

**LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:
A CASE STUDY AT A CO-EDUCATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL
IN DURBAN.**

By

KRISHNALAL RAMCHUNDER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master of Education (Social Justice).

**University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban**

Supervisor: Dr Pholoho Morojele

March 2012

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with/ without my approval

Dr Pholoho Morojele

Date

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Krishnalal Ramchunder, declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other sources have been quoted, then:
 - (a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
 - (b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am an author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- (vi) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the references sections.

Signed

Date

Student number: 210553734

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The **children** who enthusiastically participated in this study

Dr Pholoho Morojele, for his professional guidance, help and continuous encouragement. It has been a privilege to be working with such a competent supervisor. Thank you.

The staff of the Edminson library for their assistance. A huge thank you to Sanjeev, William and Varsha for always willing to assist.

The Principal, School Governing Body and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education for allowing me the opportunity to conduct my research.

To my son, **Aavarn and daughters Verosha and Tejal** for all your love, motivation, and support.

To **Shero**, for your support and assistance whenever needed.

To my sisters, **Molly and Sony**, thanks for the love and care and especially for the tolerance shown at all times.

To my dear friend **Safura Meeran**, for your continued support, motivation and inspiration, without which, this journey would have been an arduous one.

A **Dear Friend** for her inspiration and gentle encouragement.

To my Creator and Lord who has guided me throughout this study, given me the strength and wisdom to complete this task in His name.

There are many others who helped out in the process, and I would like to thank them, in no particular order.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late parents,

Mr and Mrs Ramchunder Lutchen

ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative study of girls' and boys' understanding and experiences of gender-based violence in one co-educational primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The study sought to get insights into the problem of gender-based violence by investigating the lived experiences of both male and female learners within the school context. The aim of the study was to unveil forms of gender-based violence that the learners experience and some contributory factors, as well as the strategies for alleviating gender-based violence in this schooling context.

The study adopted a qualitative case study research design. It employed semi-structured interviews as its method of data collection and these took the form of focus group interviews and individual in-depth interviews. A total of eight learners (four girls and four boys) participated in the study.

The study found that there was a high incidence of gender-based violence in the school under study. This took the form of demeaning gendered comments, unfounded sexual rumours, sexualized gestures and jokes, sexual harassment, bullying and corporal punishment. Some school spaces, peer pressure, media and dominant discourses of gender were found to be some factors contributing to gender-based violence in this school. The findings indicate that boys are the group most culpable of continuing the cycle of gender-based violence by perpetrating acts of aggression on others learners. Boys drew on dominant discourses of gender in this context, which generally accord power to masculinities, at the expense of femininities. The resultant inequitable gendered power relations played a vital role in the perpetuation of the cycle of gender-based violence in the school. The study also finds that school teachers too were implicated in acts of gender-

based violence, which mainly took the form of assaulting learners, both male and female. In addition, teachers display a general acceptance of gender-based violence incidents as normal children's behaviour, and take no remedial actions to stop such abuses.

The study offers some suggestions that relevant stakeholders could employ to address gender-based violence at schools. These include supplementing teacher education curriculum, to provide training on how to deal with gender-based violence, a campaign to bring about greater awareness in schools and in the communities where parents are involved, additional professional support for schools and setting up structures for learner peer support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	Page no.
Title page	i
Supervisors' statement	ii
Declaration of originality	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	vi

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Background to the study	1
1.3	The geographic, social and educational context of the study	4
1.4	The South African education policies on school violence	7
1.5	The purpose, rationale and objectives of the study	8
1.6	Structure of the dissertation	10

CHAPTER TWO: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	12
2.2	Understanding of gender and violence	13
2.2.1	Sexual violence in schools	17
2.2.2	Gender-based violence	18
2.3	The nature and forms of gender-based violence within schools	19
2.3.1	Sexual harassment in schools	19

2.3.2	Bullying	21
2.3.3	Corporal punishment	23
2.4	Factors and spaces that promote gender-based violence in schools	24
2.4.1	Family influences	24
2.4.2	Dominant discourses of masculinities	26
2.4.3	Dominant discourses of femininities	27
2.4.4	Teachers as perpetrators of gender-based violence	28
2.4.5	Peer pressure	29
2.4.6	Mass media	31
2.5	Strategies for addressing gender-based violence in schools	32
2.5.1	Whole school development	33
2.5.2	Individual-change strategies	35
2.6	Theoretical frameworks of the study	36
2.6.1	Bandura's social learning theory	36
2.6.2	Power as domination	38
2.6.3	Cycle of socialisation	39
2.7	Conclusion	41

CHAPTER THREE: THE STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	43
3.2	Research design	43
3.3	Sample and sampling procedures	46
3.4	Methods of data collection	47
3.4.1	Interviews	48

3.4.2	Individual semi-structured interviews	49
3.4.3	Focus group discussions	50
3.5	Ethical considerations	51
3.6	Validity and reliability	52
3.7	Data analysis	53
3.8	Limitations of the study	54
3.9	Conclusion	55

CHAPTER FOUR : LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDINGS AND FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOL

4.1	Introduction	57
4.2	Learners' understanding of gender-based violence	57
4.3	Forms of gender-based violence: a lived experience of girls and boys	62
4.3.1	Gender-based demeaning comments	62
4.3.2	Spreading of unfounded sexual rumours	64
4.3.3	Sexualised gestures, comments and jokes	66
4.3.4	Sexual harassment	67
4.3.5	Bullying	74
4.3.6	Corporal punishment as a form of gender-based violence	77
4.4	Concluding remarks	79

CHAPTER FIVE: CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND SOME STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS

5.1	Introduction	80
5.2	Factors contributing to gender-based violence in the school	80
5.2.1	School spaces as hot spots for gender-based violence	80
5.2.2	Peer pressure	82
5.2.3	Media as a promoter of gender-based violence	84
5.2.4	“Boys will be boys’ discourse”: the role of dominant discourses of gender	85
5.3	Learners suggested strategies for addressing gender-based violence	90
5.3.1	Intervention by the Department of Education	91
5.3.2	Intervention by the school management team	91
5.3.3	Intervention by the teachers	93
5.3.4	Intervention by learners	94
5.3.5	Intervention by parents	95
5.4	Concluding remarks	97

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1	Introduction	98
6.2	Summary of the study findings	99
6.3	Implications of the study	102
6.3.1	Implications for policy and practice	102
6.3.2	Implications for further research	103
6.4	Conclusion	104

REFERENCES	105
APPENDIX A: Consent Letter: School Governing Body	119
APPENDIX B: Consent Letter: School Principal	120
APPENDIX Ca: Letter of Consent: Parent	121
APPENDIX Cb: Isijobelelo C: Isivumelwano esenziwa noMfundii	122
APPENDIX D: Informed Consent: Learner	123
APPENDIX E: Ethical Clearance	124

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This is a qualitative study of girls' and boys' understanding and experiences of gender-based violence in one co-educational primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The study sought to get insights into the problem of gender-based violence by investigating the lived experiences of both male and female learners within the school context. The aim of the study was to unveil forms of gender-based violence that the learners experience and some factors contributing to gender-based violence in this schooling context.

This chapter provides the background to the study, geographic and social context of the study, and discusses some of the South African education policies on school violence. It also provides the purpose, rationale and objectives of the study and concludes with an outline of the organisation and structure of the entire dissertation.

1.2 Background to the study

Studies conducted in Africa by Leach (2003) reveal that learners are being socialized in schools in ways which condone extreme levels of interpersonal violence. From studies conducted locally and internationally it emerges that much of the violence experienced by learners happens within their schools (Harber, 2004; Bester & du Plessis, 2010; Leach, 2003). A study by the Human Rights Watch (2001b) concludes that educators and learners are largely responsible for perpetrating such gender-based violence. Research on gender-

based violence in schools in South Africa is limited to understanding how, for instance, teenagers and teachers experience gender-based violence in schools (see Bester & Du Plessis, 2010; Doig, 2005; Bhana, de Lange & Mitchell, 2009). Therefore, there remains a need to obtain deeper insight into young learners' narrative and understanding of gender-based violence and to determine their awareness, attitudes and beliefs about ways to address the problem. It is the premise of this study that appropriate strategies in addressing gender-based in schools should be derived from the real experiences of learners in these contexts.

Violence against females is regarded as one of the main social problems in the current times and as such should receive appropriate attention. Bennet (2002); Morrell (1998), Jewkes & Abrahams (2002) and Bhana (2005) contend that gender-based violence in the school context in southern African countries has been identified as a considerable problem and necessitates serious consideration. As the level of conscientisation with regards to partner violence, childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, homophobia and racial disparagement increases, our knowledge of violence has become more nuanced. Violence is increasingly being understood in terms of a cycle which involves physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuses of power at individual, social and structural levels (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997).

Violence is pervasive in schools, where males are largely perpetrators of such violence as they play out certain types of masculinity. Schools have been found to play a part in the making of masculinities and can therefore be involved in reversing such a process (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997). This means that schools have a crucial role to play in curbing violence, particularly gender-based violence. Nonetheless, from the concerns mentioned

earlier and the precise role of the school, there seems to lack clarity as to how best the prevention of gender-based violence can be accomplished. Male masculinity is considered as primarily the root of such violence (Mwahombela, 2004). This usually takes the form of male (for instance boys') aggression and female submissiveness, which is a reflection of what society expects.

Studies conducted by the Human Rights Watch (2001b) in South Africa show a high prevalence of gender-based violence, and where everyday verbal and physical bullying of girls was observed. Leach (2003) points to learners being socialized at school to tolerate high levels of violence, more especially bullying. Sexual harassment such as unnecessary comments with sexual connotations and bodily threats, touching, and kissing were shown to occur from grades 3 and 4 (Mabusela, 2006). Mabusela (2006) points to boys resorting to violent ways in addressing conflict; and younger boys were reported to be victims of sexual violence too. This form of behaviour is indicative of male dominance, as several studies show the high prevalence of power imbalances that exists between the male perpetrators and female victims of sexual violence (Bhana, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2001b; Leach, 2003). Other studies (Morojele, 2011, for instance), have shown how girls and females exercise agency to position themselves in complex ways to navigate and even challenge gender-based violence in ways that disrupt the conventional (and dominant) discourses that often portray females as victims of gender-based violence.

However, acts of sexual harassment help to reinforce gendered power differentials (Inderpal, 2007), and in schools where gender-based violence goes unchallenged, girls feel highly vulnerable (Human Rights Watch, 2001b). It is also reported by the Human Rights Watch (2001b) that sexual abuse and harassment of girls by teachers as well as learners is

widespread in South Africa. These studies suggest that not much attention is given to the problem of gender-based violence in schools. Also, many schools lack the ability and the will to effectively deal with these problems. As such, very little research has been undertaken on learners to capture both their experiences and their thoughts on how gender-based violence in schools could be addressed (HSRC, 2001).

1.3 The geographic and social context of the study

Gender-based violence is a learnt behaviour (see Bandura's Social Learning Theory in chapter 2), which is carried from the community to school and vice versa. As such, I provide a brief description of the social background of the community in which the school is located, as this has a bearing on the dynamics of gender-based violence in this study.

Galway Primary (pseudonym), the research site of this study, is a co-educational primary school under the control of the KwaZulu government's Department of Education and Culture. Galway Primary, located in Newlands East about 10 kilometres from Durban, historically comprised working class (mostly) and middle class coloured families. This study focuses on learner's experiences of gender-based violence in a co-educational primary school and not on the race group of learners. The following paragraph provides a brief understanding of the different race groups in South Africa

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation enforced by the National Party governments of South Africa between 1948 and 1994. Racial segregation in South Africa began in colonial times. However, apartheid as an official policy was introduced following the general election of 1948. New legislation classified inhabitants into four racial groups

("native", "white", "coloured", and "Asian"), and residential areas were segregated, sometimes by means of forced removals. The state passed laws which paved the way for "grand apartheid", which was centred on separating races on a large scale, by compelling people to live in separate places defined by race. Another feature of grand apartheid was the Group Areas Act of 1950. Until then, most settlements had people of different races living side by side. This Act put an end to diverse areas and determined where one lived according to race. Each race was allotted its own area, which was used in later years as a basis of forced removal. Further legislation in 1951 allowed the government to demolish black shackland slums and forced white employers to pay for the construction of housing for those black workers who were permitted to reside in cities otherwise reserved for white people.

Since 1994, following the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, there has been a considerable transformation of the learner complement - formerly consisting exclusively of coloured learners - to its current race composition of 60% coloured learners and 40% black learners. The race composition was derived from the summary register of the school.

The school admits learners from Grade 0 to Grade 7. Their ages range from 5 to 15 years and there are approximately 1300 learners at the school. There is a mixture of Coloured, African and Indian male and female teachers. This is an English medium school with a staff complement of twenty-three (23) teachers, ten (10) males and thirteen (13) females. The school management team (SMT) is made up of seven (7) educators of which the principal is the only male. The researcher is an educator at the school.

Galway Primary is weighed down by the lack of parental support and is put severely under pressure by social upheavals, exacerbated by high levels of unemployment and poverty. School fees are R400 per learner per year and a great many learners (about 60%) are unable to pay. Learners too, come to school with different problems, since they are exposed to poverty, violence, abuse, and so forth which make it difficult for the school to administer proper discipline, therefore exacerbating the intensity of gender-based violence.

The study was undertaken amongst eight grade 7 learners from a school population of approximately 1300 learners. There was balance between the number of male and female learners in this school. The school accommodates learners from grade R (early childhood development) up to grade 7. Of the 30 classes in the school, two are reception classes (grade Rs).

Whilst the greater part of learners at the school is from the Newlands East area, the other feeder areas are Kwa-Mashu, Inanda, Newlands West and Ntuzuma. Black learners are either from middle-class families or working class families. The movement of black learners to the school could be attributed to two factors. Firstly, with the advent of the new democratic government there was a growth in the size of the black middle class and resulting moves to English language schools – the way of life of many of our black middle-class learners have only recently began to evolve from working-class to a middle-class lifestyle. Secondly, many of the coloured learners of this community in which the school is situated who are from either middle-class or upper-class families, have registered at either private or semi-private schools in

Durban. The movement has created space in the school where black learners can now be accommodated.

1.4 The South African education policies on school violence

With the advent of the new democratic government in 1994, a new democratic constitution was introduced, by which the right to dignity, equality, freedom and security for all citizens was assured. As such, legislation was passed, amongst other policy changes that banned corporal punishment in schools. The two pieces of legislation concerning this are to be found in The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) and the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) (SASA). Schools are now tasked with the responsibility of finding alternative ways of dealing with delinquency, a shift towards creating safe and health-promoting schools (Asmal, 2000, p.2).

The new government had also introduced other legislation with the intention of improving education in South Africa: The White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, 1995) focused on access of quality education to all its citizens. SASA (Act 84 of 1996) was also equally to provide schools with greater autonomy; the principal feature being to allow for community ownership of schools through the establishment of school governing bodies.

Notwithstanding the Department of Education effort (2000), through the launch of “Tirisano: Call to Action” to address safety issues at school and other legislation mentioned earlier, very little has been outlined on ways to address issues of gender-based violence in schools.

1.5 The purpose, rationale and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore learners' experiences of gender-based violence in an urban co-educational primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The aim was to contribute information regarding learners' experiences and factors that contribute to gender-based violence, which could be used to support the policy initiatives aimed at alleviating gender-based violence in schools. The significance of this study lies in its ability to offer schools, communities and society at large a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of gender-based violence. This has the potential to mitigate gender-based violence in schools, by at least raising awareness about the plight of children's schooling experiences as a result of gender-based violence. The findings would also act as a stimulus to broaden the scope of school-based violence interventions to particularly include issue of gender-based violence as a central feature of school-based violence. Indeed, the findings on the experiences, thoughts and actions of the learners regarding gender-based violence provide useful information regarding both the conceptual and practical interventions to address gender-based violence within this school context.

As an educator at a co-educational primary school, I have observed confrontations between male and female learners and their peers, almost on a daily basis. These confrontations usually commence with an argument and subsequently result in violent clashes. Violence in schools seems to perpetuate. Educators persist in inflicting corporal punishment as a strategy to curb gender-based violence. The modules in my Master's programme, "Peace Education and Conflict Resolution" and "Social Identity" in 2010 and 2011 were very insightful as I engaged with literature on violence. This insight allowed me to reflect on the issue of violence and in particular gender-based violence in my school. I am now aware of

how the question of peace and conflict in society and in schools is deeply entangled with people's social identities, hence my focus on gender-based violence, which looks into how forms of masculinities and femininities are played out in the incidents or relationships of violence (Bhana et al., 2009; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Morojele, 2009).

The objective of this study is to understand the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of a sample of learners regarding gender-based violence. In so doing, the study undertakes to gain an in-depth understanding of what learners believe constitutes gender-based violence, and how they view gender-based violence, as well as what they think could be done to address gender-based violence in the school.

The study was guided by the following key research questions:

1. What are the learners' understandings of gender-based violence?

This will enable the researcher to ascertain from the learners what constitutes gender-based violence.

2. What are the learners' experiences of gender-based violence?

By offering the learners an opportunity to articulate their experiences, gives the researcher an opportunity to understand the extent of gender-based violence at the school.

3. What are the factors that contribute to learners' experiences of gender-based violence?

4. How could gender-based violence be addressed?

The factors that emerge as central to gender-based violence will be areas that need to be addressed to alleviate gender-based violence in schools.

To address the above key research questions, the study adopted a qualitative research methodology, using semi-structured interviews and observations as its methods of data collection. These were conducted with a sample of eight grade 7 learners, four of which were females and four being males. The age of the learners was between 13 and 15 years. The participants comprised one black male and one black female learner; the rest were coloured learners.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter two is a review of relevant literature on violence and gender-based violence in schooling contexts. The review of literature is based on local and international research. This chapter also presents theoretical frameworks within which data collected in this study is interpreted.

Chapter three explains the research design and method employed in this study. This study takes form of a case study, using two types of interviews, individual and two focus group discussions.

Chapter four presents the first part of the results of the study; data is presented and analysed, and the findings are discussed in the form of two themes which emerged from the

data collected. Theme one, “learners’ understanding and forms of gender-based violence” is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter five presents the second part of results of the study, data is presented and analysed, and the findings are discussed as theme two “contributory factors and some strategies to address gender-based violence in the schools.”

Chapter six concludes by drawing on the findings and presenting the implications of the study. In the study it was concluded that there is a problem of violence in this school under study, it was therefore recommended that: teacher professional development programmes be established to help in solving the problem of violence in that school; the school embark on a programme to bring about an awareness of gender-based violence amongst its learners, professional personnel assist with counselling and finally a peer support structure be considered, where peers get involved in addressing issues of gender-based violence in the primary schools. Finally, implications for policy and practice and for further research will be outlined culminating in some concluding remarks.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion of relevant literature on school violence, with particular reference to gender-based violence within schooling contexts, as this is the focus of this study. Although the research focuses on young learners' experiences and understanding of gender-based violence, the review is not confined to youth only, because there is a relationship between learners' experiences of gender-based violence and the societal factors such as adult values and the contextual realities to which children are exposed. As Morrell (2002) has noted, what is happening in schools is mirrored by that which takes place in society at large. This is partly due to hierarchical power structures that are common in most cultures and ethnic groups, where women (and girls) are positioned as subordinate to men (Vetten, 2000). The inequitable positioning of females as subordinate to males could be understood to be the primary reason why violence in society and schools tend to militate against women (and girls), and why the prevalence of this phenomenon has reached such unacceptable high levels (Fedler & Tanzer, 2000; Oransky & Marecek, 2009).

In the schooling contexts, gender-based violence is becoming increasingly noticed, especially within the contemporary society, in which schools are considered as violent and dangerous places (Morrell, 2002). In a study of secondary school learners in the Gauteng province, Meyer (2005) found that schools are considered to have become increasingly aggressive, which produces militant and violent youth. Cultural ideologies relating to the mediocre standing of women (and girls) have encouraged patriarchal feelings and

perpetuated gender stereotypes that promote a view that females are reliant and powerless and males dominant and aggressive (Fedler & Tanzer, 2000). As this literature review illustrates, such ideologies are implicated in the prevalence of gender-based violence within schools.

