

Exploring Learner Resilience to School Violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu-Natal

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Declaration

I declare that the thesis titled **“Exploring learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu Natal.”** is my own work both in conception and in execution. All the sources that I have made use of or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

B. A. Kistnasamy

Date

Prof N Gopal

Date

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"It always seems impossible until it's done"

- Nelson Mandela

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my Darling Mother, I salute you for your selfless love, care and sacrifices you made to build my future and who taught me the value of education and from whom I shall continue to draw inspiration.

Thank You,

Thank You,

Thank you, Mum,

I Love You Forever and Always.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Chatsworth near Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Specifically, the study sought to describe the nature of school violence, identify and describe the internal characteristics of resilient school learners, determine the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners, determine what skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence, and develop a framework that fosters resilience among learners.

A simultaneous mixed methods approach of both qualitative and quantitative study designs was adopted. The sample comprised of 52 Learners, 6 Educators, the principal, the Head of Department for Life Orientation (LOHOD) and 7 Learner Parents. The quantitative data collection component used the Resilience Scale for Middle-adolescents in a Township School (R-MATS) questionnaire, administered to the 52 learners, and the qualitative data collection component used face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions with 12 Learners, 6 Educators, the principal, the LOHOD and 7 Learner Parents.

The main factors seen as constituting risk for township school learners were that a lot of violence was seen around the community, there were many stressors, and participants spoke of bad life experiences. Among external factors, school environment was found to be the most lacking for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. Results indicated a neglect of problem learners by teachers, or an inability to deal with their problems. Some of the coping skills mentioned were positive commitment towards learning, taking part in extramural activities such as sports and music, and having a positive attitude towards life.

The study recommends a framework that combines both the invitational education framework and the resilience wheel framework into one framework named 'Invitational Resiliency Framework'.

Key words: Resilience, bio-ecological, protective factors, township school, coping skills

Abbreviations

The following are the full meanings of the abbreviations used in the thesis:

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
E	Educator
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
L	Learner
LOHOD	Life Orientation Head of Department
LP	Learner Parent
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
P	Principal
R-MATS	Resilience Scale for Middle-adolescents in a Township School (questionnaire)
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SGB	School Governing Body

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Township school children are regularly prey to poverty, unemployment, dysfunctional homes, general legacy of violence both at schools and in communities, gangsterism, availability of guns, availability of alcohol and drugs, and situations where gangsters rob schools and kill and rape teachers and learners (Tshatshu, 2016). In a study by Burton & Leoshut (2013) on secondary school learners, 22.2 % had experienced some form of violence during their schooling careers. School violence is a stressful situation that requires resilience from learners (De Wet, 2016). The concept of resilience recognises that struggle, pain and suffering are involved in the process of being resilient (Waxman Gray & Padròn, 2004, cited in Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). Resilience may be defined as “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of, successful adaptation, despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Leoschut and Patrick Burton, 2009). It has also been defined as “an inherent or fostered capacity or response mechanism within all individuals, organisations and communities that is used to overcome significant challenges” (Mastern & Powell, 2003:2, cited in Kiswarday, 2010). Reasons for resilience can be attributed to internal factors such as personal inner strength and external factors such as support from educators, parents and other adults, and peers (Ngqela, 2010).

This research explores learner resilience to school violence occurring in a township secondary school in Durban. These were learners from grades 8 to 12. This chapter provides a brief overview of the study, including the rationale, aim, objectives, research questions, research methodology, and research setting. Definitions of significant terms utilised are also provided. Lastly the chapter gives an overview of the chapters that follow.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

Evidence indicates that in South Africa many adolescent learners have been negatively affected by exposure to violence at school and community levels (Mkhize, Gopal & Collings, 2012). Violence disrupts the affected pupils' concentration levels in lessons, which can make them scared of going to school. While the negative impact of violence at schools has been well documented (Naidoo, 2017; Nxumalo, 2015; Thambiran, 2014; Meyer, 2005), not much attention has been focused on intervention measures such as invitational education or resiliency models. Focusing on the negative impact of violence limits the ability of the research to shed light or capitalise on the strengths of learners that could become the focus of intervention. Research has shown that despite being exposed to risk factors for violence, many children have developed resilience and do cope successfully (Lynch, 2003; Masten, 2001). This means that resilience is an ability that can be found in an average individual and which can be learned and developed – it is not a trait, but a process (Moletsane & Theron, 2017). Thus, the intention of this study is to contribute to shedding light on coping strengths of secondary school learners against violence, especially those from township schools. The study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the nature and prevalence of violence at schools, as well as considerations for intervention.

School violence is a major problem in schools in Chatsworth, near Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, and is clearly evident in the headlines published in weekly community papers, for example: 'Asoka Secondary Pupil assaulted during lunch break' (Naidoo, 2017), 'Chatsworth School Rape: Parents Speak' (Nxumalo, 2015), 'Gang Violence Takes Over Chatsworth Schools' (Thambiran, 2014), 'Brutal school beating caught on camera' (Unknown Author, 2013) and 'School bullies' rule of rule' (Premdev, 2009). An article by Ncontsa & Shumba (2013) also spoke about the nature of violence in secondary schools. A report on 'School Based Violence' by SACE (2011) stated there is a serious problem of violence in schools. The report stated further that schools are meant to be safe spaces for learners, but this is not so in the majority of cases not so in South Africa, with the majority of learners being exposed to violence. Although relevant stakeholders and authorities recognise the nature and extent of the violence at schools, not much research has been conducted on the resilience of learners. Hence,

“...investigating resilience is key to identifying domains that may be strategic locations for intervention” (Masten, Burt & Coatsworth, 2006). It is against this background that it becomes necessary to explore domains most critical for protecting township school children exposed to violence, namely, the individual, family and school domains.

1.3 Research Question

Following from the argument that despite being exposed to risk factors for violence, many children have developed resilience and do cope successfully (Lynch, 2003; Masten, 2001) and that resilience is an ability that can be found in an average individual and which can be learnt and developed (Moletsane & Theron, 2017) the following research question was asked:

Which of the individual, family and school domains would be most strategic locations for intervention against violent behaviour among learners at a township school?

The following five questions arose from the main research question:

- What is the nature of violence in schools in a township?
- What are the internal characteristics of resilient school learners in a township school?
- What are the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners in a township school?
- What are the skills resilient adolescent learners use to cope with violent experiences in township schools?
- What intervention measures may be applied to foster a culture of nonviolence among township school learners?

1.4 Aims and Objectives

This study aimed to explore the three domains, individual, family, and school domains, most strategic for intervention against violence among township school children. It had the following five objectives:

- To describe the nature of violence in schools in a township;
- To identify and describe internal characteristics of school learners who show resilience;
- To determine external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners;
- To determine skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence; and
- To explore intervention measures that may be applied to foster a culture of nonviolence among township school learners.

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1 School Violence

According to Ncontsa & Shumba (2013:n.p.), school violence is regarded as “...any intentional physical or non-physical (verbal) condition or act resulting in physical or non-physical pain being inflicted on the recipient of that act while the recipient is under the school’s supervision”. Similarly, Crawage (2005:12) described school violence as “...the exercise of power over others in school related settings by some individual, agency, or social process”.

1.5.2 Resilience

Fonagy, Steele, Steele, Higgitt & Target (1994:15) stated that resilience is “...normal development under difficult circumstances and is the capacity to withstand stress and catastrophe.” According to the American Psychological Association (2014), resilience is defined as “an individual’s ability to properly adapt to stress and adversity.” Anasuri (2016:1) defined it as “The ability to cope or ‘bounce back’ after encountering negative events, difficult situations, challenges or adversity and to return to almost the same

level of emotional wellbeing. It is also the capacity to respond adaptively to difficult circumstances and still thrive”.

Stress and adversity manifest in, among others, family or relationship problems, health problems, or workplace and financial worries. In reality, resilience is not a rare ability as it can be found in the average individual and can be learned and developed by virtually anyone. Therefore, resilience should not be considered as a trait but rather process (Moletsane & Theron, 2017). According to Lee, Cheung & Kwong (2012:4), resilience factors are “...traits that support the healthy development of individuals, families, schools, and communities, and build capacity for positive relationships and interactions”.

1.5.3 Learner Resilience

Learner resilience has been defined by Mampane & Bouwer (2006:444) as “having a disposition to identify and utilise personal capacities, competencies (strengths) and assets in a specific context when faced with perceived adverse situations. The interaction between the individual and the context leads to behaviour that elicits sustained constructive outcomes that include continuous learning (growing and renewing) and flexibly negotiating the situation.”

1.5.4 Protective factors

Protective factors are considered to be those characteristics “which can counteract risk factors possessed by children who are considered to be at high risk of involvement in anti-social behavior” (Bowen, Komy & Steer, 2008: 1).

1.5.5 Bullying

Bullying is “...a form of aggressive behaviour in which there is an imbalance of power favouring the perpetrator who repeatedly seeks to hurt or intimidate a targeted individual” (Rigby & Smith, 2011). Implicit in this definition are three factors, namely, it

occurs over a prolonged period of time, it involves an imbalance of power of a social or physical nature, and it involves intent to harm the victim (Fisher, 2015).

1.5.6 Coping

Coping refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to help individuals manage challenging external or internal demands that exceed the resources of the individual (Frydenburg, 2010; Hearon, 2015).

1.5.7 Wellbeing

Wellbeing means having psychological, social and physical resources that an individual needs to meet particular challenges (Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders, 2012). Anderton (2018:1) defines it as “the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced”.

1.5.8 Township School

A township school is a learning facility, usually a primary or secondary school, situated in an area which was formerly designated for residence of a particular race, usually black, which is usually in the outskirts of major cities (Mampane, 2011). In addition, township schools are characterised by violence and bullying.

1.6 Study Background

1.6.1 School Violence in South Africa

According to many observers, South Africa is a country driven by excessive and widespread violence. In 2016, Veronica Hofmeester – the South African Council of Educators (SACE) chairwoman – revealed appalling statistics on school violence that indicated that South Africa was second after Jamaica regarding incidents of school violence (Hofmeester, 2016). This violence is violence among school learners, between learners and teachers, interschool rivalries, and gang conflict. This has led researchers to conclude that schools are increasingly becoming arenas for violence

(Barnes, 2017; Ngqela, 2010). Barnes (2017: 27) stated, "Apart from the serious incidents of school violence that have received wide media coverage, there is general concern regarding the increase in incidents of school violence in South Africa". Schools are no longer viewed as safe learning environments (Ngqela, 2010). Ncontsa (2013:11) concluded that, "Schools have become highly volatile and unpredictable places. Violence has become a part of everyday life in some schools". This is also evidenced by reports on television and print media which have highlighted violence such as stabbings at schools, assaulting other learners, and other learner-educator violence.

According to a study by Burton (2008), as many as 1.8 million learners in grades 3 to 12 had experienced some form of violence. This constituted 15.3 % of all learners in grades 3 to 12 where 12.8 % had received threats of violence, 5.8 % were victims of assault, 4.6 % were victims of robbery, and 2.3 % had been sexually violated in one form or another at school. An earlier study by Reddy, Panday, Swart, Jinabhai, Amosun & James (2003) (The National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey) in South Africa conducted among 10,700 grade 8-11 learners found that 41 % of learners had been victims of bullying, 14 % had been members of a gang and 17 % carried weapons. Almost a third reported feeling unsafe at schools and 15 % reported being threatened or injured on school grounds. 17 % had attempted suicide while 20 % had considered it. About 10 % reported being forced to have sex, while 8 % reported having forced someone else to have sex. Bhana (2017) also wrote on the issue of violence in schools. The author stated that girls are seen as passive victims of violence. Furthermore, the author stated that this issue of girls being vulnerable to violence is an issue which has been recurring in the South African environment.

1.6.2 Children and Resilience

As mentioned earlier, resilience is not something that is inherent in school children, and every child is vulnerable. Masten (2001) noted that resilience is quite uncommon. According to Yates, Egeland & Sroufe (2003), it is a process developed over time as a child experiences risk factors that result in him or her continuing to develop competently. Two of the protective factors that have repeatedly emerged in resilience

studies are cognitive functioning, such as cognitive self-regulation and intelligence quotient (IQ), and positive relationships with adults such as parents (Luthar, 2006). Resilient children are characterised as using constructs such as locus of control, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, and play well and hold high expectations (Garmezy, 1991).

Studies linking resilience and exposure to violence in the community have identified three themes, namely, there may be a number of risks and protective factors involved; children may be resilient in one domain but not the others; and protective factors may be appropriate in the context of one domain but not the others. This means that resilience is dimensional (Lynch, 2003; O'Donnell, Schwab-Stone, & Mueeed, 2002).

As previously noted, resilience can be attributed to internal factors such as personal inner strength (Ngqela, 2010). Henderson (2007: 6) lists, among others, the following internal/individual characteristics of school learners that facilitate resilience: Feelings of self-worth and self-confidence; internal locus of control (makes life choices based on connection to self rather than outer influences); autonomy/independence; impulse control, and problem-solving; gives of self in service to others and/or a cause; positive view of personal future; perceptiveness; creativity; sense of humour; spirituality; personal faith in something greater; sociability/ability to be a friend; and ability to form positive relationships.

Many risk and protective factors lie at the school level (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). Risk factors at school level include poor educator-learner relationships, disorderly school environments, and a negative school environment. School violence is often associated with drop-out, decrease in educational performance, truancy and drop-out as learners avoid the school environment, and association with delinquent peers. Association with peers is particularly important as learners spend a significant amount of their time with peers and this has influence on learners' attitudes and behaviours.

Protective factors are those characteristics of learners which can counteract risk factors (Bowen, Komy & Steer, 2008: 1). According to Lynch (2003) there are a number of factors within the family that may exacerbate or mediate the effects of

exposure to violence. One of the exacerbating factors may be family conflict, while ameliorating factors may include family support, cohesion, and monitoring. A study by Ladd & Sechler (2012) found family support to be important only in reducing anxiety among children exposed to chronic violence, while teacher support was linked only to social competence in the classroom. Peer support, on the other hand, was found to have a modest effect on both anxiety and classroom social competence. A longitudinal study of resilience in urban children in the United States found that while parent support was a strong predictor of resilience, it became less important as children became older, while school support increased in importance (O'Donnell *et al.*, 2002).

According to Bowlby (1980:56), "The primary socialization of a child is generally provided by the family and home, while secondary socialization is provided by the school, peers and the media". Some of the risk factors of South African children living in black townships are the poor conditions in which they live, with some not living with parents but with caregivers who lack parenting skills and are without resources to meet the basic needs of children (Barnes, 2017). Other risk factors include children who come from single parent homes because of factors associated with poverty or parents dying of HIV/AIDS. These affect the self-confidence and self-worth of children which can manifest in perpetual craving for reassurance and gratification which can lead to anger and violence. These scenarios can be likened with the Chatsworth context which is also a township area.

Other risk factors are associated with parents who use violence or harsh and inconsistent measures on their children as corrective measures or punishment. According to Van der Merwe and Dawes (2007), these extreme measures by parents can lead to children feeling unloved, leading them to find this love and acceptance in the wrong places such as gangs and turning them into 'alternative families' which give them a sense of identification and belonging. These gangs terrorise and victimise other learners.

On the other hand, some parents are not able to monitor their children properly and are not able to set limits for them and these actions can also lead to violent behaviours

(Ngqela, 2010). Other risk factors may include excessively large families, little family bonding and poor family management practices (Richards, 2013). These violent behaviours by children are often transferred to the school system (De Wet, 2007).

1.7 Location of the Study: Chatsworth

Taurus Secondary School (pseudonym) was the site of this study and is located in Chatsworth, KwaZulu-Natal (Please refer to Figure 1.1). Chatsworth is a township of black, Indian and white people that lies 26 kilometres to the south of Durban and has an area of 2000 hectares. The township was first established as part of the 1950 Group Areas Act No.41 which sought to implement the policy of racial segregation (Desai & Vahed, 2013). The township was initially established as an area for Indian people (Gopal & Marimuthu, 2014), but later other races moved there. These residents are considered to be economically disadvantaged as many live in extreme poverty due to high unemployment rates and social problems that include lack of education, drugs, alcohol, gambling, teenage pregnancy, gangsterism and violence (Marimuthu, 2014). There are many secondary schools in Chatsworth but only one secondary school was used for this study.



Figure 1. 1: Map showing Chatsworth

(Source: <https://www.istanbul-city-guide.com/map/chatsworth-map>)

The crime statistics report of 2018 puts Chatsworth at number 19 in attempted murder cases among the top 30 police stations in South Africa, with 116 such cases during the period April 2017 to March 2018. This was an increase of 12.6 % from the previous reporting year. The township ranked 13 on common assault cases, with 882 such cases. These statistics, however, do not reflect the intensity of crime in that they do not give an indication of crimes per square kilometre nor by %age of the area population.

Gangsterism is one of the major factors leading to violence at schools. The extent of the problem is summed up in the following statement by Vivaga Thambiran, Editor of the Rising Sun Community Newspapers:

“Children are carrying dangerous weapons and are claiming to control turf areas. Schools in general have become a battlefield for youth. Bullying, fighting and intent to cause pain and suffering to fellow classmates is the dismal reality schoolchildren face on a daily basis. Police say the schools have reached

boiling point and the Chatsworth SAP has been to schools conducting searches” (Thambiran, 2014).

1.8 Overview of the research Methodology

1.8.1 Research design

The research design used in this study was a mixed methods approach, which is a mix of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

1.8.2 Target population

The target population in this study was all learners and educators at township secondary schools in Chatsworth, as well as learners’ parents. The specific population was all learners, educators, Life orientation Head of Department, principal, and parents at Taurus Secondary School in Chatsworth.

1.8.3 Sampling

A non-probability sampling method was used to select a sample. 52 learners were selected for the quantitative study, while 12 learners, 6 educators, the principal, the Head of Department of Life Orientation (HODLO), and 7 parents of the learners were selected for the qualitative study.

1.8.4 Data collection methods

The Resilience Questionnaire for Middle-Adolescents in Township Schools (R-MATS) was used to collect quantitative data while qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews with 12 learners, HODLO, the principal and parents of the learners; and focus group discussions with the educators.

1.8.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using frequency distributions and graphs. The individual interviews and focus group discussions were audio-taped and thereafter

transcribed. The method of thematic analysis described by Braun & Clarke (2006) was used to analyse qualitative data.

1.9 Overview of Chapters

The chapters in this thesis are presented as follows:

Chapter one has provided an outline of the entire study. It started with an introduction, provided a rationale for the study, the research questions, and aims and objectives of the study. Background to the study as well as a brief discussion of methodology were also given.

Chapter two reviews the literature existing on the topic of study.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework that informs the study on resilience and school violence.

Chapter four explains the research methodology and design utilised, discussing key elements such as target population, data collection methods, sampling, data analysis and ethical considerations for the study.

Chapter five presents the findings of the study.

Chapter six discusses the findings of the study.

Chapter seven presents conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of this study and also looked at the rationale for the study, aims, objectives and research questions. It further defined the significant terms that have been utilised. In addition, a brief background of the study was provided and a brief explanation of the location of the study area. The research methodology and design were also described. Finally, this chapter concludes by providing a brief

overview of the chapters that are to follow. The next chapter will present the review of pertinent literature on learner resilience to school violence.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review available literature that provided the academic underpinnings of this research. The focus was mainly to derive information related to the issues relating to learner resilience in a township secondary school in South Africa. Research reports, research-based articles, research reports, presentations, textbooks, and working papers were reviewed. Further, contributions made from newspapers, blogs, and other internet sources were reviewed to gather information relevant to the research objectives. Areas covered included violence among the youth in South Africa and school violence in particular at South African township schools; masculinity and violence; risk factors and protective factors; resilience in schools; internal and external characteristics of resilient learners in township schools; the roles of the schools, family, community and social media in ensuring the resilience of learners in a township school; the role of other external agencies in the fight against school violence; protective factors in ensuring resilience of learners in township schools; and coping skills of township school learners against school violence.

2.2 School violence

Violence has been defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2002:5) as a, "...deliberate use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation." The traditional definition of school violence, according to Batsche & Knoff (2004:165), includes, "...any conditions or acts that create a climate in which individual students and teachers feel fear or intimidation in addition to being the victims of assault, theft, or vandalism.". School violence has also been defined as a "deliberate pain-inflicting verbal or physical act while the recipient is under the supervision of the school" (MacNeil & Stewart, 2000: 232).

There has already been much documented work done in relation to violence and the consequences it might have, but little documentation has been brought forward regarding a holistic approach to addressing resilience at schools. Literature has concentrated mainly on how the environment at township schools contributes to learners' resilience rather than how resilience may be fostered (Christie & Potterton, 1997; Mampane & Bower, 2011; Jefferis & Theron, 2017). Resilience is the key to identifying domains that may be strategic locations for intervention (Masten, Burt & Coatsworth, 2006). Focusing on the negative outcomes is an approach which is limited both in its ability to shed light on strengths that could become the focus of intervention, and in its lack of attention to the fact that many children who are exposed to violence do cope successfully (Lynch, 2003; Masten, 2001).

The violence observed in South African township schools and its long-term effects on learners suggests that school violence may be regarded as a stressful situation with which some learners may cope, and others may not (Moletsane & Theron, 2017). The reasons for some learners in township coping could be ascribed to internal and external factors, such as personal inner strength, resilience and support from parents, educators, other adults and peers. Resiliency factors are traits that support the healthy development of individuals, families, schools, and communities, and build capacity for positive relationships and interactions. Protective and supportive factors occur at the individual, family, school, and community levels. The main influencing factors in deciding on this study are imperative to explore further and understand the role that families' and the school play as a developmental and social system in influencing the development of resilience in these learners.

Furthermore, the intention of this study is also to contribute to the understanding and fostering of resilience in coping with school violence in a township school for the benefit of the school and all interactive systems, such as school learners, educators, family, communities, community-based organisations, policy-makers and the police. Through studying these phenomena educators might also realise the magnitude of this social problem and confirm that, in spite of it, there are some school learners who have the necessary skills to cope with this environment. For many years school violence has

also put learners in township schools at a disadvantage, which is reason enough for one to take the opportunity to contribute towards the transformation of education and a better future for learners in township schools.

2.3 South African Youth Violence in Historical Context

The history of youth, especially school learners in South Africa, is best remembered in the context of the student uprisings of 1976. These were during the times of the struggle against apartheid. The apartheid regime wanted to impose Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at black schools. Already black learners were receiving inferior education called 'bantu' education as blacks were not allowed education beyond certain levels of labour. According to the then South African president, Hendrik Verwoerd, education for blacks was only to serve their community and not that of the whites. "The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open... Up till now he [the Bantu] has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and practically (sic) misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European but still did not allow him to graze there." (Hendrik Verwoerd, *Speech as Minister of Native Affairs, 7 June 1954*).

On the morning of June 16, 1976, thousands of students from the African township of Soweto, outside Johannesburg, gathered at their schools to participate in a student-organised protest demonstration against the decree to have Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at black schools. That day two students died from police gunfire. The shootings sparked a massive uprising that soon spread to 1000 urban and rural areas throughout the country. Sporadic clashes between students and police continued into 1977. By the end of the year the government acknowledged that nearly 600 people had been killed, although others have claimed that at least 3,000 people died (South Africa – Overcoming apartheid, nd). Many youth fled the country to join Umkhonto we Sizwe, which was a liberation army formed by the ANC Youth League and also Azanian People's Liberation Army, which was an armed wing of the Pan Africanist Congress

(PAC). Violence was the order of the day in South Africa with thousands of adolescents subjected to state violence, suppression, killings, torture, and imprisonment without trial (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). Many other violent acts were committed by blacks against whites and legitimised by political objective of response to state repression.

In 1984 the ANC set up the so-called 'self-defence' units, which were units formed to protect communities against the state security forces. But there was much finger pointing among black people with some pointing fingers at others and accusing them of being apartheid spies. Then followed the much-publicised violent punishment of those accused of being spies in the form of necklacing. Scharf & Ngcokoto (1990: 371) cited in Thomas (2012) define necklacing as, "...the much publicised and controversial process by which a car tyre is placed around the victim's neck filled with petrol and set alight. It became a form of execution in the townships from 1984 onwards and was used by both pro- and anti-government groups. It is usually the action of an incensed crowd of people rather than an individual act".

Political violence escalated during transition to democracy with the so-called 'black-on-black violence', especially between the Inkatha Freedom Party and the ANC. Barolsky (2007:176) cited in Thomas (2012) notes:

"Between 1990 and 1994, political violence claimed the lives of approximately 14000 people in South Africa nationally while during the preceding five years, 1984–1989, no more than a quarter of this number died as a result of political conflict. On the East Rand [where Kathorus is situated], approximately 3000 people lost their lives over a period of four years after the opening up of the South African political process in 1990 and the un-banning of formerly prohibited organisations."

There were also other forms of violence that adolescents were exposed to such as gang violence, intimate partner bullying, and in their own intimate relationships (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012).

Post-apartheid, South Africans have not realised the dream of a better life for all and traces of violence remain firmly entrenched in poor communities, which are largely still segregated along the lines of class and race, and the socioeconomic drivers of youth violence have not changed significantly (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). With the failure of government to fulfil its promise of a better life for all, adolescents continue to witness and are often involved in violent acts such as service delivery protests with roads blockaded with rocks and burning tyres, the burning of schools, destruction of property, and mob justice whereby communities take the law into their own hands and murder those accused of acts such as theft, rape, and killings, among others.

Youth violence has grown to be a norm in South Africa as more and more youths have been lured into gang-related violence and crime. For many years, the South African youth have been involved in criminal, political as well as gang related violence (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). This ultimately had the effect of creating a society that is used to violence in the youth of South Africa.

In conclusion, it is evident that violence has been normalised among the youth of South Africa. As Burton (2007) cited in Business Day (May 20, 2008: 4) pointed out: "...because young people's sense of identity is shaped by what they see around them, and because crime is so rife, many of SA's school children see crime and violence as normal". According to Ward (2007) cited in Burton, (2007), the reason why young people use violent behaviour in certain situations is a result of their social learning, that is, the information they acquire as well as their experiences. According to the author, children model their behaviours and attitudes around the behaviour they see among adults and leaders in their communities and society. The normalisation of violence among the youth, according to Ward (2007), takes place within five ecological contexts, namely: the individual, level, the microsystem level, the mesosystem level, the exosystem level, and the macrosystem level. These levels are discussed in chapter 3.

2.4 Types of School Violence

The National School Violence Study of 2012 (Burton & Leoschut, 2013), which included 5 939 learners, 121 principals, and 239 educators, found that 12.2 % of learners had been threatened with violence by someone at school, 6.3 % had been assaulted, 4.7 % had been sexually assaulted or raped, and 4.5 % had been robbed at school. Of the sexual violence acts, females reported significantly higher rates than males. The study found that cyber violence was also a concern at schools with 20 % of learners reporting that they had experienced some form of cyber bullying and violence in the past year. The study also found that learners had easy access to drugs, alcohol and weapons.

Burton & Leoschut (2013) also found that violence was not only a case of learners against learners, but also a case of learners against educators and educators against learners. More than 10 % of principals reported having received complaints of physical abuse in which educators were the aggressors. Educators were also victims of violence with 52.1 % reporting verbal violence, 12.4 % reporting physical violence, and 3.3 % reporting sexual violence perpetrated by learners.

The study also revealed that violence did not only happen on school premises. One in six learners expressed fear about their journey to and from school. Learners also reported that by the time they entered secondary school they had already experienced violence either as victims or witnesses in their homes and communities. More than 10 % of participants had seen people in their family intentionally hurting others, 10 % had themselves been assaulted at home, less than 10 % had been robbed or sexually assaulted at home, and almost 50 % had witnessed a physical fight in their community.

Violence in schools, therefore, shows itself in different forms as well as degrees. The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC, 2008) concluded that school-based violence is multi-dimensional and takes on various forms. How it manifests itself often depends on the context in which it arises. Common forms of violence at schools include abuse, assault, bullying, corporal punishment, robbery, and sexual violation. These are discussed below

2.4.1 Verbal Abuse

Eriyanti, (2018:365) said that verbal abuse is, "... the use of language (words, phrases, metaphors) that imply ignoring, humiliating, mocking, condescending, harming, humiliating, threatening, belittling the ability of a spokesperson, dwarfing, gossip, rumours so that it can cause dislike (psychological disorders) in the partner's speech." According to the author, verbal abuse can be either overt or covert. Overt behaviour is clearly apparent and noticeable behaviour such as speaking, gossip, rumours, and so on, while covert behaviour is not easily acknowledged such as thinking and reasoning. It is unobservable behaviour which leads to certain actions. Brennan (2001) cited in Eriyanti (2018) said that verbal abuse is predicted to lead to feelings of annoyance, anger, anxiety, and being feared.

Verbal abuse is triggered by the power gap and is dominated by those who are superior. Those with the power are the dominants and those without power the subordinates. This abuse can take the form of countering, discounting, verbal abuse disguised as jokes, blocking and diverting, accusing and blaming, judging and criticising, trivialising, undermining, threatening, name calling, ordering, and abusive anger (Brogaared, 2015). It is no wonder, therefore, that in schools verbal abuse is more prevalent against women. The study by Burton & Leoschut (2013) found that 6.8 % of females had been subjected to verbal abuse or teasing. These incidents either involved single perpetrators or several of them and these mainly tended to be male (90%). While incidents of verbal abuse tended to be on the decline, with 48.3 % of principals reporting a decline in cases involving verbal abuse at their schools, 25 % reported that verbal abuse had worsened at their schools in the past three years. Verbal abuse was not only found to be perpetrated by learners on learners but also by educators on learners and learners on educators. 40 % of principals surveyed reported known incidents of verbal abuse perpetrated by educators on learners and 52.1 % perpetrated by learners on educators (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012).

Netshitangani (2014) noted that verbal abuse is also normalised by educators at the schools and learners find it acceptable. The rationale behind this reasoning is that the

school environment plays a big role in the development of learners in their everyday social contexts in which they develop and that the behaviours of educators are likely to influence the way learners react to situations.

2.4.2 Physical Assault

Assault is also a common form of violence at schools in South Africa. Wallen & Rubin (2002) define assault as unlawfully and intentionally inflicting bodily harm on another human being. In the context of schools this refers to learner on learner, learner on teacher, and teacher on learner perpetrated violence. In order to distinguish it from robbery, physical assault has been defined by Burton & Leoschut (2013:15) as. "...incidents where learners may have been attacked or hurt by someone physically, using any kind of weapon or their hands, without having any of their belongings taken." This included common assault and assault with intention to cause grievous bodily harm. In their study of school violence in South Africa, the authors found that 6.3 % of learners reported being assaulted at school, and 12.4 % of educators reported being assaulted by learners. The authors also found that physical assault was more prevalent among males than females.

Highlights of assault cases at schools in 2018 included a grade 11 North-West learner who stabbed a 7-year-old learner to death, a learner from Soweto who threw a stone at a teacher causing him minor injuries, a Kimberly High School learner who threw water on a teacher's face, a Mpumalanga learner who assaulted a bus driver; a 16 year old Eastern Cape learner who stabbed an 18 year old to death over a missing cell phone; an 18 year old Zeerust, North West, learner who stabbed a teacher to death, a 15 year old learner from Eldorado Park in Johannesburg who pointed a toy gun at a teacher, and two learners from Kwamasakhane High School in KwaZulu-Natal who were stabbed to death by a fellow learner (Grobler, 2018). Cases of assault in the Western Cape, where the current study took place, increased from 5.3 % in 2008 to 9.2 % in 2012 (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). Western Cape had the second highest incidents of assault in 2012 after North West (9.6%). What is most disturbing about acts of violence at schools is that most of it is captured on social media and circulated on its platforms.

This, again, reinforces the argument that violence at schools has been normalised in South Africa.

2.4.3 Bullying

Wallen & Rubin (2002) defined bullying as the intimidating or frightening treatment that is inflicted on another learner by another learner or educator. This type of violence occurs mostly in the school setting and a large number of learners are exposed to this type of violence. Bullying can take the form of physical harm to the learner or his or her property, emotional harassment, making the learner fear for his or her own safety or the safety of his or her property, and creating a hostile environment that is counterproductive to learning.

A 2018 survey conducted in 48 countries globally by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), of which South Africa was the only country from Africa, found South Africa to have the highest number of cases of school safety violations compared to other countries included in the survey (Mitchley, 2019). Regarding bullying, the survey found that South Africa had more than double the reported OECD average. The survey involved over 260 000 teachers from 15 000 schools across the globe.

As is the case in verbal abuse, the power gap plays a big role in bullying. The bullies dominate and the victims the subordinates. Olweus (1991a) cited in Batsche & Knoff (1994) reports that bullies are often impulsive, have a strong need to dominate others, and have little empathy with victims. They are not insecure and do not lack self-esteem and feel good or happy about their acts of bullying. Examples of bullying in South African schools include incidents where a group of learners extort others, for example, by blocking the gate and making them pay to go through. They also take money from other learners or eat their lunch.

Bullying also includes cyber bullying. A study by Burton & Leoschut (2013) reported that 20 % of the learners at schools surveyed had experienced some form of cyber bullying. Incidents of bullying included, "...incidents of online fights, having rude,

offensive or insulting messages sent to one, having cruel and hurtful rumours posted or sent about one, having personal or embarrassing secrets posted online or sent online, being threatened with harm online, having messages posted by others using one's account, and having nude or sexually explicit images, texts or messages sent without one's permission" (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:3).

In the most extreme cases, cyber bullying can result in suicide or self-harm. Unfortunately, many forms of bullying do not constitute a crime both at schools and in society in general even though they can result in substantial psychological, emotional or physical harm to the victims. Regarding the reporting of incidents of bullying, some of the reasons are: "Fearing reprisals, feeling ashamed, thinking they would not be believed if they told, not wanting to worry their parents, thinking that reporting would not change the situation, fearing that their parents' or teachers' advice or responses would exacerbate the situation, being concerned that the perpetrator would find out who had reported the incident, and not wanting to be perceived as a tattle-tale" (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:46).

2.4.4 Corporal Punishment

Wallen & Rubin (2002) defined corporal punishment as, "...any deliberate act done to a learner with the aim to punish them or restrain from behaving in that particular way which is not required". It normally inflicts pain on the learner or creates some form of physical discomfort to the learner (Burton, 2008). It includes spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling or hitting a learner, with a hand or with an object, throwing things such as a board duster, at a learner, or pushing or pulling a learner with force. It can also take the form of denying or restricting a learner's use of the toilet, denying meals, drink, heat and shelter, forcing the learner to exercise excessively without water or rest, or forcing the learner to sit in an invisible chair. While it is still practiced at some of the schools, corporal punishment has been banned in South Africa since 1996. In the study by Burton and Leoschut (2013) 49.8 % of the learners surveyed claimed to have been spanked or caned by a teacher or principal as corporal punishment. While trends showed a decrease in the incidents of corporal punishment from 2008 to 2012 in some

provinces, the Western Cape showed an increase from 17.1 % in 2008 to 22.4 % in 2012.

Corporal punishment is said to set a bad example by educators. But many teachers are ill-equipped to deal with violent learners and come from backgrounds in which violence was often used as a means of conflict resolution and this could be one of the reasons why they resort to corporal punishment (Burton, 2008). This form of behaviour reinforces and models violence as an acceptable behaviour. According to Burton (2008: 29), "...corporal punishment in any form constitutes an assault on learners and serves to perpetuate the many forms of violence to which South African learners are exposed". Corporal punishment, however, seems to also be perpetrated and normalised in the home environment. A study has shown that even though parents are against corporal punishment at schools, 33 % of them beat their children and 57 % smack them.

2.4.5 Gangs

Gangs are groups of individuals with a sense of unity, with a specific purpose to commit violent acts or other crimes. They also have a protective spirit as they defend each other physically against the violent acts of other groups (Hunter, 2001). Crawage (2005:45) cited in Mncube & Madikisela-Madiya (2014) defined gangsterism as "...the evolution of an urban identity determined along racial and economic lines". Research highlights the presence of gangs within South African schools. These are informal and often terrorise and victimise other learners (South African Counsel of Educators, 2011). These will often threaten and beat other learners to get out what they want or sometimes for no reason or force other learners to sell drugs for them. It has been argued that learners who have no out-of-school activities tend to get attracted to gangsterism (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). This, together with the violence learners receive at home, marginalisation and poverty turns gangs into 'alternative families' which give them a sense of identification and belonging (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). Burton, in conversation with Grobler (2018) noted that communities are also influential in promoting gangsterism among learners: "If gangs

are active in a community, children get drawn in from the age of 11. So high school is the period when children get drawn into gangs. So there will be gang violence on the school grounds and the school itself can do little to prevent it.”

Musick (1995), cited in Mncube & Madikisela-Madiya (2014), classified gangs into three different categories namely, scavenger gangs, territorial gangs and corporate gangs. Scavenger gangs are often low achievers at school and their transgressions and crimes are not planned. Territorial gangs are those gangs that are well-organised and have initiation rites. To be accepted in the gang and to climb up in the hierarchy, members often have to prove their loyalty by fighting someone. Some groups ask the new member to kill someone before they are initiated into their gang. The learners could also be taken to harmful places for the initiation to be able to take place. Corporate gangs are more concerned about making money and often their main business is to recruit members to sell drugs.

2.4.6 Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is also underpinned by the power gap where males become the main perpetrators of violence against women. Gender-based violence can be defined as violence that is aimed at a specific gender (Hunter, 2001). It can also take various forms such as homophobia and femicide. Research shows that violence against women is underscored by the intention to intimidate and demean or is driven by sexual interest on the part of those involved. A study by South African Counsel of Educators (2011) reported that more than 30 %of girls are raped at school.

Gender-based violence takes the form of bullying, sexual violation and sexual harassment. Harassment is defined as those direct or indirect engagements in conduct that cause harm or threaten harm (Hunter, 2001). This type of violence can include watching, pursuing or accosting a learner, and loitering outside of or near the building or place where a learner lives, goes to school or waits for transport. In particular, sexual harassment is any form of unwelcome and unwanted sexual attention to another person (Burton, 2008). The victim may have sexual advances from the

perpetrator that they will not appreciate and can take place in the other various forms that include suggestive behaviour, messages or remarks of a sexual nature, intimidating or humiliating a learner, and implied or expressed promises of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request, such as good marks or being promoted to the next grade.

According to Wallen & Rubin (2002), rape is any act of unlawfully and intentionally committing sexual penetration with another person without their consent. This definition has, however, changed since 2007 to include "...acts of [unlawful] penetration of the genitals, anus or mouth of one person by the genitals of another or of the genitals and anus of one person by any object, or part of the body of another person" (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012:276). Female victims often know the male learner perpetrators, and these are usually intimate partners, fellow students or classmates (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012).

According to Wallen & Rubin, (2002), sexual violation includes any act which causes direct or indirect contact of the genital organs, mouth or anus of a learner, and in the case of a female, her breasts, the masturbation of one person by another person, compelling a learner to self-masturbate or watching the masturbation of another person, the insertion of any object resembling or representing genitalia into a bodily orifice of another person, and forcing a learner to watch a sexual offence or sexual act.

2.4.7 Consequences of school violence

According to Ohsako (1997:12-13), school violence is one of the major factors denying school children their basic right to education. In a study conducted by the author in Latin America, Israel, and Ethiopia, 40 % of the learners indicated that they had dropped out of school or repeated classes because of violence at their schools. The consequences of school violence were, among others, increased gangsterism, disregard for school rules and a weakened school discipline, absenteeism or changing of schools, vandalism of school property, teaching disruptions, and reduced net number of teaching hours due to disruptions of teaching.

2.4.8 Provisions of school discipline

One of the biggest challenges facing educators at South African schools is related to discipline for perpetrators of violence at schools. This applies to both learners and educators. According to the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), corporal punishment is prohibited at South African schools. Secondly, under Section 19(1) of the South African Constitution, all learners have a right to basic education. Suspending or expelling a learner of school-going age, therefore, does not prevent that learner from attending school. In cases where learners have to be transferred as a result of disciplinary measures, the head of department is obliged to find an alternative school for such a learner, meaning that those learners are merely being recycled within the same education system.

All public schools are self-governing (autonomous) bodies and are therefore responsible for developing and adopting their own Codes of Conducts for Learners. This is the responsibility of the schools' governing bodies (SGBs). It is important that these rules should be properly implemented, and for this to happen the SGBs need to be well informed about the legal aspects as well as consequences of a code of conduct. The reality, however, is that this is not the case, and this has led to disorganised and undisciplined schools where learners, as in the case of the school in this study, unashamedly disrupt the education process (Bray, 2005). Moreover, the SGBs do not seem to be involved in the design of measures to reduce violence at schools, but only come in when there is a disciplinary action to be heard. This leaves the educators to deal with issues of daily violence and indiscipline at schools – an undertaking that they are not equipped to do.

Youth exposure to either indirect or direct bullying, physical violence, verbal or sexual violence at school is not only a school problem but a societal, human rights and public health problem that needs to be tackled from multiple perspectives (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). In order to address the problems of violence at schools it is important to understand risk factors that lead to it, and these are discussed below.

2.5 Masculinity and violence

Another dimension to violence is that of masculinity. According to Heilman & Barker (2018), the key cause of men's and women's violence is not being biologically male or female. Girls and boys are not born to be violent but are "raised, taught, socialised, encouraged, traumatised into, and made to witness violence" (Heilman & Barker (2018:7)In their report on masculine norms and violence, Heilman & Barker (2018) mention five processes by which masculine norms shape the likelihood of men and boys experiencing or becoming perpetrators of violence. These are: "Achieving socially recognised manhood, policing masculine performance, 'gendering' the heart, dividing spaces and cultures by gender, and reinforcing patriarchal power" (Heilman & Barker, 2018: 9).

Achieving socially recognised manhood is at the core of masculine gendering. There is a demand for those recognising themselves as male persons to continually achieve their manhood and to continually police this performance. Men are also typically expected to refrain from showing too much emotion. Further, ideas of masculinity are also reinforced by dividing both physical and social spaces into 'male' and 'female' spaces with those spaces occupied by males being spaces where violence is reinforced and rehearsed. Ultimately power is reinforced by power structures that advantage men over women and men over other men.

Forms of violence that are rooted in part of muscular norms include intimate partner violence where rigid norms regarding gender and gender roles contributes to the use of violence by men (Heise, 2011; Moore & Stuart, 2005 cited in Heilman & Barker, 2018). According to these authors, when men think that they are not perceived as being 'masculine enough' they may resort to intimate partner abuse to overcompensate gendered expectations. Another form of violence rooted in muscular norms is violence against children by caregivers such as parents. This violence can take the form of corporal punishment, more serious manifestations of physical violence, emotional abuse and neglect. Child sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation are also rooted in masculine norms. Masculine norms are in most cases at the root of bullying. Hostile

educational and family environments as well as social contexts and physical locations have consistently been found to be risk factors for bullying. Other crimes rooted in masculinity are homicide and other violent crime, non-partner sexual violence, suicide, and conflict and war (Heilman & Barker, 2018). In Figure 2.1 these authors provide a conceptual overview to demonstrate the link between harmful masculine norms and violence.

According to figure 2.1 patriarchal power is at the root of all processes of harmful masculine gendering. According to the World Health Organisation (2013) thirty % of ever-partnered women have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence from their male partners. Children growing in these environments get influenced by patriarchy and are likely to imitate these behaviours in their lives.

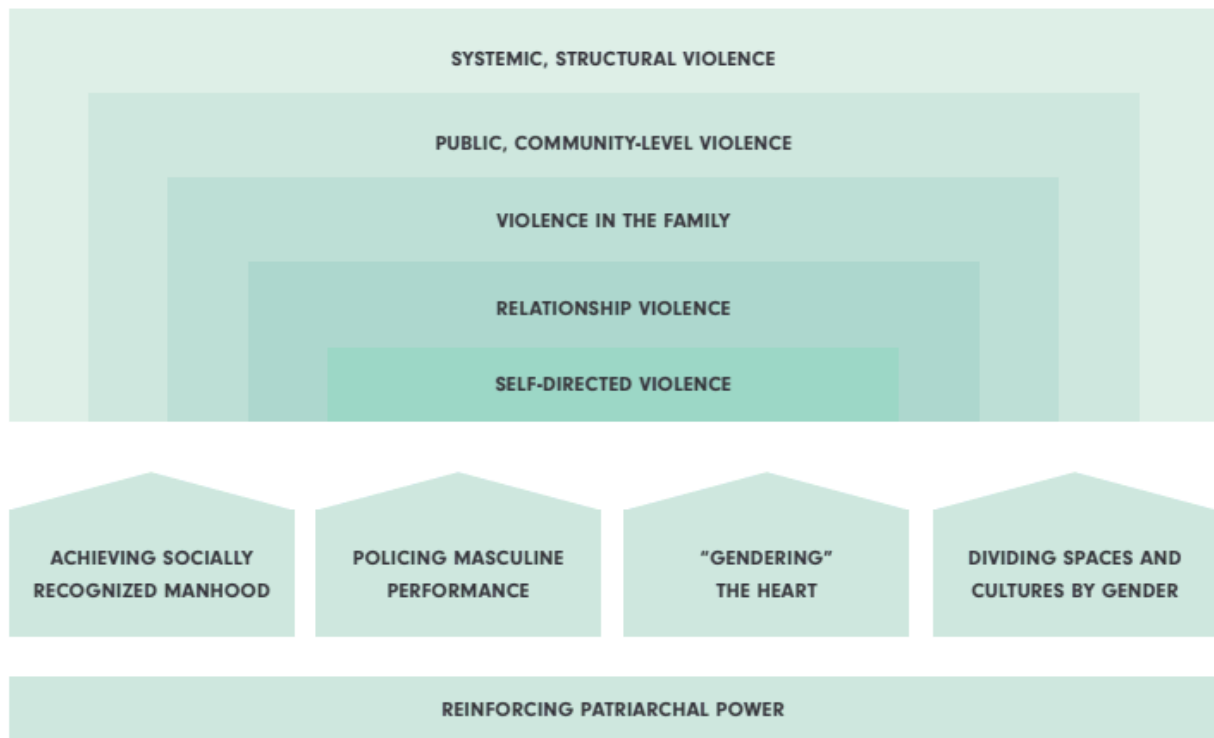


Figure 2.1: Masculine norms and how they contribute to multiple forms of violence

Source: Heilman & Barker, 2018: 22

Of greater interest to this study is bullying, which happens a lot at schools. As already alluded to, masculine norms are in most cases at the root of bullying. Bullying is a group phenomenon that occurs in a social context where various factors serve to promote, maintain, or suppress such behaviour (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Swearer and Hymel (2015) identify five levels of influences, namely the individual influences, family influences, peer influences, school influences, and community and cultural influences. At the individual level, bullying perpetration has been associated with endorsement of masculine traits, callous-unemotional traits, conduct problems, psychopathic tendencies, antisocial personality traits, susceptibility to peer pressure, anxiety, and depression (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Even though no direct causal link has been established, family characteristics such as negative family environment, domestic violence, lack of parental emotional support, poor supervision, and family members' involvement in gangs have been linked to bullying perpetration (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Peer influence is very important as learners spend most of their time with peers (at school, in neighbourhoods, in communities, and with peers on social media). In many cases peer norms are characterised by support for bullying. School influences are also very important. A negative or positive school environment can affect the frequency of bullying and victimisation. It has also been argued that inappropriate teacher response has been linked to higher levels of bullying and victimisation (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). At the community level there are higher levels of bullying that are linked to negative or unsafe environments, gangs, and poverty (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). The authors recommend that efforts to prevent bullying should focus on transforming harmful masculine norms. They recommend engaging men and boys as well as girls and women on, "...how traditional gender norms and gender non-conformity are connected with perpetration and experiences of bullying, explain, illustrate, and discuss the direct connection between the perpetration of bullying and power, control, and social acceptance, being careful to do so in a way that invites self-awareness rather than placing blame, provide participants with a safe space to practice nonviolent, healthier ways to navigate peer groups and social dynamics, and discussing ways that participants can foster group settings and peer networks that

value healthy expressions of masculinity and embrace rather than punish individual differences” (Swearer & Hymel, 2015: 50).

2.6 Risk factors and protective factors

Risk factors are those specific characteristics of individuals, their communities as well as families that can either increase or reduce the likelihood of a learner turning violent, while protective factors are those factors that are responsible for shielding a learner from violence and form the basis for intervention (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007:11). Both risk factors and protective factors lead to resilience of a learner against violent behaviour. First a learner gets introduced to risk factors, then protective factors come into play, then resilience is built. Resilience is determined by the interplay of individual characteristics of a learner, the characteristics of their family, and their physical and social environments. For instance, a learner that lives with both parents is viewed to have that as a protective factor as compared to one with a risk factor of living with a single parent or without parents in some cases (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007:12).

Leoschut & Burton (2009:2) identified nine factors that enhanced resilience from crime and anti-social behaviour. These were education, gender, non-violent family environment, non-exposure to criminal role-models, substance abstinence, interaction with non-delinquent peers, victimization, neighbourhood factors, and anti-social behaviour.

Regarding education, Leoschut & Burton (2009) found that those learners in higher grades such as matriculants were more likely to be resilient to crime than non-matriculants. Another resilience factor related to education was the attitude learners had towards schooling, such as wanting to go to university or Technikon and wanting to obtain good marks. Regarding gender, the authors found that females were more likely to be resilient to crime and anti-social behaviour than males. The authors also found that learners who come from non-violent families where disputes are resolved in non-violent ways were more likely to be resilient to violent behaviour than those who came from violent homes. Regarding non-exposure to criminal role-models, it was

found that those learners who came from families where no family member was involved in criminal or violent behaviour were more likely to be resilient to violent and anti-social behaviour than who did not. Learners who did not use mind-altering substances were also found to be more likely to be resilient to crime and anti-social behaviour than those who did. Choosing who learners interact with was also found to affect children's resilience. Those children who interacted with non-delinquent peers tended to be more resilient than those who did. Further, those children who had never been victims of crime tended to be more resilient than those who had. Those who did not have access to weapons were also found to be more likely to be more resilient to criminal behaviour than those who did. The authors also found that children who did not believe that those who had hurt them or violated them deserved some kind of harsh punishment for what they had done were less likely to offend others than those who felt otherwise.

Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners from historically disadvantaged neighbourhoods are often measured using the Resilience Questionnaire for Middle-Adolescents in Township Schools (R-MATS). The R-MATS consists of two sections, A and B. Section A assesses the background of learners in 11 statements that detail individual and systemic risk factors assumed relevant to youth in a township, measured by 'yes' (present) and 'no' (absent). These factors include: household unemployment, no formal housing structure, being an orphan with one or both parents diseased, fighting in school because of poor problem-solving skills, insufficient food, many stressors, abuse at home, not living with parents, bad treatment at home, bad life experiences, and repeating a grade because of academic problems. Section B consists of 24 item Likert scale statements reflecting resilient behaviour. The items are measured on a four-point scale using values of 'truth', namely: true all the time, true most of the time, untrue most of the time and untrue all the time. These items include the peer environment, the home environment, the school environment, and the community environment.

The R-MATS was used by Mampane (2010) in a study of resilience of learners at a township school in Mamelodi, South Africa. She found the questionnaire to be reliable

(Cronbach's alpha of 0.818). The R-MATS was also used by Mampane & Bouwer (2011) in their study of the influence of township schools on the resilience of their learners. The current study adapted the R-MATS to investigate risk factors and protective factors of township learners.

2.6.1 The Peer Environment

One of the major influences of learner behaviour is the peer environment. A negative peer environment can lead to violent learner behaviour while a positive environment can lead to non-violent behaviour. Children who grow up in violent communities tend to choose the antisocial, delinquent, criminal and gangster types as their friends and associates (Nofziger & Kurtz, 2008 cited in SACE, 2011). This, in turn, can lead to their being involved in violent activities as perpetrators of crime or their being victims of violent crime. The South African township environment, therefore, in which violence of some form is experienced and witnessed by learners both at home and in the community means that there is a high possibility that learners from township schools will tend towards violent behaviour.

In most of the cases that the South African youth experience violence, it is primarily carried out by their peers or other youths around their age. Common forms of this violence include cyber-bullying and physical bullying (Wallen & Rubin, 2002). According to Burton & Leoschut (2013), 20.9 % of the learners who took part in their survey were victims of cyber-aggression. Sexual violence was also another prevalent form of violence among the youth in South Africa. The most common form of this violence was intimate-partner violence that occurred between young couples in their early romantic relationships. In most cases girls suffered from this type of violence as they might be physically assaulted by their partners or face emotional and psychological abuse from their lovers. There were also numerous reports about boys facing this type of abuse and violence from their peers, but it was more common in girls. The study found that a great number of men in South Africa had raped someone during their teens (Burton & Leoschut, 2013).

