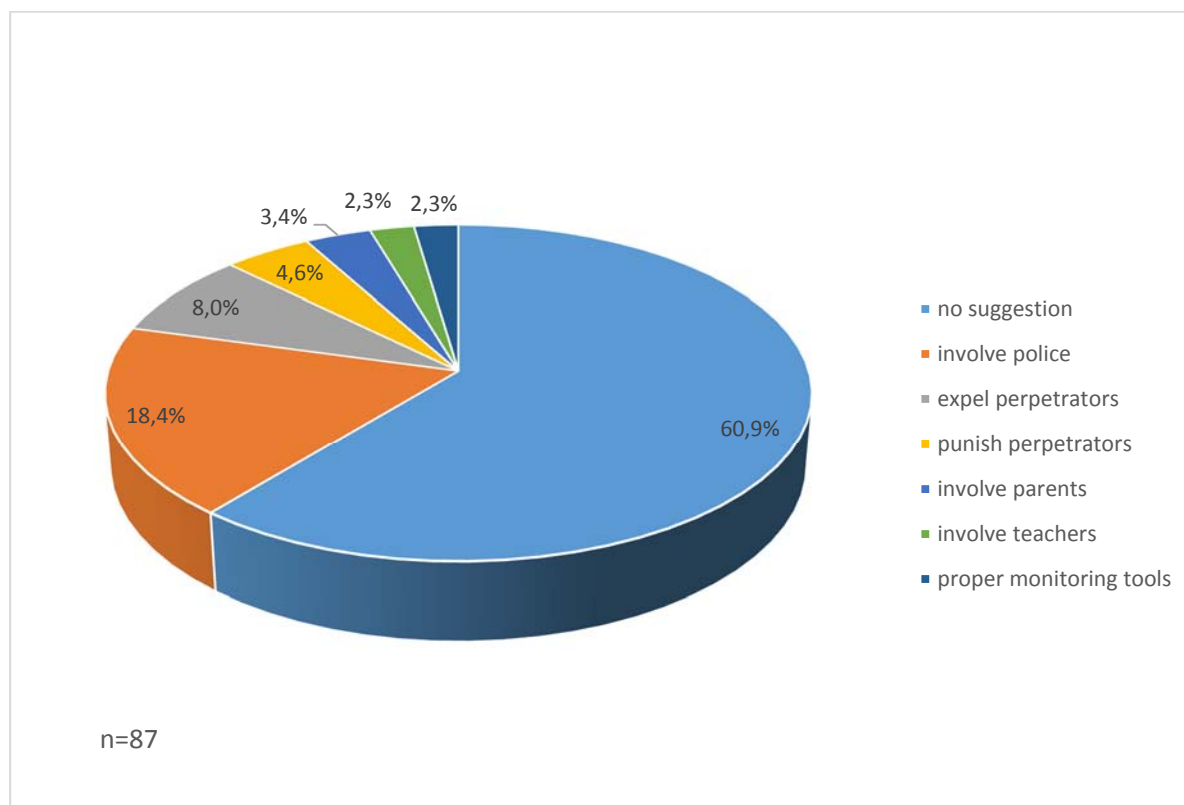


Figure 4.8: Suggestions on Dealing with Violence (Open Ended)

4.5.2 After-school Activities

In terms of after-school activities (table 4.16), more than half (50%) of the respondents indicated that they do sport, cultural activities e.g. drama, help with work around the house, do homework, do nothing/ lazing around, visit friends and work for their own income. Among the least popular activities were using dagga/drugs (81.1%); drink alcohol (73.5%) and spending time with a gang (68.7%).

Table 4.16: After School Activities

Activity	Never		Sometimes		Often		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sport	68	37.2	95	51.9	20	10.9	183	100.0
Cultural activities eg drama	80	44.7	89	49.7	10	5.6	179	100.0
Spend time with a gang	123	68.7	40	22.3	16	8.9	179	100.0
Help with work around the house	22	12.2	108	59.7	51	28.2	181	100.0
Homework	30	16.4	98	53.6	55	30.1	183	100.0
Do nothing/ lazing around	82	46.1	65	36.5	31	17.4	178	100.0
Visit friends	40	21.9	117	63.9	26	14.2	183	100.0
Drink alcohol	136	73.5	25	13.5	24	13.0	185	100.0
Work for own income	70	37.8	95	51.4	20	10.8	185	100.0
Use dagga/drugs	150	81.1	23	12.4	12	6.5	185	100.0

4.6 EDUCATORS' AND PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES

The following general themes or pre-determined categories have primarily emerged from the interview schedule and substantiated by direct quotes from the interview transcripts to verify their validity or authenticity. The sub-themes are derived from the data after reading the transcribed educators' interviews.

4.6.1 Forms of Violence Prevalence

According to educators, there are various forms of violence prevalent in the study area. These range from bullying, physical fights, intimidation using dangerous weapons like bottles and knives, gangsterism, vandalism, verbal violence, assaults and sexual violence among others. Below, are some of the *verbatim*/unedited opinions of the interviewed educators on forms of violence prevalent in the study are:

- *They are very few, if they exist. Those are minor, for example: bullying such as beating others for minor incidents or issues (1)*
- *The forms of violence that are prevalent in our schools range from bullying, gangs, fights as well as community oriented violence (differences) such as community gangs bringing their fights to the school(3)*
- *There are various forms of violence ranging from sexual, physical and verbal violence, learners speak strong and vulgar language to their fellow learners and some get angry and start fights(8)*
- *Rape is another case we had in the school where a gang of boys raped a girl who was studying after school (9)*
- *Teachers also assault learners even though the department has abolished corporal punishment (9)*

Comment: It shows that most of the schools are dominated by learners with social problems.

4.6.2 Causes and Triggers of Violence

Educators identified various causes of violence some of which are discussed below.

4.6.2.1 Stress among educators

According to the educators, stress is one of the causes and triggers of violence in schools, educators are at times insensitive when dealing with learners. They bring in their personal anger in class and, they sometimes verbally and physically abuse learners. These direct quotes below support the statement

- *Teachers insult and beat learners out of anger and they sometimes chase learners from class, other learners refuse to leave the class then chaos begins (14)*
- *Educators are failing to handle personal issues and work (19)*

Comment: welfare should play its role by giving support to educators and assist them to deal with personal issues in a professional manner.

4.6.2.2 Dealing with school violence

Educators believe that all schools have a policy document which guide them on offences and possible punitive measures, but the schools find it difficult to implement them. The school code of conduct is just kept in files and not displayed to learners at the beginning of each year. In addition, stakeholders involved are not aware of their roles for example the role of School Governing Bodies, Principals, educators and parents. The educators indicated that in some instances, learners challenge the authority of educators as they sometimes disrupt teaching and learning, tease others in class and do not pay attention in class. The following direct quotes reflect these findings:

- *If there are violent scenes, learners often move out of their respective classes to go and witness the fights inside and outside the school premises and the cannot be controlled or reprimanded (3)*
- *The excitement or commotion that comes with the fights supersedes their interest to learn therefore renders the school ungovernable (3)*
- *Parents and school have lost control over the children (8)*
- *Educators are not treating learners equal they favour others more others less, such situation causes learners to be rebellious (8)*
- *Poor school management those who are in management fails to implement school policies (17)*
- *Inappropriate implementation of school policies, school policies are just written but they are not properly implemented due to poor management (21)*

Comment: all stakeholders involved in school should be trained about their duties and responsibilities, and school policy should be clearly defined so that everyone involved will understand its purpose.

4.6.2.3 Substance use

Educators pointed out that violent perpetrators use drugs and alcohol. Educators also indicated that drugs are easily available in schools while alcohol is easily accessible to learners since most schools are located close to taverns. Learners bring dagga and dangerous weapons to school, when intoxicated they become violent towards educators and also initiate other violent acts on school premises. The educators

indicated that such behaviour places the lives of both educators and learners in danger. Some educators, especially male educators end up diverting their attention from the core business of schools to attend to violence. This is what some of the educators had to say about substance abuse by learners and violence at school:

- *Some smoke dagga and come to school drunk hence they have impaired understanding of others (1)*
- *If there are violent scenes, learners often move out of their respective classes to go and witness the fights inside and outside the school premises and the cannot be controlled or reprimanded (2)*
- *The excitement or commotion that comes with the fights supersedes their interest to learn therefore renders the school ungovernable (2)*

Comment: life skills should be taught to our learners and also involve other stakeholders to assist

4.6.2.4 Parenting style, poverty and child-headed families

The educators were of the opinion that learners from dysfunctional families often engage in violence since children raised by parents who are violent usually adopt violence as a way to assert authority. Furthermore, the educators believed that learners from such families also display anger, hatred, inferiority complex and other emotional behaviour which fuels violence at school. These findings are reflected in the following quotes from the educators:

- *Attention sinking learners who like to prove themselves that they are superior*
- *Families especial dysfunctional families learners they do as they wish at school*
- *Learner cannot control their emotions and some takes drugs (8)*
- *Lack of parental care, our learners are from child headed families and such learners are very aggressive and always frustrated as heads of households (8)*

Comment: Department of social welfare should work closer with the school since majority of learners are experiencing a lot of problems which need guidance and counselling.