This chapter discusses the literature on violence in schools both locally and internationally. In particular, the review is organised according to the following themes: notions of gender-based violence, the nature and forms of gender-based violence within schools, factors and spaces that promote gender-based violence in schools and strategies to address gender-based violence in schools. The chapter also discusses the theoretical frameworks within which gender-based violence in schooling contexts could to be understood.

2.2 Understanding gender and violence in schools

The term gender is wide in its understanding and includes a variety of concepts. In its earlier usage, gender is another word for sex or for women; the study of gender is the study of women, sex roles, or both (Butler, 1999). However, Doig (2005) refers to gender as particular to humans; it signifies all complex characteristics attributed by cultures to human males and females respectively. Paechter's (1998) understanding of gender is embodied in Foucault's thinking that "Gender is socially constructed in a way that involves or includes an unequal power relation, such that, while there are differences within genders, it is mainly males who have access to, enact and embody power" (p.55). From the above it emerges that power is often gendered.

Gender is not lived nor created out of nothing, but happens in a gendered world, in gendered institutions (Sathiparsad, 2006). Kimmel (2004) is of a firm view that gender is the property of institutions and as such produces gender differences. Gender plays itself out in any social institution such as a school, a workplace or even a street (Connell, 2002). Thus, for example in a school, how boys and girls should conduct themselves, with whom should they socialise, teachers attitudes towards boys and girls and the policies surrounding girls and boys are questions that centres on gender constructions. Schools reproduce and reinforce gender differences and gender inequalities (Leach, 2004). Each day in school revolves around clear and implied rules, custom and symbols which direct and control behaviour, e.g. girls sweep classrooms whereas boys ring the bell, and there are different tasks for male and female prefects (Leach, 2004). It is therefore necessary to make some remarks on gender construction and the part that schools play in shaping how masculinity develops. Schools, like any institution, are exhaustively gendered in their own day to day administration (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998; Morrell, 1998; Mills, 2001; Kimmel, 2004). The school as an institution upholds traditionally duplicated rules and is largely responsible for shaping whatever transpires within it (Kimmel, 2004). The pervasive nature of gender is drawn in this shaping. Learners are constantly experiencing the powerful nature of gender by observing educators advancing discriminatory practices. Gendered practices at school may become acceptable as they may be construed as the normal way of acting. Gilbert and Gilbert (1998) make the point that most facets of schooling are spoken about in terms of gendered relations. This is vital in grasping that schools are arenas for the construction of masculinities and femininities

Gender discrimination can create damaging consequences on female students' learning experience. For instance, teachers that give preference to boys over girls, because of the

boys' greater involvement in classroom activities can be a hindrance to girls. This may result in further oppression and retard their capability to progress (Leach, 2004). As such, children can feel a sense of hopelessness and annoyance, which may contribute to lasting sadness.

Gender-based violence stems from violence. As such, this study undertakes to obtain a deeper understanding of violence in order to gain more insight into gender-based violence at schools. The site for the study is a school and Morrell (2002) affirms that violence in schools exists. We need to gain a deeper understanding of gender-based violence in schools. Schools are sites for interpersonal relationships between learners, and the opportunity for gender-based violence is present. Harber (2004) describes violence as an act against an individual or group of people designed to cause physical and psychological harm. Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997) show that violence takes place almost all the time and manifests itself in physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuses of power at various levels. Therefore, it can be said that violence involves any act against a human being which can cause harm. Violence against women or girls highlights that such actions are entrenched in gender inequality (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002).

Henry (2000) offers a very simple definition of school violence by saying it is harm caused to an individual by using force and thereafter extends it by saying that violence in the school context, refers to learner-on-learner and learner-on-teacher acts of physical harm. Tillman (2000) however, adds physical aggression, as hitting, threatening, and injuring in describing school violence. In schools, these crimes of the powerful include harms committed by teachers against learners. It is clear from these definitions that school violence can take the form of physical injury as in assault. School violence can also

manifest itself in bullying where there is an abuse of power, where the less powerful are exploited by others. Sexual harassment is another form of school violence where there is an abuse of power, mainly over girls. Both bullying and sexual harassment as gender-based violence will be dealt with later.

The school is a site for violent behaviour, where the actors are learners displaying aggression towards their peers. Also, educators displaying aggression towards their peers and learners, Violence is not limited to the school arena, but also in family, sport and community activities. Violence is experienced in many forms; as a victim, a perpetrator, a target, a witness in acts of violence. All of them are predisposed not only by the gender of the learner, but also by the race and class of the learner (Strawhacker, 2002). Although this study does not focus on the disparities between class and race, when understanding violence that occurs within the school from a gender perspective, class and race serves to assist in understanding the social factors that play a role in the way learners behave, and the implications of this for gender-based violence in schools.

This study however, focuses on the human element of gender-based violence, meaning that it looks into violence as Pasteur (2004, p.2) outlines the forms of school violence which is not limited to such physical acts as “hair pulling, kicking, scratching, biting, and spitting.” Verbal violence is included, such as swearing, shouting, bullying and screaming. Mental violence also happens, for example, when learners or educators engage in comparing the academic work of learners which can be very demeaning. Harber’s (2004) definition of school violence is similar to that of Meyer (2005), but adds that schools can both be violent towards learners and can help to promote violent activity. Of foremost significance in

comprehending school-based violence is to obtain an understanding of children's subjective perceptions of the phenomena. As such, this study attempts to expand current understandings of the learners' experiences of gender-based violence in a co-educational primary school.

2.2.1 Sexual violence in schools

Sexual violence is another aspect of gender-based violence faced by schools across the world (Leach, Fiscian, Kadzamira, Lemani & Machakanja, 2003). On a daily basis girls are faced with the greatest threat of sexual violence in schools where older males make sexual advances on them (Leach, 2004). Sexual violence can be described as any sexual act, attempt to acquire a sexual act, inappropriate sexual comments or gestures, directed, against a person's sexuality using force, by any person regardless of their connection to the victim (World Health Organization, 2002). Leach et al. (2003) draws our attention to male teachers and older male learners forcefully imposing their will on female learners to engage in sexual activities with them.

The risk status of school-going girls in terms of sexual violence, more especially in rural areas, is highlighted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005). According to the report, cases of gender-based violence in rural areas tend not to be reported. This is largely owing to the difficulty experienced in accessing the criminal justice system as well as the result of women internalizing such acts as normal (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). In some cases women fear verbalising such violence as it adds to the trauma and stigma, whilst others prefer to remain silent (Leach, 2003).

2.2.2 Gender-based violence

By making gender the frame through which we view acts of violence, we imply that violence against women has a cultural basis and that violent acts could be prevented by changing social norms and perceptions (Barzelatto, 1998). The focus on gender-based violence against women is not to imply that women are never violent against men, although Leach and Humphreys (2007) argue that violence by girls against boys is a relatively unknown form of gender violence. This is probably due to the notion that many feminists do not associate girls with violence. The linking of gender to violence is used because violence is shaped by gender roles and status in society (Leach, 2003), so there is a high probability that the power relationships between boys and girls might bear on the learners' experiences of gender-based violence in schools. Further, human interactions centre on gender signifying that both men and women are vulnerable to the dominant norms of gender relations.

The primary reason for gender-based violence is the imbalance in power between males and females and in socially conventional views of what make up masculine and feminine behaviour (Leach, 2004). Further, these power differentials exists where males are created to be dominant, powerful and controlling and females to be submissive and subservient (Johnson, 2004). According to Motha (2006) any form of physical, sexual or psychological harm against women and girls is regarded as gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is any action or word with an intention to cause hurt, emotional or physical, to a person or group of persons because of gender (United Nations, 1995; Hanson, 1995). The UN

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women views gender violence as being primarily violence by males against females (United Nations, 1993).

2.3 The nature and forms of gender-based violence in schools

2.3.1 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is an aspect of gender-based violence which takes the form of sex discrimination that includes “any undesirable sexual moves, requests for sexual favours and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature” (Herbert 1992, p.14). According to Larkin (1994), sexual harassment is a way of expressing sexism that shows and supports the unequal power relation that exists between men and women in our patriarchal society. Larkin (1994) see sexual harassment as a way individuals use it to uphold hierarchical power relationships where unequal power relations are maintained. Unequal power relation could include men's power over women, and men's power over other men.

Many girls worldwide are victims of sexual harassment in schools (Leach et al., 2003). Sexual harassment seems to perpetuate itself and this is largely due to the way boys have been socialized to view girls as objects. From a very early age boys learn to see girls as less adept and less praiseworthy. Harro (2000) outlines what she calls a cycle of socialisation, in which boys are socialised to behave in certain ways, which are chiefly adversely to the ways in which girls are socialised. This socialisation is a precursor for unequal social and power relationships between boys and girls, which make it more likely that girls bear the brunt of the dynamics of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment. Harassment by girls can be construed differently. In arguing that boys enjoy being harassed by girls,

Berman, McKenna, Arnold, Taylor, and MacQuarrie (2000) suggests that these boys are not undergoing sexual harassment. The ramifications of sexual harassment experienced by boys are less noteworthy than that experienced by girls (Berman et al., 2000). For boys, harassment is about achieving a certain status among peers, whereas for girls it is a matter of further domination by boys (Berman et al., 2000). For Mills (2001), power disparity between males and females is central to harassment and in so doing underpins and reproduces these relationships.

Jones (1985, pp. 28-29) argues that daily in schools, “girls and women educators are subjected to verbal sexual harassment, demeaning sexual comment, appraising looks and smiles.” Verbal harassment appears to be innate in the lives of many female learners. Physical harassment involves touching and grabbing and sexual assault is when the touching involves a certain measure of force, which may result in injury. Visual harassment is also common in school.

Dominant masculinity compels young men to believe that it is necessary for them to control everything: themselves, the universe, other males, and particularly females. This implies that boys are socialized to show only their anger and to hold back all other emotions, which are considered fainthearted. Further on the issue of men's and women's socialization, literature suggests that boys are passive recipients of, rather than active participants in, the socialization process.

Berman et al. (2000) depart from the established assumption that sexual harassment only affects women. He makes a point by saying that males may also be subjected to sexual harassment. Therefore, in an attempt to address sexual harassment, males should not be

ignored. Does this imply that males and females experience sexual harassment to the same degree to necessitate equal attention? Berman et al. (2000) makes the point that boys harass and girls are harassed.

Girls and women are frequently positioned in threatening and insecure situations at school. In a study conducted in schools in what is commonly known as the 'developing world' Dunne, Humphreys and Leach (2006) found that boys carry this notion where they see sex as an entitlement and so forced sex is acceptable as are multiple sexual partners. As such, girls and women find it extremely difficult to protect themselves against acts of gender-based violence. Acts of vengeance and the status assigned to being in a relationship deter girls from opting out of relationships (Dunne et al., 2006).

2.3.2 Bullying

Learner-on-learner acts of violence are often classed as bullying, even though this overlooks the sexualised nature of these acts (Leach, 2004). This study construes bullying as an aspect of gender-based violence because bullying is a psychological or physical way of bringing harm to an individual by a person who is powerful to a person who is less powerful (Dunne, 2001). Bullying includes unswerving behaviours such as teasing, intimidation, fighting, taunting and theft that commences by one or more learners against a target (Banks, 1997). Bullying is a demonstration of the power imbalances that exist between two individuals which distinguishes it from other forms of violent behaviour (Crawage, 2005). This power imbalance plays itself out in incidents where learners who are fighting are seen to be not of equal standing, rather of some unequal physical strength (Olweus, 2000). In a study conducted by Morojele (2009) in the context of the Free

Primary Education policy in three primary schools in Lesotho, he found that acts of bullying draw on dominant constructions of masculinities and femininities where boys are seen as rough and uncaring and this is implicated in actions of bullying within the schools.

Bullying could manifest itself in more than one way: one learner against another, a group of learners against a single learner or groups against other groups (Neser, Ovens, van der Merwe & Morodi, 2003). They go on to say that bullying can take the form of premeditated, continual unkind acts, words or other behaviour, such as mockery and threatening committed by learners. According to Coloroso (2002) these repulsive acts may not have been planned by the perpetrator and therefore for such acts to be deemed as bullying, a disparity in power is to be found between the bully and the victim. Victims of bullying are often easy prey to the powerful and therefore such acts are repeated. Learners do not enjoy much protection from such attacks as they are more susceptible vis-à-vis the bully.

Bullies may be products of homes where violence is an everyday occurrence, which turns them into very miserable people (Roberts, 2006). Morrell (2002) is of the same opinion and adds that these bullies find schooling to be a huge hurdle. These perpetrators could also be victims of bullying from an environment outside school, which may be even more traumatic than what learners experience at schools. As mentioned earlier, bullying can take different forms and not limited to boys. A study by Harber (2004) and De Wet (2005) reveals that girls are both victims and perpetrators of bullying. However, the degree of bullying vary in that boys resort largely to physical means and girls chose less apparent and implied ways of bullying. Besag (1995) and De Wet (2005) depart from the established

assumption that bullying takes place amongst the same gender in saying that there exists ample evidence of boys bullying girls.

2.3.3 Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment as a dimension of gender-based violence is regularly used by teachers to enforce discipline in South African schools (Morrell, 2001). The passing of the South African School's Act of 1996 banned corporal punishment in South African schools. Anderson (2006) in her study of lived experiences of 13 school boys in a school in Wentworth, KwaZulu-Natal argues that, notwithstanding that corporal punishment is outlawed, teachers continue to use force to discipline learners, and thus do so criminally.

Although corporal punishment sometimes leads to injury (Hart, 2005; UNICEF, 2001), it has not usually been cast in terms of gender (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). However, corporal punishment can be connected to acts of aggressive masculinity and because of its persistent nature promotes physical violence in school relations (Humphreys, 2006). This plays itself out differently for male and female learners and teachers.

Corporal punishment as a way of instituting discipline takes on different forms in schools (Dunne & Leach, 2003; Humphreys, 2003). Further, it is also received differently by female and male learners. There exists a belief that corporal punishment was administered differently with boys and girls where boys were beaten more severely (Morrell, 2001). He goes on to say that corporal punishment with boys trained them to be more aggressive and unrelenting. Girls however, were trained to be dutiful and obedient.

The gendered belief related to corporal punishment is that boys should be subjected to aggressive forms of punishment whilst girls should not. This position is limited to the South African context where it has been found that African girls have been punished at home and at school.

Acts of punishment creates a feeling that disciplining children with experiences of pain is normal. The ramifications of corporal punishment on children are exhaustive and not limited to emotionally instability, lack of tolerance, and, most importantly, being violent. Thus, the cycle of violence is perpetuated (de Wet, 2005; Humphreys, 2008; Bhana, 2005).

2.4 Factors and spaces that promote gender-based violence in schools

2.4.1 Family influences

Violence cannot be attributed to a single factor. Its causes are complex and occur at different levels. According to the ecological model of Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg and Zwi (2002), level two of this model focuses on close relationships, such as those with family and friends. In youth violence, for example, having friends who engage in or encourage violence can increase a young person's risk of being a victim or perpetrator of violence. According to Krug et al. (2002) childhood contact to violence in the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, or even witnessing violence in the house has a significant effect on the well being of children. Further, childhood exposures to violence is a risk factor for a range of risk behaviours and disorders, for example, smoking, obesity, high risk sexual behaviour, and depression, that are in turn causally related to other major public health problems such as cancer, heart diseases, sexually transmitted

disease and suicide (Krug, et al., 2002). Pinheiro (2006) is of the view that many children are routinely exposed to physical, sexual, and psychological violence in their homes and schools, in care and justice systems, in places of work, and in their communities.

Family is only one of many interacting systems influencing and shaping human development. By this I mean, families are largely responsible for modelling behaviour that teaches children to resolve conflicts using violence. Literature strongly supports the claim that aggression and violence are learned behaviours, based largely on the social learning theory of Albert Bandura and Robert Walters (Bhana, 2000). According to this theory, continued exposure to violent role models is likely to lead to imitation and acceptance of violent conduct. Violence in homes can be detrimental as children learn from observing others. Vogelman (1990), Ozer and Weinstein (2004), and Shefer, Ratele and Strebel, (2007) argue that a boy who experiences violence at home constructs violence as normal behaviour. As such, it demonstrates to these boys that violence is used as a means of acquiring whatever is required and to control the actions of others. Applying Bandura's theory of modelling, there is a likelihood that violent behaviour of fathers is most likely to be emulated by their sons. This form of violence may manifest itself when the son engages in a relationship with women, as he witnessed violence against his mother (Vogelman, 1990; Loeber, 2001). In a study conducted by Wolfe, Crooks, Chiodo, and Jaffe, (2009) they argue that although not inevitable, it is more likely that children who are victims of maltreatment will carry forward these behaviour patterns into adolescence and adulthood, thus perpetuating bullying and harassment with peers.

2.4.2 Dominant discourses of masculinities

Highlighting that men are violent to women and to men, Morrell (2002) contends that this is detrimental to society. Morrell (2002) and Schrock and Padavic (2007) elaborate by saying that violence is a way of ensuring that boys uphold the dictates of hegemonic masculinity. However, their experiences of violence subject them to added trauma of emotional and physical pain. Klein (2006), in examining everyday violence of girls in schools, sees boys rejected or otherwise frustrated by girls whom they are (in their view) supposed to dominate, as a reason for gender-based violence. Boys do not take kindly to being rejected as this damages their ego. There exists a perception by boys that losing control over girls speaks against their expectations of traditional roles; this leads to violence. Bhana (2005) shows how boys use violence as a way of punishing girls for deviating from societal expectations and norms. However, there exists a possibility that the boy may have provoked the response.

Boys have a tendency to show pornographic material to other learners more especially girls. Studies conducted by (Human Rights Watch, 2001b; Dunne, et al., 2006) revealed that girls are unhappy when boys show them illicit pictures or write them sexual messages. From this study it emerges that boys hurl inappropriate remarks about girl's appearance, make provocative gestures and also touch their breasts and buttocks. Klein (2006) makes a point that this type of behaviour emanates from negative attitudes from parents, teachers, peers and other significant people in their lives. From the above it emerges that these people hold the notion that boys should dominate and control girls. As such, boys use aggressive means to maintain domination.

2.4.3 Dominant discourses of femininities

It is generally accepted that victims of gender-based violence are mostly women and girls. In stating that violence perpetrated by girls is not so recognized as a form of gender-based violence, Leach and Humphreys (2007) attribute this to perhaps the belief that girls are always victims and therefore cannot be linked to such acts of violence. However, they have identified some recent studies in sub-Saharan Africa that show girls as perpetrators of gender-based violence. In terms of this argument, Bhana (2008) who conducted a study on school girls in a working class primary school context in South Africa explains that girls engage with violence, resort to it, and defy it.

Wood and Jewkes' (2001) study supports the earlier claim made by Leach and Humphreys by pointing to girls bullying boys and female students acting violently towards other female and male students. According to Leach and Humphreys (2007) violence by girls is less noticeable and physical than that by boys, and it remains less recognizable. Leach and Humphreys (2007) distinguishes some forms of aggression when girls engage in unacceptable behaviour, spreading baseless rumours or mocking.

In arguing that African working class school girls are not only victims of gender-based violence, Bhana (2008) and Morojele (2009) claim that they are agents as well. Such behaviour is precipitated by the urgency to protect the limited physical and social resources available to them (Artz, 1998; Bhana, 2008). Such behaviour by girls signifies a form of oppressed group behaviour and such girls therefore feel justified in their actions. As such girls will commit acts of aggression towards others to ensure that they are not sidelined.

