

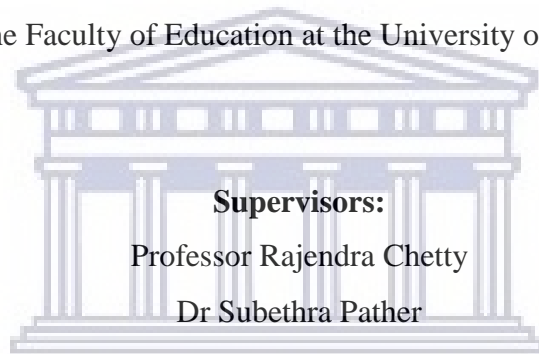
Teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school, Western Cape

by

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Master of Education

Presented to the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape



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WESTERN CAPE
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DECLARATION

I, Zandisile Mawethu Sitoyi, declare that contents of this thesis, ‘Teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school, Western Cape’, represents my own work and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the University of the Western Cape.

Signed

Date



ABSTRACT

This study aimed to ascertain in what ways violence and crime influence the teaching and learning programme in schools in a disadvantaged community. The context is a primary school in an informal settlement in Samora Machel, Philippi, in the Cape Flats, where violence is endemic. The study shows that violence does not occur in school playgrounds and areas around the school only; classrooms are becoming common sites for violence.

This study sought to establish teacher and learner experiences of violence at school, and the role of school management and parents in dealing with it, with a specific focus on school policies on discipline and how violence affects teaching and learning. The investigation also included learner behaviour during recess. An important aspect was teacher commitment to playground duty to help keep learners safe when not in class. Security around the school was included in the investigation as it impacts the safety of learners and teachers. Statistics reveal that most learners do not feel safe on their way to school. There is a fear of being robbed or raped by strangers in the street, especially in poor areas such as Samora Machel.

A qualitative approach was used and data was collected from four teachers and five Grade 7 learners with regard to their experiences of school violence and how it affects or compromises the teaching and learning programme. The criteria for the purposive sampling of the specific school are based on perceptions that the school is in a high-crime area with elevated levels of violence, germane to the research problem and purpose. Key factors for violence in schools include feeling unsafe, level of fear, economic conditions, school policy, functioning of the school, and security.

The findings from this study reveal that the lack of proper policies that deal with violence at schools is a challenge. Learners and teachers in this study feel unsafe at school as there is poor security and disruptive behaviour among learners. Parents do not cooperate with the school to make the environment safe for learners and teachers. Teachers find it difficult to work in a space where they have to deal with drugs, violence and a lack of support from school management. It is also noted that training from the Department of Education is imperative to assist teachers to handle unruly learner behaviour.

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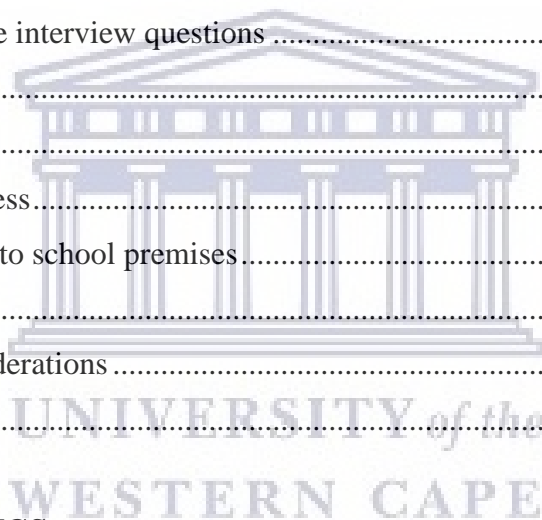
To Mama and Tata, thank you for taking care of me as your child.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	1
ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
LIST OF FIGURES	7
LIST OF TABLES	7
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	8
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Problem statement	1
1.3. Research question	2
1.4. Objectives of the research	2
1.5. Research context: violence in South African schools	2
1.6. Research design and methodology	6
1.6.1. Research design	6
1.7. Organisation of the thesis	6
1.8. Conclusion	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1. Introduction	9
2.2. Learners and violence	10
2.3. Role of community	11
2.4. Challenges in township schools	11
2.5. South African schools compared with other schools in developing countries	12
2.6. Life in gang areas	14
2.7. Dialogue and a safe space	15
2.8. Substance abuse in schools	16
2.9. Teacher–learner relationship	17
2.10. Culture of bullying	17
2.11. Disruptive behaviour	18
2.12. Peer violence in schools	19
2.13. Levels of crime against children	21
2.14. Theoretical framework used in this study	22

2.15.	Conclusion	24
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY		26
3.1.	Introduction.....	26
3.2.	Design	27
3.3.	Qualitative research approach.....	29
3.4.	Researcher's role.....	29
3.5.	Methodology	30
3.5.1.	Site	30
3.5.2.	Description of the school	31
3.6.	Sample	33
3.7.	Data-collection instruments	34
3.7.1.	Interviews.....	34
3.7.2.	Piloting of the interview questions	35
3.7.3.	Observation	36
3.8.	Data analysis	37
3.9.	Trustworthiness.....	38
3.10.	Accessibility to school premises.....	39
3.11.	Reliability.....	39
3.12.	Ethical considerations	40
3.13.	Conclusion	40
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....		41
4.1.	Introduction.....	41
4.2.	Teacher responses	41
4.2.1.	Zolisa's narrative (Teacher 1).....	41
4.2.2.	Lisa's narrative (Teacher 2)	44
4.2.3.	Mbuso's narrative (Teacher 3).....	46
4.2.4.	Sanda's narrative (Teacher 4)	48
4.3.	Learner narratives	50
4.3.1.	Mbasa (Learner 1).....	50
4.3.2.	Lizo's narrative (Learner 2)	52
4.3.3.	Thatho's narrative (Learner 3).....	54
4.3.4.	Bonolo's narrative (Learner 4).....	56
4.3.5.	Lebohang's narrative (Learner 5)	58
4.4.	Observations	59



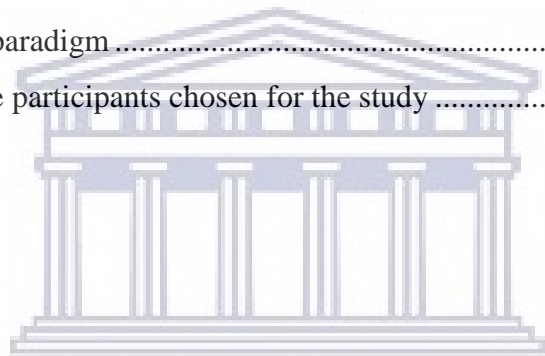
4.5.	Conclusion	61
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA.....		62
5.1.	Introduction.....	62
5.2.	The process of data analysis	62
5.3.	Themes identified in the narratives.....	62
5.3.1.	Teacher morale.....	63
5.3.2.	Lack of support from school management.....	64
5.3.3.	Implementation of school policy on code of conduct.....	65
5.3.4.	Violence outside the classroom	67
5.3.5.	Student behaviour:	68
5.3.6.	Parent involvement	72
5.3.7.	Peer violence.....	73
5.3.8.	Poor academic performance.....	75
5.3.9.	Fear of being raped	76
5.4.	Conclusion	78
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		79
6.1.	Introduction.....	79
6.2.	Recommendations.....	80
6.2.1.	Lack of support from school management.....	80
6.2.2.	Parental involvement	81
6.2.3.	Implementation of school policy on code of conduct.....	82
6.2.4.	Student behaviour and safety	82
6.3.	Conclusion	83
REFERENCES		85
APPENDICES		93
Appendix A: Interview Schedule (Learners).....		93
Appendix B: Interview Schedule (Teachers)		94
Appendix C: Observation schedule for safety in schools.....		96
Appendix D: Consent Letter.....		97
Appendix E: Educator Interview Consent Form		99
Appendix F: WCED Letter of consent		100

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.....	22
Figure 3.1: Senior management team.....	31
Figure 3.2: Photo of Samora Machel (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT)	31
Figure 3.3: Aerial view of Samora Machel (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT).....	32
Figure 3.4: An overview of the layout of informal settlements within Cape Town (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT).....	32

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Interpretive paradigm	28
Table 3.2: Details of the participants chosen for the study	34



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CJP:	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
DBE:	Department of Basic Education
EE :	Equal Education
GDP:	Gross domestic product
HoD:	Head of Department
NGO:	Non-governmental organisation
UCT:	University of Cape Town
WCED:	Western Cape Education Department
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



1.1. Introduction

The culture of violence in poor and informal townships in South Africa affects the way schools operate (Govender & Killian, 2001). Despite the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa still faces many challenges such as inequality, poverty, poor education in many public schools, and crime and violence. The majority of schools located in rural areas and townships are surrounded by poor communities that are not child friendly, with crime and violence prevalent, and learners at these schools experience many social problems.

Most schools in townships and rural communities lack sufficient resources for effective teaching and learning: there are neither enough qualified teachers nor sufficient textbooks to support the teaching programme. Academic performance is, as a direct result, low. Many of these schools are overcrowded (Tintswalo, 2015:53). According to Makota and Leoschut (2016), violence is uncommon in ex-model C schools, while in disadvantaged schools it is a daily occurrence. Burton and Leoschut (2013) indicate that violence does not occur only in school playgrounds and areas surrounding schools; classrooms have become common sites for violence.

The study aimed to examine the strained relationship between two opposing trajectories:

- (i) The negative forces of socio-economic deprivation and violence on schooling; and
- (ii) Teacher and learner experiences of violence in disadvantaged schools.

1.2. Problem statement

The very sections of society which most require and deserve educational and financial upliftment, that is, teachers and learners in lower-income South African schools, face instead a toxic nexus of neglect, indifference, violence, crime and drug-peddling. Teachers and learners face an increase in violent behaviour and incidents of violence in schools that serve poor communities (Chetty, 2015). Such conditions increase the difficulty of building healthy communities through schools which can act as beacons of social change and development. These challenges impact negatively on the learning programme and deepen the crisis of low academic achievement in poor schools.

This study explored the taxing relation between the desire to transform suffering segments of society and the reality of a social and educational fabric unravelling into yet greater violence, despair and crime. To examine this relationship between the hope of education and the crisis of daily life in neglected areas, this study was conducted at a carefully selected primary school in an informal settlement in the Cape Flats. The aim was to ascertain in what ways precisely such unrelenting violence and crime threatens and compromises the teaching and learning programme generally.

1.3. Research question

The main research question that underpinned this study is:

How do teachers and learners experience violence in a Cape Flats school?

The following sub-questions were identified:

1. What are teachers' experiences of violence in school?
2. What are learners' experiences of violence in school?
3. What factors influence school-based violence?

1.4. Objectives of the research

- The study intended to explore teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school in the Western Cape.
- The study aimed to investigate strategies used in schools to counter violence and to protect learners from violence.
- The voices of learners provided information on their feelings of safety or peril at school.
- The voices of teachers provided information on how violence affects the teaching programme, the achievement of learners, and the community in which they reside.

1.5. Research context: violence in South African schools

According to the social audit report on the safety and sanitation crisis in Western Cape schools by the non-governmental organisation (NGO), Equal Education (2015), one in six learners in the Western Cape feels unsafe at school. The level of fear and anxiety with regard to safety is higher among learners and teachers in urban schools compared with rural schools, according to the report. Learners in secondary schools feel more unsafe than learners in primary schools because of increased bullying and violence among youth. Poor urban schools have numerous learners and teachers that do not feel safe at school. Equal Education (2015)

notes that in many poor urban schools in the Western Cape, there is little access control, although the areas surrounding the schools are known to be unsafe. This lack of control enables gangsters and drug lords to enter such schools without being detected. Maseko (2013) contends that increasing learner violence is worldwide. Learner violence is high in First-World countries such as the USA, where about 23 000 homicides occur in schools every year. Perpetrators are usually under the age of 18 years, and approximately 57 out of 1000 learners are victims of violence in schools (Maseko, 2013).

Around the world, it is estimated that approximately 246 million girls are harassed and abused in school every year (Makota & Leoschut, 2016:19) and about a million girls in South African schools experience violence, robbery or rape while they are on school premises. High levels of violence, crime and gangsterism in the Western Cape, in particular, have been linked in several studies to the infamous apartheid Group Areas Act that dislocated and dispossessed citizens of land and homes. Female learners are more affected by violence; their classmates are frequently identified as the main perpetrators (Makota & Leoschut, 2016:20). Tintswalo (2014:55) points out that the majority of learners in so-called 'township' schools live within 'township' communities and informal settlements. The areas in which these learners reside experience high unemployment rates, high levels of crime, and poor service delivery from the government. Townships in South Africa lack recreation facilities such as parks and sports facilities for children to play in and be safe after school. Tintswalo (2014:55) notes that residents of townships are abused physically and/or sexually to a greater degree than those who live in suburbs and cities. Learners, who face the plight of poverty and violence, regularly turn to violence. Their lives are systematically governed by the environment in which they find themselves – overwhelmed by the hopelessness of their surroundings, the unemployment of parents, and the lack of decent schooling; they are lured by and intimidated to join gangs.

Responsible community schools are the best hope for such learners who are neglected by the government and society. Schools have a primary responsibility to protect the learners they teach. Schools can deploy their resources to stop violence within school premises and empower learners to deal with abuse in their communities (Kiprop, 2012). The majority of township schools lack all or any extramural facilities. This leads to learners being dismissed early to go home. Many of these learners go home to empty houses because unemployed parents have abandoned them, or one of the remaining parents is shouldering a menial, badly paid job with long hours (Kiprop, 2012). Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014) point out

that it is particularly dangerous to leave adolescents alone at home, given the high risk of exposure to abuse, crime and intimidation in communities with low employment. Schools need to create extramural activities and assist with after-school programmes which allow learners to finish their homework in safety and develop physically. According to Tintswalo (2014), this model can help learners to arrive home late and safely, in time for their parents' return after work.

Le Roux and Mokhele (2011) concur with Tintswalo that learners from so-called 'township' schools are facing increased challenges such as violence in and out of school. Le Roux and Mokhele (2011) claim that learners are bullied by their peers and that schools are not doing enough to stop such abuse. In many cases, teachers are stretched in their teaching and deal with large numbers in the classroom. Teachers find it difficult to eradicate bullying. Leroux and Makhele (2011) argue that some teachers in 'township' schools are part of the systemic violence in schools. Teachers still resort to corporal punishment as a primary form of discipline. The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (South Africa. Department of Education, 1996) prohibits corporal punishment. Many teachers, however, do not adhere to that stipulation, arguing that they use corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline. They feel overwhelmed by the unruly behaviour they face in the classroom. Teachers claim they deal with excessively large numbers in classrooms. In low socio-economic environments, there are cases where teachers physically and verbally abuse learners, and demand sexual favours from girls (Tintswalo, 2014).

Comparing South Africa with other developing countries, Salifu and Agbenyega (2012) found that in Ghana, learners who do not have parents or are raised by single parents in extreme poverty tend to become victims of abuse in their communities. Drug abuse and low literacy rates among parents trigger abuse of learners; parents are not there to protect their children, or they are not aware of what to do when a child is being abused at school or in the community. Salifu and Agbenyega (2012) assert that a nurturing environment is crucial in children's upbringing. Learners who suffer alienation from their families tend to submit themselves to sexual abuse as a way of gaining independence, money and a modicum of superficial affection, more than they receive at home. This leads learners to seek advice or help from 'sugar daddies or mummies' who in turn, can exploit them and expose them to prostitution (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2012).

Kiprop (2012) claims that in Kenya, schools have their ways of dealing with ill-discipline and abuse. Some schools use corporal punishment, especially in poor areas, to manage discipline, while other schools use a form of counselling to help learners who have discipline issues. Kiprop (2012) points out that Kenyan schools are encouraged to form partnerships with the communities they serve to help with challenges facing both the school and community.

According to Gutman and Midgley (2000:225), most schools do not gain support from parents to help improve their education. Teachers claim that parents do not guide and counsel their children about discipline; they leave everything to teachers. Kiprop (2012) argues that without a disciplined atmosphere, teachers find it challenging to teach, and learners struggle to learn effectively. Appropriate disciplinary practices should involve all stakeholders in the school and its community.

Mafora (2013) argues that violence in Lesotho schools is tricky because it occurs in multiple forms and affects learners in different ways. Gender inequalities frequently manifest in violence in society. Teachers use corporal punishment to maintain discipline and to punish learners for underperforming. Mafora (2013) states that some schools ban the use of Sesotho to communicate; those who are caught speaking it are punished by teachers. Teachers and schools do not see that using corporal punishment to discipline learners is a violation of learners' human rights. There is evidence of male teachers abusing female learners sexually; these teachers promise young learners good marks if they submit themselves to the abuse (Mafora, 2013).

Taole (2016) stresses that high levels of violence in schools are concerning. Every day the media report violence such as physical attacks, sexual abuse and gang-related crime in South African schools. Learners carry knives and other weapons to school; this is triggered by the level of crime these learners are exposed to in their communities. Taole (2016) states that many learners in Cape Flats schools are members of gangs from the community. These learners go to school not to learn, but to intimidate, bully and disrupt teaching and learning. In 2004 the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) established a safe schools programme. The programme aimed to support schools in dealing with safety and to ensure that teaching and learning take place without disruption. The safe schools programme includes installing security systems and mobilising communities to work with schools, police and various organisations for the safety of learners and teachers in the designated community.

Chetty (2015) contends that gangs have a unique way of recruiting young learners from poor backgrounds in areas such as the Cape Flats. Gangs create an image that gang life is a perfect way of life, affording glamour and money. This life attracts young people. For young males to prove their strength in gangs, they are required to kill or reduce females to sexual objects. Intervention strategies should include all relevant stakeholders to create a conducive learning environment for schools experiencing drug problems and not rely solely on police services. Chetty (2015) argues for partnerships between schools, community and police to fight drug problems in schools.

1.6. Research design and methodology

1.6.1. Research design

The study was conducted within an interpretive paradigm. Interpretive inquiry relies on naturalistic methods, with an emphasis on the self-understanding of the individual as a basis for social interpretation and transparent human consciousness. Nieuwenhuis (2015:418) argues that “interpretivism focuses on people’s subjective experiences of the social world by sharing meanings and how they interact with or relate to each other”. This paradigm supports the study because learners and teachers narrated their experiences concerning violence and disruptive behaviour, and how it affects them.

A qualitative approach was used, and data was collected from teachers and learners concerning their experiences of school violence and how it affects or compromises the way they teach and learn inside the school. The voices of teachers were solicited to explore examples of violent behaviour among learners and how they deal with it. Learners were able to narrate their individual experiences of violence and the effect it has on them and their school programme. It was envisaged that respondents would provide rich data about their experience of school violence.

1.7. Organisation of the thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters and includes images of the area where the school is situated and a map of the Cape Flats where the study was conducted.

Chapter 1 presented levels of violence in South African schools and internationally. This chapter provided the rationale for the study. The context of violence in schools and how it affects teaching and learning are discussed.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review that includes theories on violence and what influences a child's development in a community. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory is used to support the study and to describe the influences of child development. Solórzano & Yosso's (2002) concept of counter-storytelling theories also underpins the narrative perspective of this study. The use of Solórzano & Yosso's (2002) theory was to support the use of narratives as a way of giving learners and teachers an opportunity to voice their stories from a first-person perspective about their experiences of violence.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology used for this study. This chapter summarises pragmatism and provides the sample, data-collection methods (interviews and observations), followed by data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the results in the form of narratives from teachers and learners. The narratives were derived from the interviews conducted during the data-collection process. The narratives covered teachers' and learners' opinions about their safety at school, and they spoke about their experiences of violence.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the data and analysis. Themes that emerged during data analysis were extrapolated from the qualitative data. Findings consisted of the following themes:

- Lack of support from school management
- Implementation of school policy on code of conduct
- Student behaviour
- Low teacher morale
- Lack of parental involvement
- Poor academic performance
- Peer pressure
- Fear of being raped

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis with a summary of the study and its findings. Recommendations are provided with the support of the ecological theory, data collected, and theoretical framework.

It is essential to note that the research is limited in scale as it involved one school. The objective of the study was to explore teacher and learner experiences of violence through narratives in a single school and to investigate strategies used in schools to counter violence.

1.8. Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to provide a rationale for the study that explored teacher and learner experiences of violence in schools, and strategies that schools use to address violence.

