AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDINGS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

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By

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DECLARATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Education, in the Graduate Programme in School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Busisiwe Pretty Mabaso declare that:

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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Busisiwe Pretty Mabaso   Dr Vaughn John
Student   **Supervisor**   10 December 2015

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to all women who suffer/have suffered in silence:

Break the silence. It is a long journey, but worth taking.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Though there were so many challenges along the way, this journey was worth taking. I emerged from it a completely changed person.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAUWEF   American Association of University Women Education Foundation

CEDAW   Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

DoBE   Department of Basic Education

FGD   Focus group discussion

SVRI   Sexual Violence Research Institute

SMT   School Management Team

SACE   South African Council of Educators

UKZN   University of KwaZulu-Natal

INTERPOL   International Criminal Police Commission

ABSTRACT

Sexual violence in schools is a pervasive problem that is not confined to South Africa. It is a global issue which has been going on for years and is escalating at an alarming rate (Burton & Leoschut, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013,).

Previous studies on sexual violence have focused on girls as victims. There is less literature on sexual violence as it affects boys/men or that is perpetrated by girls/women to girls/women. There is also very little information on school-related sexual violence perpetrated by women/girls to boys/men or by boys/men to boys/men. This study approached sexual violence in schools from teachers' perspectives. The study intended to explore teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices as perpetrated by/to anyone within the school setting and the forces fuelling and shaping reporting or lack of reporting on the subject. It also explores how sexual violence affects teachers emotionally and professionally.

This study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, one of the nine provinces in South Africa, using survey and a focus group discussion with teachers. It is a qualitative study, taking an interpretive stance using Freire's concepts of 'culture of silence' and conscientization as its lens.

Findings in this study demonstrate that teachers are aware of the high levels of sexual violence practices happening in schools. Sexual violence incidents in schools are not limited to incidents occurring between learners, but at times, educators fall victim to sexual violence or are accused of perpetrating sexual violence. Findings in the study confirmed that more girls/women than boys/men are victims of sexual violence practices in schools and most of the perpetrators are boys or males. A significant number of teacher-perpetrated incidents were reported.

Fear and protection were found to be the key factors behind underreporting of incidents. School management teams were regularly blamed for not taking

stringent measures and not enforcing policies or taking action against perpetrators to curb the problem.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Sexual violence in society has reached worrying proportions, particularly in schools. This phenomenon is not confined to South Africa, but is a global issue which has been going on for years and the problem is growing at an alarming rate (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; Wilson, 2007; USAID/Management Systems International Report, 2008). There have been increasing reports of sexual violence in educational settings from around the world (Leach, 2013; USAID/ Management Systems International Report, 2008; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003). In South Africa sexual violence incidents are so rife that the country has been labelled as one of the most violent countries in the world and more so towards its children (Leoschut, 2006; Maxwell, 2010; Peterson, Bhana & Mckay, 2005). Barnes, Brynard & De Wet (2012) view South African schools as the most dangerous in the world. Yet South Africa is a democratic country whose Constitution is highly respected by most countries globally.

Since children spend most of their time in schools, the implication is that a fair amount of this violence takes place within the school settings under the guardianship of teachers whom by the principle of *in loco parentis*, are legally and ethically obliged to protect children under their care (South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996). This raises great concerns, because teachers themselves are implicated in some of these sexual violence incidents by having sexual or 'love' relationships with learners (Leach, 2013; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014), "both at primary and secondary school levels" (Burton, 2008, p. 2). These practices are prohibited by the South African Council of Educators Act 31 of 2000 and the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998. Section 9 of the Constitution stresses that anyone, a boy or a girl, should be treated equally in schools and should be free from sexual harassment of any form and that any person found guilty of sexually exploiting or abusing a minor could be imprisoned (Sexual Offences Act, RSA, 2007), yet sexual exploitation in schools continue (Leach &

Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Mchunu, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014).

Schools are supposed to be environments that are safe and nurturing, places that will allow children to grow and maximise their full capability (USAID/ Management Systems International Report, 2008) and environments where bias is critically examined (Mayo, 2009). Shockingly, at schools "many girls are raped, sexually abused, sexually harassed and assaulted by male learners and educators" (Prinsloo, 2006, p. 305). Consequently, schools have become places of fear (Burton & Leoschut, 2013), self-doubt and shame for children (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008).

However, not only girls are victims of sexual violence acts in schools, boys and teachers too experience sexual abuse from their peers and learners (Leach, 2003, 2008, 2013). In addition, South African schools are also fraught with homophobic incidents (Bhana, 2012). Such unacceptable sexual acts leave huge scars and cause great harm in the lives of victims (Jewkes, 2012). It diminishes girls' and women's self- esteem and their aspirations, girls drop out of school for fear of further victimisation (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach, 2013; USAID/ Management Systems International Report, 2008; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014) and women leave the teaching profession feeling teaching is not the place for them (Peterat, 1994). This is sexual violence, it needs to be understood and addressed.

Responsibilities of teachers include keeping peace and maintaining order and discipline at school, protecting learners from sexual harassment and violence and reporting sexual offences committed with or against learners (Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998). Any sexual relations with learners, is considered illegal and this constitutes violence, it needs to be reported and properly addressed. If educators engage in sexual relations with learners or if they themselves become victims of improper sexual encounters, that is contrary to providing protection or being protected and/ or maintaining peace at school. Instead, it is a violation of teachers' professional duties (SACE). Often, mutual

consent is given as defence by teachers for engaging in sexual violence practices with learners (Leach and Humphreys, 2007; Masehela, 2011; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; School-Based Violence Report, 2011). However, this justification does not hold water because of the power imbalance between a teacher and a learner (Smit & du Plessis, 2011). Such acts are seen in the light of a teacher exploiting his/her position of trust thereby contravening the *in loco parentis* status accorded to him or her (Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Prinsloo, 2005).

Legal measures and other interventions have been sought both internationally and locally to address the problem of sexual violence in schools, but these initiatives appear to have failed to curb the problem (Masehela, 2011; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). Criminal justice approaches to violence against women are fraught with shortcomings (Bott, Morrison & Ellsberg, 2004; De Wet, 2007; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). According to Bott *et al*., (2004) most often, prosecution takes a long time, is complicated, costly, can be traumatic for survivors, and rarely results in conviction.

Initiatives to solve the problem of sexual violence have been rendered unsuccessful, because sexual violence is a complex phenomenon and a sensitive topic to talk about and study (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Proulx & Martinez, 2013). Challenges emerge due to a variety of perceptions of sexual violence by individuals, communities, societies, and legal perspectives and understandings of what constitutes violence and violent sexual behaviours (Femi & Olaogun, 2009; Leach, 2013). In addition, it is hard to measure the true scale of the problem due to the phenomenon being under-researched (USAID/ Management Systems International, 2008). For this reason, there is a lack of accurate prevalent data due to under-reporting (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Jewkes, Vundule, Mafora & Jordan, 2001). Adding to the problem is the issue of differences in definitions (Leach, 2013).

Countries define sexual abuse/ sexual violence differently. This has a bearing on the perpetuation of sexual violence in schools as some cultures do not view certain sexual acts as constituting sexual violence, hence the silence around

the issue. For example, Olson (as cited in Richter, Dawes, & Higson-Smith, 2004) alludes to a Turkish practice where a baby's genitals are kissed and praised approving the future promise of fertility. Likewise, "grasping the testicles of an adult male was… a form of non-sexual greeting" in New Guinea (Korbin, as cited in Richter, *et al.,* p. 4). In some parts of India and certain African societies, the practice of marrying child brides is an 'accepted' cultural practice (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). These practices are likely to be interpreted as sexual abuse in many other cultures, whereas in communities where they are practiced they are culturally acceptable. These cultural sexual practices could possibly result in confusion about what exactly constitutes sexual violence. The following section attempts to explore definitions of terms related to sexual violence practices.

2. DEFINITIONS

An exact definition of sexual violence is difficult due to a number of reasons (Bott, et. al, 2004; Leach, 2013). Opinions differ regarding which dimension is most critical when defining sexual abuse/sexual violence. The argument is whether it is the use of *force* or *threat*, the difference in *ages* between the victim and the perpetrator, *power differences* between them, the lack of *mutual consent* or some other dimension (Masehela, 2011; McClure & Teyber, 2010).

2.1 Sexual violence can be defined as:

> *Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances…using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work… Sexual violence includes rape, defined as physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration… of the vulva or anus, using a penis or the body parts or an object. Sexual violence can include other forms of assault involving a sexual organ, including coerced contact between the mouth and penis, vulva or anus* (Jewkes, Garcia-Moreno & Sen, 2002, p. 149).

Sunnari *et al.* (2003) takes the definition further by indicating the multiple forms violence can take and the impact such violence has on the victim. For example, sexual violence could be:

> *Any physical, visual or sexual act that is experienced by a human being, at the time, or later as a threat, invasion or assault that has the effect of hurting a person or degrading her or him and/ or that deprives a person of the ability to control intimate contact. This definition includes rape, sexual assault, wife-beating, sexual harassment, incest, child sexual abuse and pornography* (Sunnari *et al.*, 2003, p. 1).

2.2 Sexual harassment refers to:

> *Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature* (Timmerman, 2003, p. 234).

2.3 Sexual abuse

Masehela (2011) describes sexual abuse as an umbrella term for any sexually related behaviour that makes someone else feel uncomfortable. According to Masehela, sexual abuse refers to:

> *Sexual exploitation of a child by an adult (and sometimes by another child or adolescent) by virtue of his/her superior power and for his /her own benefit or gratification* (Leach and Humphreys, 2007, p. 62).

2.4 Gender-Based Violence

According to the United Nations General Assembly (1993), gender-based violence means:

> *any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.*

> *GBV is not limited to physical or sexual violence, but also … economically coerced sex, sexual harassment, demeaning language that undermines self- esteem and even assigning girls to perform domestic tasks at school while others study* (United Nations General Assembly, as cited in Wilson, 2007, p. 4).

It is worth noting from the above descriptions that there is a wide definition of what constitutes sexual violence. It is noted that *violence* may take many forms from visible to the more invisible forms not perceived as sexual violence by some individuals or communities. It may be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, economic, or socio-cultural (Human Rights Watch, 2001). In this study sexual violence is understood as unacceptable sexual practices using coercive measures that harm the other person, regardless of consent.

Contrary to popular belief, the kinds of perpetrators may include family and community members and not just strangers. Sometimes these known perpetrators may use cultural and/or religious ideology to justify their actions (Bott, *et al.,* 2004, Proulx and Martinez, 2013). Sexual violence in schools is perpetrated by people who are known to victims, people who spend most of the time together in schools on a daily basis. Perpetrators are either teachers or learners, both males and females (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013).

In this study I will use the terms sexual violence, sexual abuse and sexual harassment inclusively to refer to unacceptable sexual practices and I argue that sexual violence cuts across gender and age. Indeed, people have rights to sexual acts, especially if the two people are in a relationship. However, when attempts to claim one's sexual rights are made through coercive measures that harm the other person, such acts amount to sexual violence. Such behaviour needs to be understood as unacceptable, it dehumanises the other person and takes away a sense of integrity. In sexual violence, it must be borne in mind that "the concern is about unhealthy sexual dynamics, about behaviours that are exploitative, abusive and psychologically and academically damaging" (Smit & du Plessis, 2011, p. 176). So, within the context of sexual violence, the

emphasis is on the violence inherent in the acts, the different violations of the victim's dignity and power dynamics involved in the acts of sexual violence.

I have always had concerns and questions about the high levels of sexual violence in school settings because it hugely damages victims' self-esteem and health. However, it seems like no one is taking action to address the problem of sexual violence practices even if they are aware of such acts (Neil, 2007; Leach, 2008; Masehela, 2011). Conducting this study is my way of contributing to the efforts to address the problem of sexual violence in schools. It is hoped that once teachers become aware of what constitutes sexual violence, they may be able to come up with strategies to combat sexual violence practices in schools. The following section presents what motivated me to embark on this project.

3. RATIONALE AND FOCUS

The source of my interest to conduct a study on teachers' understandings of sexual violence in schools was prompted by a mapping exercise I did in my Master's module "Peace Education & Conflict Resolution," where learners and I had to identify areas within and outside the school where learners felt unsafe and most vulnerable, so as to explore effective intervention programmes. The findings revealed a shocking picture of how vulnerable learners are within the school setting, a place which is supposed to be a safe haven for them. Most shocking was that learners implicated teachers –'their trusted others' – and their peers as a source of some of their experiences of sexual violence. The puzzling part was that the very learners who had raised concerns about their lack of safety at school were the same people who became hesitant to take action regarding their experiences. They felt that pursuing the matter could worsen the situation for them. So, to remain silent seemed to be the best option for them. It was as if they felt that nothing could be done if they reported the matter to teachers, but that they could end up becoming stigmatised by teachers and learners.

The level of uneasiness and reluctance to report; and discouraging comments from both learners and teachers to pursue this issue further influenced my

desire to want to expand my understanding of sexual violence in schools. I saw sexual violence as a challenge which had potential to divide the school, affect learners and teachers emotionally and academically, and thus affect the smooth running of the school. Keeping quiet and being guilty of colluding with the oppressors at the expense of vulnerable learners meant I had become 'host' to my own oppression, an idea which Paulo Freire (1995) warns of.