2.4.4 Teachers as perpetrators of gender-based violence

The things that male teachers and boys are guilty of are sexual harassment (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Leach et al., 2003; Mwachombela, 2004) and violence (Human Rights Watch, 2001b; Leach & Humphreys, 2007) more than other misdemeanours in schools. In highlighting sexual violence by teachers, the Human Rights Watch (2001b) revealed that male teachers coerce girls into relationship and significantly there are many cases where principals and teachers are guilty of raping school girls. On the same issue, a study by Leach and Humphreys (2007) conducted in eight countries at sub-Saharan Africa makes the same point regarding patterns of sexual abuse and harassment of female students by both teachers and male students. Further, some studies have reported male teachers demanding sexual favours from girls in exchange for academic accomplishments, preferential treatment in class or money in return for sex (Leach et al., 2003; Abrahams, Mathews & Ramela, 2006; Dunne, et al., 2006; Wane, 2009).

Girls more especially in Africa, who object to such advances are victimised or beaten for ill-discipline (Leach, & Humphreys, 2007). The punishment administered by teachers serves as retribution to these girls. To avoid any form of abuse and being denied a fair opportunity to progress to the next grade, girls have fewer options but to enter into a sexual relationship with teachers (Leach, 2002). On the same issue, Abrahams et al., (2006) whose study was conducted in southern African countries, lament the teachers' abuse of their power over the schoolgirls to gain sexual access to them.

A study by Bisikaa, Pierson, Ntatab, Konyani (2009) conducted in Malawi, sought to determine the extent to which violence prevents girls accessing primary school education in

Malawi. The abuses by teachers undoubtedly compound victims' reticence to report assaults, and the survey revealed that less than half of all incidents of physical violence are reported. The major reason cited for not reporting incidents of violence is a fear of further violence, since currently there are no systems in place to guarantee that the perpetrator will be punished and deterred from offending again or that the victim will be protected.

2.4.5 Peer pressure

The term peer pressure, almost immediately envisions a person being forced into situations that they wouldn't normally be in just to keep up with their friends. However, peer pressure can also be positive. It's difficult for any adult to decipher which pressures are positive and which are negative, especially as children mature and try to find their individuality (Trucco, Colder, Bowker, & Wieczorek 2011). During teen years, adolescents are more likely to seek the opinions and acceptance of friends rather than family. No influence in a teenager's life is as powerful as peer pressure (Trucco, et al., 2011).

Positive peer pressure teens have an important role to play in influencing socially acceptable behaviour by affecting the attitudes and behaviours of their peers. At best, positive peer groups can mobilize a teen, amongst other things to encourage a society free from violence.

Negative peer pressure on the other hand, is the unwanted pressure that causes a teen to participate in activities that may hurt him or others (Trucco, et al., 2011). It can draw a teen away from their family and into dangerous activities like experimenting with alcohol,

drugs or violence. Also, the pressure to be sexually active is very strong among teenagers. Teenage boys can be pressured by friends to engage in sexual activity to become a man, and girls can feel pressured to have sex in order to fit in or feel better about themselves. In both cases, teenagers see it as a way of fitting in and being accepted. Even reasonably independent teenagers can be persuaded to go with the crowd and follow what their friends may say or do.

According to Trucco, et al. (2011), teenagers look to their peer groups for social and emotional support. In order to keep that support they are more likely to give in to negative peer pressure. Teenagers who don't receive enough affection and approval from their parents will be more likely to seek approval from their friends and are more susceptible to negative peer pressure.

The education system has a commanding function to fulfil with regards to its involvement in respect of societal controls over negative peer influences and constructions. Phillips (1993, p. 60) is of the view that “the education system is where boys explicitly start learning the rules of masculinity from their peers” and the most powerful and dominant figures in the playground, who will put across most forcibly what it means to be male. As such, in their endeavour to develop a sense of masculinity, boys will be circumspect about who they keep as friends. Also, boys see a need to show their allegiance to hegemonic forms of masculinity in order to be accepted by their peers (Mills, 2001). Phillips (1993, p. 203) goes on to say that “boys are more prone to peer pressure and it is through unyielding peer-monitoring that they find out what is considered as gender-appropriate behaviour.”

Leach (2003) asserts that certain male peer group cultures engender notions of masculinity and masculine definitions of success and failure and these add to the pattern of male

disaffection and underachievement. As such, boys who do not obey the rules may be bullied, assaulted or victimised in various ways. Donald, Lazarus, and Lolwana (2002) are of the view that young children who feel inadequate within their family and school setup may increase the prospect of their seeking alternative identity status, acceptance and support in peer groups. Peer harassment, more especially sexual harassment, is a dilemma for both girls and boys in schools, and the effects from this experience can have long term effects (Fineran & Bennett, 1998). Apart from a drop in academic performances, signs of long term absenteeism, tardiness and truancy become evident.

2.4.6 Mass media

Mass media is largely responsible for the way youth are socialized. Media forms such as television, movies, radio, advertising, magazines and comics consistently portray men as dominant and women as subordinate and as such, reinforce gender stereotypes. Moane (1998, p.279) makes the point that “these media are powerful; it is able to persuade the notion of how society view its people.” From this it emerges that all forms of media perpetuate unrealistic, stereotypical and limiting perceptions. At a Congressional Public Health Summit on July 26, 2000, it was noted that entertainment violence can lead to increases in aggressive attitudes, values, and behaviour, particularly in children (Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, et al., 2003).

Further, the introduction of modern devices – mainly interactive media (such as video games and the Internet) – has given rise to fresh ways in which children and youth can be exposed to violence. According to observational-learning theory, there is a tendency towards a particular behaviour being strengthened through seeing that behaviour being

enacted by someone you value (Bandura, 1977). The observer identifies with the model and subsequently imitates such behaviour. As such, children who associate with an aggressive actor or perceive a violent scene as realistic are more likely to have aggressive ideas primed by the observed violence (Anderson et al., 2003).

2.5 Strategies for addressing gender-based violence in schools

As an initiative by the Department of Education and Culture in collaboration with South African National Department of Education, McGill University in the USA and CIDA, the Department of Education and Culture released a module to address gender-based violence at schools (Nkani, 2006). This module was created to be used at school or district level with educators, school management and school governing bodies. Essentially the module is based on the premise that teachers possess the necessary knowledge to execute curriculum change. Educators were engaged in eight interactive workshops where the focus was on highlighting gender-based violence at schools and subsequently eliciting the responses of the educators, with the intention of charting a way forward (Nkani, 2006).

Notwithstanding that these workshops were piloted in some provinces, and were expected to reach all provinces, the module has not as yet materialised. Government has a tendency of being tardy in its implementation of policy and as such issues of gender-based violence will once again be sidelined. This is evident when guidelines for educators on issues on gender in schools were published in May 2002, and only reached schools in May 2005 (Nkani, 2006). The delay in addressing issues leaves our girls vulnerable to gender-based violence, as it is vitally important for educators to have greater insight in the ways that gender-based violence manifests itself in the schooling context.

Schools not only exist to serve the educational needs of children, but, according to Eliasov and Frank (2000), they are also sites that can be used advantageously to initiate anti-violence prevention programmes as they can reach a large number of children (including those who are most vulnerable) as well as the community. As one example, Bisikaa, Ntatab, and Konyani (2009) are of the view that unless gender-based violence is recognized and a detailed multi-sectoral plan of action introduced to deal with it, Malawi will be unable to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015. Such initiatives require a coherent strategy. Thus a study by Eliasov and Frank (2000) offer a host of strategies on ways to deal with crime and violence at schools, a discussion of two of these strategies follows.

2.5.1 Whole school development

Eliasov and Frank (2000) suggest that in the schooling context, the environment and quality of day-to-day classroom exchanges can serve to oppose the negative influences that children experience in society and thereby encourage pro-social citizenship. Whole school development requires a concerted effort in developing the school capacity, in reviewing the way power is played out on a daily basis, and in ensuring that democratic process dictates policy making and decision making (Henry, 2000; Eliasov & Frank, 2000). On the other hand De Wet (2003) suggests that an intervention programme that addresses the needs of the individual school and that involve the entire school community needs to be developed, implemented and monitored. Banks (1997) is of the view that successful interventions have to engage the entire school community rather than focus on the perpetrators and victims alone. Barzelatto (1998) suggest that as a way to prevent violence, especially violence against women, society as a collective must initiate moves to revisit many cultural, social,

economic and political processes. To achieve this, changes have to take place to bring about moral respect in society, underpinned by shared esteem and unity among all individuals and mainly between men and women.

A joint effort by relevant stakeholder from within and outside the school is essential to ensure its success. Leach (2003) is of the view that a dictatorial school culture should be substituted by a more open and democratic one, in which teacher, parents and learners can talk about issues pertaining to gender-based violence. Dunne et al. (2006) are of the view that while a whole school approach is imperative to address gender-based violence, educators are central in its implementation. Further, educators are gendered beings and as such must come to terms with their own attitudes and experiences about gender and violence. Schools should embark on an intensive campaign to redefine norms and rules which outline appropriate behaviour, and should make this known to all using avenues such as the print media and organized functions (Eliasov & Frank, 2000). De Wet (2003) suggest that a group consisting of learners, educators, school management and the school governing body should be set up to investigate, for example, bullying by educators and learners.

As classroom managers, educators are expected to find creative ways and means to be in control and to be excellent role models to the children (Eliasov & Frank, 2000). This necessitates modifying classroom management styles and teaching methods to encourage greater learner participation and as such cultivate a sense of belonging which will augur well for the future. Stein (1999) suggest that discussions in the classroom should centre on gender-based violence; sexual harassment, teasing and bullying. Conflict resolution and social skills are taught directly as a distinct curriculum or through the integration in other coursework (Leone, Mayer, Malmgren & Meisel, 2000). In this regard, parents and

educators are equipped to train learners directly using specific thinking and communication skills designed to prevent conflict in school and at home.

2.5.2 Individual change strategies

These strategies are intended to promote change in learner knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour (Eliasov & Frank, 2000). This is a common approach where the focus is on particular issues, imparting true-life experiences, broadening learners' understanding of what is acceptable behaviour and inculcating in learners a greater sense of appreciation for diversity (Eliasov & Frank, 2000). It is necessary to educate both boys and girls as to their rights, especially with regard to sexual abuse and ways to inquire about recourse in case they are violated (Wane, 2009). In this regard, it is necessary to incorporate these messages in the school system.

Eliasov and Frank (2000) emphasize here that such a programme is intended to empower young people and build resilience, a view shared by Smith and Sharp (1994). Empowering youth, as Strocka (2005) understands it, is to enable them to collectively exercise agency and power in a non-violent way. This can be attained by constructing prospects for socially excluded youth to participate in community related issues and decision-making processes. These programmes attempt to build peer leadership and support structures (Eliasov & Frank, 2000). Mead, Hilton and Curtis (n.d.) argue that as a developing culture, peer support has the prospect of dispelling with the notion of "otherness" as deviant and of supporting each other in bringing about social change. They suggest that instead of social control there should be social responsibility. In peer counselling, fellow learners are empowered to assist their peers in distress.

In conflict situations, this entails bringing both the aggressor and the victim together with a view of reconciling their differences. Peer counselling provides an opportunity for young people to learn and enhance these capacities and to acquire experiences of the diverse roles and responsibilities that can mould them to become model citizens. Children on a daily basis experience gender-based violence and as such are in need of emotional and psychological support and counselling. Cowie and Pecherek (1994) argue that pastoral care system is pivotal in establishing the ethos of the school. Apart from the complexities surrounding gender-based violence in society, educators are faced with additional challenges and as such have urgent requirements for pastoral care and counselling services to be provided to youngsters.

2.6 Theoretical frameworks of the study

This section deals with the theoretical framework that is employed in the study. The theories identified are Bandura's social learning theory and the power of domination. In employing the theory of domination, this study focuses on Foucault's theory of power, Harro's (2000) theory of the cycle of socialisation and Iris Young's five faces of oppression.

2.6.1 Bandura's social learning theory

The Social Learning Theory of Bandura gives emphasis to observational learning-modelling (Bandura, 1977). Modelling according to this theory is learning that takes place by imitating the actions of others. Imitation of unacceptable behaviour by children can be

detrimental to their development. Therefore Bandura forewarns that actions learned through modelling are not always the most suitable or even socially acceptable (Bandura, 1977). Various social problems such as, “family abuse, drug and substance abuse, etc. are considered by many psychologists to be perpetuated through the process of children modelling their parents” (Bezuidenhout, 1998, p.50). In the process, the learner internalizes only those aspects of the model’s behaviours that are appealing to the observer.

Plainly, children open to the elements of abuse, especially of their mothers at home, are in danger of learning negative patterns of social behaviour (Graham-Bermann & Brescoll, 2000), including gender-based violence. Children may want to mimic these patterns of behaviour, which would normally take the form of a show of power, authority, and manipulation on the part of the perpetrator, in the same way as they have seen these actions played out in relationships between their parents or community members at home. Further, this might build on a false understanding of what should be the fitting roles of males and females in a family. As such, aggression may be construed as a way of settling conflict, if this is the way, for instance, their parents at home settle conflicts. The social learning theory of Bandura (1986) posits that boys who see their father beating their mother may internalize the aggression as a model for relationships between males and females, and their attempts to mimic this in their relationships with girls at school may culminate in acts of gender-based violence.

In the instance of persistent use of corporal punishment by teachers in schools, infliction of pain creates an impression in children’s minds that violence is an effective measure of maintaining discipline, and children might model this in their relationships, thereby continuing the cycle of violence. A learner continuously violated by an educator might

eventually resort to violence as an adult, as children mimic various role models, from teachers, parents to celebrities. The unsociable and violent conduct observed might be reproduced and received as normal (modelling) (Bandura, 1986). Through the process of observation, children can absorb the probable consequences of violent behaviour and can go on to select and reproduce those violent acts that are seen to be conquering (Bandura, 1986). Such tendencies might be implicated in incidents of gender-based violence in schools.

However, this theory does not expressly address how issues of power and social positionality affect these processes of modelling. Yet these are important to consider in understanding the gender dimensions of gender-based violence, as this is violence that is based on (or directed) towards certain learners based on their gender identity. The unequal power relations that are involved in gender-based violence mean that power and social positioning are important to consider. The next subsection deals with power domination.

2.6.2 Power as domination

Central to analyses of gender-based violence is the concept of power. Power, according to Foucault (1983), is getting someone else to do what you want them to do (power-over). Young (2000) points that another way of understanding power is to understand it not just as a resource or critical social good, like materialism, but instead, as a relation of domination. Terms used to describe this relationship are oppression, patriarchy, subjection, and so forth (Young, 2000). The common element in these power-over relationships is that power remains unjust and oppressive to those over whom it is exercised. Gender-based violence must be understood in the ways in which unequal power relations (for instance, among

different types of masculinities and between masculinities and femininities) are maintained (Anderson, 2006). Masculinity is related to issues of power, including men's power over women, and men's power over other men (Connell, 1995). In a school, power relations are exhibited at every level of interaction and this understanding would help the study to analyse how unequal power relations of masculinities and femininities inform the learners' experiences and understanding of gender-based violence.

2.6.3 Cycle of socialisation

Socialization is a significant feature in everybody's life. Irrespective of one's colour, race, gender, and so forth, socialization occurs and brings about a social identity for every individual (Harro, 2000). Primary socialization usually happens in the very early phase of infancy. During this time not much in the form of developing individual abstract thought takes place, however it allows the infant a position in society. Secondary socialization is more of a modification of one's place in the world (Harro, 2000). Parents, older siblings, and other relatives contribute significantly in shaping the masculine roles that an individual exhibits. Children are socialised by parents to act in accordance to the demands placed by as society. The father of a boy who was being harassed at school advised his son to "...fight back, let them know I was a tough guy..." (Messerschmidt, 2000, p.6). Children are socialised in a way that encourages them to retaliate by using violence to any form of victimisation they encounter.

Boys are not born masculine or feminine (Garey-Davis, 2009). Masculine conduct is acquired during infancy which is imposed and strengthened both at home and in public spaces. Being masculine can has no one form of expression (Connell, 1995). Society

applies pressure on individuals to subscribe to a certain gender, specifically the one that matches their sex (Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing & Malouf, 2001). Boys and men are compelled to act in particular ways in public, under the close inspection of their peers and adults (Garey-Davis, 2009). Boys learn and practise their masculine identities in the surroundings they find themselves in. Boys also model the observed behaviour of others (Garey-Davis, 2009), reproducing actions they see older boys and men acting. Boys that do not follow the dictates of hegemonic masculinities are treated abusively by their peers (Garey-Davis, 2009).

The gendered practices of daily life replicate a society's view of how women and men should act. Society attaches differing status to men and women in terms of equality. Should this exist, then the status of women is held in lesser esteem than that of men (Lorber, 1994). Even in nations that dissuade gender discrimination, several key positions are still gendered; women still do most of the household chores and child nurturing. Men are in command of the positions of authority and leadership in government, the military, and the law (Lorber, 1994). Gender inequality – the subordination of women and the social domination of men – has a social purpose and a social history (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997). This implies that we are socialised into maintaining the status quo.

In most modern societies males enjoy certain privileges at home: watching television while the females attend to the household chores, having meals prepared and served, while whenever necessary males receive urgent medical attention from the doctor whilst the females have to use home remedies. These privileges, according to the relationships of oppression, show the vertical relationship where males show dominance over females (Harro, 2000). Getting females of the house to attend to the needs of males is one form of

sexist behaviour. According to Harro (2000) sexist behaviour is one form of oppression which is depicted in her 'Umbrella of Oppression'. Boys sense this privilege and begin to control girls either as peers or when in a boy/girls relationship. Girls that show disobedience become vulnerable to aggression.

Teachers are guilty of gender bias. According to the cycle of socialisation (Harro, 2000), the notion that girls are incapable of operating in a male's domain perpetuates itself. This notion tends to influence teachers' actions in terms of gender, and, as such, tasks are allocated according to gender stereotyping. To illustrate, girls would not be given leadership positions because they are assumed not to be good leaders (a stereotype, in terms of Harro's Cycle of Socialization). This in many ways sidelines girls, and gives them a sense of inadequacy and helplessness. However, girls are considered to undertake menial tasks (cycle of socialisation). By denying girls an opportunity to act in leadership positions or to be in control shows how boys have power over girls, and in so doing maintains the cycle of oppression.

2.7 Conclusion

The literature reviewed covers the notions, nature and forms, factors and spaces that promote gender-based violence in schools, and provides some strategies to address it. It also sets out a theoretical framework within which to understand gender-based violence. From this review it is clear that gender-based violence, as with violence generally, is a consequence of wielding power in unjust and unacceptable ways. When left unchallenged, such situations become damaging to both girls and women. Notwithstanding the seriousness of this reality, there is a sense that gender-based violence is not taken seriously.

Studies conducted locally and internationally have focused on violence and gender-based violence, however, with few studies allowing children to articulate their experiences with this form of everyday violence. Therefore, this study undertakes to allow young learners an opportunity to be able to voice their experiences.

The next chapter discusses the research methodology and design of the study.

CHAPTER 3

THE STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology and design of the study. It outlines the research processes that were undertaken in researching gender-based violence in the context of a co-educational primary school in Durban. While the methodology mirrors the theoretical aspects of the ways in which research should be undertaken, it also signals an explanation of the logic that is fundamental in the choice of a particular way of conducting research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). A qualitative case study approach was adopted for this study. The following subsections discuss in detail all these procedures, starting with the research design, the study sample and sampling procedures, methods of data collection (individual interviews and focus group discussions), some ethical considerations, validity and reliability, the procedures used to analyse data and the study limitations.

3.2 Research design

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the experiences of learners in a primary school because such a design is suited to obtaining rich data from a small number of respondents (Cohen, et al., 2007). I selected eight participants which allowed me to gather rich data which the qualitative study is deemed suited for (Cohen et al., 2007). Qualitative research offers the possibility of carrying out exploratory and descriptive research where the context or site is used to seek out meaningful insights, in this case, of

gender-based violence (Best & Kahn, 2003). According to Lauer (2006) qualitative research lends itself to data collection that takes the form of narrative descriptions. Finch (1986) argues that a qualitative approach to research is more suited to small-scale analysis, where the researcher attempts to get to know the social world being studied at first hand. Hence, the depth of data in qualitative research allowed for greater understanding of gender-based violence in a specific world – a school context.