Educators also felt that learners faced with difficult circumstances at home also tend to be violent. These include learners without parents, unemployed parents, and those working far from home, learners looking after younger siblings among others.

4.6.3 Effect of Violence

The following effects of violence emerged from the interviews with educators:

4.6.3.1 Academic performance

School violence is perceived by educators as having a significant effect on the learner's classroom and general school performance. This was attributed to the emotional stress, playing truancy because of the fear of being violated and loss of self-confidence. Most educators if not all were of the opinion that violence has effects for both violent learners and victims, violent learners spend their time disrupting teaching and learning and victims end up performing less in school activities. The following direct quotes reflect those findings:

- *Disrupts a smooth conduct and progression of learning and latter affects learners' performance and pass rate in general*
- *Some learners bank classes because of the fear of being violated and some end up losing self confidence*
- *Low academic performance because learners are no longer focusing on their school work only but violent behaviour as well*

Comment; Learners should be taught problem solving techniques and stress the importance of education to them.

4.6.3.2 School attendance

Educators stated that there is a high rate of school absenteeism because violent learners tend to abscond from school after committing violent offenses and most

victims of school-based violence tend to be scared to go to school because they do not feel safe. Here is what one of the educators had to say with regard to this:

- *High rate of absenteeism because some think that the school is not a safe place to be (6)*

Comment: The Principal and the school at large should create safety at school.

The interviewed educators also stated that violence affects the schools and teachers as well since parents tend to withdraw their children from schools which they regard as dysfunctional, and once the enrolment of the school drops educators should be relocate to schools with high enrolment. One principal had this to say with regard to the effects of school-based violence on the schools and educators:

- *Enrolment drops because parents are removing their children from the school to other schools (7)*
- *Teacher are redeployed due to drop of enrolment (7)*

Comment: The teachers should work together with the principal and other stakeholders to maintain discipline in the school.

4.6.4 Measures to Combat Violence

According to the principals and educators, to create a violent free environment, schools should form a partnership with stakeholders and these include parents, learners, educators and the community at large. Schools use different measures to combat violence by involving parents, South African Police services, expulsion, dsetention and suspension.

Participants stated that they have problems with parents who are unavailable when needed, Schools are faced with challenges to implement punitive measures since there are learners who do not have parents, and some stay alone because their parents are working far from home. Furthermore, participants stated that other parents are not willing to cooperate and do not have control over their children. The following direct quotes reflect the mater above:

- *Parent of learners involved are called in to try and talk to their children and make pledges so that the same does not happen again (1)*
- *Not very effective because parents don't come when invited and some learners do not have parents nor guardians they are from child headed families (1)*

Comment: parents should be encouraged to be actively involved in the education of their children

Of concern is the involvement of the police officers as this was reported to bring trauma to learners since schools are regarded as places of safety free from any harm and learners tend to be intimidated whenever the South African Police Services is involved. Some of the educators had this to say:

- *“Operation adopt a police” police were adopted by the school safety and security committees, so that when they are fights the police are called to come and neutralises the situation (2).*
- *It is not effective because the presence of police authorities interferes with teaching and learning although the situations are controlled for that moment (2).*

Comment: the school should make the learners understand that the school cannot function in isolation as operation adopt a police it's part of involving external stakeholders to support teaching and learning.

4.7 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion in this chapter is done in the context of the literature reviewed in Chapter two. In the discussion, major findings are highlighted and compared with findings from previous studies. The aim of the comparison is to consider the implications of the study findings and coming up with recommendations on how to deal with school-based violence in the study area.

As discussed in Chapter two (literature review), previous studies on school-based violence differ in scope, magnitude and level of measurement. Such differences may

bring about discrepancies in comparisons during the discussion. All the same, the discussion and comparison of the current study's findings to previous studies is relevant to give a reasonable perspective of the extent of the problem in the study area.

4.7.1 Nature, Cause, Extent, Prevalence and Severity of School Violence

Highlighting the forms of violence prevalent in rural South African public schools, with reference to Mkhuhlu Circuit in Mpumalanga Province, was the first objective of the study. Based on that, the forms, incidence and nature of violence in the selected schools will be discussed.

Findings of the survey indicated that at least half (50.8%) of the learners have been victims of some form of violence at school. The most common form of school-based violence was reported to be corporal punishment (45.5%), followed by bullying (26.8%), being chased from class (22.3%) and sexual harassment was the least (5.4%).

These figures were much higher than figures reported by Burton (2008) in Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:2). In his study on school violence in South Africa, Burton (2008) reported that 15.3% of the 1.8 million learners in the Grades 3-12 had experienced violence in one form or another. The above findings clearly show that learners are victims of school violence because it takes place in the classroom or on the school grounds.

The present study reported corporal punishment and bullying as the most common forms of violence in the study area. According to Meyer (2005:17), a study by the Medical Research Council and the Department of Health showed that 40 percent of learners had experienced bullying at school in all nine provinces in South Africa, with 10 699 learners participating in this survey. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:5) also found that educators perceived bullying as the most prevalent form of violence in South African schools, with the bullies taking money from other kids, eating their lunch and harassing other learners if they do not give them money or lunch.

Despite being banned, findings of the study show that corporal punishment is still being practiced in schools. These findings were consistent with Burton and Leoschut (2013:30) and Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:10). Burton and Leoschut (2013:30) reported that, despite legal provisions, there was overwhelming evidence to suggest the continued use of physical punishment within South African schools as a means of effecting discipline. Burton and Leoschut (2013:30) reported that a total of 49.8% of the learners surveyed claimed to have been caned or spanked by an educator or principal as punishment for wrongdoings.

An overwhelming 81.9% of the learners who participated in the survey indicated that corporal punishment is still being practiced. These findings are consistent with Shabalala (2016:22) who reported that corporal punishment still prevails in township schools. Mncube and Harber, (2012:14) using observation and interviews, found that corporal punishment was still used in three out of four of her case study schools in the Western Cape area and that learners were subjected to incidents of verbal insult and humiliation. Mncube and Harbe, (2012:14) also state that corporal punishment remains widespread in rural areas.

Findings of the current survey were consistent with Ncontsa and Shumba (2013: 5) who found that most learners perceived bullying, corporal punishment, vandalism, gangsterism and sexual harassment, respectively, as the most prevalent forms of school violence in their high schools.

Unlike in this study, where corporal punishment was reported as the most prevalent form of violence, Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:6) found that bullying was the most common form of violence, and corporal punishment was the second most prevalent form of violence in schools, with 60% of the participants reporting that it was practiced in their schools.

The results show male teachers (22.8%) as the main perpetrators of school-based violence, followed by female teachers (20.3%), non-school staff (23.6%), male schoolmates (17.1%), other school staff (9.8%) and female school mates (6.5%). This finding was not surprising considering the fact that the learners indicated that corporal punishment was the main form of violence in schools in the study area. Such findings

were consisted with Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:10) who also found that educators were the major perpetrators of corporal punishment in schools. Burton and Leoschut (2013:27) also reported that educators were implicated as perpetrators in the violence against learners. A total of 28.1% of principals had cases reported at their schools where educators had been verbally abusive towards learners, 14% had cases of physical violence against learners by educators (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:27).

When it comes to cases of violence by learners against learners, the results showed that male learners were the major perpetrators of violence in schools. This finding was consistent with literature. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:10) found that the majority of the learners blamed older learners, especially boys, as the alleged perpetrators of violence in schools. Meyer (2005:15) also supports the opinion that males are most involved in school violence since males are much more likely than females to be physically aggressive at school and to become the victim of attack. For example, females do not engage in dangerous physical behaviour as often as males, but they may act in socially aggressive ways more often than males (Meyer, 2005:15).

According to the survey, incidents of violence occur regularly in the schools. Almost a fifth (20.2%) of the learners indicated that such incidents occur on daily basis, 13.3% said on weekly basis, 17.0% said on a monthly basis, 19.1% said once every few months and only 13.8% said once in a while. Gangs were also found to be prevalent in the study area, with 81.1% of the respondents indicating that there are gangs in their communities and 40.4% of the respondents indicating that gangs had done something bad to them or their family members, and only 6.1% of the learners confirming that they were part of a gang.

Numerous studies have reported the problem of gangs in the communities and schools across South Africa (Shabalala, 2016:32; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:2; Meyer, 2005:18). Shabalala (2016:32) views gangs in schools as a community problem in South Africa; since schools are a part of the community, they reflect the problems of that community (Shabalala, 2016:32; Meyer, 2005:18).

The results indicated a significant association between gender and being a victim of school violence ($P < 0.05$), with a significant higher proportion of males (61.5%) being

victims of school violence compared to females (42.1%). Findings also showed there was no significant differences in the mean ages of victims and non-victims of school violence in the study area. The study found a higher proportion of males as victims of bullying and other forms of violence compared to females and more females as victims of corporal punishment and sexual abuse than males.

