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**SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE: EXPLORING EDUCATOR'S PERCEPTIONS AND  
EXPERIENCES AT THE GEM COMBINED SCHOOL IN MPUMALANGA.**

By

**Xolani C Malindisa**

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the

Master of Social Science degree

University of Kwazulu-Natal

College of Humanities

School of Applied Human Sciences,

Durban

**Supervised by Dr PB Zengele**

October 2022

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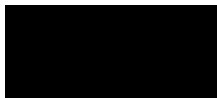
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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

**ACRWC** -African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

**CJA**- Child Justice Act 75 of 2008

**CNE**- Christian National Education

**DBE**- Department of Basic Education

**GSHS**- Global School based Health Survey

**GBV** -Gender-Based Violence

**HSSREC** -Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee

**NCESS**- National Committee on Education Support Services

**NCSNET**-National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training

**SASA** -South African Schools Act 84, 1996

**SAIRR**- South African Institute of Race Relations

**SBV**- School-based violence

**SGB**- School Governing Body

**GBVF**- Gender Based Violence and Femicide

**UNCRC**- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study focused on the school-based violence as it become a global issue. It is designed to understand the experiences and perceptions of educators at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga. The main aim of the study is to understand the experiences of educators understanding about School based violence. It sought to answer the following questions: What are the prevalent forms of school-based violence in school? What is the nature and extent of school-based violence in the school? What are the effects of violence on educators? What are the support structures put in place to assist educators manage school-based violence? The theoretical framework that will guide this research study is the ecological systems and Differential Association theory. This qualitative study explored how educators perceive and experiences school-based violence through semi-structured interviews. Semi structured interviews were used to obtain data from the 15 voluntary participants from The Gem Combined school. Purposive sampling as a technique was used for the selection of participants of this study. The participants will comprise of teacher of the school, and principal with no restriction of the number of years in practice. The research findings were analysed using thematic content analysis. The findings of the study show that educator is exposed to violent behaviours from learner. Furthermore, results indicated that school-based violence disturbs the teaching and learning. Educators are suffering to manage and deal with delinquent, deviant or related behaviours from learners. There is lack of supportive structure that is aimed at intervening. There is a greater need for social workers in schools who will provide psychosocial support to learners and inversely assist the educators in addressing school-based violence.

**Key Words:** School-based violence, educators, learners.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study focused on school-based violence as it become a global issue. It was designed to understand the experiences and perceptions of teachers at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga. The main aim of the study was to understand the perceptions and experiences of educators understanding about school-based violence. It sought to answer the following questions: What are the prevalent forms of school-based violence in school? What is the nature and extent of school-based violence in the school? What are the effects of violence on educators? What are the support structures put in place to assist educators manage school-based violence? The theoretical framework that guided this research study is the ecological systems and Differential Association theory. This qualitative study explored how educators perceived and experienced school-based violence through semi-structured interviews. Semi structured interviews were used to obtain data from the 15 voluntary participants from The Gem Combined school. Purposive sampling as a technique was used for the selection of participants of this study. The participants comprised of teachers at the school, and principal with no restriction of the number of years in practice. The research findings were analysed using thematic content analysis. The findings of the study show that educators are exposed to violent behaviours from learner. Furthermore, results indicated that school-based violence disturbs the teaching and learning. Educators are suffering to manage and deal with delinquent, deviant or related behaviours from learners. There is a lack of supportive structures that are aimed at intervening. There is a greater need for social workers in schools who will provide psychosocial support to learners and inversely assist the educators in addressing school-based violence.

**Key Words: School-Based violence, educators, learners.**

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter firstly discusses school-based violence as showed in literature that there is a great occurrence of violence in South African school. Secondly it will provide with the problem statement and explain the rationale and the significance of conducting this study. Thirdly it will outline the study aim and objectives. Furthermore, this section will provide with the research questions of this research study, it will also define some of the terms that will be used. Lastly it gives the structure of the thesis.

#### **1.2 Background and context**

According to van Nieuwenhuizen (2018) research shows that 21 000 incident of school-based violence (SBV) each annum in forty-one different countries cannot be unnoticed. These major findings illustrate that school-based violence is a worldwide social ill that needs to be addressed as a matter of importance to protect the well-being of those involved (Benbenishty & Astor, 2008; Altun & Baker, 2010; Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Espelage, Anderman, Brown, Jones, Lane, McMahon, Reddy & Reynolds, 2013). Figures remain inadequate on the experiences of violence perpetuated towards teachers. However, Espelage, et al., ( 2013) states that numerous research studies conducted on general school-based violence have reported some incidents. Violence perpetuated against teachers in schools appears to be a universally proliferating constituent of the 21st century on both locally and on the global education sector. According to Thompson (2013), approximately four percent of teachers in public-schools in the United States of American revealed, they had been victims of physical attacks during the 2007 to 2008 academic period furthermore, a survey in 2011 found that 80 percent of teachers stated being victims of assault, harassment, intimidation, or otherwise victimised at least once on the previous year. Furthermore, van Nieuwenhuizen (2018) support the assertion that violence in the United States of America has increased. Similarly, Lokmić, Opić, & Bilić (2013) expressed that in Zagreb, Croatia 74,3 percent of educators have experienced violence from their learners. Further, both primary and secondary schools' learners display vicious behaviour towards their teachers at an equivalent level.

These can be observed from an investigation conducted by Eliasov & Frank (2000; cited in de Wet, 2010) who found that that crime was pervasive in primary and secondary schools in Cape Town metropolis. Therefore, the social ill of school violence is not a concern for only

secondary schools rather even primary schools are grappling with the issues of violence. In 2018 a report from the United Nations Children's Funds reported that 150 million of children between the age of 13 to 15 years have said they experience violence, such as physical fights or forms of bullying, from their peers in and around schools. In the same report it was further reported that worldwide, approximately 720 000000 of school going age children are living in states where they are not protected fully by law against forms of physical punishment at school (Howard, 2018). These statistics shows that school violence is a universal problem and schools have become a volatile warzone. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017) 246 000000 children and young people experience school-based violence yearly. Presented records from different regions of the world show that 32% of learners have been bullied in some form by their peers in the past month at school on one or more days. Regardless of the school location there is no school that is exempted from school violence. A study conducted by Ohasko (1997; cited in Benbenishty & Astor, 2008) allude that "violence is occurring at a high rate in developing countries and its impact on schooling, learning and living is certainly serious, which refutes the commonly-held view that violence is primarily an issue of industrialized countries"(p.7). It should be noted that this assertion does not implying that in developed countries violence in schools does not occur but it does happen in smaller rate. Current studies in unindustrialized states challenges the archaic notion that violence is mainly a phenomenon of developed countries.

Along those lines of Ohasko (1997) similar findings seem to confirm the statement as a study piloted in various developing states for the Global Schoolbased Health Survey (GSHS) between 2003 and 2005 found a extensive disparity in nationwide experiences, for example in Beijing, China noted seventeen percent of girls and twenty three percent of boys (aged thirteen to fifteen) reported having been bullied in the past 30 days, and in Zambia this statistics increased to 67% for girls and 63% for boys (United Nations, 2012). The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (1999:5 cited in Zulu, et al., 2004) lists a number of cases in which teachers were killed during January and July 1999 in South Africa, Gauteng province. Sewsunker (1999:6) lists a variety of incidences of violent acts that took place in schools around KwaZulu-Natal. These violent acts include arson, armed robbery, brawling, damage to and destruction of school property, knife attacks and stabbings, murder, name calling, stone throwing, teacher's attacks by learners, sexual harassment, hostage taking, physical attack, , stolen mobile phones, hiding of drugs and weapons. Furthermore, Mncube & Harber (2013) a report findings by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) (2008); proposed

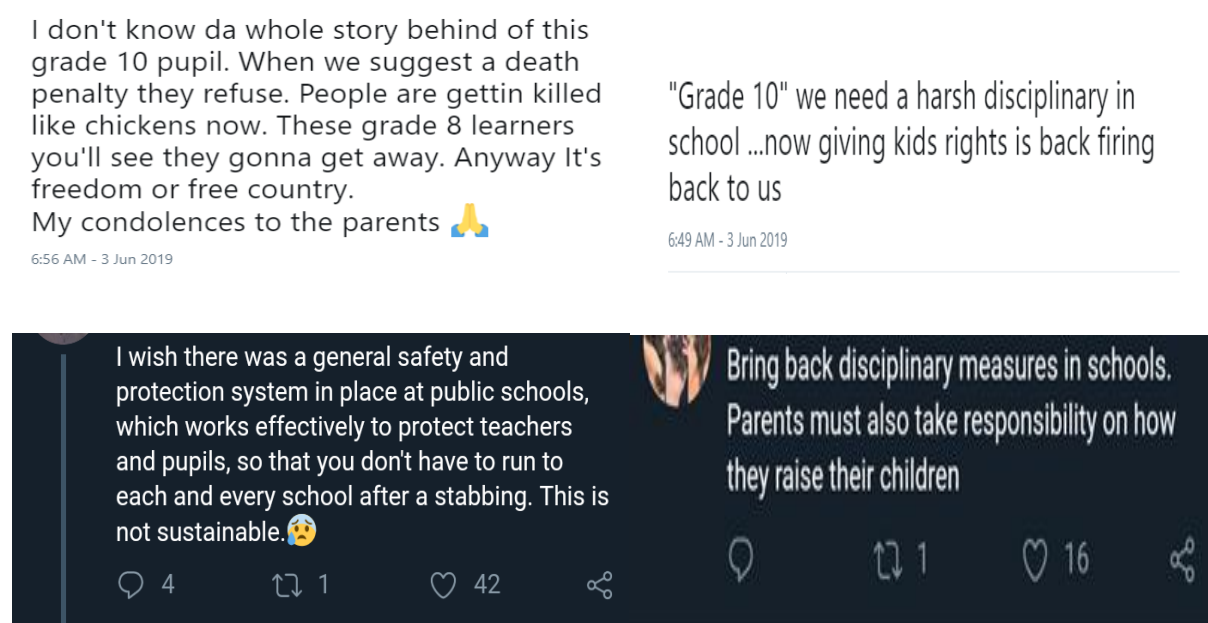
that solitary twenty-three percent of learners in South Africa revealed that they had a sense security at school conversely, to an examination that recommends that schools in Denmark, Sweden and Norway were the most safest globally with roughly seventy percent of learners saying they had a sense of security at school. A safe school can be defined as a “school that is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm, a place where non-educators, educators and learners may work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence” (Prinsloo, 2005, p. 5). In a study conducted with nine hundred Turkish teachers it revealed that more than twenty four percent of the participants have experienced emotional violence (Ozdemir, 2012).

### **1.3 The rise of Gun-violence in Schools**

Firearm brutality has shaken the youngsters of the United States of America (King, 2018). Consequently, the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, thousands of people worldwide joined high school pupils in the United States of America in a march to request restrictive gun laws (King, 2018), this daylong event, was under the slogan of ‘March for Our Lives’ which followed the February 2018 shooting at a Florida high school in which a former scholar used military-style guns and ammunition to murder 17 learners and educators and injure many other (Flatley, Shields, & Yang, 2018; King, 2018). The recently formed International Journal of School Violence and the Fourth International Conference on School Violence remain to be the paramount recent notices that school-based violence is a worldwide issue. Burton (2008); Benbenishty & Astor, (2008), and Flatley, et al., (2018), often the public in countries characterised by diverse cultures such as Ethiopia, Columbia, Brazil, Finland, Israel, Jordan, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa Norway, and United State of America are frightened by vicious deeds of futile violence in schools. On the contrary van Nieuwenhuizen (2018) elucidate that school violence is not an entirely a 3<sup>rd</sup> world phenomenon which is motivated by racism mostly.

In addition, a study by Burton (2008) revealed that approximately 1.8 000000 of all learners between Grade three and twelve with 15.3 percent in South African schools had experienced violence in one form or another. Furthermore, Burton (2008) investigation also indicated that 57.7 percent of primary school’s teachers compared to 58.1 percent of secondary school’s teachers reported feeling insecure at their institutions when teaching. However, in the South African context the government is trying by all means to make sure that children are safe guarded this can be seen from the abolishment of corporal punishment. And the establishment of several intervention strategies although it seems as if they are not effective in eradicating this social ill. Furthermore, Du Plessis (2008) states that the Department of Basic of Education

appears to be focusing more on the prevention of educator to learner violence rather than on the prevention of violence of all forms in schools and intervention strategies to deal with present concerns of school-based violence. From this the current interventions were developed from the lenses of viewing educators as sole perpetrators of SBV. As result of that educators are left to deal with violent behaviours at their work place which resulted to the public frustrated with the ineffective mechanism that have been put in place by the Department of Basic Education in the Republic of South Africa, see figure 1.3.1 below which shows a glimpse of twitter posts twitted by individuals who are frustrated about the nature of policies of the sector.



**Figure 1.3.1:** showing tweets about frustration with laws of South Africa (06:49 AM, 3 June 2019).

#### 1.4 The Impact and Severity of Violence in South African Schools

School-based violence (SBV) as a social concern encompasses various consequences and ramifications hence a holistic understanding is required to design appropriate strategies to curb and flatten the growing social ill. SBV is regarded as “any intentional physical or non-physical (verbal) condition or act resulting in physical or non-physical pain being inflicted on the recipient of that act while the recipient is under the school’s supervision” (Prinsloo & Naser, 2007, p. 47). The severity of school-based violence (SBV) in South Africa seems to be more persistent to illustrate that according to Jordaan (2018) the provincial’s figures showed that three hundred and fifty-eight learners had been involved in physical abuse, including attacking other learners. Schools in the Gauteng province have expelled 151 learners, 31 of them for assaulting teachers and other school staff members since 2018, January (Jordaan, 2018). Similarly, Burton (2008) confirms that 3 out of 5 secondary schools have received complaints



of verbal harassment from learners to educators. Such findings show that education stakeholders need to play an important part in recognising this type of violence and its implications in the sector. NAPTOSA (2018) in Limpopo alone the provincial Department of Education was handling 942 cases of assaults on educators. According to Mncube & Netshitangani (2014) schools in South African are the utmost unsafe in the world. This is unsurprising as recently the country is experiencing an increase on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), especially violence against children and women, and femicide incident are on the upsurge. The survey piloted by SAIRR showed that only 23 percent of learners in South Africa felt sensed of safe at school. Smith & Smith (2006) state that one study exposed that 56% of the teachers do not feel safe in schools. Therefore, one can say that schools are no longer a haven for safety whereby learning and teaching can take place without any hindrance. Furthermore, schools are no longer the place for conduit of academic excellence.

Although research by Howard (2018) and Jordaan (2018) shows that learners in school are more exposed to violence but it is important to note that within the South African context teachers are also victims of violence which is perpetrated by learners for example a grade 8 learner pulled a firearm on an educator at Eldorado Park Secondary School, Johannesburg. To show the drastic increase of violence directed to educators in South African schools, can be observed from the fact that an educator was stabbed to death by a learner in Zeerust in the North West (Mkhonza, 2018 and May, 2018). According de Lange, Mitchell, and Bhana (2012 cited in Altinyelken & Le Mat 2017) most of the available literature centers around on learner perspectives and lack insights on teacher opinions. The surge of school based violence raise alarming concerns for the education department of South Africa with regards to the safety of those involved in the schools environment. In Mpumalanga province at Ligugu Secondary school a school principal is accused of molesting young boys during school hours in his office (Machogo, 2018), It is imperative to be cautious that men abuse in the South African setting is seen as not prevalent due to lack of reporting from men and the patriarchal norms.

According to Netshitahame & van Vollenhoven (2002) in rural schools, school-based violence is no longer a foreign phenomenon. This Therefore, shows that violence in South African schools happens in both public and private institutions, well resource and non-well resourced. This scourge display that schools are no longer percieved as a place of safety which is against the Bill of Rights (Act No. 108 of 1996) section (24) to be precise where it states that every person has the right to an environment that is not detrimental to his health or well-being. Renfro, Huebner, Callahan & Ritchey (2003) and Sibisi (2016) on the contrarily they are of the

view that school-based violence is normal in numerous secondary schools in the context of South Africa, more specifically in those that are located in township regions. That being said, Renfro, et al., (2003) allude that there is miniature academic work on rural education and school based violence despite growing interest in rural crime matters. Further Renfro, et al., (2003); Prinsloo & Naser (2007) states that many studies have explore more on gangs and violence on school property in township context, diminutive is well-known about school violence within rural setting. It is therefore, that this study intents to explore more about school-based violence in rural school setting. On the contrarily Renfro, et al., (2003) state that there is no difference between urban and rural context of school-based violence as they assert that rural schools face the same problems as urban schools such as escalating family breakdown, violence, the influence of media violence and more importantly, insufficiency of resources to systematically address these issues. This brings a new perspective of the generally held belief that schools in rural areas they do not have difficulties about violence.

Schools-based violence in South Africa includes violent threats, bullying, corporal punishment, gang violence, sexual violence, physical assaults, robbery, and psychological abuse (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). The majority of SBV is learner to learner violence which occurs across genders and many research studies have focused more on students as victims rather than perpetrators ((Burton & Leoschut, 2013; HSRC, 2017 and McMahon, et al., 2017). The same learners may be either a victims or perpetrator. Second there is a teacher to learner violence which is the widely reported about and many researcher have explored this topic on academia. Mncube & Harber (2013) and Burton & Leoschut (2013). And inversely learner to educator violence, learner to teacher violence has became very common in schools, yet it remain one of the understudied, phenomenon both locally and interationally (McMahon, et al., 2017; Garrett, 2014; Woudstra, et al., 2018).

Jefthas and Artz (2007) point out that males and females learners are predisposed to various sorts of brutality. While girl learners are bound to be casualties of inappropriate behaviour and assault such as sexual harassment and rape executed by boy learners, male teachers or principals on the other hand, boy learners are more likely to be victims of physical assault, shooting or stabbing. Most often violence in schools is perpetuated through gender based violence. Leach & Humphreys (2007) allude that there is a lot of literature written which focused more on females as victims of gender-based violence within a heterosexual framework, and propose that other forms which must to be explored further comprise, girl-on-girl violence homophobic violence, and learner to educator violence. Hence, this raises serious concerns

about the unmapped type of gender violence which is violence perpetuated by girls, possibly the reason for this to remain ungiven much attention it is because girls are normally viewed as victims, and prevailing understandings of femininity do not associate girls with violence. According to Leach & Humphreys (2007) and Warwick, Chase, & Aggleton (2004) homophobic violence has been recognized as a serious problem in schools in many industrialized countries, such as the United Kingdom, United States, and Australia, little is known about its pervasiveness in educational institutions within developing states.

Lokmić, et al., (2013) states that perpetrators of violence towards educators are learners and their parents, and colleagues as well, which is not rare. According to Lokmić, et al., (2013) a small figure of academic studies addressing this phenomenon have shown that educators are still often victims of their learners and their parents. Such violence in South African is also seen for example a parent physically assaulted a teacher in a school using an umbrella in a school at Tlhatlaganyane (IOL News, 2019). Furthermore, Lokmić, et al., (2013) assert that a research conducted in the United states of America in 2013 showed that thirty seven percent of teachers were subjected to parental instances of abuse. The majority of studies conducted so far both locally and internationally present evidence that in understanding the the global issue of violence one can adopt a gender-sensitive frame of reference, where by school violence can be understood on gender-based violence. Gender based violence can be extensively grouped into two covering classes namely explicit gender (sexual) violence, which incorporates sexual harassment, coercion, abuse, rape and, attack and implicit gender violence, which consist of bullying, corporal punishment, psychological and verbal abuse, the unofficial use of free labor by teachers and other forms of violent or unwanted conduct (Dunne, et al., 2003).

The recent violent incidents in South African schools have resulted in a public debate between legislators and the criminal justice system bickering over how best to protect children who have committed an offence including those regarded as more serious crime in terms of schedule two and three of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977. These concerns were further raised by the spokesperson for the SA Democratic Teachers' Union, Nomusa Cembu who believed pupils' right to be educated overshadowed laws aimed at protecting teachers (May, 2018). The litany of violent acts in South African schools have received the nation's concern about violence in both public and private schools, an issue that has generated public debate about the right accorded to children. According to the children's Act 38 of 2005 a child is defined as any person who is under the age of 18 years, thus such person is regarded as a minor. Despite long-standing attention to the problem, there is a rising perception that schools are no longer safe

spaces for learning, and mass media reports highlight specific violent school-based acts for example Cape Town provincial statistics showed that there were more than 60 attacks of educators in the region during the 2018 academic year first quarter Ford-Kritzinger (2018).

### **1.5 Statement of the Problem**

South African communities are characterised by increasing crime and violence rates. According to Dunne, et al., ( 2003); Smith & Smith (2006); Benbenishty & Astor (2008); Le Roux & Mokhele (2011); Burton (2008) and King (2018) school as a microcosm of society is also characterised by such behaviours as described in literature that a normal day in South African schools includes physical attacks, bullying, substance use, learners carrying perilous arms, sexual violence and other illegal actions. Therefore, school-based violence and disruption remain a daily reality for many educators in South Africa, and these ills and deviant code of conduct from pupil are even gaining momentum in certain areas of the country. These violent acts are imported into schools by the learners as they have (internalised) adopted it from their respective homes and local communities in which they reside. According to Smith & Smith (2006) there is a profusion of exploration and conjecture on violence in inner city schools, the perceptions differ widely. Although, most of these research studies have been conducted in school's settings located in urban areas miniature continue to be known about violence experienced by schoolteachers based in rural areas (Renfro, et al., 2003). Due to that there might be existing perception which direct that rural schools can be exempted from violence. According to Zulu, et al., (2004) schools have become extremely unpredictable and volatile spaces which inversely impact on the teach and learning culture. Consequently, school violence should not be seen as an urban schools based social ill only rather that it also subsists in schools based in rural setup.

It is for this reason that this study intends to add by closing this knowledge gap by adding to the already limited work done in the field by exploring teacher's perceptions and experiences about school base violence within a rural school environment. Similarly, Smith & Smith (2006) states that although there is considerable literature that exists on school violence, perceptions of school violence and teacher attrition, the links between these issues have not been clearly established in the literature. Furthermore, teachers as a cohort have been comparatively understudied regarding school-based violence (Fisher & Kettle, 2003). The media also drive the discourse of urban school violence as compared to rural schools through their reporting. According to Fisher and Kettle (2003 cited in Altun & Baker, 2010), teachers and other school

personnel such as mental health and psychosocial professionals have more understanding and awareness than anyone else in terms of what transpires in a school and how school systems function within a larger context. Nevertheless, their perspective of school-based violence has not been sufficiently studied by researchers and academics. Equally important Espelage, et al., (2013) is of the same opinion and alludes that despite the work done in the field teachers are frequently disregarded as victims on the subject matter of school-based violence even though it has become a portion of their daily life in (some) schools in South Africa and the entire world.

In addition to that Dinkes, Cataldi, Lin-Kelly, & Snyder (2007 cited in Espelage, et al., 2013) state that although violence perpetuated towards educators is a countrywide crisis with dire repercussions and deserves attention in the school violence balance, has it is hardly defined, meaningfully discussed or empirically studied within the academic fraternity. Hence, a study of this magnitude according Zeira, Astor, and Benbenishty (2003) can offer a contrast of perspectives of teachers from diverse backgrounds which may contribute to a holistically understanding of the subject, making this a vital element for developing meaningful interventions strategies.” (p. 3166). Thus, this study aims on providing a comprehensive investigation of school-based violence against teachers as they are also affected by the phenomenon under this study, such approach will move away from looking at learner’s victimisation to the omission of teacher victimisation which according to Altun & Baker, (2010) will yield a holistically representation of the SBV.

Botha (2021) A very limited number of studies have been carried out in Learner-on-educator violence (LOEV) in South African schools, although several researchers have devoted their time to issues pertaining to schools-based violence in general. Since policymakers and research funders have largely overlooked violence against educators, insufficient information is available about the consequences thereof. It was on this bases that The Gem Combined School was selected as a research site. Due to lack of published source (empirical studies published) at this area the researcher used anecdotal evidence of incidents that took place. This evidence was observed when I was a learner at this school, as I started my primary education here until I completed grade 12. Additionally, to that I have worked at this school which makes it a total of 14 years. Moreover, having informal conversation other learners who are learning at this school about their own experiences and observation of learner’s attitudes toward educators.

## **1.6 Rationale and significance of study**

The reasons for undertaking the study were the following:

- There is a high predominance of school-based violence in South African schools that is being reported in both digital and print media houses. The tenacity of reports from the media on the issue of a lack of learners and educators' safety in schools, violence, assaults, and injuries (Netshitahame & van Vollenhoven, 2002).
- Most current data of school-based violence have been piloted in urban context school which led to the under-research of school-based violence in rural contexts. Which further, makes the narratives of teachers experiences who practise in rural setting remain unheard of.
- This study was motivated by the intensification of violence cases of learner indiscipline in schools which has raised concerns of safety and security in South African while the country has professionals who possesses the skills that can be utilised in curbing this social concern.

The significance of this study is to establish if there were supportive arrangements accessible to support educators to cope with or to manage school-based violence and how they can be modified in ensuring the safety of all involved in the school environment. Furthermore, the resulting outcomes and recommendations will make a positive contribution to existing prevention and intervention strategies related to school-based violence.

## **1.5 Aims and Objectives**

### **1.5.1 Aims**

1.5.1. The Aim of this study is to understand the experiences of educators understanding about School based violence.

The aim of the study is to understand the perceptions and experiences of educators understanding about school-based violence at The Gem Combined School.

### **1.5.2 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

1.5.2.1 To better understand the different forms of schools-based violence in the school.

To better understand the different forms of school-based violence experienced by educators at The Gem Combined School.

1.5.2.2 To understand the nature and extent of school-based violence in the school.

1.5.2.3 To explore the effects of school-based violence on teachers.

1.5.2.4 To ascertain the measures available to manage school-based violence.

## **1.6 Research questions**

1.6.1 What are the prevalent forms of school-based violence in school?

1.6.2 What is the nature and extend of school-based violence in the school?

1.6.3 What are the effects of violence on educators?

1.6.4 What are the support structures put in place to assist educators manage school-based violence?

## **1.7 Definition of terms**

**School** - means a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R (Reception) to grade twelve (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996).