According to this approach, the researcher is the vehicle for the inquiry and he/she fashions the research methods in a way that is responsive to the context and participants (Morse & Richards, 2002). There are three major components of qualitative research: data gathering, analytic procedures and written or verbal reports. Using qualitative methods, this researcher attempted to establish not only what happened in the school regarding gender-based violence, but also how it happened and, importantly, why it happened the way it did (Henning; Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004).

This research approach allowed for the exploration of gender-based violence in a natural location, eliciting the meanings and experiences that children attach to this phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The design allowed me, as the researcher, to gather data in the area where respondents live and experience the problem of gender-based violence. Best and Kahn (2003) describe qualitative research as studying real-world situations in a natural setting, and being non-manipulative and non-controlling. A variety of data collection methods such as interviews and observations are used in qualitative research design (Cohen et al., 2007; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The methods that this study employed are discussed in detail in 3.4 below.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive case study methodology (Yin, 2003). This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred. Yin (2003) describes the term case as an event, an entity, a person or even a unit of analysis. A case study is based on an intense inspection of an individual, event or a small participating pool, deriving conclusions limited to the participants or group and only in that particular background (Yin, 2003). It does not set out to generalise, but prominence is placed on exploration and description (Yin, 2003). Of importance is the relevance of the study rather than its potential to be able to generalise. Yin (2003) is of the view that generalisations on the findings cannot be extended to the population at large, but only to theoretical and analytical generalisations.

Miles and Huberman (1994) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that a case is a phenomenon of some sort that takes place in a bounded setting. Binding the case ensured that the study remained within the field of the key research questions. Patton (2002) describes case study as particularly useful when investigating a phenomenon in greater depth. Case study research is descriptive, and therefore necessitates understanding and reporting events, situations and circumstances that are occurring (Picciano, 2004). In this study, a case (unit of analysis) was children's understanding and experiences of gender-based violence in a co-educational primary school.

This was particularly a useful approach given the time constraints under which this study was conducted (Bell, 2005; Maree, 2007). Besides, it was very empowering in that it "opened the possibility for children to voice out their experiences" (Maree, 2007, p.75), and what they thought could be done to address gender-based violence in the school.

3.3 Sample and sampling procedures

The selection of the school was informed by the notion that schools are sites for producing and reproducing gender based violence, where the less powerful are becoming targets of the more powerful (Leach, 2003). The researcher is an educator at this school and therefore found it most accessible and convenient to conduct this study. A sample is a small section of the total set of objects, events, or persons, and normally such a sample constitutes the subject of the study (Cohen et al., 2007). According to Marlow (1993), sampling is a process or criteria for choosing the subjects or participants of the study. This is essential because we cannot include every person in the study as some participants, for instance, stand a better chance to yield useful information than others depending on their positioning in relation to the objectives and focus of the study (Cohen, et al., 2007). Therefore, sampling facilitates a process where the research identifies which participants would be most suited to be included as participants in the study.

The study used purposive sampling as a way to select participants. Purposive sampling, as the name suggest, is a process where study participants or the sites of research (for example, schools or units) are chosen for a specific purpose (Cohen, et al., 2007). Participants were also chosen based on my personal judgment, and were selected on the basis that they would supply the necessary information needed for the research. Also, a qualitative study of an exploratory nature requires that the participants understand the concept of gender-based violence so as to create meaning of the phenomenon under study. Therefore, it was essential for participants to be able to articulate their thoughts and in so doing illuminate useful insights about the phenomenon under study (Cohen et al., 2007). In particular, drawing on a sample eight learners from the most senior classes (grade 7) in one

school was thought to be in a position to yield the richest information in ways that would make it practical to accomplish the data production within the specified (and, indeed confined) time frames in which this study was conducted. These were four females and four males. The age of the learners was between 13 and 15 years. The participants consisted of one black male and one black female learner and the rest were coloured learners.

3.4 Methods of data collection

Data collection is an approach to gather information in a set way from participants through interviewing, talking and listening without including one's personal views (Creswell, 2002). It is also suggested that data collection should entail the following steps; outlining the boundaries for the study, collecting data through observation, interviews, document and visual materials; and establishing a procedure for recording information.

The fieldwork for this study involved interviewing, using semi-structured questions and focus group discussions with male and female learners from the school. Although to some participants English is a second language, all interviews were conducted in English as the researcher's and all participants' command of the language is good. The learners' ability to communicate in English was established by the researcher's interactions with them during lessons. Also, prior to securing their consent to participate in the study, the researcher undertook to engage these learners in short conversations during breaks and after school. This study employed interviews as the main data collection method as discussed in the following subsections.

3.4.1 Interviews

The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in someone's mind (Burgess, 1982; Cohen, et al., 2007). Since the learners' perceptions, feelings, thoughts, and intentions cannot be directly observed, interviews allow respondents to recall incidences that are related to the questions and thereby provide an appropriate response. Individual interviewing caters for one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the participants and is deemed to give participants the freedom to express themselves from their own standpoint (Cohen, et al., 2007). According to Flick (2006), a successful interview depends on the interviewer's competence in asking questions and requires effective interpersonal skills that can be used to put the respondents at ease and be prepared to rephrase questions when deemed necessary.

As part of the interview process, the individual interviews with the learners were voice recorded, transcribed and labelled. Learners were informed in advance that the interviews would be audio-recorded. Bearing in mind the ethical considerations of this study (see subsection 3.5 below and appendices C and D), the recording of the interviews was done after permission and consent was granted by the respective interviewees and their parents. Bell (2005) however cautioned that researchers should not work on the assumption that all participants are keen on having their narratives recorded. Voice recordings not only serve as a way of capturing information accurately, but also preserve that emotional and vocal character of the participants (Cohen et al., 2007).

Learners were interviewed at their convenience. This circumvented issues of unnecessary classroom disruptions and reduced any additional forms of stress on the learners. Interviews

were conducted once off as this was adequate to gather the required data. I also assured the participants that their narratives would be treated in the strictest of confidence where no information presented would be used to bring about any form of retribution to them.

In this study, the interviews were guided by semi-structured questions, thus allowing the researcher's flexibility to rephrase, probe and follow on interesting issues which the participants raised during the interview, which the researcher had not anticipated (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Semi-structured interviews took the form of individual and focus group discussions. The following subsections explain these in detail.

3.4.2 Individual semi-structured interviews

The interview method made use of questions which the researcher formulated and was posed to individual participants. The individual interviews were of eight girls and boys. All participants were exposed to the same interview questions. This allowed for greater comparability of responses (Cohen, et al., 2007). At all times the researcher maintained control of discussions by ensuring minimal digression from the topic. Also, I was very mindful that the study, by its very nature is sensitive and personal, and thus could evoke emotions. As such, I had to watch for non-verbal cues that might suggest that learners were uncomfortable with aspects of the discussion. However, during the interview sessions, participants were faced with no apparent problems or discomfort and all the interviews went on smoothly. These interviews were audio-taped and subsequently transcribed.

3.4.3 Focus group discussions

Two focus group discussions were used. Focus group discussions are a research tool that allows the researcher to gain a detailed grasp of attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of a particular group of people (Kreuger, 1988). They cater for the formation of a social setting that permits group members with common characteristics (in this case boys and girls respectively) to be stimulated by one another's experiences and ideas (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This serves to increase the quality and richness of the data generated (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The benefit of the focus group discussion is that it urges participants to relate freely and share their thoughts on their experiences of gender-based violence (Cohen et al., 2007). Information that participants failed to mention in the individual interviews was gathered at this point as there existed an environment where participants were stimulated by other group members' perceptions and ideas. Indeed, focus groups discussion worked well in this study as learners were more forthcoming in their narratives, mentioning some episodic and contested issues related to gender-based violence in the school. However, it was very challenging for me, as a novice researcher, to manage group dynamics related to matters of power and domination, involving mostly extrovert learners who wanted to take up the air space.

The study opted for gender-based focus groups with separate male and female learners. The intention to interview male learners independently from the female learners was premised on the view that gender dynamics are central in mapping how participants communicate their views, especially about matters of gender-based violence (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2002; Larkin, Andrews & Mitchell, 2006). Independent groups

allowed for open and free discussion, in particular, experiences of violence between girls and boys.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Any research has the prospect to bear upon the lives of others, and therefore ample attention must be given to the integrity with which it is conducted and its impact on people (Cohen et al., 2007). As such, social researchers ought to endeavour to make certain that research embarked on meets the conduct of ethically informed social research which should be completed before the start of data production. To this end, an ethical application was made for this study through both the research office of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Department of Education. The study was granted an ethical clearance certificate, number, HSS/0316/011M (see Appendix E).

In addition, written permission from parents was obtained for their children's participation in the study, as well as from the school, and from the children themselves. The consent letters assured confidentiality and anonymity (Cohen, et al., 2007). Participants were informed that they had the choice of opting out from the study without the worry of punishment. Further, participants were informed in advance about the study, to prevent their responses from being affected by stress as a result of not being satisfactorily primed; as Babbie (1990, pp. 340-341) suggests, "participants should be informed about the potential impact of the investigation." For details about the ethical clearance procedures followed in this study see Appendices A to F.

According to Maree (2007) it is essential to uphold the ethical portion by making sure of the confidentiality of participants' identities and the data that materialise in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained throughout this study, and this included using pseudonyms in all instances relating to the school and the learner participants in this study.

3.6 Validity and reliability

Reliability and validity are ways used by researchers to lend credibility to a study and thereby gain acceptance in the field of research (Cohen, et al., 2007). Patton (2002) distinguishes these as the two important components that need to be factored in by researchers when conducting their studies. A discussion of how these components were employed in the study will follow.

Previously, validity was a control mechanism to ensure that whatever the instrument set out to measure was indeed measured. However, in more recent research developments, validity may be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved (Cohen, et al., 2007). Validity also relates to the question as to whether or not outcomes established in a study holds true to other parallel studies (LeCompte, 2000). Essentially, internal validity should attain accuracy of data interpretation and minimize any kind of subjectivity (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 1999). To this end, the researcher minimized personal biases by not interpreting the data according to the view or opinion of the researcher.

Transcripts were given to the participants to verify the data and see if the interpretations made sense or reflected their experiences (Cohen, et al., 2007). To ensure rigour in this study, multiple data sources were used. That is, data from learners' individual interviews and focus group discussions were triangulated. The need for triangulation in qualitative research evolves from the ethical need to corroborate the concurrent validity of the processes of data production (Cohen, et al., 2007). Marshall and Rossman (1989, p. 99) encourage using a mixture of different data gathering methods to increase validity, "as the strengths of the one approach can lessen the weakness of another."

Reliability on the other hand is the consistency with which a measuring instrument produces a certain result when the phenomena being measured has not changed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). To ensure reliability, the researcher maintained a detailed account of the entire data production process. Patton (2002) suggests that this can be attained by maintaining tape recordings and transcripts which provide highly detailed and accessible representation of data.

3.7 Data analysis

According to Grinnell & Williams (1990, pp. 90-91) the main purpose of data analysis is to sift, sort and organize the multitude of information gained during data collection. This is essentially what qualitative data entails (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This can be accomplished in such a way that themes and interpretations that emerge speak to the research questions. In essence, analysis of data involves summarizing the large amounts of data collected and submitting the results in a way that conveys the most essential features.

In analysing the data, an inductive approach was used. An inductive approach allows for known facts gathered from raw data to be categorized into patterns and regularities, and form hypotheses, and then make a general conclusion (Cohen et al., 2007). In the process of analysing data the researcher organized data with the view to generate categories and themes – guided by the research questions.

The research used Marshall and Rossman's (1989) approach in analysing the field notes where data is organized such that it brings forth categories and themes. The data that emerged was tested against related literature and theories for its, credibility, usefulness and centrality. In the final analysis, the researcher pursued an interpretive stance, adding shape, form and significance to the raw data collected. Broad themes that came forth from this process are presented and discussed in the next chapter.

3.8 Limitations of the study

The presence of an audio-recorder in some ways may have caused the learners to be circumspect as to what they say. Notwithstanding learners' agreeing to their narrative be audio-recorded, learners were doubtful and uneasy as to my motives since most participants were interviewed for the first time. Despite such concerns, every effort was made to assure learners about the purpose of the interview and therefore, I very much doubt that the integrity of the data was compromised.

The researcher's position of authority he holds in the school may have intimidated the participants, but this problem was minimised by being friendly with the participants. To

achieve this, he met with participants informally during the breaks, prior to the interviews, as a way to break any tension that may have arisen during the interview.

The study used a small sample which I felt did not allow for a wider spectrum of learners. This would have given a more comprehensive understanding of gender-based violence at the school.

One of the common difficulties with qualitative studies is that they are not generalisable. The findings of my study cannot be generalized to represent the views of learners at Galway Primary school, nor can they be generalized to 'speak' about the views and experiences more broadly of learners in KwaZulu- Natal.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the research design and the specific methods of data collection to address the question of learners' experiences of gender-based violence in their school. The discussion on the research design addressed the appropriateness of the qualitative case study. A discussion of the sample and sampling procedures ensued. In addition, the ethical issues round negotiating access to school and participants have been dealt with so as to demonstrate the researcher's intention to accord both the data and learners the respect and honesty they deserve. This chapter has also set out the essential steps that were taken so as to make the findings of this study reliable, trustworthy and valid. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the inductive method used for data analysis employed and some limitations of the study. Although a qualitative case study allows for a small sample, this

however, does not make the study to generalisable to the greater school population or to any other site.

The following two chapters deal with the findings of the study, followed by a chapter on conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING AND FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

4.1 Introduction

The study set out to investigate the learners' understanding and experiences of gender-based violence, factors related to gender-based violence and the strategies that could be employed to address gender-based violence in a co-educational primary school in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The study sought to describe and analyse how gender-based violence takes place in the school, the circumstances under which learners face gender-based violence and the persons who are largely involved in the dynamics of gender-based violence at the school. As discussed in the previous chapter, the focus group discussions and individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight Grade 7 learners. This chapter discusses the study findings. It addresses the learners' understanding and forms of gender-based violence, drawing on the lived experiences of girls and boys.

4.2 Learners' understanding of gender-based violence

Learners' narratives lacked a coherent understanding of what constitutes gender-based violence. They mainly construed gender-based violence as a phenomenon where the incidents of violence take place between two genders. Learners thought that these are commonly perpetrated by boys/males against girls/females, thereby affirming the dominant perception that gender-based violence is directed to women or females. They did not easily

associate malevolent acts such as teasing and insulting with gender-based violence. For them, gender-based violence meant an act that constitutes a display of physical aggression.

Respondents described gender-based violence as an act of aggression between a male and a female. This notion was evident in both the focus group discussions and individual interviews. The following are some responses from the learners:

Amy (girl, aged 13): When a boy hits a girl.

Hetty (girl, aged 13): Fighting where the man hits his wife.

Elaine (girl, aged 14): its fights between girls and boys where the boy is guilty of hitting a girl aged 13.

Ravs (boy, aged 13): It is fighting where a boy hits a girl badly.

Nent (boy, aged 14): It is fighting between the genders.

Nik (boy, aged 13): When a girl she don't want a boy to touch her in like different places, and then the boys touch her and then she gets cross, she might tell the teacher or she keep it to herself.

Most of the participants felt it was violence between boys and girls or males and females where the boy or male was looked upon as the perpetrator. The forms and types of violence that learners speak of arise mainly through the dynamics of being gendered. As such, gender-based violence is a way of re-asserting and cementing power relations and gender roles that exist in society as the participants do see the issue of gender power but only in a limited way.

When asked about the likely targets of gender based violence at school, the learners provided the following response.

Elaine: Girls, and the richer children and the weaker children sometimes.

Amy: Girls and small children.

Hetty: Girls suffer the most from boys; even mothers suffer from abuse from their husbands.

Linett: (girl aged 14): Females, weaker children.

Nent: There is a group in my class that is always targeted. These are mostly girls and smaller built boys. These boys are scared of fighting back. The girls are targets because they are scared to fight; they have also scared of boys and not to say anything against boys. Also, little children are most often targets. Smaller children and children that come from poor homes (poor homes in this instance refer to homes where there is neglect).

Nik: People that are weak.

Ravs: Girls and boys that are not strong.

Amu (boy aged, 15): Any one that someone can take advantage off, some one that is stronger or in power.

The above excerpts indicate that these learners are of the view that acts of violence are concentrated towards one specific gender. These narratives are in keeping with stereotypes where it is believed that girls are victims and boys are perpetrators of violence. From the narrative above, the weak also featured as a likely target for unacceptable aggression.

Learners are of the view that some of the actions by children are influenced from previous generations. Male domination and acts of masculinity are some of the many forms of socialisation that children are exposed to daily (Messerschmidt, 2000). Most participants expressed their feelings towards gender-based violence as an act that emanates from actions

of parents where males are largely regarded as perpetrators of such aggression. Participants are of the view that violence against girls/females is deeply embedded in patriarchy and unequal power relations which are prevalent in society, a view also maintained by Messerschmidt (2000). Bennet (2002) argues that some of the features of gender-based violence have relevance to entrenched structural inequalities and dominant beliefs. Further, these inequalities perpetuate ideologies and attitudes that discriminate against certain groups in society, especially girls and women. Mooney (2000) suggests that violence against girls is entrenched in patriarchy and unequal power distribution that is noticeable in our society.

Learners articulated the view that gender-based violence emanates from the notion of maintaining traditional male power. The respondents had the following to say in relation to the above:

Amy: It gets passed on by generation, like if they got it from their father, their father will get it from their father.

Amu: Even at home children are seeing their mothers being hit by their fathers or mother's boyfriend.

Nent: We are disciplined at home, where violence is used. My father uses violence to control us, to show us that he is in control.

Ravs: Parents having this kind of control at home are influencing their children.

Patriarchal principles inform a society which is dominated by males, with women performing a subordinate role, considered and treated as men's possessions (Viano, 1992). The theory is suggestive in that it looks at interpersonal violence by males against the

backdrop of an unequal gendered society which is based on having power over, privilege, bullying and terror (Mabusela, 2006). As such, males will particularly stand to gain from violence against women.

In addition to the view expressed by learners that patterns of violence stem from the home, they further stated that children from instable (violent) homes are more than likely to show signs of aggression and violence. This can be seen in the following extracts.

Ravs: They do what their parents do.

Niks: They watch others behaving a certain way, and they do the same.

Nent: What we see happening at home we like to do at school. There is lots of violence in homes.

Hetty: Not in all cases. My class boy [peer in same class], in his home there is always fighting and in school he bullies and fights a lot. He is very rude to girls.

Elaine: Not always true. Sometimes these children are so scared of what they see at home, they become scared of becoming violent.

The above excerpts suggest that girls were more cautious in their response as they were not ready to generalise about the link between violence at home and violence at school. However, it appears that boys were bolder by acknowledging that children exposed to violence in the home environment are possible perpetrators of such acts.

4.3 Forms of gender-based violence: a lived experience of girls and boys

4.3.1 Gender-based demeaning comments

Studies (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Abrahams et al., 2006) confirm that public spaces such as schools are arenas where learners are antagonistic toward gay and lesbian youth. Human Rights Watch (2001a), and the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (2001), have over and over again stated that gay and lesbian youth are maltreated more often than heterosexual youth, and teachers frequently play down, or overlook the dilemma of these youth (Campos, 2005).

Elaine: Children say to me that I have been called a lesbian. I have a boyfriend; how can I be a lesbian; they don't know what a lesbian is.