Such findings were not consistent with literature. Shabalala (2016:91) asserts that female learners are often victims of bullying. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:10) reported that girls are usually targeted by perpetrators because they are more vulnerable due to being physically weaker. Meyer (2005:15) also reported physical and verbal sexual harassment as other classes of harassment that happen more frequently to females than males. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:10) also found that young learners, especially those in Grades 8 and 9, were vulnerable to school violence by virtue of their age. They (Ncontsa and Shumba, 2013:10) suggest that these young learners cannot defend themselves against bullies.

With regards to sexual harassment, Mncube and Harber (2012:59) found many instances of sexual harassment of female learners by male learners in schools. In addition, sexual violence by educators against learners in South African schools is also serious human rights issue that is widespread and well known (Shabalala, 2016:91). The Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) (2014:7) reports that in a 2001 report by the Human Rights Watch, it was found that sexual violence against girls “permeates the whole of the South African education system.” It explained that educators and other learners had subjected female learners to rape, sexual assault, offers of better grades or money in exchange for sexual favours or “dating” relationships, and other forms of abuse (Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS), 2014:7).

4.7.2 Causes of School Violence

Determining the causes of violence in public high schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit of Mpumalanga Province was the second objective of the study. Based on that, the causes of violence in schools as alluded by both learners (in the survey) and educators (in the interviews) in the selected schools will be discussed.

Among reasons cited as the major causes of violence in the schools by the learners were; jealousy among the learners, gangs from inside the school, alcohol use, problems between girlfriends and boyfriends, problems at home, jealousy of other learners' belongings and jealousy because other learners do better in school.

Educators were of the opinion that violent perpetrators use drugs and alcohol. Educators also indicated that drugs are easily available in schools and alcohol is easily accessible to learners since most schools are located close to taverns. Educators were also of the opinion that learners from dysfunctional families often engaged in violence since such children are raised by violent parents who usually adopt violence as a way to assert authority. Furthermore, the educators believed that learners from such families also displayed anger, hatred, inferiority complex and other emotional behaviour which fuels violence at school.

The educators also reported home and work-related stress among the educators themselves as one of the causes and triggers of violence in schools. They reported that educators are, at times, insensitive when dealing with learners, bring their personal anger in class and sometimes verbally and physically abuse learners.

Causes of school violence found in the study were mostly consistent with literature from Zuze, Reddy, Juan, Hannan, Visser and Winnaar (2016:2) alluding to several intersecting factors that lead to school violence. Shabalala (2016:20) claims that some of the causes of violence in schools are the effects of a poor socio-economic environment, including factors such as drug abuse, child abuse, neglect, and community- and media-related violence, all of which reverberate in many classrooms worldwide.

Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:9) investigated the nature, causes and effects of school violence in South African high schools and found the following as causes of school violence; violence/crime in the community; indiscipline; intolerance; easy access to school premises; unemployment; poverty; lack of recreational facilities; and overcrowding. Garner (2014a:487) further states that schools in most countries rely on interaction with the families of pupils to enhance the learning and social development of children. According to Garner (2014b:487), sometimes, stressors

within family units can result in violence involving children and these are varied and are not always informed or mediated by factors relating to social or economic disadvantage.

In previous studies, researchers have attempted to explain the causes of school-based violence based on theoretical frameworks to explain their findings. According to Shabalala (2016:40), the theories put forward by various researchers can be separated into those reflecting the orientations of sociologists, on one hand, and those reflecting the orientations of psychologists, on the other hand. Sociological perspectives place the phenomenon of school violence within a macro model of society; violence is seen as an outgrowth of social factors. A psychological perspective accounts for violence within a micro level of society; violence is attributed to such intra-individual factors as aggressiveness, impulsiveness and paranoia (Shabalala, 2016:40).

The current study reflects upon both sociologically and psychologically based theories which inform the discussion of school violence. In light of these arguments, this study adopts a systems approach to understanding school-based violence as adopted by the South African Council of Educators (SACE) (2011:23). Systems theory draws on a constructivist worldview, which emphasizes the need to take a holistic perspective and values personal meaning, and subjectivity. Drawing on tenets of a systems approach to understanding school-based violence the following factors are going to be explored:

- Individual factors (Microsystem);
- Relationship factors (Mesosystem);
- Community factors (Mexosystem); and
- Social factors (Macrosystem)

Individual factors (Micro system)

The Microsystem is the most basic unit of the different systems. This system, “consists of the patterns of activities, roles and internal relationships of the home, school and peer settings experienced by the developing person” (SACE, 2011:24).

According to SACE (2011:24), “Violent behaviour in young people results from a complex interaction of risk and protective factors in different environments and over time, which influence how children learn behaviors.” Based on this argument, the higher the risk factors a child is exposed to the greater the chance the child will engage in aggressive and violent behaviour.

The learners who participated in the survey and some of the educators interviewed highlighted the influence of volatile romantic relationships on violent behaviour. Poor conflict resolution skills could be the worsening the problematic nature of these relationships, and this could be further exacerbated by factors such as jealousy, drugs and alcohol abuse by the learners which have all been reported by both the learners and the educators. The findings on the individual level thus support current literature and suggest an awareness on the part of learners and educators as to individual-specific factors which contribute to school-based violence.

Relationship factors (Meso system)

The meso system refers to the relationships between micro systems, and the effect these relationships have on individual behavior. The focus in the micro system is on the direct influences certain factors may have on an individual’s behavior (Van Rensburg, 2010:77). For example, in families in which violence is the norm, children learn to judge violent behaviour favorably and tend to view violence as the appropriate manner of dealing with conflict. Research shows that it is more problematic for a child to have a violent parent or a parent involved in criminal activity than to have lost a parent (SACE, 2011:25).

As alluded by most of the educators interviewed, most of the violent learners come from dysfunctional families. Looking specifically at the relationship between violence in the home and the school context, the SACE (2011:25) reports that of the perpetrators of school violence:

- 10% - 15% of learners have family members who have used illegal drugs in the past year;
- 1 in 10 and 13% of caregivers have been to jail;
- 1 in 5 learners' siblings have been to or are currently in jail; and
- More than a 3rd of learners in primary and secondary school who experienced violence at home have been victims of violence in a school context.

Based on the findings of the study and literature on relationship factors (mesosystem), it can be assumed that family backgrounds and relationships with peers are contributing factors to school-based violence in the study area.

Community factors (Mexo system)

The mexo system contains risk factors which influence the individual more indirectly than in mico and meso systems (Van Rensburg, 2010:77). This primarily entails factors existing in the neighbourhood and community.

It is widely accepted that schools are microcosms of the broader communities in which they are located. For this reason, the social ills prevalent in communities are known to permeate the school environment to various degrees. Community characteristics such as levels of social disorganization, crime, exposure to violence, access to illegal substances and firearms, and proximity to criminals all affect children's risk for violence within the school environment (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:54).

Zuze *et al.* (2016:2) state that there is a clear relationship between school-related violence and tolerance of crime levels in society. The results emanating from this study also bear testimony to this. Both the learners and the educators indicated that the communities are plagued by gangs, alcohol, drugs and weapons easily gain access into school premises and learners are part of gangs.

Social factors (Macro system)

The final factor that needs to be taken into account when attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school-based violence in the study area is the greater social, cultural and political context (SACE, 2011:27). Macro level causes are

essentially factors that exist in the broader tenets of society, politics and cultures (Van Rensburg, 2010:78). South African society has been argued to have a culture of violence (SACE, 2011:27). The country is currently having to manage the after effects of the apartheid regime in which discriminatory policies entrenched structural forms of inequality and promoted high levels of poverty (SACE, 2011:27).

The majority of the learners in the study area come from low socio-economic families and backgrounds. Under such poor backgrounds, the educators alluded that most learners in the study area lack social support and this makes them vulnerable as perpetrators and victims of school violence.

4.7.3 Consequences of School Violence

Investigating the effects of violence on learning in public high schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit of Mpumalanga Province was the third objective of the study. Based on that, the effects of violence in schools, as alluded by both learners (in the survey) and educators (in the interviews) in the selected schools will be discussed. These are categorised as educational, psychological and emotional well-being.

Educational effects of school violence

In terms of educational/academic effects of school-based violence, the majority of the learners reported that they had failed at least one learning area while more than half reported that they missed days of school as a consequence of school violence related factors. The learners reported that school-based violence disrupted classes, damages school property and brings fear in learners and made schools unpleasant. This was also supported by the educators who reported that school violence has a significant effect on the learner's classroom and general school performance. This was attributed to the emotional stress, playing truancy because of the fear of being violated and loss of self-confidence. Most educators if not all were of the opinion that violence has effects for both violent learners and victims, violent learners spend their time disrupting teaching and learning and victims end up performing less in school activities.

Educators, on the other hand stated that there is a high rate of school absenteeism because violent learners tend to abscond from school after committing violent offenses

while most victims of school-based violence tend to be scared to go to school because they do not feel safe. The interviewed educators also stated that violence affected the schools and teachers as well since parents tend to withdraw their children from schools which they regard as dysfunctional, and once the enrolment of the school drops educators were being forced to relocate to schools with high enrolments.

Findings of the current study are also supported by numerous authors. Meyer (2005:20) states that crime and violence contaminate the school environment and jeopardize the educational process. The Human Rights Watch (2001:9) argues that discrimination, harassment, and violence hamper students' ability to get an education and take a tremendous toll on their emotional well-being. This is mainly because educators spend most of their time focusing on solving problems associated with school violence instead of focusing on effective teaching and learning (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:1).