Therefore, this study is informed by the following discussion points: learners and violence; the role of the community; challenges in township schools; South African schools compared with those in other developing countries; and dialogue and safe spaces. These discussions will form the basis of exploring teacher and learner experiences of violence in schools.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

A social audit report on the safety and sanitation crisis in Western Cape schools by the NGO, Equal Education (2015:14), shows that one in six learners in the Western Cape feels unsafe at school. According to the report, the level of fear and anxiety in respect of safety is higher among learners and teachers in urban schools compared with those in rural schools. Learners from secondary schools feel more unsafe than learners in primary schools because of increased bullying and violence among youth. Poor urban schools have the majority of learners and teachers that do not feel safe at school. Equal Education (2015:15) notes that in many poor urban schools in the Western Cape, there is little access control, although the areas surrounding the schools are known to be unsafe. This lack of control enables gangsters and drug lords to enter such schools without being detected. Maseko (2013:113) contends that increasing learner violence is noted internationally. Learner violence is high in First-World countries such as the USA, where about 23 000 homicides occur in schools every year. Perpetrators are usually under the age of 18 years, and approximately 57 out of 1000 learners are victims of violence in schools (Maseko, 2013:113).

Globally, it is estimated that some 246 million girls are harassed and abused in school every year (Makota & Leoschut, 2016:21) and about a million girls in South African schools experience violence, robbery or rape while they are on school premises. High levels of violence, crime and gangsterism in the Western Cape, in particular, have been directly linked in several studies to the apartheid Group Areas Act that dislocated and dispossessed citizens of land and homes. Female learners are more affected by violence; their classmates are frequently identified as the main perpetrators (Makota & Leoschut, 2016:22).

Solórzano & Yosso's (2002:36) concept of counter-storytelling theories underpins the narrative perspective of this study. Counter-narratives developed as both the method of telling the story of those experiences that have not been told and the stories of those deemed to be on the margins of society. They also serve as a tool for analysing and challenging the dominant versions and discourses around drug abuse and gangsterism, but not from the perspective of those that are in a position of power, such as the police, media, academics, and criminologists. Unlike fictional stories, counter-storytelling is not about creating unreal characters. Instead, the voices of the people at the coalface of drug abuse are grounded in real-life experiences.

Authentic data is contextualised in real social situations (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002:36). Counter-storytelling changes the form and content of research and conversations about events, problems and how society participates. It exposes, analyses and challenges phenomena such as violence, gangsterism or drugs. When people tell their own stories, it provides them (in this case teachers and learners) with an opportunity to give voice to those conditions where the prevailing conception of justice provides no language or means by which the marginalised person can express how he or she has been oppressed through injustice, inequality and poverty in terms that the system will understand (Chetty, 2017:83).

2.2. Learners and violence

Tintswalo (2014:53) points out that the majority of learners in so-called township schools live within township communities and informal settlements. Township schools are the schools that fall under Quintile 1 to 3. These lower quintile schools do not charge fees, and government subsidises them. Quintile 1 refers to the poorest schools, while Quintile 5 encompasses schools in affluent areas. The areas in which these learners reside experience high unemployment rates, high levels of crime, and poor government service delivery. Townships in South Africa lack recreation facilities such as parks and sports facilities for children to play in and be safe after school. Tintswalo (2014:53) notes that residents of townships are abused physically and/or sexually to a greater degree than those who live in suburbs and cities. Tintswalo (2014:53) claims that learners who face the plight of poverty and violence regularly turn to violence. Their lives are systematically governed by the environment in which they find themselves; overwhelmed by the hopelessness of their surroundings, the unemployment of parents and lack of decent schooling, they are lured by or intimidated to join gangs.

Poverty can cause learners to have low self-esteem, which can result in challenging behaviour in learners and 'acting out' to protect their inadequacies. Rubbi Nunan and Ntombela (2019:1130) contend that since the abolishing of corporal punishment in South African schools, there has been an increase in challenging behaviour among learners. Marais and Meier (2010:44) reveal that the abolition of the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (South Africa. Department of Education, 1996) did not provide teachers with alternative ways to deal with discipline at school. During apartheid or pre-1994, learners with behavioural challenges were generally well behaved because they were afraid of being punished. Currently, teachers feel hopeless and frustrated because of unruly learners. Some teachers resort to corporal punishment to try to gain control of learners, even though it is not allowed in South Africa (Tintswalo, 2014:54).

According to Lombard (2013:1138), one of the interventions to stop learner violence is to educate learners on the importance of their rights and responsibilities and how criminal justice works in the country. That might assist learners to become responsible citizens and reduce violence in communities. Learners should be made aware of what happens in prison. A former prisoner or parent can assist the school by doing workshops to help empower learners with knowledge of the prison world (Lombard, 2013:1138).

2.3. Role of community

Taole (2016:45) reveals that there are high levels of violence in South Africa communities and that violence finds its way into schools. Violence is a daily experience for learners around the world, with serious consequences for their education, health and well-being. Sinthumele (2017:170) argues that gender violence has profound implications; it deprives children from growing up in a child-friendly environment. It prevents schools from achieving their crucial objective, that is, to produce learners that are responsible citizens (Taole, 2016:44). According to Taole, gang violence is common in South Africa. It is estimated that only about 23% of South African learners feel safe at school.

Responsible community schools are the best hope for learners who are neglected by the government and society. Schools have a primary responsibility to protect the learners they teach. Schools can deploy their resources to stop violence within school premises and empower learners to deal with abuse in their communities (Kiprop, 2012:126). The majority of township schools lack extramural facilities. This leads to learners being dismissed early to go home. Many of these learners go home to empty houses because unemployed parents have abandoned them or one of the parents remaining is shouldering a menial, ill-paid job with long hours (Kiprop, 2012:126). Mncube and Madikizela-Madiya (2014:46) point out that it is particularly dangerous to leave adolescents alone at home, given the high risk of exposure to abuse, crime and intimidation in communities with low employment. Schools need to create extramural activities and assist with after-school programmes which allow learners to finish their homework in safety and develop physically. According to Tintswalo (2014:55), this model can help learners to arrive home later and safely, in time for their parents' return from work.

2.4. Challenges in township schools

Le Roux and Mokhele (2011) concur with Tintswalo (2014:55) that learners from so-called township schools are facing increased challenges such as violence in and out of school. Le

Roux and Mokhele (2011:325) claim that learners are bullied by their peers and that schools are not doing enough to stop such abuse. In many cases, teachers are overextended in their teaching. They deal with large numbers in the classroom. Teachers find it difficult to eradicate bullying. Leroux and Makhele (2011:325) argue that some teachers in township schools are part of the systemic violence in schools. Teachers still resort to corporal punishment as a main form of discipline. The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, prohibits corporal punishment. Many teachers, however, do not adhere to that stipulation, arguing that they use corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline (Leroux & Makhele, 2011:327). They feel overwhelmed by the unruly behaviour they face in the classroom. Teachers claim they deal with excessively large numbers in classrooms. In low socio-economic environments, there are cases where teachers physically and verbally abuse learners, and demand sexual favours from girls (Tintswalo, 2014:54). Mayeza and Bhana (2017:413) further state that another challenge in some schools is the lack of supervision of learners by teachers during recess. That contributes to the bullying of learners by peers, compared with when learners are in the classroom with the teacher present. It is presumed that teacher authority and surveillance stop learners from bullying each other. When violence occurs in the playground, some teachers tend to treat it as children's play, and it is normalised, whereas violence in the classroom attracts teachers' attention. Teachers pay attention to classroom violence as it affects teaching and learning and is immediately recognised (Mayeza & Bhana, 2017:413).

2.5. South African schools compared with other schools in developing countries

In comparing South African schools with those in other developing countries, Salifu and Agbenyega (2012:55) note that in Ghana, learners who do not have parents or are raised by single parents in extreme poverty, tend to become victims of abuse in their communities. Drug abuse and low literacy rates among parents trigger abuse of learners; parents are not there to protect their children, or they are not aware of what to do when a child is being abused at school or in the community. Salifu and Agbenyega (2012:55) argue that a nurturing environment is crucial to children's upbringing. Learners who suffer alienation from their families tend to submit themselves to sexual abuse as a way of gaining independence, money and a modicum of superficial affection – more than they receive at home. This leads learners to seek advice or help from 'sugar daddies or mummies' who in turn can exploit them and expose them to prostitution (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2012:56).

According to Kiprop (2012:128), Kenyan schools have ways of dealing with ill-discipline and abuse. Some schools in Kenya use corporal punishment, especially in poor areas, to manage discipline, while other schools use a form of counselling to help learners who have discipline

issues. Kiprop (2012:128) points out that Kenyan schools are encouraged to form partnerships with the communities they serve, to help with challenges facing both the school and community. Venner (2018:37) disagrees with Kiprop (2012:128), and argues that schools do not treat violence with the seriousness it deserves, and teachers do not know how to handle violent behaviour in schools. Venner (2018:38) postulates that teachers and learners in rural Kenyan schools are at risk of being victims of violence. Teachers and learners feel unsafe when they walk to school and are often harassed by men on the street, with no form of security to protect learners and teachers. In schools, female learners are harassed by boys sexually, with no consequences. There is also evidence that links school violence with learners' poor performance in primary and secondary schools in the country. School violence can lead to high levels of absenteeism in learners and the risk of dropout Venner (2018:38). Violence is problematic, not only because of its negative effects on learners; it hampers academic performance and the future of students and government is not doing much about it (Venner, 2018:39).

According to Gutman and Midgley (2012:229), most schools do not have the support of parents to help improve their children's education. Teachers claim that parents do not guide and counsel their children about discipline; they leave everything to teachers. Kiprop (2012:129) argues that without a disciplined atmosphere, teachers find it difficult to teach, and learners struggle to learn effectively. Appropriate disciplinary practices should involve all stakeholders in the school and its community.

Mafora (2013:39) claims that violence in Lesotho schools is complex because it occurs in multiple forms and affects learners in different ways. Gender inequalities frequently manifest in violence in society. Teachers use corporal punishment to maintain discipline and to punish learners for underperforming. Mafora (2013:39) states that some schools ban the use of Sesotho to communicate; those who are caught speaking it are punished by teachers. Teachers and schools do not see that using corporal punishment to discipline learners is a violation of learners' human rights. There is evidence of male teachers abusing female learners sexually; these teachers promise young learners good marks if they submit themselves to the abuse (Mafora, 2013:39).

In comparing developing country schools with developed countries, Russell and Kraus (2016:683) note that in the USA, school bullying has received attention in recent years. Education stakeholders are concerned about the effects of school bullying, which are linked to

emotional, behavioural and academic risks of learners. There is an interest in American schools to implement policies that deal with bullying. In the last decade, some schools created policies that specifically looked at sexual orientation and gender identity (Russell & Kraus, 2016:683). These schools were motivated to develop such policies as a result of the rise in bullying of lesbian, gay, transgender, and queer students. Russell and Kraus (2016:684) state that these policies include non-discrimination of learners by other learners and teachers. The policies include psychological help to address the unique needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students. Teachers are trained to provide a safe space for all learners. Taole (2016:46) stresses that high levels of violence in schools are concerning. Every day the media report violence such as physical attacks, sexual abuse, and gang-related crime in South African schools. Learners carry knives and other weapons to school; this is triggered by the level of crime these learners are exposed to in their communities. Taole (2016:46) notes further that many learners in Cape Flats schools are members of gangs from the community. These learners go to school, not to learn but to intimidate, bully and disrupt teaching and learning. In 2004, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) established a safe schools programme. The programme aimed to support schools in dealing with safety and ensure that teaching and learning take place without disruption. The safe schools programme includes installing security systems, and mobilising communities to work with schools, police and various organisations for the safety of learners and teachers in the designated community. Venter and Du Plessis (2012) indicate that bullying and violence are challenges faced by schools worldwide. Bullying is something that spirals to serious forms of antisocial behaviour if not addressed. Teachers who do not show concern for their learners and mistreat them, construct an environment where learners see bullying as a suitable way of life.

2.6. Life in gang areas

Chetty (2015:57) contends that gangs have a unique way of attracting young learners from poor backgrounds to join gangs in places such as the Cape Flats. Gangs create an image that gang life is a perfect way of living, affording glamour and money (Chetty, 2015:57). This life attracts young people. For young people to prove that they are strong in gangs, they are required to kill, and reduce females to sexual objects. Intervention strategies should include all relevant stakeholders to create a conducive learning environment for schools experiencing drug problems, and not rely solely on police services. Chetty (2015:57) argues for partnerships between schools, community and police to fight drug problems in schools. Grossi and Dos Santos (2012:124) studied the safety of learners in Brazil's public schools. They found that bullying is common in schools and learners feel unsafe. Learners who are bullied

suffer from depression and often drop out of school or skip classes because they think that there is no-one who listens to them. In some cases, young learners commit suicide or break the laws of the country to defend themselves from bullies (Grossi & Dos Santos, 2012:124). When there are no appropriate interventions in place to deal with bullying, the likelihood of violence among learners increases in schools. Teachers and other professionals have a responsibility to educate learners about values such as respect, gender difference, religion, and sexual orientation to promote a collective sense of belonging. Without the help of the government, it becomes difficult for teachers to deal with violence alone (Grossi & Dos Santos, 2012:126).

The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), in partnership with UNICEF South Africa, and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) developed a National Schools Safety Framework (NSSF) (DBE et al., 2015). The NSSF is guided by international, regional and national laws; it focuses on the safety of learners and teachers in schools. NSSF's mandate is to create a safe environment for teaching and learning. This framework assists school management in dealing with violence and focuses on prevention and intervention to help schools to respond to violence (DBE et al., 2015).

2.7. Dialogue and a safe space

A study by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007:1) noted that without teachers, there could be no education, and without education, sustained economic, political and social development is not possible. It is further argued that there are growing concerns that teachers are becoming increasingly demotivated, which contributes to deteriorating teacher performance and learning outcomes. Swanepoel (2009:464) suggests that a lack of job satisfaction results in frequent teacher absenteeism from school, aggressive behaviour towards colleagues and learners, and early exits from the teaching profession.

Freire (1970:211) stresses the importance of dialogue between teachers and school management to help deal with challenges facing the school and to learn about the spaces they operate in. According to Freire (1970:211), dialogue in education goes together with humility. In other words, dialogue cannot be used without humility. Therefore, dialogue is a component that directly influences the formation of a relationship between educator and learner, based on equal opportunity (Durakoglu, 2013). Identifying the world, through which people frequently reconstruct that world, cannot be an act of self-importance. Dialogue, as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of

them) lack humility. “How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?” (Freire, 1970:211).

It is evident that learners imitate what they see; they imitate violent behaviour that they are exposed to at home, at school or in the community. For a learner to cope with a stressful situation experienced at home or school, the learner might be aggressive to other learners or teachers at school (Thomson, 2005:14). Russell and Kraus (2016:685) consider the safety climate at schools to be an important factor related to bullying. There is less bullying at schools that create a safe space for learners, and at schools perceived to be in safe neighbourhoods. If a school has appropriate policies to deal with bullying, those schools tend to have fewer bullying incidences compared with those that do not have such policies (Russell & Kraus, 2016:685). Russell and Kraus (2016:687) found that there are still districts in America that have schools with no clear policies to deal with bullying, especially towards LGBTIQ students, nor promote safety for vulnerable students. The availability of safe spaces such as youth clubs is connected to school safety and lower levels of bullying, and also includes heterosexual students.

2.8. Substance abuse in schools

Walton et al. (2016:2) note that substance abuse in South Africa among youth is on the rise. In schools, the use of drugs is a challenge as it causes learners to misbehave. Schools are struggling to deal with the challenge of drug abuse according to Department of Social Development, 1999. The use of drugs causes tensions between teachers and learners; hence the South African government has changed school policies, thereby focusing on the well-being of the child.

Learners who abuse drugs create a challenge for teachers and other learners as they become violent when they are ‘high’ (McLaughlin & Clarke, 2010:92). According to Liberante (2012:5), educators dealing with learners that use drugs become demotivated to do their work. The teacher– learner relationship becomes strained, as learners on drugs tend to misbehave. In schools, the principle of *in loco parentis* is used; *in loco parentis* describes the educator– learner relationship as similar to that of a parent and child relationship. This means educators act as parents of the learners in schools without formally adopting the child (Liberante, 2012:2). With this principle, educators act as a parent within limits. Educators have a responsibility to guide and equip a learner for the future.

Mashau, Steyn,, Van der Walt, and Wolhuter, (2008:417) indicate that a competent educator can nurture a learner and is able to form a positive relationship with him/her. Liberante (2012:6) indicates that such a relationship can be a positive factor for a child facing numerous social problems.

2.9. Teacher–learner relationship

Bester and Du Plessis (2010:204) and Mashu et al. (2008:416) indicate that a child that uses drugs tends to have behavioural problems which can be challenging to educators. To some educators, such learners can be deemed to be attention seekers, disruptive, and potentially violent. Mashau et al. (2008:417) note that drug use has an impact on learner well-being; it affects learners' ability to perform well and has an impact on the learner-to-learner and teacher-to-learner relationship. Van Schalkwyk and Wissing (2010:55) concur that educators find it challenging to deal with learners facing socio-emotional problems compared with learners with academic problems. Educators are not trained to deal with learners with emotional and social problems. Garner et al. (2013:472) state that educators tend to be impatient with learners that disrupt classes. Drugs, poor performance and disruptive behaviour affect the relationship between educator and learner (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003:331).

Kitching et al. (2012:189) postulate that for educators to have a positive relationship with their learners, there should be active involvement, warmth and open communication in the classroom between teachers and learners. When educators have open communication, it is possible to promote academic and social competence in learners. Such educators can motivate learners to stop using drugs. Liberante (2012:6) concurs that a positive relationship between learners and teachers can assist with a sense of belonging in school and improve behaviour. Educators can act as a source of support to learners that experience difficulties in school (Keyes, 2017:97).

2.10. Culture of bullying

Being part of a bully group creates a culture of poor behaviour in schools. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017:19), poor behaviour in schools is likely when there is no teacher in sight or in places such as toilets or the playground where children are not supervised by teachers. Juvanen and Graham (2014:170) found that bullying involves intimidation or humiliation. In most cases, a physically stronger or socially more prominent person tends to abuse his or her power to bully others. Juvanen and Graham (2014:171) further state that bullying can be name-calling,

spreading rumours, physical bullying, or even cyberbullying by sharing embarrassing pictures online. Crick and Grotpeter (1995:716) note that direct forms of bullying involve intimidating or humiliating someone in front of others. Mayeza and Bhana (2017:413) argue that boys that are seen by other boys as different, or boys that enjoy games that are considered to be for girls, tend to be victims of bullying in the playground. The dominant boys think that the non-conforming boys are weak, girly and non-heterosexual. If the non-conforming boys act feminine, their behaviour is treated as outside the norm. Boys are supposed to be strong; if not, they are mistreated, teased and called names.

Grandinger, Strohmeier and Spiel (2017:77) postulate that bullying is intended to harm and gain power. Involvement in bullying is a health risk to both victim and perpetrator. Learners involved in bullying show signs of depression, and lower levels of well-being and health. Bullying has long-term effects which can affect the adulthood of a learner. Studies by Grandinger et al. (2017), and Vanner (2018) concur that bullying has a direct impact on learners' academic performance. The rise in access to technology by young people means that bullying does not occur physically only, but in cyberspace also. Cyberbullying has become a new form of bullying among learners with increased access to technology and the Internet. Although cyberbullying is not as common as physical bullying, the victims suffer the same emotional stress. Grandinger et al. (2017:77) maintain that bullying is a health problem, and a threat to the education system and economy. Therefore prevention and anti-bullying interventions at schools are important. Bullying incidences occur in a social context and are not caused by one person. Bullying occurs during the interaction of peers, so for anti-bullying interventions to be effective, they should focus on the entire systems, not individuals (Grandinger et al., 2017:77).

2.11. Disruptive behaviour

A study done by Çalışkan et al. (2019:169) indicates that bullying at schools is disruptive behaviour that affects learners and teachers. The well-being of teachers and learners is affected by disruptive behaviour. The effects of disruptive behaviour can affect learners up to adulthood. Victims of disruptive behaviour are traumatised, and often suffer from depression. Disruptive behaviour in schools should be addressed by all school stakeholders. Jaskulska and Poleszak's (2015:131) study reveals that learner-on-learner violence is global, and requires an effective solution. Peer violence is dangerous and can lead to suicide. Jaskulska and Poleszak (2015:131) believe that to eliminate learner-on-learner violence, teachers need support from other stakeholders such as psychologists and school social workers. In cases of active

violence at school, a thorough diagnosis of the cause should be done so that it can be prevented from continuing. Teachers and parents need to work together to stop school violence.