2.6.2 The Home Environment

Family and parenting environments have been found to play a significant role in protecting adolescents from violent behaviour (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). According to Leoschut & Burton (2009) children who grow among family members who use nonviolent ways of resolving conflict and who do not employ physical punishment to discipline children are likely to copy these examples and tend to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour. Having family members who are involved in criminal activities or have been incarcerated also increased the chances of violent behaviour in children (SACE, 2011). The home environment is therefore important in school violence prevention initiatives.

There was a time in South Africa when parental love was believed to moderate the effects of community violence on children. This, however, was not the case when a sample of adolescent learners participated in the study by Barbarin, Richter & de Wet (2001), as it showed that family did not provide a significant source of support when they were exposed to violence. However, according to a study by Van Der Merwe (2001) of children between the ages of 9 and 16, the support of the family assisted greatly in reducing anxiety, depression, and aggressive behaviour. This was however not the case with older adolescents, as school and peer support were more important in older than in younger age groups.

In most South African instances, children are exposed to violence at very young ages. This can be done by the actual caregivers, or between parents or adult family members, or the violence is perpetrated physically to the South African youth (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). There are many cases of children being abused by their caregivers or being victimised sexually by adults and other children in their home setting. There are many other forms of violence that are prevalent in the home situation, for example, corporal punishment is widely practiced as a form of discipline in South Africa, in many instances taking especially violent forms that result in injuries. In a study conducted in 2008, 53 % of the youth reported that it was normal for them to see their family members or parents lose their temper. Another 24 % endured violence in the form of being physically punished by their parents. Another 11 % of the respondents had

actually seen their family members in the act of hurting one another, either physically or making use of weapons (Leoschut, 2009).

2.6.3 The School Environment

Sexual violence is one common form of violence that occurs in the school setting that the youth of South Africa are exposed to. According to the 2012 South African National School Violence Survey (Burton & Leoschut, (2013), 22.2 % of the learners in high schools experienced some form of violence in the school setting. They further found that another 6.3 % of the high school learners experience physical assault, while another 4.7 % of the learners experience sexual assault. 12.2 % of the learners received or had received threats of violence at some point.

As already noted, types of violence at schools include verbal abuse, assault, bullying, corporal punishment, robbery, and sexual violation. This violence is perpetrated by learners against learners, learners against educators, and educators against learners. This creates a very uninviting environment at the school. According to Leoschut (2008), violence and crime at schools have a significant influence on the children's emotional, social, and physical development. The school environment therefore plays an important role in the development of learners, especially since this is the place where they spend most of their active time. According to Rutter (1983) cited in SACE (2011: 30), "Where good classroom management, appropriate use of praise and punishment, and student participation tend to be characteristics of non-violent schools; weak school bonds and high levels of conflict between learners (and learners and teachers) increase the rates of learners engaging in violent behaviour."

The SACE (2011) study also puts the spotlight on the consequences of violence on teachers. According to this study teachers experienced a range of emotional reactions as a result of school violence which included shame from participating in violent reactions, stress and depression, high levels of burnout, and a feeling of not being supported by the Department of Education. As a result of this, some teachers are resigning from the profession, and fewer people are interested in becoming teachers.

A study by Taole & Ramorola (2014) reported that school-based violence can lead to teachers feeling lack of motivation, sometimes going to class unprepared because of lack of concentration and motivation, and frequently being absent from school. Other negative consequences include feelings of guilt, low self-worth, and trauma (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010). Teachers have also been reported to feel socially isolated, and this has had a negative impact on relationships with peers and family members (Shields, Nadasen & Hanneke, 2015). Shields *et al* (2015) also reported in a study that they conducted on educators that the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder was 47 % of participants.

According to Burton (2008:77), dealing with school violence should adopt a 'whole school approach' which seeks to understand the school as an entity comprising of several interdependent components, rather than examining individual aspects of the school. These are: school governing bodies, principals, educators, school management teams, learners, and parents or caregivers. According to the author, all these components interrelate.

2.6.4 The Community Environment

Township communities in South Africa are associated with poverty, social disorganisation, lack of opportunities for employment, and a pro-violence culture. These risk factors are associated with violent school learners. These youth are prone to violent activities when they commute every day to and from school as they are prone to being robbed, raped or other violent activities (Wallen & Rubin, 2002). Youth that are exposed to violence at an early age are more likely to be having other occurrences of violence in their lifetime as exposure to violence is often not a single occurrence but tends to be of a repetitive nature (Wallen & Rubin, 2002). According to Ward (2007: 36): "South Africa's young people live in an environment where they learn violent behaviour, where they learn that it is rewarded, and where they feel that violence is likely to solve their problems and make them feel powerful and worthy." The SACE study recommended a need to work with community structures such as faith-based

organisations, churches and social services to reduce the levels of violent behaviour among the youth and to foster resilience to violence.

2.7 Resilience Defined

Resilience has been defined largely as "...the ability to 'bounce back' in the event that the individual has faced a complication or a hindrance to their objectives" (Rutter, 2006; Stein, 2005). This involves an individual's ability to do well in various situations in terms of coping and recovering from a situation that had put them down. Masten *et al* (2003) defined resilience as, "...the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances". As a concept it appears to be cross-culturally recognised (Hunter, 2001).

Barankin & Khanlou (2007:9) elaborated that, "Resilience involves the ability of a person to recover from a situation that was difficult, able to function well after that incident and move on with their life". Being able to cope with stress as well as challenging life situations are some of the qualities of resilient people. Through the repetitive routine of knowing how to handle stress, resilient people are more likely to cope with future challenges as well as stressful situations.

Resilience factors are those factors that allow or assist individuals to bounce back in the event that they are faced with a challenge (Leoschut & Patrick, 2009). For an adolescent to be resilient, he or she must first be exposed to risk factors and be vulnerable. It is the complex interplay of these factors over time that determines learners' outcomes. Newman's (2004) review has suggested that risk is any factor or combination of factors that increases the chance of an undesirable outcome affecting a person. Vulnerability is a feature that renders a person more susceptible to a threat. Protective factors are the circumstances that moderate the effects of risk. In the face of risk, vulnerability and protective factors, resilience is a positive adaptation in the face of severe adversities.

According to Masten, Best & Germany (2008), resilient learners are those learners that do not yield to hardships, despite their high-risk status, for example, babies of low

birthweight. They are learners who develop coping strategies in situations of chronic stress, such as the learners of drug-using or alcoholic parents. They are also learners who have suffered extreme trauma, for example through disasters, sudden loss of a close relative, or abuse, and who have recovered and prospered. Resilient learners, therefore, are those who resist adversity, manage to cope with uncertainty, and are able to recover successfully from trauma (Newman, 2004).

2.7.1 Individual Factors Affecting Resilience

All individuals are not the same and everyone has specific individual factors that determine their levels of resilience to violence or stressful situations (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007). The nature, form and extent of these factors may vary from individual to individual. Some of the common factors affecting resilience include temperament, learning strengths, feeling and emotions, self-concept, ways of thinking, adaptive skills, social skills, and physical health. According to Burton (2007), temperament can be influenced by both social and biological interactions. Studies have shown that males are more likely to be involved in acts of bullying, both as aggressors and victims (Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton & Scheidt, 2001). Female violence is said to be more indirect, such as social isolation, spreading rumours, and friendship manipulation (Olweus, 1997). Self-concept, according to Purkey & Novak (1996) is the most important of the individual factors and is learned through perceptions. Purkey & Novak (1996:2) define self-concept as, "...a complex and dynamic system of learned beliefs that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence." Self-concept leads feelings and emotions, ways of thinking, adaptive skills and social skills.

2.7.2 Family Factors Affecting Resilience

As mentioned above, some of the individual factors such as self-concept are learned through perceptions. How the adolescent perceives the family environment, therefore, has influence on resilience of the adolescent. All families face different challenges and situations in their lifetimes. These situations have an effect of interacting with the individual level factors and are influenced by environmental factors. This will ultimately

have an effect on the resilience of each member of the family and the family as a whole (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007). Some of the broad factors affecting resilience in families include attachment, communication, family structure, parent relations, parenting style, sibling relations, parents' health, and support outside the family. According to Leoschut & Burton (2009) children who grow in families that use non-violent ways of resolving conflict and who do not employ physical punishment to discipline children are likely to copy these examples and tend to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour.

2.7.3 Environmental Factors Affecting Resilience

There are a number of environmental factors that play an active role in the resilience of learners or individuals (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007).

Inclusion is defined as an individual's feeling of a sense of belonging to a certain group, for example, a family, social group or having friends, to mention but a few (Masten, 2003).

The social conditions of a community can also play a very important role in influencing resilience (Masten, 2003). A society that promotes resilience is more likely to have resilient learners as compared to one that does not. They can make use of the media to help victims of violence to cope with such situations.

Access to systems promoting resilience can play an active role in the resilience of learners. Various systems can be put in play by the school to help learners to be more resilient to stressful situations. These programmes can include activities in schools where learners are taught about violence, what to do when involved in a violent situation, as well as how to move on after such a violent situation (Masten, 2003). Education programmes can also be put into play.

The South African youth can also be involved in other global programmes and bodies like the Girl Child Network which specifically deals with violence aimed or intended to girls or women (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007). Other networks include Sonke Gender Justice which advocates for and focuses on prevention of violence against women and

girls in urban South Africa, and Project Empower which focuses on reducing rates of intimate partner violence in urban areas in South Africa.

2.8 Resilience and Children

As explained by Masten (2003), resilient children are those who perform better than they are expected to perform. These specific children have a history that involves risks and adverse experiences. Resilience in children is therefore not a trait or something that some children are just born with. There has not been any historical evidence of a child who is invulnerable and can overcome any obstacle or adversity that he or she encounters in life (Yates, Egeland & Sroufe, 2003). Resilience occurs due to the effect of a large number of developmental processes over time that have allowed children who experience some sort of risk to continue to develop competently while their peers do not (Yates, Egeland & Sroufe, 2003).

Studies conducted on resilience reveal three important themes. There are multiple risks and protective factors that influence resilience, children are not necessarily resilient in all domains, and protective factors may be protective in some contexts or domains and not in others. In short, resilience is best conceptualised as multi-dimensional (Lynch, 2003; O'Donnell, Schwab-Stone & Mueeed, 2002).

Role modelling is important and parents who resolve conflicts by pro-violent attitudes increase the risk of violent behaviour among adolescents. They portray negative role modelling. Adolescents learn behaviour through perceptions and will tend to view violence as a normal way of resolving conflicts, especially if their role model seems to benefit from violent behaviour. Abuse and severe punishment in families also have an influence on violent behaviour (Van der Merwe & Dawes 2007:98).

Poor supervision and monitoring of activities of children and permissive or lax parenting also influence violent behaviour among adolescents (Patterson, DeBaryshe & Ramsay 2014:270). Other home environment factors that may influence violent behaviour include poor family bonding, poor family management practices, and excessively large families (Patterson *et al*, 2014:265). Very often these violent

problem-solving skills in the home environment are transferred to the school system (De Wet 2007:255), thereby reflecting the interaction and transference of violence from the family system to the school system.

2.9 Building Resilience in Schools

Adolescents spend most of their daytime at school making the school a key focus area for the development of resilience in learners. Resilience can be built through formal teaching opportunities in the classroom to the informal learning that occurs through the modelling and practice of new skills. According to De Wet (2007), where possible, use should be made of evidence-informed structured programmes to develop learner knowledge and skills for resilience. Furthermore, schools can help young people to generalise and reinforce these skills outside programme sessions by embedding these processes and skills in every day and incidental interactions with learners, a regular academic curriculum, and support systems such as learning support networks, home room structures, provision of school counsellors. De Wet (2007) also emphasised the importance of learner leadership and participation processes, the development of relationships with peers and staff, and regular feedback to learners to reinforce learners when they exhibit resilient behaviours or attitudes.

2.10 Internal Characteristics of Resilient Learners in Township Schools

Internal characteristics of resilient learners include temperament factors, problem-solving skills, social competence, bicultural competence, autonomy, a sense of purpose and a future orientation, and academic and social successes.

2.10.1 Temperament factors

Learners who are able to control their temperaments normally have an easy-going disposition as they do not easily get upset and are very good at regulating their emotional arousal and impulses (Kim, 2004). These important temperament characteristics may have inherent roots. According to Ward *et al* (2012), children

whose parents are responsive to the temperament of their children, affectionate, and who teach them empathy facilitate the development of guilt as opposed to those parents who inhibit the development of guilt in their children through neglect, physical assault, or punitive disciplinary processes.

2.10.2 Problem-solving skills

Resilient learners are known for their higher levels of IQ and excellent abstract thinking skills (Kim, 2004). These learners are also very reflective and flexible when it comes to problem-solving and they have that special ability to try alternative ways to adapt to stressful situations. These learners will tend to seek other ways of resolving conflict situations rather than resort to violence. According to Caldwell (2008b) cited in Ward *et al* (2012:218), “Young people by virtue of the ways their brains develop are particularly vulnerable to intense emotions and misinterpretation of other’s intents and emotions. Furthermore, they have not yet developed the capacity to critically reflect and problem solve. On the other hand, their brains are ready to be shaped by experience, direct interaction, self-reflection and education. This early activation of emotions and passions can be turned into a powerful, positive force if youths are directed to discover and explore personally meaningful and exciting new activities.” According to the Canadian Child Care Federation (n.d), problem-solving skills build a child’s sense of competence, build a child’s self-esteem and contribute to social and emotional wellbeing.

2.10.3 Social competence

Social competence has been defined by Weiner & Craighead (2010) as being able to handle social interactions effectively. This means being able to respond in adaptive ways in social settings, getting along with others, and being able to form and maintain close relationships. Social competence is the product of a wide range of behavioural skills, personal and cultural values, cognitive abilities, and social awareness (Weiner & Craighead, 2010). Socially competent children are more likely to report higher achievement at school and better psychological wellbeing. This is in contrast with

children who lack social competence. These are more likely to report loneliness, withdrawal, and dissatisfaction with social relationships. Given the complexity of social interactions, social competence is the product of a wide range of cognitive abilities, emotional processes, behavioural skills, social awareness, and personal and cultural values related to interpersonal relationships.

Resilient learners have excellent communication skills and are mostly caring or show empathy towards others (Moffit, 2005). They are known to have a sense of humour, and can also laugh at themselves sometimes, and their behaviour is one that enables the possibility of getting along with others. They generally appeal as good company to others and thus they get the same treatment from others as they are able to monitor their own and others' emotions (Moffit, 2005).

2.10.4 Bicultural competence

Bicultural competence is closely related to social competence and learners who are biculturally competent will be able to respond in adaptive ways in social settings, getting along with others, and being able to form and maintain close relationships. Resilient learners are able to negotiate the cultural divide, according to Kim (2004). These learners can easily interact with other learners from different cultures in the sense that they can understand other learners from other cultures without audible exchange of words but by how they are associating (Kim, 2004).

2.10.5 Autonomy

These learners also have a sense of self-awareness, identity, the ability to act independently, ability to exert control over the external environment, self-efficacy and an internal locus of control (Moffat, 2005). Resilient learners also have an increased sense of self-worth and mastery. The concept of autonomy is best described using the invitational education framework (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Purkey & Siegel, 2013; Novak, Armstrong & Browne, 2014; Purkey & Novak, 2015). In this framework, autonomy can be likened to a democratic ethos which emphasises democratic principles in the growth of individuals. The emphasis is in 'doing with' learners than

'doing to' them. Implied in this approach is respect and the conviction that people have the ability to articulate their concerns.

2.10.6 A sense of purpose and a future orientation

These specific learners have healthy expectations for the future and are greatly goal-oriented (Barbarin, 2001). They also have excellent goal-attainment skills, success orientation, motivation to achieve, educational aspirations and persistence, and most of their planning is future-oriented. They also hold religious beliefs that are supported by significant others and that convey a sense of meaning in life (Kim, 2004). These learners also try their best to maintain a hopeful outlook and employ active problem-focused coping strategies.

2.11 The role of family in ensuring the resilience of learners in township schools

One of the major roles of parents is to restore family rules and routines in times of disruption that afford a sense of stability, coherence, and well-being (Boss, 2006; Fiese, 2006). In the event that learners studying in townships are behaving in a way that is not acceptable, there should be a guardian or parent that can take parental disciplinary measures in order to stop that specific behaviour from occurring again (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2016). Parents that make use of necessary disciplinary measures with their children when they do not behave in the required manner are more likely to build resilience in their school-going child.

Among processes connecting family and child resilience, parent-child relationships are the ones that have received the most attention (Cox & Paley, 2002; Fernandez, Schwartz, Chun & Dickson, 2013). According to SACE (2011), "The family is the most significant institution in shaping the beliefs, attitudes and values of children, attitudes and values, which tend to feed into socially based sex role stereotypes."

2.12 The role of the school in ensuring the resilience of learners in township schools

The secondary school used in this research has activities in play that enable learners to be resilient to violence as well as to keep them occupied and their minds busy. There are many school activities and projects such as clubs, sports and fellowship groups that the learners can participate in (Blair & Raver, 2016). These projects play a major role in keeping the learners busy and away from violent activities.

Certain measures like counselling and guidance, as well as life orientation play a vital role in the townships, specifically Chatsworth, as the environment in which these learners live has many of the risk factors associated with violent behaviour. The procedures that are set by the school also play an important role as they limit the eruption of violence within the school's premises. Learners who engage in violent activities like fighting or bullying should be punished accordingly, and an example made from them that such behaviour is not condoned at the school (McEwen, 2016).

The school's code of conduct and safety policies should be utilised consistently when the need arises, and all the learners should know what corrective action the school might take in the event that there is a learner who has broken the code of conduct. In extreme cases, learners should be expelled for unacceptable behaviour within the school premises in order to create a clear picture for the other learners that such behaviour is unacceptable (Masten *et al.*, 2015).

Support from the parents or the Department of Basic Education can play a major role in ensuring resilience in learners who study in township schools. The SACE study on school violence reported that educators have a feeling of not being supported by the Department of Education to empower them to be able to deal with violence at schools and to empower them to be able to foster resilience among school learners. Parents should also play a major role in supporting their children in order to build resilience to violence. They can assist their children with homework if they can, follow up on the

child's progress with the teacher, and provide an environment that is conducive for the child to do his or her studies, to mention but a few (Gunnar, & Heim, 2009).

This supportive role by the Department of Basic Education as well as parents is important in ensuring that resilience to violence fosters amongst the secondary school learners in Chatsworth Township (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2016).

2.13 The role of the community in ensuring resilience of learners in township schools

For a community to have resilient learners, its members must put into practice early and effective actions that address violence so that they can respond to its occurrence in a timely manner. If residents, organisations, and agencies adopt intentional and meaningful actions before an event, they can help the community re-establish stability after the event. Resilience implies that when an event has occurred a community is able to cope and recover, and to also critically look at the event and consider new priorities arising in order to improve the situation continuously (Masten *et al.*, 2015).

Secondary school learners and teenagers in townships are at risk for stress reactions following a violent incident (Masten *et al.*, 2015). These learners may have sleeping and eating disturbances, problems concentrating on schoolwork, irritability and anger, or headaches and stomach-aches (Masten *et al.*, 2015). They may start to have academic or behavioural problems at school, lose interest in activities they once enjoyed, avoid friends, or even engage in dangerous behaviours.

The community can do a number of things in order to ensure resilience among secondary school learners in the Chatsworth Township. It can hold partnership meetings to update violence response activities as a way to keep leadership in all sectors apprised of actions. It can work with all sector leaders, particularly public health leaders, to create risk messages pertaining to the disaster that will reach all residents in the community, including children. It needs to be mindful that any message has a high likelihood of being heard by children, even if they are not the intended audience.

The community can communicate to residents as well as the school learners on how and where they can receive mental health services related to the recent violence. It can sponsor, support, and participate in educational programmes for caregivers designed to increase their knowledge about how best to help learners in the aftermath of the violence. The community may also consider providing childcare services to reduce barriers to attendance. The likelihood of caregiver participation increases when programmes are directed at helping learners. These programmes generally have the added benefit of helping caregivers in their own recovery.

Additionally, the community can create a community-wide campaign to reduce the stigma associated with mental health services in the aftermath of the violence, particularly those for improving the mental health of learners. It can encourage residents to utilise their support systems such as family, friends, faith-based and cultural organisations, as these are important to emotional wellness and recovery in the aftermath of the violence. The community can also disseminate updated and disaster-specific information and materials such as handouts from the health care, mental health, and public health sectors, for use across community settings. Finally, it can provide information about and support for self-care activities for secondary school learners and their families.

2.14 The role of social media in ensuring resilience of learners in township schools

Engagement in social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook can build up learner's resilience and have a beneficial effect on mental wellbeing, according to Govender & Killian (2001), despite previous warnings to the contrary. Eke and Singh (2018) conducted a study on social networking as a strategic tool in the management of school-based violence in the Umgungundlovu district of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and found that contrary to negative reports on social media being an enabler of violent behaviours at schools, it can also be used strategically to manage school-based violence. The study indicated that managers at schools were able to employ social networking as a tool for information gathering and were able to use the media to

manage school-based violence. This allowed school managers to develop strategies to reduce school-based violence and create school climates that promoted teaching and learning.

Liou (2013) conducted a study on how social media can be used for the prevention of violence against women by considering three social media campaigns in China, India and Vietnam. The study concluded that social media can be used effectively to mobilise youth to discuss important issues on violence against women, modelling positive behaviours, and guiding audiences to positive solutions. There was, however, little evidence that social media alone could be effective in changing gender socialization. The author recommended that social media campaigns be combined with, among others, offline components for gathering and engaging youth around the campaign, partnering on the ground in target areas, and rewarding people, both those who contribute and those who benefit.

Analysing evidence from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) data, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and other independent studies into the effects of technology on young people, researchers found using social media helped learners to develop their social skills, collaborate better with peers, and access help and emotional support more easily (NSPCC, 2018).

Teenagers with mental health problems are also increasingly likely to seek support from charities such as ChildLine through the internet or they can easily obtain the information from the radio or television (Govender & Killian, 2001). ChildLine provides social services which include a 24-hour toll-free helpline for children who have been victims of violence, and their families; education awareness for preventing violence against children; advocating for policy changes that will facilitate good management practices for abused children; research into violence against children; and training and development of staff members and volunteers. While restricting a learner's use of the internet has been shown to reduce the chances of them experiencing online risks, this can be counterproductive as restricted access also inhibits the development of the

skills and resilience needed to handle such risks (Barankin, 2007). Social media, therefore, can play a very important role in making secondary school learners know how to proceed when faced with a violent situation and ultimately boost the learners' resilience.

2.15 The role of protective factors in ensuring resilience of learners in township schools

2.15.1 Standing up for beliefs

Secondary school learners in Chatsworth should be able to stand up for their positive beliefs for them to be resilient to violence (Barankin, 2007). There is a general belief in the black community that violence is pandemic and how a victim deals with a violent incident is crucial to how they perform in their day to day activities (Barankin, 2007). These beliefs should be active in the learners and in the event that a violent incident occurs, these learners would know exactly where and when to go and what to do (Dunkle, Jewkes & Brown, 2004).

2.15.2 Being honest with self and others

Learners should also be honest with themselves when encountering a violent incident. They should be able to face what happened and be able to open up to others for assistance (Barankin, 2007). Being honest with oneself is an important stage of resilience as this will show that the victim is now ready to move on from the stressful incident and go back to their normal state. These learners need to be able to open up to their peers or people they trust when they are dealing with a violent incident that occurred in their life (Dunkle, *et al*, 2004).

2.15.3 Development of a sense of purpose

Learners who have a clear purpose and direction for their lives find it much easier to pick themselves up, dust themselves off and keep moving forward. People with purpose are known to be more resilient. While some people get knocked down and

stay right there, resilient people are able bounce back from their misfortune (Burton, 2013). Having purpose makes it easier to bounce back in challenging times by providing perspective, stability, confidence and determination.

One of the common traits among learners who live with purpose is that they are able to find meaning and learning in all of life's experiences, making them emotionally resilient. This ability to find meaning in life experiences, especially when confronting life's challenges, offers a psychological buffer against obstacles. Having a purpose allows one to bounce forward, so as not to end up back in the same place.

2.15.4 Development of optimism

Seligman (2012) mentioned that helplessness can be learned just the same way optimism can also be learned. This means that people can learn optimism just the same way as they can unlearn it. He suggested that people learn to 'hear' and even write down their beliefs about the events that block them from feeling good about themselves or their lives and pay attention to the 'recordings' played in their heads about them.

Seligman (2012) also suggested that the consequences of those beliefs be written out – the toll they take on emotions, energy, will to act, and the like. He suggested that when people get used to pessimistic thought patterns these run through their minds and challenge them. The author suggested that people should challenge the usefulness of certain beliefs and gather alternative ideas and that this might lead to better solutions. People can therefore choose to see problems as temporary and not long lasting. This new type of thinking can stop the 'loop' of negative tapes running through one's head. Over time, this more optimistic thinking becomes engrained as a default position, and as optimism over pessimism are chosen through repeated experiences, new energy and vitality are the reward.

2.16 Coping Skills

2.16.1 Task-Oriented Skills

According to Doty, Davis & Arditto (2017), popular task-oriented skills in resilient secondary school learners in townships include demonstrating a genuine interest in schoolwork, solving problems effectively, being assertive and capable of showing initiative, setting and attaining realistic goals, the ability to act independently or being autonomous, showing empathy toward others, being responsible and trustworthy, and asking for support when it is needed. These task-oriented skills underpin the invitational education theory. As the name suggests, invitational theory is a theory based on making it inviting for individuals to make the right choices against violence (Purkey & Novak, 2015). An invitation is an intentional act of offering something of value to the one being invited. All the elements of invitational theory, namely, care, respect, trust and optimism are linked together by intentionality, and intentionality is part of each one of them.

2.16.2 Emotionally Oriented Skills

According to Tocino-Smith (2019: n.p.), personal beliefs towards what one views as possible and towards oneself are reinforced by the narratives that hold true and one's identity is an intersection of these narratives and one's social reality. According to Tocino-Smith, "How a student responds emotionally to a situation may be a relic of childhood experiences. Because of this, traumatic scenarios in childhood can have large consequences in adulthood."

According to Doty, Davis, & Arditto (2017), popular emotionally-oriented skills in resilient secondary school learners in townships include maintaining a sense of purpose and a positive outlook on life, using positive self-talk for encouragement, capably expressing feelings and thoughts, not hiding away from strong feelings, having helpful, age-appropriate strategies to manage emotions when upset, rearranging plans to work around an unexpected situation, using a trial-and-error approach in daily life, remaining hopeful and keeping on trying if something does not work out, knowing when to stop trying if they decide the effort is not worthwhile, and actively asking for help if they need it.

2.17 The role of law enforcement agencies in the fight against school violence

In the school environment, the South African Police Service (SAPS) gets involved when a crime has already happened (South African Police Service, 2009). The second role of the SAPS is that of crime prevention. Regarding crime prevention, police are allowed to search learners for illegal substances and to test them for the use of such substances. Despite formulating guidelines for school-based crime prevention, in most schools' learners only see the police at school when crime has occurred. However, the situation is different in Chatsworth, where the school under study is located. In this area, police have been involved in school searches at various schools. According to Captain Pillay of the Chatsworth SAPS, "The Chatsworth SAPS holds programmes at schools to empower youth on attitudes, value and life-skills. By educating pupils, police provide basic grounding in the working of the criminal justice system as well as key life-skills, which build confidence and provide ammunition to deal with victimisation," (Peruma, 2019: n.p.). Police have also shut down illegal liquor establishments around the school, but, as the literature points out, these efforts do not go to the root of the problems facing violent learners. On the contrary, the presence of police at a school can be intimidating to some of the learners and also taint the image of the school in their perceptions as police are associated with law breakers. However, the involvement of the SAPS in school governing bodies as advisors can be greatly beneficial in combating school violence, especially that which is perpetrated by outsiders who come into the school premises to engage in acts of violence, as well as developing close ties with the police for swift reaction to incidents of crime at the schools.

2.18 Counselling services at South African Schools

Counselling is referred to by Velleman & Aris (2010:19-20) as, "...primarily about enabling individuals, as far as possible, to overcome obstacles, to take control of their own lives, and to learn how to take maximum responsibility and decision-making power for themselves and their futures". School counselling was first introduced in South Africa in the 1960s but because of apartheid this was for white schools only (Euvrard,

1992). However, when apartheid was abolished in 1994 this changed and these services were extended to all schools as the post-apartheid government sought to, "... provide for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools; and to provide for matters connected therewith" South African Schools Act (1996:1). To date, counselling services have not been accomplished in all schools, and where they exist, they are not fully functional. In their national survey of school violence in South Africa, Burton & Leoschut (2013) reported that victims of school violence were seldom informed about or referred to counselling following a violent experience. Only 0.2 % of learners who had experienced threats informed counsellors about them. None of the other forms of violence such as assault, sexual assault, robbery, and theft were reported to counsellors. Another challenge regarding the use of counselling services is the negative attitudes of learners towards the use of such services (Alavi, Boujarian & Ninggal, 2012). The second reason is that learners have no trust in counsellors and feel like they are 'hanging their dirty linen in public' (Mushaandja, Haihambo, Vergnani & Frank, 2013).

According to the provisions of the education system, each school is supposed to appoint a guidance teacher with a degree in psychology. Among the responsibilities of such a teacher are individual counselling and providing personal and career guidance to learners (Mashile, 2000). However, many schools do not have a guidance teacher because of a lack of funds. Where such teachers are available, they do not have enough time to attend to all the learners that require their services as the learner to counsellor ratio has increased with the increase in the numbers of learners at schools. It is concluded from this that there is a dire shortage of school learner counselling services at South African schools.

2.19 What government is doing to keep the schools safe

Both government and schools are at a loss as to how to deal with the levels of violence at schools. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention proposes frequent patrols by law enforcement personnel (meaning the police) and the involvement of the

community. But the proposals do not address the core issues leading to violence at schools. It is like trying to stop the flow of water downstream by building a wall. It will either go over the wall or take a little turn but eventually find its way down.

Interventions by the Department of Education, on the other hand, include linking schools to the SAPS. A total of 18 000 schools have already been linked to police stations in their vicinity (Palm, 2019). Police also conduct random searches at schools and visit schools to talk to them about the dangers of violence and crime, especially bullying. The life orientation (LO) curriculum course also includes the importance of responsibility, self-discipline, respect for self, as well as other important life skills tools. Thirdly, the Department of Education has partnered with the Department of Sports and Recreation to provide sports equipment to schools. These measures, however, do not address the reasons behind violent behaviour. A more structured approach is needed that takes into cognisance the risk factors for violent behaviour as well as how resilience can be fostered.

2.20 Conclusion

This chapter provided an investigation of the literature used for this research as well as the theories that form the basis for the research. It also provided an evaluation of the important aspects of the research topic and the research instrument (R-MATS) that will be used to collect quantitative data in risk factors and protective factors. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework that informs the study on resilience and school violence.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The chapter starts by discussing explanatory theories of violent and aggressive behaviour and goes on to discuss intervention theories. These theories are relevant to school-based violence at the township school under study. Explanatory theories can be broadly classified into active or innate drive theories (genetic, ethological, psychoanalytic, personality, and frustration aggression theories), and reactive or environmental theories (social learning, social interaction, sociological, and ecological theories). Intervention theories discussed are the invitational education theory and the resiliency wheel theory.

3.2 Explanatory theories of violent and aggressive behaviour

In order to understand what lies behind violent and aggressive behaviour by adolescents at township schools in South Africa it is important to review explanatory theories of violent behaviour. These can be classified into *active* and *reactive* theories (Estévez, Jiménez & Musitu, 2008). Active or innate drive theories of violent and aggressive behaviour view aggressiveness as, "...an innate human component where aggressive acts respond to impulses or internal motivations of the person, which are necessary for their adaption process" (Estévez *et al*, 2008: 4). This views aggression as having a positive function that can be channelled towards positive behaviour. Active (or innate) theories are classified into: genetic, ethological, psychoanalytic, personality, and frustration aggression theories. This study is concerned with reactive theories of violent behaviour. Reactive or environmental theories of aggression believe that the environment is responsible for future violent behaviour. Environmental theories include social learning, social interaction, sociological, and ecological theories (Estévez *et al*, 2008). These theories are important and relevant to township adolescent learners,

where their environment, both at school and out of school, is fraught with provocations and acts of violence. These theories are discussed below.

3.2.2.1 Social learning theory

Social learning theories explain aggressiveness via observational learning processes. In short, this is aggressive behaviour that derives from what learners observe in their social environments. These observations then equip them with what is referred to as 'behavioural repertoire' and they dig into this repertoire to react to different social situations.

Aggression is defined by Anderson & Bushman (2002:28) as, "...any behaviour directed toward another individual that is carried out with *proximate* (immediate) intent to cause harm. In addition, the perpetrator must believe that the behaviour will harm the target, and that the target is motivated to avoid the behaviour". According to Anderson & Bushman (2002), the extent to which learners imitate aggressive behaviour depends on whether the behavioural model observed gets positive or negative results for their behaviour. If the results are positive, the learner is likely to imitate this violence (Estévez *et al*, 2008). According to Ward (2007:9), "Violent behaviour in young people results from a complex interaction of risk and protective factors in different environments and over time, which influence how children learn behaviours." According to this theory, a young person who is exposed to more risk factors than protective factors is more likely to use violence, and vice versa.

From the perspective of this theory, behavioural models that play an important role are models around the learners such as parents, teachers, friends, and the media. For instance, when parents tolerate the violent behaviour of an adolescent, such as parents who tell their children 'not to become wimps and stand their ground' when being confronted with aggressiveness or violence, or when adolescents are praised and applauded by their peers and friends for their 'victories' in exercising aggressive or violent behaviour, or teachers who are able to silence learners through aggressiveness or physical punishment.

3.2.2.2 Social interaction theory

Social interaction theory refers to the social interactions of aggressive individuals. These interactions are usually coercive actions used to obtain something of value such as information, money, goods, sex, or services in order to exact punishment for perceived wrongs, and to bring about desired social and self-identities (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). As one of the teachers from the Eastern Cape told a News24 reporter: “The bullies take money from other kids, eat their lunch and when the learners don’t have money or lunch they are beaten and harassed” (News24, 2013-09-04). According to social interaction theories, the actor is the one that makes decisions and the choices are directed by the rewards or costs expected. This theory supports findings that threats to high self-esteem, especially unwarranted, often result in aggression (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998).

This theory gives more relevance to the social environment within which individuals exists and how they interact with this environment. The interaction is bidirectional, with the environment influencing the individual and the individual influencing the environment. In the case of adolescents, Estévez *et al* (2008) point out that the role of family and is crucial, such as deficiency in the family socialisation and social rejection and victimisation in the school. According to this theory, improving the family socialisation and social conditions at the school will decrease the probability of aggressive behaviour.

3.2.2.3 Sociological theory

The sociological theory describes violence as being a product of sociological characteristics such as the political, cultural and economic characteristics of society. This theory is relevant to adolescent learners at a township school where political, economic and cultural characteristics are those of poverty, marginalisation, social exploitation, and difficulty in intellectual development. In these cases, violence is sometimes used to resolve conflicts, such as is the case with violent protests in townships and other poor areas of the country, violent deaths by rival gangs, and the keen interest in distributing acts of violence in mass media. Violence, therefore, gets

considered as 'normal' behaviour (Estévez *et al*, 2008). Vigilantism has also been normalised in South Africa. According to Lancaster (2019), at least two people a day die in South Africa as a result of vigilante or group attacks. Social media has also normalised violence. One disturbing video that went viral on social media was that of a 28-year-old who was dragged, attacked and stoned by a mob, including school pupils. This normalisation of violence also takes its cue from the violent history of South Africa.

3.2.2.4 Ecological systems theory

The ecological systems theory was proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The theory considers an individual as developing in a network of relationships which are interconnected. These networks and relationships are organised into five levels, namely, the individual, the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem (Estévez *et al*, 2008; Bronfenbrenner & Evans 2000).

The *individual* refers to characteristics of the adolescent such as age, race, gender and temperament. According to this theory, these are likely to influence the adolescent's development. Temperament, for example, can be influenced by both biology and social interactions. Further, some children are born naturally active while others are not (Burton, 2007). Males, for instance, tend to be more violent than females. These behaviours appear to be related to their socialisation as well as biological determinants (Burton, 2007). Studies have shown that males are more likely to be involved in acts of bullying, both as aggressors and victims (Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton & Scheidt, 2001), but that this tends to disappear in those situations where both direct and indirect violence is taken into consideration (Andreou, 2000; Craig, 1998). This suggests that there is no gender difference in the quantity of violence, but that the differences are in the quality. Female violence is said to be more indirect, such as social isolation, spreading rumours, and friendship manipulation (Olweus, 1997).

Regarding age, research shows that as adolescents grow older physical violence tends to decrease. This happens between the ages of 13 and 14 and gets replaced by verbal and relational abuse (Boulton & Underwood, 1992). Studies also show that adolescents tend to join gangs around the ages of 11 and 12 (Burton, 2007).

The *microsystem* level is about everyday social contexts of individual adolescents. These contexts are the peer group, family, the school, and after school activities (Estévez *et al*, 2008; Netshitangani, 2014). According to Burton (2007), these proximal relationships in which adolescents are involved in continuous face-to-face interactions with familiar people are most influential in shaping adolescent development. Adolescents who develop in contexts in which violence is acceptable as a means of solving problems are more likely to view violence as 'normal' and use it in their own interpersonal relationships.

The *mesosystem* refers to the interactions between the microsystems, that is, peer group, family, the school, and after school activities. For instance, children who are not happy in their homes may find comfort in gangs who may introduce them into violent behaviour or children who are unhappy at school may find comfort in gangs, and so on (Burton, 2007; Estévez *et al*, 2008; Netshitangani, 2014). Factors outside the school such as drugs, parental involvement in crime, violence in the community, and whether or not the learner has only one parent may also increase the likelihood of violent adolescent behaviour (Smith & Smith, 2006).

The *exosystem* refers to social environments in which adolescents do not participate directly, such as mass media, the neighbourhood, and schools (Netshitangani, 2014). Social media, in particular, is seen as promoting violence. In South Africa, messages of violence, such as those of certain political parties also make violence to be seen as normal behaviour. Incidents of mob justice are also common. Out of 20 336 murders reported by the SAPS in 2017/18, 846 (4.2%) of them were associated with mob justice (Lancaster, 2019).

The *macrosystem* refers to the more global aspects of the adolescents' environment which are beyond their influence such as their socioeconomic conditions, ideologies and attitudes of culture, as well as the socioeconomic environment in which the adolescent exists (Burton, 2007; Estévez *et al*, 2008; Netshitangani, 2014).

The ecological systems theory is summed up in figure 3.1 below:

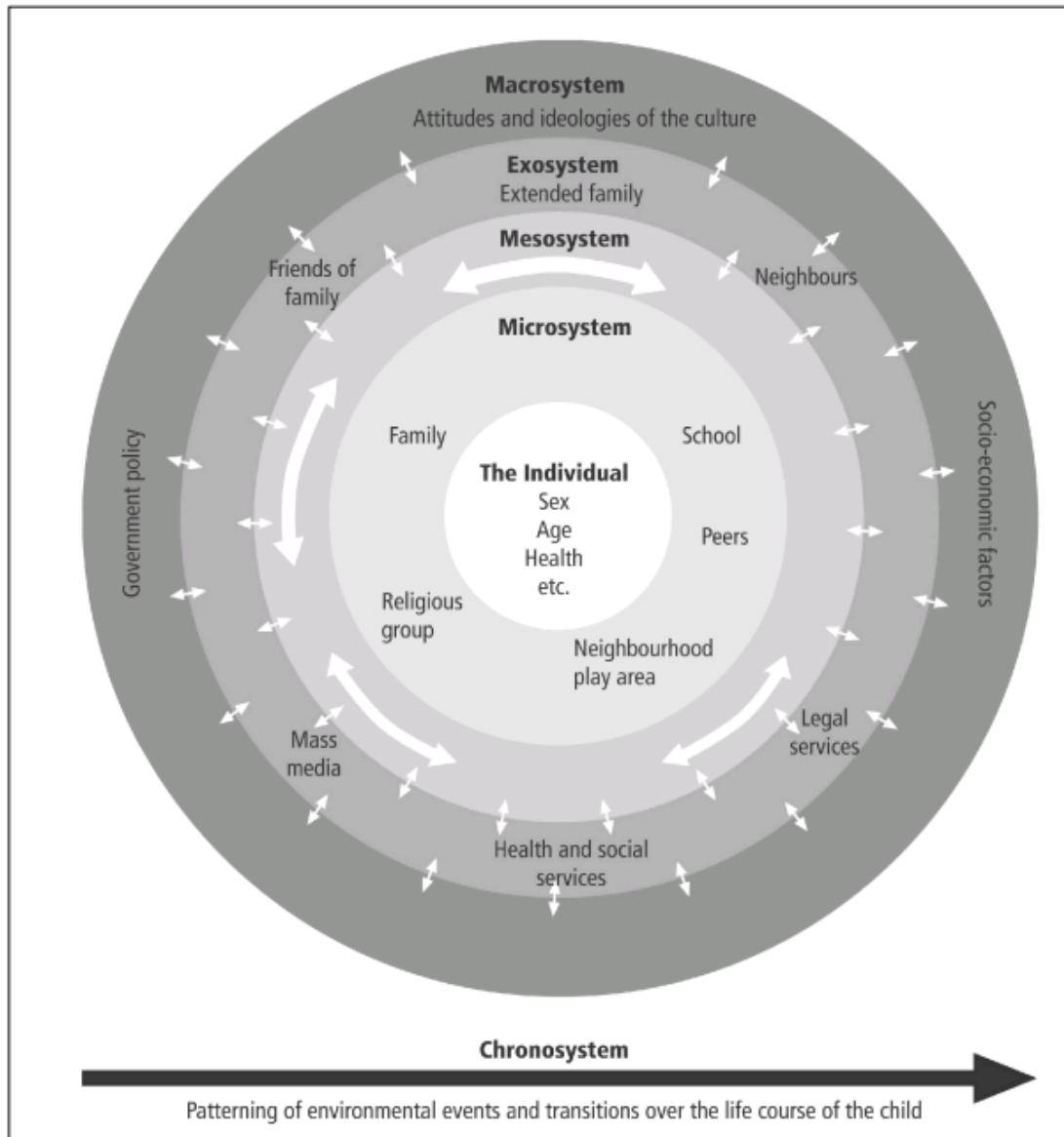


Figure 3. 1: Adolescent context relations

Source: Burton (2007:13)

According to figure 3.1, “A key element of the ecosystemic model is the connections between the nested layers: none of them can be viewed in isolation” (Burton, 2007:13). For instance, the macrosystem, such as socio-economic factors, attitudes and ideologies of the culture, and government policy that allow for widespread poverty will influence what the exosystem makes available in terms of health and social systems and this in turn will influence the whole system. As an illustration, poverty might be a

tremendous stressor among peers with them turning against those who seem to be better off. Because of poverty, adolescents may also lack pro-social activities which may increase their chances of finding something else to do such as turning to anti-social and violent activities to occupy their time.

Alongside these ecological systems is the *chronosystem* (Burton, 2007). This reflects the developmental changes of adolescents with the passage of time. This may be the case as adolescents have more contact with the school than they had with their family; or more time at school; or more time with their peers. The more time they spend within these contexts, the more they are likely to be influenced by them. Intervention models, therefore, must take into consideration the chronosystem in order to have the most impact.

3.3 Intervention Theories

Two major intervention theories are discussed in this section, namely, the invitational education theory and the resilience wheel theory. Both these theories can be applied as intervention models to mitigate the incidence of violence at township schools. These theories are discussed below.

3.3.1 Invitational Theory

Invitational theory has been described by, among others, Purkey & Novak (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Purkey & Siegel, 2013; Novak, Armstrong & Browne, 2014; Purkey & Novak, 2015). As the name suggests, invitational theory is a theory based on making it inviting for individuals to make the right choices against violence (Purkey & Novak, 2015). In understanding invitational theory, it is assumed that: "People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly; educating should be a collaborative, cooperative activity; the process is the product in the making; people possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavour; this potential can be realised by places, policies, programs, and processes specifically designed to invite development and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and

others, personally and professionally” (Purkey & Novak, 2015:1). The sections of invitational theory are illustrated in figure 3.2 below.

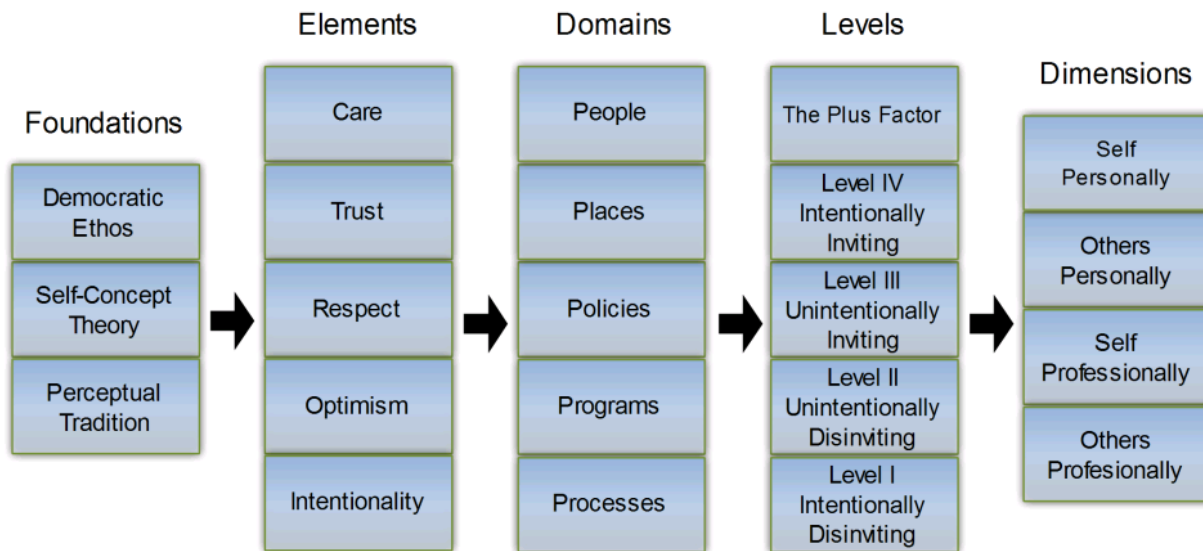


Figure 3. 2: Sections of invitational theory
 Source: Purkey & Novak (2015:1)

3.3.1.1 Invitational theory foundations

The three foundations of invitational theory are: democratic ethos, self-concept theory, and perceptual tradition. The theory emphasises that people learn perceptions and that the perceptions ground must first be made fertile for invitational theory to thrive. It also emphasises participation in developing these perceptions rather than only receiving.

Democratic ethos emphasises democratic principles in the growth of individuals and that, “People matter and can grow through participation and self-governance” (Purkey & Novak, 2015:2). The theory emphasises ‘doing with’ people rather than ‘doing to’. It is a, “...democratically oriented, perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process” (Purkey & Novak, 1996:3). Implied in this approach is respect and the conviction that people have the ability to articulate their concerns.

The foundation of the *self-concept theory* is that people learn perceptions, and that the most powerful of these is the perception of the self. Purkey & Novak (1996:2) define

self-concept as, "...a complex and dynamic system of learned beliefs that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence." Invitational theory rests heavily on the influence the school has on the learner, as well as the personal and professional qualities of teachers. Violence is linked to, "...low self-esteem and fragile concepts where many acts of violence arise from incidents that are trivial in origin – insult, curse or a jostle – the significance of which is blown out of all proportion" (Burton, 2007:63).

Perceptual tradition proposes that people are more influenced by perceptions of events than by events themselves. To understand why people, do things, therefore, it is important to explore perceptions within and among them.

3.3.1.2 Invitational theory elements

Elements of invitational theory are: care, trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. These elements are illustrated in figure 3.3 below.

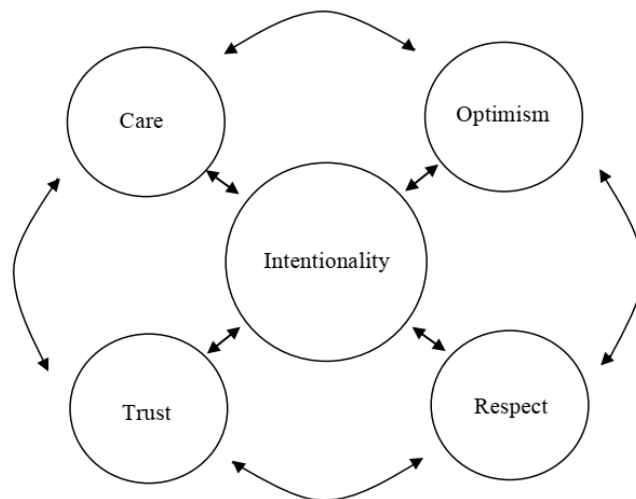


Figure 3. 3: Invitational theory elements

Source: Purkey & Novak, 2015: 2

Central to the invitational theory is intentionality. An invitation is an intentional act of offering something of value to the one being invited. All the elements of invitational theory, namely, care, respect, trust and optimism are linked together by intentionality, and intentionality is part of each one of them.

3.3.1.3 Domains

The five domains found in practically every environment are the five Ps: people, places, programmes, processes, and policies. The five Ps make up the ecosystem in which individuals continually interact. All of them are required to work simultaneously in the invitational theory framework. Figure 3.4 illustrates how invitational theory works through the five Ps in the ecosystem



Figure 3. 4: Invitational theory domains

Source: Purkey & Novak, 2015:4

Invitational theory postulates, therefore, that the ecosystem must be inviting for development to take place. Central to the five domains of the invitational theory is intentionality. Everything is about intention to improve.

3.3.1.4 Invitational theory in practice – Levels

In practice, invitational theory operates at various levels. While humans are less than perfect and may act at different levels from time to time, it is the levels they tend to gravitate towards that matter the most. The different levels are intentionally disinviting, unintentionally disinviting, intentionally inviting, and unintentionally inviting.

Intentionally disinviting refers to ecosystems in which people, places, programmes, processes, and policies are intentionally made to deny participants democracy, demean them, discourage them, discriminate against them, and so on. While there are not many such instances at schools, there still exist such ecosystems in the school environment in South Africa where, for instance, non-Afrikaans speaking or non-white learners are marginalised and discriminated against, or where teachers discriminate against certain learners.

Unintentionally disinviting is more reflective of the situation at township schools in South Africa. At an unintentionally disinviting level, there is no philosophy of intentionality, care, respect, trust, and optimism. People behave in a disinviting manner even though it is not their intent to do so.

People who operate at the unintentionally inviting level are not easy to find. These are people who are naturally inviting without being able to explain why. These may be ‘natural born’ teachers. But because they lack intentionality, they lack consistency in the policies, programmes and processes they design, and might even ignore some of the five Ps such as places.

Those who operate at the intentionally inviting level, “...seek to consistently exhibit the assumptions of Invitational Theory” (Purkey & Novak, 2015: 6). In the context of South African schools, these are schools where teachers are caring, trusting, respecting and optimistic. The places, programmes, processes and policies are formulated to encourage participation and optimism. Purkey & Novak (2015) describe this level as the ‘plus factor’ level where people continue to grow and develop.

3.3.1.5 Dimensions of invitational theory

The goal of invitational theory is to encourage individuals to enrich their lives both at individual and professional levels. At individual level the two dimensions are being personally inviting with oneself and being personally inviting with others. At a professional level the two dimensions are being professionally inviting with oneself and being professionally inviting with others.

3.3.1.6 Relevance of invitational theory to township schools

In his paper '*Implementing professional development in invitational education*', Steyn (2005) argues that invitational theory can be applied to South African schools for professional development of educators in order to 're-culture' schools. Steyn (2005) recognises the role of the educators in 'intentionally' working to improve people, places, programmes, processes, and policies in which learners continually interact. According to the author, key factors identified as important in the implementation of invitational education are: "...learning styles of educators; educators' commitment to change; transformational leadership; out-of-school conditions; in-school conditions, and requirements of programmes" (Steyn, 2005: 258).