**Learner** - means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education (South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996).

**Educator** – any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates, or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a school (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996). Therefore, for the purpose of this study this will refer to a person who teaches or facilitates the learning process, (TUKI 1981:201). Hence on this paper the term educator and teacher will be used interchangeable as teacher is a “school-based educator whose core responsibility is that of classroom teaching at a school” (DBE, 2010, p. 115; cited in Grobler, 2018).

**School based violence /school violence** - is regarded as any intentional physical or non-physical (verbal) condition or act resulting in physical or non-physical pain being inflicted on the recipient of that act while the recipient is under the school’s supervision” (Prinsloo & Naser, 2007, p. 47).

## **1.8 Structure of the thesis**

**1.8.1 Chapter 1-** This section deals with the background of the study. This chapter has provided the context and introduction to the study. It has outlined the objectives of the study, problem statement and the research question. It has also presented the definitions of the concepts used in the study.

**1.8.2 Chapter 2-** This chapter will present the history of violence in South African Schools, and legislation to understand violence in schools and lastly it discusses the types of violence that teachers witness and experience in school and the effects that it has.

**1.8.3 Chapter 3-** It will provide with two theoretical frameworks namely the ecological systems and differential association theory which will be used to understand the study.

**1.8.4 Chapter 4-** This chapter provides a description of the research methodology, research technique and procedures used to analyse the data. Furthermore, it presents ethical considerations that were considered while conducting the study and potential limitations of the study.

**1.8.5 Chapter 5-** This chapter reports on the research findings of this study.

**1.8.6. Chapter 6-** This focuses on providing with recommendations that the researcher will commend after the study has been conducted.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

The first chapter of this research has discussed the background of the study, presented statement of problem. Furthermore, the rationale and the importance of the research is outlined. In Addition to that, in this chapter the aim and objectives together with the research questions were presented. The main key concepts were defined and lastly this chapter has presented with the structure of this study. The next chapter below discusses more about literature review surrounding the area of violence in schools.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This second chapter focuses on addressing the history of school-based violence more specifically in the South Africa setting, provide with a review of a number legislation and policy that help to addresses, understanding the perpetuation of school-based violence.



furthermore, it will discuss the types of violence that teachers witness and experience while performing their duties these include both in-direct and direct exposure to violence. The government South Africa has undoubtedly put in place numerous legislation and policy frameworks aimed at protecting the rights of both learners and educators.

## **2.2 History of school violence in the Republic of South African**

### **2.2.1 Apartheid**

During the apartheid regime violence was utilized as an instrument to oppress majority groups and directly proportionally to that majority groups at that time used it as a form of resistance to injustice posed to them by the apartheid system. According to South African History Online (2011) and Vergottini & Weyers (2020) an initial proper school began in 1658, this school was established by the then Commander Jan van Riebeeck for the slave children brought to the Cape in the Dutch ship, the Amersfoort, which had caught them off a Portuguese slave master. “On the African continent, political and ethnic tensions have led to armed conflicts; many of these conflicts have made their way into schools and classrooms” (Ntshoe, 2002, p. 62). This assertion is an accurate reflection of the South African context during the apartheid government. The apartheid government was characterised by violence in solving societal issues. Although, violence was used by the apartheid regime it should be taken into consideration that violence was further utilised as a defence means to defy the hegemonic structural powers and the political administration of the time (Ntshoe, 2002). Clearly this was the only strategy that the oppressed had to use to overthrow the domination of the apartheid mechanism.

The year 1948 in South Africa marked the formulation of the Christian National Education (CNE) policy, by National party which was intended to substantiate apartheid and separate developmental ideology (Ntshoe, 2002). The main political impact of the CNE strategy was the implementation of a separated scholastic structure having schools discretely for various tribal, cultural, linguistic groups and ethnic, eventually crowning in the notorious Bantu Education Policy Act of 1953 (Eiselen, 1953). Therefore, it can be concluded that the CNE policy was exclusive and chauvinist in that the kind of Christianity it advocated meant that white Afrikaners (white supremacy) were the preferred racial group as they were of the majority race at the time. Equally important, South African History Online (2013) the 1963 Coloured Person's Education Act brought oversight of 'Coloured' education under the Coloured Affairs Department which encouraged 'Colored' schools to be also registered through the administration as well.

In addition to that the following was the year of 1965 which saw the passing of Indian Education Act, under the administration of Department of Indian Affairs which was designed to isolate and manage the education of Indian learners (South African History Online, 2013). Therefore, it was for this reason that during the apartheid regiment schools were segregated on the basis of skin colour of people for example, schools for black people were separated from those of white people. Hence, South Africa became known as the diverse and multi-cultural country which is characterised by a predominantly black population. Often black people schools were in rural and township context on the other hand white people schools were in urban setting. As result there is huge disparities in these school settings for example in the case of *HOD and MEC for Education vs Hoërskool Ermelo, SGB and Others* the judge elucidated that the apartheid administration had left the country with many scars, and due to that white schools were extremely well resourced than black schools (Mestry, 2017).

Fast forward between the year of 1970's and 1980's in South Africa, schools and educational system were the focal point of political battle when aggressive and frequently violent anti-apartheid picketing and social activism were held throughout South African schools (Ntshoe, 2002 and Zulu, et al., 2004). Consequently, of those protest action media houses started to report about the taunting and abuse of school children by South African white polices. Hence, there was the well published student uprising of 1976 which played a significant role challenging and tearing away apartheid hegemony. Consequently, it was from this period and going onwards, that education became an instrument of political reform in the history of South Africa.

During this era South African schools were characterized by violent behaviors as a form of discipline an example can be traced back in one of the SABC 1 series known as '*Yizo Yizo*'. During this period corporal punishment was mostly used as the only way to deal with delinquency and discipline ill behaviors in children in schools. It is imperative, that one highlight that it became the accepted norm that children need to be punished hard for their wrong doings. Moreover, this can be observed by the fact that on 16 June 1976 more than thousands of school learners engage in protest actions which resulted in others being shot death for example the late iconic Hector Peterson (South African History Online, 2013). The main fight was against the medium of instruction which was Afrikaans in all the learning subjects. Furthermore, teachers were adopting an authoritarian style which made it more complex for children not to challenge their teacher's decisions. The education system of South African post-apartheid has been surviving with quandaries and struggles inherited from the countries past

and socio-cultural circumstances. According to Zulu, et al., (2004) it was during this period that children of that time and now have become adults who had been exposed too and were socialized to deal with their problems in hostile and violent behaviours. Moreover, Hlophe (1999), assert that racial conflict among Indian and black learners in the province of KwaZulu-Natal is one of the reasons that threatens schools to become battle zones.

### **2.2.2 Democracy (1994- present)**

Schools in South Africa also contributed a pivotal role in the transformation of the state shifting from an apartheid to a democratic country through their means of resistance under the dominance of the apartheid government. Morrell (2001) states that every nation's constitution serves as the foundational document from which all other pieces of policies and legislation are enacted from. It is for this reason that the constitution of a country shapes the world view of a nation and its socio-political and economic position.

Since protection of children from violence is a worldwide phenomenon major legislative frameworks were put in place to ensure their safety this includes both international signatories that South Africa need to oblige to and national legislations these include but not limited to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, Children's Act 38 of 2005; South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and Prevention of Combatting and Torture of Persons Act 13 of 2013.

To indicate that crime is rife in South African communities can be seen from that in Gauteng a father accidentally shot his son to death while waiting for him to finish with evening classes at school. It was reported that the father had fallen asleep and when he heard someone knocking in the windows thought that he was hijacked he pulled out his firearm and accidentally shot and killed his son (Maphanga, 2018). Similarly, in Cape Town, Mitchells Plain pupils and teachers at Woodville Primary School witnessed the shooting of a gentleman who was shot and killed when he was dropping his children at the school (Mortlock & Persens, 2019).

According to Burton (2008) children in South African are most likely to experience violence in schools compared their households. Clearly, this shows that even under the democratic government in the country school children are seen as only victim of violence. However, this does not downplay that research reveals that they are exposed to violence more often (Burton

& Leoschut, 2013). The reporting of learner to teacher violence remains an issue in South African schools as there are no statistics from the Basic Education Department. The pervasiveness of violence during this era in South Africa has resulted to that the government recognises and classified that women and children are the most vulnerable members of society therefore they require utmost protection. According to study conducted by Burton & Leoschut (2013) 30 percent of educators affirmed that they are feeling unsafe at school. Furthermore, according to Burton (2008:2) and Maphosa & Shumba (2010) some forms of violence are more predominant in independent and well-established schools than in poorer or township schools. Hence the importance of and analysing current state of SBV in the Republic of South Africa must be comprehended within the republic's heritage of political fight, as well as the concomitant monetary disadvantages and social disparity which was all instigated by the apartheid regime. South Africa boasts as one of the world's most progressive constitutions, giving children complete rights, but there is a significant gap between legislation and reality.

## **2.3 Legislation**

### **2.3.1 Children's act 38 of 2005**

Inquiry by person to establish if his / her name is included in Part B of national child protection register (regulation 50(1)(b)) [section 126(3) of the children's act 38 of 2005]. The Children's Act established the National Protection Register (CPR), Part B of the register records persons who are found to be unsuitable to work with children. Once an individual's name appears on Part B, they may no longer be employed at an institution dealing with children. Although this section of the act was used to protect children from any form of harm or abuse it is very questionable when it comes to employing the Department of Education (DoE) personnel such as teacher as there are cases where some teachers are not even on the database of the Department as registered and qualified personnel or some with fraudulent qualification for instance, a report by the South African Council of Educators (SACE), presented that at least twenty educators have been practicing their trade by means of falsely attained certificates (Monama & Makhubu, 2016). SACE is an established statutory organization that was developed to uphold principled practice standards for educators in South Africa. According to Ndlovu (2019) the year 2010 there were about 14 000 teachers in the province of KwaZulu-Natal who were not having a formal tertiary qualification for teaching rather majority had only a grade 12 certificate. However, these individuals were given a timeframe to further their studies and failure to do so they would terminate their contract with the DBE.

For this reason, a Democratic Alliance Member of Parliament Sonja Boshoff who asked Mrs. Angie Motshekga, Basic Education Minister about the statistics of those educators that have applied for SACE registration and produced a SAPS-issued clearance certificate. Clearly this shows that the DBE does not comply with these requirements as this is one of the most infringement of children's right. However, it should be applauded that the DBE is putting more effort in rectifying and preventing violence in South African schools. The Minister responded that SACE is abiding with the newly protocols necessitating educators to submit criminal records upon their registration this year which is a new implementation (Maqhina, 2019 and Charles, 2019). These new developments on the department come after it has been under pressure to safeguard that the registration procedure for SACE integrates clearance certificates from the South African Police Service (SAPS), National Child Protection Register and National Register for Sex Offenders (Maqhina, 2019). Through these procedures that the department is putting in place can also be put within one of level of intervention within the social work framework which is the early intervention strategy to stop the reoccurring of misconduct done by educators on pupil.

According to Monama & Makhubu (2016) the report by SACE revealed that impostors frequently produced qualifications from recognized higher learning institutions such the University of Zululand, University of South Africa, and the University of North West, furthermore, 33 educators were struck off the roll indefinitely for offences including rape, sexual relationship and impregnation of learners, selling drugs to learners, indecent assault and severe physical abuse school learners. The importance of ensuring that educators and people involved in the school daily running such as security guards' personnel are evaluated for criminal record that will be deemed unfit to work with children is crucial in modern day of society as often times learners are raped by the people they know of. Monama & Makhubu (2016) from April to October 2016, a total of thirty-three teachers were canceled on the educators roll of permanently and their details handed over to the Social Development department to be incorporated in Part B of the register of persons declared not being fit to work with children. These finds show the importance of partnership between the two departments in eradicating and ensuring that fraudster do not attempt in trying their lucky with the system for example an educator in Limpopo who had worked for twenty years with fraudulent certificates without being caught.

### 2.3.2 South African Schools Act's 84 of 1996

The introductory period of teaching in South Africa corresponds with the underpinning of the colonial experience at the Cape in 1652 (South African History Online, 2011). The legacy of apartheid cannot be left out in understanding major legislative frameworks of the democratic South Africa. Past legislations have been discriminatory in nature especial to people of colour. Consequently, when the African National Congress (ANC) came into power many policies and legislation were mandatory to be changed and rectified, hence the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (hereafter SASA) was introduced. SASA allude that discipline must be upheld in both the classroom and school environment so that the learning of learner's superfluities without unruly behaviour and violations.

According to Bower, et al., (2015) corporal punishment within the education sector has been forbidden from 1997, by the SASA 84 of 1996. Subsection 1 and 2 of section 10 of SASA forbids the administering of corporal punishment in schools, and explicitly allude that an "educator who administers corporal punishment to a learner is guilty of an offence." Nevertheless, this section does not provide with alternative forms of discipline that educators can uses in administering and instilling discipline on children as corporal punishment is prohibited. This creates a dilemma as teachers do not know how they can deal with unruly pupils (King, 2018; Morrell, 2001). In attempting to preserve chastisement, teachers constantly had to be concerned about being victims of abuse by learners and they also must be very vigilant that they are not accused of abusing children. Even though this practice was abolished in South African schools' educators still utilizes this practice of corporal punishment, this can be observed by that in 2017 Statistics South Africa revealed that corporal punishment remained to be common in South African schools for example in the Eastern Cape with 12,7%, Free State with 12,6% and KwaZulu-Natal with 10.1% (Ndlanzi, 2018). Clearly as much as this practice as being outlawed but it remains to be prevalent as administered by educators.

Morrell (2001) although corporal punishment has been declared as an illegal act in South Africa, in 1998 a group of independent Christian schools challenged its prohibition. The rationale for this was that "Parliament had violated the rights of parents of children at independent schools who, in line with their religious convictions, had given permission to the use of corporal punishment by educators" (Bower, et al., 2015, no page). However, this challenge was dismissed by the Constitutional Court in 2000 (Evans, 2019). Clearly, the Christian schools were under the belief that it is grounded under the principle of "*loco parentis*" on common law. Teachers take the role of being a "*loco parentis*" in terms of

common law, and this is defined by Alexander & Alexander (1998), Oosthuizen (1998), de Wet (2010), Prinsloo (2005) and Taole & Ramorola (2014) as a lawful doctrine depicting a relationship similar to that of parent to a child, it refers to an individual who accepts parental status and duties regarding another individual, typically a youngster, without officially adopting that individual. According to Prinsloo (2005) there are two comparable pillars to the “*loco parentis*” role that educators play thus are the duty of care which suggests taking care of learners mental and physical wellbeing and the responsibility of maintaining order within the school which on the hand involves educator’s duty to discipline learners. It was grounded on this reason that teachers should act in the best interest of the children. Therefore, they adopt two roles one being a professional and more than a teacher having extra roles such as father/mother, friend, and role model (Allen, 2006, cited in Skåland, 2016).

Even though corporal punishment has been declared as an illegal practise educator still administer it to chastise learners in South Africa schools for example a school principal at Paarl Boys' High school is being investigated as several learners have come forward that the school still uses it. To further, illustrate that teachers still use the illegal practise of corporal punishment recently it has been reported that three teachers from a high school in Breyten, Mpumalanga were arrested for instituting corporal punishment against learners which left some of them with injuries (Grobler, 2020). The abolition of corporal punishment in schools of the Republic South Africa and introduction of children’s right, was unquestioningly driven by the fact that South Africa become a democratic state and guided by the developmental approach for social welfare (1997) which is based on human rights for all. Therefore, teachers had to adopt an authoritative role as parents with learner.

Section 8A of SASA which is the “random search and seizure and drug testing at schools” subsection 1 state very clear that “unless authorized by the principal for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a dangerous object or illegal drug onto school premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on school premises or during any school activity” (SASA 84 of 1996, no page). Although, the act attempts to eliminate the utilization of hazardous weapons within schools, learners still carry these and uses to hurt other learners and teachers. To illustrate this according to Montsho (2019) a 24-year-old educator, Daniel Mokolobate was stabbed to death at Ramotshere High School in Dinokana, outside Zeerust, by a 17-year-old learner in 2018, and then earlier in 2019 a sentence of ten years imprisonment for murder handed to this learner. On the contrary, Le Roux & Mokhele (2011) assert that the introduction of the Amendment Bill of Education Laws, there were lot of concerns surrounding

the rights to privacy and dignity of learners' as they were under the impression that it could be invaded and that the personnel's who conduct the searches might not be sufficiently trained or to deal with the circumstances. From the above-mentioned critics, it was clear that the only concern that they had was privacy of learners without giving many thoughts about the practise of promoting safety in the school and those involved. Department of Education (2008) responded to the sceptic that aroused by end to it by publishing a communique on the practical steps and processes for conducting the searches and seizures and drug testing.

The random search of dangerous object or an illegal drug has been put into practise recently by the Basic Education Department to illustrate this Somdyala (2019) in the Western Cape an operation at local school was requested by the province's district office, because the school is located in zone that is rife with gangsterism, which sometimes spills over into schools, the team included members of the South African Police Services who conducted the search into learners. During this operation at Woodlands High School, they discovered that learners carry weapons and drugs this includes knives, dagga and cigarettes. It is therefore, for this reason that there is a huge gap in taking this practice into full motion because principal only call when there are high incidents. In addition to that in Gauteng province, MEC for Department of Basic Education Panyaza Lesufi is anticipated to visit a Soweto based school. Freedom Park Secondary School after reports of learner's usage of rocks to attack police who were conducting a search for drugs and weapons there. Such a behaviours perpetuates some of the most pernicious evils of the apartheid government, and such behaviour need to be condemned in the strongest possible way because this disturbs the process of having a safe school which inversely will further hinders the process of human betterment.

One of the outstanding part of the school's act is that it is in agreement with the children's act 38 of 2005 by the virtue of that section 3(a) of the school's act state that one of the key condition of conducting a search it on the "best interest of the learners in question or of any other learner at the school; the safety and health of the learners in question or of any other learner at the school". This raises interesting debate that SASA is there for the best interest of learners with no consideration about the safety and wellbeing of teachers. One could also conclude that the South African legislation really caters much more about the best interest of children and their lives and safety is much more protected compared to those who are taking care for them. In this case are the teachers and other supporting staff such as the cleaners and school cooks.



According to SASA 84 of 1996 “public schools in South Africa must have democratically elected school governing bodies (SGB’s) comprising parents, learners (in grade 8 and above), educators, non-teaching staff and school principal” (no page). The SGB’s functions comprise of forming a conducive atmosphere for learning and teaching, ensuring security and safety of learners, promoting the best interests of school, disciplinary action, and policy determination of school’s fees (Mncube, 2007). Therefore, it is all stakeholder’s responsibility in the school to safeguard that all personnel’s and pupil are equally safe from violence. According to section 16(3) of SASA and Mgijima (2014) the principal has a primary obligation to ensure that learners are not subjected to assault, degradation, “*crimen injuria*”, harassment, humiliation, intimidation, or maltreatment, from other learners or educators. Educators “have a ‘duty of care’ and must protect learners from violence because of their in “*loco parentis* status” (SASA 84 of 1996: 70). Although the act prioritizes the safety of learners it does not stipulate about the safety of teachers and other school personnel and such exclusion.

Such a teacher has an obligation to safeguard learner’s safety as the obligation of care is a lawful responsibility. The law presumes teachers to always act as “*diligens paterfamiliae*” and “reasonable persons” in educational circumstances. The duty of care of a teacher is thus equated to the degree of care that a diligent parent would oblige concerning his household. Dealing with children demands a greater degree of care compared to the occasion when dealing with adults, hence educators’ demeanour as professional people will be subject to stricter tests.

*“Based on educator’s knowledge of their subject and the nature of learners, their skills, their familiarity with the dangers to which learners are exposed, their guarding against negligent acts, and the knowledge of the legal provisions that govern their profession, reasonable educators are abler to function safely within the parameters of the law”* (Beckmann, 1995:53).

The law case of *Knouwds vs Administrator*, cape 1981(1) SA 544 (C) is an excellent example of what a high degree of care entails.

### **2.3.3 Child Justice Act 75 of 2008**

According to Walker (2011) the first of April 2010, marked the phasing-in of the long-awaited Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (‘thereafter, the Act or CJA’). The CJA was introduced in 1997 for the establishment of a distinct criminal justice system (CJS) for children accused of a crime from the criminal justice system, which endures to apply for adult accused. Within

the South African legalities when one refers to a child it means that individual “is a person who is under the age of 18 years” (Children Act 38 of 2005). Similarly the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) article 2 defines a child as every human being under the age of eighteen years. Moreover, Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 1 defines a child as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier” (1989). Amongst other stuffs, that the Act raises the age under which children are irrefutably presumed to lack criminal capacity from 7- to 10-year-old. The main purpose was to move away from the formal CJS to a less formal and more age-appropriate system of correction. The Child Justice Act wholly recognises the best-interest principle within the child criminal justice field in the interpretation of any statutory provision affecting child offenders. The CJA preamble outlines its purpose of as follows:

*“To establish a criminal justice system for children, who are in conflict with the law and are accused of committing offences, in accordance with the values underpinning the Constitution and the international obligations of the Republic; to provide for the minimum age of criminal capacity of children; to provide a mechanism for dealing with children who lack criminal capacity outside the criminal justice system; to make special provision for securing attendance at court and the release or detention and placement of children; to make provision for the assessment of children; to provide for the holding of a preliminary inquiry and to incorporate, as a central feature [...] to entrench the notion of restorative justice in the criminal justice system in respect of children who are in conflict with the law; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.”*

The CJA is underpinned by major legislative framework of South African Republic of which are aimed at providing care and protection to children this consist of but not limited to the Children’s Act 38 of 2005 and Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 etc. It further integrates legislations and policies from regional and international signatories as custodian of children’s rights. Local, regional and international instruments give with the core international framework within which children in conflict with the law should be dealt with. The child justice system recognizes that certain age group of children can do criminal activities. Thus section 7 of this Act groups children into two groups namely:

*“(1) provides that [a] child who commits an offence while under the age of ten years lacks criminal capacity and cannot be prosecuted for that offence.”*

Unquestionably so, the above-mentioned important feature of the CJA is that it is also supported by the perspective of Piaget cognitive development which includes concrete

operational stage which span from 7 – 11 years, where the child's cognitive development marks the beginning of logical thoughts (Swartz, de la Rey, Duncan, and Townsend, 2011). This means that children of that age group or below their mental capacity is not yet fully developed therefore, they are unable to differentiate between what is wrong and right. It was worth mentioning this and giving a glimpse about this Act, it is outside of the scope of this research paper.

(2). *“A child who is 10 years or older but under the age of 14 years and who commits an offence is presumed to lack criminal capacity, unless the State proves that he or she has criminal capacity in accordance with section 11.”*

Furthermore, Swartz et al, (2011) assert that this age also covers the beginning of formal operational stage which span from 11 years and older clearly this marks the development of being able to formulate abstract concepts and logically test hypotheses formulated. The lack of criminal capacity is also known as the “*doli incapax*” rule. The CJA gives guideline that needs to be followed for the above-mentioned age group in rebutting the presumption of criminal incapacity, the lengthy process involves different stakeholders.

Moreover, children above the age of 14 years are considered by the law to have the mental capacity to differentiate among right and wrong and can appreciate the consequences of their actions. Therefore, they can be prosecuted for their crimes. Piaget concepts resonate well with Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development which attempt to address the inadequacy of Piaget stage of cognitive development in middle childhood. His theory tried to do so by alluding that cognitive development in children is also influenced by their social interactions and cultural context Swartz, et al (2011).

Clearly from this viewpoint Vygotsky's theory is of the idea that children are not independent explorer of the world. It should be noted that these theoretical lenses are worth mentioning but are not used to formulate a discussion at point of the study as this is dealt with accordingly in chapter three of this research study rather are used for the purposes of making a linking about the fundamentals of criminal capacity on children. Similarly, a link between the latter theory can be understood in terms of three layers of understanding cognitive functioning of preschool children and adolescence. To illustrate more about the schematic representation this theory refers to the diagram below (figure 2.3.1 zone of proximal development). In relation to School-Based Violence (SBV) Swart and Stevens (2002) study revealed that most school-based violence incidents reported of the secondary schools they investigated involved grades eight

and nine learners. It was unsurprising to have such finding because such learners are above the age of 11 years and the most of them are approaching or have reached the stage of adolescents.

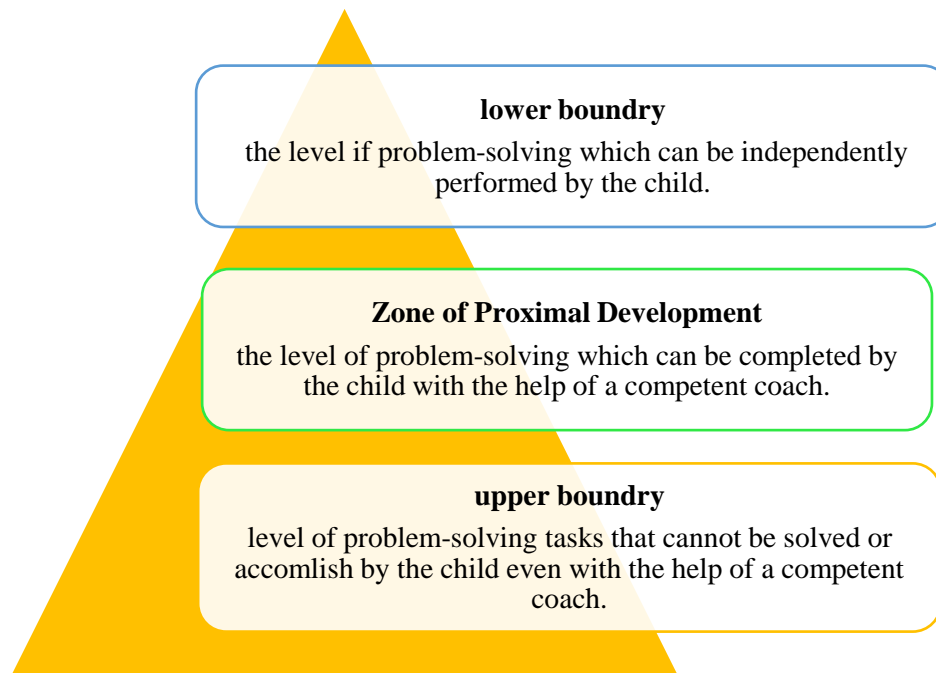


Figure 2.3.1: zone of proximal development (Swartz, et al., 2011)

The understanding that certain children lack criminal capacity is really guided by the above-mentioned justification. It is for this reason that the CJA regulates the CJS that accommodates for children younger than 18 years. The following are groupings that govern the suitable sentence for a child:

- Schedule 1: offences less serious
- Schedule 2: offences slightly more serious
- Schedule 3: very serious offences such as murder, rape, sexual offences, and aggravated robbery.