Boulton et al. (2017:41) argue that teachers do not show support to learners in their teenage years; they expect them to be independent and solve their own problems. It is believed that learners become unsympathetic towards their peers when they face bullying. Some learners believe that teachers are unwilling to assist them; that is a further reason for learners not reporting incidences of disruptive behaviour which lead to bullying (Boulton et al., 2017:42). In comparing boys with girls, girls are more open to reporting disruptive behaviour and working with teachers to solve incidences of bullying. Cunningham et al. (2016:6) disagree with Boulton et al. (2017), and argue that teachers struggle to control disruptive behaviour and support learners because of lack of time, curriculum demands and lack of training to deal with bullying. Principals, in some cases, do not support teachers, and parents are uncooperative. Lack of teacher support is frustrating, and teachers become discouraged about addressing the seriousness of bullying in schools. Schools have a responsibility to support teachers and treat all forms of disruptive behaviour to prevent violence from spreading. Educators that experienced violence and bad behaviour from their peers when they were learners tend to be able to deal with bullying incidences better than those that did not experience bullying (Grandinger et al., 2017:79).

Jaskulska and Poleszak (2015:133) add that teachers are regarded as the leading providers of solutions in schools, including violence between learners. For teachers to be able to find a solution to violent behaviour among learners, they need to be well prepared to deal with such action. Without proper preparation by teachers, even the best school policies will not work to solve violence. Teachers need to understand their role and know what needs to be done when there is a case of violence at school. Anti-bullying strategies should create a supportive and respectful school climate for learners to feel safe and protected by teachers and parents. Schools should be encouraged to create environments that are free of violence and disruptive behaviour (Gandinger et al., 2017:79).

2.12. Peer violence in schools

Pyżalski and Poleszak, (2019:19) mentions that one effective way to deal with peer violence in schools is for teachers to develop class rules with learners regarding learner behaviour. These rules need to include how to treat peers with dignity. The class rules must emanate

from learners, not from teachers. Learners need to be taught responsibility and accountability for their actions. Teachers need to be able to interpret violent signs among learners and devise ways of prevention and intervention, such as conversations with perpetrators of violence. Teachers need thorough training on how to deal with learner behaviour in the classroom. Teachers need to have discussions about behaviour at school so that learners are aware of their activities and how those activities affect other people around them Pyżalski and Poleszak, (2019:19) Rew (1989:233) contends that poor treatment of learners is responsible for poor academic performance. Alokani and Olutunji (2014) and Rew (1989) agree that abuse and poor academic performance are interrelated. Learners fail to contribute positively in a classroom setting if there is abuse.

Reyome (1993:23) found that abused children are a danger to themselves; such children have emotional challenges such as anger and are at risk of abusing drugs. Abused children have difficulties in connecting with their peers and teachers at school. Azi and Saluhu (2016:25) infer that learners' poor academic performance is likely to be caused by the school climate: underachieving in class, always fighting with peers, not taking schoolwork seriously, and disrespecting teachers.

Burton and Leoschut (2013:4) postulate that learner-on-learner violence in South African schools has increased and is a challenge faced by teachers and school districts in the country. The mass media report incidents of violence in schools that are often horrific; they include fights between learners; sexual violence between learners and teachers; and psychological and physical abuse. Burton and Leoschut (2013:4) note that schools should be seen as spaces where children receive knowledge and grow, not as places of violence. Currently, in some South African schools, the violent behaviour of learners is endemic and challenging. Greene et al. (2013:281) note that no school is exempt from the attitudes and beliefs of the society it serves, and schools should foster gender-based norms and condemn acts of gender-based violence. Mayeza and Bhana (2017:419) state that schools are places to nurture children and should help close the gap of inequality between genders.

Dauids (2013:538) agrees with Green et al. (2013), that schools are spaces where social problems are visible without serious consequences. David (2013:539) notes further that if fighting is a norm in the community where children live, violence becomes a norm at the school also. Schools are spaces where children learn about gender and power structures, and where gender-based violence tends to be normalised. The gender roles children learn at school

create gender hierarchies, where males tend to learn to dominate (Dunne et al., 2013:287). Schools are often seen as important spaces to learn socialisation, as they reinforce gender socialisation that occurs at home.

Nhlapo (2014:70) states that schools are regarded as vibrant social spaces where children and adolescents interact with one another. School is a space of deep influence on the identity, health and development of learners. For many children, the violence they experience in school adds to the violent behaviour they encounter in their societies. The violence they encounter at school encourages violent behaviour. School violence is the root of low academic performance at school, high dropout rate, and substance abuse (Mothibi et al., 2017:73).

2.13. Levels of crime against children

Chetty (2019:3) reveals that children's rights organisations are concerned by the level of crimes against children. Chetty writes that violence of different forms against children is a public issue. The recent killings of children have led the public to put pressure on the government to protect children. Mathews and Gould's (2017:61) school-based 2019 Optimus study on child abuse, violence and neglect, estimates that 35.4% of South African children experience some form of sexual abuse, 34% of South African children experience physical abuse, and 15% experience neglect. Chetty (2019:3) notes further that the abuse of children in South Africa is an economic burden to the country. It is important for the state to prioritise the fight against child abuse. The study by Fang, Zheng, Fry, Ganz, Casey, Hsiao and Ward (2017) investigating the social and economic costs of high levels of violence, estimate that violence against children alone cost South African tax payers R103.8 billion in 2015 or about 2.6 of the gross domestic product (GDP). Currently, the fight against child abuse costs less than 1% of the national and provincial Department of Social Development combined. The budget figures show that South Africa needs to take the fight against child abuse seriously (Fang et al., 2017).

2.14. Theoretical framework used in this study

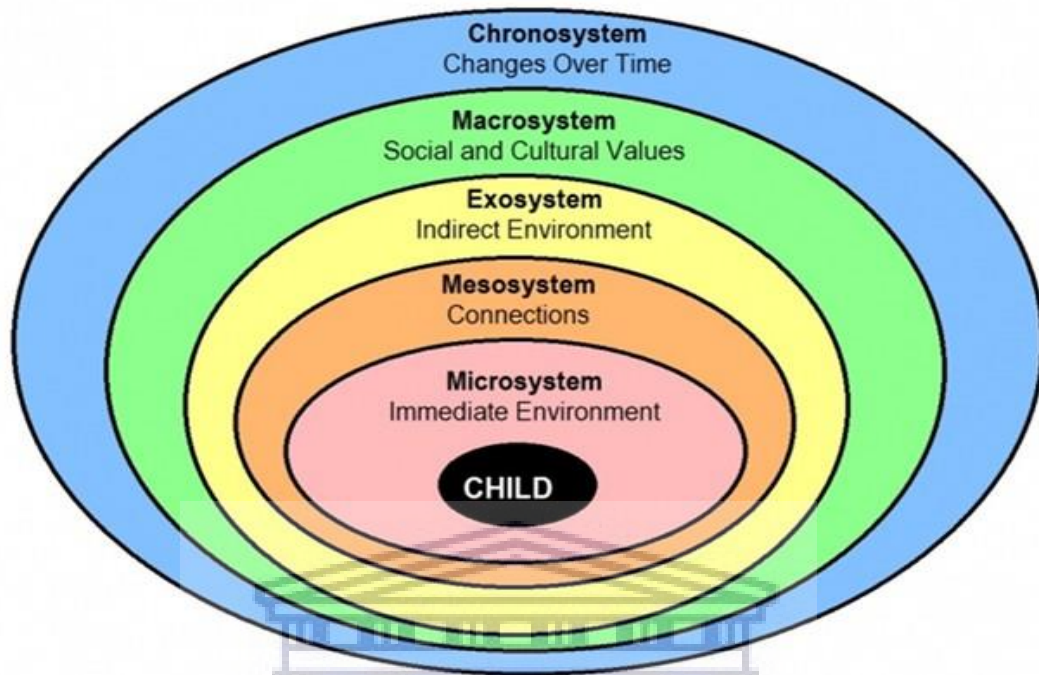
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory has been used to guide the study. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979:13), the Ecological Systems Theory indicates that all individuals are part of related systems, with the individual in the middle, and moving out from the middle to integrate with other systems. In the Ecological Systems Theory, Bronfenbrenner states that individuals co-operate with each other in various settings known as microsystems, exosystems and macro systems. Paquette and Ryan (2001:2) describe a microsystem as a system closest to the child; this system involves those that are close to the child such as parents, peers, teachers and other primary caregivers. Therefore this system affects the child's relationship with close contacts, which will result in the influence of the mesosystem. Paquette and Ryan (2001:2) note that at this level, the relationship between people happens in two ways; for example, parents influence a child's beliefs and behaviour. The child also influences the parents' beliefs and behaviour. Bronfenbrenner (1979:13) states that such relationships exist in all environments. The influence between a child and parents is strong and powerful. In the case of the learners at the school where I did this study, the microsystem may apply where a learner is from a violent home. Exposure to violence from parents, for example, may affect how a learner behaves at school. The learner might be violent to other learners or teachers

because of the influence from home. Berk (2000:27) states that in the exosystem, certain layers do not work directly together; however, there is some impact on a child's development from parents' workplace, family, and government policies. Even though children do not deal directly with these layers, they are affected by them and they influence their development. At school, if there are no policies in place to deal with violence, it will affect learners. The school will lack discipline, and there will be lawlessness that may affect teaching and learning. A macrosystem can be described as a societal guide for a particular culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:14).

This system includes values, customs, laws, and resources, and influences how the child develops. If we take the isiXhosa culture, for example, boys at a certain age go for the initiation ceremony to become adults. If a boy does not believe in this custom and is not initiated, that boy will be rejected by his peers and be called names. In this regard, schools need to be aware of the culture of the community they serve to have a better working relationship between parents and school. Therefore, this theory is appropriate to the study as it investigates the interrelated systems of the school, teachers, parents, community and peers on how they influence learner behaviour. Bronfenbrenner (1979:14) notes that the microsystem is a system that constitutes a pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations experienced between individuals and the system which they actively participate in, such as the family, school or peer group. Disruptive behaviour and violence are phenomena that do not occur in isolation; they are encouraged as a consequence of the relationship between people, families, peer groups, schools and culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:15).

Based on the interrelated systems, such as peer pressure and lack of extra-mural activities, I feel that the theoretical framework developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979:15) is suitable for the study. This is supported by the exosystem and macrosystem in theory. Bronfenbrenner (1979:15), with regard to the exosystem, states that one or more environments in which a developing learner is not directly as an active participant but which may influence or be influenced by what happens in settings and relationship that directly influence the learners (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:16). James et al. (1998:139) have called for the revision of the Ecological Systems Theory, even though they note that they are not the first to request such a revision.

A second aspect of the theoretical framework is narrative research. A narrative inquiry is a type of qualitative research in which the story becomes the raw data (Bleakley, 2005:534). In

science, the focus of a scientist is more about establishing the truth, whereas in a story, the focus is more about according meaning to the experiences of people. Narrative (from Latin *narrare*) means to tell, and storytelling entails knowledge creation and sharing of experiences (Bleakley, 2005:534). The use of stories in the study is to find the raw experiences of all the participants and how violence at school affects their daily functioning. Chetty (2017:83) writes that in narrative inquiry, soft data is collected, which can show hard realities. In the case of this study, narrative inquiry shows the hard realities of school violence and the community that surrounds the school. While the narrator of the story is allowed to tell his/her story through research, the aim is to engage all the participants and not only personalise a single story. Chetty (2017:83) contends that when working with young people's narratives, it is important to understand that they are not a homogenous group. Issues of class, race, sexual orientation and gender remain important, especially in a country such as South Africa where the racial divisions in society are still visible (Bleakly, 2005:534).

Solórzano & Yosso's (2002:36) concept of counter-storytelling is relevant to this study. Counter-narratives developed as a method of telling the story of those experiences that have not been told, the stories of those deemed to be in the margins of society. They are instruments for analysing and challenging discourses around drug abuse and gangsterism from the viewpoint of those that are in a position of power, such as the police, media, academics and criminologists. Unlike fictional stories, counter-storytelling is not about creating imaginary characters (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002:36). Instead, the voices of people at the coalface of drug abuse are situated in real-life experiences and authentic data, and contextualised in real social situations (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002:36). Counter-storytelling changes the form and content of research and conversations about events, situations and how society participates. It exposes, analyses and challenges a phenomenon such as violence, gangsterism or drugs (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002:38). When people tell their own stories, it provides them (in this case teachers and learners) with an opportunity to voice those conditions where the usual concept of justice offers no language or means by which the excluded person can express how he or she has been victimised through injustice, inequality and poverty in terms that the system will understand (Chetty, 2017:87).

2.15. Conclusion

Violence is a complex challenge faced by schools all over the world. Violence is a greater challenge in schools situated in underprivileged communities. In this literature review, I depicted what schools are faced with in respect of violence. It revealed how learners feel

about their safety in school and the role of the community in the vicinity of the school. The review noted how drug abuse contributes to school violence. The social audit report on safety and security in Western Cape schools by Equal Education (2015) provides current and concrete data on the situation of school violence and safety in the Western Cape. First-World countries like the USA also face challenges of violence in their schools. Tintswalo (2014:57) study reveals that in the South African context, learners are faced with poverty in most township schools and exposed to violence in their communities. It is likely such learners will turn to violence if there is no proper guidance at home or adequate school policies to deal with violence at schools.



CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate teacher and learner experiences of violence in a disadvantaged school. The voices of learners and teachers provided information on their feelings towards safety at school and its effect on learning and teaching. According to Blanche, Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) any research can be situated in a particular worldview. The researcher's view is also known as a paradigm, which expands philosophical assumptions that give guidance to the research as to what already exists, how to comprehend what already exists, and note how it can be studied.

This study was done within an interpretive paradigm. Interpretive inquiry relies on naturalistic methods, with an emphasis on the self-understanding of the individual as a basis for social interpretation and transparent human consciousness. Nieuwenhuis (2015:419) argues that "interpretivism focuses on people's subjective experiences of the social world by sharing meanings and how they interact with or relate to each other". This paradigm supports the study because learners and teachers narrated their experiences of violence and disruptive behaviour and how these affect them.

The following research questions guided this study's methodology and investigation:

Main Research Question: To what extent do teachers and learners experience violence at school?

The following sub-questions were identified:

1. What are teachers' experiences of violence in school?
2. What are learners' experiences of violence in school?
3. What factors influence school-based violence?

The next section of the study describes the methodology followed to explore the research phenomenon. Kothari (2006) notes that the scope of a study's research methodology is much wider than that of the research methods. The research methodology should also include the methodological underpinnings of the study. It considers the general logic behind the specific techniques, collection and analysis of data used in the context of the study (Bogdan & Biklen,

2007). Thus the alignment of the research methodology with the aims, objectives and research questions was a fundamental consideration when the study was designed. Before making methodological decisions, I reflected carefully on the purpose of the study, which was to examine the strained relation between two opposing trajectories:

- (i) The negative forces of socio-economic deprivation and violence on schooling; and
- (ii) Teacher and learner experiences of violence in disadvantaged schools.

3.2. Design

The study was done within an interpretive paradigm. Interpretive inquiry relies on naturalistic methods, with an emphasis on the self-understanding of the individual as a basis for social interpretation and transparent human consciousness (Cresswell and Poth, 2016:8). Nieuwenhuis (2015:420) argues that “interpretivism focuses on people’s subjective experiences of the social world by sharing meanings and how they interact with or relate to each other”. Cohen et al. (2007:327) concur with Nieuwenhuis that in the interpretive paradigm, concerns of individuals are epitomised. The core aim in the context of an interpretive paradigm is to understand the experiences of people. Toma (1996) further states that the interpretive paradigm also focuses on actions that are meaningful to understand the aim of the actors in sharing their experiences. Much of our everyday interaction with one another depends on such experiences. Cresswell and Poth (2016:8) notes that experiences shared by the participants and researcher can draw meaning from the findings of the data analysis which may lead to data that can be compared with literature or people’s experiences. In the case of this study, the participants are teachers and learners who shared their experiences of violence at school. I, as the researcher, also reflected on my experiences of the phenomenon of violence in schools during my teaching career.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1994:108), the interpretive paradigm has three beliefs: the first belief is that the purpose of educational research is to comprehend meanings which form behaviour. The second belief is that there is no one reality but many realities, which can be local, specific, non-generable and historic. The third belief is that findings in research do not come from a researcher, but through interpreting collected data (Lincoln & Guba, 1994: 108). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:327) indicate that the interpretive paradigm has challenges and tends to focus on understanding the actions of people to get to know people’s intentions better. Incomplete accounts of social behaviour are represented, and interpretivism does not pay attention to the political and ideological context of educational research. To retain the integrity of the phenomenon investigated, efforts should be made to understand

what participants are saying. There are different ways to understand the world we live in. In this study, the focus is on understanding the different views and experiences of the participants, not my views as the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1994:108). The interpretive paradigm involves assumptions on finding meaning and understanding the viewpoints of teachers and learners as participants. These viewpoints can be described as one's ontological and epistemological assumptions, as shown in Table 3.1 below. This paradigm supports the study because learners and teachers narrated their experiences of violence and disruptive behaviour and how these affect them.

Table 3.1: Interpretive paradigm

Paradigm	Ontology	Epistemology	Data collection
Finding meaning and understanding through the views of participants.	Reality can be understood and interpreted but not controlled. Participants' internal and subjective experiences are important, as many realities exist.	Through observations and interpretation knowledge can be gained. The researcher is empathetic and is fully involved as knowledge is personal and unique.	Interviews, observations and narratives.

Linchtman (2013:16) describes ontological assumptions as concerned with what is real regarding the nature of the social phenomenon being investigated or studied. There is no one reality but many realities that exist in the world. It is the researcher's responsibility to understand the phenomenon and question it – in this study, teachers' and learners' experiences of violence were examined and questioned. The role of the community and its influence on learner behaviour were also examined.

The epistemological assumption focuses on how individuals acquire knowledge. It then results in informing methodologies about the nature of the knowledge that is acquired in a study. For this study, participants were interviewed to narrate their own stories and share their experiences with the researcher. This assumption then further influenced the methodological choices of the study (Whitehead, 2008:108).

3.3. Qualitative research approach

A qualitative approach was used and data was collected from teachers and learners through interviews. The voices of teachers were solicited to explore their personal experience with violent behaviour among learners and how they addressed such issues. Learners' voices were also heard as they narrated their individual experiences with violence and the effect violence has on their learning at school. Respondents provided rich data on their experience of school violence.

Creswell and Poth (2016:10) notes that qualitative research means exploring and understanding the meanings of individuals or groups that face a certain social or human challenge. Qualitative research involves emerging questions and procedures, the collection of data in the participants' setting, and analysing data inductively. It relies on the data from participants to generate themes and make interpretations of the meaning of the data. Cohen et al. (2007:328) contend that the notion of qualitative research as an approach is concerned with an in-depth, complex and detailed understanding of behaviour, meanings, phenomena and attitudes. The use of a qualitative research approach for this study assisted me to explore and address the research questions appropriately.

Conducting qualitative research has its advantages and disadvantages. An advantage of qualitative research is the emphasis placed on the importance of a participant's views on education and social issues. Puchta and Potter (2002:355) highlight that an additional advantage of qualitative research is that it cannot be done objectively and neutrally if it is to produce results that show the participants' worldviews. If the researcher is narrow-minded, qualitative research can become one-sided. To avoid a one-sided research approach, I tried to be as authentic as possible during data collection and declared my subjectivity to the participants. I was also aware that different realities do exist and was acutely aware of my own bias towards school violence.

3.4. Researcher's role

The researcher is a crucial instrument in qualitative research. Merriam (2002:14) notes that a researcher can influence the data-collection process. When collecting data, I explained to all participants that I was not participating in the study, I was only conducting interviews. Participants were encouraged to be relaxed and open about their responses as much as possible. The reason for explaining my position to the participants was to avoid any bias in my interpretation of their experiences of violence at the school, and I although I empathised

with their experiences, I was not judgemental. As a researcher, even though I tried to remove myself from the study, having a close interaction with the participants was important (Cresswell, 2009:21). Each participant was given space to narrate his or her story, and I respected and focused on each participant's perspective and subjective meanings. I conducted interviews after school with participants on different days to avoid interfering with school contact time. I was an educator at the same school and had classes to teach during the school contact time. The study includes observation as one of the methods of data collection.