Invitational education has been applied predominantly in the US and Canada (IAIE State/Country Coordinators, 2004). Steyn (2005) reports that several schools in South Africa are also in the process of implementing invitational education principles and that three of these have received the *Inviting School Award* from the International Alliance for Invitational Education.

For schools to transform into intentionally inviting schools, they need to implement an effective professional development programme. This in turn means that those factors required for designing professional development programmes should be identified. Professional development, "...focuses on knowledge, skills and attitudes required of educators, leaders and other school staff to enable them to assist learners to learn and to develop their human potential" (Somers & Sikorova, 2002:103). A goal of invitational education is to inspire educators to be personally inviting with oneself and with others; and to be professionally inviting with oneself and with others.

3.3.2 Resilience Wheel Theory

The relevance of invitational theory has been discussed in the context of professional development of educators to create an inviting environment for learners to enrich their lives. It is, however, easier said than done that approaches such as invitational education can work. As evidence from television, newspapers, and social media indicates, violence has been normalised in South Africa. Violence is seen in parliament, at protest marches, in homes, in communities, in schools and universities; and incidents of violence – especially school violence – go viral on social media. In 2018 *News24* reported headlines such as: *Grade 1 pupil stabbed to death, Stone thrown at teacher, Water thrown in teacher's face, Attempted stabbing (of pupils), Bus driver assaulted, Murdered over cell phone, Stabbing teacher to death, Toy gun pointed at teacher, Culture of sexual assault, Pupil killed at school*, and so on. These are traumatic events both from the perspective of those who witnessed them and those at the receiving end. There are other risks such as the family environment, the community environment, the peer environment, and so on, that can promote or encourage violent behaviour in school learners. It is thus important, simultaneously with creating an inviting environment to personal enrichment, also to promote resilience among learners. In fact, it can be argued that promoting resilience is part of creating an inviting environment for personal enrichment.

Fonagy, Steele, Steele, Higgitt & Target (1994:15) defined resilience as, "...normal development under difficult circumstances and is the capacity to withstand stress and catastrophe." Lynde (nd:1) defined it as, "...the human capacity to face, overcome, and even be strengthened by adversities of life". Kiswarday (2010:94) defines it as, "...an interactive and accumulating process of developing different skills, abilities, knowledge and insight that a person needs for successful adaptation or to overcome adversities and meet challenges". Kiswarday's (2010) definition will be used in this study.

Resilience has been shown to be an ability that can be found in an average individual and which can be learned and developed – it is not a trait, but a process (Moletsane & Theron, 2017). Longitudinal research evidence shows that about one third of children

manage to become resilient despite having a high-risk status (Mastern & Powell, 2003:2, cited in Kiswarday, 2010).

3.3.2.1 Models for fostering resilience

Models for fostering resilience have been grouped into three major categories, namely: compensatory models, challenge models, and protective factor models. Compensatory models focus on neutralising the negative consequences of violent behaviour, challenge models use the current challenges faced by the learner as potential enhancers of future resilience, and protective factor models seek to modify the learner's response and reaction to risk factors (Cove, Eiseman & Popkin, 2005).

3.3.2.2 Fostering resilience in the school context

It has been argued that the family is the most powerful source for fostering and developing resilience in children. Taking into consideration the *chronosystem* (Burton, 2007) which reflects the developmental changes of adolescents with the passage of time, this should be true for children who spend most of their time at home. In the case of township learners, however, they spend most of their time at school making the schools the best positioned in the chronosystem to be targeted for fostering and developing resilience in children. Educators have the opportunity, chance and responsibility to interfere to foster resilience in learners.

Regarding the role of educators in fostering resilience, there seems to be agreement between the invitational theory approach and the resiliency theory approach. The premise of a resiliency programme is that, "When a protective environment is established and protective factors are increased, school climate and attendance will improve as well as students' academic achievement. Students will be less vulnerable to becoming involved in inappropriate behaviours" (Kiswarday, 2010:98). The same words can be said, replacing the word 'protective' with 'inviting' and 'resiliency' with 'inviting'. Therefore the premise of an inviting programme is that when an inviting environment is established and inviting factors are increased, school climate and attendance will improve as well as students' academic achievement.

3.3.2.3 The resilience wheel

The steps of a resilience wheel are illustrated in figure 3.5 below.

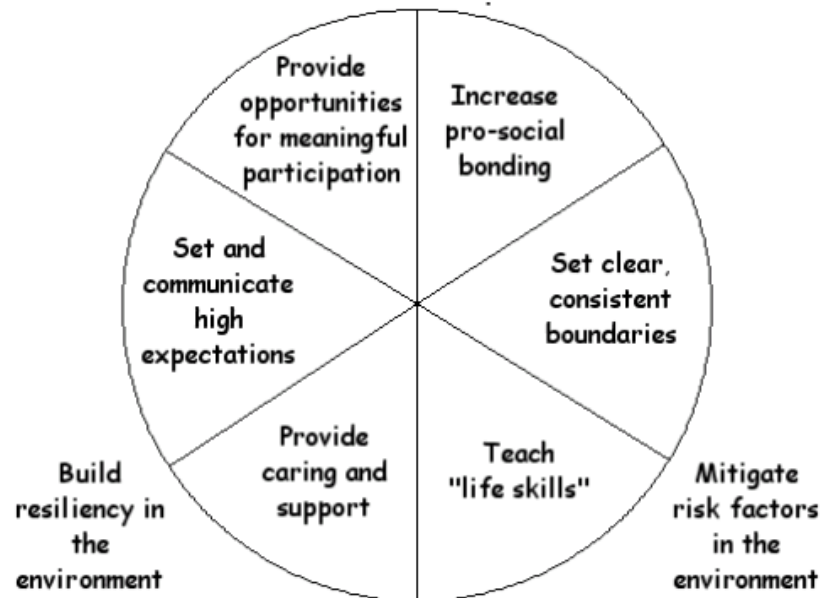


Figure 3. 5: Steps of a resilience wheel
Source: Handerson (2007:10)

Step 1 in the resilience wheel is about increasing pro-social bonding. This stimulates learners to enhance their talents and social skills. There are similarities between this approach and that of the invitational education approach.

Step 2 is about setting clear and consistent boundaries. This makes learners aware of the boundaries within which they are expected to operate. This includes clear policies, programmes, and processes.

Step 3 is about the teaching of life skills such as basic academic skills, learning motivation, conflict resolution, communication, planning, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Life skills are important to give the learner a base necessary for successfully coping with challenges and avoiding violent behaviour.

Step 4 is about providing an environment of caring and support. This is crucial in the resilience wheel theory. Again, the requirements of the resiliency wheel theory and those of the Invitational theory intersect. Patience and care are the order of the day in this step as providing an environment of care and support requires patience.

Step 5 is about setting high expectations for learners. This, however, should not be about expecting instant perfection, but again about being patient.

Step 6 is about democracy. It is about providing opportunities for meaningful participation. It is about learners using their gathered knowledge and skills to improve themselves. This step also mimics a step in the invitational theory about inviting democratic participation of learners in improving themselves.

3.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter important theories underpinning this study, namely explanatory theories of violent and aggressive behaviour, and intervention theories, were discussed. Explanatory theories were divided into active (or innate drive) theories and reactive (or environmental) theories. Among the reactive theories, the ecological systems theory was discussed at length and shown to be relevant to violent behaviour of learners in a township school.

Two intervention theories were discussed, namely, the invitational theory and the resilience wheel theory. The discussion indicated that both theories are applicable to a township school in South Africa and that both are in agreement and complementary to each other. This suggests that both theories can be used concurrently without contradiction as intervention theories against school violence. The next chapter discusses the research design and approach for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research approach used in this study. The first section is devoted to the research design and its justification. The sections that follow outline the research methodology, sampling procedure, methods of data collection, how the data were analysed, as well as ethical considerations.

4.2 Research philosophy

Research design refers to “...the overall strategy the researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical manner, thereby ensuring the researcher will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data” (De Vaus, 2001:9). The choice of the research design in this study can best be described using the research onion (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). The research onion is illustrated in figure 4.1.

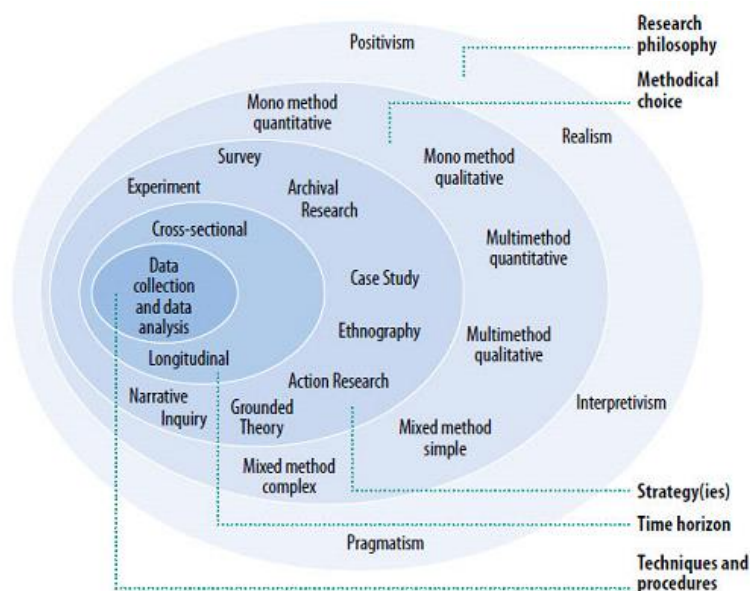


Figure 4. 1: Research Onion
Source: Saunders, et al, 2012

According to Figure 4.1, the choice of research design starts with the research philosophy, commonly referred to as the research paradigm. There are four different philosophical approaches, namely, positivism, realism, interpretivism, and pragmatism. According to the positivist purists, social phenomena should be treated the same way as scientists treat physical phenomena (Tubey, Rotich & Bengat, 2015). “A researcher with a positivist orientation regards reality as being ‘out there’ in the world and needing to be discovered using conventional methodologies” (Bassey, 1995, cited in Tubey *et al*, 2015:224). According to this belief, empirical facts exist apart from the researcher’s ideas or thoughts and are governed by laws of cause and effect. Data collected are numerical in nature and subjected to statistical analysis. This philosophy underpins the quantitative research approach.

The interpretivists, on the other hand, believe that reality is not ‘out there’ and that the aim of social research is to understand the meaning of events and the intention of human actions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Social research using this paradigm is not concerned about generalizability of results. Interpretivism underpins the qualitative research approach and often relies on personal contact between the group being studied and the researcher and can lead to deeper insight into the context under study (Ulin, Robinson & Tolley, 2004, cited in Tubey *et al*, 2015:226).

Realism is similar to positivism but differs in that realism does not believe in perfect scientific methods. According to realists, all theory can be revised and to know for certain what reality is may not exist without continually researching and leaving open minds to using new methods of research.

Pragmatism places significance on the ability of the research process to generate practical results. This approach can use both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Importance is given to the problem, and any approach that results in the understanding of the research problem should be used.

4.3 Research design

The next layer of the research onion deals with the research design. In this study a mixed methods design was used. This method combines both the qualitative and the quantitative approaches. Creswell & Tashakkori (2007:4) defined mixed methods approach as, "...research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, or methods in a single study or program of inquiry". The use of mixed methods is sometimes called 'triangulation' as it establishes corroboration of results from the quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. This approach has also been said to increase reliability, validity, or accuracy of a study (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1991).

A mixed methods approach is commonly distinguished in terms of sequence, that is, whether the qualitative approach is undertaken before the quantitative one or vice versa, or whether they occur simultaneously (Thurloway, 2014:196). In this study a simultaneous approach was used where both the quantitative data and qualitative data were collected simultaneously.

4.4 Time frame

Two-time frame approaches, as illustrated by the research onion, are cross-sectional and longitudinal. A cross-sectional approach looks at a phenomenon at a point in time, while a longitudinal approach looks at change over time. This study was more concerned with the situation of school violence at the time of the study and hence a cross-sectional approach was adopted.

4.5 Data collection instruments

4.5.1 Quantitative data

Quantitative data were collected using the Resilience Questionnaire for Middle-Adolescents in Township Schools (R-MATS), which looks at systemic and individual risk factors of violent school learners in a township school as well as resiliency factors (please see Appendix F). Systemic and individual risk factors were measured on 11 items on yes/no responses. In this study, 2 extra items were added, namely, 12) I see

a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community, and 13) Parents fight a lot. Resilience was measured on 24 Likert type items which were grouped into 6 categories as follows: 1) self-belief – nine items, 2) home environment support – two items, 3) school environment support – six items, 4) tenacity in problem-solving – two items, 5) role model in school learner's life – one item, and 6) attitudes towards school – four items.

4.5.2 Qualitative data

Qualitative data were collected using interviews and a focus group discussion. There were interviews with learners (please see Appendix G), interviews with educators (please see Appendix H), focus groups with learners (please see Appendix I), and interviews with parents (please see Appendix J). The interview guides consisted of semi-structured questions covering four themes. The first theme was on the nature of school violence a – general understanding of violence, personal involvement with peers, and learner and educator encounters. The second theme covered internal characteristics such as commitment to learning, positive values, social competency, and positive identity. The third theme was external characteristics such as the family, the school, the community, peers, the media, and protective factors. The fourth theme concerned coping skills, both task-orientated and emotionally orientated.

4.6 Sampling and sample size

4.6.1 Sampling Strategy

Sampling is the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent an entire population (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000). There are two broad categories of sampling strategies, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling refers to a situation where every unit of study in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Thyer, 2010:41), and non-probability sampling, as the name suggests, does not give study units equal probability of selection. In this study, non-probability purposive sampling was used to select the research participants. The non-probability approach allowed the researcher to handpick the sample according

to the nature of the research problem and the phenomenon under study (Marlow, 2011). Sharma (2017:751) adds that, “Purposive sampling represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. Also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, purposive sampling relies on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (e.g., people, cases/organisation, events, and pieces of data) that are to be studied.” The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable answering the research questions.

4.6.2 Sample size

For the quantitative component of the study, 52 school learners from grades 8 to 12 at Taurus Secondary School were selected. This school had a total population of 751 learners. This school was chosen because residents of the area were considered to be economically disadvantaged. Many lived in extreme poverty due to high unemployment rates and social problems that include drugs, alcohol, gambling, teenage pregnancy, gangsterism and violence (Marimuthu, 2014). The qualitative component of the sample included twelve school learners from grades 8 to 12, six educators, the principal, the head of department of Life Orientation, and seven parents of the learners from Taurus Secondary School in Chatsworth. The 52 learners who were included in the sample were learners who were willing to participate in the study. Many of the learners’ parents/guardians did not give informed consent for the learners to take part in the study. The 12 learners who were included in the qualitative study were part of the 52 learners who took part. The seven parents, on the other hand, were not necessarily linked to any of the learners in the study.

4.7 Data collection methods

4.7.1 Gaining Access

For ethical purposes it is essential to obtain permission at a certain site and to ensure that participants are aware of what is happening, and that the researcher is granted access into an organisation (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). For the purpose of this study,

the research site Taurus Secondary School (pseudonym) was visited. Initially a meeting was set up with the principal to seek permission to conduct interviews and focus group discussions with the learners and educators (please see Appendix B). The purpose and the objectives of the study were explained, whereupon permission was granted. A letter of permission from the school was received (please see Appendix C). Once access was obtained the principal and head of department for Life Orientation (LO) provided the researcher with a list of potential learners to participate in the study.

4.7.2 Interviews

Interviews can be defined as a, "...qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation" (Boyce & Neale, 2006:3). They are advantageous where little is known about the phenomenon under study or where individual insights are required from individuals. They are also advantageous because sensitive topics that would otherwise be difficult to explore in a group discussion can be explored, thus providing a 'deeper' understanding of the phenomenon under study (Silverman, 2000:8). Patton (2002) has described an interview as, "...open-ended questions and probes yielding in-depth responses about people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge." The interview process is also advantageous as it can, "...elicit people's own views and descriptions and have the benefit of uncovering issues or concerns that have not been anticipated by the researcher" (Pope, Van Royen & Baker, 2002:148).

The use of in-depth semi-structured interviews was most appropriate in this study since it allowed the researcher to explore learner resilience to school violence. Such interviews were conducted with 12 learners from grade 8-12, six educators, the head of department for LO, the principal, and seven parents.

The interviews were approximately 30 minutes in length with learners and learner parents and approximately 90 minutes in length with educators, principal and the LO head of department. Furthermore, in order to afford privacy, the interviews were

conducted in a vacant classroom within the school. The interviews were audio-recorded which allowed the researcher to capture the entire interview in transcribed documents. The participants were all fluent in the English language, therefore all interviews were conducted in English. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions allowed the conversation about school violence at schools to be transformed into text for interpretation and analysis.

4.7.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are useful in generating a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs (Morgan, 1998). Patton (2002) pointed out that a focus group is a primary means of collecting qualitative data. In essence, focus groups are interviews conducted with groups of individuals and allow participants to interact freely to build on one another's conversations and ideas. The information gathered is group generated. According to Denscombe (2007:115), "[A] focus group consists of a small group of people, usually between six and nine in number, who are brought together by a trained moderator (the researcher) to explore attitudes and perceptions, feelings and ideas about a topic". Casey & Krueger (2000:11) also maintain that focus groups provide... "...a more natural environment than that of individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others – just as they are in real life".

In this study the focus group consisted of six educators. The focus group was one hour in duration and took place in the staff room after school hours. The participants were asked to sign a consent form before starting the discussion agreeing to be part of the discussion. This method was chosen instead of interviews because it allowed for a discussion of the different opinions rather than just questions and answers.

4.7.4 Collection of quantitative data

Quantitative data were collected using the R-MATS questionnaire administered to 52 learners. Learners were given the questionnaire to fill during their break time. The questionnaire took no more than seven minutes to complete.

4.8 Data analysis

Quantitative data were analysed descriptively through frequency distributions and graphs using MS Excel. In a descriptive analysis, to display data appropriately, use is made of figures that can be read quickly by the audience (Freeman & Julious, n.d.). To do this, it is first important to understand the different types of data. Categorical data are data that can be categorised into different groups, such as age group, gender, school grade, or household dwelling structure type. This kind of data can be either ordinal or nominal. Ordinal data are data that can be presented in an orderly form such as school grade or on a scale such as 'better' or 'same' or 'worse', while nominal data have no natural ordering, such as gender or household dwelling structure type. A special case of categorical data is binary data, which can only take two possible values such as 'yes' or 'no', or 'male' or 'female'.

Data may also be measurable on a continuous scale which has interval or ratio properties. Continuous data can take on any value on the scale being used to take the measurements and can only be limited by the measurement scale being used (Freeman & Julious, n.d.). Examples would be the age or weight of a learner.

In this study, categorical data were used to investigate the systemic and individual risk factors of township school learners as well as their resilience. Systemic and individual risk factors were measured on a binary (yes/no) scale while resilience was measured on a 4-point Likert type (ordinal) scale (true all the time, true most of the time, untrue most of the time, and untrue all the time). Categorical data are usually displayed using graphs (Mountain Equipment Co-op, n.d.) of frequency counts. This analysis was applied to the analysis of the questionnaire – the R-MATS data.

Qualitative data were analysed using the Braun & Clarke (2006) thematic analysis method. Miles & Huberman (2009) asserted that qualitative data, "...are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events lead to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations." Furthermore, Patton (2002:432) posited that "...qualitative data analysis transforms

data into findings. This involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveals”.

This study adopted the method of thematic analysis to analyse the interviews and focus group discussions. Atlas.ti 8 software for qualitative data analysis was used to analyse the data. Thematic analysis is a method that facilitates the researcher to reflect on reality and to also unravel the surface of reality (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following steps were adapted from Braun & Clarke (2006) in analysing the data:

Step 1: The researcher read and re-read to gain an in-depth understanding of each transcribed interview. This allowed the researcher to actively and intimately engage with the data and to begin the process of entering the participants’ world.

Step 2: The researcher identified and made notes on relevant statements and phrases that were recurring from the transcripts. Important patterns from the transcripts started to emerge as it related to the research objectives and questions.

Step 3: Within the third step, a thematic framework for the coding of the data was thereafter established. The pertinent narratives were grouped together under an identified theme. This was done to ensure that critical issues in the data were identified. The emergent themes captured and reflected from the transcribed text were the exact narratives from the sample cohort.

4.9 Reliability and Validity

4.9.1 Reliability

The concepts of reliability and validity are important to both the quantitative and qualitative studies (Golafshani, 2003). Nunnally (1967: 206) cited in Cortina (1993:98) defined reliability as "...the extent to which [measurements] are repeatable and that any random influence which tends to make measurements different from occasion to occasion is a source of measurement error". This does not refer to how reliable the

subjects (people being interviewed) are, but the extent to which they are in agreement with the scores being used and their responses stay the same over time (Bolarinwa, 2015), which in the case of this study is the scores of the items used to measure resilience. The three major forms of assessing reliability are internal consistency reliability, test-retest reliability, and alternate form reliability.

4.9.2 Internal consistency reliability

Internal consistency refers to "...the extent to which items on the test or instrument are measuring the same thing" (Bolarinwa, 2015:199). In the case of this study, items are the 24 items on which resilience is measured. The advantage of internal consistency reliability is that it does not rely on time period as it is estimated after only one test administration. This uses the so-called "split-half" reliability index and coefficient alpha index on all possible split halves of the sample and taking the average of these. It is commonly measured using Cronbach alpha (α). The higher the value of alpha, the higher the reliability of the measure. As a general convention, researchers should strive for reliability values of 0.70 and higher (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994 cited in Bolarinwa, 2015:199)

In this research, reliability of resilience was measured using internal consistency reliability. An internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.854194 was observed, indicating a good measure of reliability. This value of Cronbach's alpha compares well with the Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 observed by Mampane (2012) and 0.82 observed by Mampane & Bouwer (2011).

4.9.3 Test-retest reliability (or stability)

Test-retest reliability refers to reliability or stability is obtained using similar scores over time with the same group of respondents. This is done by administering the same or similar questionnaire to the same or similar to the same individuals under similar conditions. Correlation of test scores at different time periods is used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire.

4.9.4 Alternate form reliability

As the name suggests, alternate form reliability refers to administering a questionnaire and its alternate form at the same point in time to the same group or different group of individuals by changing the wording. The higher the correlation between the two forms, the more equivalent they are. Alternate form reliability is similar to the Test-Retest reliability except in the case of Alternative form an alternative test is given (Yang & Miller, 2008).

4.9.5 Choice of reliability measure

In this study, internal consistency reliability will be used to test the reliability of resilience measured using the Cronbach alpha measure. The reason for this is that this study is not a longitudinal study but looks at school violence at the particular time when the study was undertaken. The second reason is that the study is not about testing reliability of the R-MATS questionnaire even though comparisons will be made with previous studies to compare agreement on consistency. The R-MATS has a reported reliability coefficient of 0.82.

4.9.6 Validity

Joppe (2000:1) gave the following description of validity: “Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit ‘the bull’s eye’ of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions and will often look for the answers in the research of others.”

Creswell (2014) recommends that validity strategies be incorporated in the proposal. Among these strategies are member checking, using different data sources of information, clarification of the bias that the researcher brings in the study (i.e. the position of the researcher, gender, culture, etc); use of external auditor; and use of peer debriefing. In this study use was made of different data sources (learners, parents and educators), and use was also made of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Researcher bias brought to the study was that the researcher was an outsider to the school and some parents were sceptical about how the information was going to be used, even though the purpose of the study was thoroughly explained. This could be part of the reasons why some parents did not allow their children to take part in the study. Peer debriefing was made use of in this study as well as an external auditor.

To determine the reliability of the procedures the following reliability procedures have been suggested (Gibbs, 2007 cited in Creswell, 2014): check the transcripts for obvious mistakes, making sure there is no drift in the definition of the codes. After three weeks the researcher met with the 12 learners who formed the qualitative study group to verify the information they had provided in the interviews. Triangulation (use of both the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection) was also used to establish corroboration of results. Triangulation is said to increase reliability, validity, or accuracy of a study (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1991).

4.10 Ethical considerations

The main purpose of ethics in research is to protect the human rights of the research participants, while ensuring that the researcher reaps maximum benefits (Schoeman, 2011:106). The researcher committed to operating within the stipulated ethical guidelines as dictated for social science researchers.

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the Human and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) at the University of KwaZulu- Natal (UKZN) where the study was registered. Permission was obtained from the HSSREC of UKZN (Certificate number HSS/1350/015D) (please see Appendix A). Since the study was conducted with minors from the school, it was necessary to seek permission and approval of the school as well as parents to conduct the study. (please see Appendices C and E). Thereafter, verbal and written consent was obtained from the sample cohort, which included learners, parents and educators (please see Appendices D and E for learners and educators respectively). In addition, all the participants were informed that participation was voluntary, and they were free to exit the study at any stage.

The study was guided by the following principles:

4.10.1 Informed consent

Informed consent entails the participants' right to know that they are being researched and that they voluntarily provide their consent. In this study, all participants were required to sign a written informed consent document (please see Appendix D). The document contained the purpose of the study, its objectives and the method that was to be used to collect data. The document further stipulated that participation was strictly on a voluntary basis and they were welcome to withdraw at any given time. Verbal and written consent were also obtained for digital audio recording from the participants (please see Appendix D). The researcher approached the principal of the school and requested for resilient students from grades 8-12. Learners were approached based on the researcher's judgment with assistance from the class educators. Each learner who was willing to participate required parent or guardian consent prior to participating in the study (please see Appendix E) since the participants were below the age of 18 years. An informed consent form was also required to be completed by the learners for their voluntary participation in the study (please see Appendix D).

4.10.2 Privacy

The researcher advised each of the participants that the data would be shared with the UKZN supervisor and the wider university community without disclosure of identifying details. The participants had no objections and they were informed that the data were for the purpose of research and would contribute to the production of a PhD thesis.

4.10.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Participants were assured that anonymity would be maintained. The identities of participants in this research study were not disclosed. The researcher was guided by using abbreviations when developing the summary report in the data analysis stage, which then assured confidentiality. In each interview, the researcher declared that the

participants would remain anonymous and no identifying details would be shared with their peers and colleagues.

4.10.4 Harm to respondents

The research did not appear to have the potential to cause harm to the participants. In certain instances, sensitive information was shared that required additional attention from the researcher. Participants were advised that they could withdraw from the study at any point. In addition, they were informed about a debriefing session should they require it.

4.11 Limitations of the study

The study was conducted in Chatsworth South Africa, so it was limited to one geographical area. The study's target population was Taurus Secondary school only, not any other school in the area. The study only took between seven and thirteen learners from each of Grades 8 to 12 only, 52 in total. This limitation was brought upon by the fact that some parents/guardians were not willing to give permission to their children to take part in the study. This limitation extends to the qualitative component of the study whereby some of the parents were not willing to take part in the study. They were also not willing to allow their children to take part in the study.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research design and methodology utilised to conduct this study. This research was a mixed methods case study that explored learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Chatsworth, Durban. Non-probability, purposive sampling methods were used to select the participants for the study. The data collection methods that were used were the R-MATS questionnaire, semi-structured individual interviews, and a focus group discussion. Quantitative data were analysed using frequency distributions and qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis. All ethical principles were maintained throughout the study. The next chapter presents the findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology used to conduct this study. This chapter presents findings from the questionnaires, interviews and a focus group used to collect data. The main aim of this study was to explore learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Chatsworth, Durban. The objectives were first to describe the nature of school violence, second to identify and describe the internal characteristics of resilient school learners, third to determine the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners, and fourth to determine what skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence.

A mixed methods research design was used. A sample of 52 learners completed a structured questionnaire which included demographic details and the R-MAT. This generated quantitative data which are presented first in this chapter.

This is followed in the next part of this chapter by the qualitative data component which was generated by interviews and a focus group. The participants for this were six educators (E), the principal (P), the head of department for LO (LOHOD), seven learner parents (LP), and twelve learners (L). It should be noted that in the qualitative data analysis only selections of narratives that were applicable and most appropriate and pertained to the objectives of this research were included. Quotes from the transcriptions have been presented to substantiate the general findings that emerged.

In keeping with ethical guidelines of anonymity and confidentiality, the research participants were identifiable only by generic abbreviations, namely, **L** for learner, **E** for educator, **P** for principal, **LOHOD** for Life Orientation Head of Department, and **LP** for learner parent.

5.2 Demographic description of learners

The demographic variables used to describe the 52 learners were 'Grade' and 'Gender'.

5.2.1 Distribution of respondents by grade

Figure 5.1 presents the distribution of respondents by grade.

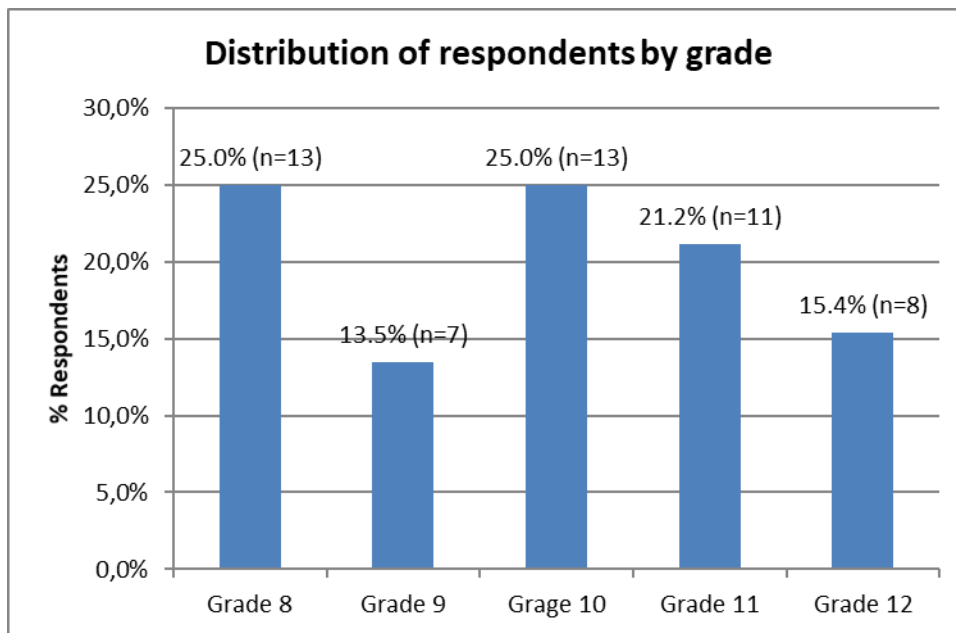


Figure 5. 1: Distribution of respondents by grade.

As figure 5.1 indicates, 38,5% (n=20) of the 52 learners were in grades 8 and 9, and 61,5% (n=32) were in grades 10 to 12.

5.2.2 Distribution of respondents by gender

Figure 5.2 presents the distribution of respondents by gender.

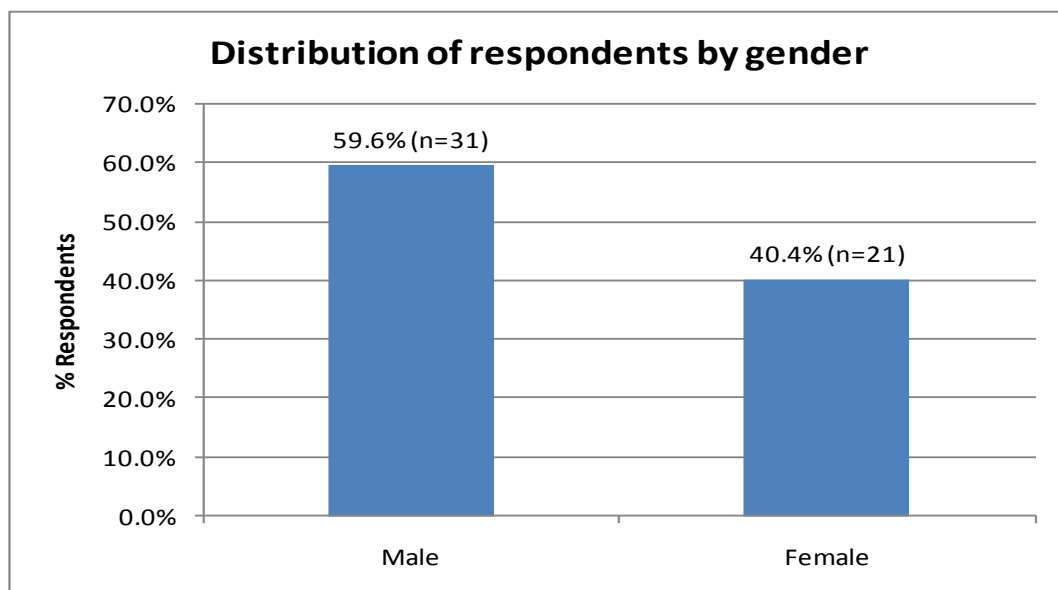


Figure 5. 2: Distribution of respondents by gender

Results show that 59.6% (n=31) of the respondents were males and 40.4% (n=21) were females. According to this distribution, both males and females were adequately represented in the sample.

5.3 Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the Chatsworth school from the R-MATS questionnaire

5.3.1 Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to all learners in the sample

Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the school were measured on 13 items, namely: 1) Everybody in my household is employed; 2) No formal housing structure; 3) Orphan. One or both parents deceased; 4) Fights a lot in school - poor problem-solving skills; 5) Insufficient food; 6) Many stressors; 7) Abused at home; 8) Not living with parents; 9) Bad treatment at home; 10) Bad life experiences; 11) Repeated a grade - academic problems; 12) I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community; and 13) Parents fight a lot. Responses were measured as either 'yes' or 'no'. Figure 5.3 presents these results.

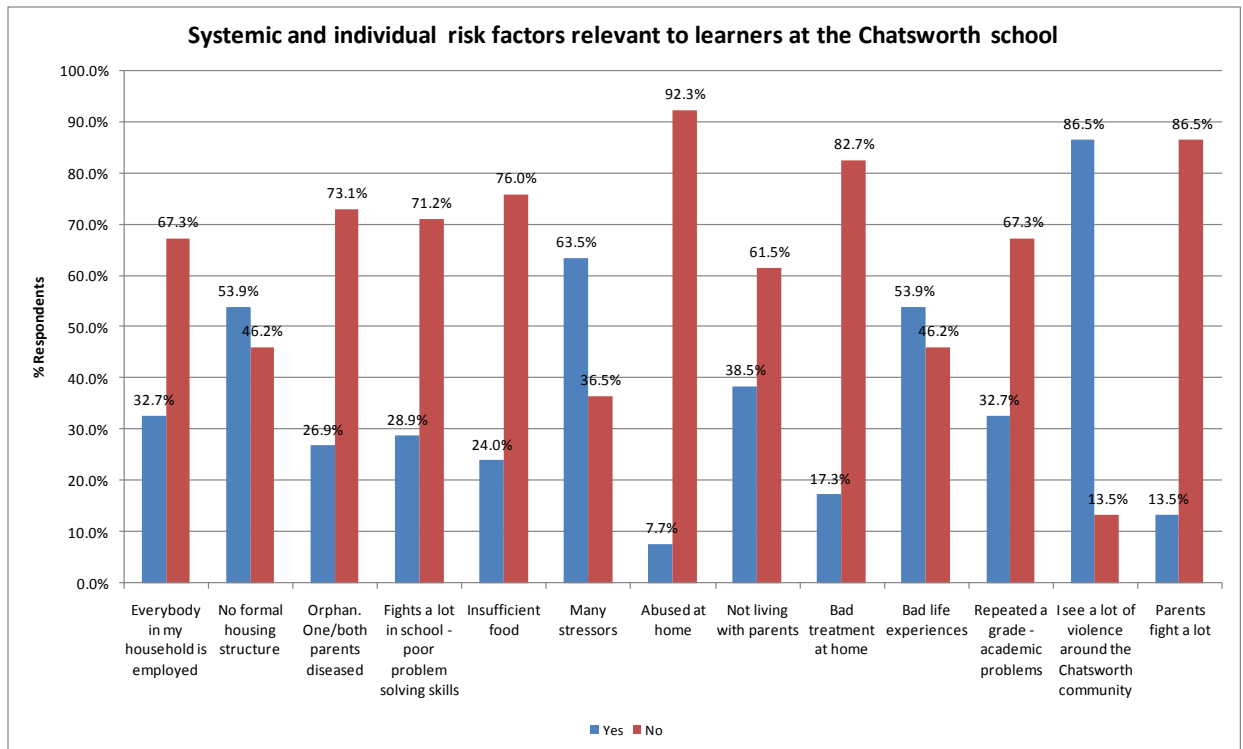


Figure 5. 3: Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the Chatsworth school

Figure 5.3 indicates that the major risk factors were: 1) *Everybody in household is employed*, to which most of the learners (67.3%) responded “no”; 2) *No formal housing infrastructure*, to which 53.9 % of responded “yes”; 3) *Many stressors*, to which most of the respondents (63.5%) responded “yes”; 4) *Bad life experiences*, to which 53.9 % responded “yes”; 5) *I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community*, to which 86.5% responded “yes”; and 6) *No formal housing structure*, to which 53.9 % responded “yes”. Results further indicate that 26.9 % of the learners were orphans (one or both parents diseased); 28.9 % reported that they fought a lot at school; 24 % reported that there was insufficient food at home; 7.7% reported abuse at home; 38.5 % were not living with parents (which included the orphans, meaning that the non-orphans not living with parents constituted 8.6% of the learners); 17.3 % reported bad treatment at home; 32.7 % reported that they had repeated a grade; and 13.5 % reported that parents fight a lot at home.

Figure 5.4 presents results of with a “yes” response to individual risk factors.

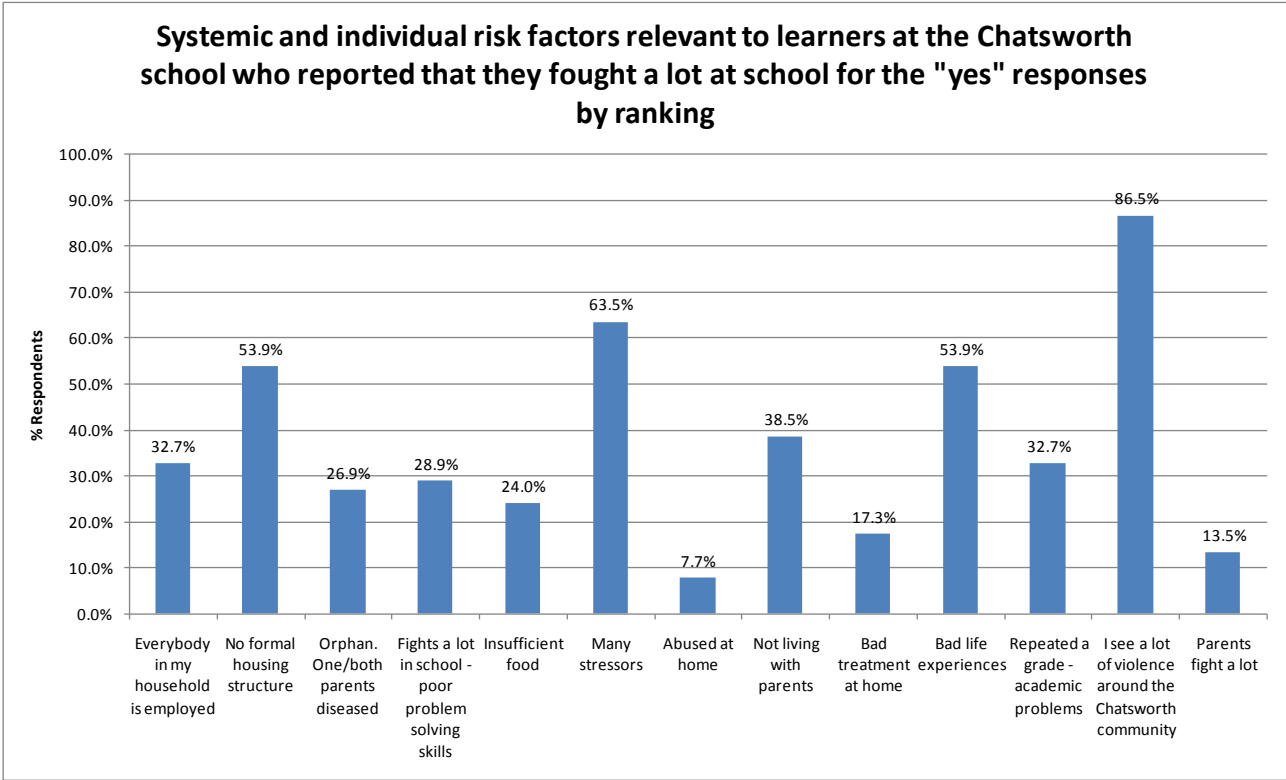


Figure 5. 4: Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the Chatsworth school for the “yes” responses by ranking

Figure 5.4 shows, 53.9 % of respondents reported that there was no formal structure where they lived; another 53.9 % reported that they had had bad life experiences; 63.5 % reported that they had many stressors; and 86.5 % reported that they saw a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community.

5.3.2 Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners who reported that they fought a lot at school

Next, the investigation concentrates on those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. In all 15 learners reported that they fought a lot at school. Figure 5.5 presents these results.

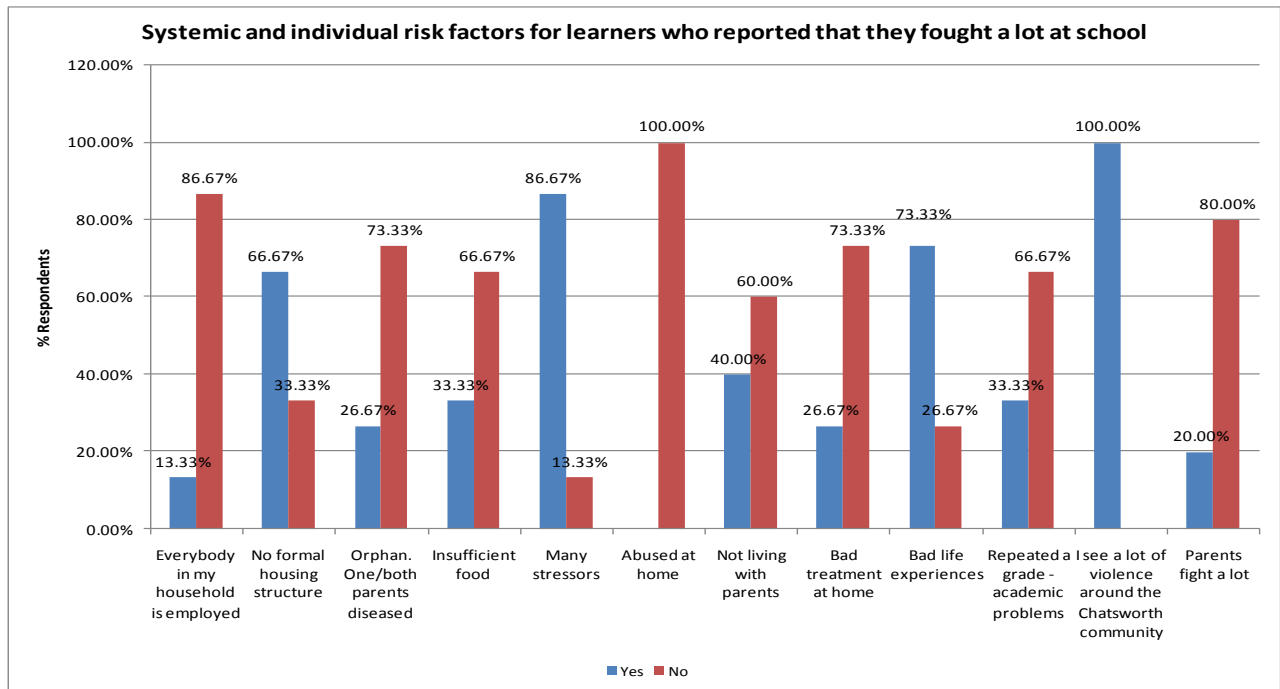


Figure 5. 5: Systemic and individual factors relevant to learners who reported that they fought a lot

Figure 5.5 indicates that 100% of the learners who reported that they fought a lot at school had seen a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community. It is also interesting to note that 100% of them were not abused at home. Results with only the “yes” responses to risk factors are presented in figure 5.6 overleaf.

Figure 5.5 indicates that risk factors found to be more prevalent in those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school were: not living with parents (40%), no formal housing structure (66.7%), bad life experiences (73.3%), many stressors (86.7%), and had seen a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community (100%). It is also interesting that only 13.3% of learners reported that everyone in their households was employed, while 86.7 % reported that not everyone was employed. This indicates that there was a high unemployment rate in the communities in which the learners lived. Few learners reported violence at home (20%), or bad treatment at home (26.7%), and none reported abuse at home (0%).

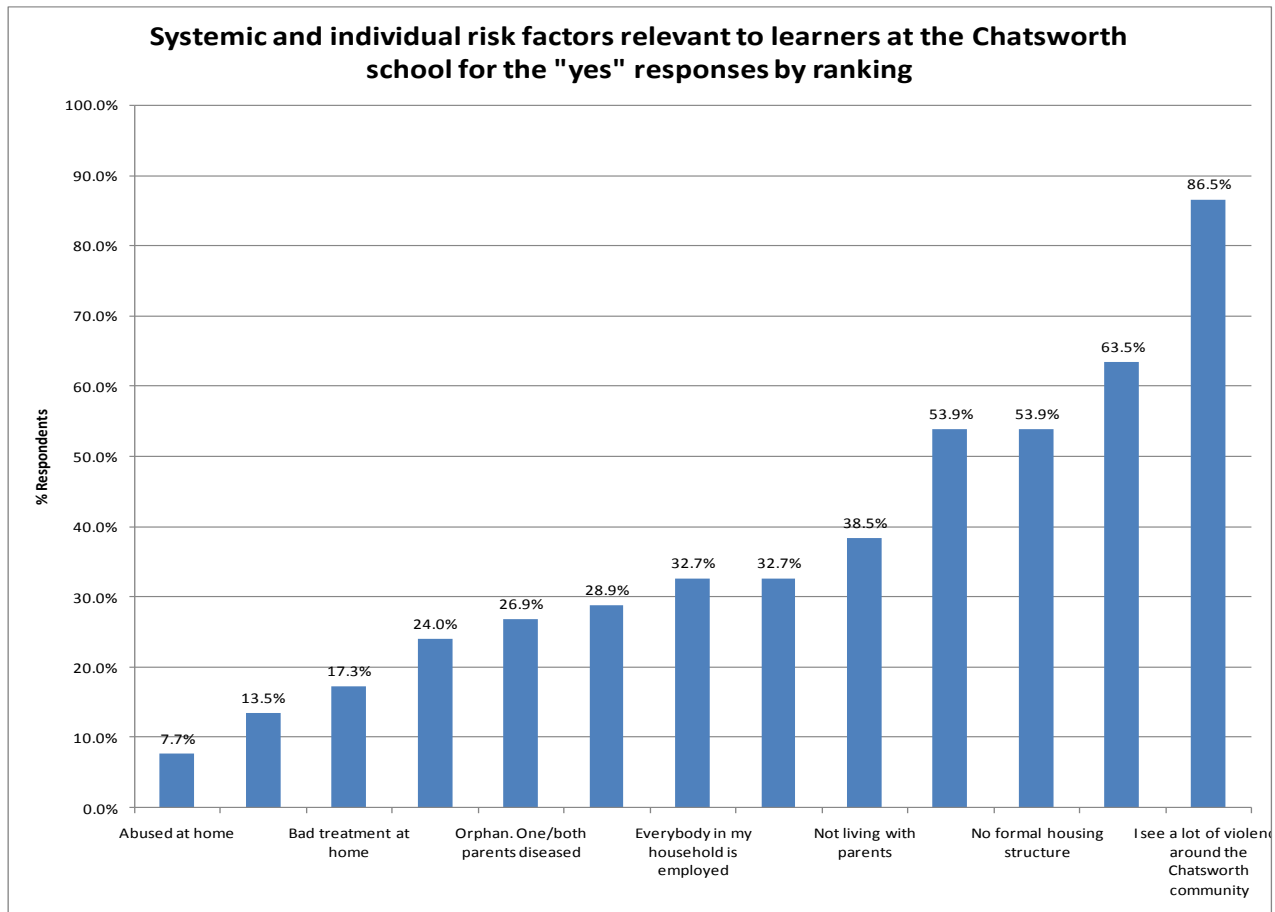


Figure 5. 6: Systemic and individual factors for those learners who reported that they fought a lot

Looking at the family environment items, namely, abuse at home, parents fight a lot, bad treatment at home, one or both parents are diseased, insufficient food, and everyone in my household is employed, it can be concluded that most of the learners were not at risk for these negative environmental factors. It does not however mean that this is not cause for concern, as violence by those learners who have violent behaviour also affects non-violent learners both as victims and as witnesses. The risk factors found in most of the learners, namely, no formal housing structure, bad life experiences, many stressors, and seeing a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community, indicate that most of the learner respondents came from low income areas with negative life experiences. It should be noted, however, that even though all learner respondents had been exposed to violence as participants or witnesses, most of them reported that they did not fight a lot.

5.3.3 Distribution of those who reported that they fought a lot by grade

Figure 5.7 presents the distribution of learners who reported that they fought a lot, broken down by grade.

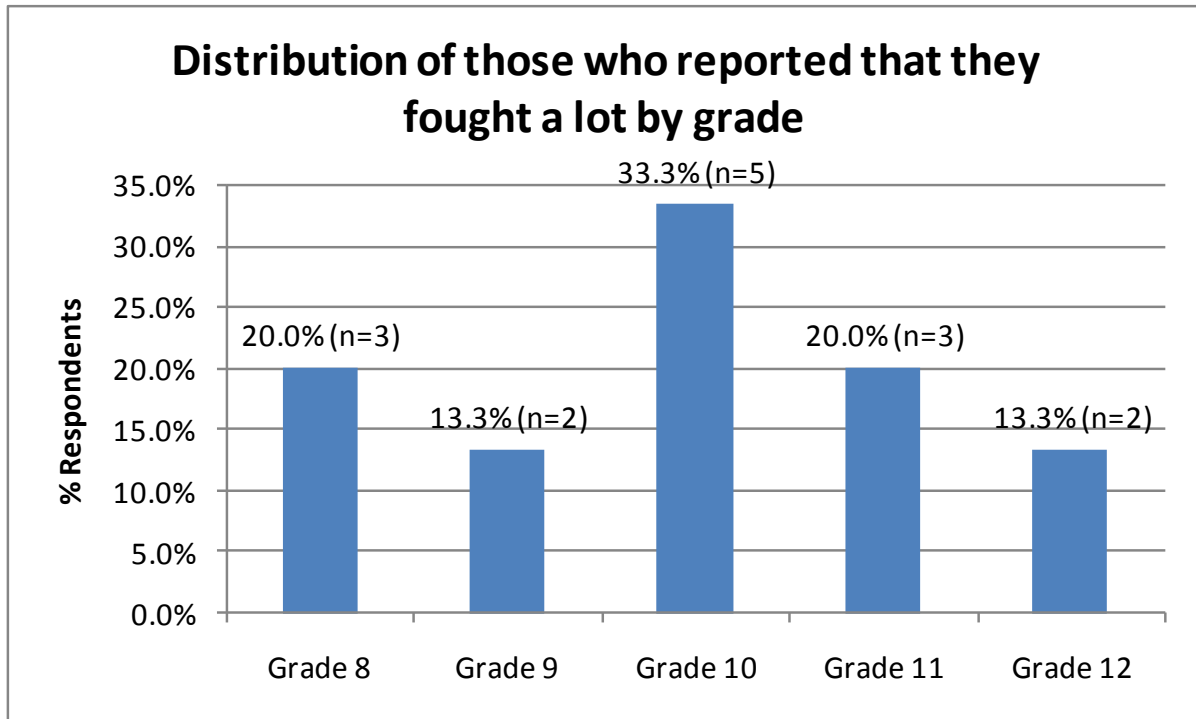


Figure 5. 7: Distribution of learners who reported that they fought a lot by grade

Considering that there were only 15 learners spread across 5 grades, the sample was too small to make accurate inferences on the school population. However, Figure 5.7 indicates that 33.3 % (n=5) of learners who reported that they fought a lot at school were in grade 10.