To show the applicability of this Act an example can be made from the well-publicised incident from the North West province where a mathematics teacher at Ramotshere Secondary School near Zeerust was stabbed to death by a 17 year old learner. The 17-year-old pupil was arrested and convicted for the murder of the schoolteacher, and he was sentenced to 10 years in prison (Gous, 2019). Similarly, in another case from the Northern Cape province a 17-year-old learner from Bosele Middle School Hostel closer to Kuruman was sentenced for 12 years behind bars. This sentence came after the pupil had stabbed his English teacher after he had failed the subject and accused the teacher of deliberately failing him. It was further reported that the 17-year-old

was found guilty on a few charges this are namely, murder, attempted murder as he also assaulted an eyewitness of the incident, malicious damage to property as he damaged the teachers hostel room and theft as the very same learner stole the teacher's cell phone. Contrary to popular beliefs that teenagers or children per say in South Africa are given too many rights which inversely backfires also makes them to get away with a lot of crimes and without having responsibility. The CJA seem to disconfirm this.

However according to Venter (2020) there has been recent development in the Act, as many children welfare organisation such as the Centre for Child Law have welcomed the Child Justice Amendment Bill of 2018 which has increased the minimum age of criminal capacity from ten to twelve years old children who have committed an offence. Clearly this move is motivated by that currently the age of 12 years is an international norm. This move will ensure that younger children will not be admitted to the criminal justice system at a young age. CJA moves away from the punitive to restorative justice with the aim of rehabilitation to offenders. The processes involved where a minor is involved in an offence that require the children's court is not discussed at this topic as it out of scope at this point.

## **2.4 Learner to learner violence and teacher to learner violence (Indirect exposure to violence)**

### **2.4.1 Bullying and intimidation**

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017) a survey in the United States of America revealed that male learners were at an increased likelihood to physical violence experiences at the hands of other learners than female learners. "Bullying can take on many forms, such as physical violence, threats, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, persistent teasing, exclusion from a group, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, and abusive comments" (Mncube & Harber, 2013, p. 8). Similarly, Leach & Humphreys (2007) state that corporal punishment is one of the utmost visible and commonly reported kind of school-based violence, which can result in school drop-out, truancy or serious injury. Furthermore, bullying cannot be understood within gender frame (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). Consequently, bullying in the school environment can be experienced by both female and male learners. Mncube & Harber (2013) bullying does not affect to male learners. Female to female bullying is a growing issue and it is usually verbal, based on sexual insults, and about rivalry for boys. One study in South Africa, discovered that that female learners having intellectual disabilities were undeniably susceptible to sexual bullying and violence (Silanesu 2012 cited in Mncube & Harber, 2013).

### **2.4.2 Gang related violence**

Between January and September 2011, Western Cape schools reported 194 assaults and 41 knife attacks whereby majority of these assaults were amongst learners and were habitually gang-related (Grobelaar, 2011). Schools are part of the community in which they are situated in therefore whatever happens in that community penetrates the school environment. For example, recently South African citizens were shocked. After the Minister of Education in Gauteng MEC Panyaza Lusufi announced on social media that it has come into his attention that in one of the schools in Gauteng a Grade 10 learner was stabbed to death by two grade 8 learners. Gang-related crimes and illegal activities are on the rise in South African communities (Magidi, et al., 2016). Belonging to gang group is no longer limited to adults but includes people of a minority, within the South African legality framework these are people who are below the age of 18 years, furthermore, gang violence has progressed into accommodating all people regardless of their psychosocial structures such as culture, ethnicity, race, and social class (Magidi, et al., 2016).

On the 30 May 2017 News24 reported that four schools in Lavender Hill were closed on Tuesday due to gang violence in the area which flared up in the previous week (Evans, 2017). According to Grobelaar (2011) precise statistics for school violence in Gauteng are unavailable because many of the incidents are internally handled by the schools and are not reported to the department of basic education. From this it can be suggested that there is a high probability that many other provinces do not report these incidents to higher authorities which can also perpetuate violence into the schools. Different media outlets on the 16 of August 2022 reported about the incident of two learners from Cebisa Secondary School, who are alleged that they belong to different gangs in the township, the one learner was rushed to Ermelo Provincial Hospital unfortunately he succumbed to death due to the injuries (Moichela, 2022).

### **2.4.3 Sexual violence and harassment**

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2014) defines sexual violence as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work”. Du Plessis et al., (1998:418 cited in Prinsloo, 2005) defines sexual harassment as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence in schools is not a recent social occurrence as according to Altinyelken & Le Mat (2017) and Wilson (no date) sexual relations between teachers and schoolgirls were common in sub-Saharan Africa even in the 1950s. In 2001 the

Medical Research Council conducted a study on the sexual harassment of schoolgirls in South Africa, it indicated that many young girls aged 15 years and under have been influenced or forced to have sex against their will, 32.8% of the females said that they had been raped as a child by their educators (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Rape is not limited to girls only as it mostly reported by the media, boys are also vulnerable and victim to this form of sexual violation though in the form of sodomy for example in Mpumalanga a school principal was accused of sexually molesting boys' learners during school hours (Machogo, 2018). However, it should be brought into one's attention that this does not downplay the fact that young girls are the most victimized individuals within the context of South Africa. According to Le Roux & Mokhele (2011) and Dunne, et al., (2003) some teachers abuse their positions of authority by promising better grades or money in exchange for sex relations and this has been one of the most common sexual acts that young girls fall victim of as they are desperate to do anything that will please and make their parents happy. To show the prevalence of this Ngcukana (2018) six educators at Flagstaff Comprehensive High School in Esiginqini have been accused of requesting sexual relations from female students, and those who refused to comply have been failed as some report cards were discovered discarded together with marked exam papers in a ditch. Similarly, Govender (2016) reported that SACE at a Free State school striped two females from education for an unfixed period after they acknowledged to having sexual relationships with two pupils seventeen and eighteen -year-olds, who were doing grade ten and eleven respectively.

Monama & Makhubu (2016) as of the first of April the tenth of November a total of 50 sexual abuse cases of learners were received by SACE. Govender (2016) approximately there were fourteen sexual misconduct complaints involving female educators that were received by SACE from 2015, April to 2016, March. This shows that that boys are becoming victims of sexual misconduct which is perpetuated by female educators which is something that was underreported on as they fear to be stigmatized by their peers and society at large as men are not believed to be coerced into sexual intercourse. Furthermore, Govender (2016) showed some shocking evidence that KwaZulu-Natal had the highest cases of teachers involved sexual assault and of teachers having sexual relationships with learners with a total of 58 cases followed by the Western Cape with a total of 33 cases.

Unquestionable, the fact that KwaZulu-Natal had the uppermost total of sexual misconduct can also be attributed to the fact that in the provinces there was a practice of *ukuthwala*, which

involves the snatching of a young girl or a woman by a man and his assistants with the purpose of obliging her family to approve to a marriage, and it as be dominant in rural parts of South Africa for many years. *Ukuthwala* is considered the culturally legitimate abduction of a female with the aim of marrying her (Nkosi, 2009). However, this cultural practice under the democratic state of South African was declared as an illegal practice.

Monama & Makhubu (2016) more disconcerting is that the number of educators accused of sexual indecency the 97 cases that were reported on the 2014 and 2015 academic years respectively. The incident that involves male teachers harassing young girls in schools is not an issue of South Africa alone as according to Mncube & Harber (2013) girls in Nepal have been reported to have male learners sexually harassing them, and male educators inappropriately touching them, including touching their breasts, buttocks, and even undoing their bras.

According to de Lange, et al., (2012) female's educators and female learners are susceptible to aggressive sexual advances from male learners and male educators within the school and also males outside the school. Although many writers collaborate to the above assertion but Leach & Humphreys (2007) are of the opinion that many studies have been conducted so far had a focus on females as victims of gender-based violence within a heterosexual context, and suggest that other types which need to be researched more fully as they have been neglected and this includes homophobic violence, female-on-female violence, and learner-on-teacher violence. According to Modisaotsile (2012), rape of schoolgirls, as well as sexual violence and abuse, often by teachers, has been a prominent feature of many boy's and girl's schooling experiences. Furthermore, in court a former California middle educator claimed she was coerced into giving an eighth-grade student oral sex although the teacher claimed that she knew that it was wrong for her to be in a sexual relationship with the pupil but she could not stop it because she feared to loss her family (Miller, 2019). It is for this reason that it can be said that both learners and educators are subjected to violence (Chetty, 2018). According to Mills (2001) that as a part of their day-to-day routine, females in co-educational classrooms and schoolyards faces sexual-based harassment from males and occasionally teachers.

According to Mncube and Harber (2013) there are two main reasons for the perpetuation of sexual harassment and violence in schools these are namely unequal power relationships and traditional gender stereotypes within the broader society and the second one being, the authoritarian, closed nature of schooling in general. With the former being that it has not being



challenged, but rather reproduced by the school. And the latter being entangled with patriarchal tenets and behaviours, provides a fertile context for the patterns of sexual harassment described above. Moreover, Altinyelken & Le Mat (2017) various research studies on this area have showed that there is a direct association which point to heteronormativity, masculine hegemony and patriarchy are examples of contexts in which sexual violence is preserved, accepted and even normalized.

#### **2.4.4 Corporal punishment and physical assault**

Although the practice of corporal punishment has been abolished in South Africa ever since 1996. According to Mncube & Harber (2013) and Dunne, et al., (2003) corporal punishment is most common internal and widely reported violence perpetrated by schools against learners. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child defines corporal punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort. Furthermore, corporal punishment can be framed as a form of implicit gender violence. Dunne, et al., (2003) there are cases where educators get schoolchildren to give corporal punishment to other pupils, this is relevant to South Africa, Evans (2019) reports that a teacher at school based in Cape Town use corporal punishment and name it “Jungle for Justice” which is meted out between peers and being hit with a plank or cricket bat in the headmaster office.

Monama & Makhubu (2016) SACE received a total of 140 cases of corporal punishment of students from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to November 10<sup>th</sup>. Such statistics gives a clear indication that even though the South African government prohibited the usage of corporal punishment, but schools remain using it. Moreover, Monama & Makhubu (2016) worryingly, the number of educators accused of corporal punishment has surpassed the 160 cases reported in the 2014 and 2015 academic years. Teacher remains the main perpetrators of corporal punishment in institution of learning as the SACE keep on having high case of teachers that are utilizing this illegal practice.

Mncube & Harber (2013) according to Childline, a children's rights organization, corporal punishment was widespread in Gauteng in 2011, with more than 300 cases reported to its Gauteng crisis line. According to the same publication, four educators in KwaZulu-Natal were arrested for allegedly beating a learner so badly that he required surgery on one of his testicles. The prevalence of corporal punishment in the context of South Africa is increasing to illustrate a creche teacher was shown on social media this week heavily slapping children in their faces

and on their heads, beating one with a scrubbing brush, pulling and throwing another to the concrete floor, and kicking and forcing two of the little children to clean up after they vomited or spilled liquid at the creche (Naki, 2019). This abuse of children in this crèche as resulted to the attention of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Social Development which has proposed that the teacher be recorded on the Child Protection Register.

Lokmić, et al., (2013) elucidate that violence against teachers is a neglected narrative as they are increasingly exposed to harassment by their learners. The latest state of violence in schools in South Africa has revealed shocking results. According to Jordaan (2018) in the Gauteng province schools have expelled 151 children whereby 31 of them have been expelled for assaulting educators and other school staff personnel. Clearly this raises serious concerns for the safety of the school environment, due to that the South African Democratic Teachers Union has called the department to start paying teachers a danger allowance because some learners go to school carrying weapons (Chetty, 2018). Furthermore, Rossouw (2008; cited in Chetty, 2018; van Nieuwenhuizen, 2018) revealed that educators have been subjected to physical violence in South African schools. Physical violence is defined by the World Health Organization (2006) and Lokmić, et al., (2013) as the deliberate, repeated, or one-time rough infliction of pain and/or body injuries by another person that involves a potential risk of physical harm and the consequences of which may or may not be visible. Espelage, et al., (2013) assert that in the United States of America 44% of teachers have experienced physical attack.

Mncube & Netshitangani (2014) corporal punishment in rural areas also remains widespread. Out of 197 countries in 90 of these countries corporal punishment remains legal even though it is not in line with the standards set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In South Africa although it was banned by it remain used. This can be caused by that teachers do not know how they can discipline these children anymore as even the department of education did not formulate other methods that can be used to sanction discipline.

## **2.5 Learner to teacher violence (Direct exposure to violence)**

According to Daniels, et al., (2007) every year, almost 234,000 teachers in the United States of America are victims of school-related violence. Between the academic years 1999 and 2000, nearly nine percent of teachers were threatened by learners, and four percent were physically attacked by learners (DeVoe et al., 2004).

Woudstra, et al., (2018) conducted a study consisting of 153 public secondary school teachers in the Tshwane area, where they establish that 62.1 percent of the teachers reported exposure to verbal bullying, 34.6 percent to physical bullying, 27 percent to indirect bullying, and 6.6 percent to cyber bullying. Mncube & Steinmann (2014) allude that bullying is the prevalent delinquent behaviour in schools. Disrespect and violence directed at teachers in schools is a substantial problematic issue, but it is important to take note this does not intend to downplay that learners are also victims of bullying either verbally or physical abuse in schools Braun (2007: 8 cited in Mncube & Steinmann, 2014). Further, according to Mncube & Steinmann (2014) learners regularly swear at their teachers and engage in shouting, back chatting. This clearly can be attributed to the fact that many South African learners understand teachers have no option to discipline them as they believe that they have rights and yet they forget about their responsibilities.

Jones (2001: 169) and Mncube & Steinmann (2014) offers the following insight - “probably more people are carrying weapons today than at any time in “history”. Therefore, teachers are more susceptible to gang related violence as according to Burton (2008) three in ten secondary school pupils know other learners who have brought weapons to school; three in ten believe it is simple to organize a knife, and one in ten believe it is simple to organize a gun. These findings present a concern about the safety of teachers in schools. When learners in South Africa conflict with other people, they have been known to turn innocuous objects like bottles or pencils into weapons (Khosa, 2006 cited in Mncube & Steinmann, 2014). “Learners are also bringing serious weapons such as guns into school property, which is an issue of great concern” (Braun 2007: 13). For example, a grade eight learner pulled a gun on a teacher in Eldorado Park Secondary School, Johannesburg West which later was found that is a toy gun (Mkhonza, 2018). Furthermore, a 17-year-old boy assaulted his English teacher at the Bosele Middle School hostel near Kuruman last year, accusing him of failing him in a subject, the teenager stabbed the teacher, damaged his hostel room, and stole his cell phone (Nqola , 2019). Furthermore, 32 years old man was shot dead in his cottage at Inzinga area, Impendle, (Mthethwa, 2019). News24 reported on an incident which involved a learner from Albertina Sisulu Special School who was expelled in Gauteng after he threw a stone on a teacher which caused the teacher to suffer minor injuries. A twitter video that since went viral showed a learner from Kimberly Boys High School whom he is showed throwing water on the teacher face (Grobler, 2018).

In September 2013, there was a widely publicised videotape of a teacher being attacked with a chair and broom by a Johannesburg learner in the presence of other pupils who also encouraged him by laughing at this incident (Anon., 2013b: np). In another incident which happened in 2018 March at a Mbombela based school, Bergvlam high school where a learner physically attacked an educator who has been in the field for 25 years (Broughton, 2022). On the same case recently Mbombela high court, Judge Takalani Ratshibvumo ruled in favour of the educator by giving him the go-ahead to sue the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

## **2.6 The effect of violence on learners**

School violence is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses mutually inclusive unlawful acts and hostility in school, a result it hinders development and learning, as well as destroying the school environment and culture. Govender (2016) SACE the trauma and the psychological effects on learners who have been sexually abused by teachers, whether the learners are male or female, are equally the same. (Pitso, et al., 2014) violence is one of the contributor of poor performance and drop-out, in learners. Gender violence in the form of sexual intimidation, verbal abuse, and physical assault, according to Dunne et al., (2003), is a significant contributor to female learner's irregular attendance and underachievement.

According to Mncube & Harber, (2013); and Pitso, et al., (2014) the consequences of bullying in learners is that it result to a loss of concentration problems, anxiety, self-esteem, stress, shame, reactive aggression, truancy, and serious psychological problems including suicide. In Addition to that the bullies themselves also suffer from depression and anxiety, they are at a higher risk of self-harm and suicide as well as being part of criminal activity (Mncube & Harber, 2013). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017) states that the consequences of school based violence comprise playing truant, avoiding school activities, missing classes, or dropping out of school completely. Therefore, it result to poor academic achievement and attainment and on future education and employment prospects. It is for this reason that it can be concluded that the impact of school violence are dire as it affect future prospect for victims.

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017) sexual violence carries the risk of HIV, other sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy. Clearly this is in agreement that young girls are the greatest risk of contracting HIV/AIDS as they fall between the age of 15-25 years in the South Africa context this is cohort is more at risk of contracting this virus. Furthermore, a principal at a high school in Daveyton,

East Rand, has been suspended with immediate effect after he was allegedly to impregnated two pupils (Marupeng, 2019). The sexual misconduct of educators clearly result to the increased number of unplanned pregnancy of young girls. (Mncube & Harber, 2013) there is substantial evidence of the impact of corporal punishment thus, include physical harm and even death. The World Health Organization, which explicitly includes corporal punishment in school as part of child abuse, and this within the South African context is a huge human right violation as children are regarded as the most vulnerable group in society that need care and protection.

The effect of bullying to victim develop low self-esteem, and to have suicidal thoughts or to attempt suicide (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017). For example, Gous (2019) a 13-year-old Pretoria girl committed suicide after a photograph was circulated through her school via WhatsApp. It is clear that learners have to deal with a lot of negative thoughts after being victims of cyberbullying. It is without doubt that victims of schools violence are at a risk of experiencing symptoms similar to those of depression and anxiety. (Sicetsha, 2019) corporal punishment has dire consequence on learners for example a learner from the Eastern Cape suffered hand damage that to such an extent that when examined by doctors, revealed that she had broken limbs in two areas of her hand. Le Roux & Mokhele (2011) children cannot thrive when they are afraid, as intimidation and fear are major consequences of bullying. Therefore, it can be concluded that bullying in schools hinder the academic progress of the victim.

According to Olweus, Limber & Mihalic (1999) and Le Roux & Mokhele (2011), victims are angry, humiliated, insecure, fearful, and in some cases they are harmed physically. Additionally academic performance suffers and learners frequently avoid going to school for fear of further harassment. Psychological symptoms such as decreased concentration, anxiety, and depression. Violence, according to Le Roux and Mokhele (2011), has a negative impact on ability or desire to learn on learner's. Moreover, Olweus (1993) states that in severe cases, students may have suicidal thoughts and attempt suicide if they do not obtain the necessary support and counseling. The growing culture violence impedes on effective learning and teaching in schools (Mncube & Netshitangani, 2014).

## **2.7 The effect of SBV on teachers**

### **2.7.1 Mental health**

Often in many studies teachers are seen as only the perpetrators of violence in schools, therefore it is imperative to recognize that educators can also be the victims of, witnesses to, violence in schools, which will all have some effect on the educator which may either be both immediate and long-term consequences (Daniels, et al., 2007).

Teachers in schools must deal with the psychological impact that violence pose on their health as they witness and inversely become victims of violent behavior (Daniels, et al., 2007). They feel unsafe and uneasy around older pupil as often they refuse to follow instructions given to them (Govender, 2016). This show the difficulty of having older pupils in a class makes the work of the teachers less productive, as they must be always having to be on the lookout and not step on the wrong toes of these learners. According to Nims (2000) Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) may experience by victims of school-based violence. Swartz, et al., (2011) define Acute Stress as the reaction to an immediate threat, which results in the fight or flight response. Acute Stress Disorder is often characterized by dissociation, anxiety, and other stress responses, which occur within 1 month of exposure to a traumatic event. Other symptoms of ASD may include avoiding events or situations that remind the person of the event. As result of this in the school environment this may be displayed by increased absenteeism (American Psychiatric Association, 2000 cited in Daniels, et al., 2007). For example, in South Africa schools the monitoring survey of the Department of Basic Education revealed that there was an increased in teacher's absenteeism daily from 8% in 2011 to 10% in 2017 (Kubheka, 2019; Maromo, 2019). It is for this reason that there is an association between exposure to school-based violence and absenteeism of teachers as they fear for their wellbeing. To illustrate that according to Govender (2019) four teachers at St Philomena school in the Northern Cape were petrified of teaching a fourteen-year-old girl to an extend that they have even attempted to acquire a protection order against her, sworn not to return to class after the June school holidays unless the Grade 6 learner is expelled.

Nims (2000) states that the long-term consequences of trauma and stress may also comprise lengthier period problems, such as symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD in the DSM-5 is found on the group of Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders. This is evident as Nims (2000) reported that educators who experience violence at school often display signs of PTSD. According to (Daniels, et al., 2007) posttraumatic stress may not only result from situations in which the individual is directly involved with threat of death or serious injury

but can also include those in which the individual witnessed or learned about a violent death or serious injury. Clearly this assertion shows that teachers are exposed to all the violence in a school setup and each as an impact on their health for example learner to learner violence. McMahon, et al., (2017) allude that victimized teachers experience decreased emotional well-being.

After one has been exposed to traumatic events such as violence according to Daniels, et al., (2007) services such stress debriefing is important to be rendered. Although such significance of having such professionals such as social workers and psychologist who can offer debriefing within the South African context often services is provided to learners on the other hand educators and other school-personnel they are frequently left neglected and having to deal with the trauma alone. Even though the significance of these services cannot be understated. Furthermore, Daniels, et al., (2007) states that there is little in the literature to describe services that are offered to educators and other school personnel following an act of school-based violence. Moreover, Grobler (2018); Taole & Ramorola (2014); De Wet (2010); Bester & Du Plessis (2010) assert that experiences with school-based violence on a personal level can results in stress which can be exhibited by increased anxiety, depression, frustration, headaches, low self-esteem and helplessness, shame. According to Isaacs (2001), when teachers are confronted by some of these stressors, such as incidents of stabbings, suffering attacks from learners or hearing and/or seeing the traumatic experiences of colleagues and learners shooting, many teachers may experience normal symptoms of trauma and/or psychological distress.

### **2.7.2 Professional role**

During school day teachers go there for the purpose of doing their work, and through that they develop a professional identity. According to Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, (2010, cited in Skåland, 2016, 310) a “professional identity describes a teacher’s personal practical identity image of himself/herself as a teacher”. King (2018) teachers end up not knowing how to control these children as them they can hit them because they sometimes carry knives and other weapons in their school bags. It is this concerns that has spiked public interest and opinions about the well-being and safety of teachers in other for them to execute their assigned duties without fear and hindrance caused by violence in the school environment. According to Lokmić, et al., (2013), any form of violence directed at teachers leaves a deep mark on teacher’s self-esteem and confidence, so it can be expected to hinder their work and affect their job performance and satisfaction, making it directly difficult to achieve a healthy atmosphere in the classroom, and all this together affects the ultimate development and success of learners.

McMahon, et al., (2017) feelings of powerlessness or an inability to act, influence, or change their circumstances.

Lokmić, et al., (2013) studies on the effect of stress on the profession of teaching display that it increases as learner's become more indiscipline in the classroom and can lead to burnout. Exposure to violence does not only impact on the personal well-being of the teacher but also on their execution of their professional role that have being assigned and mandated to them. Furthermore, according to Lokmić, et al., (2013) and Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2010) professional burnout can be defined as a set of negative feelings resulting from an unsuccessful struggle with stress, emotional and physical exhaustion, very low productivity, and negative attitudes. As result of long-term exposure to violence teachers may become too stressed and have job dissatisfaction which consequently can result in leaving the teaching profession before their careers are over (Lokmić, et al., 2013; McMahon, et al., 2017; May, 2018; Bester & Du Plessis, 2010). In the same way South African Teachers Union (2006) and Mncube & Steinmann (2014) states that within the South African context violence in schools had led to some teachers to resigning. Along those lines Maphalala & Mpofu (2019) states that between 18 000 and 22 000 teachers leaves the profession annually. Therefore, such a huge figure of educators who leave the profession raises concerns of whether these professional's resignation is caused by the lack of intervention aimed at addressing violence in a holistically manner. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2010) extend to state that burnout is understood because of long-term occupational stress, particularly among human service workers, including educators.

Teacher is no stranger to human services as they are working with individuals who are coming from diverse socio-demographic backgrounds. Moreover, according to Grobler (2018) another impact of violence on teachers is that it affects them on a professional level. On a professional capacity, the effects of school-based violence on the learning and teaching include an overwhelming negativity towards learners who are perceived as bullies or perpetrators (De Wet, 2010). Due to their fear's teachers may become unwilling to help with learning in the classroom. Mediocrity in teaching, inability to control one's temper, the disintegration of teaching and learning, disciplinary problems in the classroom, and a diminished reputation in the eyes of their learners, peers, and the principal (De Wet, 2010). Consequently, they become more vulnerable with increased probability of being more victims to learners. As study by McMahon, et al., (2017) found that teachers believe that they had fewer rights than pupils, as they are often labelled as liars, and are ignored by officials. Due to that to the lack of response to these overwhelming feelings of frustration and anger, teachers are left with no option but to



contemplate with violence using aggression and corporal punishment (Shields et al., 2015, Davids & Waghid, 2016). Mncube & Steinmann (2014) states that although educators are expected to both teach and serve learners, they engage in gang-related violent behaviour that that reflects the growing incivility of our society.