3.5. Methodology

3.5.1. Site

This section describes the context where the study was conducted. The researcher was a teacher at the school. According to Le Roux and Mokhele (2011), it is important to define the criteria for selecting the site. They point out that the criteria to select the site must be connected and appropriate to the research problem. The researcher identified a primary school as sample site in the township of Samora Machel in Philippi (an informal settlement on the Cape Flats). The reason for selecting the school was based on perceptions that the school is in a high crime area with elevated levels of violence. Mavengere (2011:66) reported that in Samora Machel, housebreakings, muggings, and domestic violence, particularly against women and children, are reported. Alcohol abuse and many cases of missing children are a concern, something which is germane to the research problem and purpose.

The school is a public school and a non-fee-paying school. To protect the school I shall call it Nkandla Primary School for ethical reasons of confidentiality and anonymity. Samora Machel is about 28 km from the Cape Town city centre. It is located between Jakes Gerwel Drive and the R300 highway. The community of Samora Machel has four primary schools and two high schools. There is a library less than 200 metres from Nkandla Primary School, a community centre, a clinic, and a mobile police station. Most of the learners at Nkandla Primary School come from Samora Machel, and a few from the Siqalo informal settlement in Mitchells Plain, while other learners come from Philippi. Samora Machel is one of the highest crime zones on the Cape Flats and is close to Nyanga, which has the highest crime rate in South Africa. Drug and alcohol use is high in Samora Machel. There are about three taverns in the vicinity of the school.

3.5.2. Description of the school

Flores (2004) describes a school as a place where teachers teach and learning occurs, also a place where teachers learn and develop to become better teachers. Schools should be places where quality education is offered to learners.

The school is a large one, with more than 1000 learners. There is a principal and two deputy principals. Each grade in the foundation phase has its head of department (HoD). There is one HoD for the intermediate phase (Grade 4 to 6) and one HoD for the senior phase (Grade 7). There are 25 teachers at the school, two administrative staff, one cleaning assistant, and two caretakers. Some of the grades have four classes, others five classes. In terms of gender, there are more women than men at the school. The school management team comprises one man, the principal; the rest of the team are women. The figure 3.1 below shows the structure of the SMT.

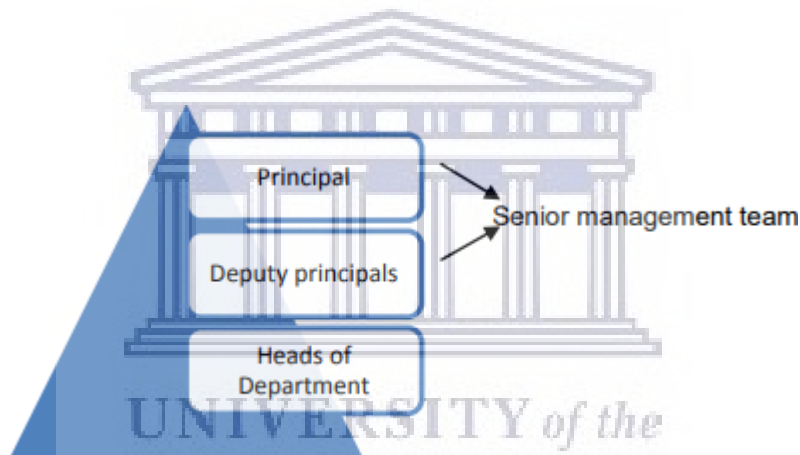


Figure 3.1: Senior management team



Figure 3.2: Photo of Samora Machel (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT)



Figure 3.3: Aerial view of Samora Machel (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT)

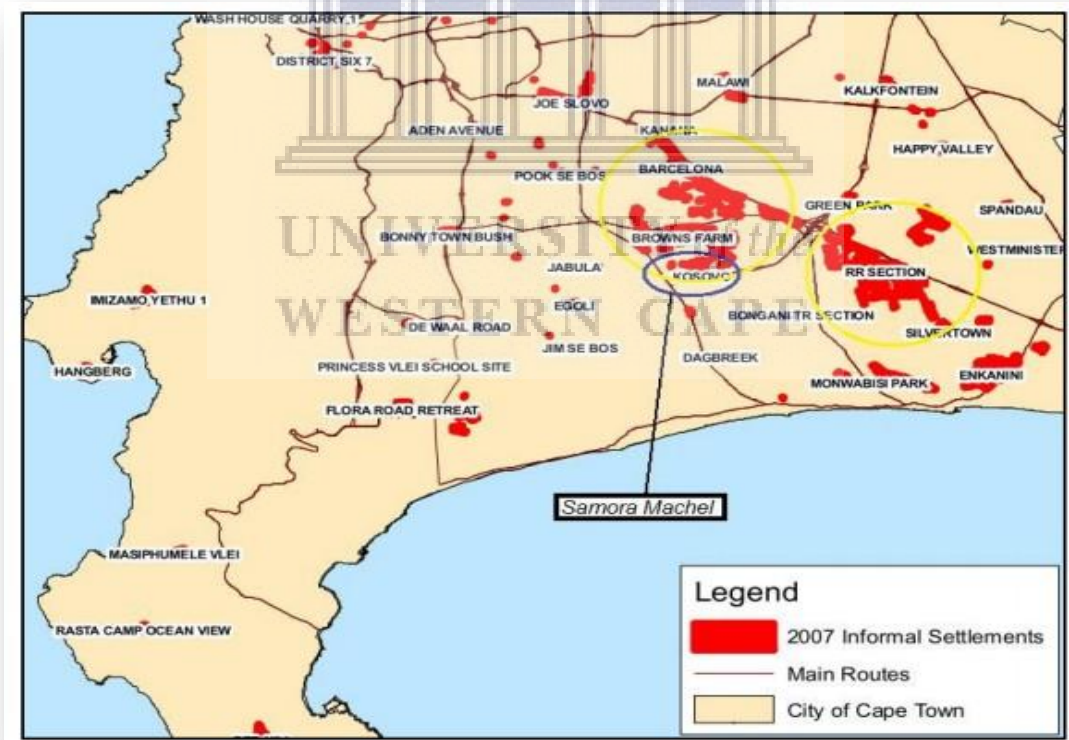


Figure 3.4: An overview of the layout of informal settlements within Cape Town (Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, UCT)

As a non-fee-paying school and Quintile 1 school, learners are provided with meals every day. Schools in South Africa are classified according to the level of poverty in the surrounding communities. The Minister of Education views infrastructure, types of dwellings in the community, and industry and commerce in the vicinity of the school when determining the quintile of a school. Quintile 1 designates the poorest school, while Quintile 5 refers to a school in a wealthy area. Schools in Quintiles 1 to 3 do not charge fees as the government subsidises them. In the morning, when learners arrive at Kandla Primary School, they receive porridge and at 11:00 they are provided with lunch. Sometimes it is rice, fish, vegetables and soup, or samp and beans. The school enrolls learners from Grade R to Grade 7. There are three Grade R classes, four Grades 1 to 3, and the rest of the grades have five classes each. The language of teaching and learning is isiXhosa in Grade 1 to 3 and English from Grades 4 to 7. The school has a computer laboratory with 40 computers. Learners use computers for mathematics programs such as Green Shoots. The teacher–learner ratio is 1:40.

3.6. Sample

One school was chosen as a sample for this study and the reason for this specific choice is that it is a qualitatively rich case study given its location within a high crime area. I used purposive sampling to select four suitable teachers for the case study. Richards and Morse (2007:195) indicate that purposive sampling happens when a researcher selects a sample for its particular characteristics. The criteria for selection of teachers were that they were qualified teachers with at least four years' teaching experience, residing in the townships, but not necessarily in Philippi. Purposive sampling was also used to select learners. I selected five learners for the study. The criteria to choose the learners were as follows:

- Grade 7 learners between 13 and 14 years (this is the last year in primary school and these learners have adequate language skills to articulate their feelings and opinions).
 - They must reside in the township of Samora Machel, Philippi.
 - They should volunteer to participate in the project.
 - The sample should include both male and female learners.

Table 3.2: Details of the participants chosen for the study

Names	Race	Gender	Age group	Years of experience
Teacher 1	Black	Female	50–59	+– 20 years
Teacher 2	Black	Female	20–29	5 years
Teacher 3	Black	Male	50–59	+–20 years
Teacher 4	Black	Female	30–39	5 years
Learner 1	Black	Female	10–15	
Learner 2	Black	Female	10–15	
Learner 3	Black	Male	10–15	
Learner 4	Black	Male	10–15	
Learner 5	Black	Female	10–15	

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) postulate that the rationale for the sample size is related to the purpose of the research, the research problem, the major data-collection technique, and the availability of information-rich cases. In this study, the sample size was suitable for data-collection methods. The four teachers selected for the sample were representative of the staff at the school. Two senior teachers have had over 20 years of experience at the chosen research site, while two newly appointed teachers were chosen as well. The five learner participants were all from Grade 7. All participants are from the surrounding communities of the school and are therefore familiar with the context.

3.7. Data-collection instruments

3.7.1. Interviews

The primary data-collection method for this study was semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Collis and Hussey (1997:167) contend that a semi-structured interview is a formal engagement between a researcher and a respondent. The respondent is asked a question by the researcher's using an interview schedule or a guide that the researcher would have prepared. When a researcher has a clear focus on the research aims, semi-structured interviews are often used (Heath et al., 2009:349). I chose semi-structured interviews as they have sufficient flexibility when collecting data. Semi-structured interviews allow many sensory channels to be used, such as non-verbal, heard, and spoken. An interview schedule was used for each participant to allow the participants to narrate their experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:76). Cohen et al. (2007:352) add that semi-structured interviews offer respondents an

opportunity to narrate their stories without restrictions. According to Greeff (2011:352), the flexibility of semi-structured interviews is that the conversation can move from one interview to the next, owing to the process of discovery in response to different aspects of the topic being voiced by the respondent (Collis & Hussey, 1997:168).

The main function of interviews is to provide a framework in which respondents can state their views in their own words. The main advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that it allows for probing, and this result in richer data. The disadvantage of this type of interview is that it can be time-consuming (Miller & Brewer, 2003).

The interviews were conducted during the week, after school hours and inside the school premises, for a maximum of 30 minutes per interview. These interviews were conducted to gain better insight into violence that respondents have experienced first-hand. Interviews were conducted in the language with which participants were comfortable: either isiXhosa or English. I conducted two interviews with each learner and teacher. The interview schedule for teachers and learners is attached (Appendix A and B).

3.7.2. Piloting of the interview questions

A pilot study was done with one Grade 7 learner who was not in the sample and one teacher from a neighbouring school to test if the interview questions were a suitable tool for data collection in this study. Thabane et al. (2010) note that the purpose of a pilot study is to assess the feasibility of the proposed study. A pilot study is done to avoid disastrous results in the larger study which could have a negative effect on the research. The pilot study has a smaller sample size which can be determined based on pilot data. From the data collected in the pilot study, and considering the challenges faced during the pilot study exercise, such as the willingness of participants and the structure of the questions, the researcher gains an opportunity to review methodologies and restructure data collection tools, as necessary. The main study can then commence with changes if the need arises (Arain et al., 2010). I chose the learner and teacher out of convenience, and because the learner was a Grade 7 learner and was articulate. The learner was 13 years old and the teacher had more than five years' experience in teaching. Each participant was asked five questions with follow-up questions as the conversation progressed. Themes such as drug use, and learner and teacher relationships emerged. After conducting the pilot study I decided to add more questions to the interview schedule about the community and how safe learners feel when they walk to or from school.

The responses from the pilot study answered the research questions; thus I decided to proceed with the main study.

3.7.3. Observation

In addition to the semi-structured face-to-face interviews conducted with the learners and teachers, this study also made use of the observation method to collect data. According to Welman et al. (2005:203), observations are a way of recording situations, actions and activities. Observation can help researchers to see what is happening on the site as opposed to what a researcher may hope to find or assumes to be occurring (Kerfoot & Winberg, 1997). Although observations can provide a quick method of gathering information, they can be time-consuming and complicated when the activity observed is not constant.

The school was observed using an observation schedule and there was special emphasis on security at the school. The factors I took note of in my observation were the surroundings, which included the school fencing; encroachment of school property by the community; gang activities; use of drugs, alcohol and cigarettes; and safety equipment such as cameras, etc. Places such as the school grounds and toilets were observed for security purposes. Observation was on-going for two months and detailed notes were kept in a logbook. The aim of the observation (see Appendix C, Observation Schedule) was to form a rich picture of the school context about security and social issues that affect the community and encroach upon the school area.

Punch (2014:181) indicates that observation as a form of data collection has its advantages and disadvantages. Advantages can include the opportunity to record information on the spot as it happens. Observations can be used to study people's behaviour or people that have difficulty in articulating their thoughts. Cresswell (2009:4) notes that the disadvantage of observations is that they limit one to a site or situation. For observations to be a success, one needs attention to detail and good listening skills. It is a challenge to develop a good rapport with participants if attention to detail is non-existent (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Management of issues is important during observation, such as potential deception created by people that the researcher observes. To ensure the success of observation for this study, I had a logbook and recorded information as it happened. The logbook helped me not to miss important events that occurred during the observation or even outside the observation time. I recorded events during the day while at school, including mornings before school, during recess, and after school.

3.8. Data analysis

According to Squire (2008:46), the search for a valid interpretive frame is perhaps the research stage that causes the most argument and concerns. There are different ways to analyse and represent narrative data (Bold, 2011:120); narrative data is always dependent on interpretation. There are different methods of narrative analysis, and it can be challenging to choose a valid interpretive frame. I included the following steps for data analysis:

1. Gather data from semi-structured interviews and observation
2. Transcription
3. Translation from isiXhosa to English
4. Initial coding of data using in vivo coding
5. Preliminary themes
6. Identify underlying patterns
7. Construct narratives from participants' standpoint
8. Representative reconstruction

I audio-recorded nine interviews with four teachers and five learners. The university provided funding for a research assistant to assist me with transcribing the recorded interviews. The person has a postgraduate degree and is familiar with research. After we had transcribed the interviews, I checked all nine transcriptions against the original recordings. This was done to ensure that everything was accurate. Doing this helped me to familiarise myself with the data.

I chose thematic narrative analysis as it is the most common form of narrative analysis. This was used to view and identify themes in the narratives (Riessman, 2008:5). Thematic narratives blend with the constructionist paradigm in psychology (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Aronson (1994), thematic analysis includes finding patterns from transcribed interviews; thereafter the researcher can identify all the data which relates to the already classified patterns.

This analysis pays attention to content with the intention to generate significant findings focusing on 'what' is said, instead of 'how' it was said or what was the 'purpose' of the telling (Riessman, 2008:5). I began to analyse the narratives and engaged intensively with the data.

Engaging intensively with the data ensured that I became familiar with it and I paid attention to specific words each participant used. During this period I reflected on how each participant

interacted with me during the interviews. While doing that, I noted possible themes. In vivo codes were applied to the data, which I categorised into themes. I carefully conducted a systematic textual analysis of the data, searching for underlying patterns and to ascertain if there were connections between different ideas to identify final themes. During the data analysis, I was guided by the Ecological Systems Theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979), see Chapter 2, Section 2.2, while keeping the purpose of the inquiry in mind (Riessman, 2008:6). The interviews and observation schedules were based on selective themes guided by the literature review, which helped to shape the content of the data collected. The analysis was inductive as it included themes from the literature which led to an inductive research approach.

Once all the themes were identified through the thematic experience-centred narrative approach analysis, I decided to present the teachers' and learners' voices in such a manner as to give a full description of their personal experiences of school violence and how it affects both teaching and learning.

3.9. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness (validity) refers to the question of whether the researcher has measured what s/he set out to measure (Kerfoot & Winberg, 1997). This is, understandably, a crucial aspect of research methodology. Non-compliance here would render the research invalid. Two methods of data collection were used in this study: interviews (with teachers and learners) and observation. Accurate and relevant data needed to be garnered. The reason for using multiple data-collection instruments was to enable triangulation. According to Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2007), triangulation is critical in facilitating interpretive validity. It was essential to take cognisance of the fact that an interview process is a social interaction between two people and can be fraught with various uncertainties. To maximise validity, any potential bias must be minimised (Cohen et al., 2000). These sources of bias include the attitudes, thoughts and expectations of the interviewer; a tendency for the interviewer to perceive the respondent in his/her image; and seek answers that support his/her preconceived notions. Other sources of bias could include misperceptions on the part of the interviewer of what the respondent is saying; misinterpretations on the part of the respondent of what is being asked; as well as issues of race, religion, status, social class, age, gender, and sexual orientation (Cohen et al., 2000).

In an attempt to minimise bias in this study, the following precautions were taken:

- The same questions were asked.
- The questions were asked in the same order.
- The venue was neutral, namely a classroom in the school.
- I allowed each teacher and learner to read the transcripts to ensure I had captured the data correctly.

3.10. Accessibility to school premises

I did not have challenges to get permission from the school principal to conduct the study. I was a teacher at the school. It was easy for me to set up a meeting with the principal to discuss my research topic. After meeting the principal, he agreed that I could conduct the study. I approached the staff members to ask permission for interviews and they were all willing to take part in the study. I approached the five Grade 7 learners that I had selected using purposive sampling to be part of the study and gave them letters of consent to give to their parents. All five learners agreed and their parents all gave consent to conduct interviews with the learners.

Obtaining permission to conduct the research involves more than receiving permission from the provincial Department of Education and school principal. If the study sample includes teachers and learners, it is vital to establish a good relationship with the participants. This relationship and understanding will help during data collection, as time will be spent with them. Acceptance by the participants is important for the study to be a success. I was in a fortunate position with regard to relationships with the sample of this study as I was a teacher at the school during the time of collecting data and had a working relationship with colleagues and learners (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:75).

3.11. Reliability

Reliability measures how well the research has been carried out. Blaxter et al. (1996) make the point that reliability is achieved if another researcher, conducting the same research, under the same constraints, settings and conditions, were to produce similar findings. Ensuring that the results are as objective as possible will contribute to reliability. This was undertaken in the design, through attempts to minimise bias and consider ethical issues, which can affect responses.

My commitment to reliable data was in terms of the following:

1. Data selected for the study.

2. The careful design of the interview schedules.
3. The technical quality of audio-recordings.
4. The adequacy of the transcriptions.

3.12. Ethical considerations

I applied for ethical clearance to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. When it was granted, a letter of permission was sent to learners' parents to request permission to conduct the study with the learners (see Appendix D). Informed consent from teachers and the principal was received to conduct the study at the school. Ethical clearance was received from the Western Cape Education Department's Research Services Unit. Confidentiality was considered as the learners, teachers and the school were allocated pseudonyms to protect their identity. Respondents were informed of the process and purpose of the study. Permission was sought from respondents for an audio-recording of the interviews. They were informed before the interview that should they wish not to answer questions during the interview or withdraw from the research, they were free to do so without any prejudice. The researcher assured them that they were protected and that the data would be secured; rules of confidentiality also applied to the scribe of the data. Feedback to participants was provided so that they could both verify data used for analysis and comment on the researcher's interpretation.

3.13. Conclusion

In this chapter, the research design and research methodology were outlined. An interpretive paradigm underpinned this study to understand the objective world of human experience. I used a case study as a research strategy and a qualitative research approach. Interviews and observations were used as the research technique. Interviews were conducted with teachers and Grade 7 learners. To ensure confidentiality, I adhered to all the ethical guidelines.

The next chapter presents the results captured in the form of narratives for teachers and learners.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings that emanated from the face-to-face interviews conducted with the teachers and learners together with observations of school grounds, access control, and school toilets over three months. The chapter begins with teachers' experiences followed by learners' experiences; the observation data is then presented. Narrative inquiry was the methodology used in this study to tell the stories of teachers and learners. The stories are told in the first person in an attempt to capture the voices of all participants directly and to ensure the narratives are authentic. The teachers told their stories in English, while some of the learners used both English and isiXhosa to narrate their stories. I translated from isiXhosa to English, maintaining the authenticity of the story as far as possible. For the sake of authenticity, the grammatical structure of the sentences has not been changed.