I searched through literature to learn what scholars say about sexual violence practices in schools and why the problem is escalating. I discovered that there is a dearth of literature covering this sensitive topic and that attempts by scholars to fill this void had been met with resistance from people who are reluctant to provide valuable information that might assist in combating this problem (Human rights Watch, 2001; Jewkes & Morrel, 2010; Masehela, 2011; Masehela & Pillay, 2014).

Previous studies on sexual violence primarily focused on the prevalence and the types of behaviours which are regarded as sexual violence (Timmerman, 2003). Most studies focus on girls' experiences and tend to ignore boys as if boys do not experience sexual violence (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). In addition, very few studies had been conducted within the schooling context; had been done from a teachers' point of view and had looked at sexual violence as a 'gender blind' challenge - affecting both girls and boys, including male and female teachers. This study sought to address this gap. It is located within a schooling context and it focuses on teachers' understandings of what constitutes sexual violence practices in schools. The study has potential to add to the limited body of knowledge on sexual violence.

This study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, one of the nine provinces in South Africa, using survey and focus group discussion with teachers studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and those teaching in different parts of KwaZulu-Natal province. It is a qualitative study, taking an interpretive stance with a view that there is multiplicity and diverse ways in which teachers understand the phenomenon of sexual violence. Teachers voluntarily responded to a structured questionnaire which contained both closed and open-ended questions on

issues relating to sexual violence. In addition, a focus group discussion was held with teachers who volunteered to participate.

The study intended to:

- Investigate the multiple ways in which teachers construct and understand sexual violence in schools.
- Explore the forces that shape secrecy and reporting of cases of sexual violence in schools.
- Understand how sexual violence affects teachers emotionally and professionally. Do they challenge, collude or do they remain unaffected by sexual violence acts?
- Identify what teachers suggest as solutions to the problem of sexual violence.

This study investigates teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices that are perpetrated by/against both male and female learners and teachers in schools. It attempts to explore the forces fuelling and shaping the *resounding silence* on the subject, a critical issue which affects reporting of sexual violence cases. I purposely use the phrase 'resounding silence' to indicate perpetual occurrences of sexual violence acts in schools which can no longer be contained and/ignored by victims and those aware of it, but which instead call for action to be taken against it. Silence on sexual violence in schools has become very 'discomforting' to be ignored (Mayo, 2009).

The study tries to address how gender norms, poverty and culture contribute to sexual violence. It is hoped that the study will provide more insight into the complexity of the sexual violence phenomenon by taking cognizance of the diverse ways teachers think and feel about sexual violence practices; and multiple contributory factors that perpetuate it. In addition, it is envisaged that teachers' insight into the problem will eventually lead to measures being designed to curb the problem.

4. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was designed to answer the following key research questions.

- What stories do teachers have to tell about sexual violence in their schools?
- What are the forces which shape secrecy and reporting of cases of sexual violence in schools?
- How does such sexual violence affect teachers emotionally and professionally?
- What do teachers suggest as solutions to this problem?

I did not intend to generalise findings from this study. The intention was to gain more insight into the complexity of sexual violence, attempting to get to the depth of the diversity of ways teachers understand and feel about sexual violence practices, and how such understandings shape their professional lives. It was hoped that if teachers, serving *in loco parentis* status, were allowed the opportunity to use their "own word, to name the world, to write about it and to gain critical awareness of their situation… they could feel empowered to take action" Freire, (as cited in John, 2008, p. 2) to ensure their safety and that of everyone within the school community.

Answers to the above-mentioned questions could help teachers to find ways in which they can work to promote non-hierarchical human relations and gender sensitive values and to create a safe environment that enhances dignity, equity and intellect for all at school. However, without adequate understanding and teacher training on what constitutes sexual violence, teachers are unlikely to succeed in implementing a curriculum of change (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). I argue that teachers are advantageously located to serve as change agents, and that they can only successfully do this if they begin to challenge unfair discrimination and violence against girls/women and boys/men within the school settings. Most importantly, they can bring about change if they could create spaces for verbalising experiences about sexual violence, thereby allowing processes of addressing it.

The big questions are: Do teachers understand what constitutes sexual violence within a school setting? Are teachers equipped with information and skills to deal with challenges posed by sexual violence in schools? It is not the scope of this study to look at the types of sexual violence acts in depth, but to attempt conceptualization of sexual violence through the understandings of teachers and how it affects them emotionally and professionally.

5. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter one provides an introduction and background, as well as issues relating to definitions. In addition the chapter highlights the importance of research in this area.

Chapter two presents a review of literature on the nature and extent of the problem. Here I highlight different scholarly debates on sexual violence issues and I end by examining contextual factors influencing the high levels of sexual violence in South Africa. I focus on some of the current debates, discussions and research done in the area locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. The literature searches were not restricted to girls, but the search provided very little data on boys and teachers as victims of sexual violence. My reasoning and theorising is inspired by the work of feminist theorists on the idea of patriarchy (hooks, 2000) and by the concept of '*culture of silence'* and *concientization* by Paulo Freire (1975).

Chapter three outlines the methodology that was used and the procedures that were followed. In chapter four I present the findings and discuss the implications of these findings for teachers and everyone involved in the school community. In the last chapter I present some recommendations for school policy and action. At a practical level I discuss some methodological issues concerning challenges faced and best practices. At a theoretical level I suggest ideas for future research.

The next chapter reviews literature on the nature and extent of the problem of sexual violence.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review literature on the nature and extent of the problem. I highlight important scholarly debates on sexual violence issues and why cases are seldom reported. Debates cover local, regional and international contexts and scholars argue that the sexual violence phenomenon is a global challenge which has been in existence for ages (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach, 2013; Wilson, 2007). The debates in this literature review are not specific to girls, but focus on anyone in a school; either as victim or perpetrator. In addition, I examine contextual factors shaping the high levels of sexual violence in South Africa and the effects of sexual violence practices thereof. To end the chapter I adopt the work of feminist theorists on the idea of patriarchy so as to explain how this systemic form of oppression perpetuates sexual violence. I also discuss the concept of oppression, *'culture of silence'* and *conscientization* by Paulo Freire (1975) through my theoretical lens.

2.2 Nature and Extent of the Problem Globally

The sexual violence phenomenon in schools is not confined to South Africa, but it is so widespread that it affects countries globally (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003). It has been going on for years and the problem is escalating at an alarming rate (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Mail & Guardian, 2010; Wilson, 2007; Richter, Dawes & Higson-Smith, 2004). Niehaus (as cited in Wilson 2007, p. 2) states that "sexual relations between teachers and schoolgirls in sub-Saharan Africa were common even in the 1950s".

Findings from limited research on this sensitive topic confirm that both girls and boys are sexually abused in schools (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Leach, 2013; Masehela and Pillay, 2014), however, the situation is gendered in that more girls than boys are victims of sexual violence and most of the perpetrators are boys or males (De Wet, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach, 2013; Leach

and Humphreys, 2007; Masehela, 2011; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Prinsloo, 2006; SACE Report, 2011; Sexual Violence by Educators Report, 2014; Smit & du Plessis, 2011; Timmerman, 2003).

According to Kilonzo, Dartnall & Obbayi (2013), seven in ten women in the world report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime. Therefore, unwanted sexual behaviour is not 'gender-neutral' (Timmerman, 2003). It also affects sexual minority groups like homosexuals (Bhana, 2012; Mayo, 2009; Msibi, 2012; Peterson, Bhana & McKay, 2005).

According to a study conducted in America and Canada by the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (AAUWEF, 1993) on the prevalence of sexual harassment in high schools, it was reported that 81% of students had experienced or know someone who had experienced sexual violence at some point in their schooling and that girls were the mostly harassed than boys (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Timmerman's study (2003) which was conducted in two regions in the Netherlands confirmed the same pattern, so does the study which was conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa (Leach *et al.,* 2003). Hallam (as cited in USAID/Management Systems International Report, 2008) points out that in a study conducted by African Rights, a UK-based NGO, it was reported that sexual violence against girls in schools is a critical problem in many African countries, including South Africa, Zambia, Sudan, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo

The three studies conducted in Lesotho schools (De Wet, 2007), showed that sexual violence is a grave challenge in schools. Findings in one of the studies indicated that 33% of 1049 women interviewed reported having experienced rape by the age of 18 (Thurman, Brown, Kendall, & Bloem, as cited in De Wet, 2007). An online survey in Britain by Teacher Support Network indicated that 84% of respondents reported having endured instances of being "verbally abused by learners … from swearing … to threats of violence or comments of a sexual nature" (De Wet, 2007, p. 685).

It is quite disturbing that schools, environments that should represent a safe haven for "intellectual, emotional and social growth" (De Wet, 2007, p. 687) are implicated as breeding grounds for unfair discrimination and victimization on sexual grounds (Mekonnen & Asresash, 2007; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). Schools are accused of reinforcing and maintaining sexual violence by encouraging wrong attitudes and perceptions that could encourage male and female learners to adhere to sex role stereotypes and behaviours that render girls/ women and sexual minority groups vulnerable to sexual abuse (Leach *et al.,* 2003; Leach, 2013; Wilson, 2007; Sunnari, Kangasvuo & Heikkinen, 2003). For example, teachers condone violence when they turn a blind eye to sexual harassment and when they support a school ethos intolerant of differences (De Wet, 2007). In addition, keeping silent about sexual violence in schools and believing that equality between sexes is culturally unacceptable is not going to solve the problem (Leach & Humphreys, 2007), instead, it perpetuates it.

The situation is made worse by teachers who still strongly believe in male power and hierarchical arrangements of people (De Wet, 2007; Wilson, 2007). These teachers contribute to violence by being violent (De Wet, 2007). Burton (2008) warns that too much exposure to violence is dangerous for learners, because school violence breeds further violence (De Wet, 2007). Teachers need to be aware of the sex role stereotypes they promote in schools which promote to sexual violence.

The following section explores the extent of the sexual violence phenomenon in South Africa.

2.3 Sexual Violence in South Africa

Sexual violence in schools is an under-researched area in South Africa (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014; Wilson, 2007). However, "assault, rape and sexual violence are endemic in South African schools" (Wilson, 2007, p. 4). There is a lack of reliable statistics on sexual violence in South Africa due to some cases not getting reported (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Kilonzo, Dartnall & Obbayi, 2013; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Prinsloo, 2006; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). Data that is available are few and

varied due to independent studies in a specific geographic area (Smit & du Plessis, 2011).

From the few studies that were conducted in South Africa, what disturbingly continues to surface is that South Africa ranks, amongst the countries in the world, as having the highest rate of sexual violence (INTERPOL, as cited in Wright 2007; Snodgrass, 2015). In South Africa, more than 55 000 rapes are reported to the police annually (Jewkes & Morrel, 2010) and these figures can go as far as "one million cases every year" (Exchange, 2006, p. 2). Of these numbers, adolescent girls between the ages of 12- 17 are particularly at risk (Peterson, Bhana & McKay, 2005). The situation is so grave that about 216,072 learners reported having contended with sexual assault on school premises in 2011, at a rate of 46.9 learners per 1,000 (Burton & Leoschut, 2012). According to the School-Based Violence Report (2011) more than 30% of girls are raped at school and "one in three children will be sexually abused before they turn 18" (Govender, as cited in Prinsloo, 2006, p. 314). These girls experience a high rate of rape, ranging from 39% (Love Life, as cited in Peterson, Bhana & McKay, 2005) to 66% (Jewkes, Vundule, Mafora, & Jordaan, 2001). Of great concern is that learners are at greater risk of being repeatedly victimized at school (School- Based Violence Report, 2011).

This percentage is very high and it raises great concerns considering that adolescents are minors, they are of school-going age, and some of them are meant to be at school under protection of their teachers (Burton, 2008). The Mandela Foundation in South Africa reported that violence, harassment and abuse were serious issues for girls travelling to and from school, and also once inside school, with peers and teachers as perpetrators. Human Rights Watch (2001) cited a study which was conducted by the Medical Research Council (2001) on the sexual harassment of girls in South African schools. According to the above study many young girls aged 15 and below have been forced or convinced to have sex without their consent. The Medical Research Council (2001) study also reported that amongst the women who reported that they had been raped as a child, 32.8% mentioned that the perpetrators had been their educators (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Jejeebhoy & Bott, (as cited in

(Winthrop & McGivney, 2014, p.8) also raised the same concerns that "in South Africa one-third of girls raped before age 15 reported a teacher as the perpetrator". Again, a national study (African Child Policy Forum 2006) in South Africa found that teachers carried out 32 percent of reported child rapes. The South African Council of Educators (SACE), reported in the Sunday Times (2003) that 32 educators had been struck from the teaching roll - a register of all teachers lawfully entitled to teach in the country- between 1999 and 2002, with the majority having engaged in sexual relations with learners (School-Based Violence Report, 2011).