Gleaning from this, it is apparent that the language of homophobia is part of the daily lives of children in schools. A word such as 'gay' is used on boys that mingle with girls and describe boys that display feminine characteristics. Boys, for example, who participate in games that girls usually play, are teased as 'sissy'. In a study by Nayak and Kehily (1996) they found that boys who were either sexually identified as gay or boys who looked (e.g. with under-developed bodies), talked (e.g., low pitched voice) or acted (e.g. non-athletic) 'feminine' were generally targets of homophobic insults by their (mainly) male peers. In some instances teachers reinforce homophobic practices when boys display 'feminine' characteristic ways by saying to them "to stop acting like girls" which was equated to being feminine (Connell, 1996; Mac an Ghail, 1994; 1996). Schools not only actively encourage heterosexual separation; they can also serve as important public sites that allow young

adolescents to read, see, understand and access the many ways of being male and female (Wang, 2001). Therefore, as is consistent with literature, it is evident that learners at this school are targeted by homophobic insults.

Learners have a tendency of making demeaning comments to the opposite gender. Such comments include ‘sexy’, ‘nice legs’, ‘nice body’, ‘moffie’, ‘bat’, ‘young one’, ‘ticky line’, ‘gay’, and ‘lesbian’. Learners of both gender use terms like ‘skank’, ‘bitch’, ‘jezebel’, ‘ravin’, ‘slut’, ‘ho’, ‘gong’, ‘faf’, and ‘rig rat’ – all of which refer to girls as prostitutes. Eliasson (2007) found that girls were not only labelled as ‘sluts’ and ‘slags’ for their sexual behaviour, but also if they stepped out of line in terms of acceptable feminine behaviour. Further, as in the case of my study, boys used such derogatory terms when they were upset or did not fancy a girl. Boys were also derogated with terms such as ‘sissy’, which meant that they were not masculine enough. Terms like ‘sluts’ were not only used by boys on girls, but also used by girls to maintain power over other girls.

The use of language to demean feminine behaviour— “stop acting like a girl” and “you behave like my granny” is comparable to the use of language negative to sexual minority learners —“you are so gay”, and so on. Not many children, gay or straight, can be at ease in an environment that so degrades and lowers their identity in this way (Fineran & Bennett, 2002).

According to reports in the literature, girls are frequently targets of boys’ verbal abuse, more especially from the tough boys. Boys not only use sexual terms of abuse, but also show aggression towards girls’ perceived degree of (hetero) sexual attractiveness e.g. “by saying they needed to diet”, “ should shave their legs”, thereby evaluating girls’ femininity.

4.3.2 Spreading of unfounded sexual rumours

In the interviews the participants offered rich examples of forms of rumours circulated by children. Common rumours circulated about children was generally an indictment on girl's character – “girls sleeping around”, “kissing behind the toilets”, and “relationship with older men”. In some instances, rumours emanated out of a sense of jealousy for the next person, as an act of revenge or as a prank to get the attention of the teacher, as can be seen in the following extracts.

Linet: Children go around saying that girls are sleeping around with boys. This happens most of the times with girls, because they do this as a way to get back at other girls. It is also jealousy, because some girls are beautiful and have boyfriends and others don't have.

Elaine: Children write messages about other children and send it around the class. They change their hand writing or write some else's name on the note. One boy wrote a note to the teacher inviting him to watch adult movies at his house; he blamed it on another boy.

Ravs: Children go around saying to their friends that they know of a boy and a girl kissing. They just say it to put these children into trouble with the teacher.

Nik: Stories of kissing is always being said, once I heard that a girl had sex with a married man. This can be true because school girls are having babies.

One participant was perceptive enough to detect that not all that his peers related are true. Boys boast about their sexual prowess and the number of girlfriends they can conquer as Amu narrates his version of boasting.

Amu: Very often my friends will talk brag about sleeping with girls and having
Many girlfriends, I don't believe all that they say, some of them just say it
to show off. They say these things just like to make them look good.

The data illustrate that there exists peer pressure on boys to acquire girlfriends and to brag about their acquisition. Analysing Amu's extract above, boasting about one's sexual prowess is in keeping with boys or males having to uphold the demands place by male masculinity. Deviation from the norm leads to learners facing humiliation from their peers.

Boys make sexual advances or propose to girls; they send them love letters and thereafter harass them for a response. They also go to the extent of accosting girls on the way to and from school and during the intervals. Signs of rejection of a boy's sexual advances are inviting the threat of irritation, foul language, physical harassment or assault (Mirembe & Davis, 2001). Cases of "boys handing girls gifts and buying them food items from the tuckshop [cafeteria]" as a friendly gesture, was also reported. Such acts demonstrate that boys are willing to pay for sexual favours. Objectification of girls by boys or males is a form of oppression where affection is rewarded by money or other goods.

Winning girls over and spreading sexual rumours are ways that boys demonstrate their manliness (Leach, 2002). Machismo is associated with having more than one girlfriend, and boys who do not conform are ridiculed and humiliated by their peers (Leach, 2002). Children who are on the end of these rumours can face tremendous embarrassment or severe trauma, which may result in long period of absence from school. The following narrative describes the trauma children face due to acts of gender-based violence and the implication thereof.

Nent: Children write names of couples on the walls of the toilet. Parents are called to school to sort out the matter. One girl, she did not come to school for a long time because her name was written in the boys' toilet.

Denying girls easy access to school or forcing them to stay absent because of acts of violence is a way of further oppressing females.

4.3.3 Sexualised gestures, comments and jokes

Boys are constantly engaging in sexual gestures, making comments or jokes about other learners. These gestures take the form of hand and lip movement and boys expose their tongue to girls.

Hetty: Boys curl their lips to show girls that they want to kiss them.

Amu: The boys show their tongue to the girls and they round their lips like they want to kiss the girls.

This behaviour offends some girls, which may result in them staying away from school, choosing not to be educated rather than going through this humiliation. Performing unwanted acts on girls is another way of subjugating them.

Boys wish to have close relationships with girls but seldom know or understand how to engage or form these relationships (Jakupcak, Lisak, & Roemer, 2002). Men use sexist jokes as a means for creating bonds (Lyman, 1987). As such boys use jokes with sexual connotations, "hey fat mama", as a means to attract the attention of girls. Joking also serves to ease the tension that may exist between a boy and girl. To the boy this may be an

acceptable way; however to the girl it may be offensive. Such flippant behaviour may lead to aggression where the girl may strike back violently and the boy on the other hand may feel a sense of rejection if he does not elicit a favourable response from the girl. The following is an account of a boy who was turned away by a girl.

Amu: One time I told this girl that I liked her and that I would like to hang out with her.

She slapped me and then began to swear me. I feel that she should not have done that because I was doing it in a nice way. I did not hit her but I pushed her away from me.

In this incident the boy expected the girl to oblige in his proposal. However, the girl's refusal to acquiesce to Amu's request shows that girls are challenging the notion of male dominance. The irritation that boys feel when spurned by girls whom they are thought to dominate may result in gender violence (Klein, 2006). Society compels a male to exert power over women, which is linked to normalized masculine expectations (Connell, 2002). As such, any form of rejection by girls may be construed by boys as a reversal of gender roles, which makes girls vulnerable to aggression and violence.

4.3.4 Sexual harassment

On a daily basis, girls in co-educational schools have to endure sex-based harassment from boys and sometimes educators. Sexual harassment more often than not results from a power imbalance between males and females, and by and large serves to strengthen and replicate these patterns (Sathiparsad, 2006). Girls have to put up with harassment in different ways.

Some react with resentment and aggression, but it makes many to be compliant and submissive, and subverts their feelings of security, self-belief and self worth.

When asked about violent acts witnessed or experienced at school, learners were quick to identify unwanted touching, unwanted kissing, sexual harassment, swearing and teasing as common acts. The severity of violence amongst girls and boys at the school was dependent on gender. Learners interviewed describe sexual harassment differently. Most maintained that it is an unacceptable act conducted by a boy onto a girl. The boys and girls in the sample did not understand sexual harassment substantially differently. Boys also endorsed that it is an act performed by males, and looked at it as a way of deriving sexual pleasure. The boy's responses speak as though sexual harassment is acceptable.

Amy: It's like boys abusing girls; to me it's like its wrong, so people say like why boys can't fight with boys, because they always fighting with girls, because it's wrong, another thing is that they know that girls are much, are like quiet, can't fight, majority. When a boy wants something from a girl, and keeps going after her.

Elaine: Wants to take the girl out on a date.

Nent: Boys interfering with girls in a bad way.

Nik: Asking a girl if she wants to do it [a reference to sex].

Amu: Grabbing a girl in a lonely spot and try to kiss her and touch her private parts.

One respondent made reference to sexual harassment as when comments are made about a girl's body.

Linnet: When a boy says something to a girl about her body that makes her feel bad.

Most of the learners speak of the action of the perpetrator and not the effects it has on the victim. One respondent did say that it is a behaviour which is not liked by the victim.

Ravs: Boys go after girls so that he can hold her and kiss her and when a boy does and says rude things to a girl.

The most common experiences of physical sexual harassment are being touched, grabbed and being intentionally brushed in a sexual way. Girls are more of the targets than boys. However, most learners reported cases of being teased, and both boys and girls are equally likely to have their clothes pulled and shown pornographic material.

Linett: These boys are always touching and brushing us and when we complain they say it was a mistake.

According to authors, sexual harassment is more often than not observed at sites where there exists a power imbalance between groups. At school boys engage in un-welcomed acts of touching girls. Boys view their actions as acceptable, because of the notion of dominance that they believe they have over girls (Mills, 2001). Sexual harassment is one of the many ways by which boys/men can exercise their power over girls/women. Boy's spontaneous apology after committing an unacceptable act is indicative of their male supremacy, where the girl must accept that it was a mistake. Cases of pinching, brushing

and touching of body parts are not reported for the fear of further humiliation and embarrassment. Teachers also try to play down such incidents.

When examining perpetrators of sexual harassment, it is evident that boys are mainly responsible for such acts. Forms of harassment leap from and underpin the notion that boys are the dominant and revered sex and that girl's wellbeing and interest should come second

Linnet: Teased at by boys and sexual rumours spread about me, pictures of men sent to me.

Amy: I have had children say bad things about me. I have had my way blocked in the school staircase, in a sexual way; I was once kissed by a boy.

Amu: Sometimes a group of boys will get absent so that they can go their friend's house to watch these movies.

Nent: I have had my shorts pulled by my friend, this was embarrassing and to show my other friends that I am not a sissy I went after him and pushed him around. I have also been pushed around by bigger boys, my private parts was once grabbed and squeezed, it hurt. Boys carry rude pictures, most of the pictures show girl sometimes in their underwear and sometimes they are naked.

Nik: Called funny names, pictures of naked women shown to me, one boy who I had an argument with called me a gay. Some people say that you walk around with the girls, they you are gay, yet they could be your friends or cousins, they say you are gay and something like that, they make you uncomfortable or something.

Boys are the common perpetrators of sex-based harassment of their own and of the other sex.

Ravs: Children tease me always and I have been handled by other boys. Some boys don't feel anything when they grab your privates.

When asked how they would respond to being harassed, girls and boys did not express any fear of retaliating to the perpetrator.

Linnet: Slap the person, stand up to the person, and avoid the person.

Amy: I will feel uncomfortable, I will just slap him, complain to the teacher.

It is clear that children do not possess adequate skills to handle cases of provocation by peers. Boys for instance resort to physical violence almost instantaneously, as if there is no other way to resolve conflict. As mentioned earlier, the demonstration of excessive force is a way of preserving the hegemonic masculinity in schools. Also, to instil fear into another person by showing aggressiveness is a way of exhibiting power over them.

Amy: I have had my way blocked in the school staircase, the boy started to place his hand on my breasts, I pushed him and ran away. I was once kissed by a boy, he forced this kiss.

Some of the acts of aggression and sexual harassment by boys are deemed to be unnecessary, a declaration of male domination over female. Boys would intercept girls along the passageways, staircases and in the school grounds, with an intention of force them into an unacceptable act.

Girls in this school are under frequent attack by boys. The actions of most boys serve to mock and disrespect girls. Furthermore, the girls were looked at as sexual objects – centring on the boys' gaze and harassment. Respondents identified swearing, teasing, touching of body parts, pushing themselves onto girls, and using mirrors to view girls' underwear, as common problems perpetrated by boys.

The sexualised language and actions employed by these boys allow them to objectify and humiliate the girls in the class, and to assert male power and control over the girls.

Linnet: By boys on girls, pinching of girl's buttocks, picking on their mothers, boys cornering girls in the staircase and pushing themselves onto these girls, boys using mirror to look at girl's underwear.

Hetty: Boys swear and pick on the girl's mothers, they say rude things like, I want to lock [intimate kissing] with you.

Elaine: Boys are always swearing girls, picking on their mothers, sometimes they go around to girls they like and touch their breasts and bottoms. Boys using mirror to look at girls' underwear.

Nent: Boys pick on parents, when they see them at a parent meeting, then when they come back to school they pick on them. When the boys pass girls in the stairs, they walk close to them so that they touch them, and boys will touch girls and then run away. Sometimes girls after these boys and then they fight.

Children's accounts mentioned above, which were frequent across the schooling arena, advance the question that girls' and women's socially marginalised standing within these communities make them susceptible to violence.

Teasing and snide remarks relating to sexuality or gender, used as a means to degrade and humiliate other girls and boys, are widespread in this school, and most girls and boys either engage in this or comply with it. Boys on the other hand, upheld their hegemonic masculinity by humiliating other boys or trying to avoid humiliation. This was easily accomplished when learners teased or picked on learners that were at risk. Girls are mocked, belittled, embarrassed and objectified (Larkin, 1994; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Renold, 2000). Teasing is blurred innately and may be flippant, bothersome or immoral. Further, the act of teasing may be irksome to some and yet not bother the next. As a victim or observer, one may not be able to gauge the intent of the perpetrator rightly. Most respondents alluded to teasing being a common problem at their school and find it unacceptable. However, being teased, in this school, appears to be part of going through the processes of schooling. One has to endure endless humiliation because of some individual feature or weakness.

Sexual harassment and abuse of girls in the schooling context are pervasive (Leach, 2002). Further, this can be attributed to the power difference between the perpetrator and the target, power that privileges males. The following narrative shows how boys take advantage by exploiting girls that are vulnerable.

Amy: Girls flirt with the boys – boys use this to get money and other things from these girls. When things don't work out between the girl and boy, like when she doesn't give him enough money, and then he starts fighting with her.

In cases where girls flirt or are in a relationship with boys, this can be to their detriment. Boys are perceptive enough to assess the situation and from a position of power coerce girls to perform sexual favours (Leach, 2002). Non-compliance in this regard may lead to the boy beating the girl.

Participants' experiences of sexual harassment also pointed to clothing being pulled in a sexual way. Nent goes on to say that pulling shorts of others is about boys imposing their power over others. He regards such acts as an attempt by boys to feel good when they inflict pain on someone else.

Nent: My friend pulled my shorts down when we were getting ready for P.T.

(Physical Training).

Nik: I saw a girl lift another girl's skirt.

Speaking of the behaviour of boys, girls in the focus group discussion mentioned that boys also were guilty of lifting the skirts of girls as well as bra pulling. All these acts of sexual harassment, perpetrated by male and female learners, are a form of dominating and controlling subordinate males and female learners (Vetten, 2000).

4.3.5 Bullying

Most of the learners interviewed had been subjected to milder forms of bullying, such as teasing, and name-calling. Bullying at this school involved one child to another and teacher to child. Learners did not identify teacher bullying although I have observed it occurring in the school. It is generally alleged that boys are the group mainly responsible for bullying

and violence. Whilst boys are considered to be the perpetrators of aggression, data suggests that girls are more likely to be the targets of such acts. While boys remain the most significant and most studied group of bullies, there appears to be a shift in this trend (O'Neil, 2007). Of late, reports of bullying by young girls in a number of Western countries have intensified (O'Neil, 2007). Determining the extent of bullying between the sexes is not easy as girls may artfully torment while boys could chose to display outward aggression, both of which may go unnoticed or unreported. Further, girl bullies thrive because the quarrel and disagreement which they establish are frequently misconstrued as a spat between friends, and as such do not get the desired attention by teachers and parents (O'Neil, 2007). Girl bullying is usually very shrewd which takes the form of harassment, including rumour-spreading, hateful gossip and manipulation of friendships (e.g. denying a girl of her best friend).

Some participants drew attention of bullying as acts of pushing and shoving, taking belongings by force. In most cases it is a once-off attack on the target. One participant mentioned that bullying is not fighting. Very little is mentioned about continued attacks on individuals. Learners have not mentioned much about the pain, embarrassment or discomfort experienced by such bullying.

Girls and boys are responsible for bullying. Children are bullied by bigger children. Bigger in this case implies children in higher grades or children who are heavier or taller in size. The targets are usually intimidated by these bigger children. This demonstrates the use of power over someone more vulnerable, especially weaker ones who are incapable to defending themselves. Prefects for instance went beyond their limits where they forced children into performing errands for them. Bullying is pervasive and can be looked at as a

root and branch of oppression (Mills, 2001). It is the agency of that deliberate mishandling of power that threatens and victimizes. Further, their false sense of power defends their injustice, allowing them to manage by living irresponsibly, thereby seeking refuge in the injustice (Mills, 2001). Ravs on the other hand points out that perpetrators commit unacceptable acts with the purpose of triggering pain for their own pleasure (Besag, 1995).

Ravs: I have been bullied by my class boys, my soccer ball taken away when we were playing. These boys like to do this because they feel good about it, and if we report it to the teacher, they catch us after school. We cannot eat chips because they will take a few. When lining up for computers we are bullied for a place, we have to move to the back.

Several participants drew attention to the importance of power in bullying. For instance, a bully will try to pass the blame onto the victim. Linet points out that bullies will indicate that the victim initiated the misdemeanour which therefore justifies the response of the bully. Victims back down for fear of being assaulted by these bullies.

Linet: Boys take your colours [coloured pencils] without asking and when we complain to the teacher they hide it in someone else's bag. Sometimes they would say, sir she took it first or he started the fight.

Bullies are learners who possess poor social skills, and have difficulty fitting in as well as they cannot meet the demands placed on them by the school (Besag, 1995). They engage in acts of bullying to feel competent and successful. Bullies control others and in this way able

to draw some satisfaction from their own feelings of powerlessness. Bullies act unacceptably when they are annoyed (Besag, 1995).

4.3.6 Corporal punishment as a form of gender-based violence

Schools are sites where the implementation of policies and practices enhances the notion of what it is to be a girl or a boy. As such, punishment meted out to learners is often gendered. Despite corporal punishment being outlawed in the South African context, teachers persist in doing so (Morrell, 2001). Gender-based violence in the school context is, much of the time, connected to the daily practices and sexualized confrontations by learners on other learners and by educators on learners. In this study, participants' accounts reveal that teachers are violent towards both girls and boys. Boys and girls get beaten, as one learner puts it, "Teachers hit children when they misbehave in class. ... I have seen girls and boys in my class getting a hiding." However, the severity of punishment levelled against boys and girls varies. A softer approach is used when disciplining girls. The data did not reveal the extent or the pervasiveness of corporal punishment as this was not the study's intention. Teachers however, did engage in child bashing and vulgarity. At this school, male teachers were largely responsible for administering physical punishment, especially to boys. As Dunne (2007) argues, this is central to their power positioning within the school hierarchies. Female teachers on the other hand fuelled this hierarchical position by sending deviant learners to their male colleagues for punishment. Female teachers go about disciplining learners in less physical forms e.g. pinching rather than using a ruler as well as verbal abuse. These different disciplinary forms allow them to act out age and authority relations while asserting their femininity (Dunne, 2007).

One learner's account of corporal punishment was that teachers would not punish a girl in the same way as that of a boy.

Amy: One boy back chatting the teacher, she got angry and started hitting him. The teacher would not use same form of punishment towards a girl, be less violent.

Punishment towards girls is less violent. This understanding stems from the way we are socialized; females are to be protected, more than males.