4.2. Teacher responses

4.2.1. Zolisa's narrative (Teacher 1)

My name is Zolisa, I'm a 33-year-old female teacher. I've been teaching for five years this year. I teach here in this primary school. I witness violence from learners here at school almost every day. The violence that I witness happens both in the classroom and outside in the playground. These learners fight with each other, assault, even rob other learners of their belongings such as taking the money of a fellow learner within the school premises. Use of drugs is also common among male learners and [there have been a] few incidences of girls being caught drinking alcohol in class.

To deal with violent behaviour in class I try to sort it out myself as a teacher. When the violence gets out of hand I escalate it to the principal's office to deal with it. Sending learners to the principal's office doesn't always work. Because sometimes learners are sent back to class without any action being taken. Such things demotivate me and other teachers to report learners. When these learners are sent back they look at you as if you have wasted your time. Sometimes they get naughty or fight, knowing very well that nothing serious will be done to them. They are sent back to class and make you the butt of their joke. That is when they lose respect for some of us teachers because no action will be taken by the office. These learners will come back and make silly jokes to disturb the class and provoke a teacher.

Violence in the classroom demotivates me to teach learners that cannot behave themselves and who do not even show respect to you as an adult. To survive in this environment, I just ignore these learners sometimes. The thing is we lack support here at school. If you report learners to the management and they don't take your case serious[ly], these learners treat you like a fool. The violent learners do not respect us at all as they know that there are no consequences for their actions. The way these learners are so violent it even affects them in terms of academic performance. Most of these violent learners end up being dropouts. Mostly boys that are misbehaving here at school – they fail their studies and drop out of school. The violence that these learners are doing in class affects other learners academically. As a teacher, it becomes difficult to teach as you are busy controlling crowds, especially the older boys – they tend to bully girls and younger boys. I sometimes spend most of my time trying to discipline learners instead of teaching. Class becomes so chaotic sometimes one cannot even teach properly. It can be frustrating especially to the young teachers.

The bad behaviour of some of these learners creates a toxic environment within the classroom and the school in general. It becomes difficult to teach; the class becomes uncontrollable; then other innocent learners suffer and do not perform during exams as teaching was not effective because of the lack of discipline in class.

These learners are so ill-disciplined and violent that they are not afraid to call each other names, fight, insult each other in class while you are there as a teacher. The violence becomes worse when there is no teacher in class. What stresses me the most is that the boys will do what they want whether you are there or not. Some of us young teachers, we cannot even teach. Some teachers when they are tired they just give these learners notes or activities. Those who want to write will write, those who don't want to work you just ignore them for your sanity. By the look of it, the behaviour of these learners is not something they learn from school. We work in an informal settlement. Learners grow up in child-unfriendly environments. They are exposed to alcohol, drug use, people fighting, gangs, and they bring what they see in the township here to school. Some of the learners will tell you that their parents fight in front of them. There is so much anger here in some of these learners.

To address the issue of violent behaviour, we do call parents to school to discuss learner behaviour. Some parents come while others will send someone else because they work long hours. Some of these parents are security guards or domestic workers. They leave home very early in the morning and come home late. It is difficult for such parents to come to school

because of work. They end up sending a relative to represent them when there is a need for a parent to come to school. A relative is not much help as he or she will tell you that the message will be passed to a parent and that is where it ends. The bad behaviour of a learner continues. The school also doesn't have clear policies to deal with discipline or if we have, we do not implement such policies. We don't have an up-to-date code of conduct; we made contributions to a new code of conduct, but nothing is happening to make it binding. At the school we do not get full support from education authorities. I wish we had resident social workers or psychologists to assist with behaviour. Unfortunately we as the school, we do not have that.

With all the incidences of violence and bullying in the school, I sometimes do not feel safe at all. Some of these children as I mentioned before are smoking and using drugs here at school, especially boys. During the break, they are sometimes caught behind the classes smoking or in the toilets. You see these boys being high after the break. They become so aggressive as if they can beat you if you try to call them out. It is very scary when I think about it. These learners are known to be part of gangs here at school. It is a mixture of your older learners and young ones. They terrorise other learners. The school tries to deal with those gangs by testing them for drugs. Send them home to call parents and the majority of these gangs test positive to drugs when the school tests them. It is just a frustrating environment to be in. In my class to keep the class under control, I try to create class rules with the learners. I try to make sure we follow the rules and it works some days. Other days you don't know; the learners just get out of hand. It is tiring to say one thing all the time; once I'm tired I just ignore the naughty ones.

These learners have rights more than anyone and forget about their responsibilities. These rights are making them do what they want because they are untouchable. To handle bullying in my class and enforce responsibility I show learners the difference between being passive, aggressive and assertive. I sometimes put myself on their level to create a safe space by talking to them, make them understand that we are all human beings – we get hurt too. I sometimes share a joke to release the tension.

I hope the Department of Education, parents and the schools can work together to fight violence. At the moment I feel like we don't work together, parents always side with their learners. It becomes worse when a parent is going to shout at a teacher in front of a learner when they are called to come to talk to their learners. To some parents, their children are angels, while they terrorise teachers and other learners here at school. The Department of

Education is not assisting teachers as well. Classes are big – it is difficult to manage huge classes. Not enough training is given to teachers to deal with violence at school. We are just hopeless. Comparing these learners with the learners I taught when I started teaching, I feel like the problem of behaviour is getting worse every year. Parents are outsourcing their responsibility of teaching learners respect. As teachers, we are expected to implement the curriculum and teach discipline. It is difficult to think about it.

4.2.2. Lisa's narrative (Teacher 2)

My name is Lisa and I am a 25-year-old female teacher I am passionate about teaching; I am kind and I have a strong work ethic.

I experience violence in school almost every day. Some of the boys I teach are violent and are bullies. These boys bully other learners, they steal and show disrespect towards teachers. These boys are disruptive in class and full of anger. When they talk to the teachers these boys look like they can beat someone and I sometimes get a bit scared.

In my class learners like to fight using pens to stab each other. These incidences happen while I am in class marking or teaching. When they fight I have to separate them. It is difficult to deal with such behaviour because it shows that these learners do not see you as a teacher.

Fights in the classroom between learners do not happen all the time; however, it is common to see and experience violence within the school. Learners fight in class irrespective of which teacher is there. During the break, it is common to find reports from female learners being bullied by boys. During break, boys bully each other in the toilets, younger boys especially are the victims. Some of the boys have been caught smoking dagga in the bathrooms and they lack discipline.

Here at school learners become violent to each other knowing that nothing will be done to them. When parents are called to talk to or discipline their children, they also complain that even at home such learners do not listen. Some parents suggest that teachers must beat learners when they bully others. I tell the parents I am not at school to beat learners. Some parents are not doing their job of raising their children well. The community where the learners come from also plays a part in the way these learners conduct themselves at school. The learners are exposed to many negative things such as alcohol abuse, violence in the community and the use of drugs.

Sometimes I become involved when learners fight in class; for example, I was once hit by an object from one boy who was hitting another learner. When I try to teach, some learners don't listen to me and bully others or disrupt the class– it is demotivating. Sometimes I feel drained and powerless. It is emotionally draining and affects how we teach – and let me state that not all learners are bad –here at school we do have good learners.

Violence makes these learners aggressive and disrespectful; it disrupts teaching and learning. It becomes difficult to teach effectively and I get frustrated to teach rude learners. I sometimes feel like I should just quit and look for another job because of disrespectful learners and lack of support from the Education Department. When effective teaching doesn't happen, learner performance gets affected and as teachers, we have to account. Also, instead of teaching as teachers, we spend time controlling the crowds, trying to discipline learners.

Learners swear at each other, calling each other names, they even call teachers *izinja* [a dog].

Some of the violent activities in my class include a learner who is bullied by others – they call her a foreigner. The learner is forced to fight with them to protect herself. Learners call this learner names that are inappropriate and discriminatory. When it comes to school policies about bullying, often policies are not effectively implemented and I blame us, teachers. Sometimes the school takes action against bullies, sometimes it doesn't. Some of the teachers end up not escalating matters to the office as no action will be taken against learners that are bullies.

As a teacher, I do act most of the time when there is a bullying incident in my class and handle it myself. When I can't handle a case of bullying, I escalate it to the management who sometimes send those learners back to class without disciplining them. Such cases are demotivating to teachers.

When it comes to my safety, I do not feel safe as I don't know what might happen to me because of the violent learners. I feel that as teachers we are not protected. The government is aware of what is happening to teachers. Learners carry knives at school and we are not safe at all especially from learners that use drugs, as I don't know what they might do one day.

To deal with discipline in my class is difficult; learners do not listen and it is frustrating to deal with such behaviour. Using corporal punishment to discipline learners is not good;

however, there are times when some learners deserve it. I know one cannot solve violence with violence. The government should give us the skills to deal with violent behaviour as it is getting out of hand.

To deal with bullying in my class I try speaking to learners. Sometimes talking to them works, sometimes it doesn't work. To create a safe space in my class, as the teacher, I encourage learners to talk to me after school to discuss issues that affect them and try to find solutions and advise where I can. I also have class rules that were created by the whole class; using the rules works at times.

I think the Department of Education and parents should allow teachers to do their jobs without being threatened by the principal or people from the department when they discipline learners. When teachers try to discipline learners, the management of the school always threatens us that we will be charged if we use a pipe/stick to discipline learners. Some of the management members sometimes shout at teachers in front of learners and learners start to disrespect teachers when that happens. For example, if a learner did not do his/her homework and the teacher asks that learner to sit on the floor and do his or her work, a school management member may inform you that you cannot ask the learner to sit on the floor in front of the whole class. Then, as a teacher, you become a joke to these learners.

Comparing learners I used to teach when I started teaching with learners of today, those learners were respectful and responsible compared to today's learners. Today's learners are entitled and do not want to do anything.

As a teacher, I do not have any proper training to deal with violent behaviour. When I go to workshops I find them ineffective to deal with the challenge of violence. At workshops trainers read theories that they do not understand and are irrelevant to teachers. The training that we get does not differentiate between advantaged and poor schools; learners in different environments behave differently. One can't compare learners from wealthy areas to learners in low-income areas. Another challenge we are facing here is that the school has no clear policies to deal with violence, or as teachers we do not know any policy about violence.

4.2.3. Mbuso's narrative (Teacher 3)

My name is Mbuso. I am a 44-year-old male and I've been teaching for the past 18 years. I'm passionate about education and I believe in discipline and kindness.

I have taught in different primary schools. I have witnessed violence in both the classroom and outside the class but within the school premises. In my current school where I teach, learners are very ill-disciplined, especially boys. They do as they please. In this school, there is a group of boys that smoke dagga and they bully other learners.

The school management is aware of these boys. Sometimes we see them in the principal's office in detention or outside the office. These boys are a mix of older boys and younger ones. I think the youngest is in Grade 3 and is known as one of the gang leaders. It is shocking to think that a Grade 3 learner is a gang leader; however, this might be caused by influences from home or the community where these children live. Some of the parents complain that they have given up on these naughty boys; even at home they do not listen. Some are friends with people older than them and that's where the influence might come from.

To describe violence in my class I remember two boys were arguing and it escalated to a physical fight. That time I was in class teaching. These kids do not care whether you are in class or not; when they want to fight the way they are so violent, they will fight in front of you. In cases like this when learners do not see you and fight in front of you, it becomes difficult. When I call parents to discuss learner behaviour they also complain to me that their child doesn't listen at home, they also gave up. It is demotivating when parents do not play the role of disciplining their children. Some parents come to a meeting when I call them; they get here and become rude to teachers in front of the learners. Some of the parents accuse teachers of mistreating their children, whereas it is the children who are naughty. These are some of the reasons these learners are disrespectful to teachers; parents do not see wrong in their children.

With these challenges, it frustrates me a lot especially when I have to stop fights between learners. It is not good at all; we are here to teach but now we are dealing with violent learners. At times it can ruin your entire day as these kids can be provoking too. Violence in class distracts learners and creates a hostile environment for learning. Teaching and learning don't happen the way it should and others get affected by this violence. Children in my class sometimes use vulgar and inappropriate language or even [have] physical fights in the presence of the teacher. I sometimes confront the learners to resolve the fights peacefully. When it is serious cases I report to the principal or deputies. When I report cases to the management, sometimes they take action, sometimes they do not. There is an inconsistency here at school when it comes to dealing with discipline and learners can see that too.

Sometimes you report a learner and he is sent to the office. The same learner will come back to class without any action being taken against him. These learners misbehave, knowing that chances of them being taken to task are very low. Some teachers do not bother to report learners because of such things. As a teacher, I feel uncertain about my safety as these learners come from violent communities and it plays itself [out] here at school. It is not common to find learners with weapons. In a few cases a knife was confiscated from a learner. Some learners take drugs; the school has tested some of the learners with permission from parents and some tested positive for drugs. To test a learner, we pick up it from their behaviour and take it from there or we test those in gangs.

To discipline my class, I try to talk to learners and discuss the results of misbehaving at school. Sometimes talking to them works, sometimes it just doesn't work. I also encourage positive behaviour and class participation to keep discipline. I think corporal punishment can be used in very extreme cases with control. To deal with the challenges faced by teachers at schools, especially in the area of discipline, the Education Department and schools should implement policies that will create a conducive environment for learning. When I compare these learners to those I taught when I started teaching years ago, today's learners are disrespectful to teachers. I think one of the causes of this bad behaviour is the abolishment of corporal punishment. The Department of Education doesn't support teachers to deal with bad behaviour at school. We don't get proper training at all. Here at school, there are no policies in place to deal with discipline. We don't have a valid code of conduct. Contributions were made by teachers on the code of conduct; however, the school has not yet invited parents to endorse it.

4.2.4. Sanda's narrative (Teacher 4)

My name is Sanda; I'm a 30-year-old female teacher and I have been teaching for the past four years. I love children and I am passionate about my job.

I have witnessed violence in class. I think I witness an average of ten cases of violence in my class a week. Learners here fight all the time, they fight in class or outside during the break. One day a boy and a girl were fighting in class while I was teaching. The girl was very angry because the older boys tend to pick on girls or younger boys. I tried to break [up] the fight and during that time one learner insulted me. After that incident, I felt that I don't have to teach that learner anymore. I was frustrated to imagine being insulted by a learner in full view of the class. Such things make me lose interest in my job.

Violence in school affects learners because they get hurt when they fight. Other learners are always scared, especially when the boys are arguing with us, young teachers. These learners disrespect almost all the teachers. It becomes worse when it is us, young teachers; they don't even see that we exist. Some of these learners disrupt class while you are teaching, play with their phones or even fight. I used to report them to the office. The other day some of the girls were watching videos on their cell phones while I was teaching. I took the phones and handed them to one of the management members. The person gave the phones back to the learners when they went to ask for them. I was upset and I decided not to report anything as it was a waste of time. There are incidences where we report learners to the management and they do not do anything about that. The bad behaviour in class is out of hand because of not holding learners accountable. I now teach those who want to listen in class.

Some of the violence that happens in class – you will find learners calling each other names or insulting each other. Some of the learners when they did not do homework, they take books of others by force to copy the work. Some of these boys and girls bully each other in the toilets or playground during the break. As teachers, it is not easy to see these incidents during the break as we are in our classes eating or in the staff room. And that is when most bullying cases happen. To stop cases of violence I report learners who are violent to the HoD or give learners letters to call their parents.

When it comes to safety within the school I do not feel safe at all. Both learners and teachers are not protected. There is no code of conduct here to apply discipline. The management is dragging its feet to come up with the code of conduct. Corporal punishment is not allowed here at school. But I think it can work to discipline these kids. To handle bullying in class I talk to learners. I sometimes involve parents and discuss bullying during lessons that specifically talks about bullying in schools. I emphasise to the learner that they must not laugh at each other. Naughty learners, I sometimes call them outside to talk to them without the view of the whole class.

The Department of Education should talk to educators to see if what they ask teachers to do with discipline is working or not. But we are not supported – they do not do anything.

When I first started teaching learners used to listen and some were responsible. They knew what they needed to do. In case I was absent, they will do their work. The ones I am teaching now are so irresponsible, if by any chance I'm out of class or school they will never work.

To deal with the discipline I have never received any training – that speaks to the challenge. The training we get doesn't address the challenges we are facing. I wish I can have the powers to push the school to have a discipline policy but I don't have such powers. I just focus on teaching; management must focus on their role because they do not take our suggestions seriously.

4.3. Learner narratives

4.3.1. MbasA (Learner 1)

My name is MbasA. I am 13 years old and I live in Samora Machel in Cape Town. I'm currently doing Grade 7. I come from an informal settlement not far from the school. At home, I live with my mother and two siblings and I'm the oldest. I come from a strict home; my mother expects only the best behaviour from all of us. We are always reminded to be responsible, take care of ourselves and respect elders and our peers. My mother works in one of the schools as a general worker.

When I go to school I walk from home as I mentioned that I don't stay far. Walking to school, I always walk with my friends or classmates as a group. I never walk alone, even though I don't stay far. We decided to walk together for safety reasons. If I walk alone, I will not feel safe in the streets. Samora streets are busy with *amaphela* [private cars turned taxis], minibus taxis and people. There are older people and kids from high school that like to bother us. Sometimes the high school boys have bullying tendencies which make it difficult to walk alone. There are stories of people raping kids in the community so I wouldn't want to be a victim. I'd rather walk in a group. I am scared that I might be bullied or raped if I walk alone. There was another story; a girl that was walking alone, the *skollies* [hooligans] took her money. Bullies are everywhere around the township, including at school. Most of the bullies I heard of live in the Cosovo area. They are a group of boys that bully people and children. We call them *skollies* because they rob people.

It becomes safer at school compared to outside; the reason for that is the trust I have in my teachers. I know that they protect us from bullies. Not that bullying does not happen at school. It does – I have seen it. My recent experience of bullies comes from learners in my class. There is a group of girls and boys that sit at the back of the class. They are so disruptive; they talk negative things about other learners including me. One day they were making silly jokes about me; that time we were alone – there was no teacher. I felt bad and disrespected; they do

these tricks even when teachers are in class. They just don't care. I choose to ignore them and try to focus on my work. I once reported these naughty learners to my mother; she advised me to ignore them. I was hoping that she will confront them or talk to my teacher but it was not the case. I get frustrated by bullies sometimes; we have a lot of bullies here at school. I often see them bullying other children by taking their money and lunch during the break when there are no teachers on the grounds. Sometimes we see boys locking each other in the bathrooms. The older boys force other learners to do their homework. Even some girls are bullies too; they do naughty things such as calling others with derogatory names in the class and outside class during break. There was once an incident; a boy was bullying girls by beating them. I and my friend reported him to my class teacher. He was removed from the class. My teacher after asking other learners what happened asked to bring his parents to school the next day. After witnessing such bullying I felt angry; such things are not supposed to be happening in a school environment. As learners, we should be safe in school at all times. After that bullying incident, I felt that we are not safe at school and more needs to be done to protect learners by teachers.

When these bullies disrupt classes while we are learning we struggle to hear what the teacher is saying and lose out a lot in the lessons. Such disruptions catch up with us when we have to write exams or essays. It becomes difficult to remember what the teacher said about a particular topic because people that are not interested in learning disrupt lessons. I think what fuels bad behaviour in class is attention-seeking. Some of these learners that are disruptive in class, they do this because they want attention from the teacher. Some teachers ignore them, others call them to order immediately and they like that attention. I think our school needs to do better to stop bullying and all the bad behaviour that is currently happening. It is such an inconvenience to some of us because we want to learn. If it needs to be, these learners must be punished by corporal punishment if that is how they going to listen. Parents are not being helpful to assist with their children's behaviour, so teachers must use whatever they can to be in control of the school and the classes.

We, as learners these days, we know our rights and abuse them. We are fully aware that teachers are not allowed to use corporal punishment as it is against the law. Learners take advantage of that knowledge – they can do as they please without consequences because parents will fight with the teachers. Teachers should be strict and ban misbehaving learners from school until their parents come to discipline them. If bullies can be dealt with in my

school, the bad behaviour that we see daily will stop. We will be able to learn in friendly space and be able to perform at our best without disruptions.