Though the above statistics are very high, it is also well understood that not all rapes happen in school (Proulx & Martinez, 2013). However, what is disturbing is that these numbers could be more if they were to include cases of sexual harassment perpetrated against boys, teachers and homosexuals, but which never get reported because under-reporting and lack of studies focusing on this area (Leach, 2013).

Masehela's study (2011) which was conducted in six rural schools in the Limpopo Province in South Africa confirmed that sexual violence in schools is very rife and girls are mostly victims. Teachers as well are victims and/or perpetrators (School-Based Violence Report, 2011). Human Rights Watch (2001) conducted a research in eight public schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape Province. They interviewed girls from a variety of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. Findings confirmed that sexual abuse and harassment of girls by both teachers and learners is rife in South African schools and it affects girls of every race and economic class (Burton, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools Report, 2014; Wilson, 2007). So, sexual violence is not largely a problem for township schools where there are few resources, instead, sexual violence penetrates the whole of the South African education system affecting even prestigious white schools, schools for Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN), primary schools and secondary schools (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Wilson, 2007; Proulx & Martinez, 2013).

Disturbingly, studies reveal that school administrations maintain silence about this problem and perpetrators are protected (Leach, 2013; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003). Adding to the problem is the absence of appropriate reporting channels in schools which is further exacerbated by inadequacies in the legal and law enforcement spheres which have discouraged many victims from pursuing justice (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014; School-Based Violence Report, 2011). Challenges in the justice system relate to failure in "identifying and tracking abusive teacher … implementing effective reporting mechanisms, the need for protection of complainants, and the lack of coordination and communication of policies" (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, p.8).

South African schools are also fraught with homophobic incidents (Bhana, 2012; Msibi, 2012). Male and female learners who display homosexual tendencies are sexually abused and beaten by male learners in the name of 'corrective' behaviour, a practice whereby those who do not conform to perceived social norms regarding human sexuality and gender roles are punished (ActionAid, 2009; School-Based Violence Report, 2011). Lesbians and gays are raped with an intention to 'cure' them of their sexual orientation. The intention is to punish them and 'correct' their 'abnormal' behaviour (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008).

The statistics above indicate a problem of great magnitude; however, the incidence and prevalence statistics are unreliable due to difficulties posed by different definitions of sexual abuse or sexual violence, research tools, methods, sampling used (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013; Kilonzo, Dartnall & Obbayi, 2013; Leach, 2013) and under-reporting of cases (Wilson, 2007; School-Based Violence Report, 2011; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools Report, 2014). As a result, it is possible that there could be a great number of sexual violence cases which are not included in certain study samples and other reports.

This statistics show that sexual violence is an area full of complexities for research and it clearly indicates that South African schools are dangerous and un-nurturing learning environments (Burton, 2008). In my opinion, there is the possibility that this could bring the whole education system into a complete crisis. If the level of sexual violence in schools continues unabated, South Africa is likely to see schools becoming more like boot camps for instilling violence, a situation which can impact negatively on victims and the country as a whole. The following section looks at the effects sexual violence has on victims.

2.4 Effects of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence acts have far-reaching consequences for victims, especially children (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). They include physical, emotional, psychological, social and health effects not only for the victim, but those who witness it as well, particularly children (MATTSO). Research confirms that:

> *Early sexual victimisation may leave women less skilled in protecting themselves, less sure of their worth and their personal boundaries, and more apt to accept victimisation as part of being female, these may increase the chances of future victimisation like battery, rape, domestic violence, high risk behaviour in adolescence and adulthood like unprotected sex with multiple partners, alcohol and substance abuse, teen pregnancy, prostitution. (Exchange, p. 3)*

According to USAID/Management Systems International (2008), consequences of sexual violence include loss of self-esteem, depression, anger, risk of suicide, unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection and fear of victimisation. In addition, victims often experience terrible feelings of guilt, extreme stigma and blame by family, friends, and society (Human Rights Watch, 2001, School-Based Violence Report, 2011). This results in constant fear of being victimised again which in turn negatively affects the quality of the learning environment. Fear also keeps victims silent (Leach, 2013; Masehela, 2011; Masehela &

Pillay, 2014; Wright, 2007). A combination of the above factors causes many girls to drop out of school (School-Based Violence Report, 2011).

Such a situation has great possibilities to render schools dysfunctional and this hinders learners' realization of the right to education (Prinsloo, 2006; Leach, 2013). No school can function normally if learners are humiliated, stressed, scared, pregnant, sick and dropping out of school. No school can function normally if teachers are at loggerheads with parents, learners and the justice system for contravening the *in loco parentis* principle.

With the high levels of sexual violence in schools the questions to ask are: What are the types of sexual violence in schools? What are risk factors? What is done about it? Why is there so much silence surrounding the issue? What then is different about South Africa making the country to be so dangerous, particularly to children? First, I will look at different debates scholars highlight about the problem of sexual violence.

2.5 Different Debates on Sexual Violence

Evident in the above discussion is that girls/ women experience high levels and more serious forms of sexual harassment than boys/men (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach, 2013; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Wilson, 2007; Bhana, 2012). According to Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium (2003), the forms of sexual violence experienced within the school system include rape and sexual coercion; sexual abuse; sexual harassment; sexual assault; intimidation; sexualised touching; or emotional abuse in the form of threats of violence and sexually-toned messages to name a few.

Having more girls than boys as victims of sexual violence acts suggest that sexual violence is not 'gender-neutral', but men perpetrate these acts against girls/women and those who do not adhere to specific gender roles are at the receiving end (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). Hence the behaviour is often referred to as gender-based violence (GBV).

GBV occurs as a result of gender inequalities in society where women and girls occupy subordinate status in society (hooks, 2000; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). Though a variety of violent acts are mostly committed by males/boys against females/girls across all cultures (Jewkes, 2012), GBV affects both the male and female genders (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Parkes & Heslop, 2013) and it tends to disadvantage and disempower one gender over another (Wilson, 2007). In addition, GBV also affects people who do not conform to rigid definitions of masculinity and femininity (Jewkes & Morrel, 2010; Msibi, 2009). There is no worldwide data on the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence, however, the literature shows that physical, sexual, and psychological abuse in and around schools is a global concern (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). As was mentioned before, this study does not ignore the existence of gender-based violence (GBV) debates which mainly focus on girls/women as victims of sexual violence as perpetrated by boys/men, however, it focuses on sexual violence that is experienced or perpetrated by anyone on anyone within a schooling context.

That more girls than boys are sexually harassed in schools does not mean that only girls are victims of sexual violence (School-Based Violence Report, 2011; Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Brown, Riley, Butchart, Meddings, Kannb & Harveya, 2009). Sometimes perpetrators are girls/women and the victims are school boys (Timmerman, 2003; Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Masehela, 2011; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Shepard, 2000). The dominant discourse is that boys are usually thought of as the perpetrators rather than the victims of sexual violence acts. Sexual violence of boys is a neglected problem in developing countries (Haile, Kebeta & Kassie, 2013). However, studies in some countries indicate that sometimes boys are subjected to sexual violence incidents in school settings, including religious educational institutions (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Jewkes, 2012: Leach, 2013).

For example, Contreras, Heilman *et al*. as cited in Jewkes (2012) mentions the IMAGES (2008) surveys, which found that rates of child sexual abuse against

boys ranged from between 3% in Croatia, 8% in Chile, to 17% in Rwanda and 21% in India. Again, in a study conducted in five African countries, findings indicated that among African children, exposure to sexual violence among boys and its potential consequences are as common among boys as among girls. This finding is contrary to what existing literature generally reports (Brown, et. al, 2009). In a study by Burton's (2005) in Malawi, which looked at violence in schools and in the home, boys were found to experience severe levels of sexual violence be it forced penetrative or non-penetrative sex, oral sex, or forced touching of genitalia/breasts. In Pakistan, boys reported being sexually abused by teachers (USAID/Management Systems International, 1998). In Israel too, boys reported higher levels of sexual abuse than girls (Leach, et al., 2002). Again, (Shepard as cited in Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium (2003) refers to *InFocus* (September 1998) where in a study in Zimbabwe, 30 percent of 548 secondary school students reported they had been sexually abused; half of them were boys abused by older females.

Furthermore, at one rehabilitation school in Soweto, cases of female teachers who had sexual relationships with school boys were reported and the school had become "a sexual activity battle ground" (Masehela, 2011, p. 2). At a school where I work, boys sometimes report cases where girls force boys to engage in sexual intercourse before they are ready, and boys do it for fear that they might be ridiculed by their peers if they do not do so. This shows that girls can be perpetrators as well, and that sexual violence cuts across gender and age.

The difference, however, is that girls get subjected to gender violence more frequently than boys, and in more severe forms and with more severe consequences (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; USAID/ Management Systems International, 2008). Boys who are sexually victimized experience the same range of psychological consequences in a similar way to girls (Mayo, 2009). For example, a study reported that being called gay made boys feel very upset (American Association of University Women- AAUW, 2001). However, this area

of sexual violence is under-reported. There appears to be less statistical data available on sexual abuse of boy learners in schools in South Africa and such studies are lacking globally (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Having more girls than boys experiencing sexual victimization has resulted in the dominant discourse in literature being a 'girls-as-victims' discourse (Leach & Humphreys, 2007) which views 'men-as-sexual predators' (Femi, Tinuola & Olaogun, 2009), whereas studies show that girls may perpetrate sexual violence acts as well. For example, boys in the Malawi study reported that girls attempted to force boys into sexual relationships, often for some material gain (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). Leach & Humphreys (2007) raise questions about such discourses which limit sexual violence only to girls when boys are victims as well as perpetrators of sexual violence acts. They argue that such discourses have potential to ignore other types of sexual violence like homophobic violence, girl-on-girl violence, girl-on-boys violence and student-on-teacher violence, which make schools unsafe as well. In addition such discourses fail to recognize a close relationship between male sexual victimisation and perpetration, because some men who perpetrate sexual violence may also have been victims of violence themselves (SVRI Forum, 2011; Jewkes, Dartnall & Sikweyiya, 2012). Furthermore, boys who are perpetrators can be viewed as victims of a narrowly constructed male gender role which provides boys limited opportunities for expressing their masculinity but instead one that condones and even encourages demonstrations of power over girls as proper behaviour (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; USAID/Management Systems International Report, 2008). Boys/men may also have been victims of cultural gender role attitudes which expect men to be virile beings who have to compete for sex (Leach & Humphreys, 2007).

Viewing females as victims is very narrow because it fails to consider that sometimes girls do not view themselves as victims, instead they use sexual attention as a way of gaining economic power and they welcome the attention given to them by men (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). This is to say that there are possibilities that girls may not have identified the sexual acts that gave rise to being categorised as victims of sexual violence or rape (Jewkes, Dartnal &

Sikweyiya, 2012; Parkes & Heslop, 2013), but such relationships are sometimes willingly chosen by girls as a way to meet material needs or desires (Parkes & Heslop, 2013). In fact, "rather than seeing girls as passive victims, they are understood to be active agents" (*ibid*, 2013, p. 12). Victim discourse, therefore, positions girls in a negative, helpless way where they lack agency to change their circumstances.

However, regardless of whether school girls regard themselves as victims or not, sexual activity between teachers and students is considered abuse because of the age and power differences between the two (Leach, 2013; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008).

Another area of school gender-based violence that is under-reported in the literature is that which is directed at gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender people, particularly because these people are deemed different to the heterosexual 'norm' and thus they get discriminated against in many countries (Dunne, Mairead, Humphreys & Leach, 2003). This kind of sexual violence is linked to societal attitudes regarding gender roles, especially those concerning male and female sexuality. Gender is a broad term linked to social behaviours, which are considered to be appropriate to masculine and feminine roles in society. Mu'Azu & Uzoechi (2010, p. 122) defines gender as "socially constructed roles, relationships and learned behaviours of male and female." It is an ideology which idealises masculinity and tends to undermine femininity. So, young boys and girls grow up in families and communities where male superiority and masculinity is idealised and violence against women becomes a norm for them. These attitudes are implicated in rendering women/ girls and men/boys as targets of sexual violence in schools (Kilonzo, Dartnall & Obbayi, 2013; Masehela, 2011).

In schools those who are deemed 'not men-enough' or 'not women-enough' become targets of derogatory labels and abuse (Bhana, 2012; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). Female teachers are subjected to sexually toned messages perpetrated by boys (Peterat, 1994) and unwelcome sexual behaviours (Bhana, 2012). Mayo (2009) contends that being

called gay or lesbian makes all learners, boys and girls feel 'very upset'. This is sexual violence. Homophobic words damage students of all sexualities and it forces them to be always cautious about their behaviour for fear of being called lesbian or gay (Neil, 2007; Mayo, 2009). It is argued that victims sometimes do not report being victimised because people would not take them seriously, and some fear revealing their sexual orientation to the police (Martin, Kelly, Turquet & Ross, 2009) and others are afraid of being abused by the police (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003). An environment where learners live in fear is not conducive for learning. The questions to ask are: Are those using 'bad' or abusive words or doing 'bad' actions aware that their actions constitute sexual violence? If such actions were to be done by friends, would they still be considered sexual violence?