According to Mncube & Steinmann (2014), affected teachers felt insecure and unable to effectively manage their classroom environments. School violence seems to have a negative effect on teachers' morale (Woudstra, et al., 2018). Verbal abuse has been associated with stress, low teacher morale and absenteeism, according to Mncube & Steinmann (2014) and the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (2006). It can be said that the recent teachers absenteeism in South African schools can be attributed to this, as there is an increased in teachers absenteeism on a daily basis from 8% in 2011 to 10% in 2017 this was revealed by the monitoring survey of the department of education (Kubheka, 2019; Maromo, 2019). In addition, Grobler (2018) and Shields, et al., (2015) violence negatively impacted educator's relationships with family members and peers, making them feel socially isolated. In communities where gangs are widespread, one cannot overlook the experiences and the effects of gangs on non-gang-affiliated residents (Magidi, et al., 2016). According to Skåland (2016) this in-between-positional roles of being a professional and a parental figure leaves an educator susceptible when faced with some critical episodes like threats and assaults from their learners when they happen.

## **2.8 Effect on the teaching and learning**

Indisputably, it is very clear that SBV have major repercussions on the delivery and progress of a good teaching and learning culture. According to Smith (1996:4 cited in Zulu, et al., 2004) the term teaching and learning culture refers to "the attitude of educators and learners towards teaching and learning, and the spirit of dedication and commitment in a school which arises through the joint effort of school management, the input of educators, the personal characteristics of learners, factors in the family life of learners, school-related factors as well as societal factors." It is for this reason that SBV has a seriously damaging effects on the teaching and learning culture as often educators spend most of their time instil good morale and behaviour on learners rather than on focusing on the delivery of the department of education curriculum. Similarly, Nxumalo (1993:57 cited in Zulu) adds that some of the facets that have negative impact on the creation of a comprehensive teaching and learning culture includes high early drop-out rates, lack of recreational facilities, learners coming from disadvantaged backgrounds affected by poverty, overcrowded classrooms, unemployment, and

violence. This is no exception to all most of the South African government school whereby there is an overcrowding in one class. Which eventually limits educators to pay full attention to each individual learners needs as there is not time.

This issue is exacerbated by the fact that many black secondary schools are still notorious for, among other things, drug, and alcohol abuse, dropping-out due to pregnancy, low pass rates, unstained school attendance, and gang activities (Christie, 1991). Schools have inadvertently become places with high probability to crime and violence which can cause dire ramification to the achievement of educational goals. According to Prinsloo (2005) school's safety is *sine qua non* for effective learning and teaching processes.

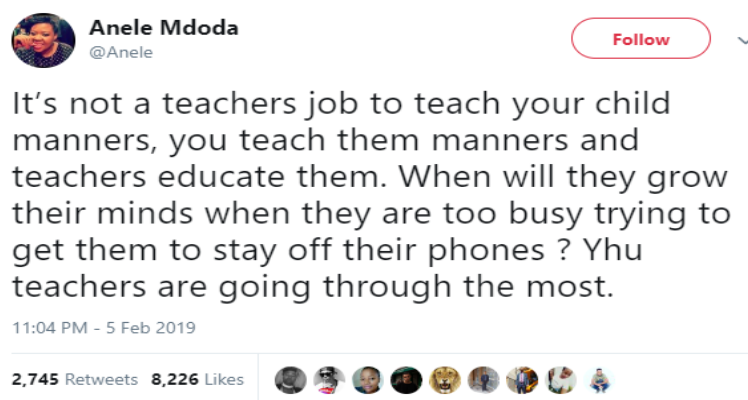


Figure 2.1: Tweet screenshot of a SA celebrity raising teacher grievance

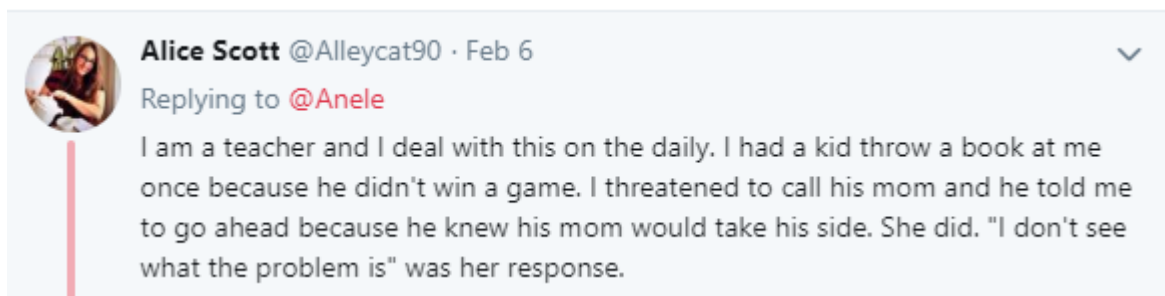


Figure 2.2: Twitter screenshot of a teacher addressing one of the challenges they face.

## 2.9 The role of Social Work Profession in rendering psychosocial support.

Vergottini & Weyers (2020) in 1973 the need to incorporate social work services was firstly recognised by the De Lange Commission within the primary education system. In the democratic South Africa, the year 1996 within the education sector marks a major milestone as the then President, Mr Nelson Mandela, and the Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bengu simultaneously, appointed the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) 1997, and the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET)

1997 (Department of Education, 1997). These two established bodies were given a mandate to explore and making recommendations on all aspects of support services and special needs in the education fraternity in South Africa. In 2009 the need for the establishment of psychological and social services in South African schools was emphasised by social development portfolio committee to mitigate the social challenges affecting learners which eventually can lead to violence and other social ills. The committee extended about the need of availability of social workers in schools to cater for the psychological development of learners.

According to Reyneke (2018) “teachers cannot fully provide this service, since they are neither trained to do so, nor have the time to fully support the psychosocial development of learners—and this could be detrimental to the pursuit of quality education” (p. 79). According to Vergottini & Weyers (2020) the way social workers are being hired in schools with the department of basic education in the country varies as in some provinces social workers are employed only at provincial level, while others do so at district/circuit level and in special and/or mainstream schools (see figure 2.9.1 below). In addition to that Vergottini & Weyers (2020) states that even though in most social workers in schools are employed by provincial departments of education, but individual school governing bodies (SGBs) have also powers of appointing their own school social workers into non-subsidies position and pay them from their own budget allocation. *Jacobs v Chairman, Governing Body, Rhodes High School, and Others* highlighted the need and obligation to provide social services and professional counselling for a troubled learner (Reyneke, 2018), it was not surprising that the judge could emphasise the significance of such services as this falls under the scope of juvenile delinquency and obstinacy and rebelliousness which inversely can be better understood by social workers in a broadly manner.

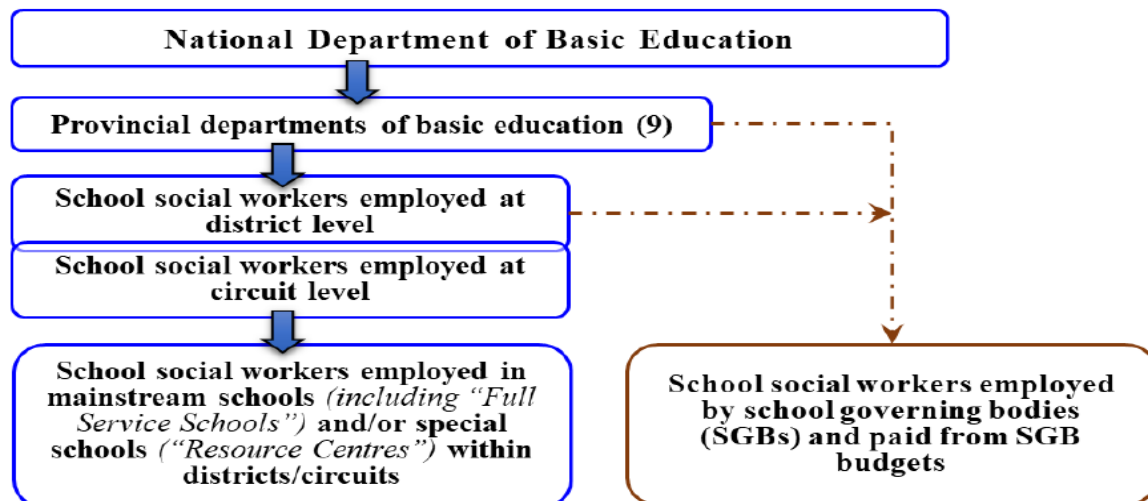


Figure 2.9.1: the basic structure of South African school social work (Adopted from Vergottini & Weyers (2020))

Vergottini & Weyers (2020) states that the year 1987 saw the first appointment of a school social worker in South Africa. Social work is a profession that is used worldwide to intervene in adverse social ills in societies and the global definition of the profession of social work is defined as follows:

*“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing”* (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014).

Internationally and locally the profession of social work is a well-protected title in which each state has mandatory body that regulates its training and practise. Within the context of South Africa, the regulatory body of social work students, social work professionals and other aligned social services professionals is the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP). Similarly, Masilo (2018) the term “social worker” in the Republic of South Africa is a title that is fully protected in the sense that no individual without the mandatory qualification and registration with the SACSSP may use the title or practice as a social worker; anyone who violates this is liable to prosecution. In south Africa to practice as a social worker one need to have practice licence in which is renewed annually. This registration is in line with the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 as a “social worker” is a prerequisite. Furthermore, Masilo (2018) the prerequisite in South Africa is a four-year bachelor’s degree

which is rated as a level 8 on the National Qualification Framework of the South African Qualifications Authority. Social work graduates exit universities with having acquired a generic degree which has exposed them to diverse methods of intervention which are applicable and unique to the profession.

According to Reyneke (2018) school social workers are not commonly hired in South African schools however, their professional expertise is often needed to render psychosocial services to learners. According to Vergottini & Weyers (2020) school social work is a specialised area of the profession and it is defined as follows:

*“School social work is the application of social work principles and methods within the education system in order to render holistic social work services to learners, parents, educators and the school as community, with the main goal of addressing personal, emotional, socioeconomic and behavioural barriers to learning and create an environment where the learner can reach his or her full potential”* (Vergottini, 2019:37-8).

The overall aim of a school social worker is to render social work services and intervention to learners, parents and educators who experience social barriers within the context of educational setting to prevent and overcome barriers which inhibit learners to reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally and promote the culture of a health learning and teaching culture (Thompson & Trice-Black, 2012). Professionals who are well equipped to provide such a counselling service are school social workers and psychologists. According to Kemp (2014:11-12 cited in Vergottini & Weyers, 2020) in 1948 the then Transvaal and Natal education departments started hiring “special teachers” or “visiting teachers” to handle some of the welfare needs of the school population’s welfare requirements. By 1955 these teachers had to hold a teaching diploma as well as a social work, sociology, or psychology qualification (Kemp & Kemp, 2017).

Unfortunately, till up to date there are not nearly enough social workers employed by the Basic Education Department to warrant that the need for psychosocial services in schools is met. Similarly, Vergottini & Weyers (2020) the number of social workers in South African schools keeps on increasing, however this varies on the appointments by the provincial department of education. These differences in provinces are recorded as follows:

2.9.1 in the Free State in 2010 there were 4 to 32 in 2017.

2.9.2 in Gauteng in 2010 they were 4 to 27 in 2015.

2.9.3 in KwaZulu-Natal from 11 in 2010 to 25 in 2015.

2.9.4 in Limpopo from 0 in 2016 to 180 in 2017 (however, only on temporary contract basis appointments as learner support advisors) and

2.9.5 the Western Cape from 4 in 1982 to 166 in 2017.

The need of school's social workers to mitigate social ills within the education system in the country is well documented and recommended within different legal enactment this include but not limited to white paper 6. It recognises that educational support services are required to support the education system in its response to these needs. These include the professional psychosocial services provided by educational and other psychologists, as well as social workers, (DBE, 2018; DBE, 2014b). Social worker are well trained professionals who can fully assess, investigate, and understand an individual in a holistically manner, within the education sector this can include physical, mental, developmental impairments, differences in intellectual ability, psychosocial disturbances, as well as differences in socio-economic deprivation and life experiences (DBE, 2001). In addition, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 section 28(1)(c) of the stipulates that children have a right to social services while section 8(5)(b) of the SASA gives effect to this right by allowing school governing bodies (SGBs) to ensures that supportive measures for counselling are available for a learner involved in disciplinary proceedings.

To mitigate the impact of the different learning barriers faced by learners in our schools, the Department of Basic Education in 2008 adopted the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Programme. The CSTL programme is planned to facilitate context-specific responses to the many barriers that impact on the ability of children to access school, to complete schooling and achieve their full academic potential. The conceptual framework for the CSTL Programme expresses the department's intention to scale up and mainstream care and support within the schooling system, based on a strong policy mandate, and available evidence and experience. The CSTL programme shows ten priority areas for the sector, two of these falls under the scope of this project namely the psychosocial support and the safety and protection priority areas. With the latter meant that schools should be free of violence, abuse and bullying to create safe, supportive learning environments.

Even given these documents recognising the importance of the roles that social worker could play in ensuring the social ills that could lead to violence in the environment are prevented. It remain one of the stumbling block as Reyneke (2018) states that South African schools are not fully employing social workers. Therefore, one relies on those from the Department of Social Development (DSD) service offices especially in schools located in rural areas. This is one another issues as these professionals have high case load and not directly involved in the school set up as result of that they cannot witness the brutality of school violence occurring. Hence the need for the department of basic education to directly employ school social worker who could provide psychosocial support to learners inversely promote safe space for all. In addition to that Reyneke (2018) is of the opinion that such a change will also helps with the enhancement of the child's social context to the understanding by teachers.

Our psychosocial team will provide counselling to the victim and other learners accordingly," the department said (Oubkaew, 2019). Clearly this assertion shows that the department of education really needs psychosocial team that will be always around the school environment as violence happens every single day. However, it seems like the department take this initiative when the issue is viewed by them as more powerful, and the issue has reached to the views of the public. The social worker will be able to view violence in a holistically manner and adopt necessary intervention strategies.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

On this chapter of the study, it has discussed the history of the school-based violence within the South African context. Due to hostile past of the Republic of South Africa major legislations needed to be rectified and aligned to a democratic state, for the purpose of this study certain segments of legislations were discussed and scrutinised thus, the Children's Act 38 of 2005, The South Africa Schools Act 84 of 1996 section 10(1), section 8A and the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 were used as the legislative frameworks. Moreover, this chapter has argued with literature debates surrounding the phenomenon of school base violence that other research in the field have discussed in the past. The next section of the study deals with theoretical philosophies that guides this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers the theoretical outline that were used in this study. The discussion will afford the reader with a synopsis of the core philosophies that supported this study, viz. the ecological system theory, and the different association theory. The intention of enlightening these theories is to afford insights on school-based violence, and the victimisation of teachers. Therefore, these viewpoints are the utmost fitting for the aim of this research study.

#### **3.2 Theoretical frameworks**

##### **3.2.1 Ecological systems theory**

Urie Bronfenbrenner is well known for developing this theory, the Russian born psychologist born on April, 29<sup>th</sup> of 1917 in Moscow, he passed away in September, 25<sup>th</sup> of 2005 (Härkönen, 2007). Bronfenbrenner remains respected as one of the important world experts in the field of developmental psychology (Härkönen, 2007). According to Mampane, et al., (2014) in 1995, Urie Bronfenbrenner took what he termed a ‘risky course’ by proposing an ‘untried’ theoretical perspective on current ecological models (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 619). The theory places the individual as an active agent existing within multiple social systems that are interconnected, interrelated and interactive (Swart and Pettifer, 2005; Mampane, 2010). According to Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological system is grounded on three significant underlying assumptions firstly that person is an active player, exerting influence on his/her environment, secondly the environment is compelling person to adapt to its conditions and restrictions and lastly that the environment is understood to consist of different size entities that are placed one inside another, of their reciprocal relationships and of micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Saarinen et.al., 1994, 88).

This study uses Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological system as a theoretical framework to understand multilevel etiological factors of violence in schools. The ecological environment is conceived as a “set of nested structures” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3), each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls. Ecological system theory contains four components (See figure 3.1): (a) microsystem, which refers to a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships experienced by the children, (b) mesosystem which refers to interconnections among two or more microsystems, and the children actively participate in this setting, such as relationships between parents, peers, teachers, or neighbourhoods, (c) exosystem, which refers to the social



environment in which children can be influenced, but they do not necessarily actively participate in, and (d) macro system which refers to consistencies found at the level of the culture, which includes legislations, belief system, norms, or ideology of that context that the individual reside in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Petersen & Govender, 2012).

Children, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979) are seen as the middle of their world, interacting with their own ecological environments. This implies that their behaviour is influenced not only by their own characteristics, but also by the contexts in which they interact. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory view all the mentioned systems to function into two different spheres namely, the proximally and distally systems (Petersen & Govender, 2012; McMahon, et al., 2017). Proximal systems refer to the immediate systems in which the individual's interpersonal transactions occur, and these include the micro- and mesosystems on the other hand distal systems refers to broad socio-contextual influences that impact on the individual and include the exosystem and macrosystem (Petersen & Govender, 2012).

For example, Bronfenbrenner thought that society is the factor influencing child development and this is central to his entire theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This theory clearly helps to understand the person and environment in any situation, inversely this shows that a person has an influence on a person and the environment equally so influence the persons behaviours. As Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems can be understood from four systemic level it is important to highlight that these interactions within these systems are bidirectional. Visser (2012) bronfenbrenner theory identifies four levels of interaction that are important for understanding individual behaviour, the four levels of interaction from the theory are discussed below:

### **Microsystem level**

Visser (2012, p. 27) the microsystem is defined "as any setting of which the person in focus has immediate experience and personal interaction in a direct way" for example, in a school setup, this would include interactions with family members, relationships with educators and fellow learners, friendship networks, or sports teams. It encompasses the interpersonal relationships individual has in these social environments.

According to Sibisi (2016) pupils' behaviour is consequently cognizant by what is happening socially around them or it can be learned from people close to them. Violence in families is considered as the means of socialising young individuals, instilling conformism, and obedience

of young children both inside the household and in communities. In a study by Birth Twenty Plus, which followed over 2000 children in Soweto, Johannesburg, from birth to 22 years old, their study findings reported that 50 percent of children have experienced violence in the home, most often through physical punishment by parents (IOL, News, 2018). Thus, learners learn violent and aggressive behaviours from their caregiver, parents, or guardians as it is a norm to chastise one's children in this form. Similarly, a study by Abrahams & Jewkes (2005) found that children who observed their mother's being abused, later tend to resort to the usage of violence as an acceptable norm of solving conflict.

According to Bhana, et al., (2009) schools have been identified as a specific site for gender-based violence which is evident in the extensive literature on gender-based violence in schools since the late 1990s. Therefore, there seem to be an interrelation between schools-based violence and gender violence. The use of punishment as such smacking and spanking increases children's aggressive behaviour because of that those children who are hit or spanked are, for instance, more likely to act out towards other children (Akers & Jensen, 2006; Mkhize, 2012; IOL, News, 2018). However, in 2019 the constitutional court declared spanking of children by the parents as an illegal act in South Africa, this was met with mixed emotions by parents (Times Live, 2019).

According to Mkhize (2012), people who have either witnessed or experienced physical violence in the family during childhood are more likely to experience domestic violence circumstance later in life. Clearly this shows the connection between early exposure to violence and how it gets emulated later in the future. When violence was the accepted norm, they apply it to their learners. He further adds on that there are also relations amongst those individuals who have been abused sexually, particularly boys, to become sexually abusive adolescents and adults. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September Sowetan Live paper published an article where a grade R learner was allegedly raped by four nine-year-old boys in one of the school classrooms at Fakukhanya Primary School in Tsakane Ext 5 in Ekurhuleni. In the same article a mother of the victim was interviewed and her views closely align with Mkhize (2012) as the mother stated as follows "It is clear that one of the boys has also been sexually abused; that is why I think that they need counselling so that they can also be helped" (Sobuwa, 2019). This is evident that there is a correlation between early exposure of violence in children and acting it towards other people. Inversely parents' resort to the usage of corporal punishment at home to discipline their children. However, it should be noted that also recently on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 the

Constitutional Court upheld a previous High Court ruling to abolish the common law defence of reasonable chastisement for hitting a child (TimesLive, 2019).

Within South African schools' young girls and female educators are often the victims of sexual harassment by male people and educators. Le Roux & Mokhele (2011) dysfunctional family structures also contribute to the perpetuation of violence. A study by Ncontsa & Shumba (2013) found that 57.5% of the learner participated in their study reported that poverty adds to the growth of schools violence for example in the North west a 24 years old educator was stabbed to death because the learner was very hungry as reported on the media that the learner was reprimanded during the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) after he had jumped the queue on the previous day (Zwane, 2018; Mkhonza, 2018).

Rivers (2000; cited in Msibi, 2012) established that 50 percent of gay learners in United State of America's high school reported being threatened or personally harmed. Clearly this can be attributed to the circumstances that parents socialise their children also in terms of heteronormativity and rendering homosexuality as abnormal for example in one of the schools at the Kingdom of eSwatini the community want a homosexual teacher to be removed from the schools even though their children have accepted her (Igual, 2018). In a similar circumstance in Zimbabwe an educator who identified himself as a homosexual man at a top private school was coerced to resign after getting death threats and legal action threats from parents because they believe that their children will be recruited to become gays (News24, 2018). As result of that homosexual teachers or learners in schools become victims of verbal abuse as their male peer often use terms like '*isitabane*', '*moffie*' and '*ongqingili*', which are isiZulu and Afrikaans derogatory terms with a similar meaning to 'faggot', are used in schools to refer to them (Msibi, 2012). Furthermore, teachers often perpetuate this behaviour by that they often tell girls to stop being tomboys.

Independent online (IOL) news (2019) in Rustenburg a 52-year-old teacher was hospitalised and in a critical state after allegedly being assaulted while at a school by a parent in Tlhatlaganyane, after it is believed that the teacher disciplined the child of this angry parent. This shows that parents also play crucial role in the widespread of school violence target on teachers as this incident took place during school hours and learners witness this which can send a wrong message to them such as that it is right to solve problems by using violence to engage in violent acts. As according to Du Plessis (2008) behaviour of learners is therefore learnt through by what occurs nearby them socially or it can be learned through the process of

socialisation. Zulu (2004) parents refer their youngsters to school in the confidence of acquiring excellent education for them in a secure and harmless atmosphere. Safe environment is an environment which is not detrimental to one's health or wellbeing rather that will promote development in a holistically means.

### **Mesosystem level**

The mesosystem is defined as a “set of interrelations between two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 209). This level of the system comprises the interconnection and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing individual. The mesosystem is defined as the set of relationships between microsystems that the person enters. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979) development will be enhanced if the various settings in which the developing person is involved are strongly interconnected. Therefore, when the values taught at home and at school match, the learner will probably learn them; when the values do not correspond, the child may become confused. For example, young boys witness their mothers being physically abused by the fathers they also act like that on their peers and other and which can also be attributed to that they also do not want to take orders to female teachers. (Dentemaro and Kranz, 1993, p. 30 cited in Sibisi, 2016) states that home-learning is an influential aspect for both beforehand and afterwards schooling has begun. These shows that a child will not show behaviour he/she has not been exposed to from home. Often violent actions are attributed to things such as single mother families or structural family breakdown (Kaldine, 2012).

Other family influences which put a pupil at an increased jeopardy of exhibiting violent behaviours include violent and aggressive behaviours from guardians or parents and substance abuse or alcohol. Substance abuse and drug abuse, learners often used either of the two with the latter have increase with a variety for example the latest being “*whoonga*” and “*nyaope*.” To illustrate this according to educators (cited in Makhubu, 2013) the male learners go out during lunch time and have this drug, “*Whoonga*”, they then return arrogant and not willing to listen to educators. There is a huge association between aggressive behaviour and drug usage. These learners are exposed to domestic violence and intimate partner violence from their homes then they imitate this behaviour as they are socialised to it as a norm. To illustrate these 3 different videos of school learners physically assaulting teachers went viral last year on social media platforms, in one of these videos it showed three learners physically wrestling with a teacher (Chawane, 2018). This theory outlines the importance of young children to have good

and positive role models from their home such brothers and parents are they will also instil good code of conduct. Sibisi (2016) state that most teachers experience complications with learners that originate in dysfunctional households as they elicit violent behaviours because they lack good parental guidance and role models.

The second most persuasive dynamic in an adolescent's lifetime is his/her peers. During this stage these group of people according to Erickson psychosocial stage of development they are understood to be on the identity versus confusion (Swartz, et al., 2011). They then need validation from their friends, and they take their advice or suggestions more seriously than those of parents (Sibisi, 2016). As a result of these it makes the work of the teachers harder as they have to deal with unruly and disruptive individuals for example this was expressed by one teacher when one video trended on twitter where a learner was involved in a physical confrontation with a teacher (See below figure 3.2 of the Twit). The desire for power and status among peer can be seen as one of the reasons of violence particularly among male adolescence. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC News) aired a live television where they look life of incarcerated inmate at a Boksburg correctional facility, one interesting thing that was revealed by this segment was that all of the 6 inmate that were interviewed all of them committed serious offence at their teenage lives this included murder.

Homosexual girls they victim of psychological abuse and sexual harassment. The latter being performed in the form of "corrective rape or "curative rape". curative rape is defined as the "sexual violence perpetrated for the purpose of supposedly 'curing' a person of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity" of being a lesbian" (Isaack, 2017, p. 2; Koraan & Geduld, 2015). Therefore, this shows that teachers witness and must deal with such complex issues. In 2008 the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) stated that corrective rape was a growing phenomenon in schools which require immediate attention for the inclusiveness of all learners regardless of their sexual orientation.

### **Exosystem level**

The exosystem, includes the connection and processes that occur between two or more environments, at least one of which does not normally contain the evolving individual but in which events occur that affect processes within the immediate environment that do contain that individual. The underlying causes of school-based violence and bullying include social and gender norms and wider structural and contextual factors (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017). Discriminatory gender norms that shape male

dominance and women subservience as well as the preservation of these norms through violence can be found in almost every culture (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017). Therefore, it can be said that schools also reproduce the already held status quo of the domination of women as it represents another system of society, and which is one of the social environments that pupils spend most of their time in.