4.3.2. Lizo's narrative (Learner 2)

My name is Lizo. I'm a 13-year-old female learner and I'm in Grade 7. I live in Samora Machel in an area called Cosovo with my mother and younger brother. Cosovo is an informal area; our houses are built of corrugated iron sheets and wood [shacks]. We face challenges in my community such as lack of housing, no safe parks for children to play, and there is a high risk of being robbed, killed or raped – that's how unsafe Cosovo is. Many people drink alcohol and others sell drugs. There are people from other countries that sell drugs. It becomes dangerous to play outside with all these challenges. We as children are forced to play in the streets, which becomes a danger.

Some children play outside until it is dark because their parents work late shifts and there is no one to call them to order. Such kids are at a high risk of being raped or murdered. There are also older children in my area who also take chances by becoming bullies. For instance, in Cosovo, one child used to bully learners from my school. He used to take our money when we go to school or when we come back from school he searches his victims. He did this by force and even took our lunch boxes when we walk to school, especially if you are younger than him.

Seeing learners being bullied on the street made me feel unsafe to walk alone. I decided to always walk with other learners and I will feel safe. The bullying that I see happening makes me not to trust strangers in the street or at home for that matter. I'm always worried that I might be kidnapped on my way to school by strangers. I feel better when I am inside the school premises because the gates are closed and there are teachers in the school.

My wish inside the school premises is for the older boys to stop being bullies. The boys in my school can be such bullies; they bully girls and younger boys than them. It makes me angry sometimes. I was once bullied by an older boy; he took my lunch money and I did not report him as I was scared of him. I did think of reporting him to my teacher but again I thought what if he beats me up after school? I decided to let it go. Bullies in school take our money, lunch or hit us for nothing. Sometimes they copy our homework. The bullying happens mostly when there is no teacher present in class or outside during a break. These bullies don't even respect teachers, especially the young teachers. They do as they please when the young

teachers are in class. We have a group of bullies in my class that are so disrespectful; when they start with their nonsense they disrupt lessons. Teachers spend most of the time trying to discipline them and we suffer as quiet learners. Time gets wasted on the bullies instead of us learning. At the end of the day we fail during tests.

Sometimes these bullies fight in class and it makes me feel bad because I'm from a community where fighting is a norm and when it happens at school it is so disturbing. I always think, what if they bully me too and it is scary to think of it. There is a child that is a victim of bullying in my class; she does not report it to the teacher as she is scared of being more bullied. Funny enough, she is bullied by other girls; in this case, we have advised her to report it to her parents so that they can come to school and sort this thing out. This learner feels so free when the bullies are not in school or when they bunk classes as they sometimes do. When they are in class and there is no teacher, other learners look miserable and not safe as the bullies can be rough on us.

During break time there is so much bullying and fights in our school. I wish the teachers or caretakers were looking after us, but we are alone and it's easy for fights to happen in the playground. Teachers are eating in the staff room or their class during the break, which makes it easy for vulnerable learners to be targets of bullies. You keep wondering what if it was you when you see someone else being bullied. One day a group of girls tried their luck on me; they wanted to take my money. It was not a pleasant experience. I was a bit scared to report them. I then told my friend from another class and we went to report it to my class teacher. The learner's parent was called by the teacher; they had a discussion after the parent-teacher meeting. I haven't seen the bully bullying anyone after that.

Some teachers here at my school use corporal punishment to punish the naughty learners but not all the time. Such punishment happens when the unruly learners test teachers until a teacher loses patience. Learners disrespect young teachers a lot and one can see that those teachers lose it at times. Learners take advantage of some teachers because they are nice people. They become unruly in class and cause chaos and are rude. If I was a teacher, I was going to be angry too when the learners are causing chaos while I'm teaching. At the same time, teachers as older people need to come up with ways to deal with unruly behaviour and not to be angry. As learners, we also need to be responsible by treating our teachers with respect and apologise if we are wrong.

As I mentioned, as learners we lack respect– we don't respect our teachers. We can be rude and violent in front of the teacher. Fights happen while we are in class, learning. In Grade 6, boys and girls used to be rude to teachers. Young teachers will be disrespected while the older teachers will get some sort of respect or control of the class. I think one of the reasons we disrespect young teachers is because we see them as the same age as our brothers or sisters. We become naughty, knowing that the teachers will not do anything. We behave when the older teachers are in class; we are scared of some of them – that are why there is control when they are in class.

When there is a fight or chaos in class, it becomes difficult for some of us during lessons. It becomes a struggle to pay attention to the teacher. We end up missing most of the lesson. At the end of the day, we as learners get affected, we perform poor[ly] during tests because we did not listen to the teacher. Unruly behaviour is a challenge for most learners who want to learn. We end up performing badly in our school work because of learners that are not interested in learning. At times a teacher has to stop a fight during lessons. It takes time for the class to settle down after that. By the time we settle down, sometimes the period is about to end and the teacher has to leave for another class. The violent behaviour of learners has to stop so that we can learn in a peaceful and friendly environment. Parents also have to do their part and discipline their children. Some learners copy what they see happening in the community and bring it here to our school by being gangsters or fighting each other. My teacher always complains about parents that do not attend school meetings or when there is a parent–teacher talk, they don't bother to come at all.

4.3.3. Thatho's narrative (Learner 3)

My name is Thato. I am a 13-year-old boy in Grade 7 and I live in Samora Machel. At home, I live with my dad, mom and my younger sister. Samora is an informal settlement with lots of people. I live next to the main road which is busy with people and cars. I live in an RDP [Reconstruction and Development Programme] house and there is a tavern about three houses from my home. Because of the alcohol being sold there and the music they play, it becomes noisy at times, especially during weekends. People walk up and down all the time until the early hours of the morning. The place closes very late even though I'm not sure about the time.

The noise from the tavern makes it a bit difficult to study at home; funnily enough I can sleep [with] that noise because I am used to it. My younger sister used to keep my parents awake

the whole night because of the noise. That used to affect me as I will not be able to sleep as well and I will be sleepy at school the next day. I cannot consider Samora as a safe place because of how it is; some people rob others during the day, and people drink alcohol and fight. Within the township, there are boys my age, others older, who are in gangs. Sometimes I see them chasing each other in the street with rocks, sticks and knives. Sometimes we are told that boys from my section are not allowed to go to other sections and if we do go we might be victims of violence between the gangs. Even though I'm not part of a gang, when there is a fight between the two sides I get affected because I live in the same area as the other group. If I join gangs my parents will kill me. They are very strict when it comes to bad behaviour. I know most of the boys that are gang members in my area; because of that I am safe in terms of being robbed. I can walk alone from school without feeling threatened. I do not feel unsafe at all – I just do my thing. I always make sure that I do not walk at night as I do not know what might happen – night time is a bit dangerous. People get robbed and killed at night in Samora so I always try to be safe by staying indoors.

During the day, as I mentioned, I can walk alone without any trouble. I think being a boy also helps because for girls it is not that easy. At school I am fine. I have friends – we hang out together – no one bothers us. At school, I am always with my friends during the break because there are these bullies from Cosovo; they like to take chances. I stay with my group to protect myself from bullying and unnecessary conflicts. Sometimes the bullies at school search for other learners and take their money or lunch. They like to bully other learners, especially the younger learners or those they consider as weak. They know that teachers will not see them as they are in classes eating. The sad part is that the victims of this bullying do not report them to teachers because they are scared. So far I am lucky I have not been bullied at school.

In class there is a group of bullies that is disruptive during lessons, throw papers at each other, with noise and disrupt the lesson. It can be chaotic in class while the teacher is there, but I just mind my [own] business and stay out of it. The young female teachers are disrespected by some of the boys. It becomes a challenge to them when they have to teach in such an unruly class. The teachers spend most of their time trying to discipline learners and we miss out in the lesson. The disrupting learners are bullies. They know that nothing much will happen to them. Sometimes when the teacher sends the bullies to the office the principal sends them back to class without anything being done to them. Sometimes the bullies are asked to go home to call their parents and the cases just disappear, according to what I observe.

I feel sorry for my teachers. I can *ukuba babane stress xa I class ingalawuleki* [have stress when the class is not under control] and see that teachers get stressed when the class is chaotic. They look hopeless at times, not knowing how to handle the situation. Some teachers lose it when learners do not want to listen and use a duster to discipline them. The beating happens once in a while when the teacher cannot control bad behaviour. Some learners walk out as a group during a lesson without the teacher's permission. I know they go to the toilet to smoke. What they doing is rude and it disrupts other learners. Some of us go to school to learn and it becomes a challenge when there are people who are not interested. We end up losing a lot. The school needs to do better to stop bad behaviour because it is out of hand. People that do not want to learn should stay home and not come to school. Parents should work with teachers and attend meetings when they are called. My teacher always complains about parents that do not come to school when asked by teachers, especially those of misbehaving learners. If parents and teachers can work together, I'm sure learners will behave better in school.

4.3.4. Bonolo's narrative (Learner 4)

My name is Bonolo. I'm in Grade 7 and I'm a 13-year-old male learner. I live in Samora Machel with my aunt and my two cousins. My area is not a child-friendly area; drains are always blocked with sewage running in the street where kids play. There are people from the municipality that come to unblock the drains but they don't come every day. To get to school I walk with my friend as the school is not far from my home. Walking to school for me is not a problem. It is safe as I don't get threatened by anyone. There are not many people that are *skollies* in my area and I am near the school. Although it can be uncomfortable and scary walking in areas that are high risk within the community, I always watch my back by not walking in dangerous areas even if it is after school. People do rob learners by taking their bags, money and other things.

I have seen people getting robbed. One day I was walking near Spar in the evening. I saw a lady being robbed by a group of guys. I think they took her wallet and cell phone. She was left shaking. Funny enough the community did not intervene. Most of the times when robberies take place, people just mind their own business. However, there are days when you see that people are *gatvol* [fed up] and fight back. These *skollies* are beaten up by the community and they even burn these *skollies* with tyres and petrol because police are not always available to protect people. So people fight back to protect themselves. To protect me,

I do not go to where I know the risk of being mugged is high. Being mugged is not a nice experience; you just feel helpless.

When I'm at school I feel relaxed and safe from being robbed. *Skollies* do not enter our school. We have caretakers that lock the gate. It is way better than being out of the school premises. There are many bullies in my school, but to be honest, they do not bully me. It is mostly that I see bullying of other children. These bullies are in my age group so I am not scared of them; they will bully those that are scared of them, not me. These [bullies] also target girls and younger boys from the other grades.

Another thing that I notice with the boys that bully others in school, they copy what they see in the township and think it is cool to do it. Some learners are friends with *skollies* from high school. They smoke together and do all the nonsense together. They learn whatever their high school friends teach them and do it here at our school. They disrespect everyone including the teachers, because they think they are the bosses. Some even carry knives to threaten other learners and they think what they are doing is cool. If you go to the toilets, some of them hang around there and smoke. They smoke during the break. I suspect that they even smoke dagga by the way they behave. Some of these boys become so aggressive when they want to smoke and the teacher does not allow them to leave the class.

Teachers get angry when there is chaos in class during lessons. They are disrupted and time gets wasted. Learners in my class tend to disrupt lessons when they don't want to learn, especially towards teachers they do not respect. Such behaviour is an inconvenience to the teacher and other learners. I try not to entertain such behaviour. I always focus on my work and respect my teachers. I know if I don't respect them I might fail and my aunt is strict; she won't be happy if I fail a grade because of misbehaviour. Some of the teachers do not entertain bullies in class; when they start with their nonsense teachers punish them by beating them with a duster or a pipe. When misbehaving learners are punished there is peace in class and I wish all teachers can punish them. I understand that beating other people is not right but it has to be done when people don't want to listen, to discipline them. It would be better to find other ways for teachers to deal with discipline in school.

Learners fight in class and schools should be strict and deal with such behaviour. Schools are not places to fight, but as learners, we copy what people do in the community and take it to

school. I hope we can have programmes to teach us discipline and how to be examples, especially to younger learners in the school.

4.3.5. Lebohang's narrative (Learner 5)

My name is Lebohang. I am a 13-year-old female learner in Grade 7. I live in Samora with both my parents and my younger sister. The issue of bullying and violence is a challenge in my community and school because we live in this area where violence is the norm. Coming to school or going home is a challenge for me as a girl. I'm [at] risk of being kidnapped even though I haven't heard of such a case in Samora, but it's always on my mind. Rape cases are common in the community; we hear about them and I could be raped as well and it scares me when I think about it. I live in a community that has gangs and *skollies* that rob people of their belongings; they even rob school children.

When I come to school my parents advise me not to walk alone so I always wait for neighbours' kids and walk with them as it is safer to walk as a group than as an individual. Walking alone, especially as a girl, is risky in my area as I can be robbed. We have people that rob others here on the main road even though the police station is on the main road. I think their advantage is that once they rob people they run into the shacks and it won't be easy to catch them once they are inside because the place is overcrowded. There is a lot of gang activities that are happening. It is just not a safe area, especially compared to the rural areas where we come from.

At school there is violence too from boys and girls, some of my former friends are violent. They fight and bully other children. During break time the boys bully other learners. Girls too are bullies. I was once a part of a group of girls – we were naughty in class disrespecting teachers and calling other learners names. I had an incident where I fought in Grade 6 with another learner; the teacher was out of the class at that time. She came back while we were fighting and took us to the office. The deputy principal asked us to remain in the chair until the end of school. We got letters to call our parents the following day and she said we must not come to school if the parents are not coming. I was scared because my dad is strict; he doesn't want bad behaviour. The fight was useless because it shouldn't have happened. My dad came to school and solved the matter with the deputy principal and my class teacher. I was punished at home and was not allowed to visit my cousins for a month. I was told not to be friends with those girls and I stopped.

My teacher complained that my marks were dropping because I do not listen in class. I have since stopped being naughty and I'm doing well in my studies. Some of the girls I was friends with this year smoke during breaks and were caught with alcohol in class. The parents were called to a meeting and after that, I haven't heard of any case of alcohol, but they are still naughty. There is so much chaos happening here at school that I wish it can be stopped. As a result, some of my teachers, when they come to class, they ignore naughty learners. I know there is one teacher that struggles to control the class; it is always chaotic. She focuses on certain groups of learners that always listen to her in class. Those that do not listen are ignored and end up failing. Learners in my school do not take education seriously – they think they are here to play. Lessons are disrupted in my class and we suffer as some teachers just ignore those that are making noise. At the end of the day, it is us learners who need to write exams and we know nothing.

4.4. Observations

During the three months of observation at the school, I paid special attention to certain aspects of the school as indicated in the observation schedule during recess, before school and after school.

The school is fenced all around; the gate that cars use to enter or exit the school is remote controlled. The secretary's office has the remote for the gate and it is always locked. There is a small gate next to the big gate for learners and pedestrians. The school has cameras watching the remote-controlled gate; there are cameras in the administration building, around the school in six classes and inside the school hall. The reason for cameras in those classes is that there are smart boards installed by the provincial Department of Education in those classes. The cameras are for security reasons, according to the school management.

During the break, learners are released to go outside for lunch. I noticed that learners are on their own; teachers do not conduct ground duties. Teachers have their lunch in their classes and only come outside when the bell rings to make sure that all learners go to classes. Learners play in the playground and the parking lot because the school does not have enough recreation space for learners. I noticed that there is a ground-duty roster; however, it is neither enforced nor implemented.

After recess, the caretakers open the small gate for Grade R learners to leave the school. During that time parents enter the school and go straight to classes if they need to see a

teacher, without getting permission from reception to do so. When parents do that they disrupt lessons and it poses a danger to teachers and learners. Anything can happen if a parent can just walk straight to a class without getting any clearance from reception to do so. The cameras in the classes and around the school are not monitored in a control room, especially during the break, to see if learners are safe in the playground or behind the school. During the observation older boys congregated behind the school building during break or in toilets to smoke as they know no one is going to notice them. There is no security guard at the school gate and sometimes it is the caretakers who stand at the gate during the day. The school is next to a busy main road and when learners are released to go home, there is an officer from the traffic department that controls cars to make sure that learners are safe.

While observing, no outsiders came into the school to rob learners and teachers. There is a high risk of robbery at the school. The entrance points of the school as mentioned are not always monitored. The school gates are not locked all the time; hence anyone can come into the school yard especially through the small manually operated pedestrian gate. This poses a risk to teachers, learners and school property. Some learners were caught smoking cigarettes at the back of the school. There is no evidence of learners buying cigarettes inside the school; learners buy them outside on their way to school. Even during break, although learners are not monitored, there was no evidence of learners buying drugs within the school premises.

The safety committee of the school need to be active and monitor playground duties by teachers and all affected members of staff. If playground duty is done, there will be fewer cases of bullying during break and in the school toilets. I noticed the difficulty teachers had to accompany learners to the bathroom during class time. The school, like most township schools, does not have teacher assistants. It becomes difficult for teachers to leave a class to accompany a learner to the bathroom. Leaving a class is risky as learners might hurt each other or it can disrupt a lesson. After school, some learners remain behind with coaches for extramural activities. During extramural activities, school gates were locked and no one was allowed to come in or go out until the coaches had finished and opened the gates to release learners. Some learners roam outside the school gate after school waiting for transport to go home. Those learners are not monitored by any one. It becomes risky if the scholar transport is delayed in fetching the learners. Teachers lock the school to activate the alarm system and leave when it is time to go home.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings that emerged from the face-to-face interviews conducted with four teachers as teacher narratives. Similarly, five Grade 7 learners' narratives were presented. The data collected from the observation over a three-month period was also presented. This chapter provides insights that teachers and learners have experienced of violence in schools, and also includes information on the surrounding communities.

In the next chapter the coded, categorised and analysed data is discussed. It explores and interprets teacher and learner experiences of violence in school and how it affects teaching and learning.



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to explore teacher and learner experiences of violence in a specific school. The results of the study were presented in narrative form in Chapter 4. This chapter discusses the findings of the study with special focus on identified themes from the narratives. The research questions that guided the study were: How do teachers and learners experience violence in a Cape Flats school? What are the teachers' experiences of violence in schools? What are learners' experiences of violence in schools? What factors influence school-based violence?

5.2. The process of data analysis

Qualitative data were inductively analysed by the researcher through a thematic system. The data were categorised into themes. Similarities and differences were identified. Data were coded into meaningful units. The themes were categorised and related to the literature (Robson, 2011).

5.3. Themes identified in the narratives

1. Lack of support from school management
2. Implementation of school policy on code of conduct
3. Student behaviour:
 - Use of drugs in school
 - Poor discipline
 - Boys as bullies
 - Violence outside the classroom
4. Low teacher morale
5. Lack of parental involvement
6. Poor academic performance
7. Peer pressure
8. Fear of being raped

5.3.1. Teacher morale

All the respondents that identified teacher morale as an issue indicated that they become discouraged by the school management team (SMT) when they try to address discipline. The respondents mentioned that the SMT does not support teachers in maintaining discipline in the classroom, for example, when a learner is sent to the office for the principal or deputy principals to assist with discipline, the teachers are not satisfied with the outcome. Sometimes the learner returns to class without teachers being informed of what happened in the principal's office. Teachers find it discouraging when the school management does not form a partnership with them to discipline learners. Teachers become discouraged to report violent learners to management, as these learners are not disciplined. Teachers mentioned that violence in the classroom affects scholastic achievement as some learners perform badly in their studies. Teacher 1 noted that:

When the violence gets out of hand, I escalate it to the principal's office to deal with it. Sending learners to the principal's office doesn't always work. Because sometimes learners are sent back to class without any action being taken. Such things demotivate me and other teachers to report learners.

A study by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007:1) noted that without teachers, there can be no education, and without education, sustained economic, political and social development is not possible. It is further argued that there are growing concerns that teachers are becoming increasingly demotivated, which contributes to deteriorating teacher performance and learning outcomes.

Teacher 2 mentioned that she gets frustrated at work by lack of support and unruly learners. She said effective teaching does not happen in the classroom: learners are rude to teachers and there is no proper support from the Department of Education for teachers. The respondent commented that she felt like leaving the teaching profession for another job because of learner behaviour. The Education Department does not provide teachers with capacity and strategies to be able to deal with poor discipline. She said that when learners are unruly, she is unable to teach, and learners fail as effective teaching did not take place.