Unfortunately, teachers are implicated in condoning negative stereotypes towards gay people by turning a blind eye to instances of homophobic harassment and through denial of its existence (Leach, 2013) hiding behind religion and culture (Bhana, 2012). Msibi (as cited in Bhana, 2012) calls this 'sexual silencing' arguing that it creates fear and hopelessness for homosexuals.

2.6 Teachers as Perpetrators

The media constantly bombards the public with stories of teachers sexually abusing learners in schools (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Sexual Violence by educators in South African Schools, 2014). However, Timmerman (2003) makes some valuable points about the need to refrain from over-emphasis on teachers as perpetrators. He argues that previous research on the sexual harassment of adolescents in secondary schools has focused primarily on the extent and the types of behaviours and the gender of the victim or perpetrator, thus overlooking "the differences or similarities (and the circumstances in which these behaviours occur) between sexual harassment by teachers or peers" (Timmerman, 2003, p. 231). Timmerman's (2003) study of 22 schools from two regions in the Netherlands focuses on the differences and similarities between sexual harassment perpetrated by peers and sexual harassment by teachers in secondary schools. In stark contrast with a picture

commonly portrayed in the media, his findings revealed that most sexual violence experiences involved students harassing other students (Timmerman, 2005). However, he notes that sexual harassment by teachers involves serious incidents of unwelcome sexual acts as compared to that by learners. In fact sexual violence by teachers is a "potential death sentence" (Panos, as cited in Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003, p. 70) for learners.

Concurring with Timmerman's findings is the research conducted by the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (AAUWEF) in America in 2001. Findings indicated that sexual violence acts perpetrated by boys targeting their peers were higher than those perpetrated by teachers. Echoing the same sentiments is Finkelhor (2009) who argues that most sexual abusers are not strangers or paedophiles; many (about a third) are themselves juveniles and 60 to 80 percent of sexual perpetrators are males known to the victim (Heise, Ellsberg & Gottemoeller, 1999). Juveniles are people of school-going age; this means that more school boys than teachers perpetrate violence in schools, a finding contrary to continuous media reports. Supporting the same argument is a study of sexual abuse in schools in the city of Yaoundé in Cameroon which revealed that about 16 percent of the 1,688 surveyed students reported being abused (Mbassa & Menick, 2001). Surprisingly, about 30 percent of the sexual violence acts that were reported were perpetrated by classmates or schoolmates of the victims and only about 8 percent of the sexual violence acts could be attributed to teachers. The findings support the idea that most of the sexual harassment, unwanted touching, and forced sex are perpetrated by boy learners and not teachers (Timmerman, 2003).

A very rare finding came from a study by Nhundu & Shumba (2001) on the nature and frequency of reported cases of teacher-perpetrated child sexual violence in rural primary schools in Zimbabwe. The study found that 108 (98 percent) of the victims were girls, while all perpetrators were male teachers. The following are examples of studies cited in USAID/Management Systems International (2008) which indicate that teachers do perpetrate sexual violence in schools. A national study which was carried out by African Child Policy

Forum (2006) in South Africa found that teachers carried out 32 percent of reported child rapes. In one Malawi study (Leach et al., 2003) fifty percent of respondents reported that teachers or male students touched their private parts against their will. They also reported that male teachers subjected girls to various forms of violence including sexual abuse and forcing girls to have relationships with teachers. Again, in a study by the United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children (2005) in Latin America, it was reported that girls in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and Nicaragua were coerced by teachers into having sexual relations with them and girl learners were threatened with getting lower grades if they refused to oblige.

2.7 Law and Legal Obligations

When sexual violence acts become rife in schools, it raises great concerns because, at school there are young children aged between the ages of 6 – 18. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa regards these children as minors who are not yet fully matured to make informed decisions. They are placed under the care of teachers whom by the principle of *in loco parentis* are obliged to protect learners. According to this principle teachers are to conduct themselves in a professional manner adhering to professional ethics which prevent them from engaging in sexual relations with learners. But incidents of teachers 'preying' on learners continue to be reported (Mchunu, Witness, January 26, 2013).

The government put in place a number of legal measures to deter teachers from engaging in sexual violence acts in their workplaces (Smit & Du Plessis, 2011). Schools have codes of conduct and acts of law that govern teacher-learner behaviour and they are binding. It is mandatory for teachers to adhere to all these prescripts so as to ensure teacher-learner safety in schools. Any contravention of any of the laws affect teachers professionally and legally and can have huge consequences that can result in a teacher being charged with misconduct and being suspended (Prinsloo, 2006) or even struck off the roll (South African Council of Educators Act 31 of 2000).

The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 prohibits teachers from having sexual relations with learners. However, incidents of teachers engaging in sexual acts with learners continue in schools and cases are rarely reported to the authorities (Human Rights Watch, 2011; Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). According to the above Act any teacher who is found guilty of having a sexual relationship with a learner of the same school where the teacher is employed should be discharged from his employment by the provincial departments of education. The question is: What if a learner is from another school? Does this not provide a chance for perpetrators to get off the hook by moving to another school or forcing a learner to go to another school to escape prosecution? In a case of a teacher deciding to move to another school with an intention to run away from facing charges, the law of statutory rape can still be applied to that teacher.

Mutual consent is sometimes used by teachers as a defence for having sexual relations with learners. However, according to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Sexual Offences Act) 32 of 2007 the stipulated age requirement of consent for sexual acts for any learner, male or female is between 12 and 16. This is to safeguard learners against unacceptable sexual violence acts. Even if there is consent between a learner and a teacher, the SACE Act 31 of 2000 prohibits the practice on the grounds that no learner is in a position to consent, because of the power imbalance between a teacher and a learner. In fact by virtue of his/her authority, the teacher exploits his or her position of trust (Smit & Du Plessis, 2011) if engaging in such an act.

The SACE Act 31 of 2000 instructs educators to be struck off the roll if a teacher is found guilty of a breach of the code of professional ethics. Even if a teacher is not personally involved in the sexual act himself/herself, but is aware of any sexual harassment incident, the teacher is obliged to report to the Department of Social Welfare or the police (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996). Not reporting and keeping silent about the occurrence of sexual violence cases has penalties, and is regarded as a sexual crime (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). But a number of cases go unreported, even on

occasions where teachers are aware; cases are swept under the carpet (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Smit & du Plessis, 2011; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). In a case where a teacher is reported, the accused party is usually just given a warning and/or transferred to another school in order to protect the school's reputation or to show loyalty to a colleague (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Jewkes & Morrel, 2010; Leach, 2013; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). Consequently, most learners decide to accept sexual harassment as part of their school life and they choose to remain silent, others decide to drop out (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Wilson, 2007).

These legal measures appear to have failed in deterring perpetrators from sexual violence acts. This could be that criminal justice measures to violence against women are fraught with shortcomings (Bott, Morrison & Ellsberg, 2004; De Wet, 2007; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). According to Bott *et al*., (2004) and Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium (2003), oftentimes prosecution takes too long, is complicated, expensive, traumatic for survivors, and does not often lead to conviction. Also, in many low and middle-income countries penal and civil law codes fail to criminalise certain kinds of physical or sexual violence acts against women, but include conditions that make it impossible to convict a person (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg, 2004; De Wet, 2007; Smit & Du Plessis, 2011). Failure to criminalise certain sexual violence acts could be related to societal perceptions and understandings of what constitutes violence and violation (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003). It stands to reason then, that no policy or law can be introduced against a particular sexual practice if it is not perceived to constitute violence.

Adding to limitations of the legal framework is that criminal justice normally focuses on punishing perpetrators rather than restoring the safety and welfare of girl/women survivors (De Wet, 2007; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). In the media there is little emphasis on initiatives aimed at supporting survivors with recovery, instead, legal measures primarily focus on prevention, management

and control of violence against victims (Smit & du Plessis, 2011; De Wet, 2007). Adding to the problem is that legal measures mainly focus on teachers and nothing much is said about deterring learners from sexual violence acts. If victims feel unprotected and no one is brought to book, victims are unlikely to report cases and sexual violence will continue unreported (Kilonzo, *et al.,* 2013). By not having strict legal measures targeting learners, are we not sending a message that sexual violence is only wrong and serious if it is perpetrated by a teacher?

2.8 Teachers as Victims

Teachers are not excluded from being victims of sexual violence acts. Neil (2007) alludes to a survey assigned by the National Union of Teachers to explore sexist language, sexual harassment and sexual assault and the ways in which institutions dealt with these problems, as well as respondents' opinions on how schools should take action against them. Findings suggested that teachers were targets of sexist language being directed at them by learners at least every week. Surprisingly, fewer than half of teachers felt it necessary to report sexist language or sexual harassment incidents which they experienced or witnessed to the school management team (SMT). Instead they chose to deal with the incidents immediately on their own, because they were hopeless from not getting adequate support from their institutions (*ibid*). Many respondents felt the school SMT did not take these despicable sexual harassment acts seriously and they felt that sexist and homophobic language was tolerated in schools. This is another example of silence.

Schools are required to have policies in place to deal with sexism and homophobia in schools; however, many teachers are not sure if their schools had set up such policies (Neil, 2007). It is evident from the above that sexual violence in schools does not discriminate between teachers and learners; it affects everyone negatively, male and female.

By not emphasizing sexual violence acts perpetrated by learners, we may be condoning sexual abuse by boys/ and girls in schools and this might have a bearing on the perpetuation of sexual violence by peers. In addition, too much

focus on teachers will in a way make people think that sexual abuse of girls by boys is not a serious offence when compared to that by teachers, therefore it is acceptable. Furthermore, it would be hard to develop adequate intervention programmes that will address only a small part of the problem, because perpetration by boys is under-researched. Hence sexual violence acts by boys is likely to continue if neglected.

2.9 Causes of Violence against Women and Girls

There are many causes of violence against girls and they are complex. These causes pertain to deeply entrenched structural inequalities and dominant ideologies that uphold beliefs and attitudes that marginalise girls and women (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; hooks, 2000). Certain cultural practices condone sexual abuse of women (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Wilson, 2007). For example, marrying a young girl in certain African societies, especially in rural settings is considered an acceptable cultural practice, yet it violates a child's right to learn (Leach, 2013). Such a practice, even though it is regarded as legal in many countries, it is a form of sexual violence, because the children involved cannot give or refuse to give their consent (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008).

Culture has been cited as a causal factor of the high levels of sexual violence in school (ActionAid, 2004; Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012). According to Masehela (2011) and Masehela & Pillay (2014) legal measures have failed because the problem of sexual violence is not of a legal nature; instead there is a possibility that the problem emanates from African traditional culture and its patriarchal system which still believes in inequality between men and women and therefore women are treated as objects. Patriarchy is an ideology of male dominance, and unequal power relations between males and females (hooks, 2000; Young, 2009). Also, as women are getting more empowered and they start to benefit from state resources and policies that are provided to redress gender imbalances, men may be feeling the pinch and thus perceive that empowerment of women comes at their expense, and violence then becomes a practical way to reassert control (Snodgrass, 2015).

I have worked in quite a number of rural schools and my experiences are that cultural traditions which devalue women are still deeply entrenched in the minds of people living in rural communities. Certain aspects of tradition and culture make sure that the male dominant status is kept and girls are socialised to believe that they are inferior to men. Violence is therefore used as a means to impose and keep the status quo. In the area where I work it is a regular occurrence for a male to *ukuthwala* – abduct a girl to make her his future wife and for a girl to leave school *'ayogana'* - go and co-habit with *'isoka'* - a would-be-husband. Some parents condone this, because they want *'ilobolo'* – money a male pays for a would-be-wife. Some girls accept these acts and they equate these abductions to 'love', and boys do not regard this as sexual harassment; they believe it is part of culture. It goes unchallenged and there is so much silence and reluctance to challenge it even when parents are 'aware' that it is their daughters who are 'suffering'. They seemingly use culture to condone oppression of women, because it benefits them. There are also cases where victims are forced to marry their abusers to avoid shame to the family (Wilson, 2007).

Feminist theorists provide strong arguments that violence against girls has its roots in patriarchy and unequal power relations that exist worldwide (Hooks 2000; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Young, 2009). Around the globe men continue to have more power than women (hooks, 2000; Jewkes & Morrel, 2010; Masehela, 2011; Bekele, 2012). In a patriarchal society girls/ women are not valued as much as boys, but they are belittled and accorded lower social status to men, and violence is condoned against girls and women. Violence is used as a means of insisting and enforcing male power (ActionAid, 2004; Burton and Leoschut, 2012; Leach, 2013).

Patriarchal societies promote a view that women have no rights over their bodies (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008); instead, women are regarded as mere sex objects to be overpowered and to satisfy men's sexual urges (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Wilson, 2007, Jewkes & Morrel, 2010). Such behaviour condones coercion and female sexual abuse committed by boys/men and violence against girls/women becomes

widespread due to this dominant culture of sexual entitlement of men over women. Such sexual violence practices are still practised, particularly in rural communities (Bekele, 2012; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Leach & Humphreys, 2003; Masehela, 2011; Proulx & Martinez, 2012). Young boys and girls grow up in families and communities where male superiority and masculinity is idealised and violence against women becomes a norm for them (Wilson, 2007; Jewkes & Morrel, 2010, Masehela, 2011). Some girls equate physical abuse to 'love' (Jewkes & Morrel, 2010).