The media also play a huge part in the perpetuating of violence for instance within the South African context drama such as “*Uzalo*”, *Generations the legacy*, “*isibaya*”. They often display violent behaviors and those who are performing it always get away with their crime or rewarded for violence. According to Burton (2008) violent computer games, song lyrics, the Internet, videos, and deficiency of discipline in schools also reinforce violent behaviour in children, as they act out what they have watched. Renfro, et al., (2003) elucidate that violent role models in the media have also been cited as contributing influences on juvenile violence. It can be said that school violence is instigated from outside the scope of the teachers control and consequently they are unable to resolve this problem.

In some place's schools are in closer diameter to taverns which makes easy access of alcohol and consequently such communal gatherings are characterized by easy access to drug sellers. Furthermore, community that are characterized by high crime and violence rate also instill these violent behaviors into children live. Children themselves become members of gangs in the community as a result this fight end up being imitated into schools and teacher are left having to mediate within these fights. On the same line Daniel (2018) also states that school violence is a repercussion of community-based violence, which is prevalent throughout society but is especially visible in needy zones.

### **Macro system level**

This year marks exactly 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of South Africa's shift to democracy, the legacy of apartheid remains appropriate in understanding violence in South Africa. According to Kaldine (2012) the Republic of South Africa has been inundated by violence since the previous century's colonial violence and tribal wars; therefore, as the early 1920's, South Africa seems to have been affected by a serious problem of violent crime especially in black dominated communities.

Unequal power relations, gender inequality, and tolerance of violence against girls and women are underlying causes of sexual violence experienced in schools by girls, including rape, sexual harassment, and coercion (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

2017). Similarly, Dominelli, (2002) states that one group becomes the subordinate group while the other one becomes the dominant one. In this case females became the subordinate group that need to conform and comply to the male figure and to heteronormativity. Furthermore, they become the target for exploitation. Mullaly (2002) states that these differences are exclusive in nature. With the creation of such inequality men became the powerful group that control all dimensions of social interaction in South Africa for an example politically, culturally, religiously hence low social class for women is created. Due to such classification, it resulted to the formation of patriarchy in communities, which is defined as a form of social structure in which men dominate, exploit, and oppress women (Macdonis & Plummer, 2008). According to Mills (2001) school violence is noticeably disturbing to learners, educators, parents, and the wider community. However, as with the head teacher mentioned above, acts of violence are frequently attributed to family structure breakdown such as (single mother headed families/ absent fathers); and the liberal parents, the court system, and lax gun legislation, (Kaldine, 2012). Questions of masculinity or toxic masculinity are rarely addressed. And this even though in most cases the offenders of this type of violence are men.

As result to the domination of women in society young boys are modelled to behave in a way that is socially approved such as controlling hence in schools, they do not to show respect to female teachers (Chetty, 2018). In contrast to young girls, they become submissive as they are social constructed to behave on that way. Mncube & Harber (2013) allude that the foremost cause of sexual harassment and violence in schools is that traditional gender stereotypes and unequal power relations in the larger society which are replicated by schools instead of being challenged. It is for this cause that violence in schools will continue to be reproduced as according to Dominelli (2002) people typically act in ways that are constant with the cultural traditions, religious beliefs, and value system in which they are rooted. The primary cause of sexual violence and harassment in schools is that unequal power relationships and traditional gender stereotypes in society are not challenged, but rather reproduced by the school (Mncube & Harber, 2013). Furthermore, Msibi (2012), South Africa it remains largely poor and black, with violent masculinities regulating sexuality, supporting those masculinities, and perpetuating strictly enforced heterosexuality.

Mncube & Harber (2013) schools also help to reproduce bullying behavior through their inactions. Most often this is seen when there is a violence perpetuated by a learner to a teacher as they only get suspension as compared to educators who can even become striped out on the education payroll should this role be exchanged. The fact that punishment given to learners is

not restorative as compared to teacher will increase the perpetuation as students notices that a one-week suspension is not big enough (IOL News, 2019). And the facts that if a learner is expelled in the school, it became the responsibility of the DBE to find an alternative school for the learner, therefore, makes it more undesirable to expel unruly pupils (South African School Act, 1997). SADTU put forward several reasons why it believed educators become victims of violence in their classrooms. Among these were lack of discipline maintained by parents in the learners' homes, as well as an over-emphasis on human rights of learners as opposed to the reciprocal responsibilities they hold towards others.

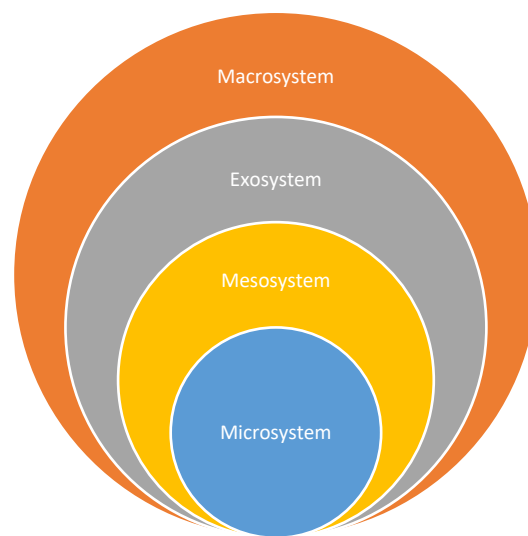


Figure 3.1: Ecological systems theory adopted from Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Visser (2012)

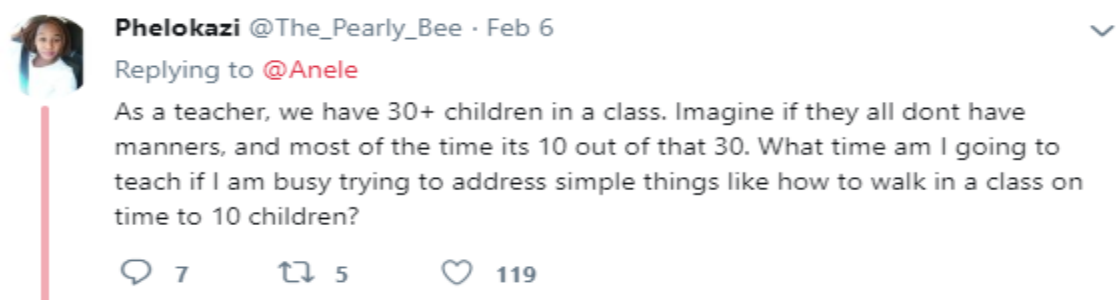


Figure 3.2: A Screenshot showing a teacher view.

The ecological perspective theory was chosen as a theoretical frame for this study because it can provide an explanation about the social ill of violence in a manner that can be easily understood. This theory theorises that violence in schools occurs in different forms and



intersects with violence occurring in a learner's home and their broader community. The ecological theory was adopted in this study as is it useful in providing with an understanding of relationships between children or young people, and for understanding the different systems listed above. Additionally, it can easily provide with a kind of a mind map to guide us through in understanding social territory in which individuals interact with.

### **3.2.2 Differential Association theory**

This theory was developed by Edward Hardin Sutherland who was born on August 13<sup>th</sup> of 1883 and pass away in October the 11<sup>th</sup> of 1950 (Bernard, 2018), he was an American Criminologist. Sutherland (1974) allude those social deviations, like social norms, are learned through social observance and interaction. Therefore, differential association theory is of the view that criminal behaviour is a learned behaviour, and which is learned through interacting with others socially.

This theory is of the opinion that the behaviours of a person are swayed and moulded by other whom they are companion with. According to Sutherland (1974) the most important primary reference groups in which criminal behaviour is initiated is the family and friends. However, this should not be translated to that if one has exposure to criminal behaviour means that they will also partake in criminal behaviour, but simply mean that it gets resourced into the criminal reason. To make an illustration to the above statements research has showed that children who are exposed or have witnessed domestic violence are more likely to act out this behaviour to other children. Renfro, et al., (2003) states that family institutions have provided the norms of behaviour, a circle of personal interaction, and a variety of social activities, which collectively shapes ethos of community. Therefore, individuals have the capacity of learning what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in society (Sutherland, 1974). "Differential association refers to direct association and interaction with others who engage in certain kinds of behaviour or express norms, values, and attitudes supportive of such behaviour, as well as the indirect association and identification with more distant reference groups" (Akers & Jensen, 2006, p. 3).

According to the theory, "the associations that occur early (priority); last longer or occupy a disproportionate amount of one's time (duration); happen the most frequently; and involve the intimate, closest, or most important partner's/peer groups (intensity) will likely exert the

greatest effect on an individual's decision to participate in either conforming or non-conforming behaviour" (Sutherland, 1974, p. 3). Therefore, individuals' decisions about either conforming to the accepted norms or not accepting will vary based on the experience that one is exposed and its potency as these plays a crucial role. The groups in which one is in differential association with act as a catalyst in all social environments in which all social learning take place. It can be said the learning of criminal behaviour can commence from both direct and indirect interaction, these interactions may include even those regarded as "virtual groups" such as computer games, internet, and mass media (Warr, 2002; cited in Akers & Jensen, 2006). Under this study violent behaviour of learners can be also viewed from multiple factors including mass media, for example many south africa sopie series such as Uzalo, The Queen they display criminality as a good way of living where by charcters always get away with crime committed, hence these individual celebrities are viewed under the lense of being role models. Furthermore, this theory theorizes that the more patterns of differential association are balanced toward larger exposure to deviant conduct and attitudes, the more likelihood that individual will engage in deviant or criminal behaviour. Learners nowadays are exposed to many violent activities hence their behaviour is enacted from that. For example, recently there has been sporadic xenophobic attacks and looting both in the country and some African countries (Mutandiro, 2019).

Additionally, Akers & Jensen (2006) and Hagan (2010) further allude that when violent or criminal behaviour is learned, it involves techniques for committing the crime for instance, workplace violence, school violence. What elucidates a behaviour as comparatively wrong or right, terrible, or good, unwanted or desirable, unjustified or justified, improper or appropriate are individual's orientations, justifications, rationalisations, excuses and other attitudes (Akers & Jensen, 2006). And these justifications Sutherland & Cressey (1978) termed them as the definitions in which they are all learned from socialization processes such as religious, moral, and other norms and values in society that support conforming behaviour while discouraging committing any deviant behaviour. As result of these definitions a person who associates him/herself more with members of an in-group who favours nonconformity, as compared to affiliates of an out-group which favours social rules, that individual is more susceptible to behave disobediently.

For example, under this study school learner associate themselves with peers and gang members who are often associated with noncompliance of accepted social norms, to illustrate this a 34-year-old teacher was hospitalised after being stabbed while trying to break up a fight

at the school between two rival gangs allegedly fight daily over drugs at the Bhongweni's Carl Malcolm's High School in Kokstad (Magenu, 2018).

Akers & Jensen (2006) states that a person deviant behaviour can be motivated by the differential reinforcement. The balance of expected or actual rewards and punishments that follow or are results of behaviour is referred to as differential reinforcement. It is without a doubt that learners in schools they are well aware that teachers are out of depth and have no option on how to chastise them as they are not allowed to beat them as it regarded as an illegal practise in South Africa therefore, they will continue being disrespectful towards them (van Nieuwenhuizen, 2018).

From the perspective of this theory clearly it can be concluded that behaviour is learned through socialization for example according to Mkhize (2012) people who witnessed or suffered physical violence in the family during childhood are more likely to live in a domestic violence situation later in life, as their behaviour is modelled to involve violence. Espelage, et al., (2013) most scholars agree that "school-based violence is a multisystem problem that manifests from community, school, school personnel, and student characteristics and processes" (p. 75).

**Our society is violent , and this learners are a reflection of it , no school teaches violence. The remedy to this will be follow a proper diagnosis and the social department must play a central role**

1:37 PM · Jun 3, 2019 · Twitter for Android

We have a serious problem as a people. Life is too cheaply taken away more often with little or no consequences at all. We have to bring back the values that a child belongs to a village, otherwise we are doomed

The theoretical triangulation of choosing the Differential association theory is that it gives a context in which learning occurs, the emphasis of this theory is that learning of criminal behaviour includes several social settings such as peers, families, and the community at large. The use of this theory was further relevant in this study as according to Ward & Brown (2015) this theory brings two fundamental aspects namely the behavioral-interactional and normative dimension. The behavioral-interactional describes associations and interaction, both direct and indirect, with people who engage in criminal activity. The values that one is exposed to as a result of their affiliation and interactions with others are referred to as the normative dimension.

Moreover, the rational for choosing this theory is that it can provide with an explanation of crime related behaviours irrespective of one age.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed two theories that were used in the study namely the ecological system which is a model that outline to understand multilevel etiological factors of violence in schools, four segments of levels were utilizes to theorizes about school-based violence namely, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystemic and macro-system. In addition to that differential association theory was used to understand the phenomenon under this research study. Now turning on the next segment which will focuses on design and methodologies that this study utilised in exploring the topic.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses how the study was conducted, including explaining the procedures and methods that will be used to conduct the study. This chapter also discusses the participants of the study, the process of data collection, and the questions asked of the participants. The primary instrument used in this study was semi structured interviews with 15 educators of the school.

#### **4.2 Research design**

Babbie & Mouton (2001, p. 74) define a research design as a "plan or blueprint" of how the researcher proposes to organise the research. The study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the SBV experienced and perceived by teachers at The Gem Combined School. This study is qualitative research in nature that, according to Babbie & Mouton (2001 and Neuman (2013) it allows for a comprehensive understanding, a detailed and open investigation, carried out in a natural and integral environment, without manipulating the sites. Furthermore, Neuman (2013) state that qualitative methodology is defined as an approach that accentuates meaningful social action and socially constructed meaning. The study will use exploratory research design. Neuman (2013) exploratory research design is appropriate when the researchers know small about the issue. Hence, in this study the investigator wants to explore into the phenomenon of SBV experienced by teachers. As there is little literature that has explored on this research topic. Therefore, by adopting an exploratory research design will ensure that the aim and objectives of the study are met, as it allows that one gains an insight about the phenomenon under this study.

The reason for choosing this research design it is because the study objectives are to obtain a detailed and rich account of the participant's experiences, and so the qualitative approach unsurpassed explores such human dynamics. Further, the researcher chooses exploratory design because violence experienced by teacher who are practising in a rural context remain one of the narratives that is under researched by the research and academic community.

#### **4.3 Research paradigm**

According to Babbie (2013) and Neuman (2013) different research paradigms are grounded on different ontological and epistemological assumptions. This study adopted a constructivist

paradigm which uses a qualitative research approach. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018) social constructivist is a worldview that believes that people seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. The constructivist paradigm supports the belief that there is no single, observable reality but there are multiple realities that exist on the other hand the positivist paradigm, which is mostly used in quantitative research approach, which accepts that reality can be observed and measured empirically (Neuman, 2013) . It is for this reason that this paradigm locates itself within the relativist ontology as it assumes that reality is a subjectively socially constructed through experiences of events in life and interactions with others Merriam (2009) and Grobler (2018). Furthermore, Neuman (2013); Creswell & Creswell (2018) are of the view that within this paradigm individual develop subjective meanings of their experiences, meanings directed toward certain objects or things.

Creswell & Creswell (2018) allude that these meanings are subjective meanings in which are negotiated socially and historically. Hence, the rationale for this study to utilise constructivist as paradigm it is because the researcher will rely on the participant's views of the issue being studied from their narrative about their experiences and perceptions. Furthermore, due to the objectives of this study are to obtain a detailed and rich account of the participant's experiences, and hence this research paradigm under a qualitative approach best explored such human dynamics.

#### **4.4 Location of the study**

The research study was conducted in a rural settlement school at New Scotland under the administration of Msukaligwa Local Municipality, on the Gert Sibande region in the Mpumalanga province (see figure, 4.1 below). Gert Sibande district is comprised of 7 local municipalities namely, Lekwa, Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme, Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Dipaleseng, Govan Mbeki, and Msukaligwa local municipality. The school is 70km Northeast of the city centre of Ermelo in the Mpumalanga province. Msukaligwa local municipality have 19 municipal wards out of these wards this school is one of the few that is in a rural area. Through municipal demarcation this school is found under ward 15 of the municipality. Furthermore, Department of Basic Education (2016) schools ranking the school is categorised as a quantile 2 school. This means that the school is a disadvantaged school, with a lack of resources. The closest community with the school is 25 minutes away when walking.

The school is catered manly for the New Scotland community which has 9 sections. Hence, most of these learners are from these different local zones. The leading commercial action in

this region is farming and more precisely subsistence farming, there are two timber companies in which had mostly hired the local people. In addition to that there is an insufficient social service available in this community. The community is dominated by Siswati speakers.

Due to the long distance from many of the learners are using the scholar transport to and from school. According to the school statistics the school had admitted 637 learners with 21 educators in 2020. The school consist of black African educators, and learners and one white teacher. The rationale for choosing this school it is because the researcher wanted to find the narrative of teachers who are practising in a rural school context and this school is a perfect example of a rural settlement. In addition to that is that the researcher noticed that majority of research studies in the field were not conducted in rural areas since such regions are perceived as havens for safe, and not affected by violence. However, Mkhize (2012) caution against such supposition and states that they are causal factors that result on the impact of violence toward learners and *teacher* (own emphasis) to remain unknown within the South African schooling system which is manage by the Department of Basic Education is separated by into two classifications namely the public and private (independent) schools. The former is the one in which the DoE has more control. On the other hand, the latter the DoE has limited control on. Parents have a choice in choosing which school do they want their children attend too. Most public schools are non-paying schools hence this school also fall under that category of schools.



*Figure 4.1: The Gem Combined School*

## 4.5 Sampling

Neuman (2013) define sample as “a small set of cases a researcher selects from a large pool and generalises to the population” (p. 246). A purposive sampling will be used in this study to select 15 teachers in the school. Babbie (2013) defines purposive sampling as “a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (p. 128). It is for this reason that according Neuman (2013) this technique is appropriate to select unique cases that are especially informative. Since the principal is a person of authority in the school he will be part of the sample of participants as most decision in the school are approved by him. Thereafter, the researcher was assisted from the principal in identifying others who in power in the school and these are namely the deputy principal as he/she also from part of decision making as a second in command, Head of Department from the 4 phases of the school and class teachers. The reason for including this personnel its because there are the first people who are involved taking disciplinary measures in the school and all decision taken about learns involves them.

Furthermore, these individuals are more involved in the daily administration of the school and every incident that happens in a class or school yard they are the first people that get a report. And also teacher they are the one who might have experienced violence at first hand. In addition to that the reason for slecting educators rather than education sector personel who are employed at a provincial or district level is that educators are undoubtedly the persons who are most familiar with the scope of learners crime and crime-related behaviour in school premises. In selecting participants, participants must atleast have a have a qualification recognised by the DBE. The teacher must be appointed by the Mpumalanga provincial department of education, in terms of There is age restriction of participants must be a 18years and older in order to be able to be part of the study. Furthermore, participants years of experience in terms of practising as a teacher will not be restrictive, meaning that all those from grade 1 which is an entry level to those who have been practicing for man years will be part of this study. The reason for choosing this technique it is because according to Wilson (2010) and Neuman (2013) it is least expensive, less time-consuming and most convenient.

The Gem Combined School as per the explanation is a combined school, meaning that it has grades starting from grade R to grade 12. The school is made up by four phases these are the foundation phase which is made up off grade R(Reception) to grade three, the intermediate phase which include grade four to six, then the general education and train (GET) phase which



comprises grade seven to nine and lastly further education and training (FET) which is made up of grade 10-12. Therefore, each phase had participants to represent it. The sample was heterogeneous as I used my own judgement in selecting participants. The school principal also was able to direct in the selection of the school management team this are some of the people who play a role in his absentia these includes the deputy principal, and head of department representatives of each phase. It should be noted that confidentiality was maintained in such that the principal does not know which of the staff members were part of the study. Additionally, it was rather the researcher who asked about the management team of the school, which is where the school principal mentioned them, which then I purposefully selected them.

#### **4.6 Data collection approach**

The researcher seek ethical clearance from Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, (See appendix 1 below). An approval letter from the Mpumalanga Department of Education was obtained as gatekeepers letter to conduct a research study at the selected school (Appendix 2 below). A consent was granted by the school principal allowing the researcher to use the school as a research site (see appendix 3 below). According to Babbie (2013) and Neuman (2013) a qualitative research approach is more aimed at collecting data that is rich and descriptive. Therefore, data collection in this study was conducted through semi-structured interviews with the individual participants from those selected in the school, towards exploring their experiences and understanding of school-based violence. Before the researcher commence with the study he first introduce himself to the school personnel and stated the type of study and the process to be adhered. The interviews sessions were conducted through the use of open ended- questions to participants, unless to seek for clarity or to authenticate given data (see Appendix 4: Copy Of Instrument used). These interviews were ranging between a minimum of 25 minutes to 1 hour per session.

These teachers were approached in the school to decide if they are interested in participating in the study, as partaking on this study was voluntary. Appropriate times and locations were chosen for the interviews with the consent of the participant, and all interviews took place at the school. Before the each research interview session begin the researcher issued out informed consent to the participants of the study (see appendix 5). Confidentiality and privacy remained restated all the time to participants and were safeguarded during the process of when participants were narrating their experiences. The motive of choosing interviews it is because they allows the researcher to obtain rich and accurate information about participant (Babbie,

2013), see Appendix 4 below for the type of questions that was used by the researcher during the interviews with individual participants.

These interviews were audio recorded, hence a voice recorder was utilised, with the consent of the participant's, to record the interviews as according to Maynard (2004), using recorders is normal practice when conducting interviews for a qualitative research study as a researcher cannot rely solely on their recollection of the interview alone. Reason for choosing interviews as a data collection tool it is because the researcher asked questions that are open-ended which were enabling the partakers of the research study to describe their experiences uninterrupted by others. Furthermore, the rationale behind choosing interviews is that according Smith & Smith (2006) interviews provide a detailed narrative, which allows the researcher to interpret and draw his/her own inferences. Which consequently allows the researcher to capture the perceived experiences of the people and interpret their stories, recognizing that the accounts were filtered through the researcher's concept of reality. The interviews allowed the researcher to investigate into the teachers' perceptions and experiences about the subject being explored, SBV.

#### **4.7 Data management and analysis**

The recorded interviews is stored in a safe place known by the supervisor and the researcher of the study. For this study thematic content analysis was used. Braun & Clarke (2006) states that thematic-content analysis permits for common patterns and themes to emerge, patterns that are common during the interviews. Therefore, this method of data analysis allowed the researcher to identify common themes about the phenomenon that will be uncovered during these interviews. After identifying the themes the researcher analysed the data and given it to the participants to verify if their responses were correctly narrated by the researcher. According to Braun & Clarke (2006) the advantage of utilising thematic content analysis in a research study is that it offers with a greatly flexible method that can be adjusted for the needs of the study, providing a detailed and rich, yet complex explanation of information. In addition to that Braun & Clarke (2006) states that it offers a more accessible form of analysis, particularly for those early in their research career.

Braun & Clarke (2006) states that thematic analysis involves a 5 stage process this are namely the 1) familiarization and immersion, 2) Inducing of themes, 3) elaboration, 4) Interpretation and 5) checking. Hence, the researcher of this study will also follow a similar trend during the process of data analysis and eventually through to the research reporting of the study findings.

Furthermore, thematic analysis can be utilised within a social constructionist framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Below is the 5 stage processes involved in thematic analysis:

#### **4.7.1 Familiarization and immersion**

The first step that a researcher needs to undertake when conducting a study is familiarization and immersion. According to Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 16) “most qualitative researchers collect data themselves as a result they often come to the analysis with preliminary knowledge of the responses of the participants”. Throughout this phase of the process the researcher repeatedly peruses the transcriptions to acquaint myself with the content of each interview. The researcher listened to the audio records of the participants for several times in concurrence with the written transcriptions.

#### **4.7.2 Inducing of themes (Generating themes)**

Under this step it is the responsibility of the investigator to transform the rich text data collected into useful and understandable information. This means that it is at this stage where coding and subtopics are created, and this are in line with the research objectives of the study.

#### **4.7.3 Elaboration**

The third step is elaboration. According to Rubin and Babbie (2013) the main purpose of elaboration is to capture the finer nuances of meaning not captured by ones’ original coding system. One can view this process as the analysis of coded data (Ntshangase, 2016). During this stage I will cautiously investigate the data with a higher level of analysis.

#### **4.7.4 Interpretation**

The fourth step of thematic analysis is data interpretation. At this stage the researcher contextualizes and theorize the findings in a descriptive way. Throughout this stage the researcher is expected to make sense of the situation and further analyses the information in conjunction with the research objectives as a way of judging as to whether the interpretation was in line with the research questions (De Vos et al, 2011).

#### **4.7.5 Checking**

During this stage the research ensure that the data received from participant is not clouded by any biasness. And is exactly as narrated by participants experiences. In order to achieve this the researcher will double check with participants what they have narrated is well captured by the researcher.

## **4.8 Trustworthiness**

According to Korstjens & Moser (2018) trustworthiness is a definitions of quality criteria used in qualitative research. This will ensure that the themes used by the researcher are precise. As, according to Braun & Clarke (2006) a rigorous thematic analysis can produce trustworthy and insightful findings Hence, trustworthiness was adopted to ensure the quality of the study by adhered to the following aspects:

### **4.8.1 Credibility**

Lincoln & Guba (1985) in quantitative research credibility is equal to internal validity and is apprehensive with the characteristic of truth-value. Credibility speaks about the “fit” amongst participant’s opinions and the representation researchers of them (Tobin & Begley 2004, cited in Nowell, et al., 2017). The researcher will ensure that the study is credible using validating the numerous themes in the narratives with the participants and this according to Lincoln & Guba (1985) is knows as member check for credibility purposes. Furthermore, the study will be credible because the researcher will have a prolonged engagement with participants.