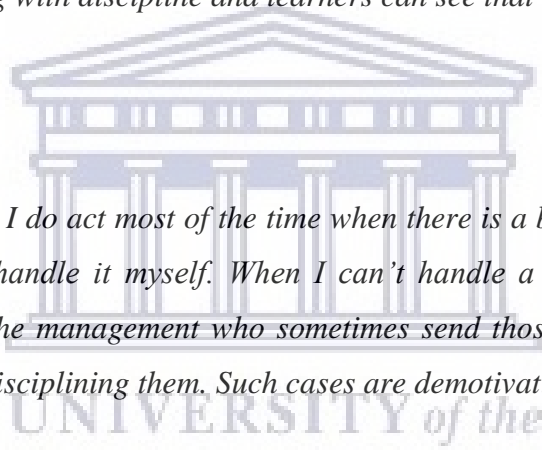
Swanepoel (2009:464) suggests that a lack of job satisfaction results in frequent teacher absenteeism from school, aggressive behaviour towards colleagues and learners, and early exit from the teaching profession. In this study, however, it is evident that with the support of

the SMT and Department of Education, teachers might be able to deal with poor discipline in the classroom. This may ensure that teacher morale is boosted and no teacher will think of leaving the teaching profession because of the poor discipline of learners. The Department of Education should support teachers by offering training on how to deal with violence in schools. If that could be done, teachers' problems might be reduced.

5.3.2. Lack of support from school management

The findings show that respondents experience a range of identical challenges in the school. They mentioned that there is a lack of support from school management when they report incidences of violent behaviour to the office. They feel hopeless, as in most cases they do not get the support they need. According to Teacher 3, *When I report cases to the management sometimes they act and at other times they do not. There is an inconsistency here at school when it comes to dealing with discipline and learners can see that too.*

Teacher 2 noted



...as a teacher, I do act most of the time when there is a bullying incident in my class and handle it myself. When I can't handle a case of bullying I escalate it to the management who sometimes send those learners back to class without disciplining them. Such cases are demotivating to teachers.

These statements show that there is no proper dialogue between teachers and management to deal with poor discipline. Freire (1970) stresses the importance of dialogue between teachers and school management to help deal with challenges facing the school and to learn about the spaces they operate in.

According to Freire (1970), dialogue is a component that directly influences the formation of a relationship between educator and learner based on equal opportunity. In the case of this school, management needs to address disciplinary challenges with learners that are reported by teachers. This can help teachers have a better relationship with their learners (Durakoglu, 2013). "Dialogue, as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lacks humility. How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?" (Freire, 1970:213).

In the case of this school, evidence shows it is problematic for teachers to have discussions about the environment and issues that they face. This is caused by the dismissive attitude teachers experience from management. Teachers are not given an opportunity to learn more about the culture and environment they work in, as there are no open discussions that take place. Kiprop (2012:126) argues that without a disciplined atmosphere, teachers find it difficult to teach and learners struggle to learn effectively. Appropriate disciplinary practices should involve all stakeholders in the school and its community.

5.3.3. Implementation of school policy on code of conduct

The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, notes that every school in South Africa must devise its own code of conduct. In framing a code of conduct as a consensus document and before accepting it, the governing body must include the parents, learners, teachers, and non-teaching staff at that school. After acceptance of the code of conduct, each stakeholder must receive a copy. All stakeholders must be consulted when the code of conduct is revised annually or when any revision is done. The purpose of a code of conduct is to encourage self-discipline, exemplary conduct and positive discipline, as learners learn by observation and experience. All key stakeholders should be dedicated to the code of conduct, despite its being directed specifically at learners (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:101).

A relevant policy and implementation guidelines for the policy can assist with law and order within the school. A code of conduct is an essential document in a school and each school needs to create a code of conduct that is in accordance with the South African Schools Act and the Constitution. Without a relevant code of conduct, according to the interviews conducted in the study, it becomes a challenge to manage a school and classes for teachers. School management and teachers should ensure that the code is implemented. The lack of a code of conduct in this school showed that teachers are helpless when they face behavioural challenges from learners. According to Teacher 3:

Here at school, there are no policies in place to deal with discipline. We don't have a valid code of conduct. Contributions were made by teachers on the code of conduct; however, the school hasn't invited parents to endorse it.

Teachers find it difficult to engage with ill-disciplined learners in the classroom. The two young teachers in the study complained about learners who do as they please in the classroom while they are teaching. The teachers stated that learners, especially boys, know that teachers

and school management will not reprimand them with regard to their bad behaviour. Bruner (2009:179) notes that teachers should reflect on how they deal with learners.

Even though teachers struggle with learner behaviour within the school, some teachers are doing their best to maintain discipline in class without any policies to follow. A comment by one respondent stood out among all the other participants:

To create a safe space in my class, as the teacher, I encourage learners to talk to me after school to discuss issues that affect them and try to find solutions and advise where I can. I also have class rules that were created by the whole class; using the rules works at times. (T2)

To discipline a class, teachers need to be motivators. Teachers and school have to create a culture of safety and a non-judgemental environment. Bruner (2009:179) notes that teachers should encourage learners to be free and independent thinkers and take responsibility for their actions. Learners should be asked to familiarise themselves with school policies, and use their creativity in the classroom to express themselves so that it can lead to positive behaviour.

Bronfenbrenner (2015) argues that the environment closest to the child, which can be the home or classroom, has an influence on the way a child behaves. In the microsystem, Bronfenbrenner (2015) notes that children learn the rules of interaction and social norms according to what the environment exposes the children to. If the school does not take action when a child misbehaves or bullies another child, it becomes easy for children to discern the patterns in which the school handles cases.

In an analysis of teachers' comments regarding school policies and learner behaviour, one respondent mentioned something similar to Bronfenbrenner's idea:

It is shocking to think that a Grade 3 learner is a gang leader; however, this might be caused by influences from home or the community where these children live.

For a learner to succeed in school, the school needs to have clear policies on dealing with learner behaviour. Schools have to find ways to understand learner behaviour. Lack of a code of conduct in schools may lead to bad behaviour. The role of schools and teachers is to create

a long-term relationship which can shape the development of a child. Bronfenbrenner (1979) notes that it is sad that modern-day society is neglecting building long-term relationships with children and their homes.

The code of conduct should suit the growth of learners and be applicable to different school levels. The language used must be easily understandable. The format should be user-friendly. In the case of the sampled school, it has not developed a code of conduct to guide educators and learners on how to handle themselves. This is evidenced by the teachers sampled in this study, as they complained about the dearth of policies to deal with discipline, and which affects how they teach in class. Grossi and Dos Santos (2012) studied the safety of learners in Brazil's public schools and found that bullying is common in schools, with both teachers and learners feeling unsafe. When there are no appropriate interventions in place to deal with bullying, the likelihood of violence breaking out among learners increases in schools.

5.3.4. Violence outside the classroom

Violent behaviour is a challenge in many communities in South Africa. Learners in schools absorb most of their behaviour from the communities where they live. Popular television shows in South Africa also show violence, and learners mostly love these characters from television shows. For example, a TV show called *Uzalo* is popular. Learners like to imitate what they see on television and in the community. If violence and bullying are common in their communities, learners are likely to bring violence into the school. Teacher 2 narrated:

During the break, it is common to find reports from female learners being bullied by boys. During break boys bully each other in the toilets; younger boys especially are the victims.

Lizo (Learner 2) said:

Parents also have to do their part and discipline their children. Some learners copy what they see happening in the community and bring it here to our school by being gangsters or fighting each other.

It is evident that children imitate what they see; they imitate violent behaviour that they are exposed to at home or in the community. For children to cope with stressful situations they experience at home, they might become aggressive to other learners or teachers at school

(Thomson, 2005:14). Bullies in many cases come from violent homes. When parents are violent to each other in front of their children, it affects how those children behave towards others.

The community also plays a role in how children behave. For example, in the community of Samora Machel, learners mentioned that it is common to see people fighting in the street or two groups of gangs fighting (Thomson, 2005). Wadedesango et al. (2011) found that a child from a poor family may steal things such as lunch boxes from others at school or use violence to appropriate lunch boxes or money from other children for survival. Teachers commented that learners reported that during break, other learners steal their food or money by force. In communities such as the poor areas of the Cape Flats, learners use any chance they get to steal for survival. It is important to supervise learners at all times in class or outside class during break. School safety committees should be established in all schools and work to prevent violence. Playground duty rosters should be drawn up and implemented. In the case of this school, learners are left alone to play during break. Teachers do not do playground duty. It is important as well to implement team-building activities to strengthen relationships among learners. Teachers and parents need to be skilled at how to deal with bullying and violence in schools, and how to identify signs of bullying in learners.

5.3.5. Student behaviour:

- **Use of drugs in school**

The school is located in a underprivileged community. The area is overcrowded and there are places not far from school that sell alcohol. Learners in the school have easy access to drugs such as dagga. There is evidence that some learners in the school use drugs within the schoolyard and become violent towards their peers once they have used drugs. Teacher 3 notes, *In this school, there is a group of boys that smoke dagga and they bully other learners.* It is apparent that the use of drugs in school by learners leads to bad behaviour as teacher Mbuso mentions above. It creates an environment that makes teachers struggle to do their work.

Walton, Avenant and Van Schalkwyk (2016:3) note that substance abuse in South Africa among youth is on the rise. The use of drugs in schools is a challenge, as it causes learners to misbehave. Schools struggle to deal with the challenge of drug abuse (Department of Social Development, 1999). Drug use causes tensions between teachers

and learners; consequently the South African government has changed school policies and focused on the well-being of children. Learners are often caught smoking in the toilets and behind school walls by teachers. Such learners are highly problematic to teachers and other learners as they become violent when they are 'high' on drugs (McLaughlin & Clarke, 2010:185). According to Liberante (2012:7), educators dealing with learners that use drugs become demotivated. The relationship between educator and learner becomes strained, as learners on drugs tend to misbehave. Given the principle of *in loco parentis*, educators act as temporary parents to children; hence, they have a responsibility to guide and equip learners for the future.

Mashau et al. (2016) indicate that a competent educator can nurture a learner and form a positive relationship. Liberante (2012:7) indicates that such relationships can be a positive factor for children with numerous social problems. Learners in this school are exposed to drugs, crime, poverty and parental unemployment. Such living conditions are not child friendly, and it makes it difficult for a child to have a proper childhood.

Bester and Du Plessis (2010) indicate that a child that uses drugs tends to have behavioural problems which can be challenging for educators to deal with. For some educators, such learners can be deemed attention seeking, disruptive and violent. Drug use has an impact on learners' well-being; it affects learners' ability to perform well; and also has an impact on the learner-to-learner and teacher-to-learner relationship. Van Schalkwyk and Wissing (2010) concur that educators find it difficult to deal with learners facing socio-emotional problems compared with learners with academic problems. Educators are not trained to deal with learners with emotional and social problems. It is therefore a challenge for educators and they become impatient with learners that disrupt classes. It is evident that drugs, poor performance and disruptive behaviour affect the relationship between educator and learner.

For educators to have a positive relationship with their learners, there should be active involvement, warmth and open communication in the classroom. When educators have open communication, it is possible to promote academic and social competence to learners. Such educators can motivate learners to stop using drugs.

- **Poor discipline**

Poor discipline among learners is a challenge faced by many teachers in schools. When learners cannot behave themselves, it affects not only the teachers but other learners too. Teachers need to find ways to deal with poor discipline in the classroom as it can lead to disruption of lessons. When learners are not disciplined, the chances of teaching without disruption are slim. Poor discipline can create an environment where it is difficult to teach and learn. Teacher 4 noted:

The bad behaviour of some of these learners creates a toxic environment within the classroom and the school in general. It becomes difficult to teach; the class becomes uncontrollable.

Learner 1 (Mbasu) said:

My recent experience of bullies comes from learners in my class. There is a group of girls and boys that sit at the back of the class. They are so disruptive; they talk negative things about other learners, including me. One day they were making silly jokes about me; that time we were alone – there was no teacher.

It is evident that bad behaviour leads to bullying and can disrupt teaching and learning. Bullying which is caused by a lack of discipline can be described as the cause of violence in South African schools. According to Nthate (2017), owing to bad behaviour at school, a 13-year-old learner was a victim of violence at school. The learner was attacked by a peer and sustained injuries which led to his hospitalisation. Brandt (2017) notes that bad behaviour which leads to bullying is connected to gender-based violence. A video filmed inside a school in KwaZulu-Natal shows a male pupil assaulting a female pupil. Poor discipline which leads to violence, reflects a child's being: such bad behaviour can destroy a learner's chances of enjoying school. For example, a Cape Town schoolgirl committed suicide after being mistreated at school by a group of girls (Brandt, 2017).

Such incidents show that learners need to behave well for the sake of others and themselves, and to make school a learner-friendly environment (Baadjies, 2015). It is evident that when a learner is exposed to bullies, he/she feels compelled to join a group

of bullies or risk being a victim of bullying. For example, a Grade 3 learner at the school the research was conducted in, is the ringleader of a boy gang. She grew up in an environment where bullying is the norm and being part of a gang is regarded as a status symbol. Bad behaviour in schools frequently occurs when there is no teacher in sight or in places such as in toilets or on the playground where children are not supervised by teachers. In 2017, the member of executive council (MEC) of Education in Gauteng, Panyaza Lesufi, warned learners misbehaving and bullying at school that poor behaviour would not be tolerated. Learners found bullying others would be removed from school (Pijoo, 2017).

Learners who do not have a sense of right or wrong, or those that are not aware of their strengths or weaknesses, tend to bully others to gain popularity. The young teachers at the school where the study was conducted mentioned that sometimes it was difficult to control a class. Learners do not take their education seriously and do not want to take responsibility for their education. Such actions disadvantage other learners and the teacher who has to teach the class.

- **Boys as bullies**

Children may be fearful or feel worthless if they are victims of bullying. If a learner is a victim of bullying at school, it is possible for the learner not to want to return to school. Learners are frightened of meeting the perpetrators if they go to school. Teacher 2 noted:

As a teacher, it becomes difficult to teach as you are busy controlling crowds, especially the older boys. They have a tendency of bullying girls and younger boys.

According to Learner 2, Lizo:

My wish inside the school premises is for the older boys to stop being bullies. The boys in my school can be such bullies; they bully girls and younger boys than them. It makes me angry sometimes. I was once bullied by an older boy; he took my lunch money and I did not report him as I was scared of him.

Juvenen and Graham's (2014:165) study found that bullying involves intimidation or humiliation. In most cases, a physically stronger or socially more prominent person tends to abuse his or her power to bully others. Bullying can be name-calling, the spread of rumours, physical or even cyberbullying by sharing embarrassing pictures online. Teachers mentioned that learners from other African countries are being bullied: those learners are called derogatory names such as *igweja*, meaning 'foreigner'. Teachers say it is bullying to call another learner by such a name, and as teachers, they try to discourage such behaviour. Teacher 2 stated:

Sometimes I become involved when learners fight in class, for example, I was once hit by an object from one boy who was hitting another learner. When I try to teach and some learners are bullying others or disrupting the class, it is demotivating. Sometimes I feel drained and powerless. It is emotionally draining and affects how we teach, and let me state that not all learners are bad – here at school we do have good learners.

The well-being of teachers and learners is affected by bullying. The effects of bullying can affect learners up to adulthood. The victims of bullying are traumatised and suffer from depression. Bullying in schools is a challenge that needs attention from all school stakeholders.

5.3.6. Parent involvement

Parental involvement is an important part of the school system. For schools to be successful at educating learners, parents to have a role to play. Thato (Learner 3) said:

My teacher always complains about parents that do not come to school when asked by teachers, especially those of misbehaving learners. If parents and teachers can work together, I'm sure learners will behave better in school.

Without parental involvement, schools will find it difficult to deal with challenges such as discipline. Teachers might feel demotivated to deal with challenging behaviour if parents do not play their part. In respect of parent involvement, the following was said.

It is demotivating when parents do not play the role of disciplining their children. Some parents come to a meeting when I call them; they get here and become rude to teachers in front of the learners.

This finding is supported in a study conducted by Gutman and Midgley (2000), that revealed that most schools do not gain support from parents to help improve their children's education. Teachers claim that parents do not guide and counsel their children about discipline: they leave everything to teachers. Teacher 4 noted:

When parents are called to talk or discipline their learners, they also complain that even at home such learners do not listen. Some parents suggest that teachers must beat learners when they bully others.

Appropriate disciplinary practices should involve all stakeholders in the school and community. It is evident that parents have an important role to play in their children's education, as it is not only the role of the school to deal with ill-disciplined learners. Partnerships between schools, community and police are important to deal with challenges faced by schools, such as the use of drugs by learners. If all stakeholders play their part, schools have the potential to become safe spaces for learners to learn and grow.

Schools can involve parents by treating parents as partners in their children's education. Training on topics of interest should be organised for parents and they should be allowed to participate in school programmes.

5.3.7. Peer violence

Learner-on-learner violence is a common challenge in many underprivileged schools. It can get out of hand if not addressed. When learners are violent to each other, effective learning is minimal. Learners are at risk of hurting each other. Peer violence can lead to learners dropping out of school. Teacher 1 noted that learners are a risk to themselves and their studies:

The way these learners are so violent, it even affects them in terms of academic performance. Most of these violent learners end up being dropouts. Mostly boys that are misbehaving here at school – they fail their

studies and drop out of school. The violence that these learners are doing in class affects other learners mentally and academically.

The issue of learner-on-learner violence is a global challenge that needs an effective solution. Peer violence is dangerous and can lead to suicide. Teacher 4 mentioned that there is no support from stakeholders to assist with learner behaviour:

As the school we do not get full support from education authorities. I wish we had resident social workers or psychologists to assist with behaviour. Unfortunately we as the school, we do not have that.

Teachers need support from other stakeholders such as psychologists and school social workers. In cases of active violence at school, a thorough diagnosis of the cause should be done to prevent its continuing. Teachers and parents need to work together to stop school violence. Teacher 1 mentioned that she speaks to learners to make them comfortable to talk to her if they encounter any challenges at school:

To create a safe space in my class as the teacher, I encourage learners to talk to me after school to discuss issues that affect them and try finding solutions and advising where I can. I also have class rules that were created by the whole class; using the rules works at times.

Teachers are regarded as the main providers of solutions in schools, including the matter of violence between learners. For teachers to be able to find a solution to violent behaviour between learners, they need to be well prepared to deal with such behaviour. Without proper preparation by teachers, even the best school policies will not work to solve violence. Teachers need to understand their role and know what needs to be done when there is a case of violence at the school. It is important for teachers to familiarise themselves with school policies and to whom they should refer learners when they misbehave. A disciplinary committee within the school, which consists of teachers, should be constituted to assist teachers to deal with violence between learners. One effective way to deal with peer violence in schools is for the teachers to develop class rules with learners regarding learner behaviour. Those rules need to include how to treat peers with dignity. The class rules should emanate from learners, not from the teacher. Learners need to be taught responsibility and

accountability for their actions. Teachers need to open their doors for learners to be able to talk to them and help where they can when learners are facing challenges such as bullying.

To discipline my class I try to talk to learners, discuss the results of misbehaving and learners bullying each other at school. Sometimes talking to them works; sometimes it just doesn't work. I also encourage positive behaviour, class participation to keep discipline. (T2)

Teachers need thorough training on how to deal with learner behaviour in the classroom. The Safe Schools Programme of the Western Cape Education Department should be used as a guide to assist schools in dealing with violence. The Safe Schools Programme offers mentorship programmes, victim empowerment, and youth development, as well as creative and constructive approaches to conflict resolution. If schools were to implement the programme with the help of Education Department officials, violence could be reduced in schools. Teachers need to discuss behaviour at school so that learners are aware of their actions and how those actions affect other people around them.

5.3.8. Poor academic performance

Poor academic performance is a challenge in many South African schools, especially those where learners' first language is not English. Learners that do not speak English find it challenging to learn in a language they are not familiar with. In the case of this school, learners speak isiXhosa as their mother tongue; however, lessons are conducted in English. Abusive behaviour that disrupts teaching and learning is exacerbated by this, as learners do not concentrate and do not participate in lessons due to language issues. A teacher noted:

It becomes difficult to teach, the class becomes uncontrollable, and then other innocent learners suffer and do not perform during exams as teaching was not effective because of the lack of discipline in class. (Teacher 1)

Abuse and poor academic performance are interrelated. Learners fail to have a positive contribution in a classroom setting if abuse is rife.

Violence in school affects learners because they get hurt when they fight. Other learners are always scared, especially when the boys are arguing

with us, young teachers. These learners disrespect almost all the teachers.