These belief systems tremendously limit women from refusing sexual advances by men (Jewkes & Morrel, 2010). Boys/men do not think or accept that their sexual advances towards girls/women might be forbidden. Any rejection of sex or the dominant status of men is an invitation for physical abuse. Thus many young girls end up giving-in to the dehumanizing sexual demands of ruthless male teachers who in turn assure them of good grades (Human Rights Watch, 2001). For girls violence is often regarded as unavoidable and they feel helpless to complain (ActionAid, 2004). Teachers do this because of their power status over young girls. Sexual advances made by teachers to their students have a negative impact on victims and through these incidents teachers present dangerous role model to male students (Leach, 2013). Girls also give-in to sexual demands by their peers in exchange for absolute protection from brutal victimisation by boys /and male teachers (Leach, 2003).

Poverty is also implicated as one of the main contributory factors leading to sexual violence. Girls engage in sexual activities because of poverty (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008; Gender-Based Violence Report, 2011; Leach, 2013, Parks & Heslop, 2013). This makes it difficult for girls to resist or complain because of the material gains they get from teachers. Teachers and older men use learners' poor economic status to force girls into having sexual relationships with them (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools Report, 2014). Once exposed, teachers arrange financial agreements with parents for damages done to the young girl (School-Based Violence Report, 2011). According to Brijraj (as cited in Independent Online, 4 December 2008), some educators take advantage of the situation and they use

parents' ignorance and their poor circumstances by promising future marriage to a girl, while actually the teacher is exploiting his position of power to gain free access to the child.

However, in a study by Human rights Watch (2001) and ActionAid (2004), findings suggested that even girls from high economic backgrounds were also victims of sexual violence. Explanation of poverty as a risk factor therefore has some limitations in this regard. There might be other explanations for young girls being targeted.

2.10 Interventions

A suggestion is that the sexual violence phenomenon in schools has to be approached using strategies that are more tuned to the needs of the traditional communities, i.e. they have to be culturally sensitive (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; Masehela, 2011; Young, 2009). In this they are supported by John (2015, p. 83) who also argues that intervention strategies to address 'structural drivers of violence' should be adapted to suit "specific local challenges of conflict, violence and development … and stubborn structural conflict (e.g. patriarchy) can…" be addressed. Sharing the same sentiments is du Plessis & Smit (2011) who propose that to solve the problem of sexual violence there needs to be a shift from focusing on avoiding liability, but instead move towards the need to educate learners and educators on the effects of sexual violence, the myths surrounding sexual violence, and the role played by culture in the perceptions of sexual violence.

Previous research on the effectiveness of sexual violence intervention programmes indicate that good quality intervention programmes can only succeed if they involve the integration of multiple services and sectors, including health, social welfare, education, and justice sectors (Kilonzo, *et al.,* 2013). Such programmes call for transformation in attitudes and behaviours towards sexual violence (Santamaria, 2012) and "strong leadership and governance, understanding of local realities, applying a multiplicity of strategies, and incorporating research into implementation through a 'learning by doing' approach" *(ibid.,* 2013, p. 2).

The above section covered the nature and extent of sexual violence in schools, causes of sexual violence, as well as suggestions by scholars on possible intervention programmes that might curb challenges posed by sexual violence phenomenon. It is worth noting that sexual violence is a complex phenomenon with multiple contributory factors. Evident in debates is that sexual violence can be perpetrated by learners on other learners and by teachers on learners as well as by teachers on their peers. However, more girls/women than boys/men experience sexual victimisation on grounds of their sexuality (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Timmerman, 2003, USAID Report, 2008; Smit & du Plessis, 2011). In addition, "perpetrators of sexual violence … may be of almost any age, any ethnicity, social classes and have a variety of abilities (physical and intellectual)" (Jewkes, Dartnal & Sikweyiya, 2012, p. 4). This study does not mainly focus on existence of gender-based violence (GBV) debates, it also focuses on sexual violence that is experienced or perpetrated by anyone within a schooling context. However, the search produced very little material which primarily focused on boys and teachers as victims of sexual violence.

The next section discusses the theoretical lens through which I explore sexual violence practices in school. I first discuss the context of oppression and power which influences the high levels of sexual violence acts in South Africa.

2.11 THEORETICAL AND/ CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.11.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to present Freire's theory of oppression as a lens for this study of sexual violence. In particular, the concepts of patriarchy, oppression, culture of silence and conscientization (Paulo Freire, 1975) will be elaborated and set up as part of the theoretical lens for understanding and theorising sexual violence practices in South African schools. It is important to discuss these concepts, because I will be using them to explore teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices in schools.

It is necessary to understand the contextual and socio-cultural dynamics in South Africa which underpin the high levels of sexual violence in schools.

2.11.2 Context of oppression and power

There is no single factor that causes sexual violence, instead, it is caused by multiple, complex and interconnected factors (Casey *et al.*, 2009; Masehela, 2011; ActionAid, 2009).

Firstly, sexual violence is common in countries with a culture of violence, or where violent conflict is taking place (Jewkes, et. al, 2002, cited in Ricardo, Eads and Barker, 2011; Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012). It has to be remembered that South Africa has had a violent past attributed to apartheid and colonialism (Wright, 2007; School-Based Violence Report, 2011). During this time African men particularly, learned that one attains what one wants through violence (De wet, 2007; Wright, 2007). Violence was normalised as a solution to solving problems (School-Based Violence Report, 2011). This created a culture of violence which spilled into schools (Burton, 2008). In schools, young boys and men use violence to coerce girls into having sex with them, having learned that one achieves what one wants through violence.

Secondly, in societies where male superiority is idealised, and where dominance, physical strength and male honour is emphasized, sexual violence thrives (Ricardo, Eads & Barker, 2011; Foluso & Asebiomo, 2012). This is to say violence against women and children is about power and control (Reichter, et al., 2004), and is a tool used by abusive men to exert their authority and power over women and those deemed not to conform to societal norms (Bhana, 2012).

Some rural settings still adhere to strict traditional cultural attitudes which tend to place men as superior to women on the social ladder (Masehela, 2011; Ani, 2012; Bekele, 2012). This is known as patriarchy. KwaZulu-Natal, the province where this study was conducted, is to a large extent rural, therefore superiority of boys and men over girls and women seem to be still highly recognised.

In rural schools for instance, abduction of young girls to make them future wives is very rife and it is a practice some rural communities still believe is correct and acceptable. In addition, requests by male teachers for sexual

favours from young girls in exchange for better grades or money happen because of the power and status teachers have over girl learners. This can be viewed as oppression of young girls by older men. It is oppression in that those in power, teachers, exploit young girls' naivety and vulnerability thereby oppressing these less powerful, girl learners. Teachers do this because of their dominant, superior status as older males and as teachers. Learners may find it hard to resist teachers' sexual advances by virtue of teachers being senior to them and more powerful. This causes young girls to become overwhelmed by their oppressed situation. In turn, this seems to silence them and stops them from speaking out against sexual violence acts in fear of being ostracised by learners and others at school (Freire, 1970).

Now, I need to address the question of why a Freirean lens is appropriate for exploring teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices.

2.11.3 Who is Paulo Freire?

As indicated above, this study draws on Paulo Freire's thinking on oppression, the *culture of silence* and *conscientization,* the concepts which form part of my theoretical lens. Freire was a Brazilian educator and a renowned author born in 1921 into a middle-class family in Recife, Brazil. Freire's work has been influential in education for quite some time and his work has been revered all over the world. However, there have also been robust critiques to Freire's work from a number of scholars (John, 2009). Peckham (as cited in John, 2009) lists several scholars who have found Freire's work inspirational. These include Stanley Aronowitz, Henry Giroux, Joe Kincheloe, Peter McLaren, Shirley Steinberg, Donaldo Macedo and Ana Maria Araujo Freire, Moacir Gadotti, Peter Mayo and Carlos Torres. Strong critique of Freire's ideas, come from Taylor (1993), Bowers (cited by Margonis, 2003) and Facundo (1984).

Unfortunately, Freire's work is narrowly perceived as relevant only for the education of poor, marginalised illiterate peasants back in the 1970s in Brazil, yet his ideas are still applicable today in different locations as they were back then (Darder, 2009; John, 2009). Key to effective usefulness is that Freire's ideas simply "requires sensitivity towards the issues of oppression that are

specific to the socio-cultural context in question … his ideas must be reinvented and cannot be transplanted … a question of adapting the approach, rather than adopting it literally" (Barroso, p. 22). Freire's ideas requires humans "to evaluate the limitations and the potentials, the historical and political forces of a particular world" (ibid, p, 3). So, given the existing realities of oppressive situations of sexual violence in societies today, particularly in schools, and the damage oppression causes to the minds and bodies of the oppressed, Freire's ideas now appear more relevant than ever before.

In addition, Freire himself has always been sensitive to different and changing contexts (John, 2009), thus cognizant of the relevance of his ideas in different contexts. He says:

> *It is always important to foreground the particularity of oppression against a background of multiple possibilities ... We must not lose sight of the need to recognize multiple constructions of power and authority in a society riven by inequalities of power and exclusionary divisions of privilege and how these are implicated in the constitution of subjectivity differentiated by race, class, and sexual preference (cited in Peckham, 2003, p.228).*

Freire became very famous for his most-cited book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970). In this book Freire explains the nature of oppression. Freire also authored, amongst others, *Pedagogy of Hope* (Freire, 1994).

2.11.4 Defining oppression

Defining oppression has been in many ways a challenging task for theorists (Jackson & Hardiman, 1997). Goltenberg (1978) has described it as an 'almost monstrous undertaking'; while Hardiman and Jackson (1997) purport that it is difficult to pin down because it is a process.

Freire (1975) describes oppression as:

> *any state or situation where an individual or group objectifies and exploits another, by making decisions for the other, prescribing*

> *another's consciousness and perception and hindering the pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person … such a situation in itself constitute violence, even when sweetened by false generosity, because it interferes with man's [and woman's]… vocation to be more fully human (Freire, 1970, p. 40).*

When describing oppression some theorists, like Goltenberg (*1978*) focus on the experience itself, thereby paying special attention only to the victims of oppression. Their focal point is the effects of oppression on the oppressed (Blauner, 1972). For example, Goltenberg (1978, p. 23) describes oppression as:

> *a condition of being, a particular stance one is forced to assume with respect to oneself, the world and the exigencies of change. It is a pattern of hopelessness and helplessness in which one sees oneself as static, limited and expendable …*

Goltenberg (1978) further points out that victims of oppression learn to view themselves and their world as 'chronically almost genetically estranged'. They always find themselves in a situation where they deal with the probable, i. e. not succeeding or failing but they only survive.

This description is very limiting in that its main focus is only the victim, the target of oppression. In addition, it assumes that oppression lends itself to an individual who is static and one who lacks capacity to change one's circumstances. Since oppression harms people's sense of agency, they might think that all is lost and nothing could be done to change the oppressive situation. However, Freire emphatically rejected the idea that nothing could be done about the oppressive situation, he called this *fatalism*.

By contrast, Paulo Freire developed a philosophy based on observations of *both* the oppressor and the oppressed. Freire believes that each participant in oppression, the oppressors/dominant, and the oppressed/subordinate have a role to play through their individual behaviours, actions, attitudes and beliefs, in either continuation of oppression or in dismantling the entanglement caused by

oppression. Freire further points out that through critical awareness of reality there can be a change from distorted perception about self towards a mentality that involves accurate and realistic awareness of one's reality (Freire, 1970).

I shall come back to conscientization later and explain how this idea applies to sexual violence in schools. First I need to explain the nature of oppression.

2.11.5 Nature of oppression

According to Freire (1970), oppression is violence directed to the oppressed by the oppressor. There are many different manifestations of oppression, because there are many social groups. There is classism, racism, ageism, ableism, Anti-Semitism, sexism and many more. Freire (1970) points out that oppression is a system that maintains advantage based on stereotyped social group memberships. Oppressed people are therefore oppressed using the stereotypical understandings and notions of what being a member of their social group constitutes. So, oppression is social injustice, and it is not accidental. Instead, it is an orchestrated systematic process that unfairly or unjustly constrains and dehumanises an individual based on the person being a member of a particular social group. For example, the inferior status accorded to girls/women and homosexuals in society happen because they belong to these social groups.

In schools girls/women are subjected to unjust or unfair treatment just because they are women. The schooling system expects girls to always clean classrooms while boys are not forced to do any of the cleaning because they are boys. In addition, girls/women have to bear with all kinds of degrading sexual comments from boys/men done in the name of 'appreciating their beauty' as women. Girls/women seem to believe and accept these messages because that is what society expects of women. This is sexual violence and it causes girls/women to be reluctant to complain, because to challenge it would seem 'unwomanly' (Leach, 2013). It causes girls/women to endure harmful sexual violence acts which dehumanise them and keep them in bondage.