### **4.8.2 Confirmability**

Morse, et al., (2002) defines confirmability as an understanding that from the perspective of the researcher, they maintained reflective and refrained from imposing any bias during all the stages of conducting the research study. Korstjens & Moser (2018); Lincoln & Guba (1985) states that confirmability concerns the aspect of neutrality and objectivity in a qualitative research approach. The interpretation should not be based on your own preferences and viewpoints but needs to be grounded in the data. Similarly, Tobin & Begley (2004) states that confirmability is about creating that the researcher’s clarifications and results are clearly derived from the data, requiring the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions and interpretations have been reached. As result of that the researcher will use semi-structured interviews with all participants of the study. Moreover, Guba and Lincoln (1989), states that confirmability is proven when dependability, credibility, and transferability, remain totally attained.

### **4.8.3 Transferability**

Lincoln & Guba (1985) refers to transferability as the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. It can be said that transferability concerns more about the aspect of applicability of a qualitative study. Thus,

the researcher will offer a thick explanation of the research participants, their context, and the procedure of the research to allow the reader to mirror study findings to their own setting.

#### **4.8.4 Dependability**

According to Tobin & Begley (2004) for researchers to accomplish dependability, researchers can make sure that the process of the research is clear, traceable, and clearly documented. When readers can examine the research procedure, they may then be able to critic the trustworthiness of the exploration (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Koch (1994 cited in Nowell, et al., 2017) a distinct way that a research study to prove its reliability is to audit its operation. These means that the research study should offer research audience with proof of the choices and decisions taken by the researcher vis-à-vis theoretical frameworks and methodology concerns all through the research, which entails a clear justification for such choices. Hence on this study the researcher has discussed all the processes that will be followed and its choices these can be found under this chapter 4 of the research. Furthermore, the researcher kept all raw data recorded on the field, field notes, transcripts, and as these will assist the researcher to cross reference information, relate, systemize, and just as to facilitate the study findings.

#### **4.8.5 Reflexibility**

Reflexivity in qualitative study is all about the process whereby the research is continually reflecting on the research process. The researcher in this study ensured this by keeping field notes. And being aware about the bidirectional relationship of prospective and retrospective reflexivity. With the former being that the researcher was aware of his impact on the study and the latter being that the researcher was always be vigilant about the effects of the study on him. As this ensure that the credibility of this study is achieved by reducing any biasness. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a great deal of upset for researchers, compelling them to learn how to work more effectively at a distance, and has also affected how research may be carried out proficiently. As a researcher during this difficult period, I become reflexive in such that one had to adapt to the changes that were made to flatten the curve such as wearing face mask, fearing other people as some people feared being with other people as the spread of the pandemic was very easy. Additional I was reflexive as I am a member of the community in which the school is based at. The Gem Combined School is also my alma mater. Additionally, I have worked in this school. Although I was a learner and former staff member it should be noted that there were some changes such as the member of staff as some were not there during my time which means I must gain their trust. The participants were told should the need arise for counselling arrangement were made for them to see a social worker for trauma counselling

or emotional containment. The researcher was aware of his own biasness and ensured that it does not impact on the study findings.

#### **4.9 Ethical consideration**

Adhering to ethical concern is very important for any researcher, therefore the researcher for this study obtained ethical clearance from the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the College of Humanities at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard Campus (See below approval letter) and an extension approval letter (See below Appendix 1). Code of Conduct is an important issue when conducting research with human being therefore, at all times of the research process the researcher was ethical by ensuring the following:

##### **4.9.1 Do no harm/ Beneficence**

The researcher ensured that participants are not injured in any means throughout the process of the research. The participants were also be treated in a respectful way. The principle of beneficence also applied in this research study. Beneficence means that participant of a study should not be harmed by the research and if possible, they should benefit from the research (Neuman, 2013). Should it happen that a participant has experienced violence and it happen that the researcher questions triggers that experience, the researcher will refer the participants to the local Department of Social Development for counselling as it offers such services for free.

##### **4.9.2 Voluntary participation**

Participation to the research study was voluntary meaning that participants were not be forced to participate on the study. And further, the principle of discontinuance was used, this means that participants were guaranteed that they can discontinue in any moment of the research process without facing any consequence.

##### **4.9.3 Informed Consent**

Research participant were aware that their involvement in the study will be voluntary thus it will be their free will to participate in the research study. This was conducted by the fact that the researcher asked for the participants consent (see Appendix 5) before commencing with the issuing of questionnaire and that they would be anonymous at any point of the study (Swartz et al., 2011). Research participant were informed that the completed research study will be published at the University of KwaZulu Natal.

#### **4.8.4 Anonymity and confidentiality**

Anonymity and confidentiality was ensured to participants. According to Babbie (2013) anonymity is defined as when neither the investigators nor the readers of the discoveries can recognize a given answer with a given participant. Therefore, the data collected was not shared with anyone external to the study team, and the interviews questions were designed in a way that omit any identifying characteristics of the participants for example name and surnames of participants.

#### **4.8.5 Consent from gatekeepers**

The researcher obtained entrance into the research side before he embarks on the quest of the study. The researcher was granted approval to use the school as research site from the Mpumalanga Department of Education and obtained an approval from the school principal to use the school as a research site for this study and to ask teachers participation.

#### **4.10 Limitations**

The limitation of this study is that participants may not be completely honest to the questions asked during the interview because they might be shy to be known that they have been victimised by a learner which consequently could alter results for reporting findings. It can also be skewed towards a certain sex because there is number of males and females who will be participating on the survey will not be equal because of the sampling technique used which will be purposive sampling. Furthermore, this research was limited to on informal settlement school in ward 15, herefore the findings cannot be generalised to all schools. The research study was conducted under a new normal during covid-19 pandemic period in South Africa. Where, schools have to adhere to strict regulations aimed at flatten the curve or interventions aimed at containing the spread of the virus. This can be seen from that the school have to set rotational schedules for each grade in which they were scheduled to come to school therefore, there was a decrease in terms of learners attendance per day. It was hard to find educators free as they were very busy trying to cover the curriculum and save the academic year. And the number of children in the school was reduced as the learners were attending on different days. And their movement within the school yard was strickly on separate occasion in trying to contain the spread of the virus which also could influence how they behave themselves both in the classroom or outside the class room.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

This section has addressed the research methodology as well as paradigm that guided this study. It discusses how data was collected and analysed using a thematic analysis and representative constructions. In addition, the study discussed how it established the study's trustworthiness. Furthermore, it also describes the ethical concerns that were imperative throughout the processes and procedures of the research. Lastly it provided with the potential limitation. Thus, the next chapter is based on the report findings. The findings of the study are untaken and discussed on chapter 5, which is the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 5:

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the research procedures that guided this study. The type of research design and data collection method which were utilised to conduct this research study were presented. Lastly, the attitude of the researcher, the explanation of ethical considerations adhered to, and the quality criterion were discussed. The focus of this section is on presenting and discussing the data collected from the 15 educators of the school. Themes were identified through the analysis of data to explore and describe how educators at the school perceives and experiences violence perpetuated against them. The use of *italics* below was used intentionally to capture the words of educator's verbatim to capture the intensity of their stories as they narrate their lived experiences of SBV. To protect the participant's identity their names were not used in this report rather participants were given unique identification number as way of protecting their privacy.

#### 5.2 PRESENTATION OF DATA

##### 5.2.1 THEME 1: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATORS

###### 5.2.1.1. Educators background

What was gathered on the educators working as in the school is that some of them started their careers in some schools a while back while other have recently joined the sector. Their training also varies as they have acquired their qualifications from different institution of higher education. Additionally, what was revealed from the participants is that the school have a mixture in terms of the year of being in the field as an educator from the participants, some are still at the emerging years in their careers while other at an advanced stage professionally.

*Before I come to teach in this school, I started in a township-based school. But in overall I have more than ten years' experiences in the field.*

This educator further elaborated on the dynamics changes from what it was observed from this school and the previous one that he taught at.

*Only four of us who are left in this school who have been working here for the longest time than some of the staff members.*

These educators are more familiar with the history of the school and how it has evolved from the new dispensation of the democratic country and the challenges that the school and educators had faced and continues to experience.

*Participant 14: stated that I have plus 4 years being an educator in this school on the other hand participant 4 stated that I have not more than 5 years being around.*

*Participant 12: I have more than 20 years in the field, I started being a teacher when I was in my twenties.*

*“I do not have much experience in the field; however, I started doing my teaching practicum in this school and inversely I am now a qualified educator in the same school” participant 5.*

The school is made up of variety of educators in terms their years of experience in the field and how they have started their career differs other educators started practising while corporal punishment was the accepted norm used to discipline learners during the apartheid regime and early years of liberal South Africa. While others have started working within the sector. Some of these educators are coming from other parts of the country.

#### **5.2.1.2. Effect of violence on educator on professional level**

In this school educators have reported that they have not had serious case of such a manner that affect them personally but hearing from the media about horrible violence happening in other schools across the country it is without a doubt that it effects on your life in both spheres. Teacher end-up having additional responsibility such as acting as *social worker assessing the child only to find out their home circumstances are not conducive.*

*“I have never come across such an incident that was a threat to me, so I can also say in this school we are lucky unlike to some other places that we often hear about the abuse of educators in the media” participant 7.*

Participant 3, participant 4, and participant 5 also expressed about the fortunate part of working in a disadvantaged school as it this school is classified as quantile two in terms of the DBE groupings of schools that they are not faced with physical aggression that is directed towards educators unlike to some school which they also feel that should this social ill is to prevented early educators will be in tight and risky position at the workplace. Along those lines participant

6 alluded the following about the negative misbehaviour of learners in the school specifically in the classroom environment:

*“I am not affected it is just that I got used to that and one has to continue with doing what he loves which is teaching and hired for:”* Participant 6.

What the participant expressed seem like there one need to ignore the attitude they are faced with from learners. From the perspective of this participant is it clear that as educators they often get their strength of coping with difficult circumstances through having to tap into their own resilience of being dedication to the profession. Additionally, this kind of coping mechanism that educators have adopted can be attributed to what I could term as an internalised negative behaviour from learners. Such a way of dealing with challenges can be traced back in the past when violence was used in the country by the apartheid government as a way of gaining control.

*“Teaching of learners need to be conducted in a peaceful and conducive environment with no obstacles to be effective however often times more time is spent on dealing with learners misbehaving as result the teaching and learning process get disturbed, for an example not completing the lesson you had prepared for that day because of all the interruptions that took place”* participant 7.

The unruly behaviour displayed by learners in a classroom can also be presumed that it affects the job performance and obstructs the work of educators as the will have many delays in the lecture that the educator had prepared for that specific day on their lesson plans. Such findings were also reported by Lokmić, et al., (2013) as they revealed that such actions can knock off on the self-esteem and self-confidence of an educators, as result their job satisfaction and performance will be affected.

*“Professionally yes because often times an entire lesson gets wasted because of those disruptions caused by unruly learners, which consequently have an impact on those learners who understands their roles in a classroom or the mandate of why they come to school.”*

Participant 4.

They further extend on what has been well written that educators spent many more times in instilling discipline which as a result disturb the teaching and learning process. King (2018) stated that educators end up uncertain on how to control these children as they carry knives and other weapons in their school bags. This is similarly highlighted by these participants that

educators are expected to be always in control to any situation they are confronted with as professionals. At the same time, they are faced with having to direct learners to show respect to them as they are in an authority position when in a classroom and school environment. Educators reported that in this school they had not experienced violent cases that are detrimental to their well-being. However, their classes are disturbed by unruly learners which makes it difficult to let them continue with the curriculum. These teachers are expressing that in their experience in this school they had only in-direct exposure stemming from learner-to-learner violence which they have to mediate in those fights of learners just to protect the well-being of those involved while they are at risk of being hurt in that process.

*“It is very difficult to conduct a lesson because you have to take care of the lesson and simultaneously you have to address the unruly behaviour from some of these learners, as a result I have two options which I either have order that disruptive learner to leave your classroom/ session or ignore the challenging behaviour, so that you can finish your lesson, which you planned for that day. It is almost impossible to do both at the same time.”* Participant 15.

Educators seem to confirm that they end-up being feeling a sense of powerlessness as these learners sometimes they are giving them hard times in ensuring that they are in control which will render that the teaching and learning continues.

*“Some learners’ behaviour is disruptive in the class”* Participant 6

#### **5.2.1.3 Community violence**

Most of the school-learners grew up in different sections of the communities around namely, New Scotland, which is comprised by Mgababa, Rothsay, Blaimore. Then are other sections including Mgega farm, Lotzaba, KaGreen, Ka-Jimmmmy (Clarence), Lothair and Mayflower. Majority of these learners are using the government initiative of scholar transport to and from the school. Although all these areas are far apart from each other in terms of the municipal demarcations they all fall under the same municipal ward.

Participants were asked about the impact of community environment in which all the learners are residing at, and all the participants agreed that community violence has an influence on how the young ones as they socialized in that way. According to Miranda and Mgijima (2014) the external atmosphere has a main influence on school-based violence.

*The school size and its locality have a significant influence on most forms of violence and violence-related behavior. Participant 2 he recalls from his experience that he once taught in a township school where during lunch time the learners would go home to eat or wonder around the streets and when they come back they would have a bad attitude compared to learners in the school setting in the rural area which is secluded from the rural community learners mostly are respectful and it leaves one with a question of what are they involving themselves during the break time.*

Participant 2.

This participant is bringing up the debate surrounding violence within school both located in urban and those in rural area. This is an important debate that have arouse within the sector in the recent year. From this comparison made above the educator is bring out the role that a school location influences the behavior of its learners with learners in his current school where he is teaching the learner are not going outside the school premises during school hours including lunch times. Unlike those school in townships which is a norm that they allow learners to have lunch at home or buy whatever they want from the supermarkets in the community. Similarly, participant 1, participant 10, participant 12 and participant 13 shared almost similar views about what she has observed in the past within the school:

*“What we have observed a lot in the physical fights in the school especially those that involve boys most of the time you find that there is a learner coming from Ka-Green, unlike the other learners from other community.”*

*We have a problem with learners from Ka-Green they are often involved in many physical fights in the school.*

The conclusion which can be made from the analysis that educators are making about the community that learners are coming from is that those from semi-rural settlement are more violent as compared to those who are coming from rural areas. Unsurprisingly, as learners from KaGreen majority were learners from neighboring school such as Amsterdam. Communities influences these learners code of conduct in the school. This cannot be disputed as in a study by Mkhize (2012) he revealed, that if learners are in a violent environment either through witnessing or experiencing it therefore such behavior will be emulated too. Furthermore, this has been explained well by the ecological perspective theory and the differential association of which upholds that behavior is learned from the socialization processes that emanate from our

person-environment fit, hence in this case violence can be approved on or reproduced from one cohort to the next (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 and Akers & Jensen, 2006).

Similar views were shared by participant 1 and 2 about community violence, *some of these fights have started in the community but end-up making its way into the school*. From these views learners can have their own conflict during weekend but fail to sort it out in the community then they bring out it to the school. As the researcher I am a member of one community enlisted above what the educators share reminded me of one incident where a group of boys from another section come to attack the others from their own community which ended-up having these boys having threats that they will see each other in school to finish what they have started.

Participant 9 expressed that having been one of the eldest serving educators in this school and maintained an opinion that familiarity between educators and learners also plays a role as far as calling out an order to learners since this school is combined school which start from grade R till grade 12. The participant expressed as follows:

*“The learners who started schooling from the early grades in this school most of the time listens, to us even when they are in other senior phases, but the challenge is the new learners, who had transferred from the neighboring schools.” Participant 9.*

Contrarily, participant 6 shared an opposing sentiment to participant 9 and expressed the following:

*“Well, I teach both phases so what I have observed is that sometimes the others who were well behaved in primary year they can also become ill mannered, other factor that as an educator has to deal with is adolescence.” Participant 6.*

This participant is raising another factor that also comes as a problem which is the stage of development. In terms of Erickson’s psychosocial stage of development which begins from the age of 12 to 18 years this stage is known as the identity vs role confusion (Swartz et al., 2011). Additionally, from the perspective of the educator is that sometimes how one is behaving at the primary class should not be a predictor or a yardstick to measure and/ assume how they will behave later in senior classes. It is also during this period of time where transition is happening from childhood to adulthood which is also observed from the body changes that are happening. Often time it is during this period that influence comes more from their friends sometimes in such cases learners became victims of peer pressure. Nofziger and Kurtz (2008)

states that children who had an upbringing in communities that are violent they have high likelihood of having association with and spend more time with criminal like activities, delinquent and/ antisocial friends. Participant 6 further extended the following:

*“Often time, I come across boys who have suddenly change in terms of their behavior and I confront them about it, when you tell them that they have started to use drugs they deny but when you look at their hand and mouth it says otherwise... latter on they were caught with dagga.”*

From the perspective of participant 6 learners have access to drugs from their community which they also bring it to the school. Drugs have been associated a lot with risky behavior. According to Sibisi (2016) it is then when they need validation from their friends, and they take their advice or suggestions more seriously than those of their parents or caregivers. These is also in-line with what participant 2 when he implied or pose a question “...it leaves one with a question of what are they involving themselves during the break time” It does not exclude rural areas about the accessibility of drugs to learners and their usage of it within the school premises. The views expressed by participants 6 seem to confirm from those of Makhubele (2008:80 cited in Masilo, 2018) “learners in rural areas have been reported attending class while smelling of alcohol.” With a difference of smell, as participant 14 revealed that I once smell a *breath of cigarette from one boy learner*. Due to lack of good behavior from learners in the school the educators are left to deal with unruliness and teacher to adopt additional roles that they adopt in trying to resolve any arising matter for those concerned learners, in the interview with participant 1 the following was shared:

*“Teachers in this school often identify learners who appears to have disruptive behavior in class and thereafter assigned to an educator who will try and investigates the home circumstance of that child”* (Participant 1)

Similarly, Burton and Leoschut (2013) corroborate this in such that their study pointed out that the impact of family and community level also play a role in violence in a school. The participant is making correlation of a learner’s behaviour from their background before they come into school which is the home, community, and later school. In relation to the ecological perspective a community falls under the mesosystem which in terms of Bronfenbrenner (1979) is defined the as a “set of interrelations between two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant” (p. 209). Learners keep all of that close to their hearts, but those emotional wounds breed to an anger that can burst at any time. According to SACE

(2012) early experience to an increased level of violence and an upbringing in violent environments has been found to negatively affect children's understandings of how the world operates. It is evident from the educator's narrations they seem to confirm that a community at large and the home plays at the developing child.

*"The community in which these learners come from play a crucial role in terms of how they are behaving."* (Participant 1)

What can be made out the 15 interviewed educators they also confirm what has been said in academic literature that a school is a microcosm of the broader community in which it is located (Dunne, et al., 2003; Smith & Smith, 2006; Burton, 2008; Benbenishty & Astor, 2008; Le Roux & Mokhele, 2011 and King, 2018). Hence educator made some observable behaviors from learners and the community in which they are residing in. Similar sentiments were also shared by participants 3 and participant 4 who were of the view that as the school personnel they have observed that children from the neighborhood places such as New Scotland were well behaved until the school started to have children from far places such as Ka-Green who is full of children who seem to have unruly code of conduct. The school started to have gang fight made of the different community. Similarly, Netshitahame & van Vollenhoven (2002) state that studies conducted in this area showed a broad rule that as school surrounding become more and more violent, schools are also affected indirectly or directly. Moreover, Netshitahame & van Vollenhoven (2002) the school, parents, and community should therefore have partnership to make a nonviolent school environment. Schools unaided cannot act as a panacea for these issues.

From the interviewed educator they are giving a communal perspective about the causes of violence within the vicinity of the school thus are the attitudes of learners and practices within the families and communities the that they are residing at. These findings seem to agree with the ecological perspective, which views the person as a dynamic participant prevailing in various social environments that are interactive, interrelated and interconnected (Mampane, 2010; Swart and Pettifer, 2005).

*"What happens within a specific community create an influence on how their children conduct themselves also"* (Participant 5)

"Supported by the ecological systems perspective/theory as it posits that a person and the environment are independent units that dynamically interact and influence one another" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Additionally, the study seems to in the same vein as the theory of



differential association in understanding human behaviour in such that the educators interviewed agreed that to some learner's violent behaviour is the normalized and appropriate approach of managing conflict resolution.

#### **5.2.1.4 Parental involvement in the school**

The major findings from the 15 educators that were interviewed in this study revealed that educator say that there is a connection between caregiver's or parental involvement in the child's academic life and how they behave in the school and their attitudes with educators or even with any parental figures in the school. Some parents they are also uncertain as to how to instil discipline toward these learners at home, participant 1, participant 11 and participant 12 revealed the following as words which are often said by some parents or caregiver.

*"He behaves the same way with me at home, I also don't know what to do anymore"*

*"Often time we as teachers are doing more work than we are supposed to do because the parents of learners do not have enough time to support their children".*

The expression above confirms that some of these learners they are even troublesome even at home which as result they do not show any respect to any person of authority as their parents are also uncertain about how they can instil discipline to them. Participant 8 further shared more insight as by stating that *"some of these learners are not staying with their biological parents but they are under the care of their grandparents"*. Educators are sharing similar ideas that some of these learners are known to be unruly to control in such that even the parents or caregivers do not have good mechanics of disciplining them hence they have lost hope about what to do any further. Participant 1 alluded the following as some of the statements that disgruntled parents or caregivers end-up telling them:

*"You have my blessing principal and teachers, you can use a sjambok on my child as he is here, he is also your child, therefore, discipline him in your own way I cannot be absent at work for his ill conduct."*

From these educators experience it is visible that parents or caregivers reported that they also utilise corporal punishment on their children as a form of discipline, even though this practise has been recently abolished by the Constitutional Court of the South African in terms of the common law for reasonable chastisement at home. Similarly, is has been long abolished in relations to the SASA 84 of 1996. As it is described by parents, resolution of conflict is done by means of violence and discipline remains imparted by means of violence. Such assertion

also creates an impression that parents or caregivers have let everything on the hands of educators such as that it is the educator's responsibility to instil discipline to their children. Which many people believe it should be a shared responsibility as stated in the twitter snippet in figure 2.1 above. Lack of (good fit) proper partnership between the home and school one social system suffers most as they are interdependent, and, in this case, schools become more vulnerable. As result educators are left to deal with the misconduct and verbal abuse from learners. The findings reveal that educators are advocating for partnership between the parents or caregiver and educator in the school for the holistic development of the learner. Participant 1, 2,14, 13, 15 shared similar opinion about the involvement of parents in the school I such that they believe that *“the involvement of parents plays a crucial role in the academic performance of the learners”*.

*“Some of these learners are staying with grandparents or caregivers who often also struggle to manage and deal with the behaviour of these children, they will tell you that this one is like this even at home he does not listen. I also don’t know how to deal with him anymore I have done everything I can”*

Similarly, to five participants namely 8, 1, 11 and 12 participants 13 shared the same thoughts about some casual factor that parents even at home have similar struggle about learners who do not obey their rules. It is evident that these educators are of the same opinion that such learners are known troublemakers who also have no respect for anyone even if one tries to show them a correct way of conduct, they tend to turn a blind eye. It appears like parents are condoning the practise of corporal punishment which was lawfully banished in South African schools. Moreover, it appears like even them at home there are using it as a way of instilling discipline to their children even though, this practise has also recently abolished on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2019 by the Constitutional Court which upheld an earlier High Court ruling to abolish the common law defence of reasonable chastisement for hitting a child (Times Live, 2019). It for this reason that educators should not fall for such suggestions from parents as the 1996 SASA no 84 describes that:

*“(1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner;”*

*“(2) any person who contravenes subsection 1 is guilty of an offence, and liable to conviction or a sentence which could be imposed for assault.”*

Additionally, Research consistently shows “the importance of high-quality relationships between parents and children, and other family members, beyond the issue of punishment”

(Burton, 2008, p. 8). Nine participants of the 15 who were interviewed had some commonalities they agreed that a learner whose parents is known in the school they normally do not have any negative behaviour. Participants 1 and 2 further outline the following:

*Some parents are fully involved in their children's academics other they are not as they are not coming to parent's meetings which in the past were used to be held during the weekdays later it was changed to weekends to accommodate those who stated that they are working, but still the participation is appalling.*

It is evident that the school has attempted to ensure that parents are well informed about any developments in the school, but their effort seem not to match with the those from parent's energy. Parents have other commitment such work related activities which they cannot the risk losing it, as it is also the only manner it brings food into the table of the household. The educators seem to also suggest that lack of parent's participation in the school result to them having to deal with many issues alone as they have a duty of sacrosanct and the principle of loco parentis which ensures that learners under their care safe and protected. Additionally, the following was expressed by participant 1 and 10:

*"Some learners, change their behaviour through parental involvement on their transgression" Participant 1*

*"Normally there is a difference in learner's behaviour for those whose parent(s) are known by the educators as compared to those unknowns with the latter they tend to have delinquent behaviour".*

The assertion above directly is making an association that those parents that are participating in school matter they tend to fear being on the wrong side of the educator these can be made by that those learners they are aware that their parents are easily accessible by the educators should a need arise. The findings of these participants reveals that the lack of parental involvement does not assist with the management of social ill in the school.

*"Parents are called in to school when their child has transgressed but other time, they do not come rather they send someone who maybe from extended family who does not really staying with the child".*

*"Some parents they go as far as defending their children's actions".*

The educators interviewed understand that for any intervention to be effective all key role players need to be on board similarly a school does not operate in a vacuum, rather it is fragment of a larger community which also involves the parents or caregiver's learners. The findings also reveal that educators must play surrogacy roles such as parenting and ensuring security for all learners. These educators are of the opinion that the involvement of a parental figure from the learner's family contribute significantly to the relationship between the school, educators, and parents. Some these parents are not purposefully ignoring their children academics affairs rather they are forced by other home commitments such as labour which requires them to devote utmost of their time at work as result of that the children will be left alone at home. A working relationship between educators and parents can "ensures that the there is a positive developmental and cognitive needs of young learners are met both at school and after school" (Burton, 2008, p 7).