5.3.4 Comparison of systemic and individual risk factors by dwelling type (formal-informal)

Housing structures were classified as formal and informal. The 2009 National Housing Code's Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme identifies informal dwelling on the basis of the following characteristics: "Illegality and informality; inappropriate locations; restricted public and private sector investment; poverty and vulnerability; and social

stress” HDA (2013: 6). A formal dwelling, on the other hand, contains: “house or brick/concrete structure on a separate stand or yard, town/cluster/semi-detached house, flat or apartment, house/flat/room in backyard, room/flatlet on a property or larger dwelling/servants quarters/granny flat” (Stats SA 2001 Census). These definitions of informal and formal housing structures are used in this study. Figure 5.8 presents systemic and individual risk factors for learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures.

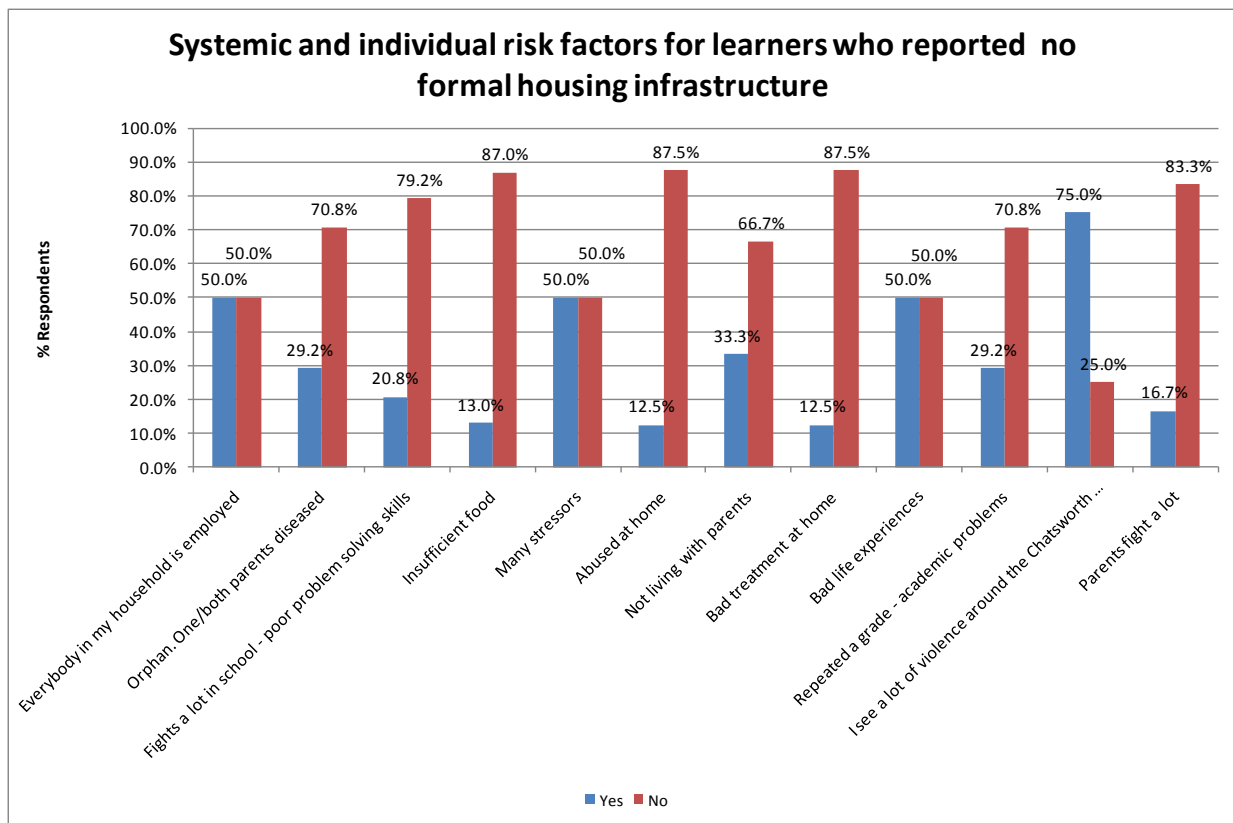


Figure 5. 8: Systemic and individual factors for those learners who reported that they did not live in formal housing structures

According to Figure 5.8, half of the learner respondents (50.0%) who reported no formal housing structure indicated that everybody in the household was employed while another half indicated that not everybody was employed. These results differ from those of the general sample where only 32.7 % indicated that everybody in the household was employed. This difference is explained in the interpretation of Figure 5.8 above. Results also indicate that 29.2 % of those who reported no formal housing

structure were orphans (one or both parents diseased). These results were not too different from those of the general population in which 26.8 % of learners indicated that they were orphans.

Only 20.8 % of learners who reported that they did not live in formal housing structures fought a lot at school. This figure is lower than that of the general sample in which 26.9 % of learners reported that they fought a lot at school. Only 13.0% of these learners reported that they did not have enough food at home.

Only 50 % of those who reported no formal housing structure reported that they had many stressors as compared to 63.5 % of the general sample. Results further indicate that 12.5 % of those learners not living in informal housing structures were abused at home, and 33.3 % were not living with parents. 12.5 % of those learners living in informal dwellings reported bad treatment at home, and 50 % of them reported that they had had bad life experiences.

Figure 5.8 also indicates that 29.2 % of those learners living in informal housing structures had repeated a grade, as compared to 32.7 % of the general sample. 16.7 % of them also reported that their parents fought a lot.

According to figure 5.9 only 17.9 % of learner respondents who reported that they lived in formal housing structures indicated that everybody in the household was employed while 82.1 % reported that not everybody was employed. These results differ from those of the informal dwellers. The reason for this could be that formal structures house both the old and the young while informal structures mainly house job seekers who have left their homes either to be close to work areas or those seeking jobs. Formal structures, typically, house about three generations (grandparents, their sons and daughters, and their grandchildren. It is not surprising, therefore, that a high %age of learners living in formal dwelling structures reported that not everyone in the household was employed.

Results indicate that of those learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures 25.0 % indicated that they were orphans. These results do not differ much from those of learners who reported that they did not live in formal housing structures.

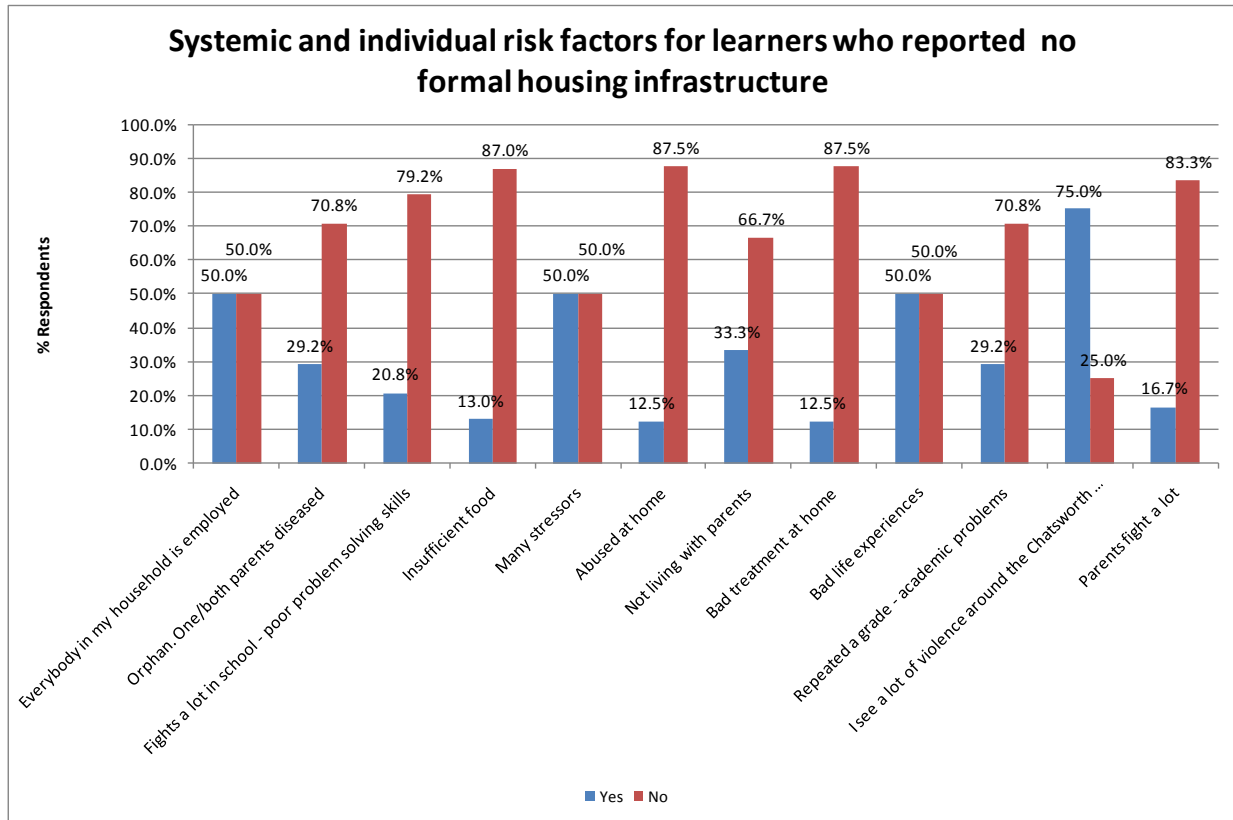


Figure 5. 9: Systemic and individual factors for those learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures

Results also indicate that 35.7% of those learners who reported formal housing structures fought a lot at school. This is a bigger %age than those who reported that they did not live in formal housing structures. Interestingly, among those who reported that they did not live in formal housing structures, only 75.0 % reported that they saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community, as opposed to 96.4 % those who reported that they lived in formal housing structures.

Results further indicate that 33.3 % of these respondents reported insufficient food at home. This figure is much higher than that of those who reported no formal dwelling structure (13.0%). The same reason given for differences in whether everybody in the household is employed is suspected to apply here, i.e. that the size of a household is

expected to be bigger in formal dwelling structures than in informal ones and therefore, because of unemployment and poverty in South African townships, it is expected that there will not be enough food to go around.

Results also indicate that 75.0 % of those learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures had many stressors. This figure is larger than that of learners who reported that they lived in informal housing structures (50.0%).

Results further indicate that only 3.6 % of those learners living in formal housing structures were abused at home, compared to 12.5 % of those living in informal housing structures. Among the reasons for this could be that those living in bigger household settings (formal housing structures) had someone to correct them when they become abusive against children, or even someone to talk to about how to handle the problem leading to such behaviour compared to those living in smaller household settings (informal housing structures). 42.9 % of those living in formal housing structures reported that they were not living with parents compared to 33.3 % who were not living with parents. One of the reasons for this could be traced to the very poverty that is so prevalent in South African townships that makes parents, especially fathers, to leave home to go and look for work elsewhere.

21.4 % of those learners living in formal dwelling structures reported bad treatment at home compared to 12.5 % of those learners living in informal dwellings. There could be a relationship between bad treatment at home and insufficient food as more of those learners living in formal household structures reported insufficient food than those living in informal housing structures. Also, 57.1 % of learners living in formal housing structures reported that they had had bad life experiences, compared to 50 % of those living in informal housing structures.

Results further indicate that 35.7 % of those learners living in formal housing structures had repeated a grade, compared to 29.2 % of those living in informal housing structures. Further, 10.7 % of those living in formal housing structures reported that their parents fought a lot, compared to 16.7 % of those living in informal housing

structures. Again, a possible reason could be that in a larger household setting there is someone to intervene when people fight, or even someone to talk to.

Results of this comparison indicate that there are advantages and disadvantages for those learners living in informal housing structures and for those living in formal housing structures. Firstly, in informal household dwelling structures there seemed to be enough food to go around as opposed to formal dwelling structures. As suggested, this could be because of the larger number of people living in formal dwelling structures. Those learners living in formal housing structures also reported more stress than those living in informal housing structures. Results also indicate that those living in formal housing structures experienced bad treatment at home more than those living in informal housing structures. More of those learners living in informal housing structures were abused at home than those living in formal housing structures. The reason for this could be that in a larger household setting (formal housing structures) there were those who opposed abuse when it happened or there was someone to talk to about how to handle situations that might lead to abuse.

5.4 Resilience

Resilience was measured on 24 items which were divided into 6 sub-categories as follows: 1) self-belief; 2) home environment support; 3) school environment support; 4) tenacity in problem-solving; 5) role model in school learner's life; and 6) attitudes towards school. The following sections present these results.

5.4.1 Self-belief

Self-belief was measured on nine items as follows: 1) I do my best to find the right answer to a problem; 2) I am in control of what happens to me; 3) My future and success depend on my hard work; 4) I believe that I have good talents; 5) I don't allow people to stop me from trying to do my best in my work; 6) I believe that I am able to do better; 7) I believe that one day things will be better for me; 8) My future is in my hands; nobody can take that away from me; and 9) I am a tough person. Items were measured on a 4-point Likert-type questionnaire with 1 = True all the time, 2 = True most of the

time, 3 = Untrue most of the time, and 4 = untrue all the time. Figure 5.10 presents these results.

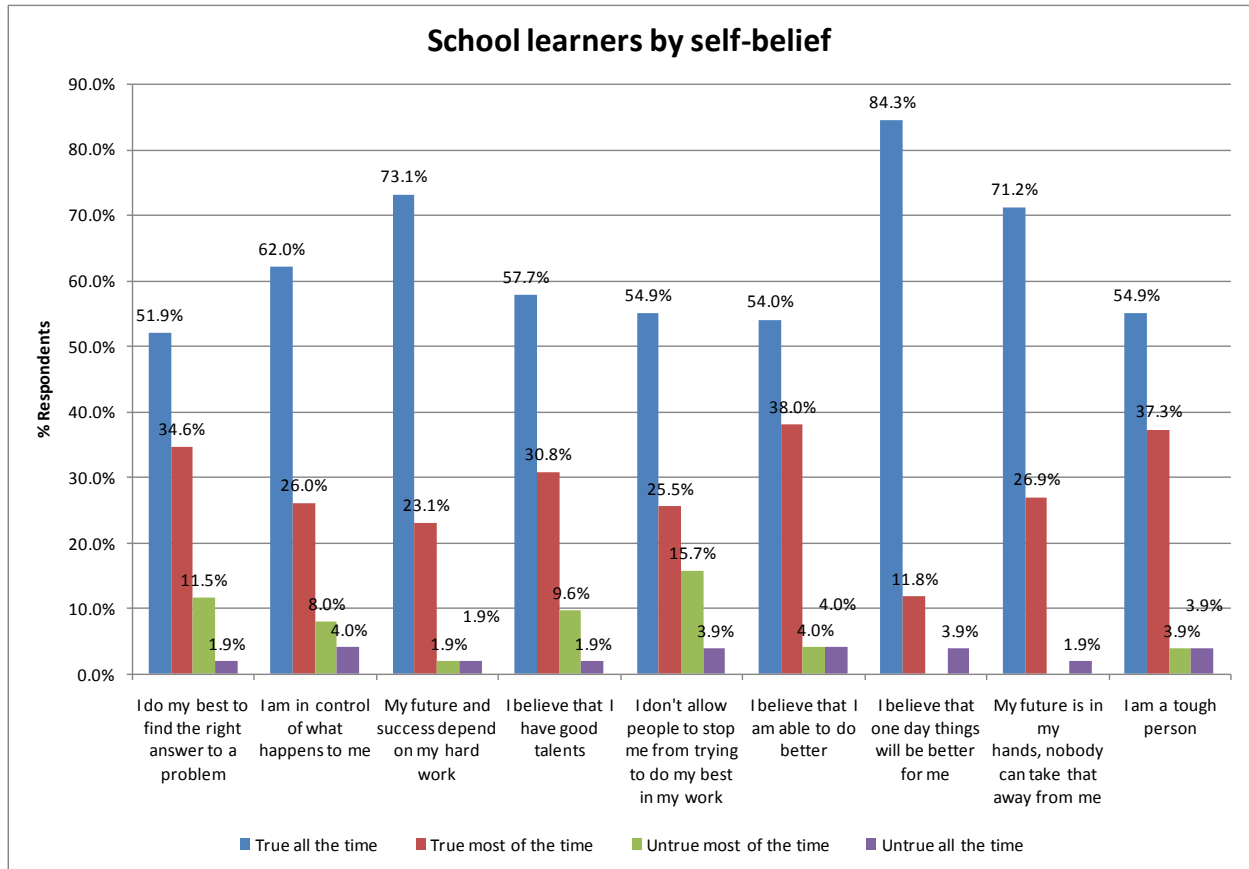


Figure 5. 10: School learners’ responses on items of self-belief

Figure 5.10 indicates that overall most of the learners had positive self-belief, as most of them responded “true all the time” or “true most of the time” on all items of self-belief. In particular, most of the learners (96.2%) responded ‘true all the time’ or ‘true most of the time’ that their future and success depended on their hard work. 96.1 % of them responded ‘true all the time’ or ‘true most of the time’ that they believed one day things will get better for them. 88.0 % of them responded ‘true all the time’ or ‘true most of the time’ that they were in control of what happens to them. 88.5 % of them responded ‘true all the time’ or ‘true most of the time’ that they believed they had good talents. 80.4 % of them responded ‘true all the time’ or ‘true most of the time’ that they did not allow people to stop them from trying to do their best in their work. 92.0 % of

them responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' that they believed they were able to do better. 98.1 % of them responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' that their future was in their hands and that nobody could take that away from them. 92.2 % of them responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' that they were tough.

Figure 5.11 presents results on items of self-belief for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school.

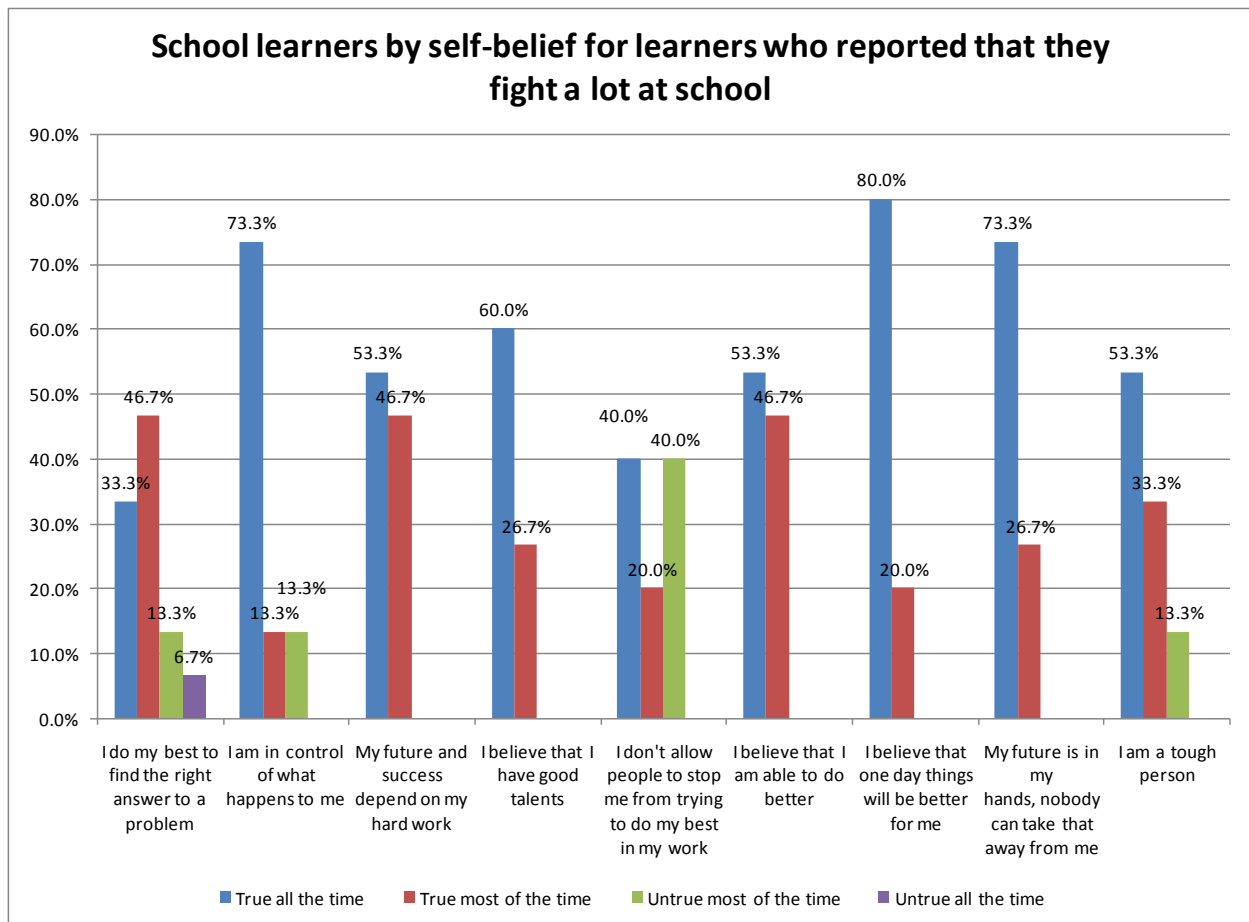


Figure 5. 11: School learners’ responses on items of self-belief for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school

The salient item of self-belief for those learners who reported that they fought a lot was: 'I don't allow people to stop me from trying to do my best in my work' on which a fair proportion of learners (40.0%) responded that it was 'untrue most of the time'. All the

learner respondents believed that their future depends on their hard work; that they believe they had good talents; that they believe they are able to do better; that they believed that one day things will get better for them; and that their futures were in their hands. Therefore, despite reporting that they fought a lot, learners still had positive beliefs about themselves and the future. These results are further categorised by formal versus informal dwelling structure to investigate how learners living in different household dwelling structures responded.

5.4.2 Responses of items of self-belief – Formal/Informal housing structures

Figure 5.12 presents school learners’ responses on items of self-belief for those learners living in formal housing structures.

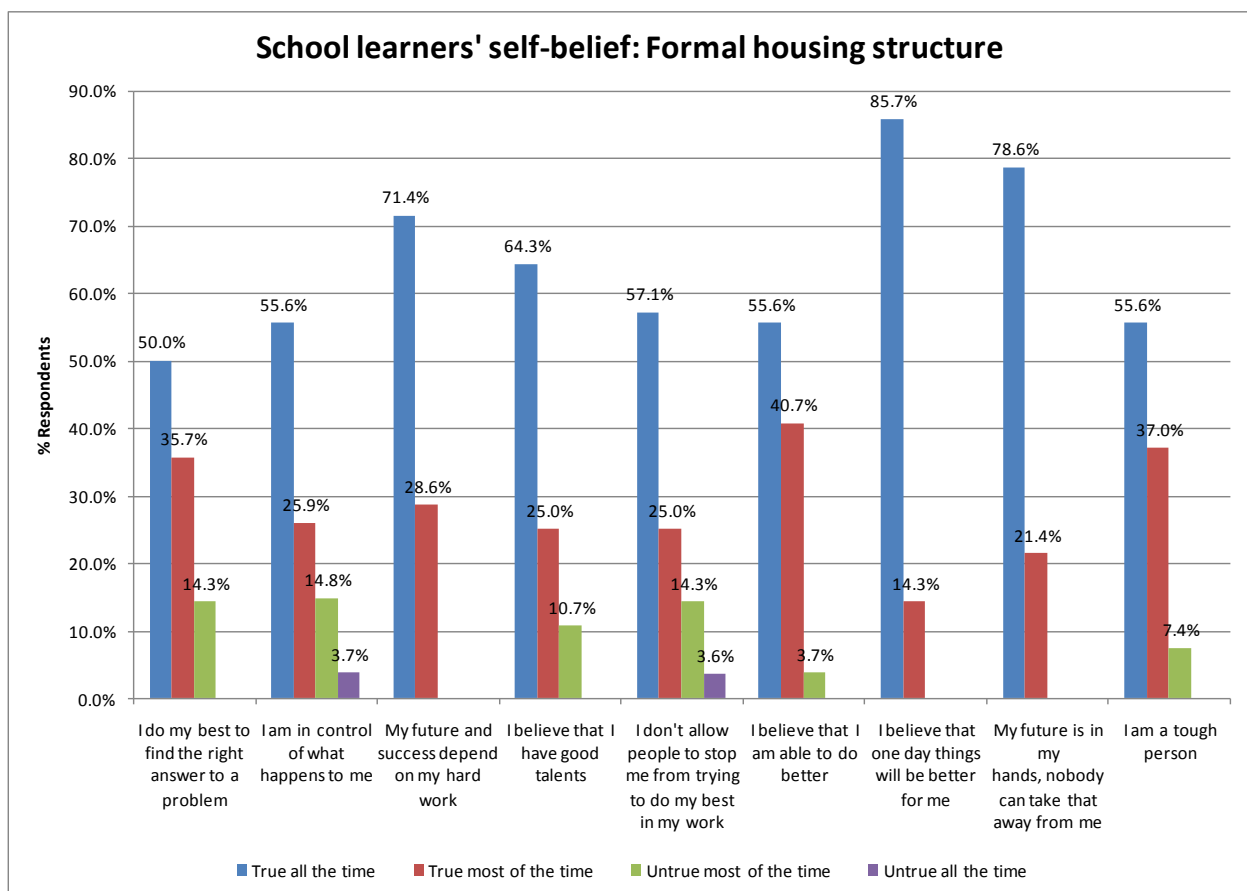


Figure 5. 12: School learners’ responses on items of self-belief for those learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures

According to figure 5.12 learners' responses were not very different from those of the general sample. Figure 5.13 presents school learners' responses on items of self-belief for those learners who reported that they lived in informal housing structures.

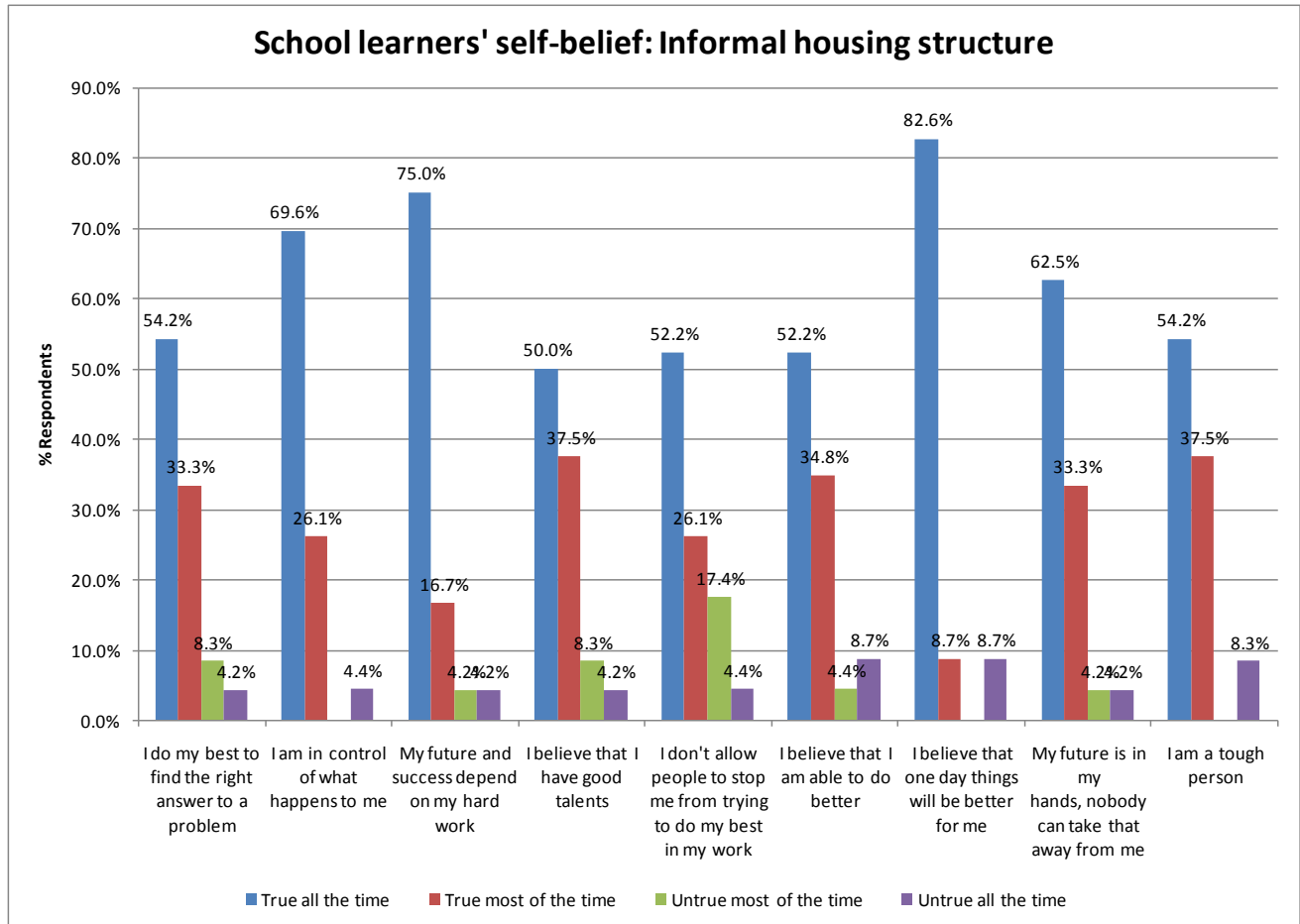


Figure 5. 13: School learners' responses on items of self-belief for those learners who reported that they lived in informal housing structures

According to figure 5.13, learners' responses were not very different from those who lived in formal household dwelling structures and those who lived in informal ones. However, fewer (4.4%) of those learners who lived in informal dwelling structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that they were in control of what happens to them than those who lived in formal dwelling structures (18.5%). It cannot be concluded, from these results, that there were major differences between the two groups.

5.4.3 Home environment support

Home environment support was measured on two items, namely: 1) I have an adult to talk to at home, who listens all the time; and 2) I feel safe and loved at home, they want to know if I am ok. Figure 5.14 presents results on school learners' home environment support.

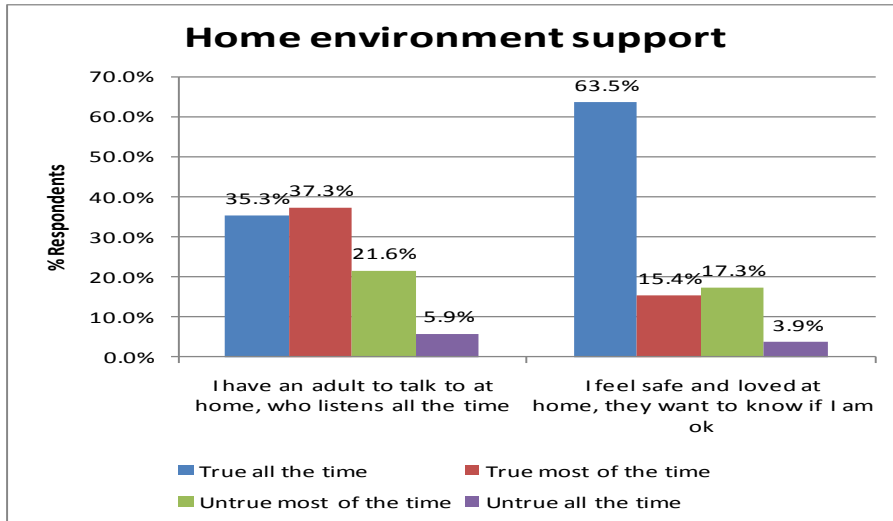


Figure 5. 14: Home environment support

Figure 5.7 indicates that 27.5% (n = 14) of the learners did not have an adult to talk to at home, who listens to them. 21.2% (n=11) did not feel safe and loved at home.

Since this study was on school violence, it was necessary to investigate those learners who responded that they fight a lot at school. The results are presented in Figure 5.15 below.

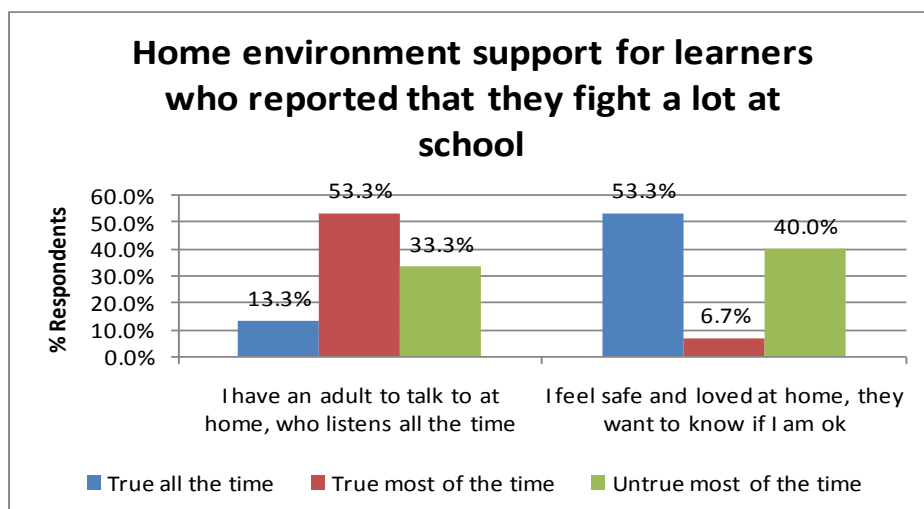


Figure 5. 15: Home environment support for learners who reported that they fight a lot at school

Results of Figure 5.15 indicate that 33.3% (n=5) of the learners who reported that they fight a lot at school responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether they have an adult to talk to at home, who listens all the time. 40% (n=6) of the learners responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether they felt safe and loved at home.

Results of home environment support, therefore, indicate that while most of the learner respondents had an adult to talk to at home and felt safe and loved, this was untrue most of the time for at least a third of the learners. These results are categorised by formal versus informal dwelling to investigate how learners living in different household dwelling structures responded.

5.4.4 Home environment support – Formal/Informal housing structures

Figure 5.16 presents home environment support for learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures.

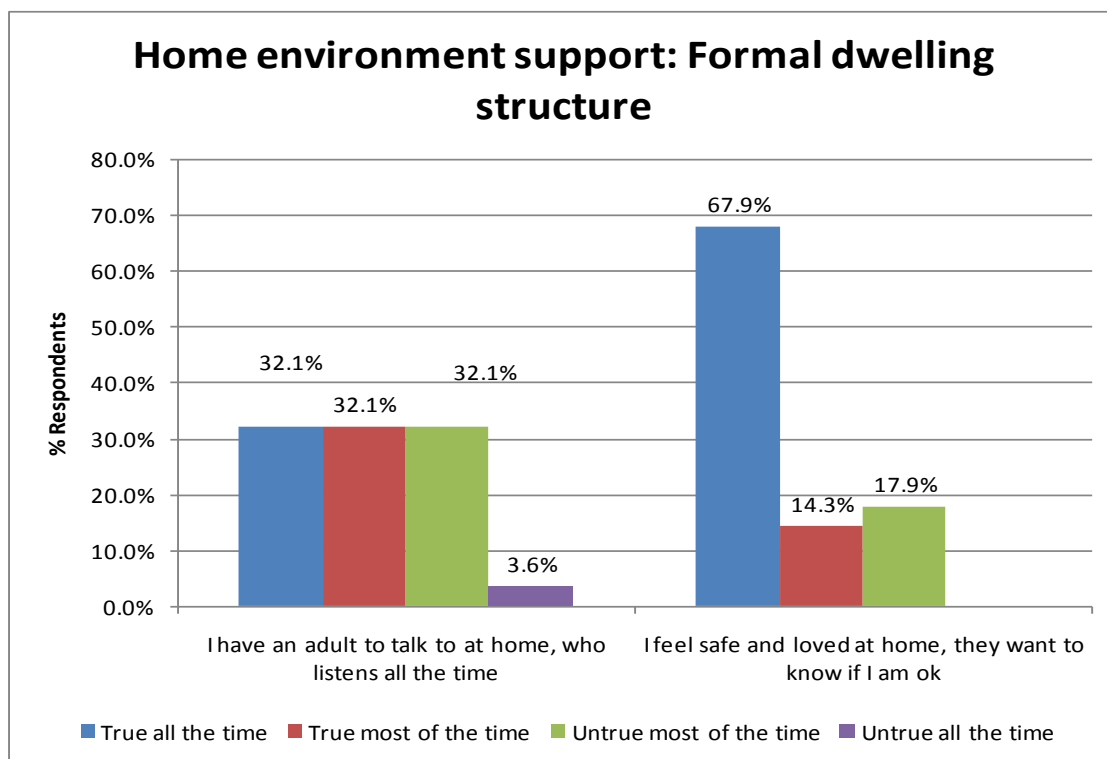


Figure 5. 16: Home environment support for learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures

These results did not differ much from those of the general sample. 27.5 % of those in the general sample responded ‘untrue most of the time’ or ‘untrue all the time’ that they had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, compared to 35.7 % of those who lived in formal household structures. 21.2 % of those in the general sample responded ‘untrue most of the time’ or ‘untrue all the time’ that they felt safe and loved at home and that those at home wanted to know that they were ok, as opposed to 17.9 % of those who lived in formal household structures. Figure 5.17 presents results for those who reported that they lived in informal household dwelling structures.

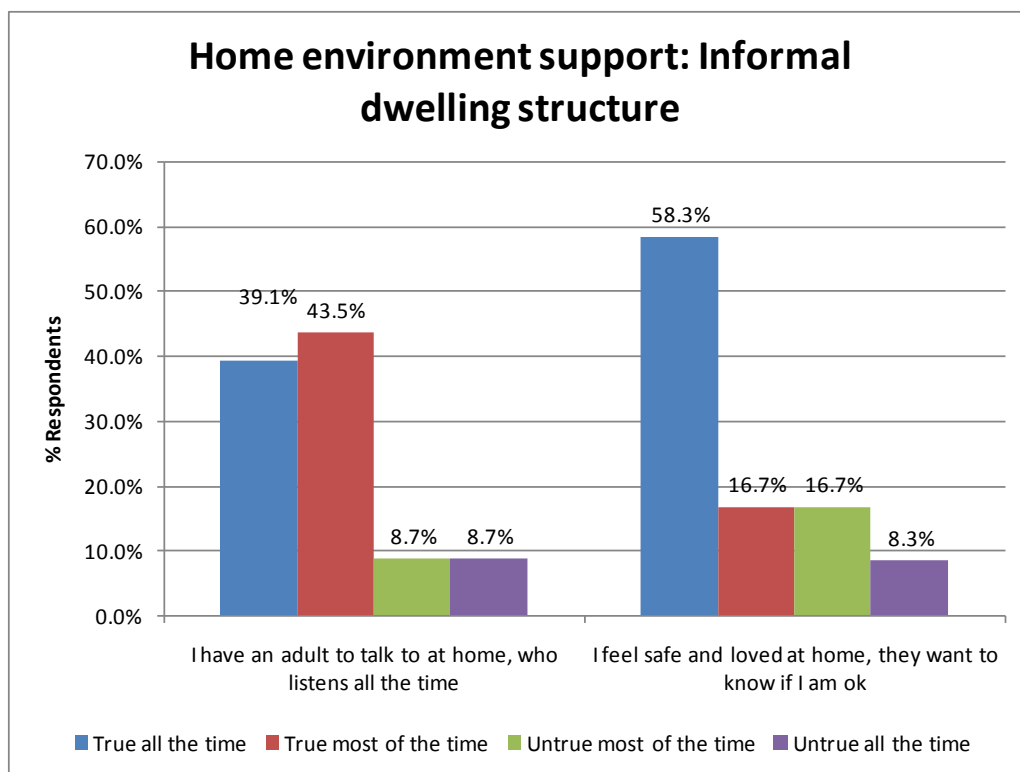


Figure 5. 17: Home environment support for learners who reported that they lived in informal household dwelling structures

According to figure 5.17 fewer (17.4%) of learners living in informal household dwelling structures responded ‘untrue most of the time’ or ‘untrue all the time’ that they had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, as opposed to 35.7 % for those who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures. 25.0 % of those living in informal household dwelling structures that they felt safe and loved at home and that those at home wanted to know that they were ok, as opposed to 17.9 % of those who lived in formal household structures.

The major difference between those who lived in formal household structures and those who lived in informal household structures seemed to be whether there was an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time. The earlier reason given regarding the family size in formal versus informal housing structures, where those living in formal household structures lived in a bigger size family and those who lived in informal ones did not is a possible explanation for having someone to talk to at home. Those living in

bigger households would be more likely to have someone to talk to than those who did not.

5.4.5 School environment support

School environment support was measured on six items, namely: 1) My teacher works hard to help me understand my work better; 2) I know someone at school who cares about me and I can talk to; 3) There is at least one teacher I can talk to who listens to me and encourages me to do my best; 4) My teachers made me see that I am good with my work and I can do well in class; 5) My teachers support me to aim high; and to think of my bright future; and 6) Teachers explain a lot in class, they give extra examples. Figure 5.18 presents results on school environment support.

According to Figure 5.18, most of the learners either responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' on school environment support. However, it is a concern that 21.1 % of learners responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that their teachers worked hard to help them understand their work better. 43.2 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that they knew someone at school who cared about them that they could talk to. 44.2 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that there was at least one teacher they could talk to who listens to them and encourages them to do their best. 28.9 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that their teachers made them see that they were good with their work and could do well in class. 32.0 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that their teachers supported them to aim high and think of their bright future. 23.5 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that their teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples.

These figures indicate that the school environment was not so supportive to learners, especially when 44.2 % of learners seemed not to have at least one teacher they could talk to who listened to them and encouraged them to do their best, and 43.2 % seemed not to know someone at school who cared about them that they could talk to.

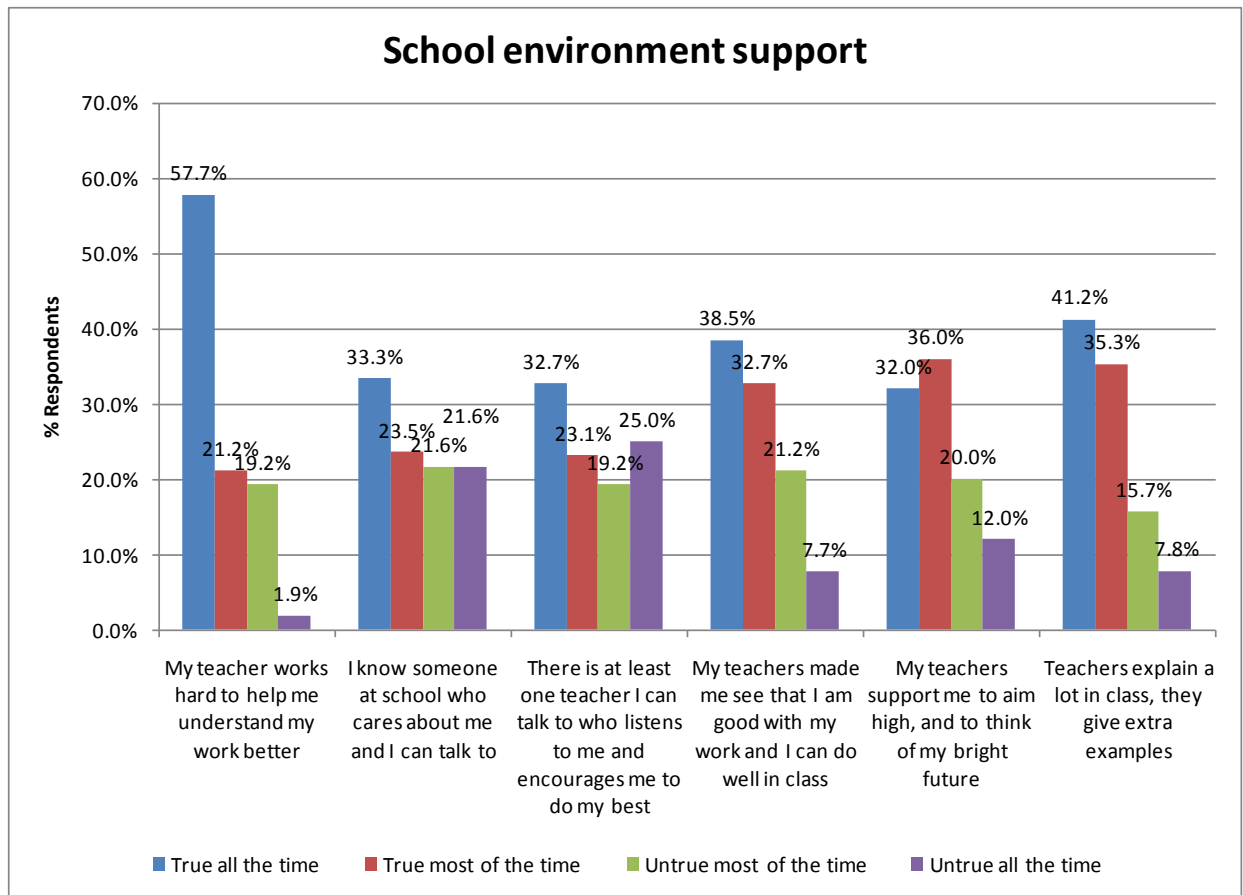


Figure 5. 18: School environment support

Figure 5.19 presents results on school environment support for the 15 learners who reported that they fight a lot at school.

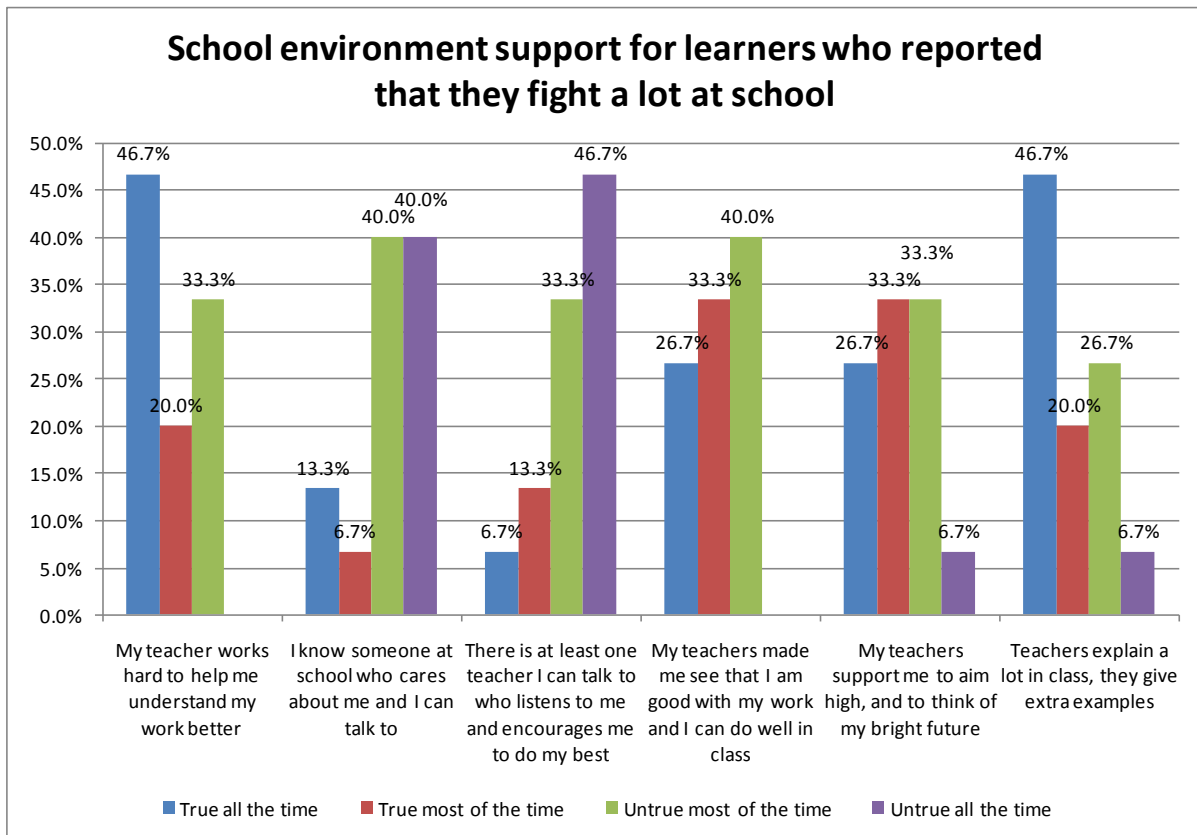


Figure 5. 19: School environment support for learners who reported that they fight a lot

Figure 5.19 indicates that 80% (n=12) of the learners who reported that they fight a lot at school responded ‘Untrue most of the time’ or ‘Untrue all the time’ to whether they knew someone at school who cares about them and they can talk to. 80% (n=12) of them responded ‘Untrue most of the time’ or ‘Untrue all the time’ to whether there is at least one teacher they can talk to who listens to them and encourages them to do their best. 40% (n=6) responded ‘Untrue most of the time’ to whether their teachers made them see that they were good with their work and that they could do well in class. 40% (n=6) responded ‘Untrue most of the time’ or ‘Untrue all the time’ to whether their teachers supported them to aim high and to think of their bright future.

Results on the school environment support indicate that at least four out of ten of the learner respondents did not have a teacher that they could talk to at school that cared for them and had a listening ear (untrue most of the time and untrue all the time). This

number increased to eight out of ten for those learners who reported that they fought a lot. Overall, results indicate that those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school experienced a negative school environment that did not encourage change for the better.

5.4.6 School learners' tenacity in problem-solving

School learners' tenacity in problem-solving was measured on two items, namely: 1) Even when my problems are just too much, I do not give up trying to make it work; and 2) I use different ways to work out a difficult problem. Figure 5.20 presents results on school learners' tenacity in problem-solving.

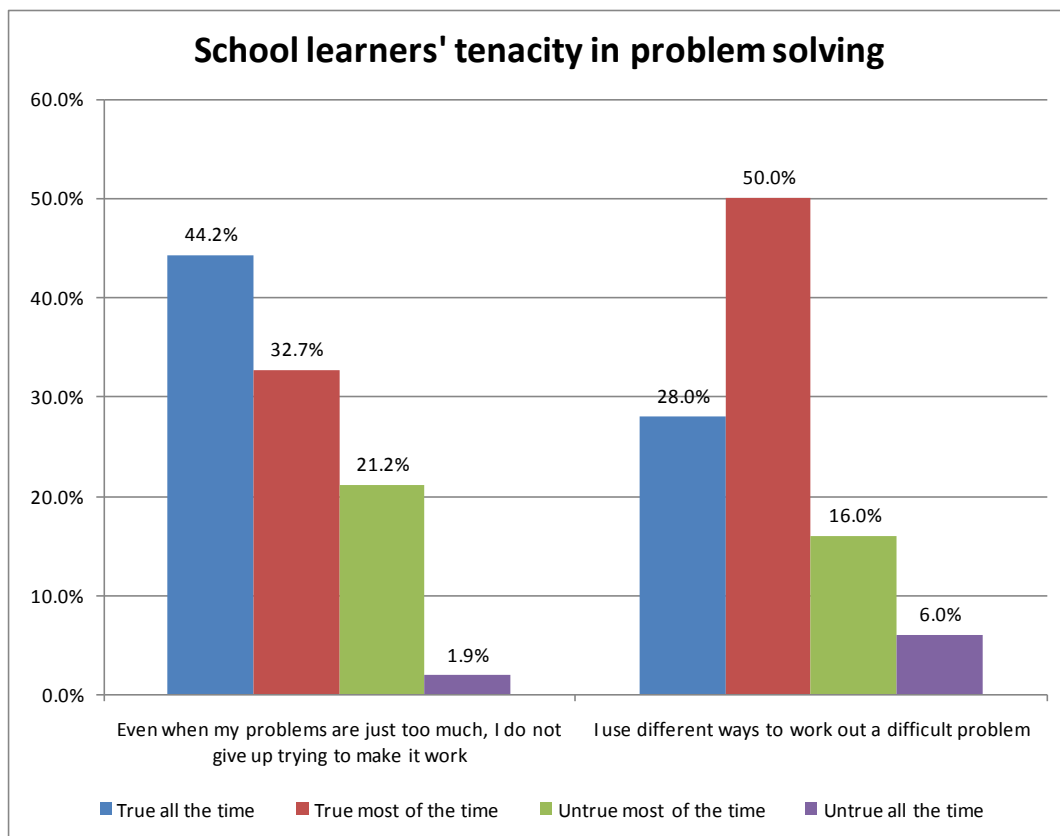


Figure 5. 20: School learners' tenacity in problem-solving

Figure 5.20 indicates that 77% (n=40) of the learners responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether even if the problems are just too much they do not give up trying to make it work, while 23% (n=12) responded 'Untrue most of the time' or

'Untrue all the time'. 78% (n=39) responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether they used different ways to work out a difficult problem, while 22% (n=11) responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time'.