Amu reported that a teacher "lets out vulgar language, he uses bad language, swears the boys." Another participant alleges that a teacher uses a stick on learners; boys are primarily the targets. However, Nent reported that his teacher is a "violent person and nothing will stop him from hitting girls." Also, female teachers use harsh words as a means to reprimand girls for acts of misconduct.

Several studies on corporal punishment revealed that boys face harsher punishment than girls (for example, Morrell, 2001; Humphreys, 2008; Dunne, Humphrey & Leach, 2004; Dunne et al., 2006). Morrell (2001) argues that in the schooling context administering different degrees of punishment to learners will elicit different responses. For example, there exists a notion that different forms of punishment will make boys more resilient and girls more compliant. Corporal punishment can therefore be regarded as central in upholding a masculine authoritarian order resulting in gender formation and power relationships (Ngakane, 2010).

4.4 Concluding remarks

In an attempt to obtain greater understanding on gender-based violence at schools, this chapter examined the accounts of a group of primary school learners' understandings of gender-based violence and various forms of gender-based violence. The findings are presented and examined in the form of themes which emerged from the data collected. Those themes are: learners' understanding of gender-based violence and forms of gender-based violence-the lived experience of girls and boys in the school. The first theme suggests that gender-based violence is construed as a phenomenon where the incidents of violence take place between two genders and boys are looked as perpetrators. The second theme included a discussion on demeaning comments made about another's gender, sexual rumours circulated about other learners, sexual gestures, comments or jokes to other learners, sexual harassment, bullying and corporal punishment.

The next chapter deals with contributory factors and some strategies to address gender-based violence in the schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

5.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses some factors that contribute to gender-based violence in the school. These include the hot spots for gender-based violence in the school spaces, some activities that easily lend themselves to gender-based violence such as media and technology, mainly draw on dominant discourses of gender in promoting gender-based violence. Some learners suggested strategies on how to address gender-based violence are discussed, specifically highlighting the roles that all the stakeholders (Department of Education, School Management Team, teachers, learners and parents) could play in addressing the scourge of gender-based violence in the school.

5.2 Factors contributing to gender-based violence in the school

5.2.1 School spaces as hot spots for gender-based violence

Much of the gender-based violence takes place at school, in the classroom, grounds and corridors. Very little is said about bullying to and from school. A participant was of the view that “you can escape being bullied as there is a large learner population.” This, according to the participant, makes it easier to escape the bullies. The school building plays a role in the incidents of gender-based violence. The area around the girl’s toilets for

example, has been identified as a location where incidents of sexual harassment are high. Much of the violence experienced by learners centre around boys asserting their supremacy over girls and is mainly unwarranted, e.g. a boy cornering a girl, touching, pinching, and shouting obscenities to demean or humiliate her. For many girls, this harassment of their personal space is an inescapable part of school life (Leach, 2004).

Amy: I have had my way blocked in the school staircase and this boy put his hands around me.

Amu: In computer time, one boy went on to look at pictures of naked girls, the teacher caught him.

Learners control the space where other learners move about, which results in these areas becoming sites for violence and abuse. Respondents identified staircases and the computer centre as highly vulnerable areas.

Elaine: In a classroom, when we report it to the teacher he doesn't do much about it, that's when children start their arguments and fights.

Hetty: On school grounds, outside the school, in the car park (pick and drop off zone), in class the teachers sometimes hear these comments but don't do anything to the boys.

Learners also complained that sexual harassment occurs publicly in front of teachers who do very little to curb it, creating an environment that is unsafe. Not taking this behaviour seriously tantamount to sanctioning boys to have power over the girls.

Nik: When I am first in the line for computers and then sir, they push me out and then I go to the back or when we come back to class they fight for the front or we having like a show outside.

Pushing and shoving within the school context can make the lives of a large number of girls and boys (and also that of teachers) miserable. Jostling for position at assembly or when queuing for computer lessons happens quite often where bullies generally get to locate themselves wherever they want to. This form of harassment takes place across the same gender as the learners are trained to line up according to their gender. A study by Collins, Batten, Ainley and Getty (1996) asserts that violence by males against males, which is often interpreted as boys being boys or as bullying, is indeed gender-based. Learners who frequently display bullying behaviours are generally rebellious or aggressive toward adults, troublesome, and quick to break school rules (Collins et al., 1996). These learners look as if they have a need to feel powerful and in command. The bullies need to constantly assert their power and influence, for their status depends on the continued respect or compliance of the lower-status boys (Neser et al., 2003). Learners who challenge these bullies for a position will either be abused immediately or violently assaulted later in the day (Neser et al., 2003).

5.2.2 Peer pressure

Learners commit acts of violence because they are compelled to do so by peers and these acts are targeted at learners that appear to be less powerful (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997). Sometimes peers influence learners by enticing them with valuables. Coleman (1992) is of the view that young adolescents are more vulnerable to the influence of their peers because

of their inability to build a sense of self. As such, young children are susceptible to peer pressure which alters the potential to act in an acceptable manner. Learners also feel a sense of belonging and therefore, to become part of a gang, they feel compelled to act unacceptably. As such, learners are now in a position to measure themselves against others. Peers endorse our actions, allowing us to feel included.

Nik: I bet you that I can pick a fight with you and the girl will ignore him, and then he will hit her, just to show off, or seek attention.

Nik points out that betting takes the form of encouraging learners to engage in aggression, "I bet you to do that". Although learners do not exchange money when betting, the idea is to incite a peer into committing an unwanted act. Inciting peers demonstrates the power that people wield over others. Niks' response above is indicative of male and masculine behaviour where learners are forced to conform to forces of masculinity, thereby avoiding humiliation, elimination and dishonour, resulting in loss of masculine competence. Further analysis of this response shows that the participant was prepared to use acts of violence so as to arouse the interest of the opposite sex, a characteristic of hegemonic masculinity.

Boys in the focus group reported that their peers who are not naturally aggressive, reward fighting and bullying with clapping, or back them up in aggression-led peer groups.

Negative peer pressure to get involved in acts of aggression is a way of encouraging peers to conform to macho type behaviour. Such behaviour according to the learners is very noticeable. Perpetrators feel a sense of jubilation having children around as one participant expresses it as "cheering you on."

5.2.3 Media as a promoter of gender-based violence

The media plays a considerable role in perpetuating violent behaviour amongst adolescents (Anderson et al., 2003). Media forms such as television, music and movies frequently portray women as taking pleasure from being abused and it is a masculine characteristic to have power over women (Nkani, 2006). Women are portrayed as sex objects and as suitable targets of violence (Anderson, et al., 2003). As such, a false notion is created in the way men/males should conduct themselves towards women. These include dominance, a sense of being in an elevated position, entitlement and seeing women as objects instead of human beings (Robbin, 1992). Such stereotyped conceptions of what it means to be male and female are thought of by children as ordinary (Robbin, 1992). Children are watching programmes where women are depicted as lesser than males, and males prescribe females actions. Watching excessive amounts of killing, fighting and sexual harassment forces children to identify with these characters and thereby emulate them.

Respondents are of the view that the media affirms the power imbalance between males and females. Violence portrayed via the media is frequently made to look like a very exciting, stimulating, and entertaining means of resolving disagreements. Being bombarded with violent imagery that surrounds us, we become engrossed which makes us less aware of the harm it can cause. As one participant (Nik) stated, “in movies people get up after they are shot but this doesn’t happen in real life.” As viewers we forget that some of our actions are irreversible or may lead to fatalities.

Nik: Some say that get it from watching wrestling on TV, they try some of those stunts, see people fight outside their homes, watching their parents fighting.

Nent: Violence is a way I have learnt to defend myself. Also, I see it happening all the time.

Boys are constantly exposed to violence, at home, whilst watching television or from the streets. It has become necessary for them to be able to defend themselves, more especially from attacks by community members. Being violent “sends a clear message to others that they should stay away.” Girls may also develop a response to their discrimination at home with a sharp need to shelter themselves and use retribution to sexual harassment at school as a mechanism of self-defence (Fineran & Bennett, 1999). Boys on the other hand may realize from their abusive families that as males in society they not only have a right to be in control but also need to be in control (Fineran & Bennett, 1999).

5.2.4 “Boys will be boys’ discourse”: The role of dominant discourses of gender

It is important to recognize, as Collins et al. (1996) have done, that violence by males against males, which is often interpreted as boys being boys or as bullying, is indeed gender-based. Such violence is often a form of boundary policing, usually with a homophobic edge, which serves to both normalize particular constructions of masculinity while also determining where a boy is positioned within a hierarchical arrangement of masculinities (Collin et al., 1996).

Amy: Boys will bully because they are boys, its part of their behaviour.

Amy: A boy kissed me on my cheek and ran away. I didn’t think much of it and I didn’t report t to the teacher.

Elaine: Sometimes they fight over girls.

The account by Amy where she described being kissed on her cheek by a boy is a demonstration of what it is to live up to a heterosexual male. In a patriarchy world, sexual advances such as stealing a kiss from a girl is often described as typical or boys will be boys' behaviour. Amy also speaks about "boys will be bullies because they are boys" as though it is an acceptable norm, where showing toughness is what it takes to be a boy or male. Aggressive acts are a way for boys to gain power and to dominate, which is intimidating and threatening to girls.

Elaine's account of "Sometimes they fight over girls" can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, boys can be violent towards other boys, where they combat any form of threat from competitors. Secondly, boys can be in more than one relationship. This can lead to violence when the girl in one relationship challenges the boy on account of his being unfaithful to her. In the first instance, warding off possible competition is a way of upholding one's masculinity and a display of superiority amongst male peers. In the second instance, having more than one girl at a time in a relationship is demonstrating one's masculinity where in the eyes of male peers you are seen as upholding notion of male masculinity.

The 'boys will be boys' discourse does not help the cause of curbing gender-based violence. It serves to increase its survival and reduces its gravity. Discourses of this type, as well as many others, are hazardous in that they perpetuate stereotyped views. These views can become detrimental to the self-esteem of victims. Parents and teachers downplay aggression by saying that children need to learn to defend themselves, "it was harmless", and "it was just a joke". Many teachers are of the opinion that violent and threatening actions by boys form part of 'growing up' and need not be taken seriously (Leach, 2004).

Connell (1995, p.77) argues that “masculinity is central in upholding patriarchy.” It is easily noticeable in disrespect towards women and aggression over the powerless, mainly females. In the schooling context, this could pan out as educators and boys having control and power over girl learners. Society expects boys to live up its expectations where aggressive behaviour is used over girls as a way to do the acceptable thing, demonstrating that they are real men (Connell, 1995). Failure to display aggression will deviate from the norm and therefore the boy concerned will be called names.

According to Paechter (1998) such deviation is considered problematic, leading to marginalisation of the individual. Because of the power relationship that exists between males and females, and because male’s masculinity is constructed as dominant to that of femininity, men are supposed to use violence or aggression over women (Paechter, 1998). Men that do not conform to patriarchal domination over women are seen as the other and called names such as ‘sissy’. This by and large exerts pressure on men to prove their masculinity through acts of violence (Paechter, 1998).

Nent: Because he hit me and being a boy I cannot let him get away, it would make me look like a sissy or even stupid. Also I had to defend myself to protect myself from this boy, to show him that I am stronger and that he cannot take advantage over me.

Nent suggests that violence was a strategy adopted by heterosexual young men to conceal anxiety and insecurity about their own sexuality; as he put it, violence is a way to show that he is not made to “look like a sissy.” Nent’s response is typical in that it is in keeping with masculine behaviour and ways to resolve conflict where the male asserts individual

dominance and power (Dunne, 2007). Nent felt that his non-compliance to the norms of male masculinity will render him marginal; as such there was a need to for him to fight to protect his honour. This aggressive and stereotypical way of thinking can be ascribed to the patriarchy and male domination (Dunne, 2007). Instead of finding other ways to address the conflict, males are socially pressured into turning to the macho image and ways to resolve conflicts that are seen as conforming to it. Failure to conform to masculine stereotypes leads to boys being liable to be persecuted ostracized and bullied (Leach, 2003; Morrell, 1998).

Society has placed certain demands on boys and men, that they have to protect their manliness and in so doing resort to violence. Fineran and Bennett (1999) are of the view that attitudes about male dominance in society makes people vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Patriarchy is deeply entrenched in society and the belief that males are superior, as well as cultural beliefs and practices which support this view, were felt to result in males believing that females should accommodate male's sexual desires (Fedler & Tanzer, 2000).

Boys who are pleasant, who endeavour to excel academically, or who are exceedingly caring are much of the time labelled as effeminate, and lose their popularity amongst their peers and as such become vulnerable to aggression. "We don't like to hang out with boys that do well in class, they are gays" was an account of Nik in the boys focus group discussion. Boys in this focus group discussion also reported that that do not like these boys and therefore take advantage of them, say nasty things to them. The participants did not report any physical violence used against boys that are construed as effeminate. The

prejudices against boys who do not measure up to the expectations of the dominant forms of masculinity are generally expressed in terms of their being feminine (Epstein, 1997; Kenway & Willis, 1998). As such the terms used on these boys are usually disparaging to females. Drawing upon what respondents identified and which Lees (1993) refers to as a vocabulary of abuse, these boys are, for example, commonly labelled and referred to as: “sissies,” “girls,” and “fags.” Basically, such a practice is openly used by the boys who use these terms to boost their heterosexual masculine standing, and to police the boundaries of acceptable male behaviour and identity (Mac an Ghail, 1994; Martino, 1995; Skeggs, 1991). To avoid being labelled gays, boys are pressured into conforming to the expectations of society in the male role, and to uphold social control.

Nik relates his experience of being referred to as a gay because of his companionship with girls. Mac an Ghail (1994) put forward that a hegemonic heterosexual masculinity among young men in school actively ‘others’ peers who do not conform to a masculine norm and who are always branded as effeminate and gay.

Nik: One boy who I had an argument with, called me a gay. Some people say that you walk around with the girls, then you are gay.

Fights between girls and boys mostly emanated from girls retaliating to aggression and violence by boys. Because of the pervasive stereotyped notion assigned to girls as inferior and submissive, boys try to discriminate against them (Morojele, 2009). Girls that deviated from stereotypes associated with femininity were met with violence from boys. Ravens is of the view that “girls must not show off in front of boys, they must not argue with boys, not

fight with boys. When a girl doesn't listen I will get angry and hit that girl." The findings highlight that boys use physical abuse to control girls.

Gleaning from the data, it was found that some girls were not prepared to accept unacceptable behaviour from boys. As such, one respondent was very vocal when she said that she "would use violence on anybody, to make sure that they don't take advantage of me." Not only is the actions of girls to defend themselves contrary to dominant femininities, she will not succumb to the intimidation or aggression. Dominant femininities are very restrictive; as such girls needed to be creative to perform gender outside the boundaries of these stereotypic perceptions (Morojele, 2009). This, according to Morojele (2009) equips girls to adopt a zero tolerance approach against boys who stifled their freedom. At Galway Primary, girls are geared to take on boys who wield power over them.

5.3 Learners suggested strategies for addressing gender-based violence

One of the key interests of this study was to collect information from learners as to how gender-based violence can be curbed in schools. Whilst it is significant to gather learner's perspectives in this regard, it is worth mentioning that a collaborative effort is essential by all stakeholders, including learners to try to address issues surrounding gender-based violence at schools.

This section looks at how learners' views on how gender-based violence can be curbed in schools. Learners were very imaginative in their responses to the question of how the different stakeholders can contribute to address gender-based violence at schools.

5.3.1 Intervention by the Department of Education

The role of professional child care workers such as social workers and psychologists was mentioned by participants to play an active role in addressing children that have experienced trauma.

Amu: The school needs a full time counsellor. We have a temporary one who is not in school every day. I went to her once and she is good, she listens to our problems and tells us what to do.

Elaine: Send them to the psychologist to find out what their problems are.

Also, what emerged from the above extracts points to the need for professional personnel, such as a counsellor, to take up position on a full time basis so that they can offer pastoral care to the learners. Secondly, learners with behavioural problems should be referred to independent professional organisations for their intervention. Professional organisations linked to the school are expected to work in conjunction with the school to establish an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

5.3.2 Intervention by the School Management Team (SMT)

Schools may support gender role stereotypes and would be violent by not giving it the desired attention (Ohio State University, 1996). Also, adults often minimize the potential of violence in schools. By ignoring issues surrounding violence, schools are liable for giving

credibility to gender role stereotyping and violence. This in turn strengthens the trauma that children face.

Participants were of the view that school management team (SMT) can be important in addressing gender-based violence at this school. Suggestions took the form of what the SMT could introduce to alleviate the problem of gender-based violence, for example, one participant expects “more assembly talks, bring people just like the Durban Solid Waste people to do shows on gender-based violence.”

Other suggestions were:

- The principal should visit classes to talk to children about gender-based violence.
- More information in the form of posters should be displayed in and around the school.
- Use school functions and parents meeting days to address issues of gender-based violence at school.

These extracts point to ways of addressing gender-based violence which the school and its personnel could adopt in the future. Schools are obliged to inculcate in their learners a sense of social responsibility, self-discipline and respect for others (Leach, 2003; South African Schools Act, 1996). Teachers are endowed with the task of grooming learners into boosting their self-esteem, pro-social behaviour and moral reasoning (Coleman, 1992). Further, the school environment is where children should be equipped with skills to interact peacefully within and contributing to the all-round development of the community. As such, teachers are entrusted with the task of ensuring the removal of prevailing notions that

schools can only perpetuate gender-based violence. Schools should become agents of change (Mabusela, 2006).

5.3.3 Intervention by the teachers

Lind (2000) suggests that education should focus more on the development of moral thinking and judgement. Coleman (1992) points to teachers as well equipped to scaffold moral experiences for learner in schools. Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2003) point to character education as being the responsibility of adults. Therefore, in the schooling context there is no other person better than the teacher to assume such a role.

Niks: Teachers should be talking to us about these things like violence, drugs and other things.

Schools are sites which provide ample opportunities for developing policies to address norms and to curb gender-based violence. Learners were of the view that teachers do not give sufficient attention to issues pertaining to gender-based violence within the school, and as such tend to overlook the implications it can have for both the learner and society at large.

Amu: She does not listen to our problems.

Hetty: They should not ignore small complaints. Sometimes the teachers are busy and they chase you away.

Linett: Teachers must sort out the problem the same time.

Respondents were very vocal when it came to use of corporal punishment as a form of disciplining learners; other ways should be explored. One learner suggests that teachers should adopt a more caring approach where he outlines that teacher should “try to understand the child, listen to the children, teachers can also go their house to talk to their parents, counselling with parents...”

Nent: Teachers should also not hit or bully children around.

Participants, both in the interviews and in the focus group discussions, emphatically articulated that corporal punishment should not be used by teachers. Learners were not able to connect corporal punishment to gender-based violence. They looked at corporal punishment as an aggressive act by the teacher.

5.3.4 Intervention by learners

Peer support is a system of giving and receiving help based on key doctrines of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful (Mead et al., n.d.). It is about understanding another’s situation earnestly through the shared experience of emotional and psychological pain. Learners are advocating that they should get more involved in the welfare of their peers. As such, they perceived peer support systems as an essential process to curb gender-based violence at schools. Participants voiced views by saying that the school should adopt a system where certain learners could be appointed to manage peer support structures in school. One such strategy suggested was that learners form peer groups to act as watch dogs for incidents of gender-based violence, as can be seen in the narratives that follow. Peers should form support structures where children that

have experienced trauma could seek help. There is also a call for greater unity amongst learners, that children should refrain from practicing unacceptable acts and one learner suggested “we should help by stopping bullying” (participant).

Niks: Have assembly talks on issues like violence; keep a watch as to what happens to learners during breaks and in the classroom, and after school.

Linett: We must be there for our friends.

From the above it emerges that it is necessary to keenly engage learners in the process of finding possible solutions and to accept that children are central in solving the problems of gender-based violence at schools and therefore should be given a serious hearing. Linett’s response suggests that gender-based violence also serves to break friendships; this realisation is a potential resource for ending it.