There should be a uniform rather than contradictory messages instilled to learner from home to school vice-versa. It can be observed that from the educator's view that there is a correlation between the attitudes and behaviour examples of caregivers, parents, and other adults in the family and in the community all of which have an intense influence on learner's academic performance and development, as well as on their social behaviour, attitudes, and reactions in school. The fact that majority of this learners are coming from rural areas they are not *exposed to a lot of things* however they are easily influenced by those who have been to *affluent places*. According to Mkhize (2012), the fact that aggressiveness between learners is very common means that they could be inadequate to control their anger and/or tend to take out their frustrations which emanate from home on other fellow learners. Such assertion was also shared by one participant who re-emphasize many times the issue of *emotional instability* to some of these learners which is caused by their background such as *orphanhood*.

*"It is vital that parent comes into the table and be involved in fighting against any form of violence in the school to avoid any further spread of violence".* Participant 2

*"It is not the role of the school or educators alone rather we should be in partnership with parents in order to have a school free of violence".* Participant 15

The finds further revealed that educators are calling and making references about the role that parents must play in the well-being of this learner which is vital for the development of a well-behaved learner.

#### **5.2.1.5 Forms and types of violence witnessed/experienced by respondents.**

The results of this research study found that all the interviewed educators have witnessed violence between school-learners within the vicinity of the institution. Two types of SBV were acknowledged by the educators, specifically physical and verbal abuse that they had experienced while at their workplace. With the former they experience through in-direct exposure as witness of learner-to-learner violence and the latter being direct victim of learner's verbal abuse that had been directed towards them. Participant 3 her opinion was that she has been a direct victim of verbal abuse by a learner at the presence of other learners in one class that she is teaching.

*"I have experienced verbal violence from a learner when I was trying to discipline them. The argument could have resulted in me being physically assaulted if I had not ignored her. I kept quiet because I felt intimidated by the boy learner, you could see anger on his eyes"*

(Participant 3)

According to this participant she resorted in keep her mouth shut for the sake of peace and not to lose respect from the rest of the class. Additionally, some other participants confirmed that it part of their daily life to have learners back chatting and being hostile towards them. As a way of moving forward with the lesson they resort in either completely ignoring that behaviour or after the lesson they must ask that guilty learner to come with them to the staff room. The educators approach they reported that it somehow works when the learner is no longer in the presence of other learners. According to participant 2

*"Some female educators have a challenge in maintaining control to boy's learners especially those who are much older as they some challenge to their authority and lack disrespect them hence as male teacher we are coming to intervene".*

*"Daring of educators"*

Such acts are not surprising considering the long history of patriarchal norms in the country which made women to occupy the subordinate position while men including boys are viewed as the superior group within the social hierarchy. Although the current generation might have been born after some social and political changes within the republic but as behaviour is learner through socialization and passed from one generation to generation as it also rooted in culture.

Contrarily, to this participant a female participant was of a different opinion as she narrated her experience as that to her she has not yet experienced any animosity from boy's learners during her class but girl learner they tend to have this "*negative attitude of back chatting with you*". The findings of the study show that educators are not immune to verbal abuse from learners. However, participant 5, participant 6 and participant 7 share a different view as female teacher they alluded that what seem to be challenge with the is a verbal abuse of female learners as most of the time when they call them out about their attitude they seem to back-chat to them. Participant 2 who believed female educators seem to have struggle with boys' learners as they often challenge the authority of female person.

We also know very little about violence against teachers. A report on the retention of female teachers in rural areas of Ghana by Casely-Hayford (2001) suggests that female teachers are as much at risk of sexual harassment as female students". (Dunne, Humphreys & Leach, 2006, 89) extend further to include the issue of gender-based violence. One participant in this study also shares slight views he reported that at times *female educators in the school their authority is challenged by male learners*. Many male learners contest the authority of a female figure this can be linked to the history of toxic masculinity which viewed females as subordinate as compared to males regardless of the age. In connecting GBV and masculinity, many researchers in South Africa revealed how violence is understood in the context of embedded sociocultural views of masculine privilege as well as supremacy, and the social influence of "apartheid, political emasculation and unemployment on generations of African men" (Wood, Lambert, and Jewkes 2007, cited in Bhana, de Lange & Mitchell, 2009, p. 50). Contrary to the general perception that SBV is frequently instigated by educators through the usage of corporal punishment rather it can also be initiated by learners whose behaviours display anti-social traits and those who are ill-disciplined.

The findings seem to confirm the assertion made by Leach and Humphreys (2007) by stating that verbal violence towards educators can sanctioned through the inaction of parents. Educators are expressing their challenge of how it hard it is to talk to a learner who backchat when he/she is instructed about a misconduct.

#### Gang violence/ physical violence

All the educators revealed that they have witnessed physical violence in the form of learner-to-learner violence within the school. According to participant 14 "*Learners fight in and outside of classrooms or school premises. Some are in organised group gangs and others take*

*drugs. It causes lots of problems in the school*” The educators narrated that they are in-directly exposed to physical violence from learners. Additionally, participant 14 make an account that some learners especially those in senior grade tend to use marijuana which is a problem.

*“This other year there was a big fight that involved (name and surname of the learners is withheld by the researcher for his privacy) and his friends. Yey! it was very huge in such that I had to get in between the two boys one which I had taught in the primary grade. I know it was dangerous, but they were going to hurt each other very bad fortunately enough those who I have taught before were able to calm down and respected me but then the matter was then dealt at the principal office” Participant 9*

From the above assertion the educator was more concern about the safety of those learners involved as compared to her well-being even though she knew the risk involved in separating the two she felt compelled and obliged to stop it before anyone could get hurt and end-up being their problem as they often blamed if such happens in the school.

Participant 2 stated the following:

*“Recently we had a case of learners ranging from grade 10 to 12 who engages in a hostile and dangerous fight that involved weapons which they had carried out from the school gate fortunately no one was hurt as we were able to intervene even though this fight was schedule to have happened outside the school gate, one learner had a panga/machete, other well-orchestrated weapon were found in the school bus by other learners, then such well-planned fight left one with questions of what can happen in the school bus? ”*

The educator is expressing that there are some learners who are carrying dangerous weapons with a purpose of causing harm to other learners when conflict arises. As result as educators of the school they have a duty to safeguard the well-being of all learners even though this fight had been planned to have taken place outside the school yard. It also appears that such fight has started at the community, but they want to finish it at the school. Such act needs to be dealt with effectively to prevent possible injuries of even death.

*“This one other time two boys were fighting in the classroom I had to scream to catch their attention and those of other colleagues”.*

All the interviewed educators had been witnessing violence, whether it was intended directly or in directly towards them by learners in the school. Learner-to-learner violence was the greatest prevailing form of violence in the school which had an undesirable consequence on other learners and the educators in the school and on the teaching and learning culture. Some educators stated that the quarrels between learners could happen for trifling causes that can be resolved easily for an example participant 2 and participant 14 stated this:

*“The recent gang fight that resulted in learners carrying dangerous weapon into the school, was caused by a beanie of a learners belonging to one group by another member of the other gang group”.*

*“Some of the learner’s fights are caused by petty stuff”.*

Gang members consider themselves as family unit, therefore they protect one another who they regard as part of their in-group. For an example in the school the recent gang fight was between two learners of belonging to two different gang groups the other gang members escalated the matter by entering their dispute which inversely caused disruptions in the school. Similarly, several studies found that educators are faced with disruptive classroom conduct and deference to authority (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker and Goesling (2002); Zulu, Urbani and Van der Merwe (2004) in Mncube and Harber (2013); Prinsloo, 2006). Due to the normalisation of violence the only way that learners react with is violence as way of dealing with any challenges. Educators suggest that other fights are not necessary as they are caused by merely petty things that can be resolved with having a discussion.

*Recently the as the school we have a rising concerns about gangsterism and the use of drugs by learners in the school.*

There is a common pattern that arises from the educators concerns which is the rise of gang groups and the use of drugs, from one educators he revealed that even there is a concern about these subgroups that learners have they have not yet established about the possibility of these groups having names as it known in society that normally gang members associated themselves with specific group name similarly even in correctional facilities it is a common for inmate to identify with a specific group name, for example Masilela (2021) states that in south African prisons there are three groups that are common these are the 26, 27 and the 28’s. Although from the educator’s observation they have noticed that there are those group that these that they associated themselves and one participant was probed about the possible names that these learners concerned identify with, the participant asserted that *“so far it is just groups there is*



*no name that they call themselves*". Participant 3 revealed that ever since she joined the school, she has witnessed a few gangs related fight:

*"It has happened a few times over the years, but then after the school management intervention its subsidies thereafter"*.

According to Mncube and Harber (2013) violence has been normalise which as a reasonable way of resolving conflict. "Pakistan report (USAID, 1999b) indicated that female teachers were frequently threatened or assaulted in the villages where they worked and they were frightened to leave the school" (Dunne, Humphreys & Leach, 2006, 89). Similarly, participant 5 share an experience where she was shocked about the conduct of one parent who called her while she was at home questioning about an incident that happened during lesson *"We cannot do much to them, but they can do whatever they want to do, and get away with it, and you are left powerless. And it is as if they are mocking you"* because once you try to discipline them their parents are overprotective toward their children."

#### **5.2.1.6 School phase**

The school is a combined school which have school grade starting in grade R till grade 12 with the same environment with under the leadership of one school principal. The school can be separated by four school phases namely, the foundation phase which consist of grade R(Reception) till grade three, the intermediate phase which include grade four to six, then the general education and train (GET) phase which comprises grade seven to nine and lastly further education and training (FET) which is made up of grade 10-12. All these phases have a different head of department in the school. Research in school-based violence reflects that secondary schools seem to have higher levels of violence as compared to primary schools (Burton, 2008). Similar view was shared by the participant who believed in their phase *they are not having any challenges with learners who have anti-social behaviour, rather it is a challenge in the other grades or phases*, the participant further extended that *if were to be separated and not be a combined were going to have a clean record on violence*.

Burton (2008) the National Schools Violence Study established that 34.5 percent of high school learners knew learners who had come to school drunk as compared to 3.1% of primary school learners. Additionally, similar proportion saw of some other pupils that come to school highly intoxicated. In terms of the ecological perspective and the differentially association theory behaviour is established primary earlier during childhood phase therefore, the learning and

experiences of children in their developmental years set much of their later behaviour. Although participant 2 agrees to some extent with this however, he differs slightly by saying:

*Not always is that case as some learners in their lower grade they were well behaved but now at secondary phase they are a complete opposite of what we know them as.*

This shows the power of the negative acquired social capital, to fit in with a group that display delinquent behaviour. As these learners when they reach high school class, they tend to want affirmations from their peers due to peer pressure unlike in lower classes where the individual learner is complying to order given to them.

*We have large number of learners per grade which is also another problem it becomes problematic to try to control such number some classes have 40 plus learners as an educator you must maintain control in such class and learners are easily distracted in a crowd but then one has to every in their power to ensure that you do not loss focus.*

Majority of the educators agreed that the challenges faced by them differs also based on the phases, some of those who are on the GET phase revealed that they have a high number of learners which some of these learners are troubling some comes from. Moreover, the educator in experiences varies based on the phases which often the foundation phase is reported to have no violence action from learners as compared to the other grades. But the educators from the foundation revealed to have a challenge with dealing with issues which also outside their scope practise such as dealing with learners who are appearing to be in a need to specially schools. On the other hand, the other phases seem to have a challenge that includes behavioural issues including violence and drugs.

## **5.2.2 THEME 2: FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN**

### **5.2.2.1 Educator fears of confronting misbehaving leaners**

*“We cannot do much to them, but they can do whatever they want to do, and get away with it, and you are left powerless. And it is as if they are mocking you” because once you try to discipline them their parents are over protective toward their children which also is not helping the situation as they favour their children” I recall one particular experience a learner misbehave in my class and when I call her out to that she went home spoke lies about that and later that day I received a call from the learners parents questioning me and the next day the child’s parent come into the school but I was never called to that meeting to clarify the matter” Participant 5*

The assertion above highlights the sense of powerlessness from the participants about the lack of proper discipline from parents who are ready to fight for their children at any given point. The parent's attitude also comes as a sense of a thread to the educators. Evidently it leaves the educator in a tight position on how to further relate and deal accordingly to the learner concerned if the parent defends them at the expense of those who are supposed to be working with them in ensuring good conduct from a school learner.

*“Some of these classrooms consist of more than 35 in a class, which makes it very tough to keep control, that is the biggest challenge we have in our classrooms as teacher”* Participant 2, Participant 10, Participant 4

The school as a social institution which formally legitimates educator's control and regulation of the applicable behaviour of learners in a classroom. The educator seems to have sense of powerless in working in overcrowded space and at time with unruly learners who have no sense of respect for their authority. One educator further revealed that *covid-19 pandemic played had an impact on our classes and school in general our learners had a rotational schedule which allowed us to gain some control over the number of learners*. In the same vein Obadire & Sinthumule (2021) confirms that overcrowded classrooms are also a source of disciplinary problems among learners. They further discovered that such classrooms are not conducive for learning and teaching, as additional period is consumed in correcting learners' misbehaviour. From this it is not easy for educator to manage an overpopulated classroom.

Due to the unruly behaviour from learners the educators in order for them to maintain control for their class one educator expressed that:

*“When you instruct him to leave your class, he declines: “No, I don't want to ...” I would tell the school management; however, it did not assist. I felt threatened as his conduct in the classroom was not pleasant. I would state to him not to do that, and you could see the hostility in his face, as way of protecting myself I end up no longer responding to his actions/ challenge”* Participant 3

*“Those are some of the things that you just observe and continue with the lesson of the day thereafter call that learner to the staff room to speak with.”* Participant 13

Educators had to turn a blind eye to the delinquent behaviour exhibited by learners in the school or classroom in fear for their well-being and that these learners are aware that they do not have anything to that keep them in order. Moreover, these educators have adopted a style that will avoid an unproductive back and forth with a learner which could also further derails they work.

*“You know many of our learners are respectful however I think it is very much important that they are constantly reminded that their right go hand in hand with responsibility” (Participant 3)*

*There is nothing much we can do to these learners as corporal punishment is an illegal practise.*

From this view about the participant is feeling like the learners do not understand their rights correspond well with responsibilities therefore they need to be conscientized, the participant further revealed that the unruliness that some of these learners have at times result to one as an educator to choose to be silent for the sake of peace making and continuing with the lesson. For example, participant 3 expressed the following:

*“I had to asked him to come with me to the staff room because I knew if I continued with him, he was going to become more hostile towards me. I asked him why he was doing that he told me that he was angry with one particular educator I asked him but why was he directing his dissatisfaction to me? he apologised and moved on since then he became respectful towards me”*

Such strategy that these educator resort in adopting and applying it is because they feel like when the guilty learner is approached alone outside the classroom they do not have the power that they normally get from the other friend in the class who will giggle and clap hands around when he/she becomes confrontational with you, as they regard them as “*isikhokho*” (a slang word used to refer to clever person). It is unsurprising that the learner would feel that way is because the bystander or the present of the other reinforces his/her negative behaviour. What can be observed from these participants is that the is fear and feeling of disempowered that they experience as far as dealing with a verbally abusive learners and they resort in ignoring it in class.

*“... one learner had a panga/machete, other well-orchestrated weapons were found in the school bus by other learners, then such well-planned fight left one with questions of what can happen in the school bus or during lunch” participant 2*

Due to violent fights the educators fear that this new kind of behaviour poses as a greater threat to other learners and other staff person as these learners have the capability of carrying those weapons into the school without any fear of causing an injury, simultaneously hurt those who could try to separate the brawling. These findings highlight the increased vulnerability that educators are faced with in their workplace, and the lack of intervention aim at this scourge. Educators are becoming afraid of confronting aggressive and unruly learners and consequently they are vigilant of assisting in dissolving a fight between learner to learner and becomes more challenging to instilling discipline. Weapons have been confiscated from learners which increases the probability of those weapons to be used to them by unruly learners with deviant behaviour. What can be concluded from the educator's perspective is that they share common opinion that a school environment is all about the teaching and learning culture, therefore it should be the department of basic education responsibility to warrant an environment of such nature is formed without any hindrance. They are calling out to having experts of human behaviour such as social worker within their working space is a cry that DBE should invest in to schools that will cater at the well-being of learners in a holistically manner, as they opinionated that some issues are stemming from the home background of learners.

*As you can see for yourself there is no school security in the gate that would safeguard the safety of educators and learners or other school personnel.* Participant 3

The participant fears are suggestive that the presence of a person who is a security personal could to some extent decrease fight in the school and the bringing of weapons within the premises of the school. Study by Sibisi (2016) found that many of the educators that were interviewed felt being neglected by Department of Basic Education, which is their employer, seem to also correlate to this current study even though the school context which both these were conducted differs.

*“What we see at times in schools is shocking, we had a learner who drew explicit pictures on the school property come we are going to use this desk during hearing as an exhibit”.*

The educator showed the researcher a pornographic drawing drew by learner on the school desk. This is kind of behaviour is also dangerous to the well-being of others as hence in the South African legal framework of the sexual offence and related matters 32 of 2007 (as amendment) is regarded as an offence. Section 19 of the Act explicitly states the following:

*“19. A person (“A”) who unlawfully and intentionally exposes or displays or causes.*

*the exposure or display of— (a) any image, publication, depiction, description or sequence of child pornography or pornography;”*

*“(b) any image, publication, depiction, description or sequence containing a visual presentation, description or representation of a sexual nature of a child, which may be disturbing or harmful to, or age-inappropriate for children, as contemplated in the Films and Publications Act, 1996 (Act No. 65 of 1996), or in terms of any other legislation; or”*

*“(c) any image, publication, depiction, description or sequence containing a visual presentation, description or representation of pornography or an act of an explicit sexual nature of a person 18 years or older, which may be disturbing or harmful to, or age-inappropriate, for children, as contemplated in the Films and Publications Act, 1996, or in terms of any other law, to a child (“B”), with or without the consent of B, is guilty of the offence of exposing or displaying or causing the exposure or display of child pornography or pornography to a child.”*

Below is the picture of the depicting a pornography:



Figure 5.1: Pornographic pictures drawn by a learner on a school table

#### 5.2.2.2 The long-term consequences of SBV

*“If violence in schools is not attended very soon, teachers will not be respected by learners, they will undermine their authority in the classroom”* Participant 7

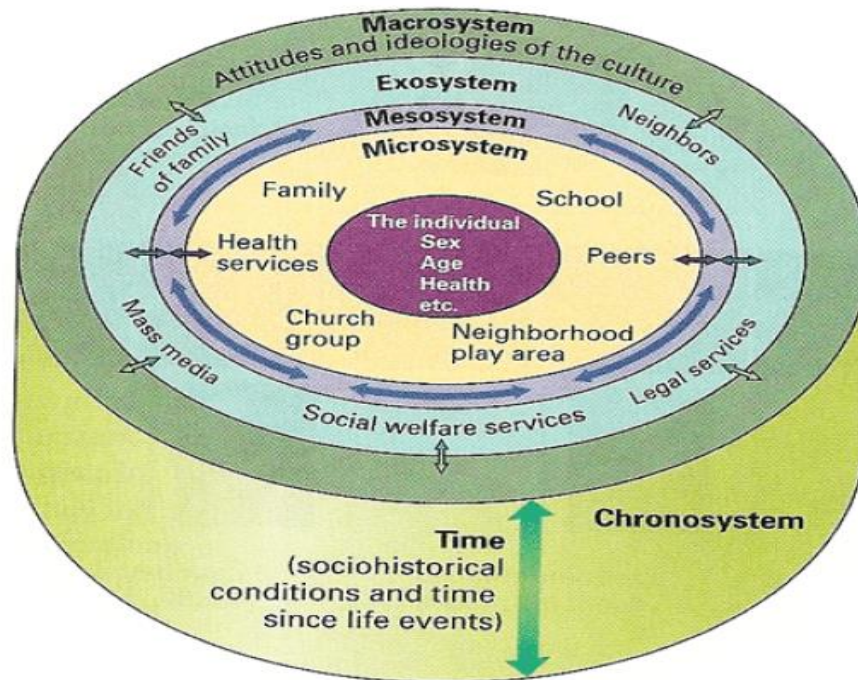
*“If this is not well attended properly educators will have to face or deal with violent and hostile learners everyday which could jeopardize the teaching and learning process”*

Participant 1

According to Burton (2008) violence exposure and experience on any setting from an early age escalates the likelihood of antisocial behaviour engagement later in life. This are some common worries that many of the educators predict that could be a reality that they will have to face, and the community at large will have to suffer harshly as it will become the accepted norm of socialisation similarly many learners will thereafter secure negative social capital.

*Schools will be dangerous war zone which will result on teachers having to working under dangerous working conditions.*

The educators share similar sentiments with Burton & Leoschut (2013) that the long-term consequences are also costly for broader society considering that the Republic of South Africa is also one of the nation's globally with the highest rates of gender-based violence specifically targeted to women and children (GBVF). As the ecological systems perspective provided with a comprehensive analysis on how human behaviour is emerges from a young age as one socializes with the different systems as displayed on the diagram above on figure 5.1 below:



*Should this not prevented in the long run we are going to have a serious problem in our society as much we have a problem of gender-based violence especially towards women and children, what kind of society we will be? A violent one which will be not good to the next generation.*

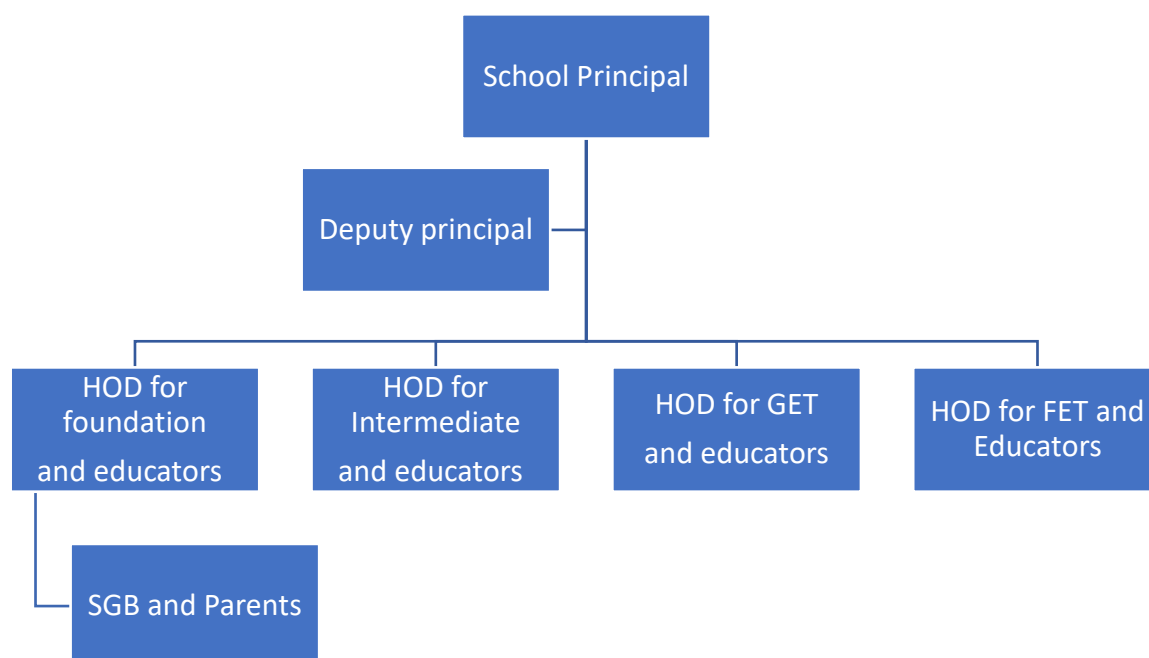
According to Burton & Leoschut (2013) the long-term consequences are also costly for wider society. Similar sentiments were shared by the participant who also made a link with the scourge of gender-based violence that South Africa is currently dealing with. Is has become one of the social ills that remain an issue in addressing it.



### THEME 3: EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCIPLINARY MEASURES.

#### 5.2.3.1 Methods are you using to disciplining unruly or misbehaviour learners.

School as an organisation it has its own organogram which will assist in deal with any matter of the school for a proper management of cases they are faced with.



In a general norm for schools to have principals occupying the top position in the hierarchy. They are assisted by the School Management Team (SMT) in carrying out their professional responsibilities. The SMT is made of the principal, the deputy principal who is the second in charge and all the head of department from each phase from the four phases that are in this school. To promote democratic participation, in South Africa all public schools are required to have a “democratically elected school governing bodies (SGB’s) comprising parents, learners (in grade 8 and above), educators, non-teaching staff and school principal” (South African Schools Act 84, 1996, no page). The SGB should actively participate in formulating school policies. According to Mncube (2007) the functions of the SGB’s include forming a conducive environment for learning and teaching culture, promoting the best interests of school, ensuring safety and security of learners, disciplinary action and policy determination of school fees.

The educators all confirmed that they see the role that is played the SGB when they are faced with social ill in the school and they are actively involved in all matters concerning the school.

*“Our SGB in the school is actively involved, they are always available when they are called about the matter of the school”.*

What can be concluded from all the interviews is that educators shared similar sentiments about the visibility, roles, and participation of the SGB. There is great partnership with the SGB, which seem like they have the best interest of the school at heart which will ensure that the teaching and learning process continues unhindered.

*“When we have a disciplinary hearing member of a learner the SGB is always involved and part of that meeting”.*

Two participants revealed that they are also keeping records of all the learners involved in a violence in the school.

*“We have a record book which dates back as from 2005, where record all the names of the learners who have committed heinous crime, such as carrying drugs or weapons”*

Participant1.

#### 5.2.3.2 Written notice and disciplinary hearing

*“When there is a serious matter or fight in the school, we follow the rules of the school’s act by calling the school’s management and invite the parents of those involve in such a case for a hearing”* Participant 1, Participant 2

*“When the is pressing issue the school management is informed and teachers on the morning briefings when it requires parents, they are called into the principal office”*

Participant 4

Eight of the participants recalled some incident which had required that a parent/s were invited to appear in a disciplinary hearing for their children. According to the educators when a learner was involved in violence or criminal activity, they are given letter to be given to their parents inviting them to the school on specific day.