2.11.6 Forces that keep oppression operational and functioning

It is individuals, institutions and the larger society/culture that consciously or unconsciously holds oppressive beliefs and behaves in an oppressive way (Freire, 1970).

Oppression operates at three different levels, namely, individual, institutional, and societal/cultural levels. At individual level, both the dominant/oppressor and the subordinate/oppressed play a role in supporting the continuation of oppression by advocating or colluding with oppression. For example, we are socialised into a society that privileges dominant/oppressors, in particular, men over women. When women don't challenge the oppressive environment, but ostracise those who challenge it, that leads to perpetuation of oppression. This results in women being submissive and they end up believing that their state of affairs is a normal way of life.

At institutional level, rules passed in government, industry, education, etc. perpetuate oppression. For example, in schools girls are made to clean classrooms while boys are exempted from this. In addition, in schools boys are encouraged to do more challenging subjects like Mathematics and Physical Science and to pursue careers that require them to show their mental and physical prowess. Girls on the other hand are encouraged to do less challenging subjects and to pursue careers that portray them as nurturers.

At social/cultural level, the values of the dominant group determine what is 'normal' and correct. The subordinate group's culture gets eradicated or misrepresented while the dominant group's culture gets imposed (Freire, 1970). For example, men are entitled to unearned privileges just because they are men and they end up dominating women (Jewkes and Abrahams, 2002; Bekele, 2012). Valuing men over women perpetuates oppression and this system is known as patriarchy.

Oppression results in the disadvantage of oppressed or target groups, while the oppressor or dominant groups enjoy unearned (unasked-for) privileges or advantages generated by the situation or relationship based on oppression. For

example, in schools heterosexuals enjoy being accepted as 'normal' whilst homosexuals are considered 'abnormal' and thus get ostracised (Bhana, 2012). In addition teacher-learner relationships and abduction of young girls to make them future wives widely occur in schooling contexts, especially in rural areas and these benefit men.

As can be construed, these privileges often seem to be accepted as part of the social structure – the order or the norm of things in life. That is, there is an illusion that without them, life would lose meaning. Male teachers for example, seem to believe that through their behaviour they are doing these girls/women a favour by offering them marriage. These privileges are often inaccessible to members of target (oppressed) group. The lack of access to privileges often produces dissonance in a person's life. This is oppression.

2.11.7 Freire's concept of the *'culture of silence'*

According to Freire (1970) one of the most devastating effects of oppression is that it dehumanizes the oppressed people. This is to say that under the objective conditions of oppression people lose their ability to see themselves as individual human beings (Freire, 1970). So, oppression is also a psychological process that manipulates one's mental and emotional states and it distorts one's perception of reality. The end result is an individual who has limited thinking, limited feeling, and limited self-expression. According to Freire, this situation eventually leads to one's 'self- oppression', a condition where a person internalises their condition and accepts it as 'normal' or given, thereby denying freedom to oneself (Freire, 1970; Clark, 1975). Once oppression is internalised, oppressed people lack critical awareness to identify that they are not the source of the problem, instead the problem lies within the unjust structures and mechanisms in societies which they are part of (Osajima, 1995). Hence they become resigned to their situation and do nothing to challenge the situation, seeming to think that their circumstance is permanent.

Freire (1970) calls this limited thinking, feeling and lack of self-expression a *'culture of silence'*. Culture of silence is a condition whereby the oppressed are unable to name their own reality, but are forced to live under conditions

imposed on them by the oppressor. A culture of silence keeps people in "bondage", lacking the voice, critical awareness and response to change their situation (John, 2008). As a result, the oppressed seem to feel hopeless, powerless and fearful to ever question or challenge the oppressive situation (Osajima, 1995; John, 2008), silence becomes a solution rather than risk being ostracised (Freire, 1975). In other words, oppression diminishes people's sense of agency to challenge oppression. For example, it seems like teachers and learners do not challenge teacher-learner relationships or abduction of young girls, because it is a widely 'acceptable' practice in society. It seems like fear causes them to feel hopeless and helpless to challenge their situation. They end up accepting the status quo.

2.11.8 Applying Freire's concepts of internalised oppression and *culture of silence* to the practice of sexual violence in schools

The relevance of Freire's ideas to our current situations, especially in schools cannot be stressed enough. Oppression, with its consequences to lead to a culture of silence still reigns high in schools.

Sexual violence is a form of oppression in that it is based on domination and exploitation of one person by another. It is a condition where the oppressed – girls/women and homosexuals for example are constrained by the unequal power dynamics inherent in the oppressive instance wherein the oppressors seem to have a false belief of unearned privilege of 'sexual entitlement'. Sexual violence involves unacceptable sexual practices using coercive measures that harm the other person. It often manifests itself "… as a threat, invasion or assault that has the effect of hurting a person or degrading her or him and/or that deprives a person of the ability to control intimate contact" (Sunnari, *et al*., 2003, p. 1), thus constituting violence.

In schools, different forms of sexual violence practices take place. These range from visible forms to more invisible forms which may not be perceived as sexual violence by other individuals or communities, but which are sexual acts that violate one's sense of self. Sexual violence acts may include verbal or non-verbal forms. At school "many girls are raped, sexually abused, sexually

harassed and assaulted by male learners and educators" (Prinsloo, 2006, p. 305). In addition, girls/ women have to bear with sexually toned messages. However, not only girls are victims of sexual violence acts in schools, boys too and teachers experience sexual abuse from their peers (Leach, 2003, 2013). This is a form of oppression.

Also, South African schools are fraught with homophobic incidents (Bhana, 2012). For example, using derogatory words for individuals considered 'unmanly' or 'unwomanly' or using sexually-toned messages is sexual violence, because it results in loss of sense of self and dignity for these oppressed people. Such unacceptable sexual acts leave huge scars and cause great harm in the lives of victims (Jewkes, 2012).

School teachers are found giving girl learners good grades or not failing pupils or even giving them money in an attempt to solicit sex from school girls. Learners seem to find it hard to resist teachers' sexual advances by virtue of teachers being senior to them. It also seems like poverty causes school girls not to challenge what happens to them. In addition there are reports of female teachers being forced into having sex with their prospective line managers in return for being offered posts. They seemingly keep quiet and allow the culture of silence for fear of being stigmatised, ostracized or being blamed for the incident by their peers (Leach, 2013). This is sexual violence and is a form of oppression which Freire talks about.

Freire (1970) argues that people faced with economic, social and political domination are denied a voice and feel paralysed to name their world (Freire, 1970) and even worse to change their circumstances. Often, people who are subjected to manifestations of oppression tend to narrow their sense of the world, assisting constraining forces to constrain them even further (Freire, 1970). Sexual violence in schools dehumanises and creates fear and silence in learners and teachers alike. This is to say, the person who is subjected to sexual violence often feels uncomfortable (Leach, 2013; Masehela, 2010), but is often unable to verbalise their discomfort in a society governed by a culture of silence (Freire, 1970).

Sexual violence as a form of oppression therefore creates fatalistic impression of ever breaking out of the constraints of the oppressive situation. Sexual violence paralyses girl learners and female teachers to challenge sexual violence acts by males. It seems like the financial circumstances created by poverty causes these young girls and female teachers to participate in their own oppression rather than to resist and report sexual violence acts. In this way they collude with perpetrators and the cycles of silence and violence continues. They seem to prefer material gain (goods) than freedom. As a consequence, fear and desperate need for money seem to create a cruel trap which these vulnerable girls/women cannot escape, but which keeps them silent, hence the 'culture of silence'.

In schools, it may leave women and young girls less skilled in protecting themselves and it may eventually lead them to internalize their own victimisation as part of being female (Exchange, 2006; Leach, 2013). In this way the oppressive situation make them 'accept' sexual violence practices as 'way things have to be' for them. Consequently, schools have become places of fear, self-doubt and shame for children (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008).

In addition, consequences of sexual violence may include loss of self-esteem, depression, anger, risk of suicide, unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection and fear of victimisation. Victims often have severe feelings of guilt and are often stigmatized and blamed by family, friends, and society in general (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Exchange, 2006). According to Freire this is oppression and it is based on exploitation of one person by another.

2.11.9 Impact of oppression on the oppressor/perpetrator

Unfortunately, although the privileges that oppressors enjoy due to hierarchical and oppressive structures seem to only benefit oppressors, Freire argues that there are harmful consequences of oppression for oppressors as well (Freire, 1970). That is, oppression is as damaging to the oppressors as it is to the oppressed (Freire, 1970; Freire, 1972; hooks, 2000). For example, as a result

of individual and societal homophobia, a heterosexual man/woman may find it difficult to form meaningful interpersonal relationships with gays and lesbians, - the people who may be family members, schoolmates, colleagues or associates. Furthermore, because of their unfair privilege and dominant status in society, oppressors may possibly suffer a loss of authenticity and humanity, i.e. it dehumanises them (Freire, 2000). For instance, not taking any action against sexual violence acts in schools when young children are suffering may be regarded as loss of humanity on the part of teachers.

The end result is that oppressors get so intensely hurt and affected by their oppressive behaviour, that in the long run they would be better off without the unfair privileges brought about by the system of oppression (Freire, 1970; Hooks, 2000). For example, it hurts men to always adhere to rigid gender roles and their community's expectations even if they cannot live up to it (Hooks, 2000; Horowitz, 1997). That is, it causes them to always live under constant pressure. In the same way, it hurts teachers and causes them to live in constant fear and guilt to not act out on their responsibility as 'parents' by speaking out against sexual violence acts in schools.

In sexual violence, perpetrators live under constant fear that their actions may be discovered, hence they sometimes threaten their victims or manipulate their thinking by showing them some form of 'sweetened false generosity' (Freire, 1970) to keep them silent. In schools this may be in the form of money, unearned marks or preferential treatment offered to teachers' 'lovers' to keep them silent and not to expose them. Teachers know that this is unacceptable and against the law according to the '*in loco parentis*' status accorded to them. It has also been noted how the power of oppression causes teachers and/ learners to become indecisive to break free from their fear to openly condemn blatant injustice like sexual violence practices. Such a situation may be regarded as loss of humanity.

2.11.10 Freire's concept of conscientization

Conscientization is a term indicating heightened awareness of oppression. It is the kind of "consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform reality" (Taylor, 1993, p. 52). Freire (1975) points out that humans have the capacity to think critically about their oppressive situation. Once the oppressed become aware of how oppression operates, and once they realise what the sources of their oppression is, and the fact that their oppressed condition is not a permanent fact, this will lead to the oppressed getting empowered to bring about changes to the oppressive systems (Freire, 1970). This means that through heightened understanding of how oppression work, the oppressed can transform their situation instead of adapting to the status quo (Freire, 1970).

In schools for instance, through their ignorance about sexual violence acts, teachers bring their unaware biases to their workplaces and relationships with their peers and students. This is to say that when teachers allow and/ignore inappropriate sexualized comments or gestures and unjust behaviours that are discriminatory to the marginalized to prevail, this is sexual violence and they perpetuate oppression. In addition, when learners and teachers allow sexual violence acts to continue to happen to them without challenging those discriminatory acts, it perpetuates sexual violence in schools.

However, once teachers become aware of how oppression cripples their minds with fear to speak out against sexual violence, they may begin to have a deeper understanding of the nature of oppressive situations. As a result, they may begin to realise what needs to change about their situation and what actions are open to them to change their plight instead of remaining silent. Eventually, they could show agency to change the status quo and break free from prescriptive 'false consciousness about self and the world' (Freire, 1970). Freire calls this awareness of reality *conscientization* and he argues that this can bring back one's dignity.

In school, if teachers can strive to find ways in which they can work to promote non-hierarchical human relations and gender sensitive values, this can create a safe environment that enhances dignity, equity and intellect for all at school. I

argue that teachers are advantageously located to serve as change agents, and that they can only successfully do this if they begin to challenge unfair discrimination and violence against girls/women and boys/men within the school settings (instead of remaining silent). Most importantly, teachers can bring about change by creating spaces for verbalising experiences about sexual violence, thus allowing processes of addressing it. This could bring back lost hope to those affected by sexual violence acts.

2.11.11 Feminist perspectives on sexual violence

Feminists also argue that sexual violence is perpetuated through socialisation where boys and girls are socialised into a set of unequal gender and power relations (hooks, 2000). Such socialisation often teaches boys that to be dominant over girls and to control them is okay, while girls learn to accept that such power dynamics are 'normal' (Richter, *et al,* 2004; hooks, 2000), and not needing to be challenged or questioned. For instance, in some families, girls are discouraged from expressing their point of views or expressing a different opinion where adults and males are concerned. Some cultures go to the extent of discouraging speaking about sexual matters, particularly to adults (Richter, *et al,* 2004). This has a perilous potential of making it difficult f or children to speak out against abusers (who may be their teachers), who are senior to them and who happen to be males and may probably have financial power. Such silence and unquestioned obedience often exposes them to severe extents of vulnerability (Richter, *et al,* 2004; Masehela, 2011).