In the schooling context, just like in other spheres, where people have been marginalized, there is a rooted sense of powerlessness that goes unrecognized. Recognizing and discussing issues about power dynamics is the first step towards breaking them down and this can be attained by engaging in peer support structures.

5.3.5 Intervention by parents

Although it is important for parents to get involved in the welfare and education of their children, this by no means entitles them to address discipline issues where it can become confrontational. The following is an account of a way a parent reacted when he or she heard that his child was being beaten.

Niks: They say look they hitting my boy, let me go and hit the boy, parents must stop being violent.

Irrational acts by parents can lead to added violence which is not a suitable way to resolve disputes. There is a need for parents to call at school to attend to issues pertaining to discipline of their child.

Amu: Come to school to sort out the problem, talk to your children at home. Get help from the church if your child is bad.

As such, the school and the parents can work together to rehabilitate children in respect of gender-based violence. It was also suggested that parents use social network structures to talk about gender-based violence as well as engage in campaigns to highlight the problem. One such social network is the church, where learners are looking at them to extend their responsibilities to include ways of helping families deal with gender-based violence.

Elaine: Parents can go around in groups in the community with posters telling other people about gender based violence.

Parents should also not use violence at home as way of disciplining their children as one learner suggest that “they should also not be violent at home.” The use of corporal punishment by parents on children adds to a perception, from an early age, that violence is a suitable reaction to problems, conflict and unwanted behaviour. It teaches that it is okay for powerful people to be violent toward the weak and to solve

conflicts through violence. Legislation alone will not end gender-based violence. It needs to be coupled with a concerted awareness raising programme and public education to change attitudes of all.

There is also a strong plea for parents to adopt a more pastoral and caring approach towards their children. Parents should also “spend time in the classroom with the intention of observing their children’s behaviour.”

5.4 Concluding remarks

The chapter presented findings emanating from the data gathered from the respondents on the factors that contribute to and some strategies to address gender-based violence. The data was analysed using the thematic approach. From the process of data analysis the following themes culminated: school spaces as hot spots for gender-based violence, the role of peer pressure in gender-based violence, media as a promoter of gender-based violence and the ‘boys will be boys’ discourse: the role of dominant discourses of gender. It then culminated in a discussion on some learner-suggested strategies on ways to curb gender-based violence in the school.

The next chapter deals with the conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

The study sought to explore how a small group of primary school girls and boys understand and experience gender-based violence as it happens in their school. Therefore, it aimed to investigate the narratives that these young girls and boys produced of their experiences of gender-based violence. The researcher was influenced by the high prevalence of gender-based violence in schools and in society at large. The school serves as a site where violence is performed by many male and female learners against other learners. These learners are not only facing the daily challenges of violence at school but also in other areas of interaction outside school (for example, sports field, community, family).

The study was guided by the following key research questions:

1. What are the learners' understandings of gender-based violence?
2. What are learners' experiences of gender-based violence?
3. What are the factors that contribute to learners' experiences of gender-based violence?
4. How could gender-based violence be addressed?

To address these questions, a qualitative case study methodology was employed, located within an interpretivist paradigm. Focus group interviews and semi-structured individual interviews were used to collect data. Eight participants, four boys and four girls comprised the sample for the individual interviews. Separate focus group discussions were conducted, where four girls and four boys were used in each group. A thematic analysis was then used

to make meaning of the data by generating categories and themes (Cohen, et al., 2007) which elicited the findings of this study.

The following section provides a synthesized summary of the key findings of the study.

6.2 Summary of the study findings

Learner's narratives lacked a clear understanding of what constitutes gender based violence. Participants appropriated gender-based violence as being violence between two genders but commonly perpetrated by boys/males against girls/females. Gender-based violence assumed the form of physical and verbal violence where acts of sexual harassment, corporal punishment and bullying featured prominently. Acts such as teasing and insulting were not looked at as forms of gender-based violence.

The results of this study indicate that gender-based violence is high in this school and it appears as though it has become an acceptable norm by boys and girls. Retaliation against continuous annoyance and bullying at the school is another reason for the spate of gender-based violence. Girls are considerably more likely than boys to be harassed.

Peer sexual harassment is a challenge for both girls and boys in the schooling context, the effects of which can be very disabling. The nature of acts of sexual harassment includes the more frequently practiced: teasing, swearing, spreading of sexual rumours, demeaning comment, intentionally brushing against another in a sexual way, obstructing and cornering one in a sexual way, touching, grabbing, or pinching one in a sexual way, sexual comments, jokes or gestures.

The data indicated that a great deal of bullying is perpetrated by girls and boys who are physically stronger and directed towards younger children. The data also reveals that bullies target other learners who display signs of being physically weak, lack adequate skills to handle social problems and possess a low self-esteem.

Some factors related to gender-based violence in the school context include schools spaces as hot spots for gender-based violence, the role of peer pressure, the media as promoter of gender-based violence; the 'boys will be boys' discourse and corporal punishment. The data also shows that educators are persisting in the use of corporal punishment as a form of punishment. Disciplinary action in the form of punishment is also gendered, where different forms of punishment are administered to girls and boys.

Some educators in schools could do with additional support on how to manage situations when attending to disobedient learners or delinquents given the fact that many educators are still resorting to corporal punishment as a form of discipline. In addition, disciplinary support mechanisms currently being used on the part of the school need to be looked at for their effectiveness and to determine if they in fact realize its objectives, namely, to support educators in their overwhelming undertaking of maintaining discipline in our schools.

Given the fact that the country is faced with a crisis of violence, it is recommended that schools go on an intensive campaign to try to make girls and boys more aware of the detriment of aggressive behaviour which is evidently lacking as they choose violence as their first line of defence to settle conflicts at school.

In view of educators perpetuating stereotypes, either intentionally or unintentionally, schools should embark on gender-based training programmes, courses or workshops which should take place on a continuous basis. This will serve to constantly remind educators of the things that they should do or not do in the classroom so as to avoid perpetuating stereotypes about girls' and boys' behaviours.

In the absence of suitably qualified personnel and considering the overwhelming workload of educators to deal with learner behavioural problems at school, it is recommended that there is a need for professional personnel, such as a counsellor, to be attached to schools on a permanent basis. Such a person will not only act in cases of unacceptable behaviour by learners, but also act as a liaison between learners and educators on matters where for example teachers are guilty of intimidating learners.

Also, there is a suggestion that schools should pursue a peer support structure where peers get involved in addressing issues of gender-based violence in the primary schools. Peer support structures lends themselves to learner empowerment where programmes such as assembly talks could be initiated to highlight to the general school population issues of gender-based violence.

Violence in any form places our children at risk, and to promote greater resilience to gender-based violence, it is essential to galvanise the support of the community which forms part of the school structure. In this regard, it is suggested that parents get involved in community campaigns to highlight the scourge of gender-based violence and see to the well-being of our children. Also there is a suggestion that parents attend workshops, seminars and other meetings to brush up on their conflict management skills in an attempt

to reduce domestic violence which will impact positively on how their children deal with conflict situations in the future.

6.3 Implications of the study

6.3.1 Implications for policy and practice

The study has highlighted the centrality of gender-based violence in primary schooling, and these have direct implications for policy and practice in schools aimed at ensuring that schools are violence-free learning spaces. An important finding of the study is the revelation that boys and girls possess a practical understanding of the harmful effects of gender-based violence on their personal, social and academic lives in the school. The processes of identity construction have featured significantly in the dynamics of gender-based violence, thus pointing to the need to establish suitable ways through which boys and girls could construct, contest, assert and protect their gender identities without recourse to gender-based violence. Bearing this in mind, the study recommends the following:

- The school's policymakers (viz. the school management team and school governing body), should devise gender-based violence awareness campaigns focusing on the nature and effects of gender-based violence on girls and boys in the school.
- The primary school curriculum should be revised to explicitly discourage gender-based violence, and teach girls and boys life skills necessary to manage and avoid being involved in the incidents of gender-based violence, usually in life the skills lessons.

- This could be integrated in a programme for HIV and AIDS, where the relationships between sexual harassment, sexual assault and aggression and HIV and AIDS could be emphasised as a means to discourage gender-based violence.
- The schools should ensure that all spaces within the school are free from gender-based violence, and clear measures be put in place to address all forms of gender-based violence occurring in the schools.
- Taking seriously all actions of gender-based violence could serve to discourage the perpetrators and encourage reporting of these incidents by those who fall victim, knowing that such acts are explicitly banned.
- The national educational policymakers should incorporate ways to curb gender-based violence by running workshops such as conflict management skills which include both educators and learners. Such policies should not be ‘stand on its own policies’ but rather incorporated, in the curricular and co-curricular activities of the schools.

6.3.2 Implications for further research

The study has the following implications for further research in this area:

- As this study was undertaken in an urban, public school, it would be of interest to conduct a similar study with learners from a privately funded institution. This would facilitate a comparison of what transpires in respect of gender-based violence at both sets of institutions.
- The study was conducted in an urban primary school. It would of interest to conduct a similar study in a rural area as children experience life differently in various places.

- A study of single sex schools where gender-based violence is explored would add to the understanding of what constitutes gender-based violence and the resulting experiences of learners in a different context.
- Based on the limitation of this research, it is recommended that further research with a larger sample be conducted with a population across the school's population (Galway Primary). Also, it would be valuable to include in future research educators' experiences of learners' gender-based violence

6.4 Conclusion

This research is a qualitative case study in that it explored the experiences of gender-based violence of a group of learners based in a co-educational primary school in Newlands East. It focused on a group of grade seven learners as victims or perpetrators of gender-based violence so as to bring about awareness to the relevant stake holders in education. The findings reveal that there is a high incidence of gender-based violence being perpetrated at this research site. Of significance is that boys are largely guilty of continuing the cycle of oppression by perpetrating acts of aggression on girls. While small in extent, contrasted to the number of occurrences amongst learners, the frequency of teachers assaulting male and female learners demonstrated an alarming pervasiveness and acceptance of such abuses.

It is my fervent wish that policy makers give due consideration to this study and to the scourge of gender-based violence in schools and in society as a whole. Should policies incorporate my recommendations, I am convinced that they would, if not eradicate, at least curb the spate of gender-based violence in schools.

REFERENCES

- American Association of University Women Educational Foundation. (2001). *Hostile hallways: bullying, teasing, and sexual harassment in school*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Abrahams, N., Mathews, S., & Ramela, P. (2006). Intersections of sanitation, sexual coercion and girls' safety in schools. *Tropical Medicine and International Health, 11*(5), 751-756.
- Anderson, B. (2006). *Coloured boys in trouble: An ethnographic investigation into the constructions of coloured working-class masculinities in a high school in Wentworth, Durban*. Unpublished master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Anderson, C. A., Berkowitz, L., Donnerstein, E., Huesmann, R., Johnson, J. D., Linz, D., Malamuth, N. M., & Wartella, E. (2003). The influence of media violence on youth. *American Psychological Society, 4*(3), 81-110.
- Artz, S. (1998). Where have all the school girls gone? Violent girls in the school yard. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 27*(2), 77-109.
- Asmal, K. (2000). *Why corporal punishment is banned?* 5 October, 2000. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods*. CA: Wadsworth.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: a social cognitive theory*. NY: Prentice Hall.
- Banks, R. (1997). *Bullying in schools*. University of Illinois: Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC). Retrieved August 2, 2011, from http://scholar.google.co.za/scholar?hl=en&q=Bullying+in+schools&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_ylo=&as_vis=1
- Barzelatto, J. (1998). Understanding sexual and reproductive violence: An overview. *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics, 63*(1), S13-S18.
- Bell, J. (2005). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education, health and social science* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education: Open University Press.

- Bennet, J. (2002). *Southern African higher educational institutions challenges sexual violence. Sexual harassment: A handbook of resources*. Cape Town: Umnwebi Communications.
- Benninga, J. S., Berkowitz, M. W., Kuehn, P., & Smith, K. (2003). The relationship of character education implementation and academic achievement in elementary schools. *Journal of Research in Character Education, 1*(1), 19-32.
- Berman, H. R. N., McKenna, K., Arnold, C. T., Taylor, G. M. A., & MacQuarrie, B. A. (2000). Sexual harassment: Everyday violence in the lives of girls and women. *Advances in Nursing Science, 22*(4), 32-46.
- Besag, V. E. (1995). *Bullies and victims in schools*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Best, J. W., & Khan, J.V. (2003). *Research in education* (9th ed.). NY: Pearson Education Company.
- Bester, S., & du Plessis, A. (2010). Exploring a secondary school educator's experiences of school violence: A case study. *South African Journal of Education, 30*(2), 203-229.
- Bezuidenhout, D. (1998). *Industrial psychology*. USA: McGraw-Hill.
- Bhana, D. (2000). *Making gender in early schooling. A multi-sited ethnography of power and discourse: from grade one to two in Durban*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Natal, Durban.
- Bhana, D. (2005). Violence and the gendered negotiation of masculinity among young black school boys in South Africa. In L. Ouzgane & R. Morrell (Eds.). *African Masculinities* (pp. 205–220). London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Bhana, D. (2008). Girls hit! Constructing and negotiating violent African femininities in a working-class primary school. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 29*(3).
- Bhana, D., de Lange, N., & Mitchell, C. (2009). Male teachers talk about gender violence: Zulu men demand respect. *Educational Review, 61*(1), 49–62.
- Bisikaa, T., Ntatab, P., & Konyani, S. (2009). Gender-violence and education in Malawi: a study of violence against girls as an obstruction to universal primary school education. *Journal of Gender Studies, 18*(3), 287-294.
- Burgess, R.G. (Ed.). (1982). *Field research: a sourcebook and field manual*. London: Allen & Unwin.

- Butler, J. (1999). *Gender trouble*. NY & London: Routledge.
- Campos, D. (2005). *Understanding gay and lesbian youth: lessons for straight teachers, counselors, and administrators*. USA: Rowman Littlefield.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Collins, C., Batten, M., Ainley, J., & Getty, C. (1996). Gender and school education. *Hawthorn, Australian Council for Educational Research*.
- Coleman, C. (1992). *The school years: Current issues in the socialization of young people*. New York: Routledge.
- Coloroso, B. (2002). *The bully, the bullied and the bystander: Breaking the cycle of violence*. Retrieved August 2, 2011, from <http://www.ctvnews.com/content/publish/popups/tagged/articles/coloroso.htm>.
- Connell, R.W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R.W. (1996). Teaching the boys: New research on masculinity and gender strategies for schools. *Teachers College Record*, 98(2): 206-235.
- Connell, R.W. (2002). Gender regimes and the general order. *The Polity Reader in Gender Studies, Polity Press*, 29-40.
- Cowie, H., & Pecherek, A. (1994). *Counselling: Approaches and issues in education*. London: Sage.
- Crawage, M. (2005). How resilient adolescent learners in a township school cope with school violence: A case study. An unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg.
- Creswell, J.W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merryhill.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Department of Education. (1995). White Paper on Education and training in a democratic South Africa. First steps to develop a New System. *Government Gazette*, 357(16312).
- Department of Education. (2000). *An implementation plan for Tirisano*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

- De Wet, C. (2003). Eastern Cape educators' perceptions of the causes and the scope of school violence. *Acta Criminologica*, 16(3), 89-106.
- De Wet, C. (2005). The nature and extent of bullying in Free State secondary schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 25(2), 82-88.
- Doig, R. (2005). Male adolescents' experiences of violence in an urban, private, secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. Unpublished master's dissertation, KwaZulu-Natal, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2002). *Educational Psychology in Social Context* (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Dunne, M. (2001). Breaking the bullying cycle. *American School and University*, 7(3), 112-156.
- Dunne, M. (2007). Schools and the production of gendered identities: insights from Ghana and Botswana. *Commonwealth Education Partnership*, London: Nexus Strategic Partnerships, pp. 26-30.
- Dunne, M., Humphreys, S., & Leach, F. (2004). *Gender and violence in schools. Background Paper for the Education for All (EFA) global monitoring report 2003/4*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Dunne, M., Humphreys, S., & Leach, F. (2006). Gender violence in schools in the developing world. *Gender and Education*, 18(1), 75-98.
- Dunne, M., & Leach, F. (2003). Institutional sexism: contexts and texts in Botswana and Ghana. Paper presented at the *Seventh Oxford International Conference on Educational Development*, 9–11 September.
- Eliasov, N., & Frank, C. (2000). *Crime and violence in schools in transition: A survey of twenty schools in the Cape Metropole and beyond*. University of Cape Town: Institute of Criminology. Retrieved August 2, 2011, from <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/sjrp/publicat/criviol.htm>
- Eliasson, M.A. (2007). *Verbal abuse in school: Constructing gender and age in social interaction*. Unpublished thesis, Department of Work and Health, National Institute for Working Health, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Epstein, D. (1997). Boyz own stories: Masculinities and sexualities in schools. *Gender and Education Right Project*, 9(1), 105-115.

- Fedler, J., & Tanzer, Z. (2000). A world in denial: International perspectives on violence against women. In Y. Parks, J. Fedler & Z. Dangor (Eds.), *Reclaiming women's space: New perspectives on violence against women and sheltering in South Africa* (pp. 17-42). Lenasia: Nisaa.
- Finch, J. (1986). *The use of qualitative methods in social and educational research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Fineran, S., & Bennett, L. (1998). Teenage peer sexual harassment: implications for social work practice in education. *Social Work, 43*(1), 387-401.
- Fineran, S., & Bennett, L. (1999). Gender and power issues of peer sexual harassment among teenagers. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 14*(6), 626-641.
- Fineran, S., & Bennett, L. (2002). Sexual harassment between same-sex peers: intersection of mental health, homophobia, and sexual violence in schools. *Social Work, 47*(1), 65-74.
- Flick, U. (2006). *An introduction to qualitative research*. (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Foucault, M. (1983). Afterword: The Subject and Power. In H. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics* (2nd ed., pp. 123-145). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Frosh, S., Phoenix, A., & Pattman, R. (2002). *Young Masculinities*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Garey-Davis, T. (2009). Construction of masculinities at a township school south of Durban: A case study. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Gilbert, R., & Gilbert, P. (1998). *Masculinity goes to school*. London: Routledge.
- Graham-Bermann, S.A., & Brescoll, V. (2000). Gender, power, and violence: Assessing the family stereotypes of the children of batterers. *Journal of Family Psychology, 14*(4), 600-612.
- Grinnell, J. M., & Williams, M. (1990). *Research in social science: A primer*. IL: F.E. Peacock.
- Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (1981). *Effective evaluation: Improving the usefulness of evaluation results through responsive and naturalistic approaches*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hanson, K. (1995). *Gendered violence: Examining education's role*. Newton, MA: Education Development Centre, Inc.

- Harber, C. (2004). *Schooling as violence. How schools harm pupils and societies*. NY: Routledge Falmer.
- Harro, B. (2000). The cycle of socialization. In W.J. Blumenfeld, M. Adams, R. Castaneda, H.W. Hackman, M.L. Peters & X. Zuniga (Eds). (2000). *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (pp. 15-22). NY: Routledge.
- Hart, S. N. (Ed.). (2005). *Eliminating corporal punishment: the way forward to constructive child discipline*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Henry, S. (2000). What is school violence? An integrated definition. *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 567, 16-29.
- Herbert, C. (1992). *Talking silence - The sexual harassment of schoolgirls*. London: Falmer Press.
- Hollway, W., & Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing qualitative research differently: Free association, narrative and the interview method*. London: Sage.
- Human Rights Watch. (2001a). *Hatred in the hallways: violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students in U.S. schools*. NY: Human Rights Watch.
- Human Rights Watch. (2001b). *Scared at school: sexual violence against girls in South African schools*. NY: Human Rights Watch.
- Human Sciences Research Council. (2001). *Crimes and violence on Gauteng schools: A report commissioned by Gauteng Department of Education*. Pretoria.
- Humphreys, S. (2003). Shy girls, playful boys' and the stick: an exploration of the relationship between corporal punishment and classroom gender relations. Paper presented at the *Seventh Oxford International Conference on Educational Development*, 9–11 September.
- Humphreys, S. (2006). Corporal punishment as gendered practice – not a simply human rights issue. In F. Leach & C. Mitchell (Eds.), *Combating gender violence in and around schools* (pp. 56-67). Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.
- Humphreys, S. (2008). Gendering corporal punishment: beyond the discourse of human rights. *Gender and Education*, 20(5), 527-540.