Figure 5.21 presents results on school learners' tenacity in problem-solving for the 15 learners who reported that they fight a lot at school.

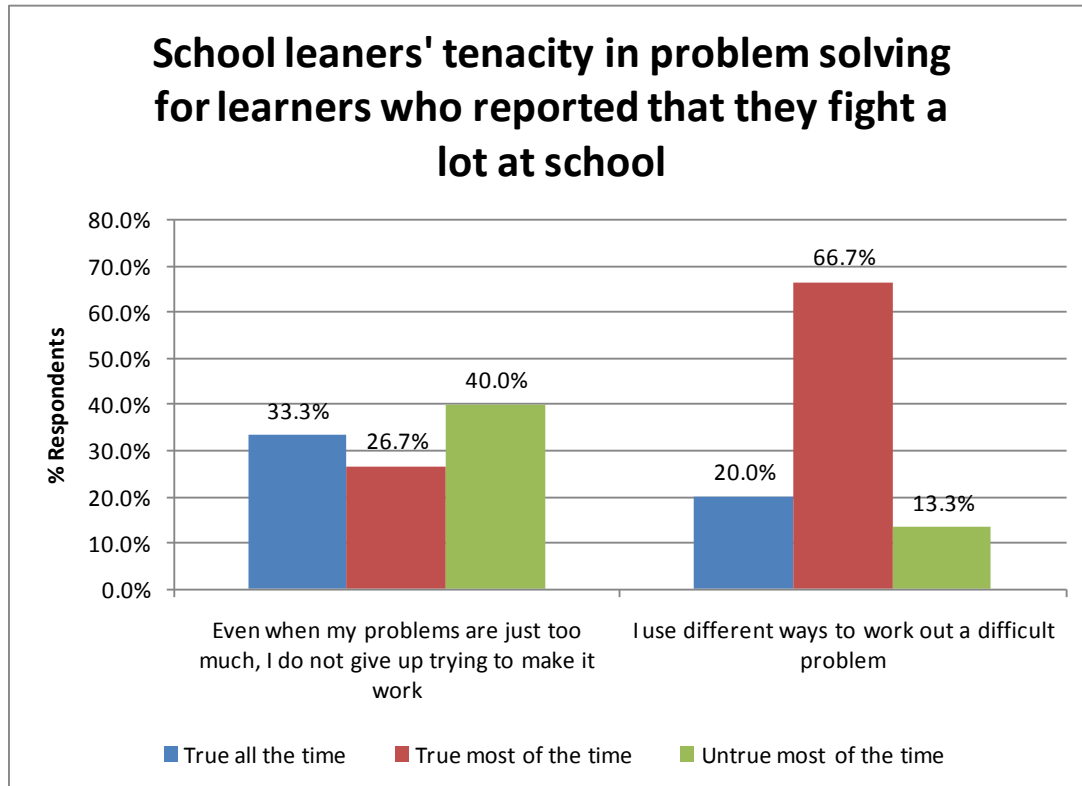


Figure 5. 21: School learners' tenacity in problem-solving for learners who reported that they fight a lot

Figure 5.21 indicates that 40% (n=6) of the learners responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether even when their problems were just too much, they did not give up trying to make it work. While most of the learner respondents reported that they did not give up trying even when problems were too much and also that they used different ways to work out a difficult problem, four out of ten of the learners who reported that they fought a lot responded that it was untrue most of the time that they did not give up trying when problems were just too much.

5.4.7 School learners' tenacity in problem-solving – Formal versus Informal housing structures

Figure 5.22 presents results of school learners' tenacity in problem-solving for those learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures.

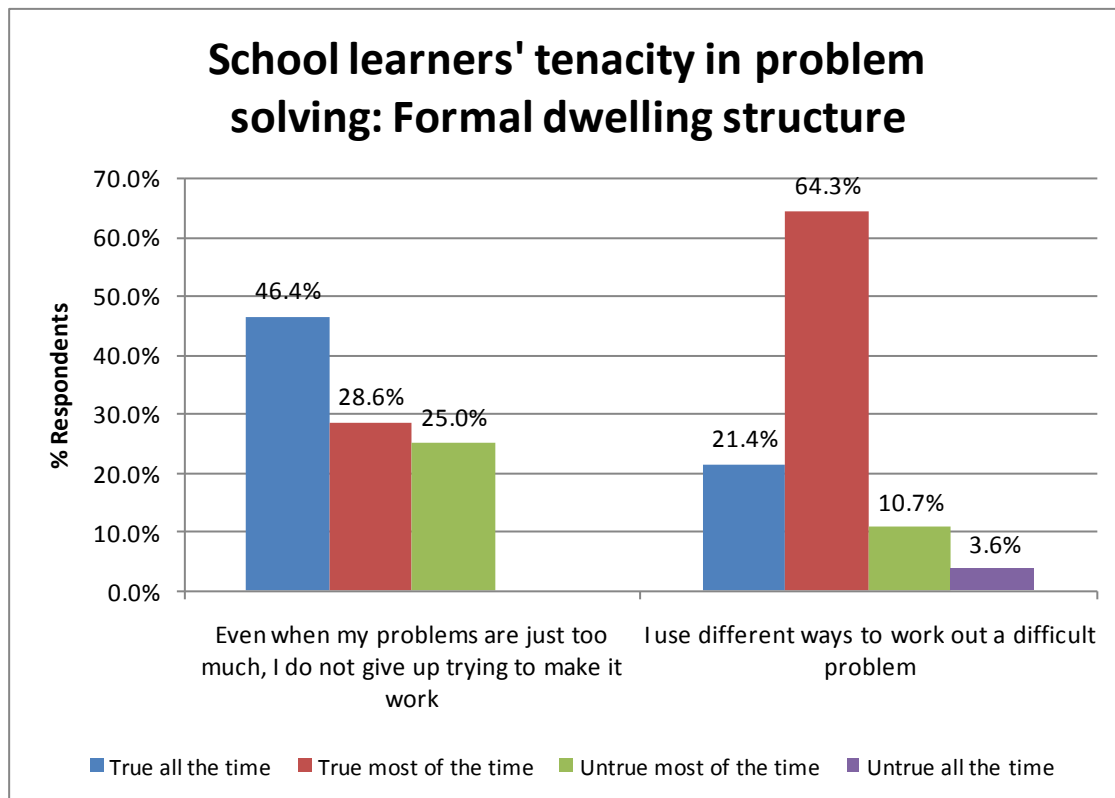


Figure 5. 22: School learners' tenacity in problem-solving for learners who reported that they lived in formal household structures

Figure 5.22 indicates that 25.0 % of learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or untrue all the time' that even when problems are just too much they do not give up trying to make it work, as opposed to 23.1 % of the general sample. 14.1 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or untrue all the time' that they used different ways to work out a difficult problem.

Figure 5.23 presents results for those who reported that they lived in informal household structures.

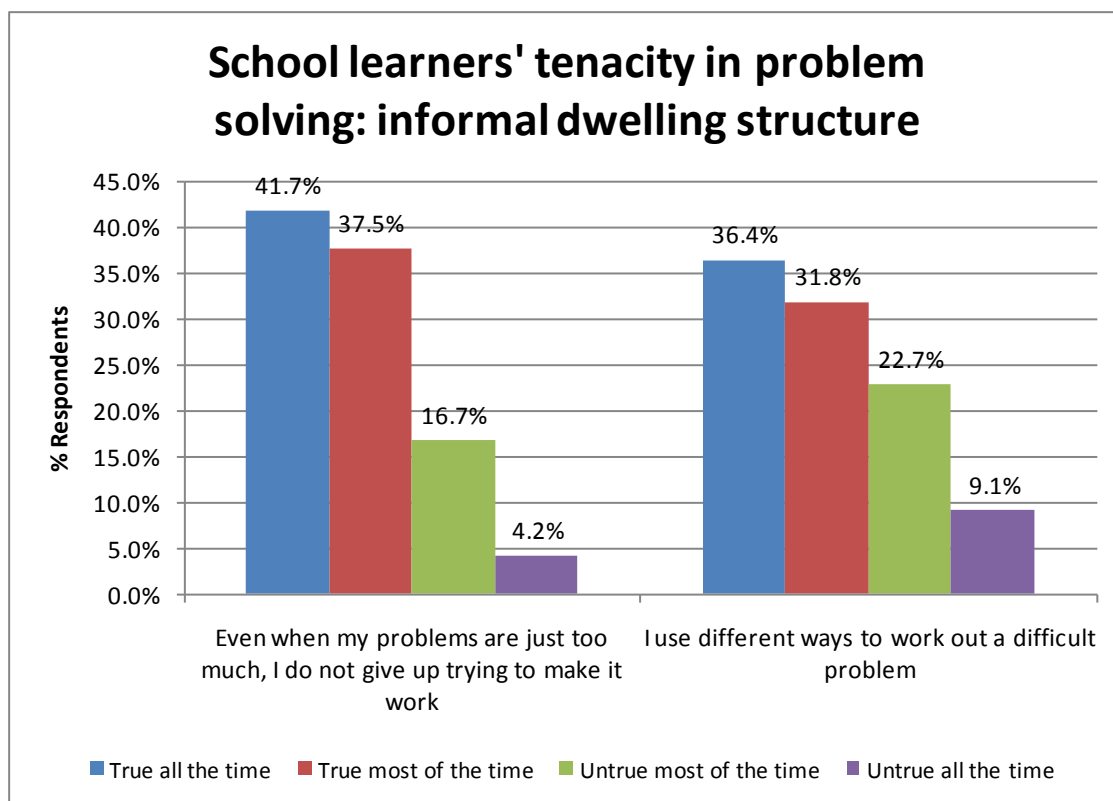


Figure 5. 23: School learners’ tenacity in problem-solving for learners who reported that they lived in formal household structures

According to Figure 5.23, fewer (20.9%) of the learners living in informal household structures responded ‘untrue most of the time’ or untrue all the time’ that even when problems are just too much they do not give up trying to make it work, as opposed to 25.0 % of those living in formal structures. 31.8 % of the learners living in informal household structures responded ‘untrue most of the time’ or untrue all the time’ that they used different ways to work out a difficult problem, as opposed to 14.3 % of those living in formal structures.

These results indicate that the major difference between those living in formal household structures and those living in informal ones was on using different ways to work out a difficult problem, with more of those living in informal structures responding ‘untrue most of the time’ or ‘untrue all the time’. The reason for this could be that those living in formal household structures have more people to lean on for support than those living in informal structures.

5.4.8 Role model in school learner's life

Figure 5.24 presents results on whether school learners have a role model in their lives whose behaviour is a good example to them.

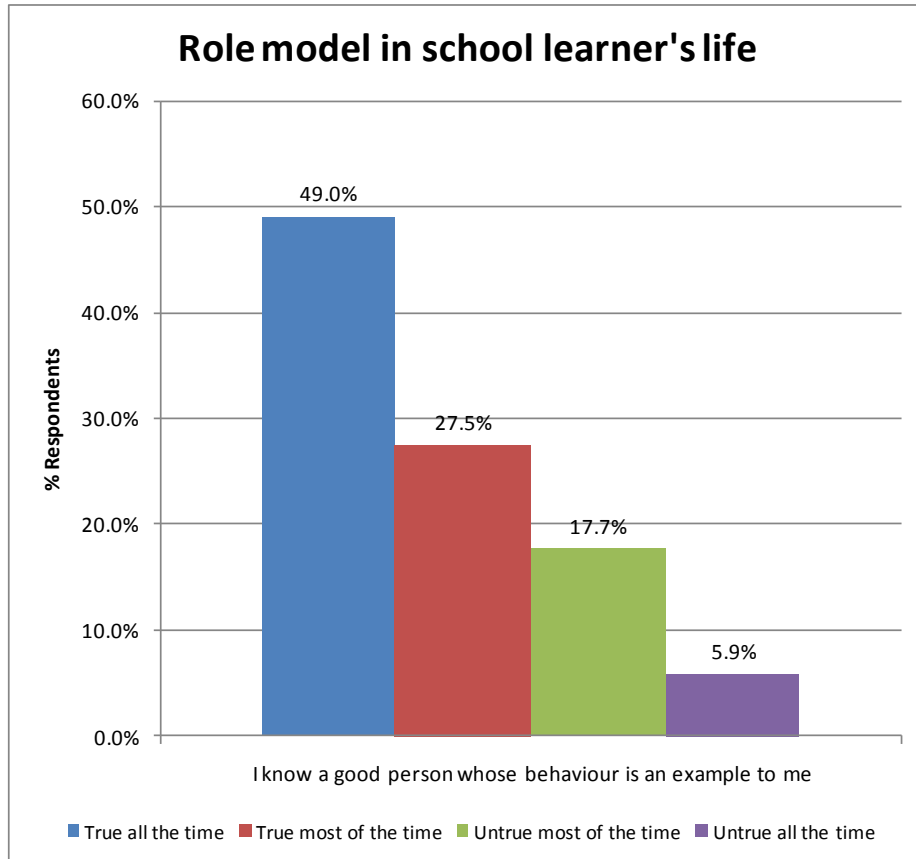


Figure 5. 24: Role model in school learners' lives

Most of the learners (76.5%, n=39) responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether they had a good person whose behaviour is an example to them, while only 23.6%. (n=12) responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time'.

Figure 5.25 presents results on whether school learners have a good person whose behaviour is an example for the 15 learners who reported that they fight a lot at school.

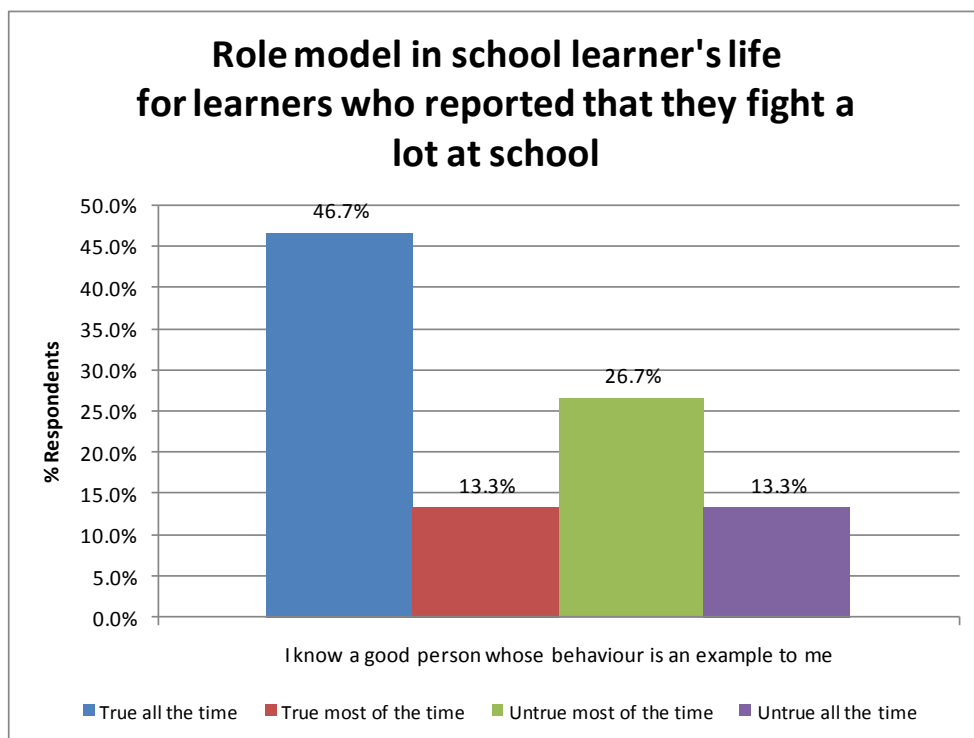


Figure 5. 25: Role model in school learners’ lives for learners who reported that they fight a lot

Figure 5.25 indicates that 40% (n=6) of the learners responded ‘Untrue most of the time’ or ‘Untrue all the time’ to whether they had a good person whose behaviour is an example for them. 60% (n=9) responded ‘True all the time’ or ‘True most of the time’.

Overall, just over two out of ten learners reported that they did not have a good person whose behaviour was an example to them. This figure jumped to three out of ten learner respondents for those who reported that they fought a lot.

The following section compares learners who reported that they lived in formal household structures and those living in informal structures.

5.4.9 Role model in school learner’s life – Formal versus Informal housing structures

Figure 5.26 presents results on whether school learners have a role model in their lives for those learners who reported that they live in formal household dwelling structures.

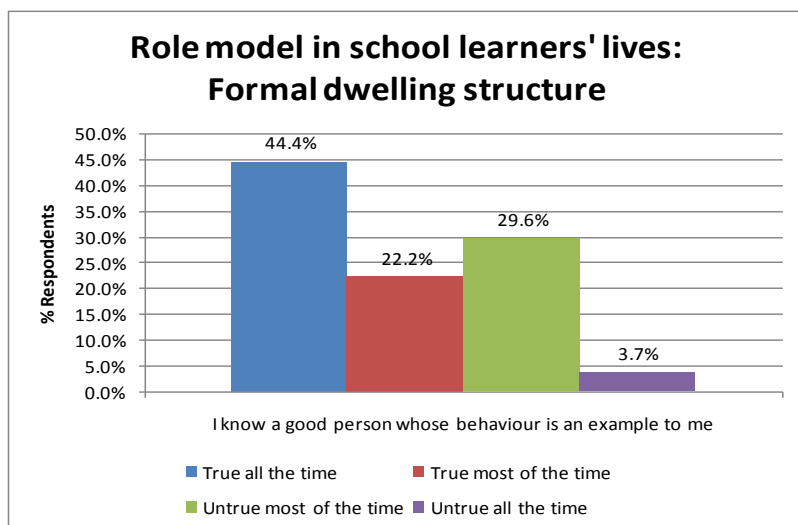


Figure 5. 26: Role model in school learners’ lives for learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures

Figure 5.26 indicates that 33.3 % of learners who reported that they lived in formal household structures responded ‘untrue most of the time’ and ‘untrue all the time’ on whether they knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to them. This figure was higher than that of the general sample (23.6%). Figure 2.27 presents results on whether school learners have a role model in their lives for those learners who reported that they live in informal household dwelling structures.

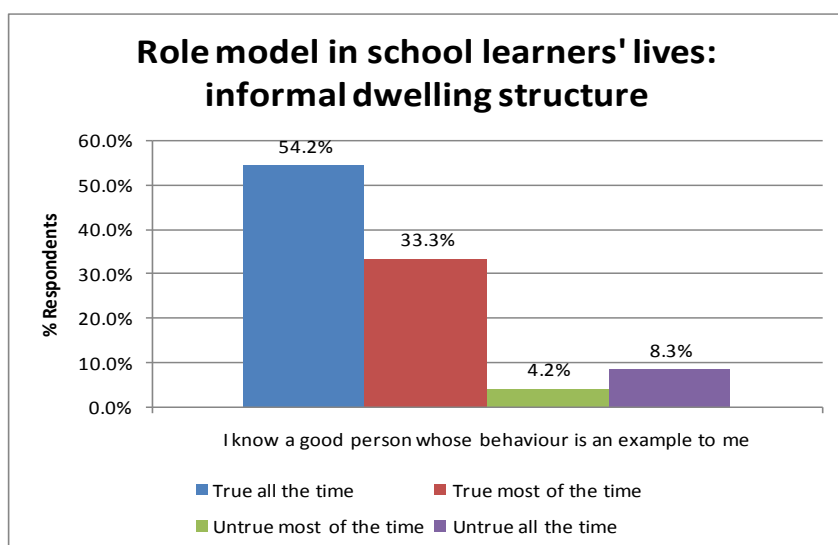


Figure 5. 27: Role model in school learners’ lives for learners who reported that they lived in informal household dwelling structures

Figure 5.27 indicates that only 12.5 % of those learners who reported that they lived in informal household structures responded ‘untrue most of the time’ and ‘untrue all the time’ on whether they knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to them, as opposed to 33.3 % of those who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures.

5.4.10 Learners’ commitment to learning

Learners’ commitment to learning was measured on four items, namely: 1) I make sure that I do my class work and homework; 2) Doing well at school is very important to me; 3) I do not like being absent from school; I hate to miss the teaching; and 4) Even when I do not understand in class I do not give up trying. Figure 5.28 presents results on learners’ commitment to learning.

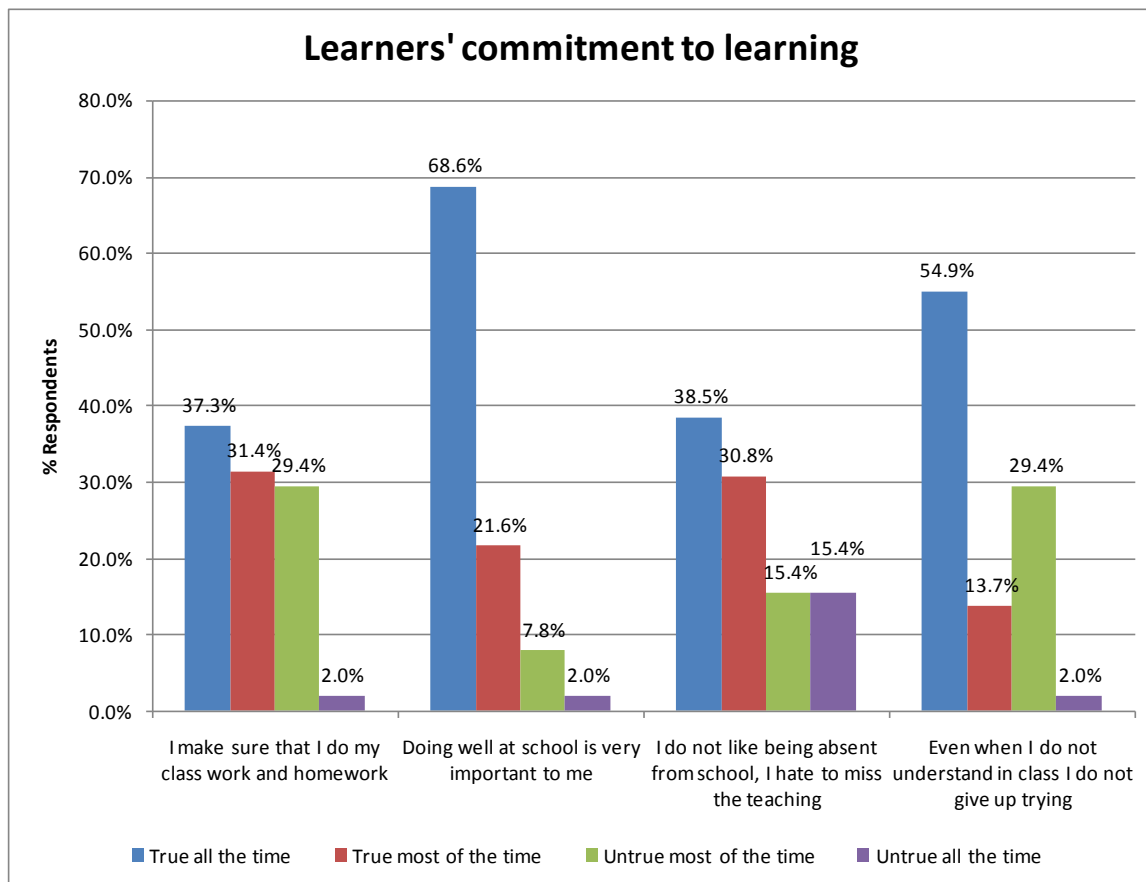


Figure 5. 28: Learners’ commitment to learning

Figure 5.28 indicates that most of the learners had positive commitment towards learning. This was especially so on the importance of doing well at school where 80.2% (n=46) of the learners responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time'.

Figure 5.29 presents results on learners' commitment to learning for the 15 learners who reported that they fight a lot at school.

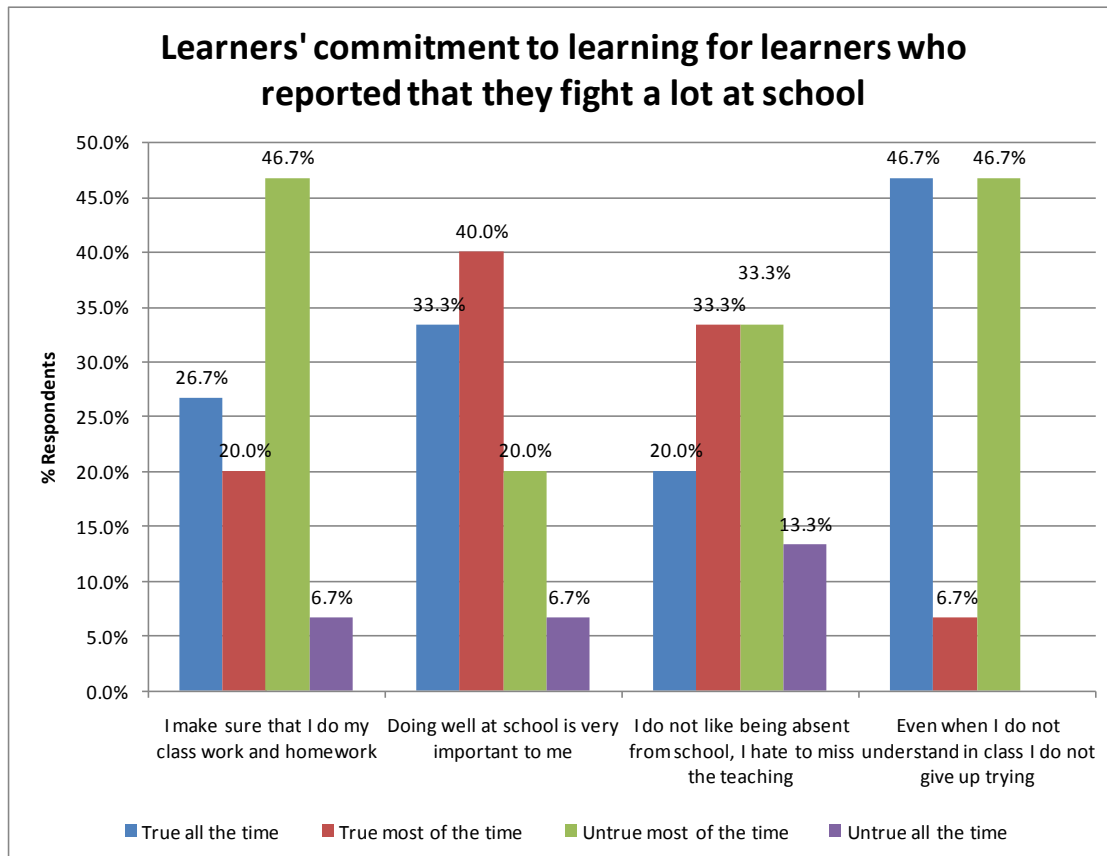


Figure 5. 29: Learners' commitment to learning for learners who reported that they fight a lot

Figure 5.29 indicates that 53.4% (n=8) of the learners responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' that they made sure that they did their class work and homework. 46.6% (n=7) responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' that they did not like being absent from school. 46.7% (n=7) responded 'Untrue most of the time' on whether even when they do not understand in class they do not give up trying.

While, overall, three out of ten learners reported that it was untrue most of the time or untrue all the time that they made sure to do their class work and homework, this number jumped to just over half for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. Numbers also increased for all the items of commitment to learning for those learners who reported that they fought a lot.

5.4.11 Learners' commitment to learning for those learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures

Figure 5.30 presents results on learners' commitment to learning for those learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures.

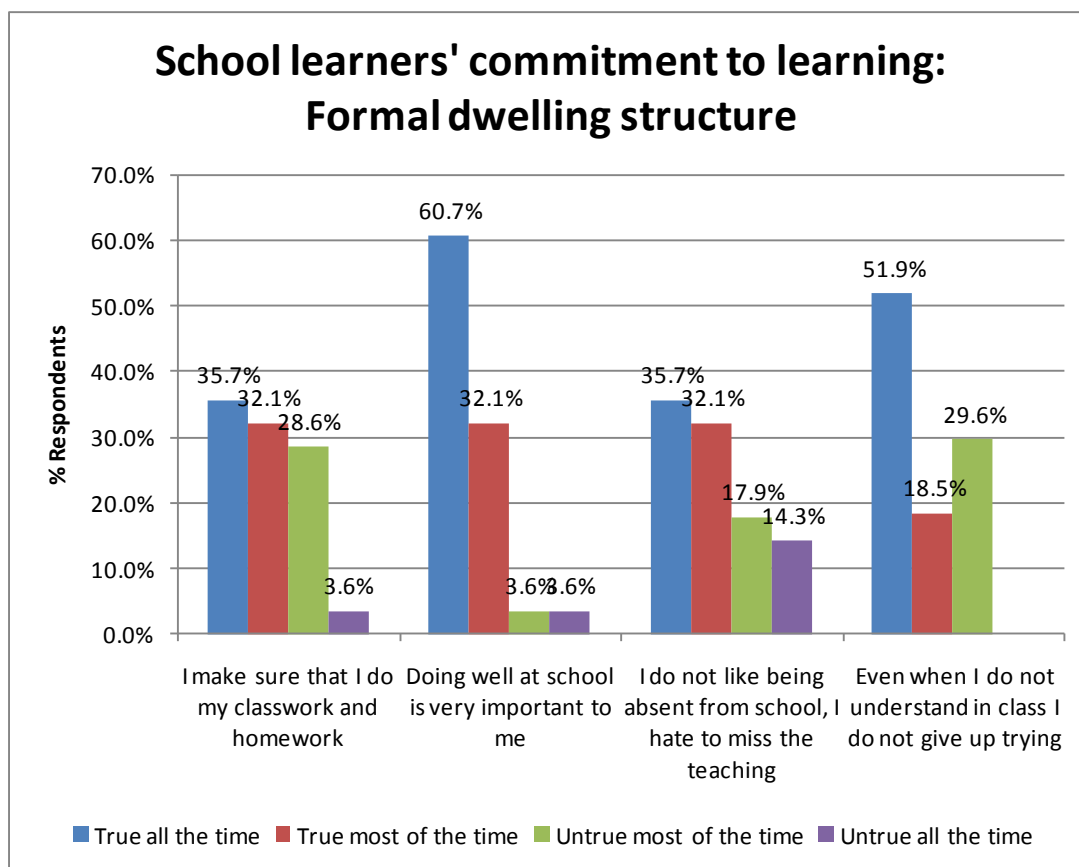


Figure 5. 30: Learners' commitment to learning for learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures

Figure 5.30 indicates that 67.8 % of those learners who reported that they lived in formal housing structures responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' on

whether they made sure that they did their class work and homework, as opposed to 32.2 % who responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time'. These results did not differ much from those of the general sample whereby 68.7% of learners responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time', and 31.4 % responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time'. Figure 5.31 presents results for those learners who reported that they lived in informal household dwelling structures.

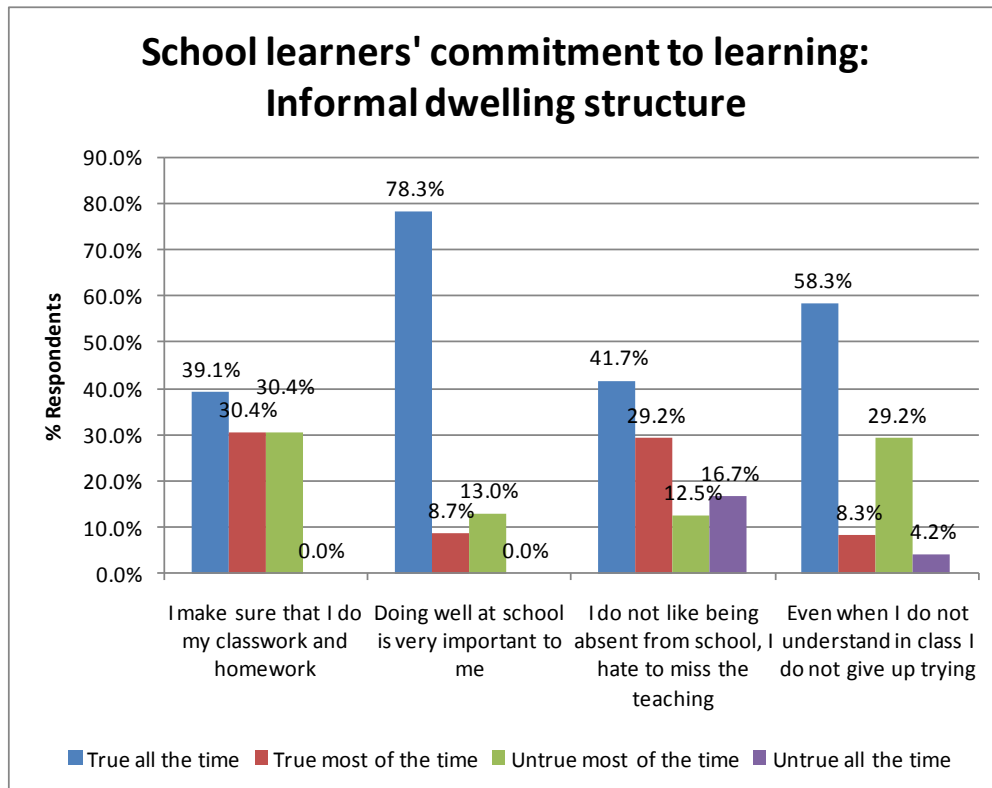


Figure 5. 31: Learners’ commitment to learning for learners who reported that they lived in informal household dwelling structures

According to figure 5.31, there was not much of a difference between those learners who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures and those living in informal household dwelling structures on whether they made sure that they did their class work and homework, with 69.5 % of those living in informal structures responding 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' compared to 67.8 % of those living in formal structures. 30.4 % of those living in informal household dwelling structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' compared to 32.2 % of those living in formal structures. Regarding whether doing well at school was important to them, 87.0

% of those living in informal structures responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' compared to 92.8 % of those living in formal structures. 13.0 % of those living in informal structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' compared to 7.2 % of those living in formal structures. 70. % of those living in informal household dwelling structures responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' to whether they did not like being absent from school compared to 67.8 % of those who reported that they lived in formal structures. 29.2 % of those living in informal structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' compared to 32.2 % of those living in formal structures. 66.6 % of those living in informal household dwelling structures responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' to whether even they did not understand in class they did not give up trying, compared to 70.4 % of those living in formal structures. 33.4 % of those living in informal household dwelling structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' compared to 29.6 % of those living in formal structures. It can be concluded, therefore, that results did not differ by much between those who lived in formal household dwelling structures on learners' commitment to learning.

5.4.12 Gender distribution by whether learner fights a lot at school

Figure 5.32 presents the gender distribution of respondents by whether they fight a lot at school.

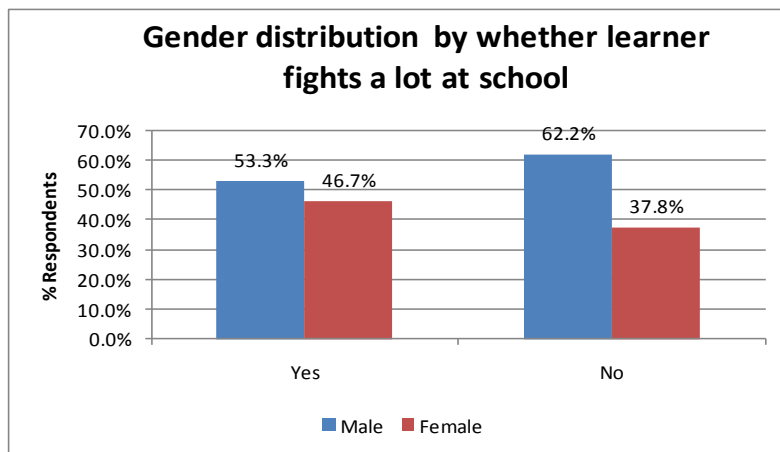


Figure 5. 32: Gender distribution by whether learners fight a lot at school

Figure 5.32 indicates that there was not much of a difference between the proportions of learner respondents by whether they fought a lot at school or not. 53.3% (n=8) of those who reported that they fought a lot at school were males and 46.7% (n=7) were females.

5.4.13 Summary of questionnaire results

Results of the systemic and individual risk factors assumed to be relevant to township youths indicate that most of the learner respondents were not at risk in a negative family environment with abuse at home, parents fighting a lot, bad treatment at home, one or both parents diseased, insufficient food, and many in the household being unemployed. It does not mean, however, that this is not cause for concern as violence by those learners who have violent behaviour also affects non-violent learners both as victims and as witnesses. Most of the learners, especially those who reported that they fought a lot reported that not everybody in the household was employed, there was no formal housing structure, there bad life experiences and many stressors, and they saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community.

Comparison between those who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures and those who lived in informal structures indicates that there were advantages and disadvantages of the different household dwelling structures. Firstly, in informal household dwelling structures there seemed to be enough food to go around compared to formal dwelling structures. Those learners living in formal housing structures also reported more stress than those living in informal housing structures. Results also indicate that those living in formal housing structures experienced bad treatment at home more than those living in informal housing structures. It has been suggested that, among other factors, the bad treatment could include lack of food. Results also indicated that more of those learners living in informal housing structures were abused at home than those living in formal housing structures.

Resilience was measured on 24 items which were divided into 6 sub-categories as follows: 1) self-belief; 2) home environment support; 3) school environment support; 4) tenacity in problem-solving; 5) role model in school learner's life; and 6) attitudes

towards school. Results of self-belief indicate that most of the learners had positive self-belief, as most of them responded 'true all the time' or 'true most of the time' on all items of self-belief. The stand-out item of self-belief for those learners who reported that they fought a lot was: 'I don't allow people to stop me from trying to do my best in my work' on which a significant proportion of learners (40.0%) responded that it was 'untrue most of the time'. Results were not very different between those who lived in formal household dwelling structures and those who lived in informal ones. However, fewer of those learners who lived in informal dwelling structures responded 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time' that they were in control of what happens to them than those who lived in formal dwelling structures.

Results on home environment support indicated that while most of the learner respondents had an adult to talk to at home and felt safe and loved, this was untrue most of the time for at least a third of the learners. Further, the major difference between those who lived in formal household structures and those who lived in informal household structures seems to be on whether there was an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, with those living in bigger households more likely to have someone to talk to than those who do not.

Regarding the school environment support, there was a significant number of learners who indicated that they did not have a teacher that they could talk to at school that cared for them and had a listening ear, or who seemed not to know someone at school who cared about them that they could talk to. This was especially so for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school.

Regarding school learners' tenacity in problem-solving, a significant number of learner respondents did not give up trying even when problems were too much and also that they used different ways to work out a difficult problem. The number increased for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. Some learners also reported that they did not have a good person whose behaviour was an example to them. There was also a significant number of learners who reported that it was untrue most of the time or untrue all the time that they made sure to do their class work and

homework, and this number jumped to just over half for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. Despite reporting that they fought a lot, however, learners still had positive beliefs about themselves and the future. The major difference between those living in formal household structures and those living in informal ones was on using different ways to work out a difficult problem, with more of those living in informal structures responding 'untrue most of the time' or 'untrue all the time'.

On role models, just over two out of ten learners reported that they did not have a good person whose behaviour was an example to them. This figure jumped to three out of ten learner respondents for those who reported that they fought a lot. Moreover, fewer of those learners who reported that they lived in informal household structures responded 'untrue most of the time' and 'untrue all the time' on whether they knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to them, as opposed to those who reported that they lived in formal household dwelling structures.

On commitment to learning, three out of ten learners reported that it was untrue most of the time or untrue all the time that they made sure to do their class work and homework, this number jumped to just over half for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. Results did not differ by much between those who lived in formal household dwelling structures on learners' commitment to learning. Lastly, results indicate that there was not a significant gender difference in results among those who reported that they fought a lot at school.

5.5 Participants in the interviews and focus groups

5.5.1 Demographic characteristics of participants in interviews and the focus group

For the interviews, the participants consisted of learners, staff and parents. There were 12 learners from grades 8 to 12, two females and ten males, within the ages of 13 to 18 years. The staff participants consisted of six educators, two of whom were master teachers, the HOD for Life Orientation, and the principal. Finally, there were seven

parents of learners, five of whom were females and two of whom were males. For the focus group, the participants were six educators.

5.5.2 Themes emerging

This section is divided into four major sections in line with the objectives of this study. These objectives form the four dominant and encompassing themes, namely, 1) nature of school violence, 2) internal characteristics, 3) external characteristics, and 4) coping skills. These themes and subthemes are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5. 1: Themes and sub-themes emerging about learner resilience to school violence.

Objectives	Research Questions	Analysis: Themes and Sub Themes
1. To describe the nature of school violence	1. What is the nature of school violence in a township school?	1. Nature of school violence 1.1 General understanding of violence 1.2 Personal involvement with peers 1.3 Learner and Educator Encounters
2. To identify and describe the internal characteristics of resilient school learners	2. What are the internal characteristics of resilient school learners in a township schools?	2. Internal Characteristics 2.1 Commitment to learning: Being actively engaged in education. 2.2 Positive values: Demonstrating values through words, actions & avoiding risks. 2.3 Social competency: empathy & friendship skills 2.4 Positive identity: self-esteem & sense of purpose
3. To determine the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners	3. What are the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners in a township school?	3. External factors 3.1. The Family 3.1.1 Parental Disciplinary Measures 3.2. The School (Opportunities to participate in school projects) 3.2.1 School Protocol when confronting violent incidents 3.2.1.1 School's Code of Conduct and Safety Policies 3.2.2 Lack of support from the parents/ Department of Education 3.2.3 Lack of Resources 3.3 The Community/Peers (opportunities to participate in the

Objectives	Research Questions	Analysis: Themes and Sub Themes
		community) 3.4 The Media 3.5 Protective Factors 3.5.1 standing up for beliefs 3.5.2 being honest with self/others 3.5.3 resisting negative peer pressure 3.5.4. development of sense of purpose 3.5.5. development of optimism
4. To determine what skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence.	4. What are the skills resilient learners use to cope with violent experiences in township schools?	4. Coping Skills 4.1 Task Orientated 4.2 Emotional Orientated

The sections that follow discuss findings under these themes and subthemes.

5.6 General Understanding of Violence

According to results of the qualitative study, violence at schools took the form of physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse among peers (personal involvement with peers) and between educators and learners (learner and educator encounters). One of the educators described violence at the school as follows:

At school physical violence will mean fist fighting and kicking... We also have mental abuse where learners are bullying other learners; verbal abuse; teasing them; mocking them; and ridiculing them. [E6].

Learners witnessed physical fights in school as exemplified by the responses of these participants:

In school the fights are physical; they are fighting with their hands. I was screaming for them to stop, because it is not fair, and it doesn't look nice. The teacher came and pulled them away [L1]

I witnessed an incident last week I'm not sure how the problem started, but I just saw the boy on the floor, and everybody was kicking him [L10]

The periods when learners are idle during the school calendar, we witness an increase in violence, which the LOHOD observed as follows:

Before the exams, when learners are idle. They are not in the classroom because they are not writing so they get into unnecessary problems and the bunking that takes place that is where all the violence starts. The violence occurs most often during lunch breaks [LOHOD].

Sometimes the violence involves groups and can be so severe as to land a learner in hospital. One learner described such an incident as follows:

I witnessed an incident with a matric boy. They hit him and put him in hospital last year. I never even did anything. They were just hitting the boy on the floor. I tried to separate. I pulled my friend away, but they caught me and said I was one of the boys hitting him [L11]

An incident was also mentioned where a boy not from the school assaulted a girl outside the school premises. According to one of the learners:

In the school I have witnessed violence like fighting, where a boy hit his girlfriend; he is not even in school; he hit a girl who is in our school; he hit her outside school [L3]

This indicates that violence involving learners does not only happen among learners from the same school but that even those from outside the school are able to go into school premises and engage in acts of violence. This statement also indicates that there is poor security at the school.

According to an educator at the school not all the learners are involved in violent behaviour.

We do have these few perpetrators that continually bother the children in the school, and we need to weed them out gradually. We have to find ways and means of getting them out of the school because other children feel intimidated, they feel their lives are at risk, they afraid and we too, as teachers would also be afraid because we don't know how they going to react towards us because of their violent nature
[E6]

Apart from the fact that scissors are dangerous, another factor emerging from this statement is that parents did not seem to be involved or even considered by children regarding acts of violence. There was no account of parents intervening in any manner. However, suggesting expulsion of learners from the school is not the answer to school violence. Results of the quantitative study indicated that almost 30 % of learners reported that they fought a lot at school. Secondly, there are many other forms of violence at schools which might not be viewed as serious enough to warrant expulsion of a learner from school, yet such violence can infringe on the rights of other learners to education and lead to negative consequences. As the study by Ohsako (1997) suggested, about 40 % of the learners drop out of school or repeat classes because of violence at their schools. This point was reiterated by the SACE (2016:4) report: "The high levels of violence and crime taking place within South African schools is robbing children/learners of the opportunity of being able to reach their optimal academic and educational potential." Weeding learners seen to be ill-disciplined out of the school, as one of the educators (E6) suggested, is therefore not the answer. There is so much lack of discipline and defiance that learners won't even adhere to disciplinary measures exercised against them.

I have had incidences where in front of me the principal gave them (learners) transfers and that transfer card was a joke because the very next day they are back in the class **[E1]**.

According to one of the educators, the school was also not getting any support from the Department of Basic Education regarding discipline at school.

It really scares me, the fact that there is nobody that has a backbone to stand up to those bullies to take them on; the fact that the principal and the Department allow all of this nonsense to go on in the school. It is such a joke. In my son's case which was such a big thing where my child could have died and not even a call from the Department of basic education to see if he was ok or if he was safe. There is not enough plans in place to safe guard our kids in school not even the security can do anything [LP6].

The LOHOD also complained that whenever there was a problem the Department was not objective in dealing with issues of violence at township schools.

We never ever experienced anything or any support coming from the Department of Basic Education itself, nothing at all. Whenever there is a problem with the child the department worries about the child not the teacher [LOHOD].

Moreover, as one of the educators indicated, they did not even know how to expel the learners from the school as they were afraid of the learners.

We have to find ways and means of getting them out of the school because other children feel intimidated, they feel their lives are at risk, they afraid and we too, as teachers would also be afraid because we don't know how they going to react towards us because of their violent nature [E6].

Under Section 19(1) of the South African Constitution, all learners have a right to basic education. Suspending or expelling a learner of school-going age (up to 15 years old), therefore, does not prevent that learner from attending school. In cases where learners have to be transferred as a result of disciplinary measures, the head of department is obliged to find an alternative school for such a learner, meaning that those learners are merely being recycled within the same education system. This further supports the argument that expulsion is not the answer.

Results on bullying indicate that those involved in acts of bullying seemed to think that they had superior power over others and seemed to be proud of it. As one learner recalled an incident:

Straight after school I saw one fellow hitting another fellow with the bottle on his head. The one boy that slaps other boys in the school and the other boys are just stand and look at him and he has got like an attitude; he feels like he has got more authority than anyone else so he can hit whoever he feels like [L3].

Another emerging trend in South African schools is the number of learners who have been injured and even killed with the use of scissors. According to Section 8A(2) of the Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), “Unless authorised by the *principal* for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* onto *school* premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on *school* premises or during any *school activity*”. Objects such as knives are regarded as dangerous objects, but scissors are not. However, scissors have been found to be very dangerous weapons within school premises as the following statements confirm:

He threatened one boy outside school and stabbed him with the scissors, because they were interfering with him [LP4].

I usually keep quiet; I just walk away. I always say, “One day I’m going to catch you”. By the time I catch them that was like only February. I stabbed her; I don’t know how. She was carrying a scissors. She tried to cut my hair. She came from the back. She started slapping me. I asked her, “Why are you slapping me”? She said, “I’m like ok, I’m going to see what you are going to do”. Then I actually fisted her. She went down, and I picked her up and I saw her crying. She is like, “No bring the scissors”, she was telling her friend. I was alone. There were seven of her friends, she tried to push the friends away then when she picked up the scissors trying to cut my hair, I pulled the scissors. I fisted her with my forehead and then I

stabbed her in the thigh. Then blood came out. I backed off. They were, "Oh my God you stabbed her, and you are going to get arrested". I said, "I will never get arrested". That was 50 meters away from my house. She came to my house to hit me, so I defended myself. They didn't ever come back to me. They don't speak to me ever again. I don't care.

There have been numerous other reports involving stabbings of learners using scissors. According to Ramphele (2019), "The rate of school stabbings seems to be on the rise," with 17 stabbings reported in the 2019 first term in the Western Cape alone. According to the Director of Communications at the Western Cape Education Department, this is a country-wide problem. Other examples include the stabbing to death of a learner in 2019 at Thuto-Tiro High School in Sebokeng (Ramphele, 2019), the stabbing of a learner in Kwazulu Natal (eNCA, 2018), and a 13 year old who was stabbed to death at Mateane Primary School (News24, 2019). Stabbings using scissors are not only a problem at South African schools but happen elsewhere. Examples include a 2016 stabbing of a learner with scissors in the face at a school in Texas (Charlton, 2016) and a learner who was stabbed with scissors at Churchill High School in Washington (St. George, 2016).

Results indicate that there was physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse at the school. Results also indicate that the violence could sometimes be serious enough to warrant hospitalisation of learners. Violence also spreads beyond the school premises as mentioned by L3 above.

The following sections break down school violence into violence among peers and violence between learners and educators.

5.6.1 Personal involvement with peers

Most of the learners, nine out of twelve, had been victims or perpetrators of violence. Results showed that violence among peers could not be ascribed to specific gender; it occurs among male learners; among females; and between females and males. The

dominant theme was that violence was sparked by boyfriend-girlfriend issues. As the **LOHOD** mentioned:

Another thing is relationships. It is one of the issues that we deal with all the time and I have been doing this all the time. [LOHOD].

In school there are many people fighting, they fight for boyfriends or girlfriends [L1]

A real fight occurs in school are about girlfriends and boyfriends [L5]

Violence sparked by boyfriend-girlfriend issues also occurs among females. As one participant shared:

Typical fights at school are because of boyfriend and girlfriend issues; some girls getting upset with other girls because they are getting jealous [L3]

Another learner explained as follows:

Another thing is relationships. It is one of the issues that we deal with all the time and I have been doing this all the time. [LOHOD].

The LOHOD summed up this theme as follows:

The behaviour of these learners is just absolutely terrible; their attitude is very bad, and we don't know where it is stemming from because some of them come from good homes. Our main concern is that violence is getting out of hand and it is not only the boys it is the girls as well, and when they do fight it is a catfight where they are rolling down with all their clothes lifted up and they are at it. You call them and tell them they have to behave like ladies and this kind of behaviour is unacceptable. They will do it and they have no remorse

whatsoever. After that it is just like it did not happen, it is over and life goes on [LOHOD].

Fighting over boys or over girls is a common occurrence in South African schools. In August 2017, News24 reported that 10 girls were suspended from Norkem Park High School in Kempton Park, Gauteng for fighting over boys. This violence escalated when parents brought weapons into the school and joined the fight. In March 2019 the Sowetan newspaper reported a story of 5 girls who attacked a 14-year old girl at Crystal Park High School, Benoni. The fight was over a boy. According to a girl at the school, "There is a lot of fighting, especially over boys or gang-related issues. All we want is to feel safe inside and outside the school premises" (Sobuwa, 2019).

The principal reiterated the seriousness of violence sparked by girlfriend-boyfriend issues.

Violence is something that does not come by magic, conflict is a reaction. Where did it start? The other problem we have sadly in our communities is boy-girl relationships and in the older generation these were concealed now it is more open. In my book I have got records where a lot of violence is because he looked at my girl [P].

According to this principal, boyfriend-girlfriend issues are some of the common causes of violence at the school. It is clear that this form of violence is a major concern.

Most of the fights in school are about gossiping and all that is going around. Some of the girls fight for boyfriends. They never start by talking about it; they just go straight into fist fights [L6]

Fights can start as a result of girlfriend issues such as a boy not wanting his girlfriend to be looked at by other boys or over nothing in particular (just looking for the opportunity to fight). Other forms of boyfriend-girlfriend violence are those of boys hitting their girlfriends. According to one of the learners:

In the school I have witnessed violence like fighting, where a boy hits his girlfriend; he is not even in school; he hit a girl who is in our school; he hit her outside school [L3]

According to Surface, Stader, Graca & Lowe (2012), dating among teens often involves a controlling behaviour within a romantic relationship. This includes physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse. The author suggests that lack of experience in dating allows teens to become vulnerable when dating and they are sometimes unlikely to recognise that they are being abused.