In a study by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:7), 19% of the learners who participated in the survey indicated that they ended up bunking classes, and in some cases, learners even dropped out of school because of peer victimization and 45.6% of the learners reported that their grades had fallen because of school violence. Shabalala (2016:113) interviewed a total of 32 educators, and they all stated that violence impacted negatively on teaching and learning. Educators stated that violence demoralized the spirit of teaching due to violent cases they had to solve every week (Shabalala, 2016:113).

Psychological and emotional well-being

In this study, social effects of school violence reported included losing friends and feeling unsafe in the community. The findings of the study also indicated that victims of school violence had experienced psychological and emotional distress. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:7) also found that a substantial number of the learner respondents reported that they were not able to concentrate on their studies because of school violence.

The majority of the learners (91.3%) also indicated that they did not receive any psychological support in the form of counselling after abuse. This is despite literature

indicating that learners who experience or witness incidents of violence may become depressed and this in turn may affect their ability to learn in a negative manner (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:7).

Meyer (2005:20) reports that there can be serious long-standing physical, emotional and psychological implications for both educators and learners as a result of school violence and this includes:

- Distress, reduced self-esteem, risk of depression and suicide, reduced school and
- Reduced attendance, impaired concentration, fear and a diminished ability to learn.

Similarly, Mncube and Harber (2012:17) state that exposure to school violence may result in serious long-standing physical, emotional and psychological implications for both teachers and learners, including: distress; reduced self-esteem; risk of depression and suicide; reduced school attendance; impaired concentration; fear; and a diminished ability to learn.

4.7.4 Strategies to Deal with Violence in Schools

The fourth and last objective of the study was to evaluate the current strategies in place to combat violence in school and their effectiveness. Based on the findings of the study, some of the mechanisms in selected schools will be discussed.

It is worth noting that the study area (Mpumalanga Province) has a history of school violence, with Meyer (2005:18) reporting that educators in the province were demanding guns to protect themselves from criminals and delinquent learners after a spate of robberies, assault and hostage-taking of educators.

The results showed that more than half (50%) of the learners indicated that the schools have adequate security guards to protect the school during school hours, the school are doing enough to protect learners from people outsiders and the school protects

the learners from violence from other learners. Most of the learners indicated that they did not know how to deal with anger without getting violent.

According to the survey, more than half of the learners feel that detention (57.6%) and being given work to do at school (52.9%) are ideal punishments for learners' violent behaviour. With regards to training on conflict resolution, at least half (51.2%) of the learners indicated that they have been trained on conflict resolution and that they received the training from people outside of the school. The majority of the learners were of the view that school principals properly dealt with school violence.

According to the principals and educators, to create a violent free environment, schools need to work with stakeholders, and these include parents, learners, educators and the communities to combat school violence. Schools use different measures to combat violence by involving parents, South African Police services, expulsion, detention and suspension. Educators also alluded to the lack of proper punitive measures. This was also reported by Shabalala (2016:102) who stated that educators felt the lack of proper punishment measures due to the abolishment of corporal punishment, and this caused huge challenges as violent learners could not be easily controlled.

Educators also stated that they had problems with parents who were unavailable when needed. The schools are faced with challenges to implement punitive measures since there are learners who do not have parents, and some stay alone because their parents are working far from home. Furthermore, the educators stated that other parents are not willing to cooperate and do not have control over their children. Of concern is the involvement of the police officers as this was reported to bring trauma to learners since schools are regarded as places of safety free from any harm, and learners tend to be intimidated whenever of the South African Police services is involved.

Based on the findings of the study and literature from related studies, it is ultimately the management of the school that is responsible for creating an organizational culture or school ethos which minimizes violence. Findings of the study, as also found by Mncube and Harber (2012:78) portray a lack of basic respect and trust between

learners, educators and parents as evident in the findings discussed so far. Many learners lack confidence in the school and teachers and complained about the continued use of corporal punishment and the educators blame the parents and learners for not being cooperative in their bid to combat school violence.

The lack of recreational facilities was also identified as one of the major causes of school violence, with majority of the learners indicating that they had nothing to do in their free time or after school. As stated by Ncontsa and Shumba (2013:9), the existence of adequate facilities means that learners who do not excel in class can be given the opportunity to excel on the sports field and earn respect from their classmates.

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter provided the profile of the respondents, their ages, gender and general information of the schools. The first part of the results dealt with findings from the quantitative study which drew 201 learners from 9 schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit found in Mpumalanga Province. The second part of this chapter dealt with the findings where specific themes that emerged during the individual interviews with educators. The last part of the chapter covered the discussion of the major findings of the study. These are highlighted and compared with findings from previous studies.

Deliberate attempts were made to connect the findings to existing literature on the topic. The following chapter, that is Chapter 5, will give a summary of the results, followed by a discussion of the conclusions drawn from the results with reference to the research questions. Lastly the chapter will give the perceived contribution of the study and recommendations and discuss the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter (Chapter 4) covered the presentation, interpretation and discussion of empirical findings. Chapter 5 deals with the findings, the summary and the recommendations. This chapter summarises the key findings of the study in relation to the specific objectives and their implications to the research problem. Finally, recommendations to improve safety in schools are made. The recommendations are based on the suggestions as discussed in the literature review, the needs and suggestions of the learners and educators who participated in the study, observations made in the schools as well as the researcher's views and experiences.

5.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

5.2.1 Forms of Violence Prevalent in Public Schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit

The first objective of the study was to establish the forms of violence prevalent in rural South African public schools with reference to Mkhuhlu Circuit in Mpumalanga Province.

Findings of the survey indicated that the most common forms of school violence were corporal punishment, bullying, being chased from class and sexual harassment. An overwhelming 81.9% of the learners who participated in the survey indicated that corporal punishment is still being practiced in their schools despite it being banned in South African schools. These findings were also supported by the educators who were interviewed. The educators reported that various forms of violence prevalent in the study area including: bullying, physical fights, intimidation using dangerous weapons like bottles and knives, gangsters, vandalism, verbal violence, assault and sexual violence among others.

Male teachers were found to be the main perpetrators of school violence, followed by female teachers, non-school staff, male schoolmates, other school staff and female

schoolmates were the least reported perpetrators. When it comes to cases of violence by learners against learners, the results showed that male learners were the major perpetrators of violence in schools.

The study found that incidents of violence occur regularly in the schools, with almost a fifth (20.2%) of the learners indicating that such incidents occur on a daily basis. Amongst the biggest challenges faced by schools were gangs were in schools and in communities. Over 80.0% of the learners indicated that there are gangs in their communities and over 40% indicated that gangs had done something bad to them or their family members, and 6.1% of the learners confirmed being part of a gang.

Findings of the study showed a significant association between gender and being a victim of school violence ($P < 0.05$), with a significant higher proportion of males (61.5%) being victims of school violence compared to females (42.1%). The study also found a higher proportion of males as victims of bullying and other forms of violence compared to females whereas more females were victims of corporal punishment and sexual abuse as compared to their male counterparts. A Student's *t* test showed no significant differences in the mean ages of victims and non-victims of school violence in the study area.

5.2.2 Causes of Violence in Public High Schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit

Determining the causes of violence in public high schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit of Mpumalanga Province was the second objective of the study. The study found multiple causes of violence, with the main causes as pointed out by learners being: jealousy among the learners, gangs from inside the school, alcohol use, problems between girlfriends and boyfriends, problems at home, jealousy of other learners' belongings and jealousy because other learners do better in school. Educators were of the opinion that violent perpetrators use drugs and alcohol.

The educators also indicated ease of availability of drugs and alcohol to learners in the schools and community. Educators were also of the opinion that learners from dysfunctional families often engaged in violence since such children are raised by violent parents who usually adopt violence as a way to assert authority. Furthermore,

the educators believed that learners from such families also displayed anger, hatred, inferiority complex and other emotional behaviour which fuels violence at school. The educators also reported home and work-related stress among the educators themselves as one of the causes and trigger of violence in schools.

According to the SACE (2011:23), there is no single cause of violence, but rather, “a series of interrelated factors impacting on young people in different ways, one of which will be in the perpetrating of violent acts against other young people and society in general” (SACE, 2011:23). In light of that argument, an attempt was made to explain the different causes or factors, which individually and collectively, lay the foundation for as well as perpetuate and increase the incidents of school-based violence in South Africa.

5.2.3 Effects of Violence on Learning

The third objective of the study was to elucidate the effects of school violence on the learners, educators and the academic output. The findings showed that school violence has direct and indirect effects on the teaching and learning. Direct effects were reported as a drop in academic performance and loss of school time while indirect effects were noted as psychological and emotional well-being of both the learners and the teachers. In terms of educational/academic effects of school-based violence, the majority of the learners reported that they had failed at least one learning area and more than half reported that they missed days of school as a consequence of school violence related factors. The learners also reported that school-based violence disrupted classes, damages school property and brings fear in learners and made schools unpleasant. This was also supported by the educators who reported that school violence has a significant effect on the learner’s classroom and general school performance. Most educators were of the opinion that violence has effects for both violent learners and victims.