According to all the interviewees they had one common view which is that not all the cases of delinquent nature reach the disciplinary hear. There were some contradictory opinion from the educators some were of the view that suspension is not well effectively to solve problems all the time while other they maintained that suspension act a way of a learning curve for learners to reflect on their transgression. Although there were those different view what they all agreed upon that there are some exception that to some extend it has worked to other learners. Participant 13 and 14 emphasise some disadvantages of this suspension that learners get:

*It can become a vicious cycle as a learner can be suspended for a few days and thereafter he is back with the negative behaviour.*

*Learner can merely be suspended for few days, a week or two, thereafter they are back at school, luckily here it seems to be effective as it also sends a strong message to other learners that there are consequences of violating schools' regulations.*

The researcher seek clarity about the effectiveness of having written notice to parent, participant 1 maintained that *after a letter has been referred to the parent of the learner the involved learner is not allowed to come into the school until he/she comes with a parent and the matter is addressed.* It is evident that such action which the school had to adopt as a way of involving parents and it also an opportunity for those parents who do not attend parent's meetings to get a report about the conduct of the child when they are at the school. As participant stated that there are some instances where a learners behaviour changes in a positive way after the parental involvement.

*Some learners, change their behaviour through parental involvement on their transgression.*

Although there is communication that took place where there is a case of learner's misconduct in the school from the SMT some educators who are class teachers sometimes they feel sidelined when their learners are going into disciplinary hearing as they are sometime partially involved at times not involved at all. It is this reason that as management they should ensures that they play a partnership with educators, such grievance was mentioned by one participant:

*"Even though the school management is called often times as class teachers we are sometimes left out then one gets to question oneself about the role of class teacher in learners' well-being, we are just informed like the rest of the staff members during our morning briefings"* participant 4.

*"I am not sure what is my role as a class teacher of the grades because at times management will only brief us all in our morning meetings/briefings about an incident and sometimes they will tell us about the decision they have taken to resolve a matter, but we are never in involved in all those processes"* participant 3.

*"Weapons that we find in the school are confiscated from learners to minimise the risk of having those weapons used on staff members or other learners"* participant 1

*“Knives and other dangerous weapons were found in the school bus were taken by the us”*  
participant 2.

The SASA in terms of section 8A it allows that a random search and seizure and drug testing at schools be done. The educators see a constant need of having such practise within the school to mitigate the usage of weapons and drugs in the school. Participant 14 expressed that *we should be having these random searches of weapons quarterly*. From this narrative the educator suggests that having an increased number of random search and seizure can decrease the pattern of bringing weapons in the school. *Since I joined the school, I have witness one random search of weapons by the police.*

*Participant 1 further revealed that as the school we are assigned to a police officer from Lothair, whom we can call when there are challenges, earlier today she visited about the incident that involved learners carrying pangas.*

The seems to have a working relationship with the South African Police Service office that the school falls under its jurisdiction for a partnership in fighting against crime within the educational facilities. The finds also reveal that the educators at this school are aware about all the due process that need to follow when there is a crisis within the school and they are taking it necessary to follows the SASA,

*“As stipulated on the South African Schools Act a learner can only be expelled in a school under extreme circumstances”* participant 15.

## **THEME 4: SUPPORT SERVICE**

### **5.2.4.1 School Based Support Team (SBST)**

It was revealed that in the school there is a school-based support team (SBST) which play a pivotal role in the well-being of learners. Due the context of the school all these educators seem to have at one point identify learners who have some challenges. This can be observed from the following assertion from the below statement:

*teachers in this school often identify learners who appears to have disruptive behaviour in class and thereafter assigned to an educator who will try and investigates the home circumstance of that child”* Participant 1

*“As teacher we have many roles such as teacher, social worker and police to play to an overwhelming number of children whom other have learning difficulties, not so well home background”* Participant 1, participant 9 and participant 10

These results are confirming what David and Waghid (2016) termed as surrogacy roles. These educators revealed that they are often expected, feeling compelled, to fulfil other roles which are outside of their practise just for the sake of attempting to understand learners in a holistically manner. They further revealed that it is a difficult task to do as they have an overwhelming number of learners who need different kinds of attention.

*Well, I am one of the teachers who are part of the school - based support team, let me tell you there was not training that was given to us by the department, but they want it to be implemented, I recall in one meeting with a senior official of the department she requested to see our file.* Participant 3

The educators are feeling a sense of being neglected by the department as they must deal with a lot of issues which they are also outside of their power and expertise. Hence, they see it befitting that having a social worker in the school could create a referral network for learners needing services which could be outside from the educator's expertise. And inversely it will create a safe space which will ensure the practise of teaching and learning continues in a smooth way.

## **THEME 5: SOLUTION TO ADDRESSING SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE**

### **5.2.5.1 Increase of random search for drugs and seizure and security guard**

*As you can observe when you enter the gate there is no security guard*

*This random search should at least be conducted once in quarter of the school terms, so that learners can fear to even think about bringing those weapons.*

The educators are having one common view about an increase of search within the school for learners to fear bring such weapons in the school. Along those views participant 15 expressed that *these search of weapons and drugs should also be done in the scholar transport as these learners can be able hide these things in the bus*. Such assertion is not surprising as of the recent fight involving a group of boys, they carried weapons to the school some which according to the educators were left in the school but with an aim to be used to other learners after the school bell as rang.

The school does not have a 24-hour service of a security service like those school independent schools it is for this reason that the education department need to also invest in having such security measures.

#### 5.2.5.2 Employment of psychosocial professionals

*Having support services such as social workers or psychologist that are easily accessible can us with their expertise to intervene where it is necessary such as learners with disorders like ADHD. And those who are coming from dysfunctional homes.”*

*“Having social workers on board at the school level will assist well because when you try to understand the child you will find-out that most of their problems are stemming from home”*

*“Like currently in our phase we have a learner who has a learning disability, she is really struggling to cope from mainstream school but here on this phase we try to assist her by giving her more attention and time to finish her work, but I am more concern about the following year as she will be in other phase where there is no much attention given to each individual needs as the number in class rises”*

These findings point to the need for a targeted, urgent, well-organized series of actions by the South African Police Service (SAPS), Department for Social Development (DSD) as well as DBE. The DSD role is critical in tackling school-based violence and over the long term, this portfolio's failure to engage will damage any meaningful transformation both inside and outside schools. “It is beyond the scope or mandate of the DBE to give home interventions or address external violence” (Burton, 2008, p.9). It appears like the educators to adequately attempted to mobilise all significant stakeholders into a coherent entity for the smooth operations of the school though, getting social workers from either the department of education or social development is a hard task to fulfil as result they are doing by all means on their power to enhance a holistic approach from the educator’s skills which is not enough.

*“As teacher we have many roles such as a teacher, social worker and police to play to an overwhelming number of children whom other have learning difficulties, not so well home background”* participant 1, participant 9

*“these social workers or psychologist employed at the district or circuit level they have a number of schools they end-up not reaching all of us, I out sources from social development they assisted partially... having them at school will really assist us a lot” participant 1*  
*Social worker need to be employed in our schools for easy accessibility because their current employment at district office is not working as they are focusing on too many school which also delay an impact their service delivery. participant 10*

These participants are bringing a significant view that need be considered by the department of education in ensuring that their intervention towards school based violence are holistically, they are bringing consideration about the significant role that social workers has to play such that social workers are not merely responsible for management of disciplinary problems. They also have a crucial part to play in the early prevention of disciplinary problems and in the provision of social services. These educators recognises that they do not possess all the skills hence they are mentioning other human behaviour expertise to come on board in alleviating all social ill in the school including violence. It is unsurprising that such a call is relevant in modern day society as within the context of Republic of South Africa was made from the early 1970's by the De Lange Commission, which saw the need of having social work services integrated within the primary education system (Vergottini & Weyers, 2020).

Social worker are skilled professionals in which on their practise they have incorporated home visits for their client in trying to provide holistically interventions. The three social work methods such as community work, casework and group work can be used with the context of schools.

*“Teachers in this school often identify learners who appears to have disruptive behavior in class and thereafter assigned to an educator who will try and investigates the home circumstance of that child” participant 1*

*“I recall one day a learner come to disclose to me about an incident that happened at home”*

“The school as an entity consists of several interdependent ‘components’, namely, learners, educators, principals, school management teams, school governing bodies (SGBs), and parents or caregivers. Together, these components interact and exist within the greater system of the home and community”. Therefore, social workers are skilled personnel that have trained and possess all the skills required to deal with multiple social systems. The literature on SBV recommends that curbing this social ill is not merely the duty of the DBE or the police, but it

is the responsibility of the institutions themselves. Schools should have a code of conduct in place, as well as support and prevention programs for learners and educators (Grobler, 2018). According to participant 4 and participant 7 *“As far as I know there is no document that is written in the school that guide us on what to do if learner X has transgressed school conduct, rather cases are treated as they come.”* Families with vulnerable children face multiple challenges that need proper intervention. It is important to note that these families have strengths, resources and resilience, that social workers must recognize and use to help members of family (Nhedz & Makofane, 2015). Similarly, educator’s experiences seem to confirm that learners home circumstance plays a role in their behaviour as result they see it fit that having a social worker who can assist with addressing such and inversely to render early intervention and prevention strategies in the school. According to participant 1 *“learners who are staying in child headed household, or orphaned are vulnerable so their behaviour seem to be problematic.* The participant is outlining the lack of emotional intelligence when learners are faced with adversity. International standards within the international sphere/ global domain proves that partnership to render intervention services amongst state organs such as social welfare and education is key in the early prevention of violence at young age and related delinquent behaviour.

*We do not really know how to fully deal with the issues of psychological and emotional difficulties displayed by some of these learners.*

*“For several times we asked for the social worker to intervene on the learner who is struggling from main stream school, but till to-date no one has come”*

It appears that teachers are expected to assess or identify that a learner has issues of anger, an eye impairment or a writing impairment and also try to assist that learner even though it is outside of their expertise. What also arises from these participant’s is that some of these learners are in need of child protection services such services are directed to children who are in need of care and protection in terms of the Children’s Act 38 of 2005 under section 150. The call from educators that having a social worker within their vicinity will mean easy access to service delivery from the social worker. They further revealed the difficulties of arranging for social workers’ intervention in the school as they are based at district office.



*It is a struggle to get social workers either from the department or social development, I have tried in the past from social development but due to some of their other commitment they did not come*

These educators seem to understand the need for holistic intervention for a good child development and recognises what is beyond their area of specialisation. However, the psychosocial team they are depended in due to other commitments and responsibility they end-up being delayed or not at all reaching out. What can be made from this is that the current structure seems to be unrealistic in reaching out to individual school needs as school have a plethora of social ills that need agent intervention.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter addressed the interpretation of data of the study. The central findings were presented, discussed and analysed by means of a thematic analysis. Themes were formed in relation to the main themes that arose from the data. The study explored the experience and perceptions of educators about school-based violence. SBV was found to have an effect on the professional role of educators. Concurrently, it had effect on the of teaching and learning culture. Additionally, the findings showed that the community in which learners are coming from played a contribute to the learners' behaviour in the school. Similarly, parental involvements and attitudes have a role in such that parents at times are not fully involved as result educators are left alone with huge responsibilities. Consequently, educators shared similar sentiments that about the use of disciplinary measures at the school. Lastly, the educators offered propositions for addressing violence in the school. Below is the sixth chapter which is aimed at presenting a summary.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This study was conducted to explore school-based violence by exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined school in Mpumalanga. After the analysis and discussion of the data, some conclusions arose in relations to the research objectives/questions expressed on the first chapter above. This chapter presents the conclusion of the study together with the appropriate recommendations.

#### **6.2 General conclusions**

The main conclusions were drawn in relation to the following study objectives:

6..2.1 To better understand the different forms of schools-based violence in the school

6..2.2 To understand the nature and extent of school-based violence in the school.

6.2.3 To explore the effects of school-based violence on teachers.

6..2.4 To ascertain the measures available to manage school-based violence.

To achieve the above-mentioned research study objectives extensive literature was consulted to provide a broad background about educator's perceptions and experiences about school-based violence. The research design that was adopted in this study is the qualitative research which used thematic content analysis to analyse semi-structured interviews of 15 participants. The partakers were individually interviewed in order to collect data for the study. Beneath is the presentation of the main conclusions that were made from this research study in line with the objectives research.

In relations to the first and second objective of the study, the findings revealed that all the participants had witnessed violence among learners within the vicinity of the school. Educators revealed that they have witness learner to learner violence while at the school this was observed in physical violence which includes gang violence. Additionally, the findings found that educators had been victim of learner to educator violence in the form of verbal abuse. Additionally, the study discovered that social ills that exist in the communities that the learners

are coming from become a problem in the school where the use of drugs and gangsterism activities are community issues which end up being spilled over into school premises. Educators have a lot to deal with SBV as a social ill which can also be observed from the media reports after the release of matric class of 2021 where there were two separated incidents where educators were reported to have allegedly been shot to death by learners who they are accusing the educators to have had them failed.

The third of the four study objectives showed that the educators were affected by school-based violence professionally. On the professional level school-based violence undeniably affects the teaching and learning practice. Educators spend most of their time instilling good morale and behaviour on learners rather than on the delivery of the curriculum. Additionally, the findings revealed that all the educators expressed that often violence or related behaviours from learners interrupted their lessons. The educators have sacrosanct duty of creating a comprehensive teaching and learning culture in congested classrooms, learners coming from underprivileged backgrounds affected by lack of recreational facilities, poverty, unemployment and violence. The school where this research study was conducted is a disadvantaged school in such that there are no recreational facilities such as sport ground. The over-crowding in classrooms is also a barrier to educators to pay full attention to each individual learner needs as there is not enough time. Furthermore, the study reveals that educators have a sense of fear in the school in confronting violent or delinquent behaviours from learners.

Lastly objective four revealed that educators do not have available supportive structures that are accessible for the eradication and intervention of school-based violence except the support from the school-based support team. The findings also show that there were no supportive arrangements easily available to educators in the school such as psychosocial support professionals; thus, counsellors, social workers, or educational psychologist to assist educators handle with or management of SBV. Although such professional personnel are working at a regional office as showed on figure 2.9.1 above, they do not assist with anything as they have high number of schools that they need to focus on. Furthermore, educators revealed that they struggle to obtain interventions from these professionals as they are employed at the district level these professionals are only available for a short period of time, rather than being full time staff members of the school. All the educators share similar sentiments that having one of these professionals such as social workers as full-time member of staff can be valuable support to the educators and the learners. These educators recognise that some of the ills they are faced

with are outside of their scope of practise hence it requires professionals who are well trained to render such services.

Moreover, the lack of such social services to be provided at school level have major implications on the social work profession. This includes rendering services meant for the vulnerable group in our society such as care and protection as mandatory by the children's act 38 of 2005. Social workers are fully trained on major legislation of the Republic of South Africa which ultimately allows them as cornerstone of human right for all and the fighting against any form of violence. The newly introduced policy which required educators to report pregnant learners who are below the age of 16-years, is also something that shows the increased need for social workers who will also assist the school in reporting such matters effectively and combating statutory rape.

The general result of the present research offers compelling evidence that educators are struggling to deal with delinquent behaviours which often are displayed by learners. It appears that there is a less attention devoted to educator's capability to deal with SBV come up with strategies aimed at eradicating violence in schools. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is a need for the narrative to change which only views educators only as perpetrators of violence in schools through the usage of corporal punishment to that of being also victims of SBV. In general, the need for social work-related services provided at school can act as a prevention tool for educator's safety. As of recently with the two separate incident after the release of Grade 12 results where educators were gun down because the learners had failed. The need of having psychosocial services easily accessible keep on increases daily such incident could be preventing as these professionals could have had preparatory session with learners prior and after the announcement of the results. The findings of this study further revealed that psychosocial wellbeing seem not to be prioritised by the department as a significant aspect of learners' development and learning. This research makes significant contribution in the area of SBV.

The study findings revealed that all the participants had witnessed violence among learners of the school. Educators revealed that they have witness learner to learner violence while at the school this was observed in physical violence which includes gang violence. Additionally, the findings found that educators had been victim of learner to educator violence in the form of verbal abuse. Moreover, the research found that educators had been victim of verbal abuse perpetuated by learners in the classroom meant for teaching and learning to take place.

The research concludes that the impact of SBV on educators affected them professionally as they are faced with strains of executing their duties. Unruly behaviour makes it hard for the teaching and learning process as much more time is spent by the teacher in trying to discipline good code of conduct in the classroom which is time consuming. The study further revealed that from the perspectives of the teachers at The Gem Combined School learners they are faced with challenges of dealing with learners coming from underprivileged backgrounds which at times also affected the learner's way of doing things affected. The study found that educators at this school are not receiving enough supportive mechanism in addressing unruly behaviours from learners of when they are faced with social ill which has a negative impact on the learner's morale. As a result, the educators see a need of having a psychosocial professional in the school for easy accessibility in tackle social issues as they believe that such personnel are well trained in the field of human behaviour and social behaviour change.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Following consideration of the study's findings, the recommendations beneath can be made:

6.3.1 There is an undisputable need for psychosocial professionals such as social workers, educational psychologist or school counsellors due to the proliferating school-based violence in the school. The facility should provide counselling services to learners which will inversely assist in ensuring that the teaching and learning is not hindered. And that educators are working in conducive space and feeling a sense of security. The educators expressed a need for social work interventions as a method of assisting them with social behaviour change on learners.

6.3.2 There is also a greater necessity to tighten up security at the school grounds and at the school gate which is used for entry and exit purposes. At this school there is no security guard employed to be stationed at the gate all the time rather having someone who is employed to look after the school equipment/property only.

6.3.3 Parents or caregivers of learners should be fully involved on their children's academic work. Parents of learners need to take their responsibilities in instilling discipline to learners rather than shifting it to educator's roles.

### **6.4 Recommendation for further research**

It is recommended that future research should focus on the significant role that social workers or counsellors can play in eradicating violence in schools. Similarly, a comparative analysis which will explore between schools that have psychosocial professionals and those that do not

have such personnel on their system in determining their services rendered impact on learners' attitudes and behaviour.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Schools as a microcosm of society therefore, they are not immune to social ills such as violence. There is room for further research in this area of pedagogy. The results of this study have answered all the predicted research questions. This chapter has highlighted how the objectives were met. Possible recommendations were also made for this study together with those for further research in the area of South Africa school-based violence.

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### **Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance from UKZN**

- University ethical clearance approval
- University ethical clearance- recertification



08 October 2019

Mr Xolani Cyprian Malindisa (214502190)  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Malindisa,

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00000320/2019

**Project title:** School-Based Violence: Exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga

#### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 26 August 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) 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 discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid for one year from 08 October 2019.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

Yours sincerely

Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

/ms

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



30 September 2020

Mr Xolani Cyprian Malindisa (214502190)  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Malindisa,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000320/2019

Project title: School-Based Violence: Exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga

**Approval Notification – Recertification Application**

Your request for Recertification dated 28 September 2020 was received.

This letter confirms that you have been granted Recertification Approval for a period of one year from the date of this letter. This approval is based strictly on the research protocol submitted and approved in 2019.

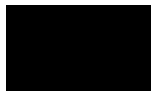
Any alteration s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Urmitla Bob  
(University Dean of Research)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Tel: +27 31 250 8350 / 4557 / 3557

Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

## **Appendix 2: Permission for Gatekeepers**

- Gatekeeper permission letter to the Provincial Education Department.
- Gatekeepers approval letter from the Mpumalanga Department of Education

The Head of the Department  
Private Bag x11341  
Nelspruit  
1200  
14 October 2019

## **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN A SCHOOL**

Dear Dr HA Baloyi

My name is Xolani Malindisa, and I am a Master of Social Sciences student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The research I wish to conduct for my master's dissertation is titled as **School-Based Violence: Exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga**. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Zengele (UKZN, South Africa).

I am hereby seeking your consent to spent at least 15 weeks in which I will be interviewing 15 school teachers at The Gem Combined School in the Gert Sibande District under the Breyten circuit in the Mpumalanga province to be part of my participants. I have provided you with a copy of my dissertation proposal which includes copies of the measure and consent forms to be used in the research process, as well as a copy of the approval letter which I received from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.



Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a copy of the full research report. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 073 022 4986 or email at xolanicypran@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Xolani Malindisa



Shamanga Building, Government Boulevard, Riverside Park, Mpumalanga Province  
Private Bag X11341, Midrand, 1200.  
Tel: 013 766 5552/5115. Toll Free Line: 0800 203 115

Ukholo-ke Tselelindvo. Unxangwe-ke Punda

Department e-ke Gedekeke

Ntsewulo-ke Dondoo

Mr. XC MALINDISA  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
University of Kwazulu-Natal  
HOWARD CAMPUS


**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MR XC MALINDISA**

Your application to conduct research study was received and is therefore acknowledged. The title of your study reads thus: **"School-based violence: Exploring educators' perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined school in Mpumalanga Province."** The aims and the objectives of the study may benefit the department in particular the school safety division. Your request is approved subject to you observing the provisions of the departmental research policy which is available in the departmental website and available on request. You are also requested to adhere to your University's research ethics as spelt out in your research ethics document.

In terms of the research policy, data or any research activity can only be conducted after school hours as per appointment with affected participants. You are also requested to share your findings with the relevant sections of the department so that we may consider implementing your findings if that will be in the best interest of the department. To this effect, your final approved research report (both soft and hard copy) should be submitted to the department as soon as you complete your research project. You may be required to prepare a presentation and present at the department's annual research dialogue.

For more information kindly liaise with the department's research unit @ 013 766 5476 or [a.baloyi@education.mpu.gov.za](mailto:a.baloyi@education.mpu.gov.za).

The department wishes you well in this important project and pledges to give you the necessary support you may need.

  
MR. J.H. NKOSI  
ACTING HEAD: EDUCATION

19/11/2019  
DATE



### **Appendix 3: Gatekeeper Permission from the School**

Date: 12 October 2020

The Principal

Name of School: The Gem Combined School

Dear Mr MP Nzima

#### **Permission to conduct a research study in the school**

I am writing to request your permission to conduct a study of the teacher's experiences, about school-based violence (SBV). The research project is titled: **School-Based Violence: Exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga.**

The project aims examine how teachers experience, witnesses and observe SBV. Every day news reports both in print and digital media show us that SBV is a problem in some schools and has negative effects to those who are exposed to it. The project will involve establishing whether and how teachers experience SBV. The study aims to analyse how school teachers experience, witness and observe and talk about SBV and how this differs for male and female teachers. The project will involve interviews with teachers and school managers, as well as observations of learners' interactions in schools, including playground.

All participants will be anonymous using pseudonym names in the publication of the thesis that will result from this study. Furthermore, participants will be also being free to withdraw from the project at any time during or after data collection, without any punishment.

Whilst every precaution will be taken to maintain the confidentiality of the participants in interviews, there will be limits of confidentiality. Participants will be informed that should

there be a disclosure/s which indicate that their well-being/others wellbeing is being compromised or at risk, the researcher will seek their consent in addressing the matter.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely

**Xolani Malindisa**

**Cell:** 073 022 4986

**Email:** [xolanicyprian@gmail.com](mailto:xolanicyprian@gmail.com)

### **Permission Form**

I..... (Full names of **Principal/Deputy Principal**) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I grant permission to the teacher participating in the research project and give permission for the school to be used as a research site.

I understand that both the teachers and the school are at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL

DATE

.....

.....

School Stamp

## **Appendix 4: Copy of Instruments**

## **Questions**

### **Interview schedule for Educators**

#### **Demographics**

Age:

Gender:

1. Please tell me a story about how you reached where you are now in terms of your career as a teacher and how long have been working as an educator?
2. How does school violence affect one as an educator on both a personal and professional level?
3. Does the crime and violence that occurs in this community in which the school is in situated have any effect on the learner's behaviour on school premises?
4. Have you ever experience violence (verbal or physical or any other) on school premises if so, how did you address it?
5. As an educator are you afraid of confronting misbehaving leaners?
6. How does violence in the school affect your performance in the work place?
7. What do you think will be the long-term consequences of violence in school if this issue is not addressed sooner?
8. Does the prevalence of school violence demotivate you as an educator in any way? If so how?

9. What are the school disciplinary measures put in place and are they effective? Please explain your answer.
11. What methods are you using to disciplining unruly or misbehaviour learners?
12. Are the any school supports services that are currently available to educators to help them manage the effects of school violence?
13. What do you think will be a solution to addressing school-based violence

## **Appendix 5: Copy of Informed Consent form.**

## **Informed Consent form for educators**

### **Title of Study:**

School-Based Violence: Exploring educator's perceptions and experiences at The Gem Combined School in Mpumalanga.

Researcher: Xolani Malindisa

Supervisor: PB Zengele

School: Applied Human Sciences

Department: Social Work

Cell number: 073 022 4986

Dear Sir/Madam

I am **Xolani Malindisa**, a master's student from the University of KwaZulu-Natal at the Department of social work, doing research on the nature and extend of violence experienced by educators. This research is being conducted in order to take serious look at how school-based violence may impact on educator's performance and attitudes towards the leaners and their profession. I am interested in recording the educator's opinions, on how violence in school has affected them in their personal and professional wellbeing. My reason for choosing a combined school it is because recently violence in schools involves all the phases. And furthermore, I choose this area as research site because its located in a rural area which is often a neglected narrative as far as school violence is reported in the media.

### **Procedures**

I will spend at least two weeks in the field collecting information. This will give me an opportunity to engage with the respondents and develop rapport with them. I will conduct in-depth interviews outside of school hours, which should take about an hour at a time depending on the data that is produced. If I need to explore further ideas, I will request additional time from the respondents. After the completion of my project I will share the results with the respondents and other staff members.

Please note that your participation is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage you feel uncomfortable, as there will be no negative consequences associated with withdrawing from the study.

### **Confidentiality**

Personal information is not being required therefore your discretion is secure. If you chose to participate all tape recordings of the interviews will be stored in a safe place at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and disposed of once the thesis is completed. No one else except me and my supervisor will have access to these recordings. Each respondent will be given a pseudonym at the inception of the research which will be used when I write up my thesis. Each participant will have right of confidentiality and will remain anonymous at the completion of the research.

### **Authorisation**

I have read and understood this consent form, and I volunteer to participate in this research study. I have been informed that there will be no risks and I am aware that there will be no benefits for me or my school for participating in this research. I have also been provided with the researcher's contact details and those of their supervisor who can be easily contacted.

### **DECLARATION**

I.....(*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I further understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate. I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

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SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

---

DATE

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