Another peer-related issue was that violence among learners was as a result of social class differentials. Learners who perceived themselves to be from a lower class tended to pick fights with those perceived to be from the middle class. As one parent explained:

Violence just pops in this school because you have got low class children from very poor backgrounds and you have the middle class and they all want to be someone big in the school. If you notice very carefully you will see the lower-class children will gang up against the middle class [LP4].

This statement links school violence with risk factors mentioned in the quantitative study. It is clear from the statement that there are many factors at play that include the socio-economic statuses of children. The statement also suggests that children coming from the middleclass want to play big and put down those coming from the lower class. They have better food and more money and supposedly 'better manners'. Then those from the lower class have to defend themselves against this 'superiority' and fight back.

It looks like sometimes there are those learners who are known to be fighters and fight for the sake of fighting or are themselves competing against each other for some title as indicated by L4:

In another incident I was involved with this guy he had a knife. Actually, I started it. He took off with me, he was giving me his attitude and I was in my own mood and it just escalated into something and we got into a physical fight. I was poked, his head was bust [L4].

L4 is a typical example of those learners that E6 speaks of finding means to weed them gradually out of the school. But as already discussed, taking them away from one school to another does not solve the problem.

Another account of fighting for the sake of fighting was given by L6 in the following statement:

I've been involved in a fist fight. It was a free period with another teacher, so they were throwing paper at the teachers and this boy carried on throwing at me and I got angry and I threw the paper back at him. So outside class, he pushed me, and I retaliated and then we left from there the next day morning he came back. I didn't want to fight I told him I don't want to fight. So, he started punching me and I pushed him back and his head hit the wall. He had stitches. It wasn't my fault he turned into the wall [L6].

Results also indicated that educators were not adequately equipped to deal with peer violence. One of the educators described the situation as follows:

Sometimes when the school management changed, a lot of pressures were asserted on the kids and that had a counteraction on the violence so that spilled out on the streets etcetera, I found that the more pressure that came from management there was another type of force that came out from the kids. So, it is a social issue, it is where things work in cycles if there is more pressure on one end the counter pressure will come in. I found that also an issue [E5]

It is not only about school management changing but about them struggling to make a difference with school violence. It is clear from the above statement that management thought they were doing a good thing trying to suppress violence without foreseeing the retaliation that was going to come from the learners. Making the laws harsher is almost like playing a game with them about who is going to win in the end. Children also know the law and they know what the educators can do legally and what they cannot. This statement further indicates that harsher laws and punishment are not the answer to school violence. On the contrary, they fuel it. For example, one educator's car tyres were punctured for scolding a learner:

*When you scold learners in the classroom, they take it outside school.
For example, when I scolded a learner for behaviour problems in the
classroom, they punctured my new car tyres with a screwdriver*
[LOHOD].

Regarding the law, for example, learners do not listen to teachers when they are outside the school premises, telling the educators that they do not have jurisdiction outside the school premises.

*When they have fought recently, I went there to see what was going
on and they said "it is after school hours there is nothing you can do"*
[LOHOD].

In summary, this section has indicated that fighting over boys or over girls is a common occurrence in the school and in township schools. Intersectionality was also discussed, which is a theory that recognises race class and gender as interlocking and reinforcing each other. This theory is no different from that which postulates that the risk factors that learners are exposed to at home, in the community, and at school shape the way in which they tackle violence. These results also indicated that there is use of both direct and indirect use of aggression at schools. Other forms of boyfriend-girlfriend violence were those of boys hitting their girlfriends. Violence among the learners was also found to be as a result of social class differentials, with learners who perceived themselves to be from a lower class tending to pick fights with those perceived to be

from the middle class. Lastly, the results indicated that making harsher laws and punishment would be met with intent resistance by learners, meaning that harsher laws or punishment are not the answer to curbing the violence.

5.6.2 Spread of violence beyond school premises

Another theme that emerged in this study was violence beyond school premises. Many learners mentioned that violence among learners from the school tended to spread outside the school premises, and that this tended to be even more serious in severity than that witnessed at the school. As one learner elaborated:

There is a difference between fights that take place inside and outside of school. The typical fights that happen in school is one slap or punch, nothing like outside school where there are guns and knives [L5].

The LOHOD also reiterated:

Whatever happens in the classroom, they will take it into the break and then from there it becomes after school hours which is outside the gates [LOHOD].

These results indicate that because learners knew that they were being watched at school fights they did not tend to be serious whereas at school fights became more serious and dangerous weapons are more likely to be used. The LOHOD continued to elaborate:

Whatever happens in the classroom, they will take it into the break and then from there it becomes after school hours which is outside the gates. When they fought recently, I went there to see what was going on and they said, "It is after school hours. there is nothing you can do". I mean, "You are wearing our school uniform". Then one gentleman that came with a gang he said to me: "Do you like what you are doing as a teacher standing outside, inciting these children to

fight?” Then he tells me, “Do you like what you are looking at?” It is scary because of the fact that they can throw stones at us after school, attack us, and our class is right at the bottom. We have had an incident here where we had people coming here, they held us up at gunpoint [LOHOD].

These results indicate that the environment outside school premises is even worse, with learners feeling at liberty to take out weapons when they are outside the school premises. As another parent recounted:

He threatened one boy outside school and stabbed him with the scissors, because they were interfering with him. What those boys were doing is not right; you don't blame him. My husband always told him you must behave in school so what those boys did, they should cut his bag they should scribble on his shirt and he didn't know until he takes it out, so they were provoking him [LP4]

Teachers also do not feel safe not only in the school premises but also outside. The LOHOD also indicated that people have come from outside the school and held them at gunpoint. This is an expression of decayed moral fabric of society. This also makes school violence a very complex issue which, as it has been suggested, needs an approach that recognises that there are many factors at play and that these factors also interact.

Regarding the ability of educators to do anything about it, the LOHOD described the situation as follows:

We have eyes in front and at the back. It is a scary thing after we had that incident with one of the teachers here. We were actually threatened after school by parents and children so you must watch your back even when you are driving out of the school, you don't know when the brick is going to come through your window. Bricks can come in the classroom. When you scold learners in the classroom, they take it outside school. For example, when I scolded a learner for behaviour problems in the

classroom, they punctured my new car tyres with a screwdriver. The fact that you have a discipline problem you have to sort it out and they don't see the difference. [LOHOD]

As mentioned earlier, it is outside the school premises where learners felt most free to engage in violent behaviour.

Major fights will happen after school, there were a few incidences outside, a few girls were fighting, boys were fighting, people do get injured and in my case that's what happened [L12]

These statements show that violence among learners gets even worse outside school premises. Learners know their 'rights' and there is nothing educators can do outside of the school premises. Learners also show no respect for educators.

5.6.3 Social media

Social media has already been mentioned in the presentation of these results with fights circulating on social media. In most of these cases those fighting do not ask to be videotaped and this can be seen as harassment. This is exemplified by the following narrative by L9:

Last year when I first entered the school, girls used to come to me and ask me for my number, so these boys got jealous. So, this boy he was in grade 11, during break he went and told the whole school, there will be a fight with me and him. So, after school came as soon as I went out of the school gate the whole school was there already started videoing me coming down. They were like go down because we are going to fight down because there are no teachers we can't fight here because there are teachers. I went down and he was like ok come on lets fight and then I was like, "Okay wait", I wanted to ask him, "What are we actually fighting for?" as soon as I said "wait" he hit me here. I was bleeding on my ear. I got very angry I held him, he was holding me and hit me.

People are still videoing this fight and my sister was trying to separate and then he hit my sister. As soon as he hit my sister then I went to him. I was giving him. Then I held his stomach, then I pulled him down, then I was the one that was hitting him. It was going to be a big fight. Then my taxi driver came, and he told me to move because this thing here is going to be a big problem. My taxi driver put me in the taxi then he took me home. I was full of blood all over. The next day people were telling me, "Your video is on YouTube did you go see?" I went and saw it. My teachers only found out this year there was a video on YouTube. She didn't know so then that is why I am saying this is a bad school. When he stabbed me in my ear and I got home my head and ears started to pain, so my aunt took me to the hospital, and I was admitted for one and a half weeks. I felt so miserable I didn't feel like eating [L9].

Again, another statement that shows how little remorse some of the learners felt when they were videotaping these fights. It is almost like fighting is just another form of entertainment to them.

There is a lot of excitement and when they go outside just for the sake of fighting, they record it and put it on Facebook. Everything is on Facebook there is a school chat group that goes viral. So, it goes on to YouTube and everybody looks at it and makes comments about it [LOHOD].

I was also involved in a fight and my video is all over YouTube [L1]

These statements show how violence has been normalised at the schools and in the communities. This was a serious fight that landed one of the learners in hospital, but it was just entertainment to the rest. The second point made in this statement is that of jealousy among boys. Or it may have been a case of stamping authority and letting everybody know who the boss still was. This was why this learner went to inform the whole school to come and watch the fight.

These days learners have access to devices such as mobile phones, or some form of a computer, and have access to all sorts of media platforms. Social interactions take place and while some are good and positive interactions others are bad and negative and meant to cause mental and reputational hurt to another. The most common form of online victimisation is cyber-bullying. Bullies will go out to look for bad and demeaning content that they can post about their victims. In most of the cases fights are the easiest such content to access.

5.6.4 School environment

It has been argued that the risks that learners living in townships face such as the home environment and the community environment make them more likely to engage in violent behaviour than those learners who are not confronted with such risks. A learner and educator described the school environment at Taurus Secondary School as follows:

This school it is not a really good school. You see children jumping over the wall, bunking, smoking, sitting in the corners. As you enter the toilet you get the smoke smell and there is lots of violence at school, there is always fighting. I was also involved in a fight and my video is all over YouTube [L1]

We are having a losing battle, especially in our school, we have disastrous cases I have never seen anything like this. There was a time that children couldn't just even look at me, they had that respect and fear, they had that then they don't have that now. The little grade eights that are now coming in are as disastrous as our matriculants [E1].

The statement by the educator suggests that the higher the grade the more the learners are likely to engage in violent behaviour, with the grades 8s finding their way to the disastrous matriculants.

The reputational damage for school was a concern for **E6**:

School violence really affects the academic structure of the school. It doesn't bode well for the reputation and the image and status of the school, because schools that have a lot of school violence means that it's not a safe haven for the children and the parents are reluctant to send their children there, so it does have an impact [E6].

Other examples of violence indicated a culture of resolving disputes through violence. Statements by **L5**, **L7** and **L11** indicate that the innocent are even expected not to reveal the guilty but take the blame for something they did not do. According to L5:

I have been assaulted a couple of times in school. Another boy who looks just like me, kicked the ball on another learner and because I look like that boy, they mistook me for him, and I got into trouble. I came to the office and they wanted to suspend me and wanted me to pay for that girl's medical bills, but I refused to pay for it because it wasn't me. So, because I told his name he caught me outside school, and he assaulted me. He skopped (colloquial term for assault) me and then he started punching me, then my leg went under the tyre, but he continuously punched me on my head [L5].

In the statement above, the other learner was trying to bully L5 into admitting fighting when he did not, and even paying medical bills that had nothing to do with him.

Schools have often been targeted as places that can play a major role in learners' development as they provide safer spaces and also because learners spend a significant amount of time at school. Results of this study, however, indicated that there was lack of discipline among learners at the school and there was a lot of violence, making the school a negative environment for learners' development. These results are also supported by those of the quantitative study which indicated that those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school experienced a negative school environment that did not encourage change for the better.

5.6.5 Violence in families and community

The study by Burton & Leoschut (2013) highlights the intersection of school violence and family and community factors as these expose learners to violence at an early age. The involvement of family members in activities such as gangsterism, drug-related, and other criminal activities is also reported to have an influence on school learners. Regarding violence in the family, one learner encapsulated as follows:

I see a lot of fighting where I stay. Last year my father was fighting with his sister and they poked each other with a cup. They were sitting in the room and I don't know what happened. We were sitting in our room eating breakfast and I heard the noise, they were fighting. The two brothers held them, and my father got hurt on his forehead. I cried and I told them to keep quiet. It was bad and there was blood [L1].

Learner violence is also influenced by the kind of treatment that learners received at home. One of the learners described the situation at home as follows:

It was so bad in my home. If I didn't do the thing right my father will say, "Go and do the thing right." When he shouts I get angry [L1]

My mother and father used to hit me, last year they hit me with the belt [L1].

When the school called and told my parents about me using the swear word on an educator, they chased me out of the house for one night. I stayed in the yard; I slept the whole night outside with no food nothing. I went back inside at 5 o' clock the next morning. My punishment from my parents was to clean the yard and house [L2].

When I get involved at school, they call my parents, and my parents get angry and they punish me. They ban me from doing certain stuff like going out with my friends [L6].

Quantitative results also indicated that many learners see a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. These extreme measures by parents can lead to children

feeling unloved and even lead them to joining gangs in search of love and acceptance (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007).

Violence in the community was described by L4 and L5 as follows:

Violence around the community of Chatsworth is bad, because people are dying over trivial things like cell phones and jewellery pieces [L4].

I witnessed fights out of school and fights happening on the roads. The fight I witnessed outside of school was when I was walking on the road after I played soccer, there was an accident on the road and one boy smashed a car and that fellow pulled out a gun because that fellow didn't want to pay for his car and he wanted to shoot him, then the other fellow hit him with a jack then the gun fell down and his wife picked it up and put it in the car. [L5].

One of the educators summed up as follows:

Actually, it's difficult because of the environment that we live in, most of the parents are actually violent themselves, that's the truth of the matter. And we don't know how to handle violence otherwise, because the school is located in a place where there is a lot of drug abuse and so forth. So, parents now don't make any kind of contribution in terms of trying to help the school to reduce violence because they don't know how [E6]

It is evident from these results that learners experience violence of an extreme nature in the Chatsworth community and at home, and also that educators are at a loss as to what to do to deal with school violence as even the home environments of some of these learners encourage violence.

5.6.6 The role of parents

Results of this study indicated that some of the parents are not involved in the fight against school violence and do not seem to care what happens. L1 related an incident

where there was a fight that took place and their parents were called but did not go to the school.

I was sitting in the class and that boy came and punched me in the back, I stood up and I went to his place and I kicked him. I don't know why he punched me. Then the children told mam [teacher] what happened, and she told us we must get out. We told her what happened and she told us that she wants our parents to come to school. Our parents did not come to school because they were busy [L1].

Parents also tend to be protective of their children and tend to defend them and blame the teachers. One of the parents summed up the relationship between educators and some of the parents as follows:

The minute you hear anything of being involved in an act of violence the teachers say that you are a bully in school. Not knowing the true background, I think my son just ended up being in places at times he shouldn't be and gets involved and because of one incident you naturally get marked down. So, he had a few outbursts. Of recent where a child in a smaller grade told him something and he obviously said something back and then that child said something to piss him off. So, he turned around and smacked the child. That was a couple months back. So that is the only thing he can get temperamental, he may not show it to us as parents, we reprimand him or scream and shout at him. But I think outside when somebody tells him something, he gets a little temperamental. He has a scarier upbringing; we have both been through divorces and we settled together after our previous marriage. He has seen a lot of stuff he shouldn't be seeing but I think that stage of his life he has grown out of. He realises I helped him through the process, she also helped him through so he can never use that as an argument which he used to use when he was smaller [LP1].

I feel the teachers have no control over the children and the thing that pissed me off is that if a child is not in class for registration that is labelled as bunking and that is a misdemeanour. I had a problem because I work and I cannot be coming to school all the time for petty things because he is not labelled as a problem child, he didn't come to class or he came five minutes late. So, my thing is that the teachers, and even the principal, they need to deal with bigger issues like the drugs that is happening, the violence, but as a school they are terrible [LP2].

I feel that the teachers are accountable for the way the school is turning out. Firstly, they have no control and secondly is the way they treat the children and handle situations. I mean for example where the child got beaten up by seven children how can you allow the children back? But if a child has to miss class or is disruptive or tells the teacher something and she feels he is back chatting they suspend the child. So even with me, if you are going to keep telling me things that is going to piss me off and you keep picking on me, so with him now his problem is his teacher. I cannot stand her and to see her every day and the way she handles him he is big to sit on the floor or you make him sit in the front or you make him sit outside if he is two minutes late [LP2].

It is evident from this statement that parents tended to justify the violent behaviour of their children and expected the educators to understand. This happens when parents are not able to monitor their children properly and are not able to set limits for them, leading to violent behaviours that they [parents] are not aware that their children are capable of (Ngqela, 2010).

Provocation was also used as an excuse to justify a learner's violent behaviour by a parent:

He threatened one boy outside school and stabbed him with the scissors, because they were interfering with him. What those boys were doing is not right, you don't blame him. My husband always told him you must behave in school so what those boys did, they should cut his bag they should scribble on his shirt and he didn't know until he took it out, so they were provoking him [LP4].

The following statements by educators indicate that they also put the blame on parents.

When they are notified about their child's behaviour they side with the child. That is the greatest tragedy. The greatest flaw is the parent, and I am so sorry to say that, but it is the parent [E1].

Parents are not accepting responsibility and it becomes our problem. [E2].

The arrogance of the child and some of the parents will take the child's part and tell you straight: "It is the manner in which you behave that is why my child behaves towards you like that". [LOHOD].

It is clear from this that apart from parents defending their children when they have done wrong, some of them will go as far as blaming the educators for their children's bad behaviour. It is clear that communication has broken down between the educators and the parents. It was the observation of the researcher that the majority of parents or guardians in townships did not attend school meetings and the educators had to find innovative ways of getting them there, such as releasing learners' reports at the meeting. But after that they never get involved again. Quorums for meetings have been reduced to as low as 15 %, but even with this low quorum meetings cannot go ahead sometimes because the quorum has not been met. This is a major problem and solutions to reduce violence must take this into consideration. Further, several educators mentioned that parents' defensiveness and not accepting responsibility for their children's behaviour is a common occurrence. As some of the educators described some parents' behaviours:

The LOHOD further reiterated:

They are totally for their children and they will place the blame on the educator and a lot of cases happen where the parents neglect their duty as a parent and then find somebody to blame for why their child is doing wrong [LOHOD].

It is a dilemma. Parents seem to expect that educating their children about violence is the job of the teacher. But the teacher's primary job is to teach, not to raise children as a parent would. They cannot wholly be blamed for the violent behaviour of school children. This defending of learners who have done wrong then rubs off onto the children and they feel that they can defy the educators. The LOHOD cited an incident of a learner replicating the behaviour of his parent towards an educator as follows:

We had this child involved with the other teacher. The parent comes from a drug violent background and the child does the same thing at school you know so you can see it replicating. The parent came and was screaming and talking to me very rudely and he actually got up to hit one of the lady teachers in my presence. I had to stop them. The child was present so now the child stands up to the teacher and says: "You know you can't touch me no matter what, you can't touch me". That is the behaviour and the child now run around the school because the parent said it is the teacher's fault and not his child's. The parent was an ex pupil of ours and the child is doing the very same thing now [LOHOD].

This only goes on to demonstrate the powerlessness of educators when dealing with parents. An earlier incident where girls from Norkem Park High School in Kempton Park, Gauteng were fighting at a school over boys and parents came into the premises and joined in the fight is another example of parents not taking responsibility for violent behaviour at schools, but instead perpetuating them.

It was parents who were at the forefront of the abolition of corporal punishment in South African schools and it is parents who do not want to take responsibility for the

violent behaviour of their children at school. Corporal punishment is a form of violence, but it cannot be that parents will fight to eliminate it and not fight to eliminate all forms of violence at schools. It is not an option but an obligation of parents to get involved in fighting violence in their homes so that the schools can be an extension of what is happening at the home.

5.6.7 Learner and educator encounters

Violence is not confined to educators but extends to educators as well. The study by Burton & Leoschut (2013) found that educators were victims of violence perpetrated by learners, such as being insulted, being sworn or shouted at, being threatened, being sexually harassed, having a weapon pointed at them, having an object thrown at them, and being physically assaulted. Learner-educator violence is not only perpetrated by learners against educators but also by educators against learners.

5.6.7.1 Violence against learners

Learners indicated that the school is renowned for physical violence, emotional violence, and verbal violence perpetrated by educators. According to one of the learners:

The biggest problem is emotional because physical wounds heal but not the others. In terms of verbal I have heard educators swearing at learners, picking on their parents, belittling them, making them feel unworthy [L4].

We also have mental abuse, where learners are bullying other learners, verbal abuse, teasing them, mocking them, and ridiculing them. [E6].

I got angry yesterday when an educator squashed my work because it was just lying on my desk, she decided to squash it because it wasn't her class work. Because I sat up late at night, I did my work. I went and did research, I went and bought data to do my schoolwork and

then it had to all get squashed. I even started crying. She told me she was not giving it back to me. I went to her after school and she told me to get out. I thought that was very wrong. She could have taken it away and given it back to me at the end of the lesson. If it was her child's work, she wouldn't have done that [L3].

As this learner points out, emotional wounds do not heal easily. When educators belittle learners, making them feel unworthy, they brew unhappy learners who might even react in a manner that turns them violent as a way of expressing their frustrations.

Provocation and retaliation were yet further examples:

I was writing my math test and my teacher verbally insulted me, which provoked me because I yelled back at him. I am being investigated because of that, but it was the teacher's fault because she provoked me, she questioned me in front of the entire class and because she provoked me I am under investigation for expulsion [L4].

Educators did not only perpetrate emotional abuse against learners, but also became physical. As one learner observed:

I noticed a violent incident in the school where an educator has been hitting the learners with sticks and punching them with their hands [L6].

Results suggest that educators are also indirectly perpetuating violence among learners. As one learner elaborated:

It was on the 1st of March and this happened at 10:05 in the morning. I had classes for Afrikaans, so a boy from my class hit one grade 12 boy because apparently, he stepped on his foot. He threw him on the floor and started punching him and made his nose bleed. [When the victim reported the incident] one of the teachers said she wished she was there, and the other teacher ignored him. So, during the break

this boy told his friends about this and they came looking for this boy. I told him, "Don't hit him, let's go to the principal's office and we can sort this out"; and then one of the boy's friends pushed me and he grabbed me by the legs and he was going to throw me over. So, I held the railing and kicked his leg, they got me on the floor and then they all started hitting, after that I got up the floor and I didn't know what was happening. I have a fractured scalp, nose, a bruised left eye and a nose pain. I was admitted to the hospital that same day and I stayed there for two and a half days. I got discharged and the following week, I had to go see an ophthalmic surgeon, a maxillofacial surgeon and the surgeon that treated me in trauma [L12]

We had an early closure. It was a SADTU meeting. There was an issue where our boys went to another school and there was a small problem there. I am the monitor of my class, so I was in my Afrikaans class with and the principal came in the class and he called me out. He asked me which learners went to another school. I said I don't know. I went back into class and the educator continued doing the work. When I sat down, they told me I must go and change my place, so I went and sat where nobody was sitting, and I took out the book and I asked the educator what is the page number. He came running and he booted the table. The table hit me in my mouth. When I woke up, I pushed him, and I told him why are you hitting me and he punched me with his ring and after that it got stuck in my mouth. Then I pushed him he tripped, and he fell on the table. I asked him a question, "Why did you hit me". He hit other learners. That was not the only incident involving that educator, he hit a lot of learners, and he also broke the stick on a boy's head [L5].

This violence against learners paints a grim picture for the school. It is a picture that shows lack of ability to cope with violence from both the educators and the learners. It

is also a picture that does not bode well for education. Clearly the school environment is not welcoming to both learners and educators.

Results also indicated that to protect themselves some educators resorted to threats. As one learner mentioned:

The worst incident of violence I witnessed at school was an educator assaulting learners where he [educator] took them into the classroom one by one [and assaulted them]. The learners had blue marks on them, he told them if they tell anybody he will kill them [L4].

Provocation by educators and retaliation by learners was yet another example of promotion of violence at the school.

She [the educator] always likes to make me sit on the floor when I don't do my work... I get angry when I have to sit on the floor, but I just keep it aside [L2].

When an educator squashed my work, I was so irritated I could have throttled her and screamed at her, banging the table for her to give my work back. I would have told her she was being very hard on me [L3].

A parent also attested to her son being punched by an educator repeatedly.

The latest one, apparently, we didn't know, because our son has got into several fights. Maybe he thinks that if he tells us we are going to think he is at fault. It was the same teacher that punched him in the ribs and the next day we thought he was sick, but we didn't know why. Not once but repeatedly. I didn't know about that until he came and told me and I told him the next time I would have gone to school. [LP2]

The above statements indicate that some of the educators are to blame for the spread of violence at the school. They set a bad example for learners, making them think that

it is okay to express one's anger through verbal, emotional, and physical abuse. They also promote violence indirectly by not doing anything when learners report incidents of violence – perpetrators are encouraged, and victims take the law into their hands.

5.6.7.2 Violence against educators

Another theme that emerged was violence against educators. This not only involves learners but also adults from outside the school. As the LOHOD explained:

It is scary because of the fact that they can throw stones at us after school, attack us and our class is right at the bottom. We have had an incident here where we had people coming here and held us up at gunpoint [LOHOD].

Violence against educators is not only physical but also verbal. According to one educator:

Each one of us sitting here has been exposed to several levels of abuse. Just this week I have been called the B word and that is harsh. He [the learner] is in Grade 8 and he comes in smiling and entering the classroom. I said, "I won't have you here because that is verbal abuse and I am not prepared to have you in my class". Then we have incidents where we have taken the learners that have transgressed the code of conduct right up to the principal. He has given written instructions that they must conform to, but they are blatantly back the next day. There is no way; not even the principal is going to get them to conform [E3]

The LOHOD acknowledged the increase of violence by learners against educators:

Over the years there has been an increase in pupil-educator violence. It is not always verbal; it is now becoming physical. It used to be verbal, but I think the teachers used to discard it. Now it is becoming

physical and when it becomes physical the teachers are not allowed to touch the child, you know, with corporal punishment. Our hands are tied [LOHOD].

These statements indicate a lack of morals and respect for educators by learners. But, as indicated in the previous section, some of the educators are also to blame as they behave no differently from the learners. Clearly, the educators, parents, and learners need to come together to address issues of violence at schools. It is clear from the above statements that this is not a problem that can be solved by any of the parties alone. The community also needs to get involved, maybe in the form of mentors or police motivating learners against violence.

5.6.8 Educator frustrations

Educators expressed frustration regarding violence at the school as follows:

I feel that I am sinking. I am drowning in this profession [E2].

It is really a challenge. Every lesson is a challenge. I speak for myself after being such a strict teacher and an experienced teacher there is an interruption every two minutes, the learners refuse to listen [E2].

I have never been more demeaned. There is no safety in our environment. We never looked at it as just your job. Well, we tell ourselves that we are no longer going to go that far. We will do our duty and walk out. That is what we say. Next day as a mother, as a care giver, as an educator, we go back to it. We close our eyes to our hurts, to our pains, to our sufferings. We shelve it. Do you know, our very own children would be horrified if we truly told them how we are treated? [E1]

I am finding right now I don't know how to deal with this sense of gloating. They are so smug they laugh at you and it is humiliating. I am at the stage now I feel that we are trying really hard and we are getting

nowhere. In the past week alone, every issue that we have raised we have gone full circle and there has been no resolution [E2].

Experiences of teachers with school-based violence can lead to lack of motivation, going to class unprepared and frequent absenteeism from school (Taole & Ramorola, 2014), and feelings of guilt, low self-worth, negativity towards learners, and trauma (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010). Teachers have also been reported to feel socially isolated resulting in a negative impact on relationships with peers and family members (Shields, Nadasen & Hanneke, 2015). Results of this study indicate that educators are feeling the same symptoms as described by these authors – feelings of frustration, of being demeaned, of desperation, of hurting.

5.7 Resilience

The above sections have described the nature of violence at schools, how it manifests itself, as well as how the socio-economic environments of learners contribute as risk factors likely to influence learners to resort to violent behaviours at school or to become victims of school violence. Despite the high risk environments in which township learners live, research has shown that many children have developed resilience to cope with and avoid violence (Lynch, 2003; Masten, 2001), meaning that resilience is a quality that can be found in an average individual and which can be learned and developed – it is not a trait, but a process (Moletsane & Theron, 2017). The following sections present results of this study on resilience of learners at the school.

5.7.1 Internal characteristics of resilience

Internal characteristics of resilience include commitment to learning (being actively engaged in education), positive values (demonstrating values through words, actions and avoiding risks), social competency (empathy and friendship skills), and positive identity (self-esteem and sense of purpose).

5.7.1.1 Commitment to learning: Attempting to be actively engaged in education.

In the quantitative component of this study, commitment to learning was measured using four items, namely: 1) I make sure that I do my class work and homework; 2) Doing well at school is very important to me; 3) I do not like being absent from school; I hate to miss the teaching; and 4) Even when I do not understand in class I do not give up trying. The quantitative study found that most of the learners had a positive commitment towards learning, including some of those who reported that they fought a lot at school. A number of learners mentioned their commitment to learning as an internal characteristic of resilience to violence. As some of the learners commented:

I want to study harder [L1].

I concentrate on school. My uncle, he tells me I can go play out in the yard. He gives me opportunities to do everything but sometimes when it comes to education, he is very strict [L10].

I have an interest in school, I do concentrate, but I find things hard so sometimes I just forget about the work because it's hard but in the end, I just end up doing it [L12].

These learners expressed commitment to learning. It is also important to note, as L10 indicated, that commitment to learning is also connected with the support of caregivers. However, there were those learners who were intent on disrupting lessons. As one educator explained:

Sometimes it is not a direct attack on the teacher that the child is warped in the head. From the moment they enter the classroom, their intention is to destroy the lesson. From the beginning to the end of the lesson it goes on, interjecting nonsense into the lesson and eventually the educator's patience is tested. And what happens is we tend to send that learner out and send them to the principal. He runs in front of the principal and he vanishes into the surroundings [E1]

According to the above statement, there are those learners who are not committed to learning and are intent on disrupting classes. These are those learners described by Mayer & Chetty (2017) as those who continue to do what is wrong when they know the right thing to do. Moreover, it seems that there is not much that educators can do about such learners in terms of disciplining them.

5.7.1.2 Positive values: Demonstrating these values through words and actions and avoiding risks.

Learners reported on their positive values within conflict situations and talked against violence as cited below:

I am not a fighter; I am a lover. What I mean is that I don't go out looking for trouble and I am not the one who instigates trouble. If somebody comes to me, I rather resolve it than get into a verbal or physical fight [L4].

I feel that we are in high school; we need to talk about the situation not fight about it [L10].

I think that fighting is very wrong, and it should not happen because any problem we have, it shouldn't lead to violence. You can sort it out in a better way. You can talk about it or inform an educator. You shouldn't take matters into your own hands [L11].

These results indicate that despite living in high violence environments, some of the learners did not see violence as the solution to conflict situations. These corroborate the findings that learners from high risk areas can be resilient to violence.

Religious convictions also seemed to play a part in some of the learners' anti-violence stance as indicated by the following quotes:

I am a good person and I don't like to fight with people because I am a quiet boy. I ask God to help me not to fight with others [L1].

After using the swear word on my educator, I went on my knees and I asked my Creator to forgive me [L2].

I can just picture God in front of me, and with everything that I do. Prayer comes in everyday for anything that comes my way [L3].

Religion has been cited as one of the important factors in the personal transformation of youth (Schumacher, 1978, cited in Mayer & Chetty, 2017). The author points out that personal transformation requires an inner commitment and draws on religions such as Islam and Christianity to illustrate this commitment. It should be noted here that religion as an internal characteristic of resilience also requires the support of caregivers, thus emphasising the intersection of the external environments with internal characteristics.

Beyond the school environment, some learners reported on the importance of family values and specified respect and reverence in particular.

I like spending time with my family and friends and I really love rapping, singing and dancing and my school knows that. It is the home you are coming from. If you respect yourself and if you respect your parents and don't back chat with them then you will do the same in the school with your fellow learners and educators [L9].

I am a respectful person; I help others a lot and care of family is important. I grew up knowing what's right, doing what's right and that helping someone was right. I end up getting it [L12].

Respect was also emphasised by the principal:

In our community there is moral decay. I don't know if you can accept that. For example, if you look at the value system paramount in any individual, I would say respect, and respect is something you don't have to literally teach a person, it must emanate because values are inculcated [by the parents] [P].

According to these results, positive values intersect with both the home and the school environment. These results also support findings that resilience can be learned as it can be influenced by the environment of the learner in terms of both positive school and positive home environments.

5.7.1.3 Social competency: Possessing empathy within the different contexts of engagement.

Social skills and friendship have been cited as some of the most important characteristics of identifying non-resilient learners. These were characterised by withdrawal, display of lack of social skills such as little eye contact, complaining about others and lack of perspective talking. They were also described in terms of negative emotional states as moody, over-reacting, anxious, hypersensitive, depressed, and having unexplained mood swings. Resilient learners, on the other hand, were described as having good social skills, an internal locus of control, optimism, and perseverance.

In this study, several learners mentioned regret and remorse for their actions and demonstrated empathy after taking responsibility for their actions:

I was so angry, I was sitting and writing my English work and my friend came and punched me, so I got up and kicked him. He is my best friend, the next day, I told him, "I am sorry." He said, "Fine." [L1].

After using that swear word on my educator, I regretted it and I told myself I will never use that word again. I told the educator, "Sorry," and she said I must get out of the class [L2].

The one thing that I regret doing is disrespecting my mother. Because I am so short-tempered, so I snap at times, and I say things I don't mean. But I regret it. For Mother's Day I made her a frame of my late granny, it's what she always wanted, she really appreciated it more than the jewellery my father bought her. It made me feel happy to see

my mother happy and smile after everything, it made me feel good inside [L4].

In order to inculcate and maintain such social competency, an educator asserted that the absence of a guidance counsellor at school had multifarious repercussions. This educator mentioned further that the situation at the school was so dire that even counsellors could not take it. The educator attributed this to the dysfunctional environments that learners came from and noted that this tended to make them irritable and explosive when they were being put in place.

My academic job does not allow me that kind of skill, and there is no guidance counsellor offered to schools; that is the greatest tragedy. The guidance counsellor that we had was the one that jumped off the pier. I don't know for whatever reason he did what he did. I can tell you that this system drives you there, because I am seeing a lot of pain and I cannot handle the pain. The pain is so deep seeded it is sick. Their home environment is sick, then they transport that from where they are coming from, being sick, then when they come here, they are so much into this sickness. Therefore, the moment you are thinking you are putting your rules and values you are beginning to irritate them and an explosion occurs [E1].

The commitment to sustaining social competency was further illustrated by **LOHOD** who noted the practical aspects of such an engagement:

We have helped a lot of children coming from very poor socioeconomic backgrounds. We give them groceries when necessary. We get those learners with behavioural problems, so it has helped me to grow as a person. I know what happens in people's homes where the children come from, why they behave in that manner. So that has grown me tremendously to understand and show empathy where needed. On the other hand, we have children that

simply don't care, and I think parents also are to blame for a lot of what is happening to their children's behaviour [LOHOD].

Empathy and parental responsibility were regarded by the **LOHOD** as pivotal in managing social competency.

5.7.1.4 Positive identity: Possessing self-esteem and a sense of purpose.

Being independent, confident and with high self-esteem has been identified as one of the key characteristics of resilient children (Garmezy, 1991). In this study, two learners mentioned that positive self-esteem and a sense of purpose made them resilient to violence.

I have got a very strong self-esteem too; I didn't always think like that. As I am growing, my ways of thinking have changed [L3].

I see myself as somebody that makes people the victims. At times it boosts my ego and at times it makes me feel terrible about myself [L4].

The above results indicate that even learners from high risk environments can have positive identity. Reasons for this could be attributed to the supportive home and school environments of learners.

5.7.2 External factors

In the discussion of results of internal factors of resilience above, a theme that kept recurring is external factors of support for learners to be resilient. These results are in agreement with those reported by Ngqela (2010) which indicated that external factors such as support from educators, parents, other adults, and peers can help learners build resilience to violent behaviour. On the other hand, negative external characteristics of learners' environments can affect them negatively. The following sections describe external characteristics of learners and how they affect them. These are family, school, community and peers, and the media.

5.7.2.1 The home environment

Some of the learners in this study reported abuse at home while others did not. Family environments that have affected learners positively include the following:

Having my mom to talk to is very good because she is ready to listen and also gives me advice. I can't take advice from people that are my age; they are not going to give me the best advice. I feel I rather take advice from my mom who is bigger than me and wants the right thing from me [L3].

This statement emphasises the role of parents in creating a positive environment for learners that ensure prudence in what they do. However, some educators mentioned that some of the learners came from abusive home environments.

The fear is that most of these children are abused children and we do not want to admit that. When I say abused, they are abused in their homes. I had a very scary incident last year of a learner who cannot even read or write, let alone the academic aspect of that. My heart really melted when she smiled at me and I didn't know whether to cry or not. The problem is her mother suffers with elephantiasis. Her mother is bed ridden she lives at home with her father which I wonder is her own father, her mother and three other siblings other than her. If the mother is not suitable to do her job then who am I to do her job, you know what I am saying? And now you can't get a word of sense from the learner, so can you imagine the pain and the suffering that child is going through, but I am not skilled to handle it. I do not have the time to handle it [E1].

The **LOHOD** and **E5** and **E6** in particular mention the absence of parents at homes:

It is inefficient parenting and parents not being around [LOHOD].

Some kids are running their own homes and they don't have parents, there are lots of issues and it needs to be addressed [E5].

Firstly, the challenge that the child has in many cases is the fact that their parents are not home [E6].

Learners also mentioned coming from negative family environments where family members swear and shout at them, parents who get physical against them, parents who have separated, family with financial problems, and alcohol and drug abuse at home.

I have got a case where I send the child to psychological services. The child has been writing about all the verbal abuse and physical abuse that he has been experiencing at home. He attempted suicide and we counselled him; he now sits with me every break time he is with me all the time. I called the parent and the parent said, "He is lying". He wrote down everything that the parents do to him at home and he showed us. I told him bring the book to me every day. The parents took the book away. Now when the parents came, they told me they didn't take the book away. Now I don't know who to believe. [LOHOD].

Regarding parents who swear and shout at their children, some of the respondents mentioned the following:

It was so bad in my home. If I didn't do the thing right my father would say, "Go and do the thing right". When he shouts, I get angry [L1].

My mother is a very short-tempered person and she does expect a lot. The first time I remember I seriously backchatted her and the second thing was that she hit me, but that wasn't that much because I was still a kid. And she used to swear me a lot. Like the 'bitch' word. So, I really take that thing inside. As I grew, she still does that. I told her I was tired of what she was saying to me and I can't take this in because the next thing I am going to do is go to the police. And then for a while she did stop and then she started with me again last year, so I didn't take that in a lot, but I still suffer with that [L8].

Regarding learners whose parents had separated, the following responses captured the deeply embedded sadness in the children which sometimes manifested in violence.

My family is not a very rich family. My parents are separated and there are family issues, a lot, and I can't deal with them... I really struggle that my father doesn't like me the way he likes my younger sister. That's the problem I'm having. Mostly I think about the trouble at home. Because most of the time in my family my father is not that very supportive. So, as a girl I think if I had money now it would be like this. Where am I going to get the money, I should do this maybe. I will get the money. The thing is I really think about that a lot. I do give my family a hard time about my anger. I shout, I swear a lot and I do hit a lot [L8].

The above statement suggests drastic measures that the learner is contemplating to taking to alleviate the financial situation. This could even lead to prostitution (*Where am I going to get the money, I should do this maybe*).

Last year I thought I was going to fail because my mother got a second husband so they were fighting every day, we couldn't eat, and very rarely could I go to school [L10].

Several educators also reiterated that the violent home environment contributed to the violent behaviour of learners in schools:

They come from homes where there is a lot of alcohol abuse, drug abuse, physical abuse and it's difficult for them [parents] to now want to teach the child good values and principles and morals because they themselves are like this [E6].

One of the learners mentioned that he was getting differing messages from his mother and father. One parent taught anti-violence while the other taught violence:

My mother is an incredible woman, very instrumental in teaching me values. But all the values and morals that she taught me faded over time because of the environment that I was introduced to, like the school. My mother taught me if someone slaps you turn the other cheek. My father taught me if somebody hits you and you can't hit them back take a brick and bust their head... [L4].

The principal elaborated further on morals and values originating from the home:

A child's morals and values – the value system – must emanate from the home. If you look at the older generation – and I sincerely believe in this – if we can get back to this as a community and I mean this seriously and sincerely, is that the lap of the mother is the first school. If that child learns respect from the parents and certain values from the parents and from the home then the role of the school is not the initiation, it is the reinforcement [P].

The tantrum I have is like a fit of rage, it is like a complete outburst that is where the problem comes in with me and my mother. My mother is the most special person in my life, not even my father because he is my stepfather and all I want is for her to be happy and at times everything gets forgotten. I just lose it completely I just snap, I yell, and I shout. She says things back or she sits quietly, and she doesn't talk to me anymore. The fact that she responds and tells me things aggravates me even more. I don't prefer for her to be quiet. I prefer not to have this in me. I try, "I say Mummy, can I talk?" and she says, "Just leave me alone." [L4].

Several educators also noted that it was a common occurrence for parents to be defensive of their children and not accept responsibility for their actions:

When they are notified about their child's behaviour they side with the child. That is the greatest tragedy. The greatest flaw is the parent, and I am so sorry to say that, but it is the parent [E1].

Parents are not accepting responsibility and it becomes our problem [E2].

The lack of degradation stems from the home. I believe it comes from the home; I don't know what kind of transition has taken place over the parents for them to condone such kind of behaviour from the children. Quite recently, the tone of the school has changed quite drastically. I am teaching for now 39 years and in those 39 years I have never experienced what I am experiencing now in the past four years. [E1].

The **LOHOD** further reiterated the parents' shifting of the blame to educators for their children's behaviours:

They are totally for their children and they will place the blame on the educator and a lot of cases happen where the parents neglect their duty as a parent and then find somebody to blame for why their child is going wrong [LOHOD].

There were, however, parents who were willing to accept the blame for learners' violent behaviour.

I think parents need to have a tighter rein on their kids, because I think the problem is the bullying stems from home and it is the upbringing of the kids and then it follows through right to school. So they get away with a lot at home and then it just carries on into school because they walk out the house and think I am getting away with a lot of nonsense at home it is ok to go and do it to somebody else [LP6].

The responsibility of parents was echoed by the principal who extrapolated as follows:

A child's moral and values, the value system must emanate from the home. If you look at the older generation and I sincerely believe in this, if we can get back to this as a community and I mean this seriously and sincerely, the lap of the mother is the first school. If that child learns respect from the parents and certain values from the parents and from the home, then the role of the school is not the initiation it is the reinforcement. For example, in school I still teach, and I always ask the learners who's your best teacher? And you know what the answer is for that question? Now let us look at this scenario about values, presently there are homes where it happens and we cannot say it is blanketed, there are still those homes where there is the initiation and the inculcating of the values of those homes [P].

These results indicate that not all parents have left the responsibility of dealing with school violence with the educators. It is true that ideally the mother's lap should be the first school. This should be so for fathers too. However, as the principal also pointed out, many of the learners come from broken families where caregivers come from previous marriages and this causes tensions in these homes.

There are those homes where, for example, there is a single parent, and this is quite prevalent and I have been in two schools in very similar communities. There is a lot of marriages from individuals from two different marriages. They are remarriages from broken marriages [P].

These results indicate that while some learners come from family environments where they are supported, it is not so for other learners.

5.7.2.2 Parental disciplinary measures

Child transformation begins with exchanges with parents, siblings, neighbours and peers and it is the daily interactions with these that contribute to aggression and violence. Parental disciplinary measures therefore can be linked to aggressive learner behaviour with both positive and negative reinforcement of such behaviour. One of the

themes that emerged on the effect of family environment on the learner was parental disciplinary measures. Some learners mentioned that disciplinary measures that their parents adopted when they misbehaved were drastic and left them angry. Parents, on the other hand, also seemed to be at a loss as to the kind of discipline appropriate for children. Different forms of discipline are narrated by learners as follows:

My mother and father used to hit me, last year they hit me with the belt [L1].

When the school called and told my parents about me using the swear word on an educator, they chased me out of the house for one night. I stayed in the yard, I slept the whole night outside with no food, nothing. I went back inside at 5 o' clock the next morning. My punishment from my parents was to clean the yard and house [L2].

When I get involved at school, they call my parents, and my parents get angry and they punish me. They ban me from doing certain stuff like going out with my friends [L6].

These results show that some of the disciplinary measures by parents can be drastic, such as chasing the child out of the house for the whole night without food and still continuing to punish the child afterwards. Hitting the child is also a drastic measure which was abolished in South Africa in 1995. These measures only serve to make children angry and give them a sense of non-belonging which they might try to compensate for by joining gangs, engaging in violent behaviour, or low self-esteem.

One of the parents mentioned that he made his son sign a contract that if he misbehaved at school, he should get expelled:

I sat down with him and I made him draft a contract and he has a copy... I made him put down where he went wrong and that he is going to ensure that he never repeats that. It reads as follows: "I now solemnly promise that I am not going to do all these misdemeanours

and should I get caught or it becomes an issue that any of the educators are not happy with it, it is not going to go where you call a parent and they will be taking you up to the governing body for expulsion". I told him straight, the contract is if you break the rule the principal just needs to call me, and I will come and take him out of school. It is over, his schooling life is finished [LP1].

Some of the parents mentioned milder forms of discipline as follows:

With teenagers their phones are their privileges. We take their phone and their privileges away, such as their friends are not allowed here. We did all that where his friends couldn't come. He was grounded and didn't have a phone and was not allowed to sit where we are sitting. So instead of being violent and hitting them I prefer this way [LP2].

Similarly, LP1 also reiterated this form of punishment:

I will take away everything and then the next two days I start giving it back and then he knows it gets taken away and he gets it back when he starts behaving [LP1].

LP1 also informed that although he used this method of chastisement it also had other disciplinary benefits beyond the home:

When it comes to his punishment, I can be harsh on him. As parents we are punishing him, but I want to teach him what is right and what is wrong. If I am too strict, he is going to retaliate at school and that is the last thing I want, so I will scream and shout at him and week goes on and I see a little change in him [LP1].

However, **LP3** conceded that the circumstances become tenuous and challenging when contemplating parental disciplinary measures:

I try not to hit or anything of that sort, but sometimes he pushes me to the limit [LP3]

Acknowledging the role that parents should play in disciplining their children, one of the parents elaborated as follows:

Discipline stems from home and not your teachers, and the fact is that the kids stand up to the educators. You cannot expect educators to do what a parent is supposed to do. All they [the educators] are there for is just to make sure that the learners understand the schoolwork.
[LP6].

However, results indicated that some of the measures taken by some parents left the children angry and this anger could lead to violent behaviour.

5.8 Dealing with Violence and the Challenges faced

5.8.1 The school (Opportunities to participate in school projects)

Opportunity to participate in school projects is thought to be one of the measures that can be taken to increase the self-esteem of learners and hopefully discourage violent behaviour. However, one of the respondents noted that the school lacked extramural activities:

Besides having a Debs Balls, the school is not doing things like have a fun games day, where learners are going to get occupied and get involved. Even if the school lacks funds, having things like that gets the kids excited on a weekend. Do a clean-up of the school or the classroom. You don't have to have money to do that. One day have a cake sale or fun day get the teachers to do things so they can make money for the school where the children are getting involved. There are so many things and ideas. It is the teacher's role to come to a point and strategize and get to do things where the children are involved and they will be excited in that way the school is going to benefit and the kids are off the street as well. Get their mind of all the nonsense that is happening **[LP2].**

This statement indicates that while some of the learner parents saw the necessity of extramural activities, they still thought that it was the job of the educators to come up with ideas. This again showed that parents were not playing such an active role as they should in school activities and encouraging positive behaviour by the learners.

A theme that emerged strongly regarding measures taken by the school to address violence were measures instituted through the Life Orientation (LO) course. As some of the learners put it:

In my LO lessons we discuss the causes, why violence starts, how it starts and how it can be prevented. I think it is a good idea because this allows us to speak about violence in the classroom. We are being asked questions about it, we are being taught about it so you can give your opinion and your point of view. It also helps to reduce violence because they are telling you the cause. Why get involved in a fight if you know that you are going to get hurt or if you know you are going to get in trouble? [L3].

In LO it was part of the syllabus, so we went through the types of violence, emotional, physical and how people deal with it [L4].

An educator reiterated the learners' responses and mentioned the extent to which LO is taught at the school:

The LO curriculum extensively teaches learners how to handle violence and how to control themselves. In all grades they touch a little bit on it but as you go into higher grades it becomes more intense [E6].

Some learner participants also indicated that the issue of violence is also addressed during assembly which becomes another site for awareness:

In my subjects at school they don't talk about violence and whether it's right or wrong to hit each other. But they talk about it at assembly that all the learners are young, and we must not fight. I would like for the school to speak to the learners and help the learners not to fight [L1].

A concern was raised by one of the learners that there is no one that ever comes to school to speak to them about violence:

There is nobody that comes to our school and speaks to us about violence and in assembly they don't really speak about violence, but we have like every Thursday there is a grade to do assembly so if one learner picks a speech or a poem maybe on violence or on love or something like that. So, we are also learning from there [L3].

The **LOHOD** also corroborated that violence was not only addressed during the assembly but also incorporated in the LO lessons:

I have done quite a number of assembly talks on violence and like I said, you are talking to the children that are not violent. So those children that need to be there are not there; so what I have done is that I incorporate it into my LO lessons and I don't teach the entire school so therefore it is only the classes that come to me that will get that talk on violence. Of course, the other teachers are doing it but they won't go into much detail because of syllabus coverage. So that is where we are restricted in trying to solve the problem, and the more you talk to these children as well some of them just won't listen and therefore it continues [LOHOD].

The above statement by the LOHOD indicates that more needs to be done to educate the learners about violence and to try to curb it. The statement suggests further that the school needs a specialist to address violence on a regular basis as the teachers are

not equipped and also have time restrictions because they have to concentrate on the subjects they teach.

5.8.2 School Protocol when confronting violent incidents (School's Code of Conduct and Safety Policies)

All public schools are self-governing (autonomous) bodies and are therefore responsible for developing and adopting their own Codes of Conducts for Learners. This is the responsibility of the schools' governing bodies. Results indicated that there was no real protocol followed when confronting violence at the school. As one of the learners mentioned, if there was violence the principal simply suspended the learner:

If there is violence in the school the principal just suspends them, some children they get charged [L10].

Some of the educators mentioned that they try to counsel the learners:

As educators we can only counsel them. We can call them aside, speak to them and try to find out exactly what has actually triggered this off and assist them there, speak to their parents. We do that very often, we speak to the parents, but we have to go via protocol and the management, and we visit homes as well, to speak to the parents [E6].

However, the educators felt that they lacked the skills to deal with the situations since they were not equipped to address the psychological aspects in particular:

It is a very disturbing fact. It makes us feel like we are inadequate in our job. As much as we have the experience, we find that we are not equipped enough to handle the mental aspect of the child that has been involved in an incident. So, we do the necessary; we follow protocol and we feel bad about this. But it's inevitable because we are usually not around when the violence is happening [E6].

Educators also mentioned that when the violence occurred outside the school the principal told them that it did not concern the school:

I've witnessed people outside of school, they were hitting each other with their hands [L2].

If the fight is outside school the principal says, "It is not in the school premises, it doesn't concern the school" [L10].

A lot of frustration by the principal also emerged as a theme in trying to combat violence. As some of the educators observed:

I have had incidents where in front of me the principal gave them [learners] transfers and that transfer card was a joke because the very next day they were back in the class [E1].

The disrespect for such protocol was further noted by **E2** and **E4** in particular, who authenticated encounters by which the principal was confronted:

They are dancing and teasing the principal [E2].

They even swear at the principal and they run in opposite directions [E4].

A parent also mentioned that some of the methods used by the teachers as punishment for misbehaviour lead to more misbehaviour:

When the teachers chase the children out the classroom they roam around the entire school because the teachers do not want them in class and this causes them to get up to mischief. The teachers shouldn't be kicking children out the classroom for their haircuts and things, rather give them proper warnings. Keep them in class and get their parents to come, or even put them with a teacher and wait for

their parents to come, and not leave them by the office to sit or loiter around, which is the main cause of these children misbehaving [LP3].