2.11.12 Freire's role of education in conscientizing people

Freire argued that the purpose of education is to conscientize people, liberate their minds and to humanise them and not to domesticate them (Freire, 1970). For Freire, education should aim to create critical understanding about how oppression operates. According to Freire (1970), conscientization through education means a process by which the oppressed, as empowered subjects achieve heightened awareness of the social realities which shape their lives and through such awareness they begin to understand that they can change the status quo (Freire, 1970).

In light of this, in schools, teachers and learners need to be empowered to fight against traces of oppression and to work towards education that liberates them. Freire (1970) argues that those who are subjected to domination cannot be liberated by anyone, but they must fight for their emancipation. So teachers and learners have to liberate themselves from sexual violence practices in schools by becoming aware of its negative effects and in turn speak out against it. This kind of education enables the oppressed to overcome false perception of reality. For Freire, it is a continuous process that occurs in both the oppressor and the oppressed.

2.11.13 Conclusion

It is evident that Freire's ideas are still as relevant today as they were in Brazil back in the 1970s. Because of different forms of oppression that still prevail in our societies, there is still a need for Freire's ideas which promote education that liberates and humanises people from constraints of 'false consciousness of self and the world.' This can only happen once the oppressed develop heightened critical insight into how oppression operates. This kind of deepened understanding of how oppression operates may empower the oppressed to break free of the fear that consumes them even in the face of blatant injustice like sexual violence. Critical awareness of oppression may allow teachers and learners to break the silence on sexual violence acts in schools. This research intends to explore current understandings of teachers about sexual violence. Such an exploration could inform interventions attempting to develop critical awareness and challenges to oppression and sexual violence. The next section covers the methodology that was used in the study.

CHAPTERTHREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the study design chosen, purpose of the study, where the study was conducted, how and why the participants were selected (sample and sampling technique) and the sample size. In addition, the chapter discusses positionality of the researcher, data collection and data analysis techniques, the ethical considerations, validity and reliability and lastly limitations of the study.

3.2 Purpose of the Study

Given the high prevalence of sexual violence in schools, the study was conducted with teachers in KwaZulu-Natal province in order to explore information pertaining to teacher's understandings of sexual violence practices in schools. This investigation was considered to be important because of a lack of information about teachers regarding sexual violence practices in schools that can lead to some oversight and erroneous interventions which are intended to address the challenges caused by sexual violence. However, the intention of the present study was not to generalize findings since it is a small exploratory project. This study seeks to add data from a small sample to the limited information regarding teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices in schools. The study intended to generate data related to the following key research questions:

- What stories do teachers have to tell about sexual violence in their schools?
- What are the key forces that shape secrecy and reporting of cases of sexual violence in schools?
- How does sexual violence affect teachers emotionally and professionally?
- What do teachers suggest as solutions to this problem?

3.3 Positionality of Researcher

This is a qualitative study positioned within the constructivist/interpretive paradigm as the researcher believes that there are diverse ways in which people interpret the world, and that there are multiple realities about sexual violence in schools. Besides, "the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 21). So, as I entered this research, I in no way excluded any trace of my own thoughts; therefore there are areas with traces of self-referencing and the use of emotive phrases. In some ways my research could be subject to personal or societal influences considering that in a study there may be "… multiple versions of the truth and reality, sometimes subjective and sometimes objective, sometimes scientific and sometimes humanistic" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2011, p. 23).

The study involved some critical reflections of my role as a teacher and a researcher. The whole study process saw the researcher confronted by an "essential and ever present aspect of the investigation" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 55), that of shifting from different identities and positions of insider/outsider researcher (Foster, 2012). I was an 'insider' researcher in that as a teacher in a schooling environment, I shared with the participants some characteristics, opinions and experiences of the phenomenon under investigation. However, being cognizant of my own experiences, and guided by the notions of objectivity, reflexivity and authenticity of a research project, I ensured that I did not 'contaminate' data by being biased or by influencing information in any way. I always kept my biases and preconceptions in check throughout the process of data collection and data analysis. Through the process of self-reflexivity as a researcher, I committed to accurately and adequately represent participants' experiences. In that way I assumed the 'outsider-researcher' status.

This constant shifting of positions in the study indicates that there is fluidity of identities in any research *(ibid)*. Hence in this study, I was an 'insider 'and 'outsider' researcher (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Forster, 2012; Watt, 2005) as Forster (2012, p.14) postulates that "every researcher is both an insider and an

outsider", and "there is no neutrality … only greater or less awareness of one's biases" (Rose, cited in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 54).

Doing research on sexual violence can be challenging and traumatic for the researcher, because of the sensitive nature of the research (Garcia-Moreno, 2011). Collecting data on sexual violence is hindered by scarcity of people who are willing to participate in such studies (Proulx & Martinez, 2013). However, the 'insider-researcher' position in this study became advantageous in that it allowed participants to feel at ease around the researcher during focus group discussion and this led to openness and greater depth of data that was collected (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Judging from the participants' openness during FGD, it seemed as if they felt like 'I was one of them' (Proulx & Martinez, 2013).

3.4 The Research Design

According to Polit & Beck (2008, p.66) research design is defined as "the overall plan for obtaining answers to the research question being studied including specifications for enhancing the study's scientific integrity". The study drew on both quantitative and qualitative methods using a mixed-method approach, which is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2011). A questionnaire and focus group discussion were used in the study. Using a combination of methods allowed the researcher to get straight to the business of answering the research questions without being restricted by whether the data and methodologies are quantitative or qualitative (Feilzer, 2010). In addition, "a single approach on its own will only yield a partial understanding of the phenomenon being investigated" (Green, 2008, p. 20). The idea of using a mixed-method approach is further supported by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport (2011) and Ncotsha & Shumba (2013) who say that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods provides a better understanding of the research problem than when each approach is used alone.

The strengths of this approach are that combining the two methods made triangulation of data possible which led to enhanced quality of findings.

Triangulation may be defined as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour" (Cohen, et al., 2011, p.195). This technique is strongly advocated by Babbie & Mouton (2001). Furthermore, cross-checks between the data gathered from both methods were thus made possible, because triangulation attempts to give more explanation, more richness and complexity of human behaviour by investigating the phenomenon from different perspectives (Cohen; et al., 2011). In addition, using two data collection methods allowed the researcher to overcome "'method-boundedness', an idea of thinking one's method is superior to all others even at the expense of the approach not always yielding positive outcomes" (Smith, as cited in Cohen, et al., 2011, p.196).

Choosing this approach seemed better fitting with the lens I used in the study. A mixed-method approach is based on social justice principles, because it values tolerance, acceptance, equality, respect and democracy (Green, as cited in Cohen, et al., 2011). These values resonate with the ideas and values that are espoused and sought by Freire in order to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society. Freire's theory emphasizes interdependence and co-existence of individuals in society as well as tolerance and equality of all human beings (Freire, 1970) .The mixed method approach values interdependence of approaches as long as that benefits creation of knowledge based on rigor and acceptable research ethics.

However, a mixed-method approach is also fraught with challenges. Limited time, costs and lack of expertise may pose a problem in achieving the study's objectives (Creswell, 2012). The above challenges may also restrict the parameters of a research.

3.4.1 Data collection methods

Survey research and focus group discussion (FGD) were used to collect data. Collection of data began with administering questionnaires which was followed by a FGD. A survey is a quantitative method that uses a series of written or oral questions to sample a desired population or group of people (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011)**.** This method seeks to "describe and /or analyse, even in some cases to

explore, some aspect of the world out there as it is" (Robson, p 124). Surveys are generally characterised by the collection of quantifiable data from large numbers of people or units in a uniform or systematic way through the use of a representative sample (May, 2011). A sample is a fraction of a larger group of individuals from known populations. The present study was an exploratory kind of research involving a small group of participants; therefore it did not totally conform to a proper conventional survey. The main idea behind using a survey was to get a range of perspectives on a sensitive topic.

Focus group discussion is a qualitative method useful in collecting rich, detailed data and it usually includes semi-structured sessions, an informal setting and is moderated by a facilitator using guideline questions (Carey and Asbury, 2012). FGDs are a research tool that allows the researcher to gain a detailed grasp of diverse attitudes, beliefs, opinions or perceptions of a specific issue from the perspective of a particular group of people (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Hennink, 2007; Liamputtong, 2010). The researcher wanted to learn about stories regarding sexual violence practices in schools from teachers themselves and not to speculate, therefore, focus group discussion seemed very appropriate and convenient. This methodology offered the researcher "a way of listening to people and learning from them" (Morgan 1998, p.9), because FGD gives more importance to the viewpoints of the respondents than that of the researcher (Liamputtong, 2010).

It is reported in literature that sexual violence marginalises survivors and it subjects them to 'uncomfortable' silence as a result of fear of ostracisation from people (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Masehela & Pillay 2014). The choice to use FGD in this study seems appropriate then, because "focus groups have been used to 'give a voice' to marginalised groups … or people affected by stigmatised illnesses ... they enable researchers … to 'listen' to people who may have little chance otherwise to express their viewpoints … focus groups are used extensively … as a basis for empowering marginalised people" (Liamputtong, 2010, p.7).

3.4.2 Data collection process, sampling procedure and sample

Collection of data began with a survey using questionnaires which were first piloted. Piloting refers to testing of questions in a trial setting before the final questionnaire is sent off to participants (Rule & John, 2011). After pilot testing, the questionnaire was refined further with the assistance of my supervisor.

In this project purposive sampling and convenience sampling were used. Purposive sampling refers to sampling participants because they meet specific characteristics that are needed to answer the research problem (Cohen, Manion & Morrrison, 2011). Convenience sampling involves choosing participants according to ease of access (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Marlow, 1993).

Initially, eighty respondents from teachers studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), both males and females were sought to voluntarily answer a survey questionnaire. Letters of invitation, with information on the study, together with an informed consent page were distributed to teachers who were currently participating in various programmes (ACE, Honours, and Masters) at UKZN. This strategy was purposefully adopted to avoid entering schools which may be sites of sexual violence and thereby exposing participants to identification by their peers and management structures with this study. This was done with the permission and assistance of UKZN lecturers responsible for these programmes. However, teachers studying at the university were always very busy and giving them extra work seemed to be an added burden. This process was thus abandoned.

An online version of the survey was created using the Google platform. Teachers were then invited to participate in this survey process which also allowed for anonymity. Due to insufficient participation with the online version, paper-based surveys were handed to teachers who came to mark Grade 12 final examination papers at the marking centre in KZN. The study then used convenience sampling as it involved choosing participants according to ease of access. The paper-based survey thus ran concurrently with an online survey. The same questionnaire used in both formats of the survey included closed and open-ended questions (see Appendix C). Completed paper-based survey responses were entered into the online survey to create a comprehensive

online database which also allowed for some summary statistics and graphs to be generated. In total, 51 responses were received, from teachers from different parts of KwaZulu-Natal province.

The questionnaire also provided space for participants to indicate their willingness (and contact details) to participate in the second part of data collection, namely a focus group discussion. Ten respondents thus self-selected to be involved in this latter part of the study, but eventually, six teachers participated in the FGD.

Recruitment of focus group participants involved getting voluntary respondents from the survey questionnaire. As voluntary respondents lived quite far apart in different districts, distance posed a challenge on several occasions when planning a focus group meeting. The researcher then used snowball sampling to get a large pool of participants for the focus group discussion (FGD). This began by identifying someone who met the criteria for inclusion in the study and asking him /her to recommend others who also met the criteria (Cohen, *et al.,* 2011). Eventually, one focus group discussion which consisted of six participants was conducted. Participants included 3 male educators and 3 female educators. Amongst them were two principals, two HODs and two post level one educators. Some of these participants volunteered for the focus group while others were purposively chosen and invited.

At the beginning of the FGD session, the project was introduced to the participants and explanation was given on the purpose of the focus group. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time without penalties. Before data was collected, a permission to use an audio tape to record the discussion was sought from participants. Participants agreed to participate in the study and not a single one of them withdrew before the end of the session. An FGD schedule was used as a flexible tool to guide the discussion. The session lasted about 1hour and 30 minutes.

3. 5 Ethical Considerations

Before the study began, I first obtained ethical approval for the study protocol from the Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

Participants joined this study voluntarily. In both paper surveys and online surveys as well as in FGD, participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that confidentiality of their information would be ensured. Participants thus freely participated without any pressure and written consent and permission to do voice recording was obtained from all participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity of all information was strictly protected. The participants were assured that their responses would in no way be linked to their personal identities and that transcriptions will be kept in a safe place and would only be used for purposes of this study after which it would be destroyed. At the beginning of the FGD participants were informed that in case they needed counselling due to participating in the study, a list of numbers of counselling services at different University of KwaZulu-Natal campuses and possible providers of support in the Department of Education and community were available and would be provided.