In this study, social effects of school violence reported included losing friends and feeling unsafe in the community. The findings of the study also indicated that victims of school violence had experienced psychological and emotional distress.

5.2.4 Strategies in Place to Combat Violence in Schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit

The last objective of the study was to evaluate the current strategies in place to combat violence in school and their effectiveness. The results showed that more than half (50%) of the learners indicated that the schools have adequate security guards protect the school during school hours, the school are doing enough to protect learners from people outsiders and the school protects the learners from violence from other learners. According to the survey, more than half of the learners feel that detention (57.6%) and being given work to do at school (52.9%) are ideal punishments for learners' violent behaviour. With regards to training on conflict resolution, at least half (51.2%) of the learners indicated that they have been trained on conflict resolution and that they received the training from people outside of the school. The majority of the learners were of the view that school principals properly dealt with school violence.

According to the principals and educators, to create a violent free environment, schools needed to work with stakeholders, and these include parents, learners, educators and the communities to combat school violence. Educators also alluded to the lack of proper punitive measures and as a result they resorted to corporal punishment.

Educators also stated that they had problems with parents who were unavailable when needed. The schools are faced with challenges to implement punitive measures since there are learners who do not have parents, and some stay alone because their parents are working far from home. Furthermore, the educators stated that other parents are not willing to cooperate and do not have control over their children. Many of the learners lacked confidence in the school and teachers and complained about the continued use of corporal punishment and the educators blamed the parents and learners for not being cooperative in their bid to combat school violence. Lack of recreational facilities was also identified as one of the major causes of school violence, with the majority of the learners indicating that they had nothing to do in their free time or after school.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Conflict Resolution

Findings have indicated that school violence in the study area comes in different forms and nature. Learners thus need to be equipped with a variety of skills to help them with conflict resolution and to prevent victimisation. It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education and the schools offer learners training on conflict resolution or infuse it with the curriculum.

5.3.2 Participation of Stakeholders in Policy Formulation

The educators indicated a low level of participation in disciplinary activities by parents. Based on that, the researcher recommends that parents and the School Governing Body (SGB) at large be involved in disciplinary issues and policy formulation in general.

5.3.3 Corporal Punishment as an Act of Violence

Even though the use of corporal punishment was banned by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the study found that corporal punishment is still prevalent in the study area. It is strongly recommended that schools stop the use of corporal punishment as it has a lot of undesirable consequences on both the learners and the educators, since it instils fear in learners and destroys the trust between the two parties. Instead, as suggested by the learners themselves, ill-disciplined learners can be given menial tasks such as cleaning the school, gardening but not corporal punishment. When it is necessary to use punishment to suppress specific behaviours, educators are recommended to incorporate punishment as part of teaching or eliciting incompatible desired behaviours and followed by high levels of reinforcement.

5.3.4 Identification of At-risk Learners

Bullying was reported to be one of the most common forms of violence in the study area. It is recommended that the schools, with the assistance of parents and SGBs,

identify learners exhibiting violent behaviours and who are ill-disciplined and find ways to help the learners. In that regard, educators and principals are recommended to develop strategies that take learners' social and cultural backgrounds into account and effectively address learners' needs, since sometimes, misbehaviour is an expression of self-blame or frustration of being neglected in school.

5.3.5 Developing Anti-crime Initiatives

The Department of Education should develop anti-crime initiatives which will concentrate on capacity building programmes for learners, educators and parents. These security measures should involve infrastructure including: burglar bars, safety gates, strong fences, security guards and getting parents and other community members to check the school's premises regularly.

5.3.6 Extra Programmes and Extra-curricular Activities

Findings of the study and also personal observations by the researcher indicated a lack of extra-curricular activities for the learners after school or during their free times. Some of the schools lacked sport fields and in schools where sports facilities were present, they were poorly maintained. It is thus recommended that the Department of Basic Education, SGBs and other stakeholders assist schools with putting in place facilities and initiating programmes that give the learners after-school activities to keep their minds busy and refreshed. That way, learners who are not good academically may also have an opportunity to excel in sports and other activities and avoid being a laughing stock in the classrooms and schools.

The Department of Basic Education and the schools also need to include conflict-resolution and peer mediation programmes in their curricula. The schools are also recommended to come up with anti-drug, anti-alcohol, weapon free and violent free policies to deter learners of unacceptable behaviours and possible consequences.

5.3.7 Principals' and Schools' Roles in Promoting Discipline and Safety

The principals' roles in reforming schools and transforming the images of their schools cannot be over-emphasised. Principals have key roles in creating a positive school environment, enforcing discipline and maintaining codes of conduct in schools. With most learners reporting that incidence of violence are reported almost daily in their schools, it is thus important that principals drive their school's anti-violence measures and transform schools in the study area.

5.3.8 Guidance and Counselling Programmes

The results showed that the study area is dominated by a high proportion of learners with social problems and poverty. The communities in which most of these schools are based are plagued with gangsters, high HIV/AIDS infection rates, dysfunctional families and drug and alcohol abuse. In addition, the majority of the learners who were victims of school-based violence indicated that they never received any form of counselling. From such a background, it is recommended that the schools work closely with the Department of Social Welfare and offer guidance and counselling to learners. It is also recommended that each school assign a person that will be responsible for guidance and counselling, who is professionally trained.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Like any other study, this study has some limitations that are worthy acknowledging but do not necessarily compromise the major findings of the study. One of the possible shortcomings of the study lies in the fact that school-based violence involves multiple role players and factors, and the fact that the home environment and parents were not part of the study is a possible shortcoming.

The other main shortcoming lies in the delimitation of the study. The fact that schools in the other provinces of South Africa were not sampled, generalisation of the findings of the study to other rural public schools in other provinces needs to be done with care.

Since the questionnaire was designed in English, it was apparent that some learners did not fully understand some of the questions and thus some questions and concepts needed to be explained to them since most of the learners were not English first language speakers. Some of the questions were sensitive, for example, questions on sexual abuse to female learners, so there is a likelihood that some of the learners were not fully comfortable and honest with their responses.

Further studies on school violence in the study area and beyond, will need to focus on prevention strategies and ways to effectively help both the victims and perpetrators. Both the study findings and literature reviewed indicated a huge number of learners who have fallen victim to school-based violence, and there is an urgent need to look for effective prevention strategies and ways to rehabilitate/counsel the victims.

There is also the need to conduct studies to look for ways to effectively equip and involve principals and SGBs. Future research needs into look in training needs for the kind of leadership that will lead to successful management of schools and the transformation of education in South Africa; in a way, that would make schools safe and maximise teaching and learning.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that rural public schools in the Mkhuhlu Circuit of Mpumalanga Province are plagued with various forms of violence with the main forms being corporal punishment and bullying. The high levels of school-based violence in the study area was attributed to prevalence of gangs in both schools and communities, drugs and alcohol, high levels of poverty in the study area, dysfunctional families and failure to utilize other punitive measure by educators to correct ill-disciplined learners. The high levels of violence were found to be having negative effects on teaching and learning and the well-being of both staff and learners. The researcher has made some recommendation based on the reviewed literature, synthesis of the findings, guidelines and documents and observations in the study area. It is envisaged that the recommendations and suggestions made, if properly implemented will assist in creating safer schools and build trust between learners, parents and schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1. Section A: Biographical data

- 1) What is your gender: Male [] Female []
- 2) What is your ageyears
- 3) In which grade are you?

2. Section B: The effects of school violence

Think about the situation at your school this year and answer the following questions:

2.1 Have you been victim of any form of violence in schools, for example bullying, corporal punishment or abuse by teachers?

a) Yes		b) No	
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2.2 If yes, what form of violence have you experienced? (You can pick more than one option)

a)Bullying		c)Sexual abuse	
b)Corporal punishment		d)Other (Specify)	

2.3 Who did this to you (the above)?

a)Male schoolmate		d)Female teacher	
b)Female schoolmate		e)Other school staff (male/female)	
c)Male teacher		f)Non-school staff (male/female)	

2.4 How often did these incidents occur?

a)On a daily basis		d)Once every few months (two or three times in the school year)	
b)On a weekly basis		e) Only once in the school year	

c)Once a month		f) Other (please specify)	
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2.5 Do learners get corporal punishment at your school?

Never	
Sometimes	
Often	

2.5.1 What is your opinion about corporal punishment?

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2.6 Are there criminal gangs in your community?

a) Yes		b) No	
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2.6.1 If “Yes”, have they done anything bad to you or your family?

a) Yes		b) No	
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2.6.2 If “Yes”, are you part of the gang?

a) Yes		b) No	
--------	--	-------	--

2.7 Have any of the following happened to you this year at the school?

	Yes	No
Have you been hit, kicked or slapped by other learners?		
Have you been called a bad name to hurt you by other learners?		
Have you been made fun of in a bad way by other learners?		
Have you been sexually abused by other learners?		
Have your belongings been broken or damaged by other learners on purpose?		
Has another learner injured you with a weapon?		
Has a teacher hit, kicked or slapped you?		
Has a teacher called you a bad name to hurt you?		
Has a teacher made fun of you in a bad way?		
Have you been sexually assaulted by a teacher		

2.8 Have you done the following this year at school?

	Yes	No
Hit, kicked or slapped another learner?		
Called other learners a bad name to hurt them?		