The above statements show that there was no school protocol when confronting violent incidents or that, if it existed at all, then it was not being adhered to. As one parent reiterated:

The code of conduct is not being used at all because the learners can leave at any time; there is no control in school. In comparison to other schools in this area where my other son attended, for example, learners couldn't stay away more than one day a week, you had to come with a doctor's certificate. If you did badly in school, they always called you to school, and you get suspended if you are misbehaving. They are very strict; however, this school is the total opposite [LP3].

Parents also lamented the inadequacy of safety measures and accountability to address the situation as elucidated below:

It really scares me; the fact that there is nobody that has a backbone to stand up to those bullies to take them on; the fact that the principal and the Department allows all of this nonsense to go on in the school. It is such a joke. In my son's case which was such a big thing where my child could have died and not even a call from the Department of Basic Education to see if he was okay or if he was safe. There are not enough plans in place to safeguard our kids in school, not even the security can do anything [LP6].

5.8.3 Lack of Support from Parents and the Department of Basic Education

Results indicated that educator and parent participants felt that there was lack of support from parents and the Department of Basic Education, as exemplified by the following narratives:

The Department is not standing by us, I am so sorry to make this statement [E1].

We never ever experienced anything or any support coming from the Department of Basic Education itself, nothing at all. Whenever there is a problem with the child the Department worries about the child not the teacher [LOHOD].

I think 99 % of the parents do not give us any support [E2].

The main issue is parents. They do not call in here when we send a letter. It's the lack of cooperation from the parents. The attitude of the parent when you tell them their child is the problem, they will deny the fact or they will indicate that their child is never that way; and when we give them the facts they will not accept it [LOHOD].

The **LOHOD** also mentioned very poor attendance and support from parents at parents' meetings as indicated below:

When we have parent's day, we have a very poor response and support from the parents. The parents that do pitch up here are the parents of the very good children, so when they walk into here you don't know what to tell them because their child is good. You give them all the good responses, but the parents that need to come in don't attend. The learners don't even take the letters to their parents or to say they need to attend. And when the parent does come, they say, "Why did you not inform us about all these things?" It is not our job to tell them about the letter, the child is supposed to take it [LOHOD].

The need of a guidance counsellor was accentuated by educators and parents as specified below:

We definitely need a guidance counsellor at school. Learners who have real problems, whether it is violence or a social issue, the problem must be addressed, or they just fall through the cracks with the system that we have [E5].

Educators noted further the lack of adequate, appropriate, and timeous intervention by personnel besides the educators themselves:

We don't have the manpower. We don't have qualified psychologists or psychiatrists based in school all the time to deal with these issues. It means if we have an issue, we have to phone them, wait for them, the time they are available to get to the school and then try and handle that. We as teachers we can do so much. We are not qualified psychologists or psychiatrists to handle these kinds of issues [E5].

A parent also remarked as follows:

I think they should have social workers and guidance counsellors going into school and talking to them about being rebellious and getting into trouble, even the victims. But nothing of that sort is coming from the school [LP3].

The theme on need for professional intervention in the form of qualified personnel has been running throughout these results. Educators mentioned that they did approach the Department of Basic Education, but in vain.

5.8.4 Lack of Resources

Lack of resources mentioned were lack of financial resources, lack of access to telephone and internet, a poorly functioning school governing body, and lack of assistance from the school to assist the learners to attend a rehabilitation programme for anger management. The LOHOD and parents acknowledged that the school was under-resourced, as exemplified by the narratives of these participants below:

We don't have any monies. Our school was at a balance of minus last year towards November. Yes, a negative balance of over two thousand rand and everything [water, electricity] was cut [LOHOD].

The LOHOD also mentioned that the school had no telephone and access to the internet:

In our school currently we don't even have access to a telephone and internet. So, whatever we do is from our own. So, if a child has a problem case we have got to phone from our own personal phones. I often make call from home because of the fact that I have got free calls after seven, so I communicate with all the teachers from there, after school hours. [LOHOD].

The LOHOD also mentioned that the School Governing Body (SGB) chose priorities that were often not seen as priorities by the educators and also misappropriated funds.

We had an SGB that came in before and they were the ones that misappropriated all the funds. They used the funds to renovate the school to paint the bricks, monies were used to purchase things that we do not require, and we only have receipts of about R18 000, R6000 disappeared and nobody can account for that [LOHOD].

Parents also commented on the lack of finances and resources:

They just need to sort out security in that school. But the school does not have the finances and that has put the biggest constrains to the teachers. So, if that place was fenced up properly and they had a guard the community would not jump in and pitch in and do things. It is actually sad to walk through that school and see what it is now [LP1].

From the narratives above the participants affirmed how the lack of resources and financial constraints affected the operations of the school.

5.8.5 The community and peers (opportunities to participate in the community)

Participants did not mention any community activities for learners. Instead, they commented more on how the community and peers influenced school learners, and how cigarettes and drugs were accessible to learners.

Another contributing factor is the appeasement of peers, for example, there were many cases where violence took place because I want to show my strength [P3].

However, the **LOHOD** offered another perspective:

We have some children that come from 'Lusaka' which is a very low-cost area and we understand where they are coming from. On the other hand, we have children that come from very good homes and when they come in here they are completely different than what they are at home where they are like an angel. So, when they come out here they are totally different so I can't even say it is the community because it is individuals and families rather than the community itself [LOHOD].

Parents also mentioned the accessibility of drugs and alcohol in the community to learners:

The school geographical location and the area in which the school is situated, the learners have access to cigarettes and drugs [LP2].

The statements above indicated that more participation is needed from the communities to address the issues and challenges that learners are facing. As one of the educators opined:

I think the best thing would be to rally around and get people from the community together and discuss the issues and the challenges that the learners are experiencing and get to the root of the problem [E6].

5.8.6 The Media

The role the media plays in scholar behaviour was also seen as a concern as some of the learners watched TV programmes with violence. Educators were also concerned about the excitement of learners to record fights as if they were just things to gossip about:

I watch Generations and Uzalo. It's not the best because there is violence [L1].

I watch WWE and I like the way they do the moves. I try the moves on my small sister. I speared her. I think WWE teaches me how to fight and if any stranger comes you are allowed to protect yourself [L2].

The **LOHOD** mentioned further concern around the excitement and eagerness when fights occur which were recorded and uploaded on social media:

There is a lot of excitement and when they go outside just for the sake of fighting. They record it and put it on Facebook. Everything is on Facebook. There is a school chat group that goes viral. So, it goes on to YouTube and everybody looks at it and makes comments about it [LOHOD].

The above statements indicate that the media might have a role in promoting violence among school learners. The statements also point to lack of supervision by parents on what children can watch on TV and their general behaviour around the media.

5.9 Protective Factors

Protective factors include maintaining beliefs, being authentic with self and others, reflecting on development of sense of purpose, and operationalizing optimism.

5.9.1 Maintaining beliefs

Learners mentioned that standing up for their beliefs was a protective factor. Beliefs included religious beliefs as well as self-belief.

I am a Christian. You must not fight if the person is hitting you, you must leave them. You must pray to God to help those people [L1].

I hate it when girls fight, because it is not lady like. In my opinion, if they have a problem they must try and talk it out because a girl must have class and if someone has to come up and fight, she should try and prevent it. Walk away if she is going to say something that is going to aggravate him more and the more, she is going to aggravate him the bigger the problem is going to get and the harder the situation [L3].

I am a person that does not like to hold grudges against anybody. I am a very friendly person [L5].

My son is a fairly straightforward boy. He always stands up for what he believes in and he is always very helpful. He is the youngest of my kids and a little more on the spoilt side, but obviously without having a dad they grew up the hard way. He knows if somebody is in trouble he is not going to stand back and watch, and he will go and help that person, that is his nature [LP6].

These statements show that both religious beliefs as well as self-belief can help to protect learners from engaging in acts of violence.

5.9.2 Being Authentic with self and others

Being authentic with self/others and accepting mistakes of the past was also mentioned as a factor that could protect school learners from acts of violence.

My track record is not so good, I was a naughty child, but I changed. I was disrespectful, arrogant, and experimental. I did try substances [like] marijuana and I kicked my habits. Because of the onetime incident, you are labelled for the rest of your life. There is no satisfaction, there is nothing you can do about it and you can't speak to nobody [L4].

5.9.3 Reflecting on development of sense of purpose

L3 and **L4** in particular commented on the following as a development of a sense of purpose:

I always thought before that if you in a fight you must show them that you can fight, but that is not going to get you anywhere in life as it is just going to spoil your image and it is going to show others that you have no way of behaving. It is going to make you look low in front of others [L3].

As I get older, I tend to be wiser with the words I choose, my decisions, priorities, like how I interact or go through my academic work, my working years, my relationship between my siblings. There is no reason to get into arguments to avoid the whole situation [L4].

The above statements suggest that reflecting on development of sense of purpose can also help school learners to avoid acts of violence.

5.9.4 Operationalising optimism

Optimism about the future was also mentioned as one factor that could deter learners from acts of violence:

I am doing life science and I want to be a doctor or a nurse, so I need to overcome that fear of seeing blood, I can't keep on having that fear inside me because later on in life I want to be able to work with other people, work with seeing blood and everything [L3].

Where I want to see myself is five years from now having a good job, having a good car, living out life, enjoying it with no troubles [L4].

My brother is training to be a policeman. I think it is good and in the near future I want to do something similar so I can catch all the crooks. Violence is bad and has to stop. People are losing their lives and being injured [L5].

5.10 Coping Skills

Literature indicates that factors that enhance resilience include education, gender, non-violent family environment, non-exposure to criminal role-models, substance abstinence, interaction with non-delinquent peers, victimization, neighbourhood factors, and anti-social behaviour. While these external factors are important in enhancing resilience, learners are confronted on a daily basis with testing situations that necessitate some kind of coping skills not to fall victim to acts of criminality and anti-social behaviour. Falling victim to acts of violence, in this instance, means not letting provocation or even abuse get into one's head, and resisting reacting in a negative way to these acts of abuse and victimisation. Results of this study suggest task orientated and emotionally orientated coping skills.

5.10.1 Task oriented coping and resilience skills

The use of electronic devices, specifically by learner participants, was one of the ways of coping mentioned by learners. Learners also mentioned sleeping when confronted by anger, talking to someone, watching TV, listening to music, dancing, playing soccer, sitting quietly, and fasting. This helped to take their minds away from thinking negative thoughts of feeling like victims of criminality, abuse, or feeling vengeful.

I play with my phone and WhatsApp, and watch TV [L1].

The thing that is most instrumental in my day is my phone, because I have pictures, I call people to talk to and I play games [L4].

I watch TV and play games [L12].

When I get angry I sleep [L1].

I sleep because relaxing helps me, and when I wake up I feel different. The problem that I am angry about will come to mind, but it won't come in such a way that I was angry as before [L3].

I speak to my mom, and I can discuss anything and everything with my mom and tell her anything. I feel calm on the inside. I feel like whatever was on my chest is out. So, having my mom to talk too is very good because she is ready to listen and also gives me advice. I can't take advice from people that are my age, they are not going to give me the best advice. I feel I rather take advice from my mom who is bigger than me and wants the right thing from me [L3].

I like listening to rap, it helps me to relax [L7].

I like singing and the songs. I like listening to hip hop, RnB and slow jams. My best artist in rapping is Chris Brown, Usher and R Kelly [L9].

I like dancing to hip hop and African dance, pantsula and kwaito [L9].

I dance to feel good [L11].

I take it out in playing ball. I feel better when I play ball [L5].

I like soccer it takes my mind of things. I play on weekends and one day during the week [L6].

I like to play soccer [L7].

I will try my best to control my temper and walk away from the problem and I will sit in the corner and try to calm myself down. I also play soccer [L11].

When I feel stressed, I smoke a cigarette. It calms me down. [L4].

When I get angry, I don't eat food for one day. In the morning when I wake up, I take my food [L1].

The above statements show that to cope, learners either found something to watch, found something physical to do, found something spiritual to do, or pondered the problem in quiet anger. Ways of coping were different.

5.10.2 Emotionally Orientated Coping and Resilience Skills

Emotionally oriented skills of coping included prayer, keeping to oneself, engaging with family, and seeking professional help.

After the fight with my friend, I prayed for him and for God to help me not fight with others [L1].

When I get angry, I can just start praying in my mind and everything is calm and I feel peace. I can't even see blood I get very emotional. I can't see other people fight because I can start crying [L3].

I prefer keeping things to myself. I'm not an outspoken person [L11].

Family is there to help; it's just up and down for me [L12].

At that stage he was very young, and you know kids they get into fights and arguments but as he got older, I did take him for counselling. He has been to the psychologist and for occupational therapy [LP2].

Of these coping mechanisms, the family can be singled out as a factor that can be manipulated to contribute more to the learners' ability to cope and indeed to steer them away from acts of violence.

L3 and **L8** in particular interestingly shared that their temperament was a challenge and they found it difficult to control their anger

I can be open and upright when it comes to certain stuff. There are a lot of things I am very emotional about and I can fight a lot. I don't mean it as in hitting. I do not like someone to aggravate me. I can get to a point where I can get pissed off completely. I get angry fast and cannot control myself most of the time [L3].

I'm a much-organised person. I'm not that talkative. I'm confident and sometimes very short-tempered, extremely short-tempered, cannot control my anger [L8].

5.11 Summary of interview and focus group results

According to the interview and focus group results, violence at schools was experienced among peers, between educators and learners, between learners and outsiders, and between educators and outsiders. This violence was not confined to school premises but continued in an even worse form outside the school premises. This violence took the form of physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse. The dominant themes on sources of violence among learners were that it was sparked by boyfriend-girlfriend issues and social class differentials. The results also indicated that learners had little respect for educators and sometimes even turned violent against them. Likewise, educators also had little respect for themselves and the learners. The results indicated further that educators were also to blame for the escalating violence at the school. Educators were alleged to have abused learners verbally, emotionally, and physically.

Other major themes that emerged were the influences of the violent community of Chatsworth, and parents not playing their role to curb violence, but instead taking to the defence of their children.

The most recurring theme on the effects of the family environment was that of a negative family environment with learners coming from families that swore and shouted at them, parents who became physical against them, parents who had separated, families with financial problems, and alcohol and drug abuse at home. On the subject of disciplinary measures taken by their parents, learners mentioned that some of the measures that their parents took were drastic and left them angry.

The internal and external characteristics of resilience included a commitment to learning, positive values, social competency, positive identity, positive self-esteem and a sense of purpose. Participants felt that there was lack of support from parents and the Department of Basic Education. In particular, they mentioned that the school needed a professional person trained to deal with school violence. This was the recurring theme throughout the responses.

5.12 Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to followed up learners as well as resilience

There was a further analysis of eight of the learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. These were learners from the quantitative study. Some of these learners happened to form, though not by design, part of those that were included in the qualitative study.

5.12.1 L1 Further analysis

Risk factors for L1 were reported to be that not everyone in the household was employed and the family lived in informal housing structure. L1 was not an orphan, he lived with his parents and was not abused at home. L1 said that he fought a lot at school and reported further risks in that there was insufficient food at home, and there were many stressors such as bad treatment at home and bad life experiences. He had

repeated a grade. He saw a lot of violence in the community, and his parents fought a lot.

With L1 it was mostly the fighting that he saw at home that seemed to be affecting him.

I saw a lot of fighting where I stay. Last year my father was fighting with his sister and they poked each other with a cup. They were sitting in the room and I don't know what happened we were sitting in our room eating breakfast and I heard the noise, they were fighting. The two brothers held them, and my father got hurt on his forehead. I cried and I told them to keep quiet. It was bad and there was blood [L1].

Apart from this the learner also reported 'bad treatment' at home as exemplified by the following statement:

It was so bad in my home. If I didn't do the thing right my father will say, "Go and do the thing right". When he shouts, I get angry [L1].

The learner, however, indicated some elements of potential resiliency.

I want to study harder [L1].

After the fight with my friend, I prayed for him and for God to help me not fight with others [L1].

These results indicate that L1 was exposed to most of the systemic and individual risk factors relevant to school learners at township schools where the home environment as well as the community environment are not inviting to non-violent behaviour. The fact that this learner reported that he fought a lot at school supports the theory that learners exposed to systemic and individual risk factors as listed in the R-MATS questionnaire lead to violent learner behaviour.

Regarding self-belief, L1 reported that it was true all the time that he did his best to find the right answer to a problem, true all the time that he was in control of what happened

to him, true most of the time that his future and success depended on his hard work, true all the time that he believed he had good talents, true most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do his best in his work, true most of the time that he believed he was able to do better, true all the time that he believed that one day things will get better for him, true all the time that he believed that his future was in his hands and that nobody could take that away from him, and untrue all the time that he was a tough person.

These results indicate that despite the many risk factors that the learner was exposed to at home and in the community, there was a strong self-belief inside him. The learner responded positively to most of the items of self-belief. This indicates that there is potential for the learner to become resilient, thus supporting the theory that resilience can be learned.

The major problem indicated by this learner was the home environment. The learner indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he had an adult at home that he could talk to, and untrue most of the time that he felt safe and loved at home. These were exemplified by the statements above regarding the home environment. There seems to be an anger in the learner that stemmed from his home environment that manifests in the violent behaviour. Possible interventions with such a learner could include counselling and providing an inviting school environment.

Regarding the school environment, L1 indicated untrue most of the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work better, untrue most of the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him and he could talk to, untrue most of the time that there was at least one teacher that he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, untrue most of the time that his teachers made him see that he was good with his work and could do well in class, untrue all the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and to think of his bright future, and untrue most of the time that teachers explained a lot in class, giving extra examples.

This learner displayed risk factors of being isolated and living in a hostile environment, both at home and at the school. There was no encouragement from the teachers, thus creating a negative school environment which left the learner feeling that no one cared about him. From the result that this learner reported that he fought a lot at school, it can be deduced that the learner was angry inside. The problem with schools, which stems from human nature, is that they sometimes tend to show love to those learners who are well-behaved and do well in their schoolwork without taking into cognisance the fact that while well-behaved and hard-working learners should be encouraged to keep up the good work, it is those learners such as L1 who need more attention and more encouragement. Reasons for this behaviour could be because teachers are not equipped to deal with violent learners and are also not equipped to identify problems behind the violent behaviours of learners as well as how to deal with them.

Regarding commitment to learning, L1 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, but true most of the time that doing well at school was very important to him. The learner further indicated that it was true most of the time that he did not like being absent from school and hated to miss the teaching. However, the learner indicated that it was untrue most of the time that even when he did not understand in class, he did not give up trying. This learner indicated a positive attitude towards school but lack of commitment to schoolwork. However, it could be not so much lack of commitment to schoolwork as the home environment and the school environment, which were not conducive to learning.

Regarding problem-solving, the learner indicated that it was untrue most of the time that even when problems were too much he did not give up trying to make it work, but indicated that it was true most of the time that he used different ways to work out a difficult problem. This learner indicates that he did not give up trying, thus corroborating the reported results of strong self-belief.

Lastly, this learner reported that it was untrue all the time that he had a good person whose behaviour was an example to him.

In summary, it is evident that L1 was exposed to most of the systemic and individual risk factors relevant to school learners at township schools and this could be the reason why he fought a lot at school. Results also show while the learner had self-belief and regarded school as important in his life, the home environment, school environment, and community environment were not supportive. The learner also mentioned that there is no role model in his life whose behaviour was an example to him. These results indicate that some sort of intervention is needed to make this learner cope with the home environment and also to make the school environment supportive.

5.12.2 L2 Further analysis

L2 lived in a formal housing structure, was not an orphan, was not abused at home, and had not repeated a grade. The risk factors for L2 were reported to be that not everyone in the household was employed, he did not live with his parents, his parents fought a lot, he fought a lot at school, there was insufficient food at home, there were many stressors, there was bad treatment at home, there were bad life experiences, and he saw a lot of violence in the community.

Regarding self-belief, L2 mentioned that it was untrue all the time that he did his best to find the right answer to a problem, and true all the time that he was in control of what happened to him. Further, the learner indicated true most of the time that his future and success depended on his hard work, true most of the time that he believed that he had good talents, untrue most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do the best in his work, true most of the time that he believed that he was able to do better, true most of the time that he believed that one day things would get better for him, true most of the time that he believed that his future was in his hands and that nobody could take that away from him, and true most of the time that he was a tough person.

Like L1, this learner also displayed most of the elements of being a self-believer. The only major differences were that L2 reported that it was untrue all the time that he did

his best to find the right answer to a problem, untrue most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do the best in his work, and true most of the time that he was a tough person. It is not clear that these differences could be attributed to the differences in the risk factors.

Regarding home environment support, L2 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that he had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, and untrue most of the time that he felt loved at home. These results are also similar to those of L1 and support the theory that learners who come from negative home environments are likely to engage in violent behaviour.

Regarding the school environment support L2 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work, untrue most of the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him and he could talk to, untrue all the time that there was at least one teacher that he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, true most of the time that his teachers made him see that he was good with his work and that he could do well in class, untrue most of the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and to think of his bright future, and untrue most of the time that his teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples.

Apart from the fact that L2 reported that it was true most of the time that his teachers made him see that he was good with his work and that he could do well in class, the results were similar to those of L1. The reason for this could be that L2 was a brighter scholar than L1, as noted that while L1 had repeated a grade, L2 had not. The same reasons mentioned about the lack of school environment support apply to L2.

Regarding attitudes towards problem-solving, L2 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that even when problems were just too much he did not give up trying to make it work, and that it was true most of the time that he used different ways to work out a difficult problem. These results are similar to those of L1, indicating that both learners tried most of the time to use different ways to work out a difficult problem.

On commitment to learning, L2 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, that it was untrue most of the time that doing well at school was very important to him, untrue most of the time that he did not like being absent from school as he hated to miss the teaching, and untrue most of the time that even when he did not understand in class he did not give up trying. These results differed from those of L1 in that L1 reported making sure he did class work and homework and he did not like being absent from school. L2 showed little concern for school. It is possible that the risk factors affected the two learners differently. For instance, as compared to L1 who reported seeing fights at home as well as being shouted at, L2 reported severe punishment at home:

When the school called and told my parents about me using the swear word on an educator, they chased me out of the house for one night. I stayed in the yard; I slept the whole night outside with no food nothing. I went back inside at 5 o'clock the next morning. My punishment from my parents was to clean the yard and house [L2].

The learner also mentioned learning how to fight from watching TV.

I watch WWE, I like the way they do the moves. I try the moves on my small sister. I speared her. I think WWE teaches me how to fight and if any stranger comes you are allowed to protect yourself [L2].

Regarding presence of a role model in his life, L2 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that he knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to him. L1 also did not have a role model to emulate, which suggests that the absence of role models in the learners' lives was also a risk factor for violent behaviour.

Results of L1 and L2 were similar as both learners were exposed to most of the systemic and individual risk factors relevant to school learners at township schools, and this could be the reason why they fought a lot at school. The school environment was also negative for both learners. The fact that both these learners fight a lot at

school supports the theory that learners exposed to risk factors as outlined in the R-MATS questionnaire are likely to engage in violent behaviour.

5.12.3 L3 Further analysis

L3 was female while L1 and L2 were male. She lived in a formal housing structure and she was not an orphan. There was sufficient food at home. She was not abused or treated badly at home, and her parents did not fight a lot. Regarding systemic and individual risk factors L3 mentioned that not everyone in the household was employed, her parents were divorced, she fought a lot at school, she had many stressors, she was not living with her parents, she had had bad life experiences, she had repeated a grade, and she saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community,

Results of L3 are different from those of L1 and L2 in that L3 was not treated badly at home, there was sufficient food, and everyone in the household was employed. These results suggest that L3 was driven to violence for different reasons to those of L1 and L2, probably because her parents were divorced. The second reason could be that L3 was in a higher grade, grade 10 than L1 and L2 who were both in grade 8. The learner mentioned that she gets angry easily.

I get angry fast and cannot control myself most of the time [L3].

Regarding self-belief, L3 mentioned that it was true all the time that she did her best to find the right answer to a problem, that it was true all the time that she was in control of what happened to her, that it was true all the time that her future and success depended on her hard work, that it was true all the time that she believed that she had good talents, that it was untrue most of the time that she did not allow people to stop her from trying to do the best in her work, that it was true most of the time that she believed that she was able to do better, that it was true all the time that she believed that one day things will get better for her, that it was true all the time that her future was in her hands and nobody could take that away from her, and that it was true all the time that she believed she was a tough person. This learner showed more self-belief than L1 and L2, yet she still reported that she fought a lot at school.

Regarding the home environment, L3 mentioned that it was true all the time that she had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, and that it was true all the time that she felt safe and loved at home and they wanted to know if she was ok. These results are different from those of L1 and L2 who both reported that it was untrue most of the time that they had someone to talk to at home who listened to them or that they felt safe and loved at home. It seems, therefore, that the home environment was not a negative one for L3 and was not a factor for violent behaviour.

With respect to the school support environment, the learner reported that it was untrue most of the time that her teacher worked hard to help her understand her work better, that it was untrue all the time that she knew someone at school who cared about her and she could talk to, that it was untrue all the time that there was at least one teacher that she could talk to who listened to her and encouraged her to do her best, that it was untrue most of the time that her teachers made her see that she was good with her work and that she could do well in class, that it was untrue most of the time that her teachers made her aim high and think of her bright future, and that it was untrue most of the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. This learner expressed a more negative attitude towards school environment support than L1 and L2. Among the incidents mentioned by the learner was when the teacher squashed her work and threw it away.

When an educator squashed my work, I was so irritated I could have throttled her and screamed at her, banging the table for her to give my work back. I would have told her she was being very hard on me [L3]

Despite the negative environment as well as the fact that she fought a lot, the learner still expressed some qualities of resilience:

I can just picture God in front of me, and with everything that I do. Prayer comes in everyday for anything that comes my way [L3].

Regarding tenacity in problem-solving, the learner indicated that it was untrue most of the time that even when problems were just too much she did not give up trying to

make it work, and that it was true most of the time that she used different ways to work out a difficult problem. These results are similar to those of L1 and L2. Even though they tended to give up when problems were too much, they also tried different ways of solving problems.

Regarding commitment to learning, L3 mentioned that it was untrue most of the time that she made sure that she did her class work and homework, that it was true most of the time that doing well at school was very important to her, that it was untrue all the time that she did not like being absent from school and hated to miss the teaching, and that it was true all the time that even when she did not understand in class she did not give up trying. This learner displays elements of commitment to learning and elements of lack of commitment. This is probably because of the negative school environment support.

Regarding a role model in her life, the learner indicated that she knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to her. This person was probably her mother as exemplified by the following statement:

I speak to my mum, and I can discuss anything and everything with my mom and tell her anything. I feel calm on the inside I feel like whatever was on my chest is out. So having my mom to talk too is very good because she is ready to listen and also give me advice. I can't take advice from people that are my age, they are not going to give me the best advice. I feel I'd rather take advice from my mom who is bigger than me and wants the right thing from me [L3].

Results of L3 indicate that even though she reported that she fought a lot at school she was not exposed to most of the risk factors for violent behaviour at home. However, the school environment was not supportive to her. However, the learner indicated self-belief and that she had a role model in her life. These results suggest that the learner was led to violence because of the divorce of her mother and a negative school environment.

5.12.4 L6 Further analysis

L6 was a male in grade 11. He lived in a formal housing structure, and there was sufficient food at home. He was not an orphan. He was living with parents and he was not abused or treated badly at home. On systemic and individual risk factors, the learner reported that not everyone in his household was employed, that he fought a lot at school, that he had many stressors, that he had had bad life experiences, that he had repeated a grade, that he saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community, and that parents fought a lot. Even though this learner did not report many of the risk factors for violent behaviour, he reported that he fought a lot at school. The reason for this could be because his parents fight a lot at home. The learner expressed worry about his behaviour as follows:

Sometimes I worry about my behaviour, I am naughty, and I join the wrong people and get into trouble by talking in class and not going to class sometimes, and not listening to the teacher when they are giving homework [L6].

Regarding self-belief, L6 reported that it was true most of the time that he did his best to find the right answer to a problem, that it was true all the time that he was in control of what happened in his life, that it was true all the time that his future and success depended on his hard work, that it was true all the time that he believed that he had good talents, that it was true all the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do his best in his work, that it was true all the time that he believed that he could do better, that it was true all the time that he believed that one day things would get better for him, that it was true all the time that his future was in his hands and nobody could take that away from him, and that it was true all the time that he was a tough person. This learner expressed a high degree of self-belief, indicating that self-belief was not a factor responsible for his violent behaviour.

Regarding home environment support, the learner indicated that it was true most of the time that he had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, and that it was untrue most of the time that he felt safe and loved at home and that they wanted to

know if he was okay. These results indicate that even though the learner was not abused at home and was not treated badly, most of the time he did not feel safe and loved. The reason for this could be the fighting that happened between his parents or caregivers.

Regarding the school environment support, L6 indicated that it was true all the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work better, that it was untrue all the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him and he could talk to, that it was untrue all the time that there was at least one teacher that he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, that it was untrue most of the time that his teacher made him see that he was good with his work and he could do well in class, that it was untrue most of the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and think of his bright future, and that it was true all the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. These results indicate that while the learner expressed the good work of teachers in teaching, most of the time they did not give support. Again, these results suggest that teachers are not equipped to deal with learners who display a need for support, and even do not know how to identify them. Lack of educator support could therefore be a factor that leads to violent behaviour of learners.

Regarding learner's tenacity in problem-solving, L6 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that even when his problems were just too much he did not give up trying to make it work, and that it was true all the time that he used different ways to work out a difficult problem.

Regarding commitment to learning, L6 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, that it was untrue most of the time that doing well was very important to him, that it was untrue most of the time that he did not like being absent from school and that he hated missing the teaching, and that it was untrue most of the time that even when he did not understand in class he did not give up trying. These results indicate lack of commitment by the learner to learning. The fighting between his parents at home, feeling unsafe and unloved at

home, as well as the negative school environment support could be responsible for the learner's violent behaviour.

The learner also indicated that it was true all the time that he knew a good person whose behaviour was a good example to him. It is unlikely that this role model was from home because of the fighting that took place there. The learner reported that one of his coping methods was to play soccer.

I like soccer. It takes my mind of things. I play on weekends and one day during the week [L6].

Results of L6 indicate that while he was not exposed to many of the risk factors for violent behaviour, his parents fought a lot at home. The learner also indicated a negative home environment support where he did not feel safe and loved. The school environment support was also lacking, with teachers who did not care. He was also not committed to learning. Results suggest that these factors could be responsible for the learner's violent behaviour. However, the learner reported positive self-belief, indicating that it was possible to transform him to be a better person.

5.12.5 L7 Further analysis

L7 was a male in grade 10. While there was sufficient food at home, he was not abused at home, and he had not repeated a grade, results of the risk factors for violent behaviour indicated that not everyone in the household was employed, that he lived in an informal housing structure, that he was an orphan, that he fought a lot at school, that he had many stressors, that he had had bad treatment at home, that he had had bad life experiences, and that he saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. Again, the major risk factors for violent behaviour were many stressors, bad treatment at home, bad life experiences, and witnessing a lot of violent behaviour in the Chatsworth community.

Regarding self-belief, L7 indicated that it was true all the time that he did his best to find an answer to a problem, that it was true all the time that he was in control of what happened to him, that it was true most of the time that his future depended on his

hard work, that it was true most of the time that he believed that he had good talents, that it was untrue most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from doing his best in his work, that it was true all the time that he believed that he could do better, that it was true all the time that he believed that one day things would be better for him, that it was true all the time that he believed that his future was in his hands and nobody could take that away from him, and that it was true all the time that he was a tough person. Again, these results indicate that even though this learner reported that he fought a lot at school, he had self-belief. The home environment seemed to be the major contributing factor to the learner's violent behaviour.

Regarding the home environment support, L7 reported that it was untrue most of the time that he had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, and that it was untrue most of the time that he felt safe and loved at home. These results seem to confirm the suggestion that lack of home environment support is responsible for the learner's violent behaviour.

Regarding the school environment support, L7 reported that it was untrue most of the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work better, that it was untrue all the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him that he could talk to, that it was untrue most of the time that there was at least one teacher that he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, that it was true most of the time that his teacher made him see that he was good with his work and could do well in class, that it was true all the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and to think of his bright future, and that it was untrue most of the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. This learner expressed some positive elements of teacher support, such as making him see that that he was good with his work and could do well in class, and that his teachers supported him to aim high and think of his future. However, the school environment support was lacking in many aspects.

Regarding learner's tenacity in problem-solving, L7 reported that it was untrue that even when his problems were too much he did not give up trying to make it work, and

that it was true all the time that he used different ways to work out a difficult problem. These results are similar to those of L1, L2, and L3.

Regarding commitment to learning, L7 indicated that it was true all the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, that it was true all the time that doing well at school was very important to him, that it was untrue most of the time that he did not like being absent from school and hated to miss teaching, and that it was true all the time that even when he did not understand in class he did not give up trying.

L7 reported that it was true all the time that he knew a good person whose behaviour was a good example to him. The learner reported that his way of coping was by playing soccer, suggesting that his role model was a soccer personality.

These results indicate that the major risk factors for violent behaviour were many stressors, bad treatment at home, bad life experiences, and witnessing a lot of violent behaviour in the Chatsworth community. While there were elements of teacher support, the school environment was overall not supportive. The learner also expressed positive self-belief and a good degree of commitment to learning as well as acknowledging a positive role model in his life. These results indicate that the learner possessed elements of resilience that could be used to transform the learner into a better and non-violent person.

5.12.6 L8 Further analysis

L8 was a female in grade 11. While she did not get bad treatment at home, she was not abused at home, and she had not repeated a grade, results of the risk factors for violent behaviour indicated that not everybody in the household was employed, the learner lived in an informal housing structure, she was an orphan, she fought a lot at school, there was insufficient food at home, she had a lot of stressors, she was not living with parents, she had had bad life experiences, and she saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. Risk factors that can be attributed to the learner's violent behaviour include insufficient food at home, many stressors, and witnessing a lot of

violence in the Chatsworth community. The learner indicated that she could not control her temper.

I'm a much-organised person. I'm not that talkative. I'm confident and sometimes very short tempered, extremely short tempered, cannot control my anger [L8].

Regarding self-belief, the learner indicated that it was true most of the time that she did her best to find the right answer to a problem, that it was true most of the time that she was in control of what happened to her, that it was true most of the time that her future and success depended on her hard work, that it was true all the time that she believed that she had good talents, that it was true all the time that she did not allow people to stop her from trying to be the best in her work, that it was true all the time that she believed that she could do better, that it was true most of the time that she believed that things would one day be better for her, that it was true all the time that her future was in her hands and nobody could take that away from her, and that it was true all the time that she was a tough person. These results indicate that despite reporting that she fought a lot at school, L8 had a lot of self-belief. These results suggest that the learner could be transformed into a better and non-violent person because of the positive self-belief.

Regarding the home environment support, L8 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that she had an adult that she could talk to at home who listened all the time, but reported that it was true most of the time that she felt safe and loved at home. The major factor that led to violent behaviour regarding the home environment support, therefore, could be the fact that the learner did not have an adult at home that she could talk to and who listened all the time.

Regarding the school environment support, L8 reported that it was true most of the time that her teacher worked hard to help her understand her work better, that it was untrue most of the time that she knew someone at school who cared about her and she could talk to, that it was untrue most of the time that there was a teacher that she could talk to who listened to her and encouraged her to do her best, that it was untrue most

of the time that her teacher made her see that she was good with her work and she could do well in class, that it was untrue most of the time that her teachers supported her to aim high and to think of her bright future, and that it was true all the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. Again, these results indicate that while teachers seemed to do a good job of teaching they did not give enough support to learners, probably for the same reason that they tended to notice and favour learners who were not violent and performed well in their school work, without taking into cognisance the fact that it is those learners who display violent behaviour and do not perform well in their school work that need them the most.

On tenacity in problem-solving, L8 reported that it was true all the time that even when problems were just too much she did not give up trying to make it work, and that it was true most of the time that she used different ways of working out a difficult problem. This learner displayed good tenacity in problem-solving.

On learner's commitment to learning, L8 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that she made sure that she did her class work and homework, that it was true most of the time that doing well at school was very important to her, that it was untrue most of the time that she did not like being absent from school and hated to miss teaching, and that it was it was untrue most of the time that even when she did not understand in class she did not give up trying. These results indicate that even though doing well at school was very important to the learner, overall, she was not committed to learning. This was probably because of the negative school environment support as well as the systemic risk factors that the learner was exposed to.

Regarding a role model in her life, L8 mentioned that it was true most of the time that she knew a good person whose behaviour was a good example to her. Lack of a role model, therefore, was not a factor leading to violent behaviour for the learner.

Overall these results indicate that the risk factors that can be attributed to the learner's violent behaviour include insufficient food at home, many stressors, and witnessing a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. Results also indicate that the learner did not have an adult that she could talk to who listened, that the school environment

support was lacking, and that the learner was not committed to learning. However, the learner reported self-belief and a role model in her life whose behaviour was a good example to her.

5.12.7 L9 Further analysis

L9 was a male in grade 10. L9 had sufficient food at home, was not abused at home, and did not experience bad treatment at home. Results on systemic and individual risk factors for violent behaviour indicated that not everyone in the household was employed, the learner did not live in a formal housing structure, was an orphan, fought a lot at school, had many stressors, did not live with parents, had had bad life experiences, had repeated a grade, and had witnessed a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. According to these results, risk factors that can be attributed to the learner's violent behaviour include being an orphan, many stressors, bad life experiences, and witnessing a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community.

Regarding self-belief, L9 indicated that it was true all the time that he did his best to find the right answer to a problem, that it was untrue most of the time that he was in control of what happened to him, that it was true all the time that his future depended on his hard work, that it was true that he believed he had good talents, that it was true most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do the best in his work, that it was true all the time that he believed that he could do better, that it was true all the time that he believed that one day things would get better for him, that it was true all the time that his future was in his hands and nobody could take that away from him, and that it was true all the time that he was a tough person. Overall, this learner indicated that he had self-belief, even though he reported that it was untrue most of the time that he was in control of what happened to him. Lack of self-belief, therefore, cannot be regarded as a factor leading to the learner's violent behaviour.

On the home environment support, the learner reported that it was true most of the time that he had an adult at home who listened all the time, and that it was true all the time that he felt safe and loved at home.

Regarding school environment support, the learner indicated that it was true most of the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work better, that it was untrue all the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him and he could talk to, that it was true all the time that he knew one teacher that he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, that it was true all the time that his teachers made him see that he was good with his work and could do well in class, that it was true all the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and to think of his bright future, and that it was true most of the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. Contrary to the results of other learners who indicated that the school environment was not supportive, this learner reported a supportive school environment. In the case of this learner, therefore, the school environment cannot be regarded as a factor leading to violent behaviour.

On school learners' tenacity in problem-solving, L9 reported that it was untrue most of the time that even when problems were too much he did not give up trying to make it work, but that it was true most of the time that he used different ways to work out a difficult problem. These results indicate that even though the learner tended to give up when problems were too much, he was able to use different ways of solving a difficult problem.

Regarding commitment to learning, L9 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, that it was true all the time that doing well at school was very important to him, that it was true all the time that he did not like being absent from school and hated to miss the teaching, and that it was true most of the time that even when he did not understand in class he never gave up trying. These results indicate that the learner was committed to learning.

Regarding a role model, L9 reported that it was true all the time that he knew a good person whose behaviour was an example to him. This learner also expressed respect for family and friends as follows:

I like spending time with my family and friends and I really love rapping, singing and dancing and my school knows that. It is the home you are

coming from. If you respect yourself and if you respect your parents and don't back chat with them then you will do the same in the school with your fellow learners and educators [L9].

It is not clear why this learner reported that he fought a lot at school. The learner did not have most of the risk factors mentioned by those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. The learner also reported positive self-image, a good home environment, a good school environment, good commitment to learning, and the existence of a role model in his life.

5.12.8 L10 Further analysis

L10 was a male in grade 10. L10 reported that he was not an orphan, that there was sufficient food at home, he was not abused at home and he did not get bad treatment at home, and that his parents did not fight a lot. According to results of systemic and individual risk factors for violent behaviour, L10 reported that not everybody in the household was employed, that he lived in an informal housing structure, that he fought a lot at school, that he had many stressors, that he was not living with parents, that he had had bad life experiences, that he had repeated a grade, and that he saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. These results suggest that the risk factors leading to the learner's violent behaviour included many stressors, that he was not living with parents, that he had had bad life experiences, and that he saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. Regarding the time when he was still living with parents, the learner recalled as follows:

Last year I thought I was going to fail because my mother got a second husband, so they were fighting every day, we did not eat well and I very rarely went to school [L10].

Regarding self-belief, the learner indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he did his best to find the right answer to a problem, that it was untrue most of the time that he was in control of what happened to him, that it was true all the time that his future and success depended on his hard work, that it was true all the time that he

believed that he had good talents, that it was untrue most of the time that he did not allow people to stop him from trying to do his best in his work, that it was true all the time that he believed that he could do better, that it was true all the time that he believed one day things would get better for him, that it was true all the time that his future was in his hands and nobody could take that away from him, and that it was untrue most of the time that he believed he was a tough person. While this learner indicated some elements of lack of self-belief, he also indicated many elements indicating that he had self-belief. It cannot be concluded from these results that lack of self-belief was responsible for the learner's violent behaviour.

On the home environment support, the learner indicated that it was true most of the time that he had an adult to talk to at home who listened all the time, and that it was true all the time that he felt safe and loved at home. These results indicate that the learner had good home environment support, meaning that the home environment support could not be blamed for the learner's violent behaviour.

Regarding school environment support the learner indicated that it was true all the time that his teacher worked hard to help him understand his work better, that it was true most of the time that he knew someone at school who cared about him that he could talk to, that it was untrue all the time that he knew at least one teacher he could talk to who listened to him and encouraged him to do his best, that it was untrue most of the time that his teachers made him see that he was good with his work and could do well in class, that it was untrue most of the time that his teachers supported him to aim high and to think of his bright future, and that it was untrue all the time that teachers explained a lot in class and gave extra examples. According to these results, the only good thing that the learner mentioned about the teachers was that they worked hard to help him understand his work better. Apart from that the learner perceived school environment support negatively. This could be one of the reasons why the learner fought a lot at school.

On tenacity in problem-solving, L10 reported that it was true all the time that even when problems were just too much, he did not give up trying to make it work. While the

learner did not respond on whether he used different ways to work out a difficult problem, this result indicates that the learner was a good problem-solver.

Regarding commitment to learning, L10 indicated that it was untrue most of the time that he made sure that he did his class work and homework, that it was untrue all the time that doing well was important to him, that it was untrue most of the time that he did not like being absent from school and hated to miss the teaching, and that it was true all the time that even when he did not understand in class he did not give up trying. Apart from not giving up trying when he did not understand in class, this learner showed no commitment to learning. The reason for this could be the perceived lack of school environment support.

On the role model, the learner indicated that it was true all the time that he knew a good person whose behaviour was a good example to him. This role model was probably the learner's uncle, as indicated by the following statement:

I like playing soccer. I play for a soccer club but sometimes my uncle grounds me towards exam time so I can pay attention to education
[L10].

Overall, these results indicate that the risk factors leading to the learner's violent behaviour included many stressors, that he was not living with parents, that he had had bad life experiences, and that he saw a lot of violence in the Chatsworth community. The learner indicated a few elements of lack of self-belief, but many elements indicating that he also had self-belief. The learner also indicated a positive home environment support but indicated that the school environment was not so supportive. The learner also indicated lack of commitment to learning despite having an uncle who tried to make sure that he did his schoolwork.

5.12.9 Summary results for learners who were analysed further

In this section, eight of the 15 learners who reported that they fought a lot at school were analysed further to get a clearer perspective of their risk and resilience characteristics. All the respondents mentioned that not everyone in the household was

employed, that they had many stressors, and that they had had bad life experiences. The other risk factors were not living with parents (6), having repeated a grade (5), parents fought a lot (4), informal housing structure (4), orphan (3), bad treatment at home (3), and insufficient food at home (2). All the learners reported that they were not abused at home. Most of these learners reported positive self-belief and showed commitment to learning.

Resilience factors considered were the home environment support, school environment support, and the community environment. Regarding home environment support, some learners reported that it was untrue most of the time that they had an adult at home that they could talk to and also that they did not feel safe and loved at home. Most of the learners also reported that the school environment support was lacking, with these learners not getting any attention or encouragement from their educators. This, it has been suggested, is because educators tend to show attention to those learners who are well behaved and do well in their schoolwork and ignore problem learners. It has also been suggested that the reason for this could be because teachers are not equipped to deal with violent learners and are also not equipped to identify problems behind the violent behaviours of learners, as well as how to deal with these problems.

5.13 Chapter Summary

The questionnaire component of this study investigated systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the township school. These were measured on 13 items. The questionnaire also investigated resiliency at the township school. This was measured on 24 items which were classified into 6 categories, namely, self-belief, home environment support, school environment support, tenacity in problem-solving, role model in school learner's life, and attitudes towards school. The interviews and focus group continued from the questionnaire part of the study to investigate the nature of school violence, internal characteristics that contribute to resilience of school learners, external characteristics that contribute to resilience of school learners, and coping skills.

Both approaches were in agreement about the violence taking place in the Chatsworth community. Learners spoke of shootings and stabbings for minor items such as cell phones and minor arguments such as road rage. Both studies were also in agreement regarding lack of home support, with learners reporting bad treatment at home such as excessive punishment and having no-one to talk to at home. Learners also reported fights in the home environment. Perhaps the major convergence between the two studies was on the school environment support with learners reporting poor support. Learners reported abuse at the hands of educators, but it was not only the fault of educators as they also experienced a lot of abuse from the learners.

The next chapter discusses these findings in line with the objectives and literature reviewed in the study.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented findings from the questionnaire component of the research as well as the interviews and focus group discussion. This chapter discusses these findings. Results of this study will be discussed within the framework of the resiliency wheel theory. First, the nature of school violence will be discussed, followed by internal characteristics of resilient school learners, then the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners, and finally the skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence.

6.2 Systemic and individual risk factors relevant to learners at the Chatsworth school

Risk factors are those specific characteristics of individuals, their communities as well as families that can increase the likelihood of a young child turning violent (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007:11). Systemic and individual risk factors were measured using the eleven items in the R-MATS questionnaire. In this study an additional two items were added to the eleven items used to measure risk factors, namely, 'I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community' and 'Parents fight a lot'. 86.5 % of the learners reported that they saw a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community. This is typical of communities with poor socio-economic backgrounds. Only 13.5 % reported that parents fought a lot. The other major risk factors identified were many stressors (67.3%) and bad life experiences (53.9%). Only 28.8 % of the learners reported that they fought a lot at school. These results were contrary to those of the study by Mampane (2012) in which 94 % of the learners reported that they fought a lot at school.

Regarding abuse and bad treatment at home, Mampane's (2012) study reported that 92 % of the learners were abused at home, and 85 % reported bad treatment at home.

This was also contrary to findings of this study, in which only 7.7 % reported abuse at home and 17.3 % reported bad treatment at home. Results also differed on whether the learner had had bad life experiences, with the study by Mampane (2012) reporting that only 10 % of the learners had had bad life experiences while in this study it was 53.9 %. Results more or less corroborated, however, on 'many stressors' where 67.3 % of respondents in this study reported 'many stressors' and the study by Mampane reported 84 %.

It is also interesting to notice that of those learners that reported that they fought a lot at school in this study, all of them reported that they saw a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community. It is also interesting to note that they were all not abused at home. The two prominent risk factors in this study were, therefore, 'many stressors' and 'I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community'. The conclusion drawn from this discussion is that the home situation or treatment at home were not major risk factors, but that stress was a risk factor.

6.3 Nature of school violence

In this study the nature of violence was divided into four themes, namely, the general understanding of violence at the school, personal involvement with peers, learner and educator encounters, and spread of violence beyond school premises. These themes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.3.1 General understanding of violence at the school

The World Health Organisation (2002:5) defined violence as, "...a deliberate use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation." This definition of violence fits the violence that has been experienced at the township school under study. Subthemes emerging under the nature of school violence at the school were physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse among peers (personal

involvement with peers) and between educators and learners (learner and educator encounters).

According to Burton (2008), physical assault ranges from mild assault to severe assault, whereby learners sometimes ended up in hospital and even dead. Studies on physical violence at schools have indicated that the extent of physical violence at schools varies. Obvious forms of violence tend to be more present in township schools than in private schools where there are less obvious forms such as hazing and initiation (Burton, 2008). Gangsterism is also common in township schools and gangsters terrorise and victimise learners (School based violence report, 2011). As results indicated, physical assault at schools was not gender specific or educator-learner specific. These results are in line with other studies which have been conducted on violence in schools. It involves both males and females (Brown & Tappan, 2008). The National School Violence Study of 2007 found that in more than nine out of ten cases of school-based violence the perpetrator was a fellow student. Regarding physical assault perpetrated by educators, the study found that there were incidences where educators assaulted learners (Burton, 2008). There were also reports of violence perpetrated by learners against teachers.

Wallen & Rubin (2002) defined bullying as intimidating or frightening treatment that is inflicted on another learner by another learner or educator. Results of this study indicated that bullying took place at the school under study where learners verbally abused and bullied other learners, teasing them, mocking them, and ridiculing them.

In order to get a better understanding of violence in township schools it is important to take into consideration the historical context of youth violence in South Africa. For many years, the South African youth have been involved in criminal, political as well as gang-related violence (Ward, Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2012). This can be viewed largely to be a result of socio-economic factors including unemployment and deep long-term poverty within the context of significant economic inequality. Results of this study indicated that the black, Indian and coloured communities in which the children lived had of high levels of violence, easy access to drugs, and easy access to alcohol.

An educator mentioned that some of the children came from homes where there was a lot of alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and physical abuse and that this made it difficult for parents to try to teach their children otherwise as they were learning from them. A parent also mentioned that access to drugs and cigarettes in the school vicinity was also a problem. According to Leoschut (2008), these are all factors which increase children's vulnerability and chances of becoming victims of violence.

6.3.2 Personal involvement with peers

Previous studies have found that fellow peers or classmates are often the primary perpetrators of school-based violence (Burton, 2008), and that the perpetrators are even other learners or youth from outside the school (Ward, 2007). These findings were in line with findings of this study which found that violence was common among peers and that sometimes the violence was perpetrated by someone from outside of the school. The study also found that violence was not confined to any gender group and that it was perpetrated by boys against boys, boys against girls, and girls against girls.

The major cause of peer-to-peer violence was found to be boyfriend-girlfriend issues. Boys fought other boys for girlfriends and girls fought other girls for boyfriends. Social class differentials were also found to cause violence at schools. Learners who perceived themselves to be from a lower class tended to pick fights with those perceived to be from the middle class. These results corroborate those of other studies which have found that boyfriend-girlfriend issues were a major cause of violence (Burton, 2008) as well as socio-economic backgrounds (Netshitangani, 2014).

6.3.3 Learner and educator encounters

The results showed that school violence was also perpetrated by learners against educators and educators against learners.

6.3.3.1 Violence against learners

Learners indicated that the school is renowned for verbal violence, physical violence, and emotional violence perpetrated by educators. In talking about verbal violence, learners reported that educators swore at them and belittled them, making them feel unworthy. These results corroborated a study of violence in the Free State in which, out of a sample of 800 teachers, 43 % reported that educators in their schools had threatened one or more learners at their schools over the period of a year (De Wet, 2007). According to Eriyanti (2018), the power gap is one of the triggers of verbal abuses committed by teachers against learners in schools. This verbal abuse stretches from students' rejection of opinions, allegations, belittling ability and dignity of students, judgment and reproaches, coercion, to threats, and outbursts of anger (Eriyanti, 2018:363). This leads to a deep sense of resentment and brews unhappy learners who might even react in a manner that turns them violent as a way of expressing their frustration.

The next form of violence against learners is physical violence such as assault and corporal punishment. According to the school-based violence report, many educators come from a background in which violence was often used as a means of conflict resolution and even though corporal punishment is illegal educators battle to utilise other forms of discipline and tend to lean on more violent forms (Burton, 2008). According to the National Youth Victimization study of 2005, 51.4 % of participants reported having been caned or spanked at school (Ward, 2007).

Violence by educators against learners can also be attributed to the power gap between learners and educators. Sometimes educators go to the extent of punching learners. To protect themselves, some educators threaten learners, as evidenced by a learner who mentioned that one of the educators assaulted learners and then threatened that he would kill them if they told anyone about the incident. These results corroborated those of other studies at schools where educators were found to physically abuse learners (Mncube & Harber, 2012; De Wet, 2007; Burton, 2008).