Teacher 4?

Abused children are a danger to themselves: such children have emotional challenges such as anger and are at risk of abusing drugs. Abused children have difficulty in connecting with their peers and teachers at school. Academic performance is likely to be influenced by the school climate, such as general underachieving in class, constant fighting among learners, not taking school work seriously, as well as disrespect towards teachers. Teacher 1 mentioned the struggle teachers faced in dealing with violence in the classroom.

Violence makes these learners aggressive and disrespectful; it disrupts teaching and learning. It becomes difficult to teach effectively. When effective teaching doesn't happen, learner performance gets affected. Instead of teaching like teachers, we spend time controlling the crowds, trying to discipline learners.

It is the innocent and dedicated learners that suffer most from such disruptions. Teachers waste time trying to discipline learners and lose teaching time. Learners are not performing well, according to respondents, as they are affected by the bad behaviour in class.

5.3.9. Fear of being raped

Children, mostly those in poor areas of South Africa, are at high risk of being raped and murdered. South Africa generally is not a safe country for children. In some parts of the country, children are not safe to play in the park without the risk of being raped and killed. Chetty (2019:5) notes that children's rights organisations are concerned at the level of crime against children. Recent killings of children have led the public to put pressure on the government to protect children. Mathews and Gould's (2017) school-based 2019 Optimus study on child abuse, violence and neglect estimates that 35.4% of South African children experience some form of sexual abuse, 34% experience physical abuse, and 15% experience neglect. The study reveals that about 42% of children in South Africa have experienced some form of violence. During the interviews, Learner 1 commented:

There are stories of people raping kids in the community so I wouldn't want to be a victim. I'd rather walk in a group. I am scared that I might be bullied or raped if I walk alone.

This comment by Learner 1 shows that female learners do not feel safe in the area – girls live in fear in Samora Machel. A child afraid to walk to school alone is evidence that the area is not safe for a girl child. The community of Samora Machel needs to rise up and demand better protection from the government. Learners might be unable to focus on the lessons at school and concentrate more on how they are going to get home safely. Learner 2 mentioned the risk of rape during the interviews:

Some children play outside until it is dark because their parents work late shifts and there is no one to call them to order. Such kids are at a high risk of being raped or murdered.

The above statements show that female learners do not live in peace and enjoy their childhood. For a young child to be scared of being raped on her way to school or when playing outside can never be normal. During the interviews, the male learners never mentioned being afraid of walking to school or the risk of being raped. One male learner narrated that he was not scared of bullies at school, as he knew them. Girls, however, are more cautious of being bullied, robbed or raped. The statement by the male learner shows the patriarchal privilege males have compared with females in society. To show that male learners have some form of privilege, the following comment stood out from Learner 3, Thatho:

I know most of the boys that are gang members in my area; because of that I am safe in terms of being robbed. I can walk alone from school without feeling threatened. I do not feel unsafe at all – I just do my thing.

Learner 3 feels safe because the bullies are his peers and he mentioned that he is not scared. There are stories of young boys being raped at school or in the community, even though such stories are not as common as females being victims of rape. The issue of male privilege did come up in the narrative from Learner 3, Thatho:

During the day, as I mentioned, I can walk alone without any trouble. I think being a boy also helps because for girls it is not that easy. At school I am fine. I have friends – we hang out together – no one really bothers us.

The learner is acknowledging that being a male does protect him from being bullied at school or in the community. Learner 5, Lebohang, is a girl, and she is not free to walk alone. She noted:

When I come to school my parents advise me not to walk alone, so I always wait for neighbours' kids and walk with them as it is safer to walk as a group than as an individual.

Comments such as the above show the need for a better partnership between school and community. It cannot be normal that female learners are scared to walk to school or home. Social workers should spend more time in the field preventing the abuse of children and spend less time doing administrative tasks. More social workers should be recruited, specifically for child welfare, and be provided with proper training. The abuse of children affects how learners perform at school and the way they grow up. If neglected, abused children become broken adults, the abuse and bullying that we see daily will have a negative effect on the country. Abusing children sexually, physically or mentally does not only affect the child. Teachers and parents are affected too. The behaviour of an abused child becomes difficult to deal when that child becomes an adult.

5.4. Conclusion

It is important for schools to take the issue of violence in schools seriously. Communities where schools are located have an influence on how learners behave inside the school. Learners are influenced by what they are exposed to at home or in the community where they reside. If learners are exposed to violence, it is possible that they will transfer that violence to school. Teachers struggle to deliver lessons if learners are violent and unruly in class. Learners in violent classes struggle to learn in such environments. Lessons are disrupted and teachers spend more time disciplining learners than teaching. Violence in schools is a challenge, and schools need solutions to stop the violence. It is important to have policies that deal with violent behaviour, and such policies need to be implemented at all times. It is important for schools and communities to work together to create a safe space for learners and teachers. If schools do not offer this safe space, the schooling system will collapse and learners will not receive an adequate education. There will be a concomitant dropout rate, with passive citizens who cannot contribute to the welfare or economy of the country.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The data that emerged in the narratives and observations were to address the main research question relating to the investigation: teachers' and learners' experiences of violence at school. The teacher and learner interviews focused on their experiences of violence in school, its effect on them personally and professionally, and the influence of the community on school violence. The objectives of the study were to explore teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school in the Western Cape. The study aimed to investigate strategies used in schools to counter violence and to protect learners and teachers from violence. The voices of learners provided information on their feelings of safety or peril at school. The voices of teachers provided information on how violence affects them personally, the teaching programme, learner achievement, and the community in which they reside

To interpret the findings of the study, a well-constructed framework by Bronfenbrenner, the Ecological Systems Theory, was used to guide the study. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory framed the understanding of violence in school. The theory guided the research reflecting a correlation relationship between the external environment (the community) and the school. The Ecological Systems Theory provided a lens to investigate the community's influence on what is happening in the internal environment, which is the school. For example, exposure to violence in the community influences how learners behave at school. The Ecological Systems Theory guided the research on how schools handle violent behaviour and how behaviour affects teachers and learners. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory allowed me, as the researcher, to unpack the influencing role of school policies, the school management team, parents, peers, media, government, and the community on a learner's development and behaviour.

The findings from the study allowed me as researcher to better understand the influence of the community in promoting violent behaviour of learners at school. The community that learners reside in and the area in which the school is located have a major influence on learner behaviour. From the data on teachers' and learners' experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school in Cape Town, it was clear that learners and teachers become victims of violent behaviour which impacts the delivery of teaching and learning at school. The magnitude of violence in the Cape Flats area, where the school in this case study is located, affects the

livelihood of learners in the area. Nyanga, which is the area in which this Samora Machel school is located, is regarded as one of the murder capitals of South Africa. The Cape Flats are notorious for gang-related crimes, murder, rape and kidnapping of children. Learners end up joining gangs to 'fit in' with society. Lack of role models, poverty and high unemployment are some of the contributors to violent behaviour in the Cape Flats. Schools find it challenging to handle learners that bring outside violence into the classroom.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory indicates that all individuals are part of a related system. The results from this study show how the teachers, learners, parents, SMT and community that operate at various levels known as a microsystem, exosystem, and macrosystem, influence the school environment. When one links a microsystem and learner behaviour, it becomes evident that violence and poor behaviour do not happen in isolation; they are encouraged by the relationship between families, peer groups, school and culture.

Key themes that emerged from the data were about policies, drugs, teacher support from the school management team, parents' roles and violence. A social audit report by Equal Education (EE) (2015) revealed that one in six learners and school administrators feel unsafe at school in the Western Cape. The findings from this study support the social audit report by Equal Education. It was evident from the data that many learners and teachers felt unsafe in their school environment. The 2015 Equal Education study shows that 22% of students either had been victims of violence or had witnessed violence at school (Equal Education, 2015:16).

6.2. Recommendations

6.2.1. Lack of support from school management

Lack of support by management is a challenge to teachers, and they find it difficult to report incidences of violence in their classrooms as nothing gets done about the reported cases. It is recommended that devising a reporting structure should guarantee protection and quick assistance to teachers. The reporting structure can be linked to the safety representative officer at the school, and the safety committee, deputy principal, principal, and school safety programme officer at district level and at head office. The inclusion of school safety programme officers can assist to speed up the resolution of the problem. School management and safety committee members will be forced to act on reported cases and solve them quickly if they know that superiors are monitoring their actions. Every month a report can be sent to

the school safety programme at district level to state the number of cases reported and number of cases resolved by the safety committee and school management.

It is recommended that the creation of an environment conducive to teachers is needed at the school to motivate teachers. Kiprop (2012:128) argues that without a disciplined atmosphere, teachers find it difficult to teach and learners struggle to learn effectively. Appropriate disciplinary practices should involve all stakeholders in the school and within the community. Teachers and school management need training on how to solve violent issues among learners and teachers. The school needs to form an active safety and disciplinary committee that will consist of teachers, non-teaching staff and a member of School Governing Body (SGB) to assist the school with disciplinary issues. The committee should be responsible for safety and creating a disciplinary policy for the school. The committee should devise programmes such as school safety day, where the theme could be 'safe in school' or 'anti-bullying day' to educate learners about the dangers of bullying and violence. Peer groups can be formed with learners, and a teacher can support the group to guide learners and assist them with awareness of violence and bullying at school.

6.2.2. Parental involvement

It is recommended that parents need to be educated on their role in their children's education. Schools should involve parents by treating parents as partners in their children's education. Training in topics of interest should be organised for parents to allow them to participate in school programmes.

To educate parents, the SGB can organise a training workshop for parents and educate them about the role they need to play at school and the importance of working with the school to address challenges such as poor learner behaviour. Parents can be identified within the community, and be appointed as ad hoc members of the SGB. Those parents can be given the responsibility to distribute information to other parents in the community, using pamphlets and social media, or address parents during community meetings on the role they should play at school and the challenges faced by schools. The parents appointed to the SGB can help change the narrative on education. Parents that are not working and have free time can be asked to patrol the streets in the morning when learners go to school and in the afternoon when learners go home to ensure the safety of learners. Some parents can be asked to volunteer at the school by conducting playground duties with teachers. Such parents will have to be vetted to see if they are fit to work with children. Parent-teacher talks should be

conducted every school term to discuss learner behaviour and performance at school. It should be compulsory for parents to attend parent–teacher talks or to send a representative.

6.2.3. Implementation of school policy on code of conduct

It is recommended that the SMT and SGB be trained and obtain the necessary skills in legislation. Effective workshops should be held annually for the SGB on legislation to refresh or retrain them. The importance of having a relevant code of conduct in schools should be part of the training. It is recommended that government make it compulsory for all schools to have a relevant code of conduct that is aligned with the South African Constitution. It is recommended that once there is a code of conduct at a school, teachers need to be trained on how to implement the code of conduct in their classes effectively. SMT should enforce the implementation of the code of conduct by all teachers, and learners should be aware of the consequences if the code of conduct is not implemented. If the school does not take action when a child misbehaves or bullies another child, it becomes easy for children to discern a pattern in the school's handling of such cases.

It is recommended that the SMT encourage teachers and learners to treat each other with respect, irrespective of their backgrounds and country of origin. It is recommended that all disciplinary hearings conducted at school by the school disciplinary committee should be guided by the code of conduct. Learners that are witnesses to cases need to be called to testify in a safe space without the fear of being victimised.

6.2.4. Student behaviour and safety

Schools need to do awareness training about poor behaviour and the dangers of using drugs and drug abuse. Schools can invite social workers to talk to learners about drugs and poor behaviour. The police can be called once in a while to come to school and do a search for drugs. Searching of learners should be handled with the sensitivity it deserves and within the policy of drug searches to avoid a breach of the law. Serious cases of misconduct, where the code of conduct is not effective, and that require suspension or expulsion, should be reported to the office of the head of department (HoD) in the province. It is recommended that the SMT create a playground duty policy for the supervision of learners by teachers. Playground duty needs to be divided according to different times of the school day. There should be a morning duty, break duty, and afternoon duty supervised by more than four teachers, as the school is too big to be supervised by one or two teachers. Afternoon duty is recommended in case learners that use transport have a transport crisis. Learners are left unsupervised outside

the school gate while waiting for their transport to arrive. Sometimes the transport is late, and it is dangerous for learners and frightening, as female learners do not feel safe on the street. The risk of being robbed is high, as well as the fear of being raped. Learners can remain inside the school premises until their transport arrives.

When members of staff are on playground duty, it is recommended that they move around the school to be able to have a better view and control of learners. The SMT need to emphasise to those staff members that are on duty to be aware that they will be answerable to the SMT if any incident such as bullying occurs or there is misconduct during supervision time. When there are no appropriate interventions in place to deal with bullying, the likelihood of violence among learners increases in schools.

It is recommended that all staff members at the school have the responsibility to address misconduct or misbehaviour when it happens during supervision. The SMT need to ensure that staff members take supervision duties seriously. Staff members failing to honour their playground duty schedule should be reported to the school principal for disciplinary action.

6.3. Conclusion

Although this study cannot be generalised, I believe that it represents what is going on at schools on the Cape Flats and in the majority of township and rural schools in South Africa. Violence in schools is a challenge to both teachers and learners. To stop violence at schools, it has to start with the community where the school is located. Learners that are exposed to violence are likely to become violent. Schools then have a responsibility to devise policies that can guide teachers and learners on how to stop the violence and create an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

It is clear from this study that female learners feel safer inside the school premises, compared with when walking outside on the street. The school has the responsibility to protect learners when they are at school by making sure that violence does not happen. There must be measures in place to deal with bad behaviour, such as an active school disciplinary committee that deals with discipline. Teachers have to be well informed about their duties and the importance of keeping discipline at school, in class, or outside during break or after school.

What I have gathered from this study is that violence at schools is a challenge and makes it difficult for teachers to teach effectively and for learners to learn. This tells us that there is a

need for teacher education institutions to train teachers effectively on how to deal with violence at schools. Schools should invite parents to assist schools by maintaining law and order through patrols and engagement with teachers. Parents need to be motivated to work with schools to help solve challenges faced by schools. The Western Cape Education Department needs to do awareness training in schools about the safe schools programme and use it effectively to make schools a safer place for all.



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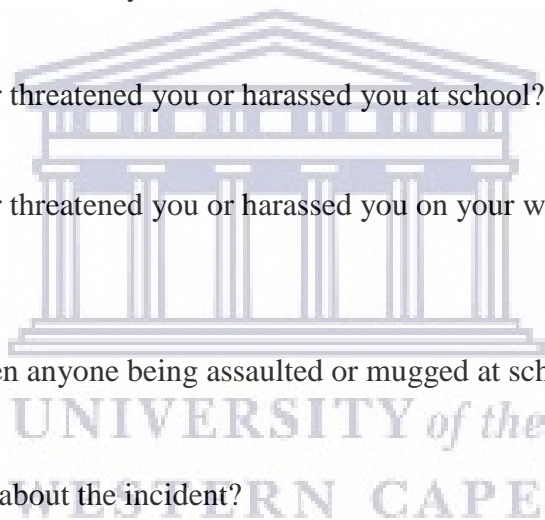
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedule (Learners)

1. Describe the area where you live.
2. Describe your home and tell me about your family.
3. How do you travel to school?
4. How safe do you feel on your way to and from school?
5. How safe do you feel when you are inside the school?
6. Has someone ever threatened you or harassed you at school?
7. Has someone ever threatened you or harassed you on your way to school or on your way home?
8. Have you ever seen anyone being assaulted or mugged at school? Describe the incident.
9. How did you feel about the incident?
10. How did you feel about your safety after the incident?
11. Have you or your peers been beaten by a teacher at school? Explain what happened.
12. How do you feel about the use of corporal punishment in school?
13. What do you think can be done to stop violence in your school?



Appendix B: Interview Schedule (Teachers)

1. Have you witnessed violence in your class or school?
2. Describe an incident of violence in your class or school?
3. How were you personally affected by school violence?
4. How do you think school violence affects learners?
5. Describe incidents of verbal violence in your class/school.
6. Describe incidents of bullying in your class/school.
7. How did you react to incidents of school violence?
8. How safe do you feel inside the school premises? Explain.
9. How do you deal with discipline in your class? Explain.
10. What are your views on corporal punishment?
11. How do you handle cases of bullying?
12. How do you create a safe space for learners to speak out and express themselves without being ridiculed by others?
13. What can the Department of Education and the community do to alleviate challenges teachers face in township schools?
14. How would you describe the learners you teach currently compared with the learners you taught when you started teaching? If there is any difference, what do you think is causing that?
15. What kinds of training have you received to deal with violence at school?

16. Does the school have any policies in place to guide you on how to deal with violence and safety? Do you think these policies may affect the way you react to violent behaviour?



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Appendix C: Observation schedule for safety in schools

Description	Yes	No	Sometimes
School is safe for learners during school hours			
School is safe for teachers during school hours			
Learners fight among themselves			
There is a security guard at the school gate			
Outsiders enter school premises without permission			
Outsiders rob learners			
Outsiders sell drugs to learners inside the school			
Outsiders intimidate teachers			
Learners rob other learners			
The school has a playground duties roster			
Teachers are honouring their playground duties			
The school has a safety policy			
The school has a safety committee			
Members of the committee are working together			
The school has CCTV cameras			
Cameras are monitored all the time			
The school is fenced properly			
Learners are monitored when they go to the bathrooms			
Learners carry dangerous weapons			
School is safe after hours			
School buildings are suitable for learners to learn			
Learners use drugs and alcohol, or smoke cigarettes			
Learners are part of gangs			

Discussion

Appendix D: Consent Letter

CONSENT LETTER 1

Zandisile Mawethu Sitoyi
(Master's Candidate)

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
BELLVILLE
8000**

Email: 3879577@myuwc.ac.za

Dear Parent,

I am currently doing my master's in education at the University of the Western Cape and form part of a research unit, focusing on literacy development and poverty. I would like to investigate teachers' and learners' experience of violence at a Cape Flats school, Western Cape.

I would like your child _____ to participate in this study. I have received approval from the Western Cape Education Department and the Research Ethics Committee in the Faculty of Education for this research project.

If you agree that your child can participate in this research, please sign at the bottom of this consent letter.

All information your child provides will be strictly confidential and no names will be revealed, i.e., all participants are anonymous. Please bear in mind that your child may, at any time during this research, withdraw from and stop participating in the study. All information provided will be used solely for research purposes and anonymity of all is guaranteed. Your child will not be disadvantaged in any way.

If you would like to know more about this research project, then please feel free to contact me.

I trust that the research will contribute significantly to literacy development in disadvantaged communities.

Parent's name _____

Signature

Yes, I agree _____

No, I do not agree _____

Yours in education

Zandisle Mawethu Sitoyi

Tel. (work): 0213719739

Cell: 0763919060



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Appendix E: Educator Interview Consent Form

Purpose: Mr Z.M. Sitoyi is conducting interviews on teacher and learner experiences of violence in schools. The information from these interviews will be used only for the purpose of research and will be kept strictly confidential.

Name of the educator _____ Date _____

I voluntarily give Mr Sitoyi my consent to interview me. I understand that any information from these interviews will be kept strictly confidential and will only contribute to his research.

Signature _____ Date _____



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Appendix F: WCED Letter of consent



Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za

tel: +27 021 467 9272

Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20180509–1954

ENQUIRIES:

Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Zandisile Sitoyi
18 Liquid Amber Street
Mandalay
7785



Dear Mr Zandisile Sitoyi

Research Proposal: Teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats School, Western Cape

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **15 May 2018 till 28 September 2018**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).

7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000



We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

Directorate: Research

DATE: 10 May 2018

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001

tel: +27 21 467 9272 fax: 0865902282

22

Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000

Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33

www.westerncape.gov.za

ELIZABETH S VAN ASWEGEN
BA (Bibl), BA Hons (English language & literature), MA (English), DLitt (English), FSAILIS

Language and technical editing | bibliographic citation

DECLARATION OF EDITING

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The MEd thesis by candidate **Zandisile Mawethu Sitoyi**, titled 'Teacher and learner experiences of violence in a Cape Flats school, Western Cape' has been edited, the references have been checked for conformance with the Harvard style of bibliographic citation, all references have been checked against the text, and all in-text citations have been checked against the reference list. The candidate has been advised to make the recommended changes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E.S. Aswegen', is written over the top part of the university watermark.

Dr ES van Aswegen
10 October 2020

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