- Inderpal, L. A. (2007). *Grade 9 students' accounts of conflicts and abuses in a formerly Indian school near Durban*. An unpublished master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Jakupcak, M., Lisak, D., & Roemer, L. (2002). The Role of Masculine Ideology and Masculine Gender Role Stress in Men's Perpetration of Relationship Violence. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 3(2), 97-106.
- Jewkes, R., & Abrahams, N. (2002). The epidemiology of rape and sexual coercion in South Africa: an overview. *Social Science & Medicine*, 55(6), 1231-1244.
- Johnson, T. (2004). *Gender-based violence*. Paper presented at the background paper for the Commonwealth Secretariat's Human Rights Expert Group Consultation.
- Jones, C. (1985). Sexual tyranny – male violence in a mixed secondary school. In G.Weiner (Ed.), *Just a bunch of girls – feminist approaches to schooling* (pp. 78-89). Philadelphia: Oxford University Press.
- Kenway, J., & Fitzclarence, L. (1997). Masculinity, violence and schooling: challenging poisonous pedagogies. *Gender and Education*, 9(1), 117-133.
- Kenway, J., & Willis, S. (1998). *Answering back: Girls, boys and feminism in schools*. London: Routledge.
- Kimmel, M. (2004). *The gendered society*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Klein, J. (2006). An invisible problem: Everyday violence against girls in schools. *Theoretical Criminology*, 10(2), 147-177.
- Kreuger, R. A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. London: Sage.
- Krug, E.G., Mercy, J.A., Dahlberg, L.L., & Zwi, A.B. (2002). The world report on violence and health. *The Lancet*, 360 (9339), 1083-1088.
- Larkin, J. (1994). Walking through walls: the sexual harassment of high school girls. *Gender Educational Review*, 6, 263-280.
- Larkin, J., Andrews, A., & Mitchell, C. (2006). Guy talk: Contesting masculinities in HIV prevention with Canadian youth. *Sex Education*, 6(3), 207-221.
- Lauer, P.A. (2006). *An education research primer: how to understand, evaluate, and use it*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Leach, F. (2002). School-based gender violence in Africa: A risk to adolescent sexual health. *Perspectives in Education*, 2(2), 99-112.

- Leach, F. (2003). Learning to be violent: the role of the school in developing adolescent gendered behaviour. *Compare*, 33(3), 385-400.
- Leach, F. (2004). Gender violence in schools. *UNICEF*, 7(1), 101-130.
- Leach, F., Fiscian, V., Kadzamira, E., Lemani, E., & Machakanja, P. (2003). An investigative study into the abuse of girls in African schools. *Educational Research*, 56(1), 56-61.
- Leach, F., & Humphreys, S. (2007). Gender violence in school: taking the girls-as-victims discourse forward. *Gender and Development*, 15(2), 51-65.
- LeCompte, M. D. (2000). Analysing qualitative data. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 146-154.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J.E. (2005). *Practical research. Planning and designing* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Lees, S. (1993). *Sugar and spice: Sexuality and adolescent girls*. London: Penguin.
- Leone, P.E., Mayer, M.J., Malmgren, K., & Meisel, S.M. (2000). School violence and disruption: Rhetoric, reality, and reasonable balance. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 33(1), 1-20.
- Lind, G. (2000). The importance of role-taking opportunities for self-sustaining moral development. *Journal of Educational Research*, 10, 9-15.
- Loeber, R., & Farrington, D.P. (2011). *Young homicide offenders and victims risk factors, prediction, and prevention from childhood*. NY: Springer.
- Lombardi, E. L., Wilchins, R. A., Priesing, D., & Malouf, D. (2001). Gender violence: Transgender experiences with violence and discrimination. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 42(1), 89-101.
- Lorber, J. (1994). Night to his day: The social construction of gender. Excerpts from *Paradoxes of Gender*. CT: Yale University.
- Lyman, P. (Ed.). (1987). The fraternal bond as a joking relationship: a case study of the role of sexist jokes in male group bonding. In M. Kimmel (Ed.), *Changing Men: New Directions in Research on Men and Masculinity*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Mabusela, N. (2006). *Learners' perspectives on gender-based violence in semi-rural secondary schools*. Unpublished master's dissertation, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.
- Mac an Ghaill, M. (1994). *The making of men: Masculinities, sexualities and schooling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Mac an Ghail, M. (1996). Deconstructing heterosexualities within school arenas. *Curriculum Studies*, 4, 191-207.
- Maree, K. (Ed.). (2007). *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Marlow, C. (1993). *Research methods for generalist social work*. CA: Brooks and Cole.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G.B. (1989). *Designing qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Martino, W. (1995). Cool boys, party animals, squids and poofers: Interrogating the dynamics and politics of adolescent masculinities in school. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 22(2), 239-263.
- McKendrick, B., & Hoffman, W. (Eds.). (1990). *People and violence in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education: evidence based inquiry*. Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- Mead, S., Hilton, D., & Curtis, L. (n.d.) *Peer support: A theoretical perspective*. Retrieved August 12, 2011, from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.84.2734&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- Messerschmidt, J. W. (2000). Becoming real men: Adolescent masculinity challenges and sexual violence. *Men and Masculinities*, 2(3), 286-307.
- Meyer, A. G. (2005). *School violence in secondary schools: Guidelines for the establishment of Health Promoting Schools*. North West Province: North-West University.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book* (2nd ed.). CA, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Mills, M. (2001). *Challenging violence in schools*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Mirembe, R., & Davies, D. (2001). Is schooling a risk? Gender, power relations, and school culture in Uganda. *Gender and education* 13(4), 401-416.
- Moane, G. (1998). Gender and Psychology. In K. Trew & J. Kremer (Eds.), *Violence* (pp. 217-226). London: Arnold.
- Mooney, J. (2000). *Gender, violence and the social order*. London: Palgrave.
- Morojele, P. J. (2009). *Constructions of gender in the context of free primary school education: A multi-site case study of three schools in Lesotho*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.

- Morojele, P. J. (2011). What does it mean to be a girl? Implications of girls' and boys' experience of gender roles in rural Lesotho primary schools. *Education as Change, 15*(1), 133-147.
- Morrell, R. (1998). Of boys and men: Masculinity and gender in southern African studies. *Journal of Southern African Studies, 24*(4), 605-631.
- Morrell, R. (2001). Corporal punishment in South African schools: a neglected explanation for its persistence. *South African Journal of Education, 21*(4), 292-299.
- Morrell, R. (2002). A calm after the storm? Beyond schooling as violence. *Educational Review, 54*(1), 37-46.
- Morse, J. M., & Richards, L. (2002). *Read me first: For a user's guide to qualitative methods*. California: Sage.
- Motha, S. (2006). Gender based violence (GBV) and human rights education. *Human Rights Education Newsletter, 2*, 2-4.
- Mwahombela, L. (2004). *Perceptions of violence in a secondary school*. Unpublished master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Nayak, A., & Kehily, M. (1996). Playing it straight: Masculinities, homophobias and schooling. *Journal of Gender Studies, 5*(2), 211-230.
- Nelson Mandela Foundation. (2005). *Emerging voices: A report on education in South African rural communities*. Houghton: Nelson Mandela Foundation & Cape Town: HSRC.
- Neser, J., Ovens, M., van der Merwe, E., & Morodi, R. (2003). Bullying in schools: A general overview. *Acta Criminologica, 16*(1), 127-157.
- Ngakane, M. V. (2010). *Learner experiences of school violence at a secondary school in Lesotho*. Unpublished master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007). Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 70-90). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nkani, F. N. (2006). *Factors that explain gender based-violence amongst secondary school learners in the Inanda area*. Unpublished master's dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- http://www.sacsc.ca/Literature%20Review_finalSON.pdf

- Ohio State University, Centre for Sex Equity. (1996). Students in danger: Gender-based violence in our schools. *Equity Issues*, 2(1), 121-134.
- O'Neil, S. (2007). *Bullying between and teen girls: A literature, policy and resource review*. Retrieved August 17, 2011, from
- Olweus, D. (2000). *Bullying in school; what we know and what we can do*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Oransky, M., & Marecek, J. (2009). "I'm not going to be a girl." Masculinity and emotions in boys' friendships and peer Groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 24(2). 218-241.
- Ozer, E.J., & Weinstein, R.S. (2004). Urban adolescents' exposure to community violence: The role of support, school safety, and social constraints in a school-based sample of boys and girls. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 33(3), 463-476.
- Paechter, C. (1998). *Educating the other: Gender, power and schooling*. London: Falmer Press.
- Pasteur, L. (2004). *Violence and peace at school*. Retrieved August 12, 2011, from http://members.tripod.com/the_english_deutltwin2.html
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. (3rd ed.): CA: Sage
- Phillips, A. (1993). *The trouble with boys: Parenting the men of the future*. London: Harper Collins.
- Picciano, A. G. (2004). *Educational research primer*. NY: Continuum.
- Pinheiro, P.S. (2006). World Report on Violence Against Children. *National Criminal Justice Reference Service*, 218252.
- Renold, E. (2000). Coming out: Gender (hetero) sexuality and the primary school. *Gender and Education*, 12(3), 309-326.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). *National Education Policy Act, 27 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). *South African School Act 84 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa. (2007). *Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters). Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007)*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

- Robbin, D. J. (1992). *Educating against gender-based violence*. Retrieved August 2, 2011, from <http://www.edc.org/Women'sEquity/pubs/digest-gbviolence.html>.
- Roberts, W. B. (2006). *Bullying from both sides; strategic interventions for working with bullies and victims*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Robinson, K. (2005). Reinforcing hegemonic masculinities through sexual harassment: issues of identity, power and popularity in secondary schools. *Gender and Education, 17*(1), 19-37.
- Rubin, J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. London: Sage.
- Sathiparsad, R. (2006). *Gender-based violence and masculinity: A study of rural male youth*. An unpublished doctoral thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Schrock, D.P., & Padavic, I. (2007). Negotiating hegemonic masculinity in a batterer intervention program. *Gender & Society, 21* (5), 625-649.
- Shefer, T., Ratele, K., & Strebel, A. (2007). From boys to men: Social constructions of masculinity in contemporary society. Lansdowne: Juta & Company Ltd.
- Skeggs, B. (1991). Challenging masculinity and using sexuality. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 12*(2), 127-139.
- Smith, P. K., & Sharp, S. (1994). *School bullying: Insights and perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- South African Law Commission on Sexual offences: The substantive law Discussion Paper, 85. Pretoria: South African Law Commission, 1999.
- Staton, P., & Larkin, J. (1998). If we can't get equal, we'll get even: a transformative model of gender equity. *Canadian Woman Studies, 17*(4), 16-22.
- Stein, N. (1999). Gender violence in elementary and secondary schools. *Women's Studies Quarterly, 27*(1/2), 212-217.
- Strawhacker, M. T. (2002). School Violence: An Overview. *The Journal of School Nursing, 18*(2), 68-72.
- Strocka, C. (2005). *Social identity: An alternative approach to understanding youth gangs and youth violence in Peru*. Paper presented at the QEH 50th Anniversary Conference, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. Oxford Department of International Development.

- Tillman, J. K. (2000). Violence around schools. *European Education*, 32(1), 5-19.
- Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (1999). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences (2nd ed.)*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Trucco, E.M., Colder, C.R., Bowker, J.C., & Wieczorek, W.F. (2011). Interpersonal goals and susceptibility to peer influence: Risk factors for intentions to initiate substance use during early adolescence. *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 31(4), 526-547.
- UNICEF. (2001). *Corporal punishment in schools in south Asia*. Kathmandu: Author.
- United Nations. (1993). *Declaration on the elimination of violence against women*, adopted by the General Assembly. Retrieved July 12, 2011, from www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm.
- United Nations. (1995). *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 4-15*. NY: United Nations.
- Viano, E. C. (1992). *Intimate violence: Interdisciplinary perspectives*. WA: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.
- Vetten, L. (2000). Deconstructing violence against women in South Africa. In Y. J. Park, J. Fedler & Z. Dangor (Eds). *Reclaiming women's spaces* (pp. 34-41). Lenasia: Nisaa.
- Vogelman, L. (1990). *The sexual face of violence: Rapists on rape*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Wane, N. (2009). Sexual violence and HIV/AIDS risks in Kenyan and Ugandan schools: Social implications for education policy development. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, 4(1), 71-91.
- Wang, A. (2001). *Boys' masculinities in play: In dialogue with anti-violence teachers and students*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, Columbia.
- Watts, C., & Zimmerman, C. (2002). Violence against women: Global scope and magnitude. *Lancet*, 359, 1232-1237.
- Wolfe, D.A., Crooks, C.C., Chiodo, D., & Jaffe, P. (2009). Child maltreatment, bullying, gender-based harassment, and adolescent dating violence: Making the connections. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 33, 21-24.

- Wood, K., & Jewkes, R. (2001). Dangerous love: reflections on violence among Xhosa township youth. In R. Morrell (Ed.), *Changing men in southern Africa* (pp. 317-336). Scottsville: University of Natal Press.
- World Health Organisation (WHO). (2002). Communiqué on violence and health. *African Journal of Safety Promotion: A Journal of Injury and Violence Prevention*, 2(1), pp. 27-32. Retrieved October 12, 2011, from <http://www.thehardnessfactor.com>
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Young, I. M. (1990). Five faces of oppression. In M. Adams & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 123-127). NY: Routledge.

APPENDIX A

Consent Letter: School Governing Body

Permission to conduct research in your school

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Masters in Education student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus) conducting a research project titled; “*Learner interpretations of gender-based violence: A case study at a co-educational primary school in Durban.*”

I am interested in ways in which learners’ experience and think about gender-based violence as it happens in their schools. I kindly request permission to conduct my study at your school. Learners in grades 7 will be the participants in my study. They will be required to participate in individual and focus group interviews.

Please note that:

1. There will be no benefits for participation in this research project.
2. The learners will be expected to respond to each question in the manner that will reflect their own personal opinion.
3. Their identity will not be divulged under any circumstance.
4. There is no right or wrong answer.
5. All their responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
6. Pseudonyms will be used (real names of the participants and the institution will not be used throughout the research process).
7. Participation is voluntary; therefore, participants will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them.
8. The participants will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.
9. Audio recording of interviews will only be done if the permission of the participant is obtained,
10. Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed by burning.

APPENDIX B

Consent Letter: School Principal

Permission to conduct research in your school

Dear Sir,

I am a Masters in Education student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus) conducting a research project titled; “*Learner interpretations of gender-based violence: A case study at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal.*”

I am interested in ways in which learners’ experience and think about gender-based violence as it happens in their schools. I kindly request permission to conduct my study at your school. Learners in grades 7 will be the participants in my study. They will be required to participate in individual and focus group interviews.

Please note that:

1. There will be no benefits for participation in this research project.
2. The learners will be expected to respond to each question in the manner that will reflect their own personal opinion.
3. Their identity will not be divulged under any circumstance.
4. There is no right or wrong answer.
5. All their responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
6. Pseudonyms will be used (real names of the participants and the institution will not be used throughout the research process).
7. Participation is voluntary; therefore, participants will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them.
8. The participants will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.
9. Audio recording of interviews will only be done if the permission of the participant is obtained,
10. Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed by burning.

APPENDIX Ca

Letter of Consent: Parent

Permission for your child to participate in my research project

Dear Parent,

I am a Masters in Education student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal conducting a research titled: “*Learners’ experiences of gender- based violence: A case study at a co-educational primary school in Durban*”. I am interested in ways in which learners experience and think about gender-based violence as it happens in their schools. I request your permission for your child to participate in the study. This will involve individual and focus group interviews.

Please note that:

1. There will be no benefits that your child will receive for taking part in this research project.
2. Your child will be expected to respond to each question in the manner that will reflect his/ her own personal opinion.
3. Your child’s identity **will not** be divulged under any circumstance.
4. There is no right or wrong answer as this is **NOT** a test or examination
5. All of your child’s responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
6. Pseudonyms will be used (real names of your child and the school will not be used throughout the research).
7. Participation is voluntary; therefore, your child is free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to him or her.
8. Your child will not under any circumstances be forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.

Audio recording will only be done once permission is obtained from your child. Such information will be stored in a University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed by burning.

APPENDIX Cb

Isijobelelo C: isivumelwano esenziwa noMfundii

Mfundii othandekayo

Ngingumfundii owenza iziqu zeMaster kwezemfundo e Nyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natal. Ngenza uewaningo ngo “Iwazi lwabafundii mayelano nokuhlukumezeka ngoko-bulil: Isifundo socwaningo esenziswa kwesinye sezikole zamabanga aphansi eThekwini (Durban)” Ngilangazele ukwazi kabanzi ngolwazi onalo ngobudlobongela obenzeka esikoleni sakho nokuthi ucabangani ngalobubudlobongela. Ngicela ukuthi ube yingxenye yalolucwaningo. Nzizobe ngikubuzwa imibuzo, ngawedwana kanjalo nangamaqoqe ngobudlobongela obuqhubeka esikoleni sakho. Imibuzo iyoqhutshelwa esikoleni sakho.

Nakhu okumele ukwazi:

1. Awukho umvuzo (imali noma izipho) oyotholakaka ngokuba yingxenye yalolucwaningo.
2. Umbuzo ngamunye kumele uwuphendule ngendlela oban ngayo.
3. Ngeke ladalulelwa muntu igama lakho.
4. Ayikho impendulo eyiqiniso noma engamanga ngoba akusona isivivungo lesi.
5. Zonke izimpendulo zakho ziyogcinwa ziyimfihlo.
6. Amagama abantu noma esikole ngeke osetshenziswe kulo lonke lolucwaningo.
7. Njengoba uvolontiyile ukuba yingxenye yocwaningo, unelungelo lokuhoxa noma yinni ngale kokuhlukunyezwa.
8. ngeke waphoqwa ukuba usho ongafumi ukukusho.
9. ukuqoshwa kwezwi kuyokwenziwa kuphela ngemvume yakho.
10. Ulwazi oluqoqiwe luyogcinwa luphephile eNyuvesi luze lushiswe emva kweminyaka emihlanu.

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent: Learner

Dear Learner,

I am a Masters in Education student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, conducting a research project titled; “*Learners’ experiences of gender-based violence: A case study at a co-educational primary school in Durban.*” I am keen to find out about your experiences of violence in your school and what you think about violence in your school. I kindly request you to assist me in this research by being a participant. I will interview you about violence in your school on your own, and then I will interview in a group with other learners. The interviews will take place at your school premises. I want you to know the following:

1. There will be no benefits that you will receive for taking part in this research.
2. You will be required to answer to each question in the manner that will show your own personal opinion.
3. Your identity (name) **will not** be made known under any condition.
4. There is no right or wrong answer.
5. All your answers will be treated with strict confidentiality.
6. Pseudonyms will be used (real names of the participants / school will not be used throughout the research process).
7. Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable effects on you.
8. You will not be forced to make known what do not want to say.
9. **Audio- recording** will only be done through your permission.
10. Information will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed by burning.

APPENDIX E

Ethical Clearance



Research Office, Govan Mbeki Centre
Westville Campus
Private Bag x54001
DURBAN, 4000
Tel No: +27 31 260 3587
Fax No: +27 31 260 4609
mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

14 June 2011

Mr K Ramchunder (210553734)
School of Education & Development
Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Ramchunder

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0316/011M

PROJECT TITLE: Learners' experiences of gender-based violence: A case study at a co-educational primary school in Durban

In response to your application dated 10 June 2011, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has 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 school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor: Dr P Morojele
cc. Mr N Memela/Ms T Mnisi