6.3.3.2 Violence against educators

This study found that violence against educators was not only verbal but also physical (Nconts & Shumba, 2013). According to results of this study, school learners have attacked educators with stones after school. Educators have also been held at gun-point in school premises by people coming from outside the school. These occurrences reinforce the fact that violence is not only confined to school premises or only perpetrated by learners and educators, but that it also continues outside school premises and that it also involves people from outside the school. Educators also mentioned verbal abuse by school learners. A major problem mentioned by educators was that no one seems to be able to discipline these learners. They blatantly defied educators and even the principal.

6.3.4 Spread of violence beyond school premises

Results of this study showed that violence was not confined to school premises but that it continued outside school premises. These results corroborated the results of the UNISA report on the dynamics of violence in South African school which showed that violence among learners extends beyond school premises and hours (UNISA, 2012:46). In this report, violence extending beyond school premises and hours was the result of racial tensions between black learners and coloured learners. In the case of the school under study the tension was the result of social class differentials. Results showed that educators were usually powerless outside school premises and hours.

6.4 Characteristics of resilient school learners

In the above sections the nature of violence was discussed. The sections that follow discuss the characteristics of resilient school learners to violence. Henderson and Milstein (1996:7) defined resilience as, "...the capacity to spring back, rebound, successfully adapt in the face of adversity, and develop social, academic, and vocational competence despite exposure to severe stress or simply to the stress that is inherent in today's world." It involves the ability of a person to recover from a situation that was difficult, able to function well after that incident and move on with their life (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007:9).

Two theories of resiliency are applicable to this study, namely, the bio-ecological theory of human development and the resiliency wheel theory. The bio-ecological model of human development relates to the developing individual, the environment and the interaction between the two (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). This framework emphasises interrelated influences between individuals' development and their surrounding environmental contexts. For instance, a young child who has not yet reached school-going age will spend more time at home and will be influenced by the family environment to a great extent. A child going to pre-school will be influenced by the pre-school environment, the peer environment, and the family environment. A school learner will be influenced by the family environment, the school environment, the peer environment, and the community environment.

It has been argued that in the context of South African schools the resilience wheel theory can be easily adopted as an intervention mechanism as schools are the places where learners spend most of their supervised active life (Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Thomsen, 2002). This stems from the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which considers an individual as developing in a network of relationships which are interconnected. These networks and relationships are organized into five levels, namely, the individual, which includes characteristics of the adolescent such as age, race, gender and temperament, the microsystem, which concerns the everyday social contexts of individual adolescents, the mesosystem, which is the peer group, family, the school, and after school activities, the exosystem, which is the social environments in which adolescents do not participate directly, such as mass media and the neighbourhood, and the macrosystem, such as the socioeconomic conditions and ideologies and attitudes of culture (Estévez *et al*, 2008; Bronfenbrenner & Evans 2000).

Alongside these ecological systems is the chronosystem (Burton, 2007), which reflects the developmental changes of adolescents with the passage of time. Intervention models, therefore, must take into consideration the chronosystem in order to have the most impact. According to the chronosystem, those children who spend most of their time at home will have the family as the most powerful source for fostering resilience. Likewise, those children who spend most of their time at school will have the school as

the most powerful source for fostering resilience. Educators, therefore, have the opportunity, chance and responsibility to interfere to foster resilience in learners.

This discussion now looks at internal characteristics of resilient school learners, external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners, and skills resilient learners use to cope with violence at school.

6.4.1 Internal characteristics of resilient school learners

Not all individuals are the same and everyone has specific individual factors that they possess which help make them the people they are and determine their levels of resilience to violence or stressful situations (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007). Internal characteristics of resilient school learners were divided into four sub-categories as follows: 1) commitment to learning, 2) positive values, 3) social competency, and 4) positive identity. The following sections discuss the results.

6.4.1.1 Commitment to learning

Commitment to learning is one of the strengths said to lead to learner resilience (Barankin & Khanlou, 2007). From the questionnaire commitment to learning – attempting to be actively engaged in education – was measured on four items: 1) I make sure that I do my class work and homework; 2) Doing well at school is very important to me; 3) I do not like being absent from school, I hate to miss the teaching; and 4) Even when I do not understand in class I do not give up trying. The majority of learners (between 68.6% and 90.2%) had positive commitment towards learning.

In order to focus on those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school, these were studied separately on the same items. These results indicated that 53.4 % of the learners responded “Untrue most of the time” or “Untrue all the time” that they made sure that they did their class work and homework. 46.6 % responded “Untrue most of the time” or “Untrue all the time” that they did not like being absent from school, and 46.7 % responded “Untrue most of the time” on whether even when they do not understand in class they do not give up trying. This indicates that higher %ages of

those who reported that they fight a lot at school were not committed to learning. Results from the interview and focus group data also indicated that there were also those learners whose aim was to disrupt classes. This is akin to bullying – of learners and educators alike.

6.4.1.2 Positive values: Demonstrating these values through words and actions and avoiding risks.

Resilience has also been defined in terms of positive adaptation in the face of adversities (Newman, 2004). These specific learners have healthy expectations for the future and are greatly goal oriented (Barbarin, 2001). In this study positive values included both personal values and religious values. Learners mentioned that they would rather resolve a conflict situation through dialogue or involve an educator. They also mentioned that their religious convictions helped them to avoid violence.

According to Netshitangani (2014:1398), “...a lack of parental care, peer influence, unguided exposure to media, psychological factors, and poor socio-economic background” were highlighted as responsible for a lack of values among learners. This view was corroborated by results of this study in which learners mentioned family values as contributing to avoidance of risks that might lead to violence.

6.4.1.3 Social competence: Empathy and friendship skills

According to Moffit (2005), resilient learners have excellent communication skills and are mostly caring or show empathy towards others. They generally appeal as good company to others and thus they get the same treatment from others as they are able to monitor their own and others’ emotions. In this study, several learners mentioned regret and remorse for their actions and demonstrated empathy after taking responsibility for their actions by apologising. In order to inculcate and maintain such social competency an educator asserted that the absence of a guidance counsellor at school had multifarious repercussions.

6.4.1.4 Positive identity

Antisocial behaviour among school learners is influenced by, among others, having no sense of belonging resulting in a low self-esteem. According to Gilmartin (1987 cited in Eisenbraun, 2007: 461), victims of school violence have a lower self-esteem as a result of higher levels of anxiety and depression than their non-victimised peers. In this study learners mentioned that positive self-esteem and a sense of purpose made them resilient to violence.

6.4.2 External characteristics of resilient school learners

External characteristics of resilient school learners were divided into five sub-categories as follows: 1) family; 2) school; 3) community/peers; 4) media; and 5) protective factors. These sub-categories are discussed below.

6.4.2.1 The family environment

The family environment has been identified as one of the factors that can increase the risk of a youth engaging in violence at school (CDC, 2016). According to Eisenbraun (2007:461), a child who lacks a supportive social network at school may look towards the family to provide affection, security, and emotional compassion. Data on family environment involved both quantitative and qualitative data. In the questionnaire study, family and home environment were measured on two items, namely: 'I have an adult to talk to at home, who listens all the time', and 'I feel safe and loved at home, they want to know if I am okay'. Results of this study indicated that most learners had a positive family environment. Of those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school, 33 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether they had an adult to talk to at home, who listens all the time, and 40 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether they felt safe and loved at home. This is still a concern as the issue of school violence was not an issue for the majority. One dilemma that some learners faced was that even in the family setting there were disagreements on how to deal with violence. The father would preach to the child not to be a 'sissy' and fight back, while the mother preached non-violent solutions.

In the interviews and focus group some of the learners reported a negative family environment with families that swore and shouted at them, parents who got physical against them, parents who had separated, families with financial problems, and alcohol and drug abuse at home. According to Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2016), there should be a guardian or parent that can take parental disciplinary measures in order to stop that specific behaviour from occurring again. This was also the view of the principal at the Chatsworth school, who mentioned that a child's morals and values must emanate from the home. Some parents or guardians, however, tended to defend their children, placing the blame on the educators. This is a serious problem. As the LOHOD observed, some of the children who get involved in violent activities come from good homes. This observation was also confirmed by results of the questionnaire study, which indicated that most of those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school reported a good family environment.

6.4.2.2 The school environment

A study by Werner (2004) found that children's perceptions of teachers as caring adults contributed positively to their resilience. Henderson & Milstein (2003:13), Benard (1995:3) & Bosworth & Earthman (2002:301) stipulated that schools that practice and encourage high expectations of learners experience a high rate of academic success and a low rate of problem behaviour such as delinquency, drug problems, and drop-outs. This is in line with invitational education theory, which focuses mainly on the school environment, especially the role of educators. The role of invitational education theory is to inspire educators to be personally inviting with oneself and with others; and to be professionally inviting with oneself and with others. According to Purkey & Novak (2015:1), "This potential can be realised by places, policies, programmes, and processes specifically designed to invite development and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally". This principle has already been tried in South Africa. Steyn (2005) reported that several schools in South Africa were in the process of implementing invitational education principles and that three of these have received the *Inviting School Award* from the International Alliance for Invitational Education. Invitational education theory and the

resilience wheel theory can be applied together as intervention models to mitigate the incidence of violence in township schools.

In this study, the school environment support was investigated using both the questionnaires and the interviews and focus group. The questionnaire study focused specifically on learner-educator interactions and found that most of the learners reported a positive learner-educator environment. However, of those who reported that they fought a lot at school, 80 % of them responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' to whether they knew someone at school who cared about them and they could talk to, and 80 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' to whether there was at least one teacher they could talk to who listens to them and encourages them to do their best. A smaller %age (40%) responded 'Untrue most of the time' to whether their teachers made them see that they were good with their work and that they could do well in class, and 40 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' to whether their teachers supported them to aim high and to think of their bright future. These results indicated neglect of problem learners by teachers. These results were corroborated by the interviews and focus group where learners reported abuse by educators, both verbal and physical. The educators, on the other hand, mentioned that they got frustrated as they were not trained to deal with violent learners. De Wet (2007) mentioned, among other things, the need for the provision of counsellors at school to build learner resilience. Educators also mentioned lack of support from the Department of Basic Education in the form of providing counsellors for the learners. At the time of this study there was not a single counsellor assigned to the school.

Regarding school activities, it was found that there were many school activities and projects at the school, for example, clubs, sports and fellowship groups that the learners could participate in (Blair & Raver, 2016). These projects played a major role in keeping the learners busy and away from violent activities. However, one of the parents suggested that school activities were not enough and put the blame on the educators. This indicates that some parents did not get as involved as they should in

their children's schools and believed that everything that happened at school was the responsibility of educators only.

Regarding school protocol when confronting violent incidents (the school's code of conduct and safety policies), respondents reported that there was no real protocol followed when confronting violence at the school. Educators also felt that they lacked the skills to deal with the situations since they were not equipped to address them, in particular the psychological aspects. It can be deduced from this that not only did the school lack the services of a counsellor, but also that educators needed to be trained in dealing with psychological aspects associated with school violence. What was interesting in all this was that parents still saw these problems as those of the school and educators alone and were not helpful in mitigating the problem.

A goal of invitational education is for schools to transform into intentionally inviting schools. To do this, they need to implement an effective professional development programme. This, in turn, means that those factors required for designing professional development programmes should be identified. Professional development, "...focuses on knowledge, skills and attitudes required of educators, leaders and other school staff to enable them to assist learners to learn and to develop their human potential" (Somers & Sikorova, 2002:103).

6.4.2.3 Community and Peers

Community and peer support include the influence of the community at large and also whether learners have role models within the community. The questionnaire component of the study indicated that most of the learners (76.5%) responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether they had a good person whose behaviour was an example to them. However, of those who reported that they fought a lot at school, 40 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' to whether they had a good person whose behaviour was an example for them. This does not necessarily mean that there was a shortage of role models in the community, but that some learners might not even be aware of them because of low self-esteem, lack of determination to succeed in life, and other factors.

In the interviews and focus group, learners indicated that cigarettes and drugs were accessible to learners. Other learners indicated that they engaged in violence to appease peers. Violence, therefore, surrounded children in their communities. According to one of the educators, more participation was needed from the communities to address the issues and challenges that learners are facing.

6.4.2.4 The media

The media can be used positively or negatively to address issues of school violence. Engagement in social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook can build up learners' resilience and have a beneficial impact on mental wellbeing (Govender & Killian, 2001). Yet the very same social media can be used to promote violence. For instance, girl fighting has always been popular with the media (Brown & Tappan, 2008). Violence is so normalised in the South African society that educators were concerned about the excitement of learners to record fights as if they were just things to gossip about. Social media was also used to promote bullying.

6.4.2.5 Protective factors

Protective factors include maintaining beliefs, being authentic with self and others, reflecting on development of sense of purpose, and operationalising optimism. How a victim deals with a violent incident is crucial in how they perform in their day to day activities (Barankin, 2007). In the questionnaire component of this study, self-belief was measured on nine items, and most of the learners reported positive self-belief.

One of the protective factors that was investigated was the school learners' tenacity in problem-solving. This factor was measured on two items, namely, 'Even when my problems are just too much, I do not give up trying to make it work', and 'I use different ways to work out a difficult problem'. 77 % of the learners responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether even if problems were just too much they did not give up trying to make it work; and 78 % responded 'True all the time' or 'True most of the time' to whether they used different ways to work out a difficult problem. However, 40 % of those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school responded 'Untrue

most of the time' to whether even when their problems were just too much, they did not give up trying to make it work. This means that these learners displayed poor tenacity in problem-solving.

6.5 Coping skills

The coping skills investigated in this study were task-orientated and emotionally orientated skills. One of the task oriented coping skills investigated in the questionnaire was commitment to learning. This was measured on four items, namely: 1) I make sure that I do my class work and homework; 2) Doing well at school is very important to me; 3) I do not like being absent from school, I hate to miss the teaching; and 4) Even when I do not understand in class I do not give up trying. The results indicated that most of the learners had a positive commitment towards learning. Of those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school, 53.4 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' that they made sure that they did their class work and homework, 46.6 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' or 'Untrue all the time' that they did not like being absent from school, and 46.7 % responded 'Untrue most of the time' on whether even when they did not understand in class they did not give up trying. This indicated less commitment to learning by those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school.

Other coping mechanisms mentioned by learners included playing on the phone, watching TV, sleeping, singing, talking to an older person who was willing to listen, and playing soccer. Emotionally oriented coping skills included prayer, keeping to oneself, engaging family, and professional help. One of the major factors facilitating coping was the Life Orientation course, which addressed violence as well as how to cope with it.

6.6 Summary

According to results of this study, violence at the school under study took the form of physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse among peers (personal involvement with peers) and between educators and learners (learner and educator

encounters). The major cause of peer-to-peer violence was found to be boyfriend-girlfriend issues. Social class differentials were also found to cause violence at schools, with those learners who perceived themselves to be from a lower class tending to pick fights with those perceived to be from the middle class. Learners also indicated that the school is renowned for physical violence, emotional violence, and verbal violence perpetrated by educators. Likewise, educators reported abuse from learners which sometimes turned violent.

The majority of these learners in this study did not report a negative home or family environment, but all reported that they saw a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community. The two prominent risk factors in this study were: 'many stressors' and 'I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community'. The conclusion drawn from this discussion is that the home situation or treatment at home were not major risk factors, but that stress was a risk factor.

Characteristics of resilient learners were categorised into internal and external characteristics. Internal characteristics included commitment to learning, positive values, social competency, and positive identity. The majority of learners were found to have positive commitment towards learning. Positive values mentioned included religious values and family values. Social values included regret and remorse for their actions and empathy after taking responsibility for their actions by apologising. Positive identity included positive self-esteem.

External characteristics of resilient school learners were divided into five sub-categories namely, family, school, community and peers, media, and protective factors. In the interviews and focus group some of the learners reported a negative family environment with families that swore and shouted at them, parents who got physical against them, parents who had separated, families with financial problems, and alcohol and drug abuse at home. Regarding the school environment, the study found that educators needed to be trained in dealing with psychological aspects associated with school violence. Regarding the community and peers, learners indicated that they witnessed a lot of violence in their communities and that they engaged in violence to

appease peers. Regarding protective factors, learners mentioned good tenacity in problem-solving, but it needs to be noted that 40 % of learners reported that they fought a lot at school. Coping mechanisms mentioned by learners included positive commitment towards learning, playing on the phone, watching television, sleeping, singing, talking to an older person who was willing to listen, and playing soccer. Emotionally oriented coping skills included prayer, keeping to oneself, engaging family, and professional help. Another major factor facilitating coping was the LO course at school which addressed violence as well as how to cope with it.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The main objective of this study was to explore learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Chatsworth, Durban. A mixed methods research design was used. The quantitative data collection component used the R-MATS questionnaire administered to 52 learners. The R-MATS questionnaire was used because it was found to reflect the risk factors associated with a township school. Qualitative data were collected using interviews and a focus group discussion. There were interviews with learners (please see Appendix G), a focus group discussion with educators (please see Appendix H), and interviews with parents (please see Appendix J). In this study, a modified MacNeil & Stewart's (2000) definition of school violence was used and school violence included a verbal or physical act while the learner or educator was under the supervision of the school, and all such acts perpetrated by and against learners or educators from the same school outside of school supervision.

7.2 Risk factors

First, the risk factors associated with learners from a township school, as outlined in the R-MATS questionnaire, were investigated. The factors which stood out were: 'I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community', 'many stressors', and 'bad life experiences. Given that violence around the Chatsworth community is something that one observes, it was concluded that the major risk factors were 'stressors' and 'bad life experiences. This study did not prove the causes of such stresses and bad life experiences.

7.3 The nature of violence

The results indicated that violence at the Chatsworth school took the form of physical violence, bullying, verbal abuse, and emotional abuse among peers (personal involvement with peers) and between educators and learners (learner and educator encounters). This violence was sometimes carried out outside the school premises. The major cause of peer-to-peer violence was found to be boyfriend-girlfriend issues, with boys fighting for girlfriends and girls fighting for boyfriends. Social class differentials were also found to cause violence at schools. The study also found that some of the children who come from families not known for violent behaviour or poverty were also perpetrators of violence.

Violence was also found to be a common way of retaliation by some of the teachers who abused learners verbally, emotionally, and physically. This led to deep sense of resentment by learners and some learners retaliated by also verbally abusing educators and even physically assaulting them, especially outside the school premises.

7.4 Characteristics of resilient school learners

The discussion on characteristics of resilient school learners looked at internal characteristics that contribute to resilience, external factors that contribute to resilience, and skills resilient learners use to cope with violence at school.

7.4.1 Internal characteristics of resilient school learners

Internal characteristics were divided into four sub-categories as follows: 1) commitment to learning; 2) positive values; 3) social competence; and 4) positive identity. The majority of learners, between 68.6 % and 90.2 %, reported positive commitment towards learning. Results also indicated that significant numbers of those who reported that they fought a lot at school, between 46.6 % and 53.4 %, reported negative commitment towards learning. Regarding positive values, learners mentioned both personal values and religious values as those that improved their resilience. Learners mentioned further that they would rather resolve a conflict situation through dialogue or involve an educator. Regarding social competence, several learners mentioned regret and remorse for their actions and demonstrated empathy after taking responsibility for

their actions by apologising. An educator asserted that the absence of a guidance counsellor at school had multifarious repercussions.

7.4.2 External characteristics of resilient school learners

External characteristics of resilient school learners were divided into five sub-categories as follows: 1) family; 2) school; 3) community/peers; 4) media; and 5) protective factors. Results of this study indicated that the majority of learners had a positive family environment. Of those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school, 33 % reported that they had an adult to talk to at home, who listened all the time, and 40 % reported that they did not feel safe and loved at home. These results again indicated that the family environment alone was not enough to mitigate violent learner behaviour. As the LOHOD observed, some of the children who got involved in violent activities came from stable homes.

The school environment involved learner-educator interactions, school activities, and school's code of conduct and safety policies. While most of the learners reported positive learner-educator interactions, 80 % of those who reported that they fought a lot at school did not know someone at school who cared about them and that they could talk to, and 80% responded that there was no one teacher they could talk to who listened to them and encouraged them to do their best. These results indicate neglect of problem learners by teachers, or inability to deal with their problems. Educators mentioned that they got frustrated as they were not trained to deal with violent learners. They also mentioned lack of support from the Department of Basic Education in the form of providing counsellors for learners.

Regarding school activities, it was found that there were many school activities and projects at the school, for example, clubs, and sports and fellowship groups, that the learners could participate in, in an intentionally inviting environment. However, one of the parents suggested that school activities were not enough and put the blame on the educators. This indicates that some parents did not get involved as they should in their

children's school and believed that everything that happened at school was the responsibility of educators only.

Regarding school protocol when confronting violent incidents (school's code of conduct and safety policies), respondents reported that there was no real protocol followed when confronting violence at the school.

One of the reasons given by learners for violent behaviour was that they engaged in violence to appease peers. The media also played a part in promoting violence. According to one of the educators, learners relished taking videos of fights and putting them on social media. This also led to bullying as this affected those whose pictures were on the media without their permission. Protective factors included maintaining beliefs, being authentic with self and others, reflecting on development of sense of purpose, and operationalising optimism.

7.4.3 Coping skills

Coping skills of learners included commitment to learning where doing well at school was paramount. Those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school showed less commitment to learning. Other coping mechanisms included playing on the phone or watching TV, sleeping, singing, talking to an older person who is willing to listen, and playing soccer. Emotionally oriented coping skills included prayer, keeping to oneself, engaging with family, and professional help. Another major factor facilitating coping was the LO course at school which addressed violence as well as how to cope with it.

7.5 Recommendations for the school

7.5.1 Recommendation 1: Invitational Resiliency Framework

Invitational theory is premised on the influence that the school has on the learner, as well as the personal and professional qualities of educators. It therefore focuses on the school environment support, specifically the support of educators. The resilience wheel framework, on the other hand, focuses on the protective environment to foster

resilience. According to (Kiswarday, 2010:98), “When a protective environment is established and protective factors are increased, school climate and attendance will improve as well as students’ academic achievement. Students will be less vulnerable to becoming involved in inappropriate behaviours”. In the case of the school environment, a protective environment is an inviting environment, as described in invitational theory. When an inviting environment is established and inviting factors are increased, the school climate and attendance will improve as well as students’ academic achievement. In this regard, both the invitational theory and resilience theory are in agreement.

Results of this study indicated that there was lack of school environment support. A significant number of learners indicated that they did not have a teacher that they could talk to at school that cared for them and had a listening ear. They also did not know someone at school who cared about them that they could talk to. This was especially so for those learners who reported that they fought a lot at school. This suggests that changing the educators’ attitudes towards the learners to become more supportive and more accommodating can improve the school environment and make it more inviting to learners. Educators and parents all agreed that there was need for educators to be trained in dealing with psychological aspects associated with school violence. In the process, the learners will be more confident and more positive about themselves. Results of this study have indicated that learners who are more confident and positive about themselves tend to shun violent behaviour.

Another theme that emerged strongly to address school violence were measures that could be instituted through the Life Orientation (LO) course. This was the view of all the participants in the study: learners, educators, LOHOD, principal and parents. Parents further noted that opportunity to participate in school projects can increase the self-esteem of learners and hopefully discourage violent behaviour.

According to the invitational education theory, people learn perceptions. Therefore, the perceptions ground must first be made fertile for invitational theory to thrive. Likewise, according to the resilience wheel theory, resilience is not a rare ability as it can be

found in the average individual and can be learned through changing the perceptions of learners (Moletsane & Theron, 2017).

The three foundations of invitational theory are: democratic ethos, 'doing with' instead of 'doing to', self-concept theory which argues that people learn perceptions, and the most powerful of these is the perception of the self, and perceptual tradition, which proposes that people are more influenced by perceptions of events than by events themselves. Assumptions of the theory are that: "People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly; educating should be a collaborative, cooperative activity; the process is the product in the making; people possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavour; this potential can be realised by places, policies, programmes, and processes specifically designed to invite development and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally" (Purkey & Novak, 2015:1). These foundations and assumptions of the invitational theory are in agreement with the resilience wheel theory, which emphasises a democratic ethos of providing opportunities for meaningful participation. The two theories are also in agreement on the self-concept foundation. Resilience is not a trait but an ability that can be found in an average individual and which can be learned and developed (Moletsane & Theron, 2017).

However, risks for violent behaviour among learners in South Africa are not only related to the school environment support but also to the family environment, the community environment, and the peer environment. It is therefore important to, simultaneously with creating an inviting environment to personal enrichment, also promote resilience among learners. The invitational theory framework can therefore be regarded as a subset of the resiliency wheel theory.

In light of the convergence of the two theories, especially as regards the school environment, the following model which combines the two frameworks is recommended, named *Invitational Resiliency Framework* by the author, as presented in Figure 7.1.

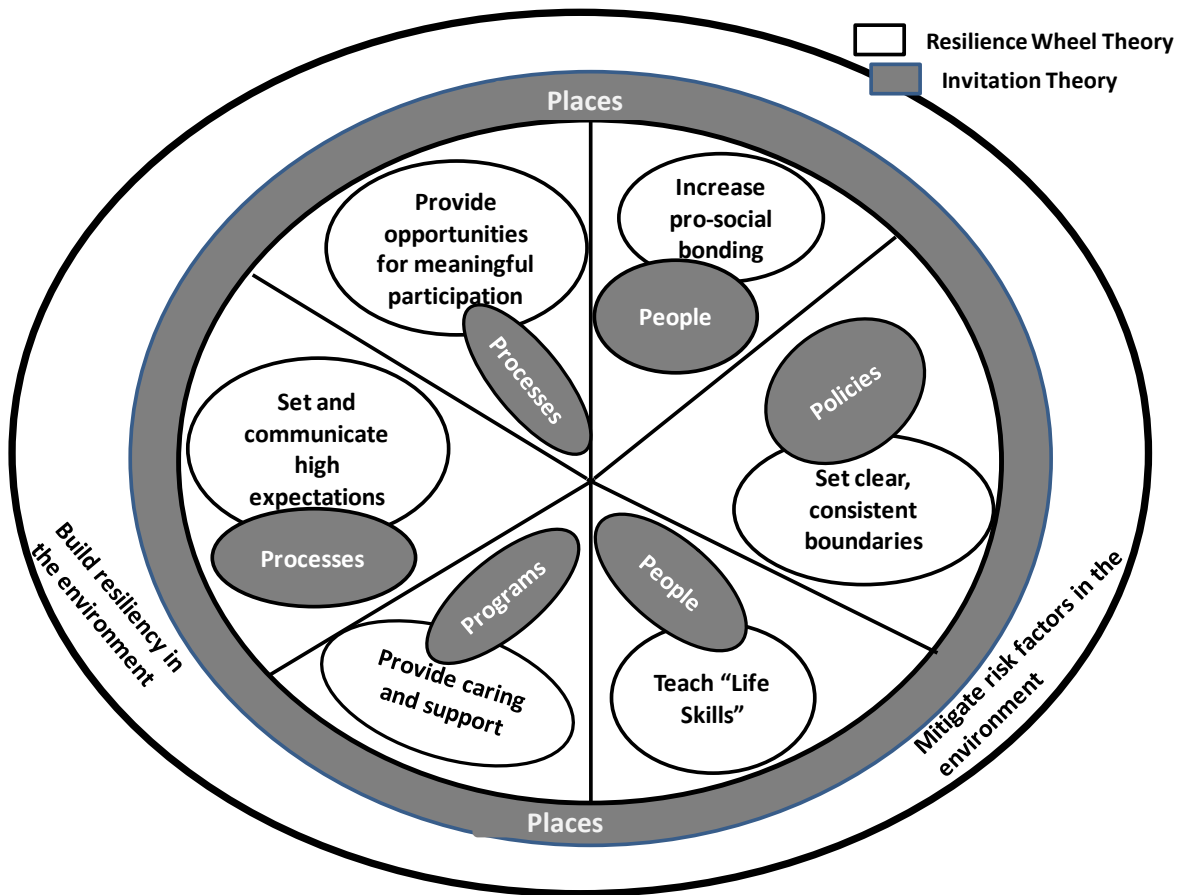


Figure 7. 1: Invitational Resiliency Framework

The process of developing the learner to be a positive and non-violent person has to start somewhere, and according to the literature on both the resilience framework and the invitational framework the best place is the school as this is where learners spend most of their active time. While learners learn perceptions both at home and in the community, the school is the place best suited to change perceptions and to learn perceptions. The core elements of this framework are underpinned by the invitational theory and are: care, respect, trust and optimism, and are all linked together by intentionality. Intentionality is an intentional act of offering something of value to the one being invited. For those learners who are exposed to negative environments, the school should be the place of refuge; a place which they look forward to going to; a place of hope for the future, and a place of building where they can build positive perceptions of self. Achieving this will mitigate risk factors in the external environment

and build resilience in learners. The steps of the invitational resiliency framework are listed below.

7.5.1.1 Steps of the invitational resiliency framework

Step 1: Increase pro-social bonding and stimulate learners to enhance their talents and social skills. Educators can stimulate pro-social bonding by being trusting, respectful, optimistic, caring, accessible, courteous, and intentional in their efforts to promote this bonding. This will, in turn, make learners to be inviting to themselves, meaning that they will view themselves as valuable and responsible and will be open to experience.

Step 2: Set clear and consistent boundaries. This makes learners aware of the boundaries within which they are expected to operate. This includes clear policies which are inclusive, fair, equitable, tolerant, defensible, consistent, and just. As mentioned in the literature, policies in schools are largely the responsibility of the School Governing bodies (SGBs). Regarding the development of codes of conduct, these SGBs will need to be well informed about the legal aspects as well as consequences of a code of conduct. These policies should be communicated to the learners in the spirit of 'doing with' rather than 'doing to'. Learners should be encouraged to make inputs in these policies so that they feel that the policies are also their own policies. This could be done by giving learners a homework assignment every year in essay form on the topic: '*What I would do to stop violence at my school if I was the principal of my school?*', and discussing these essays and noting positive inputs, and even use some of the learners' ideas to improve policy.

Step 3: Teach life skills such as basic academic skills, learning motivation, conflict resolution, communication, planning, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Already there is already a life orientation course at South African schools. This course should be made as enriching, stimulating, healthful, interactive, constructive, developmental, and engaging as possible.

Step 4: Provide an environment of caring and support. This is crucial in the resilience wheel theory. Again, the requirements of the resiliency wheel theory and those of the

invitational theory intersect. Educators should be trusting, respectful, optimistic, caring, accessible, courteous, and intentional in their efforts to promote this bonding. This will encourage learners to be likewise.

Step 5: Set high expectations for learners. This, however, should not be about expecting instant perfection, but again about being patient. Setting high expectations is about processes. Processes of learning, reporting violent behaviour, or even suggesting what the school can do to improve should be deliberately designed to be inviting to development and should be encouraging, democratic, cooperative, collaborative, and evaluative.

Step 6: Encourage democracy. This is about providing opportunities for meaningful participation. It is about learners using their gathered knowledge and skills to improve themselves. Democracy is also about processes that are designed to 'do with' rather than 'doing to'. It is a... "...democratically oriented, perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process" (Purkey & Novak, 1996:3).

Step 7: Make changes to places. The most obvious elements in schools that are easiest to change are places, meaning the physical environment. Care must be taken to ensure that these places are functional, attractive, clean, efficient, aesthetic, personal, and warm. This should also be done in a collaborative and cooperative manner between learners and educators so that it is inviting.

7.5.1.2 Implementation of the invitational resiliency framework:

Firstly, learners at risk of engaging in violent behaviour or engage in violent behaviour should be identified. The process of identification can use the R-MATS or a similar questionnaire.

Secondly, these learners should be assessed for counselling needs, that is, what their specific problems are that lead them to violent behaviour and what their counselling requirements are. This assessment can be done by guidance teachers at the schools. Counselling sessions should then be arranged for these learners as a first step to

changing their perceptions of self and to make them receptive to the invitational resiliency framework being embarked upon by the school. Noting the shortage of both guidance teachers and counsellors means that government should employ more guidance teachers and counsellors. In the case where this cannot be done, efforts should be made to see to it that there is a counsellor attached to each school and that these counsellors do their work. It had been noted in this study that the counsellor attached to the school under study had just disappeared without the school knowing. This does not apply to guidance teachers, who must be part of the school. For this framework to work there has to be a guidance teacher at a school.

It was noted in the literature that even at those schools where there is a guidance teacher that such teachers are not able to attend to all the learners that require their services because the learner to counsellor ratio has increased with the increase in the numbers of learners at schools. Mitigating this problem will mean employing more than one guidance teacher at a school in order to reduce the learner to counsellor ratio.

Thirdly, teachers should be trained in dealing with aggressive learners. In particular, teachers should be trained in the approaches of the invitational resiliency framework.

Fourthly, it was noted in the literature that very few incidents of violence that take place at schools are reported to counsellors. Learners have negative attitudes towards the use of such services as they feel like they are 'hanging their dirty linen in public'. It is important that there is a link between the counsellors and the schools, and all acts of violence by both learners and teachers should be reported to the counsellors so that there is an integrated approach to the problem of violence.

Fifthly, those factors required for designing professional development programmes should be identified. Professional development, "...focuses on knowledge, skills and attitudes required of educators, leaders and other school staff to enable them to assist learners to learn and to develop their human potential" (Somers & Sikorova, 2002: 103). These programmes include dealing with violent learners, counselling, and how to be intentionally inviting.

7.5.2 Recommendation 2: Enhancing coping mechanisms

As the literature has indicated, resilience is enhanced by factors such as education, a non-violent family environment, non-exposure to criminal role-models, substance abstinence, interaction with non-delinquent peers, freedom from victimisation, a positive neighbourhood factors, and pro-social behaviour. This is difficult in the context of learners at township schools in South Africa as these learners are with testing situations confronted on a daily basis that necessitate some kind of coping skills not to fall victim to acts of criminality and anti-social behaviour. It would be going beyond the scope of this study to make any recommendations on the behaviour of parents, the community, and peers. The study can only make recommendations on enhancing task oriented and emotionally oriented coping and resilience skills.

Among the coping mechanisms mentioned by learners were participating in physical activities such as taking part in sports or singing. These coping mechanisms can be enhanced by introducing such activities at schools. As suggested in Recommendation 1, this should be a cooperative and collaborative undertaking between the learners and the educators. Such activities can be scheduled for the 'Physical Education' slots in the learners' timetables.

Emotionally oriented coping and resilience skills included religion and meditation and prayer. Religion has been cited as one of the important factors in the personal transformation of youth (Schumacher, 1978 cited in Mayer & Chetty, 2017). While it may not be feasible to introduce religious studies at schools because of the diversity of religions in South Africa, the importance of religion in personal transformation can be emphasised in an interactive and participatory way in the life orientation course.

7.5.3 Recommendation 3: The involvement of the SAPS

In the invitational resiliency framework, it is recommended that the involvement of the South African Police Services (SAPS) should be confined to the space outside the school premises, thus mitigating risk factors in the environment, as well as offering support to the SGBs in order to create positive perceptions about the school premises

and environment. Police can shut down illegal liquor establishments around the school and search learners for illegal substances and dangerous weapons but should not enter the school premises. Links should also be established between schools and the SAPS, especially swift reactions to incidents of crime at the schools.

7.5.4 Recommendation 4: Help for educators

Results of this study, as well as from studies reviewed in the literature review indicate that educators are not resilient to provocations by learners and as a result do not know how to react. Educators are themselves also victims of crime perpetrated by learners. It can be argued that, like the learners, educators also need intervention to foster resilience in them. Even though educator resilience was not the subject of this study, invitational theory assumes that educators are able to create an inviting school environment. It is therefore necessary for educators to be equipped with requisite skills to be able to become the initiators of an inviting school environment.

Invitational theory emphasises that people learn perceptions and that the perceptions ground must first be made fertile for it (the theory) to thrive. The three foundations of the theory are democratic ethos, self-concept theory, and perceptual tradition, which have five elements, namely, care, trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality, with intentionality being at the core of the theory as an invitation is an intentional act of offering something of value to the one being invited. As a first step towards making the perceptions ground fertile, the perceptions of educators need to be changed. This means that educators must believe that things can and will get better.

It is clear from results of this study that educators cannot always cope with the violence that happens at schools. This is traumatic and means that educators need support and possibly counselling to cope with the situation. Educators will need to be trained in the procedures of invitational theory. Invitational theory framework is not something new in South Africa. Literature indicates that at least three schools in the country have already implemented the framework. To this end, the Department of Education will need to provide professionals who can train these educators.

7.6 Recommendations for future research

Future research should involve the piloting of the invitational resiliency framework at a township school, as well as enhancing coping mechanisms of learners as outlined in recommendations 1 and 2 in order to evaluate its impact on improving the school environment support as well as building resilience in learners.

One limitation of this study was that it only looked at the resilience and coping mechanisms of learners without much consideration for the resilience and coping mechanisms of educators as it can be argued that they also learn perceptions. For the perceptions of educators to change, therefore, the perceptions ground must be made fertile for educators. A similar study that explores educator resilience to school violence in a township school is recommended for future research. This will help to make informed interventions at schools to foster resilience and an inviting environment.

Future research could also look at how other environments such as the home environment and community environments that affect learner development can be influenced to foster resilience. Regarding this home environment, it could be suggested that the counsellors intervene, but literature indicates that families and scholars alike shun counsellors. Moreover, counsellors might not be welcome in homes where there is violence and abuse. The best interventions, therefore, could be those that are not direct. To this end, one of the intervention methods could be to embark on campaigns that are visible to the community for the messages to filter through. These campaigns could take the form of walks in the township communities, spreading messages about the link between child development and the home and community environments. These can be done through partnerships with National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Department of Education, other non-governmental organisations, and the private sector. Future research should look at intervention methods aimed at improving the home and community environments to foster resilience in learners.

Future research could also involve the piloting of the invitational resiliency framework at a township school, as well as enhancing coping mechanisms of learners as outlined

in the first two recommendations in order to evaluate its impact on improving the school environment support as well as building resilience in learners.

7.7 Conclusion

This study explored learner resilience to school violence in a township school. The study had two components, namely, the quantitative component and the qualitative component. The quantitative component used the R-MATS questionnaire adopted from Mampane (2010). The second part of the study was qualitative and looked at internal and external characteristics of resilient learners as well as their coping mechanisms.

The focus of the study was on how the school environment could be improved to foster resilience in learners. The study found, among others, that the school environment was not inviting to resilience, that there were problems with implementing codes of conduct at schools, that parents were not working collaboratively with educators to fight school violence, that there was a shortage of guidance educators and counsellors at the school under study and township schools in general, and that there was resistance by learners to use the services of counsellors. Results also indicated that educators, like learners, are also traumatised by the violence taking place at the school and that resilience also needs to be fostered among them. Despite all these problems, there was lack of support from the Department of Education.

The invitational resiliency framework, a framework that combines the resilience theory and the invitational education theories was recommended. It was noted, however, that the implementation of this framework would also require that perceptions of educators to be changed and that it was necessary for resilience to also be fostered among them. The study also found that there was no guidance teacher at the school and that the only counsellor attached to the school had disappeared. Further, it was noted that there is resistance to the use of counsellors and very few incidents of violence were ever reported to them. This mentality needs to change, and one way of doing this is through the use of invitational theory. Going forward, recommendations of this study

should be presented to both the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education and the National Department of Education so that they can be acted upon.

Research should also be undertaken to establish the most suitable interventions to deal with the issue at hand. School violence is increasing and has become the daily life experience of many learners and educators. The trauma needs to be dealt with so the cycle can be broken. Then the school will be an inviting place and a safe space for resilient learners and educators alike.

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Appendix A: Ethical Clearance



29 September 2016

Ms Bonita A Marimuthu (207517376)
School of Applied Human Sciences – Criminology
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Marimuthu,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1350/015D

Project title: An exploration of resilience and school violence among school learners: A case study of an Indian Secondary School in Chatsworth.

Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

With regards to the various responses received to our letter of 29 October 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Dr Nirmala Gopa
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Jean Steyn
cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X64001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbep@ukzn.ac.za / snymam@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



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Appendix B: Permission Letter to Principal



University of Kwa Zulu – Natal
Howard College Campus
Department of Criminology and Forensic Studies
Durban
4001

The Principal

RE: Request for permission to conduct research study in school

It is a great pleasure to inform you that I am a registered student at the University of Kwa Zulu - Natal, Howard College for a PhD Degree in Criminology and Forensic Studies. Currently I am conducting an empirical research for the fulfilment of my degree. The topic that I have selected is **“Exploring learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu Natal.”** The aim of my study is to determine what skills resilient adolescent learners in a township school use to cope with school violence. It is envisaged that this study would therefore be beneficial to the institution and the community, and feedback would be provided on completion of the study. Permission is therefore requested to undertake the research at the facility. Confidentiality would be maintained at all times and subjects would have to consent to participate in the study.

Please note that I envisage the inclusion of Grade 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 pupils in the final sample.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Bonita Marimuthu (Researcher)
(Supervisor)

Prof. N. Gopal

Appendix C: Permission Letter from School



LET GOOD PREVAIL

With Compliments from

Asoka Secondary School

Skyridge Circle, Moorton, Chatsworth

Telephone: 4045830 / 4061030

Fax: 4045830

Enquiries:

Reference:

P.O. Box 56513
CHATSWORTH
4030

08 September 2016

Ms Bonita Marimuthu
Researcher

C/O UKZN – Department of Criminology and Forensic Studies

**AN EXPLORATION OF HOW RESILIENT ADOLESCENT
LEARNERS COPE WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN A
TOWNSHIP SECONDARY SCHOOL IN CHATSWORTH,
DURBAN**

Please be informed that permission is hereby granted to you to conduct your research at school. The project will be limited to conduct focus group discussions and individual interviews with learners from Grade 8 – 11 on condition that you obtain consent from each learner.

I take this opportunity in wishing you well in you studies.

Yours sincerely



PRINCIPAL
R. HALUMAN

Appendix D: Letter to Participant



Dear Participant

Re: Request for permission to participate in a research study.

I, Bonita Marimuthu (Student Number: 207517376), am a PhD (Criminology) student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This is a formal invitation to request you to participate in a research study entitled: **“Exploring learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu Natal.”**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. describe the nature of school (educators /principal)
2. identify and describe the internal characteristics of resilient school learners
3. determine the external factors that contribute to resilience of school learners
4. determine what skills resilient school learners in a township school use to cope with school violence.

Please Note:

- Participation in this study is entirely voluntary.
- You will remain completely anonymous.
- You have the right to withdraw your participation from the study at any time.
- The data that you provide will be made available to you should you so wish

(Please indicate your answer with an X)

1. Have you been adequately informed about the research?	
2. Do you understand that your identity and answers will not be appear in any reports or publications arising from this study?	
3. Do you understand that you are free to refuse to answer any questions?	
4. Do you understand that you may withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reasons?	
5. Do you understand that any information that you provide will be treated as confidential?	
6. Do you agree to take part in the study?	

Should you have any further questions pertaining to the study, please feel free to contact Professor Nirmala Gopal my supervisor of the study, on gopal@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 7986.

If you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, please contact the Research Office:

Ms Phumelele Ximba
Research Office, UKZN
Tel: 031 260 3587
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your co-operation and time
Yours Sincerely,

Bonita Marimuthu

.....

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMED ASSENT REPLY SLIP

I, _____ (Signature of participant) on the /..... /..... (Date) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research study, and I consent in participating in the research study. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research study at any time, should I desire.

Additional consent, where applicable:

I hereby provide assent to:	Please tick	
Audio-record my interview	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix E: Informed Letter to Parents/Guardians



Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Request for permission for your child/ward to participate in a research study.

I, Bonita Marimuthu (Student Number: 207517376), am a PhD (Criminology) student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of the requirements of the degree, I am required to complete a research dissertation. This letter requests your permission to allow your child to participate in a research project entitled: **“Exploring learner resilience to school violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu Natal.”**

This study is being carried out under the supervision of Prof Gopal, an Associate Professor at the University of Kwa Zulu Natal in the Department of Criminology and Forensic Studies. I undertake that any information provided by your child will remain confidential and anonymous. This information may be useful to the Chatsworth community to gain a full understanding of the school violence and the ways learners can cope with school violence.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would agree to your child's participation in the study. If you are not agreeable to this, please return form with a written decision. Your child will not be inconvenienced in any way, or put under any pressure to participate. Thank you for your consideration in this matter, and for taking the time to read this letter.

Should you require further clarification please feel at liberty to contact Professor Nirmala Gopal, my supervisor of the study, on gopal@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 7986.

If you wish to obtain information on your child's rights as a participant, please contact the Research Office:

Ms Phumelele Ximba
Research Office, UKZN
Tel: 031 260 3587
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your co-operation and time

Yours Sincerely,

Bonita Marimuthu

.....

PARENT'S INFORMED CONSENT REPLY SLIP

I, _____ (Signature of parent) on the /..... /.....
(Date) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature
of the research study in the capacity of parent/guardian of
....., hereby consent voluntarily to allow
my child/ward to participate in the above-mentioned study.

Appendix F: R-MATS Questionnaire – Resiliency in School Learners



Please tick the appropriate box:

Grade:					
	8	9	10	11	12
Gender:	Male			Female	

Section A

This section addresses the background of respondents in 11 statements detailing systemic and individual risk factors assumed relevant to township youths. The respondents are required to indicate the presence/absence of risk in their environment with **Yes** or **No**.

Risk Factors	Yes	No
1. Everybody in my household is employed		
2. No formal housing structure		
3. Orphan - one/both parents deceased		
4. Fights a lot in school – poor problem-solving skills		
5. Insufficient food		
6. Many stressors		
7. Abused at home		
8. Not living with parents		
9. Bad treatment at home		
10. Bad life experiences		
11. Repeated a grade – academic problems		
12. I see a lot of violence around the Chatsworth community		
13. Parents fight a lot		

Section B is a 24 item Likert scale reflecting resilient behaviour. The respondents are required to evaluate themselves against each statement using values of 'truth' (i.e. true all the time; true most of the time; untrue most of the time and untrue all the time).

No.	Item	True all the time	True most of the time	Untrue most of the time	Untrue all the time
1.	I have an adult to talk to at home, who listens to me				
2.	I make sure that I do my classwork and homework				
3.	I do my best to find the right answer to a problem				
4.	My teacher works hard to help me understand my work better				
5.	I am in control of what happens to me				
6.	I feel safe and loved at home, they want to know if I am OK				
7.	Doing well at school is very important to me				
8.	My future and success depend on my hard work				
9.	I believe that I have good talents				
10.	I do not allow people to stop me from trying to do my best in my work				
11.	I believe that I am able to do better				
12.	Even when my problems are just too much, I do not give up trying to make it work				
13.	I know someone at school who cares about me and I can talk to				
14.	I use different ways to work out a difficult problem				
15.	There is at least one teacher I can talk to who listens to me and encourages me to do my best				
16.	I believe that one day things will be better for me				
17.	I do not like being absent from school, I hate to miss the teaching				
18.	I know a good person whose behaviour is an example to me				
19.	Even when I do not understand in class, I do not give up trying				
20.	My teachers made see that I am good with my work and can do well in class				
21.	My teachers support me to aim high, and to think of my bright future				
22.	Teachers explain a lot in class, they give extra examples				
23.	My future is in my hands nobody can take that away from me				
24.	I am a tough person				

-----Thank you for your participation☺-----

Appendix G: Learner Interview Schedule

Name of school	
Name of learner	
Gender	
Age	
Grade	

1. Describe violence at your school
2. Explain exactly the time when you experienced violence at your school (listen carefully to the full story/prompt when necessary).
3. Tell me how did you handle the situation?
4. What is the kind of skills that helped you to cope with the situation?

5. Describe yourself more in detail.
 - How do you perceive yourself/ what kind of person are you?
 - What is your feeling about your school and schoolwork?
 - What are your best qualities? (helpful, hopeful, happy, confident)
 - What extra-mural activities do you partake in?
 - What do you do during your free time?
 - How would you describe your academic achievements?
 - Which of the areas do you perform well in (athletics, leadership, friendships etc.)?
 - In terms of values and beliefs what is important to you?
 - What helps you to persevere in your life?
 - In your friends' what characteristics do you value?
 - Explain your family relationships and who is the most supportive person
6. How do you feel about your safety at school? Discuss
 - Explain the discipline/corporal punishment/alternatives and the safety measures at school

- What are your parent's contributions/ a code of conduct/school safety plan/ perceptions?
- What can be changed for the school to be safe and secure?
- Share how violence in school can be reduced?

7. What kind of programs can be used to prevent/curb school violence?

8. Additional comments

Do you have additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview.

Appendix H: Educator and Principal Interview Schedule

Name of school	
Name of teacher	
Gender	
Designation	

1. Describe the background of the school in terms of
 - Population size of learners and staff
 - When was the school established?
 - History of violence
2. How would you describe the ethos/values/principles of the school?
 - Values
 - School climate
 - Discipline
3. Explain the culture of this school (that means the social/artistic characteristics unique to this school?)
 - Late coming/absenteeism
 - Meetings
 - Celebrations
 - Conflict
4. How does the school function daily?
 - Management
 - Programs
 - Activities
 - Extra-mural
5. What kind of violence occur in the school and how does it affect the learners and educators?

6. What are the parent's contributions/ a code of conduct/school safety plan/ perceptions towards school violence?
7. What can be changed for the school to become safe and secure?
8. What skills do the learners use to cope with school violence?
9. Additional comments

Do you have additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview?

Appendix I: Educator Focus Group Schedule

Name of School: _____

Name List of Educators

Name	Age	Designation	Gender
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

1. What kinds of violence occur at school and how does it affect learners at this school?

- Feelings/others/self
- Reactions
- Teaching and learning/progress/ academic performance
- School attendance and discipline
- Teacher's attitudes/commitments
- Parents support and involvement

2. Coping Skills

How do the learners cope or deal with school violence?

- Coping skills
- Problem-solving
- Reactions under stressful situations

3. Protective factors that enhance resilience

For learners to cope with school violence what do you think is the best characteristics that learners should have, for example:

- Attitude
- Positivity
- Age
- Critical thinking
- Self-image/esteem
- Leadership skills
- Assertiveness

4. Safe Schools

As an educator do you perceive this school as a safe school? Discuss

- Discipline/corporal punishment/alternative/ safety measures
- Parent contributions/ a code of conduct/safety plan/perceptions
- What would you like to change in order to make this school safe and secure?
- What obstacles/problems/management
- How can violence in schools be reduced?

5. Strategies to enhance resilience

What aspects could be included to prevent violence?

- Support programs to fight violence?
- Children's contributions to curb violence
- Education of school and parents/community in terms of safe schools
- How can teachers help children to cope with violence?
- How can parents help children to cope with violence?
- Improvement of school security
- Education programs/ curriculum

6. Additional comments

Do you have additional comments, concerns or suggestions that you would like to make, which are not included in the interview?

Appendix J: Parent Interview Schedule

Name of parent	
Gender	
Age	
Career	

1. Describe the violence in your child's school?
2. Explain the time when your child experienced violence in the school?
3. What kind of skills helped him/her cope in this situation and generally?
4. How would you describe your child? (resilience/characteristics)
 - Understand the self/ self-concept
 - Attitude and feelings towards school and schoolwork?
 - Academic achievements
 - Best qualities (helpful, hopeful, happy, confident/ independent
 - Extra mural activities/ spending of free time
 - Importance of values and beliefs
 - Perseverance/ not giving up
 - Role of friends
 - Family/relationships

 - Discipline/corporal punishment/alternatives/safety measures
 - Parents contributions/ a code of conduct/ safety plan/perception
 - What would you like to change in order to make this school safe and secure?
 - What obstacles/ problems/management
 - How can violence in schools be reduced?
5. What can be done to curb violence at your child's school?

Appendix K: Turnitin Originality Report

Screenshot:

The screenshot displays a Turnitin Originality Report for a PhD thesis. The document title is "Exploring Learner Resilience to School Violence in a township secondary school in Durban KwaZulu-Natal" by Bonita Adele Kistnasamy, ID 207517376. The report shows a 14% match rate with 11 sources. The sources are listed in a table on the right side of the report.

Rank	Source	Match Percentage
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Turnitin Report:

PhD thesis			
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SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
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6	coalitionforrecovery.org Internet Source		<1%
7	www.cjcp.org.za Internet Source		<1%
8	Ruth Mampane. "Psychometric Properties of a Measure of Resilience Among Middle-Adolescents in a South African Setting", Journal of Psychology in Africa, 2014 Publication		<1%