Made fun of another learner in a bad way?		
Sexually abused another learner?		
Broke or damage another learner's belongings on purpose?		
Threatened another learner with a weapon?		
Hit, kicked or slapped a teacher?		
Called a teacher a bad name or hurt him/her?		
Sexually assaulted a teacher?		

2.9 Would you say the following are reasons for violent behaviour in your school?

	Yes	No
Gangs from outside the school		
Gangs from inside the school		
Alcohol use		
Problems between girlfriends and boyfriends		
Problems at home		
Jealousy of other learners' things like cell phones etc?		
Jealousy because other learners do better in school?		
Jealousy because other learners are more popular than them?		

2.10 Why do you think there are high levels of violence in South African schools?

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2.11 General impressions of violent incidents (5-point scale)

Violent Incidents	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Name calling, insults and teasing					
Physical fighting at this school					
Threats by student against another					

Sexual comments by one against another					
Inappropriate touch by one against another					
Students are hassled by other students					
(I saw) students being beaten up					
Racial comments by one against another					
Drugs sales on school grounds					
Intruders caused problems at this school					
Gang violence is a problem at this school					
Robbery or theft over R50 from (me) student					
I heard that someone was threaten with weapon					
(I) Student has been bullied by other students					
Student was assaulted with a knife					

3. Consequences of school violence

3.1 Educational

3.1.1 As a result of violence have you:

a) Missed days of school?	Yes	No	c) Felt like you were unable to learn?	Yes	No
b) Failed learning areas/Subjects?	Yes	No	d) Dropped out of school?	Yes	No

3.1.2 If you miss classes, how often do you miss classes?

a)At least once a month		c)Rarely (once or twice in the school year)	
b)Once every two to three months			

3.1.3 If at least once a month, how many days of school have you missed in one month:

a)One day		c)More than 10 days	
b)Two to five days		d)I do not miss classes every month, only once in a while	

3.1.4 If you have missed classes, how many learning areas/subjects have you failed?

a)One subject		b)More than one year	
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3.2 Psychological and emotional well-being

3.2.1 Did you feel emotional distress as a result of the episode of violence?

a)Yes		b)No	
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3.2.2 If yes, did you seek counselling, psychological support?

a)Yes		b)No	
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3.2.4 If not, why not?

a)I did not need it		c)It was too expensive	
b)service was unavailable			

3.2.5 If yes, who provided the service?

a)The school		c)Government service	
b)Community		d)Other (Specify)	

3.3 Social

3.3.1 As a result of school violence, has any of the following taken place?

a)Lost friends		c)Lost trust in teachers	
b)Lost trust in school		d)The community feels more unsafe	

How does violence affect your school?

It disrupts the classes	Yes	No	Uncertain
There is damage of school property			
It makes the school an unpleasant place			
It causes some learners to be scared			

Is there any other way that the school is affected by violence?

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4. Reactions to violence, coping, conflict resolution

How do you react to violent incidents at your school?

I avoid certain places at the school	Yes	No	Uncertain
I take part in the fights			
I try stop the fights			
I report the fights to teachers or authorities			
I just stand and watch the fights			
I keep away from other learners			
I have problems with concentration			
I am afraid to go to school			
I become frustrated with violence			
I am afraid to be humiliated if I am picked on			
I become angry			
I feel isolated from other learners			
I do not like school anymore			

Do you have another kind of reaction? Please state it

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What do you think of the following at your school?

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Violent learners get punished				
Learners know how to deal with anger without getting violent				
Only learners & school staff are allowed on the school ground during school hours				
Learners are searched for weapons on a regular basis				
Security guards protect the school during school hours				
Teachers patrol the playgrounds during breaks				
Prefects have control over the behaviour of the learners				
The school protects the learners from violence from other learners				
The school protects the learners from violence from teachers				
Violent learners get corporal punishment				
The school does enough to protect learners from people outside the school who want to cause trouble at the school				

What do you think would be a good punishment for violent behaviour?

	Yes	No	Uncertain
Detention			
Corporal punishment			
Suspension			
Doing work on the school ground			

Do you have any other idea for punishing violent behaviour? State it

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General impressions of Violence prevention strategies implemented at the sample schools (5-point scale)

Violence Prevention Strategies	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Suspensions					
Detentions					
Enforce school code of behaviour					
Teachers enforce classroom rules					
Principal/Vice-principal monitoring					
Parent involvement					
Teachers create a positive school atmosphere					
Teacher monitors outside the classroom					
Teach conflict resolution strategies					
Police involvement with the school					
Expulsions					
Teach violence prevention strategies					
Use classroom activities to promote peaceful					
Teach anger management strategies					
Train a few mediators or peacemakers at the school					
Teacher in-service on violence prevention					

How would you react after an incident where someone really hurts you?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
I talk about it with a friend			
I find reasons to laugh about it			
I just stay at home and do not go to school			
I try to find someone who can offer me advice or otherwise help me with my problem			

I use alcohol and/or drugs to help me forget			
I stay at home and avoid friends and family as much as possible			
I get into more arguments than usual			
I experience difficulty sleeping			
I remind myself to focus on the good things in my life instead of the bad			
I manage to find an outlet to express my emotions (talking to a friend, writing a diary, playing some music, drawing or painting)			
I remind myself that things will get better			
I do something that makes my body tired (like sport)			
I think of ways to get back at the person			

Do you have anything else to help you with the hurt? Please indicate

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Have you ever been trained to deal with conflict and other difficult situations at school?

a) Yes	
b) No	

If “Yes”, where did you get the training?

a) It is taught in class	
b) People from outside the school taught us about this at school	
c) I learned if from an organisation that have nothing to do with school	

Do you think such training would be effective in preventing violence?

a) Yes	
b) No	

What do you think about the ability of the school (principal/teachers) to deal with violence in your school? (Choose one)

a) They deal with it well most of the time	
b) They sometimes deal with it	
c) They are not able to deal with it	

Do you have any suggestions on how violence can better be dealt with in your school?

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Is there an adult person who takes care of you after school?

a) Never	
b) Sometimes	
c) Most of the times	

Do the people who take care of you sometimes drink until they are drunk?

a) Never	
b) Sometimes	
c) Often	

How often do you do the following after school?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Sport			
Cultural activities e.g. drama			
Spend time with a gang			
Help with work around the house			
Homework			
Do nothing/ lazing around			
Visit friends			
Drink alcohol			
Work for own income			
Use dagga/drugs			

Do you have anything else you do after school? Please indicate

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APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN RURAL SCHOOLS OF MKHUHLU CIRCUIT, BOHLABELA DISTRICT

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT OF THE INTERVIEWS

1. Question 1 will focus on determining the forms of violence prevalent in rural secondary public schools in Mkhuhlu circuit.

☐ **In your opinion would you say are the forms of violence prevalent in rural public schools in Mkhuhlu circuit, please explain briefly?**

2. Questions focusing 2 on the causes of violence in public high schools. The questions will focus specifically on factors that lead to school violence.

☐ **Can you elaborate what are the nature, the causes and the triggers of violence in schools in the Mkhuhlu Circuit?**

3. Question 3 will ask principals/educators the effects of violence on learning.

☐ **Can you describe the effects of violence on learners and educators that you encounter at your school?**

4. Question 4 will enable the researcher to draw insight from the experiences of educators and school heads on the current strategies in place to combat violence in school and their effectiveness.

☐ **What measures are currently in place to combat violence in rural public schools and how effective are they in schools in Mkhuhlu Circuit?**

NB: *“The information gathered will be used with confidentiality for this study only and your anonymity will be ensured. Participation is voluntary and you could withdraw at any point should you wish to do so. There are neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study.”*

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM FOR LEARNERS

The effects of school violence in rural school of Mkhuhlu Circuit, Bohlabela District.

The purpose of this study is to understand the effects of school violence in rural school secondary school. Data will be collected using questionnaires and interviews on learners, teachers and principals. The respondents may ask questions before and after participating in the study. The respondents' confidentiality and anonymity will be respected. Participants have a right to withdraw from the study any time they feel like.

There are no known risks associated with the study.

Signature (parent/guardian) Date.....

Signature (learner)..... Date.....

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF PERMISSION

Enq: 0837479547

khwentsa@gmail.com

P. O BOX 1521

MKHUHLU

1246

23 APRIL 2017

The Circuit Manager/District Director

Private bag x 9399

Bushbuckridge

1280

DEAR SIR/MADAM

LETTER FOR A PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I hereby request permission to conduct a research study from the 9 secondary schools of Mkhuhlu circuit, Bohlabela district

- My study is based on “THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL OF MKHUHLU CIRCUIT, BOHLABELA DISTRICT”
- I am giving the Department an assurance that there will be no risk involved during the collection of data
- Participants are guaranteed anonymity and that the information gathered from them will be kept confidential and only used for the study
- I will also make arrangements with principals from all the schools where the research will be conducted so that school activities should not be disrupted
- Lastly great diligence and professionalism will be applied throughout the process.

My full particulars are as follows

Institution: University of Venda

Field of study: Master of Education

Student no: 11565324

I would be glad if my request can be considered

Yours faithfully

Maria Thobile Mdhuli

Signature.....

APPENDIX E

EDUCATORS TRANSCRIBED DATA

1ST EDUCATOR

EDUCATORS TRANSCRIBED DATA

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- They are very few, if they exist. Those are minor e.g. bullying such as beating others for minor cause incidents or issues.

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Some learners beat each other because of abusive language and stealing their personal belongings like books pencils and other small items.
- Some smoke dagga and come to school drunk hence they have impaired understanding of others.

At the other hand some learners as a result of boyfriends and girlfriends

3. The effects of violence on learners and educators

- It causes indiscipline among learners.
- Disrupts a smooth conduct and progression of learning and latter affects learners' performance and pass rate in general.

4. Measures currently in place to combat violence and its effectiveness

- Parents of learners involved are called in to try and talk to their children and make pledges so that the same does not happen again.
- Not very effective because parents don't come when invited and some learners do not have parents nor guardians they are from child headed families.

2ND EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent
 - Yes there are forms of violence, learners fight a lot and scold each other and at the end of the day the school become uncontrollable
2. Causes and triggers of violence
 - Sometimes it is because other learners don't understand that other kids have a right to different like being gay, heterosexual, poor etc
3. Effect of violence on learners and educators
 - Some learners bank classes because of the fear of being violated an some end up losing self confidence
 - On the other hand teachers especial new teachers feel intimidated by those violent learners and they end up hating the career
4. Measures currently in place to combat violence
 - Normally we allow learners to do public speaking and debates based on violence
 - Yes it is effective because one of many can start behaving well

3RD EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalence
 - There are forms of violence that are prevalent in our schools ranges from bullying, gang, fights as well as community oriented violence (differences) community gang lead their fight school
2. Causes and triggers of violence
 - Cause of violence emanates from communities, one gang willing to dominate the school territory
 - Sexual violence people from the community members coming to school to fight over girlfriends or boyfriends to whom they have exchanged gifts with and that causes disorder at the school

3. Effects of violence on learners and educator

- If there are violent scenes, learners often move out of their respective classes to go and witness the fights inside and outside the school premises and the cannot be controlled or reprimanded
- The excitement or commotion that comes with the fights supersedes their interest to learn therefore renders the school ungovernable

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- “Operation adopt a police” police were adopted by the school safety and security committees, so that when they are fights the police are called to come and neutralises the situation
- It is not effective because the presence of police authorities interferes with teaching and learning although the situations are controlled for that moment

4TH EDUCATOR

- Forms of violence preferences
 - In my opinion there are forms of in rural schools of Mkhuhlu circuit, some of the reasons might be that some public schools are dysfunctional and the level of discipline is below average

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Learners fight in groups and use weapons
- The trigger might be the adolescent stage which causes them to be hyperactive and short-tempered

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Visible effects maybe that learners have low self-esteem, feeling scared and scared when violence has taken place
- Level of teaching and learning drops

4. Measures in place and their effectiveness

- Suspension is the current measure that takes place but it is not effective because most of the learners enjoy being suspended, they feel like as if they are forced to learn while they are not on it

5th educator

1. The forms of violence prevalence

2.

- Some learners are from disadvantaged background which turns them to be aggressive, bullying and violent.
- Some are using drugs at school

3. Causes and triggers of violence

- Use of drugs
- They form gangs especial those who use substances are ungovernable because some are addicts

4. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Learners become injured and teachers who try to stabilize the situation also got injured as well as learners who are not part of the gang
- Sometimes learners are hospitalised and lose lessons
- Learners bank classes and some dropout of school

5. Measure in place to stabilise violence

- Stakeholders are engaged to assist teaching learners about the effects of violence in school and society at large
- The school also educates learners about danger of and consequences of bullying
- It is a bit effective for a while

6TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- The forms of violence prevalent in our school are bullying, fights and gangsters
- Learners who are engaged in the above mentioned violence lack discipline and they cause chaos at school

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Drugs and alcohol abuse by learners
- Learners are in sexual relationship with school dropout who sometimes enters the school premises to cause disturbances

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- learners are selling drugs at school premises since they are engaged with people who are from outside the school who use substances
- Low academic performance because learners are no longer focusing on their school work only but violent behaviour as well
- Innocent learners are no longer free to participate in other school activities
- Learners bank classes
- Educators are no longer free and safe because learners are bringing weapons at school
- Victims also bring weapons to defend themselves on their enemies
- High rate of absenteeism because some think that the school is not a safe place to be

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Structures are involved e.g. school governing bodies, teacher liaison officer, parents, police, pastors and many more

- The school has adopted its police officer to keep law and order
- The school has its own disciplinary committee to oversee minor issues
- We also have safety and security committee in place
- These measures are not that effective but they control the situation for that moment because learners never stopped bullying each other

7TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms violence prevalence

- Yes learners are calling others with funny names and such end up into fights and bullying.
- Other learners are not well mannered most of them are heading their families since parent are working far from home, because they head families and they expect their peers to treat them as adults at school

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- The use of drugs and alcohol can be the cause and trigger of violence, after smoking learners become so disrespectful and disturb teaching and learning
- The school is situated closer to a shebeen where learners are sometimes banking classes and drink, when coming back they become ungovernable and violence take place

3. Effects of violence on teachers and learners

- School become dysfunctional
- Enrolment drops because parents are removing their children from the school to other schools (7)
- Teacher are redeployed due to drop of enrolment (7)
- The loses experienced teachers
- The school develop bad image in the community

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Police, school governing bodies and parents are engaged
- It is not effective school enrolment drops every year

8TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- There are various forms of violence ranging from sexual, physical and verbal violence, learners speak strong and vulgar language to their fellow learners and some gets angry and start fights

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Learner cannot control their emotions and some takes drugs
- Lack of parental care, our learners are from child headed families and such learners are very aggressive and always frustrated as heads of households
- Parents and school have lost control over the children

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Leads to over fights
- Dropping out from school
- Victims live in fear and it interferes with their performance
- Low participation in school activities both extra and academically activities
- Low moral from learners

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Parents involvement because the department has abolished corporal punishment
- The school involve SGB, community police forum, department of basics education, social workers and many more

- The stakeholders involved are sometimes invited to advocate violence to learners
- The school have school safety committee that also play a role
- It is effective even though cases are reported

9TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalence

- There are different types of violence prevent in rural schools such bullying, where learners bully each other in various forms like teasing others during lessons
- School property is vandalised when learners fight
- Rape is another case we had in the school where a gang of boys raped a girl who was studying after school
- Teachers also assault learner even though the department has abolished corporal punishment

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Frustrations learners not cooperative and teachers end up beating them
- Gang fights are common especial on boys
- Majority abusing substances

3. Effects of violence on educators and learners

- Learners are afraid to come to school
- Educators are frustrated because the environment is not conducive for teaching and learning
- Inexperience educators are afraid to attend classes

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- All cases are attended by authorities because the school believes that any case is serious
- The school tries by all means to instil discipline but the measures we use are not that effective because the situation is not stopping completely

10TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalence

- Language used by learners on their peers is so disrespectful.
- Physical fights is another form of violence where learners fight for food during break

2. Causes and triggers violence

- Some learners are from dysfunctional families and such learners are ungovernable
- Learners from poor background feels unrecognised, when behaving in a bully manner they feel recognised
- Over aged learners are always bossing the younger ones

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Performance for learners is poor
- Teacher are so discouraged to attend such learners

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Over aged learners are advised to enrol with FET colleges
- Over aged learners are no longer admitted for the following year
- Yes it is effective because in few years to come we will be left with learners under the age of 19 as per the requirement of the department

11TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- Yes there several forms of violence fights, bullying, teasing and vandalising
- School property is destroyed by violent learners and the fight teacher and their follow learners

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Substance abuse, parents are working far from home so they normal give their children money for household expenditures, and learners divert the money for alcohol

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- It has negative effect on teaching and learning because learner bring weapons such as knives to school for gang fights
- Drunk learners cause disturbances at school
- Lives of teachers and learners are in danger because weapons are used against them
- Learners are transferred to other school which drops school enrolment and educators should be relocated

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Learners are timorously searched by police and SGB during school hours
- Former inmates are called to educate/advice learners about the consequences of violence
- It is effective because few of our learners rehabilitees

12TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- Learners who repeat one grade for so many are the major cause of violence in form of fights, verbal and physical bullying

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Drugs and alcohol triggers these violence
- Over age learners need to be treated like adults and they expect teachers to treat them like adults as well and it becomes a conflict of interest because teachers teach learners not adults

3. Effects of violence on educators and learners

- Female educators have fear to discipline violent learners
- Class discipline becomes a challenge and it's difficult to have control over such a class

4. Measures in place

- Reported cases are taken care of by the principal and the disciplinary committee.
- The strategy use is helping for that moment because kids will be always kids won't stop violating others but the situation is under control

13TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violent prevalent

- Yes learners bully each other because they are from different cultures and believe
- They laugh at each other because they are from different family background and from the above mentioned situation a big fight emanates

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Learners laugh when others are responding to questions during lessons
- Fight for food during break because what the department is providing is not enough for learners from disadvantage background because once they have eaten they will eat the following day, it is survival of the fittest
- Educators are not treating learners equal they favour others more others less, such situation causes learners to be rebellious
- Substance abuse on the side of older learners

3. Effects of violence on educators and learners

- Learners dropout because they cannot handle the violence at school
- High rate of absenteeism because victims feel unprotected
- Banking of classes which affects image of school and the teachers are being criticised
- Learners eliminates their participation in school activities
- Teachers are demoralised

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Detention learners are kept after school as punishment to serve their sentence(given work to do as punishment)
- If the case is more complex the teacher in charge takes the matter to management
- Parents are called to assist as well as SGB
- If the case is severe police are involved
- The measures assist because learners cooperate

14TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms violence prevalent

- Boys fight in groups which interferes with teaching and learning during fights dangerous weapons are brought to school by learners

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Bossy lifestyle which causes other learners to feel superior than others
 - The use of alcohol by learners
 - Teachers insult and beat learners out of anger and they sometimes chase learners from class, other learners refuse to leave the class then chaos begins
3. Effects of violence on teachers and learners
- Learners and teachers live in fear use of dangerous weapon are brought
 - The violence extend to community which affects teachers and learners because they community members as well
4. Measure in place to combat violence
- Police are engaged
 - Social workers are used to provide counselling
 - The measure is stabilising the situation

15TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence
- There is violence in our school teachers are bullying learners inform of corporal punishment, sexual harassment and assault.
 - Learners fight with teachers and their peers
2. Causes and triggers of violence
- Over aged learners want to be treated like adults, the want to be treated like adults
 - Teachers in sexual relationship with learners, learners feel offended when a teacher is in relationship with their peer and they attack the teacher
 - Teachers abuse their authority by violating rights of learners
 - Learners with low IQ normal have negative attitude to gifted learners
 - Fights for feeding scheme food
3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Dropouts due to fear and embarrassment
 - High failure rate because learners who are part of violence are normal suspended and it affects their preface
 - Teachers are having stigma because of few teachers behaviour
4. Measures in place to combat violence
- Learners and teachers involved are given warning
 - Parents and external stakeholders assist
 - It not effective because teachers are still assaulting learners and learner still have sexual relationships with educators

16TH EDUCATOR

1. Form of violent prevalent.
 - Learners always fight each other using weapons like pangas which they carry in their bags to school
2. Causes and triggers of violence
 - Fighting over boyfriend or girl friend
 - Family background also plays a key cause of violence because majority of violent learners are from child headed families
3. Effect of violence on learners and educators
 - It has a negative effect on teachers and learners because it hampers effectiveness of teaching and learning
 - Educators are subjected to address the issue at hand rather than educating learners when their fights, as such teaching and learning is disturbed
4. Measures in place to combat violence
 - There is 'adopt a cop' where the school has adopted its cop from the neighbouring police station to address learners constantly and conscientize the of the danger of violence
 - The school police which is in line with the constitution also assist to address the issue of violence e.g. if the perpetrator's behaviour warrants a suspension, the learner has to appear to the disciplinary committee with her parents

- It is effective in a sense that most learners are afraid of police officers and when they see them they behave in a good manner
- They hate suspension and could not lie to get into trouble

17TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- There are forms of violence in schools where learners take picture of teachers and follow learner and paste on social media
- Community fight teachers and start strikes that involve learners which ending up vandalising school property

2. Causes and triggers of violence in school

- Community strikes
- Attention sicking learners who like to prove themselves that they are superior
- Families especial dysfunctional families learners they do as they wish at school
- Peer pressure learners like to sacrifice their education to please their friends
- Poor school management those who are in management fails to implement school polices
- Learners fail to choose their role model from their community

3. Effects of violence on educators and learners

- Dropout from school due to fear
- Teaching and learning is disrupted because other learners enjoy violence
- Educators are demoralised

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Parents are called to assist
- Violent leaners are suspended till matter is resolved
- School governing bodies assist when the case is series
- Trips to prisons are arranged for learners to see the danger of violence

- It assist

18TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- Yes there are form of violence because teachers and learners are not following the school policy
- The code of conduct for the school is just written and kept some where safe for department official to see it is not displayed and given to teachers and learners and these causes a lot of violence in the school
- Bullying and vandalising is common as a results of the above

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Lack of discipline on school management
- Inappropriate implementation of school policy
- Over aged learners
- Poor disciplinary strategies
- Media

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Teachers and learners got injured
- Learners feel unprotected
- High rate of absenteeism

4. Measure in place to combat violence

- Calling parents and detention
- Learners are given manual work
- Yes the measures assist because most learners avoid violence at school

19TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- Violence is there among learners they fight among themselves for various reasons like boyfriends, girlfriends and misunderstandings
- Educators come to school moody and beat learners out of anger

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Peer pressure on learners
- Educators are failing to handling personal issues and work

3. Effects of violence on educators and educators

- Innocent learners are disrupted
- Learners got embarrassed and dropout of school
- Educators are in danger of losing their job
- Educators become enemies of learners, and these create unfavourable working condition
- Educators risk losing their jobs and SACE certificate

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- Learners involved are given warning, when they repeat again they suspend then or expel then when making no progress
- Teachers are also disciplined when they have done misconduct
- They are effective because teachers are afraid of losing their jobs so they minimise and some stop violence completely
- Learners don't always act positively because they never stopped fighting their peers and educators

20TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- Yes there is bullying, physical fights' verbal abuse, teasing, gossiping and corporal punishment

- Learners and teachers abuse each other one way or another and it is difficult to solve their issue
2. Causes and triggers of violence
 - Learners of different ethnic group always confront each other
 - Most learners are raised in antisocial behaviour
 - Poor parenting, adolescent stage, poverty and unemployed parents
 3. Effects of violence on educators and learners
 - The wellbeing of teachers and learners is affected because all of them want to be recognised and be proven right
 - High failure
 - Both teachers and learners lose focus on academic work
 - Unpleasant atmosphere in the school environment
 4. Measures in place to combat violence
 - Introducing code of conduct to learners
 - Various structures are put in place parents, pastors and the community at large
 - Measures help for a while

21TH EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent
 - Learners are bullied sometimes, you may find them teasing each other, fighting in groups and this is common on boys than girls.
2. Causes and triggers of violence
 - Learners don't respect each other and they don't respect educators as well, especially those who see themselves as bosses in their groups
 - Majority of learners are in substance abuse and so they become violent
 - Inappropriate implementation of school policies, school policies are just written but they are not properly implemented due to poor management

- Learners are raised from different family background, some learners were not raised with strictly rules, the lack respect when they are at school they behave the way they like

3. Effects of violence on educators and learners

- Other learners are no longer performing well at school, they turned to be slow learners
- Learners are aggressive and others just became quite and withdrawn themselves on school activities
- Educators and learners become injured e.ge. broken bone, black eyes , scares etc
- Learners start to isolate themselves from their friends and it becomes a problem because some of the school work should be done in groups
- Dropouts because learners are dealing with their challenges in different was and they cannot make friends anymore

4. Measures in place to combat violence

- School awareness campaign
- Safety and security
- Parents and teachers take care of the situation
- it is effective because the school is still functioning

22ND EDUCATOR

1. Forms of violence prevalent

- There are forms of violence those which are common are physical bullying and verbal bullying.
- The main cause can be home where violence is learnt, parents become role models of their children whatever they do their children apply it outside home
- Some do violence to relieve stress from home and frustrations

2. Causes and triggers of violence

- Violence from home which learners turn to apply on their peers
- Dysfunctional families where kids just do as they wish there's no parents guidance and rules
- Teachers insult and beat learners out of anger and they sometimes chase learners from class, other learners refuse to leave the class then chaos begins

3. Effects of violence on learners and educators

- Violence disturb educators when facilitating lessons because they have to attend to the violence instead of teaching
- Learners got disorganised in the class and the school at large
- Increases the numbers of absentees and results to school dropout

4. Measures in place to combat violence and its effectiveness

- School policy has stated clearly ways to deal with violence
- South African Police Services assist to address the matter of violence through face to face talk to learners
- The measures are not effective because violence never stopped and parents are not ready to assist

23RD EDUCATOR

1. Form of violence

- Bullying, physical violence, verbal abuse, teasing, gossips, corporal punishment jealous we spend most of our time solving violence issues rather than teaching learners and consumes our time for teaching

2. Nature causes and triggers of violence

- There are different factors such as poor parenting
- Adolescent stage and substance use

- Poverty and unemployment
- Learners from different ethnic groups always causes confrontation
- Most learners are grow being exposed to anti-social behaviour

3. Effects of violence learners and teachers

It affects the wellbeing of learners

- High failure rate
- Unpreparedness to attend classes
- Loss of concentration
- Absenteeism
- Ill discipline
- Unpleasant place to be

4. Measures to combat and its effectiveness

- Disciplinary committees
- School governing bodies, parents
- Parents
- Representatives from department of education
- Social workers