None of the participants sought counselling at the end of the discussion. Instead, participants indicated that the focus group discussion was an invaluable experience they had needed. They even suggested that more such opportunities should be made available to teachers so that they can talk about sexual violence practices that happen in schools in a non-threatening atmosphere and in an environment like the one provided by this focus group discussion. They commented that the discussion gave them opportunity to vent.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data from both the survey and the FGD was analysed concurrently. Analysis of the survey results was based primarily on the frequency of responses from the participants regarding different questions. Given the size of the sample and sampling process more sophisticated analysis was not deemed appropriate. I then compiled graphs and tables for each major question to help me work with

the frequency distributions. Analysis of data from the focus group discussion (FGD) began during the focus group session where the facilitator processed the comments of group members and verified accuracy of comments from participants and by summarizing main ideas for the group to review. Multiple readings of transcripts and thorough review of notes and listening to the tape was done as soon as possible after a focus group session. Transcripts were coded and codes were then grouped into preliminary categories so as to find patterns of response and emerging themes and to search for relationships with data from the survey.

Content analysis of teachers' narratives and axial coding, a theoretical coding method to make connections between thematic concepts was used. Findings were compared with existing literature. I developed explanatory framework as suggested by Miles and Huberman (as cited in Carey & Asbury, 2012).

3.7 Trustworthiness and Research Quality

Before the questionnaire was administered, it was first piloted to a group of teachers. Minor modifications were suggested and effected to the original questionnaire with the help of my supervisor. In order to ensure validity of data collected during FGD, data was analysed immediately after it was collected. Focus group notes were typed and taped focus group discussions were then translated; transcribed and verified for accuracy from participants. All the participants confirmed their responses as correctly captured. To double-check accuracy and consistency the same questions were asked in several ways.

I also used triangulation, the process of using multiple sources and methods in a research to support findings (Rule and John, 2011). Two data collection methods were used so as to get depth of the problem of sexual violence.

3.8 Limitations

There were several limitations to the current study. The first one relates to the sampling method and sample. The study was a small exploratory study which used a non-representative population, non-probability sampling method and a small sample size. As a consequence there can be no generalization of

findings. However, the intention was not to generalize findings, but to get an indication of sexual violence practices in schools. With more research on this topic, the findings can provide a guide for prevention programmes that can be put in place to curb the problem from escalating.

Secondly, few people are willing to participate in sexual violence studies (Proulx & Martinez, 2013), because it is a sensitive subject. In this study too it turned out that there was a scarcity of teachers who were willing to participate in the study. Adding to the problem was that getting teachers at university as was initially planned posed a challenge, because teachers were always busy with assignments. I then opted for convenience sampling by giving questionnaires to the teachers who came for marking at the marking centre to fill them during their spare time. This decision helped. In FGD, I opted for self-selection.

Thirdly, I sometimes assumed insider-researcher status, an act which had benefits of allowing me to make quick connections with participants' experiences. The downside of this is that this might have influenced the participants in FGD to take it for granted that I was aware of all their experiences which was not true. As a corrective measure I made sure that I asked participants to clarify and explain in detail what they meant.

Distance posed a challenge. Travelling from my place of work to UKZN campuses (Pietermaritzburg and Durban) is quite a distance. Added to this was that the likely participants (volunteers) were spread out in different parts of KwaZulu-Natal province. This posed a challenge when arranging focus group discussions during the week. As a consequence, dates for FGD got postponed several times. This impacted on finishing the study within the planned timeframe. I then arranged focus group discussions for Friday afternoons or weekends.

The study focused on sexual violence practices perpetrated by/against anyone (teachers or learners) in schools. That was too broad to be covered in one study. The broadness of scope covered by the research could pose a challenge by leaving some uncovered gaps. However, the study was bound by limiting it to

sexual violence practices that happen within the school confines only. Also, the research was confined within KwaZulu-Natal province only.

The study was a small exploratory study. The gaps can be filled by future researchers.

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides findings from a study conducted with teachers in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province regarding teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices in schools. The chapter discusses the demographic profile of participants and the results of the survey and focus group discussion (FGD).

The questionnaire used in the survey included both closed and open-ended questions (see Appendix C). In total, 51 responses to the survey were received, from teachers from different parts of KwaZulu-Natal province. It is important to note that the totals for various results do not equal 51. In some instances, respondents were allowed to select more than one option (e.g. In instances known to you, who were the perpetrators? Who were the targets of such sexual violence? etc.). In some instances respondents chose not to select an option (e. g, If you decide to tell no one, can you indicate the main reason for keeping it to yourself?).

Quantitative data from the survey generated findings about the extent and nature of the problem which were then probed in-depth in the FGD. In addition, the survey was used to invite prospective participants to the FGD. Rich qualitative data from the FGD provided indications of what the problems regarding sexual violence are and a range of reasons for these. That is, it allowed the researcher to provide in-depth or richer data regarding teacher experiences, clarifications, confirmations and different opinions and details of this complex phenomenon from the participants' point of view.

Though it is not the intention of this study to generalize findings since it is a small exploratory project, getting various responses from teachers around different parts of KwaZulu-Natal gave one a better sense of the prevalence of sexual violence across the province. The survey and FGD generated data related to the following key research questions:

- What stories do teachers have to tell about sexual violence in their schools?
- What are the key forces that shape secrecy and reporting of cases of sexual violence in schools?
- How does sexual violence affect teachers emotionally and professionally?
- What do teachers suggest as solutions to this problem?

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The following table indicates the demographic profile of the 51 respondents in the survey.

4.2.1 The survey

Table 1: **Demographic profile of respondents**   *(n= number)*

Gender	Female	Male			
n=	34	17			
Position	Post level 1	Post level 2	Post level 3 and above		
n=	39	6	6		
Age group	21 – 30 years	31 – 40 years	41 – 50 years	51 – 60 years	Above 60 years
n=	2	26	21	2	0
Population group	African	Indian	Coloured	White	
n=	45	4	1	0	
Category of school	Primary	Secondary school	Combined school	Other	
n=	19	19	11	2	
Location of school	Rural	Urban	Township		
n=	34	9	8		
Type of school	Government School	Ex-Model C School	Private School	School for learners with disabilities	Other
n=	47	2	0	0	2

There were 34 female and 17 male respondents altogether. The majority of respondents (47) came from the age group 31 years to 50 years with very few respondents from ages between 21-30 years and those between 51-60 years of age. Respondents to the survey were mainly Africans (45) teaching in rural (34), government schools (47). Other respondents included 4 Indians and 1 Coloured. Of the 51 respondents 2 came from ex-model C schools whilst the other 2 came from schools categorized as "other" in the questionnaire. 9 of the respondents taught in urban areas whilst 8 taught in township schools. 39 out of 51 respondents were post level 1 educators with 6 at post level 2 and 6 at post level 3 and above respectively. There was an equal spread of respondents from both primary (19) and secondary (19) schools with 11 respondents from combined schools and only 2 from "other schools". The experiences of White teachers and Private School teachers are thus not captured by the survey and the experiences of teachers in Ex-model C schools are under-represented.

4.2.2 The Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

One FGD comprising six educators from UThukela district in KZN province was held. All participating teachers were Black African and Zulu speaking. Three of the participants were male teachers and three were female teachers. Amongst the participants there were two principals, two HODs and two post level one educators. Both primary and secondary schools were represented in the FGD.

The following were findings that emerged in the study. Data from both the survey and FGD contribute to these findings.

4.3 Main Findings

Of a total of 51 responses received, it was noted that more female (34) than male respondents (17) answered the questionnaire. It could have been that there were more females available than males, since the study involved convenience sampling. It could also indicate that females may have a deeper interest in issues concerning sexual violence practices. This is supported by findings in this study where participants in the FGD reported that "males do not regard topics involving sexual violence practices in a serious way, they often talk about it in a joking way and say "it is a female thing".

4.3.1 The extent of the problem of sexual violence

Figure 1   *Figure 2*

Do you know of any instances of sexual violence in schools in KwaZulu-Natal province?

Yes	**44**	86%
No	**5**	10%
Unsure	**2**	4%

Have any instances of sexual violence occurred at your school?

Yes, once	**4**	8%
Yes, a few times	**25**	49%
Yes, many times	**10**	20%
No, not at all	**12**	24%
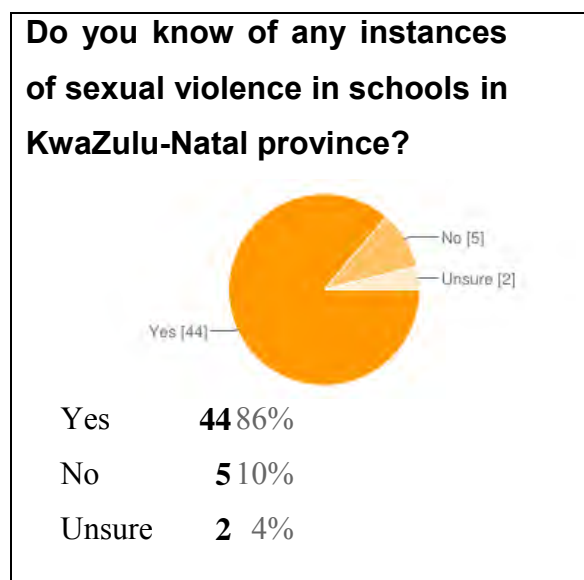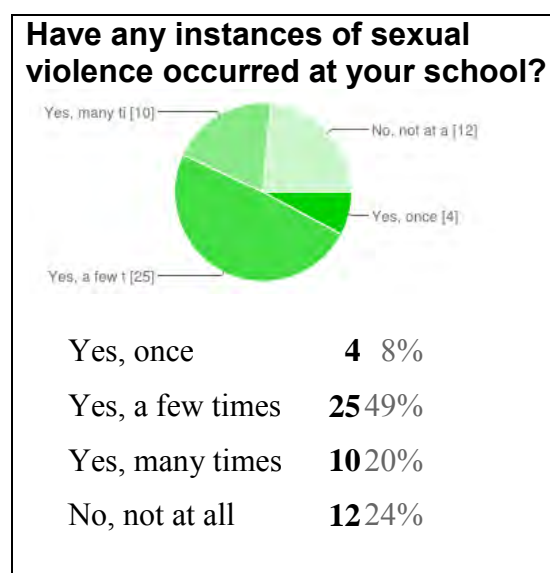
A definition of sexual violence as 'many different acts of a sexual nature where consent is not given for such acts or where consent is not possible, because the other party is a minor', was provided in the introduction to the questionnaire. These acts include sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and rape amongst others. When asked if they were aware of any instances of sexual violence in schools in KwaZulu-Natal, an overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents (44 of 51) reported to have knowledge of sexual violence incidents happening in schools in KwaZulu-Natal province both at primary and secondary schools.

Of the 51 respondents, a higher number (39) of respondents reported that there had been sexual violence incidents which had occurred in their schools compared to only 12 respondents who reported to have never had incidents of sexual violence practices occurring in their schools. This reflects a 77% prevalence of direct experience of sexual violence within the sample. Of these 25 (49%) respondents reported to have had sexual violence incidents a few times and 10 (20%) respondents reported to have had these incidents many times. Only 4 (8%) respondents reported to have had only one sexual violence

incident that had occurred in their schools. The multiple cases point to high prevalence of sexual violence incidents in schools.

This finding was reinforced in the focus group discussion where teachers reported that "sexual violence posed a serious problem in schools". One participant said: "As a teacher who used to teach at high school but now I teach at primary school, I will relate stories. These things do happen … I have many stories". The participant shared a story of a girl who was forcefully locked in a classroom by a group of boys who told her that they wanted to find out how she would respond if they touch her sexually. When the girl reported the incident to her teachers, they blamed her and accused her of being the one who "boys always trouble you … why you all the time, why not others? You like boys very much". This participant was supported by another participant who reported: "I confirm that sexual violence practices do happen in schools. It is there … in the area where I now work, I experience it more often … at a rate that is very shocking [sigh] … there are a lot of these cases." Another participant confirmed: "I taught for quite a number of years both at high school and primary school … I fully agree with my colleagues when they say that sexual violence practices do happen in schools".

4.3.2 Common types of sexual violence practices reported

Participants mentioned the following as sexual violence practices that they were aware of in schools.

- rape
- sexual harassment
- sexual abuse
- teacher-learner relationships.
- male learners molesting girls or touching girls' private parts.
- sexually-toned language or remarks and inappropriate talk by teachers and learners.
- abduction of school girls.
- conspiracies in staffrooms where a colleague reports a 'suspected' incident of sexual violence only when it suits them with an intention to get back at their colleague because of a failed relationship.

- demanding sex in return for favours as in cases where learners are promised good marks in exchange of having a sexual relationship with a teacher.
- male teachers bribe parents to keep quiet about sexual violence.
- female teachers beg school girls to have 'love' relationships with their male colleagues.
- principals ask for sexual favours from female teachers before they could offer them teaching posts at the school.
- male union officials and senior departmental officials solicit sex from female teachers in return for senior positions in schools.
- use of sex by some principals to solve conflicts amongst staff members. For example, some principals seem to believe that if there are conflicts amongst staff members, principals could solve this by engaging in love relationships with female staff members so as to keep them quiet.

4.3.3 Stories of sexual violence practices in schools

Participants reported cases of male teachers who solicit sex from female teachers and school girls. Participants reported that teachers impregnate girls and thereafter seek a transfer once the incident is discovered. Male teachers were also accused of bribing girls' parents with money so that they will remain silent about the incidents. Cases of learners abusing other learners were also reported.

Teachers shared the following stories as evidence and illustrations of sexual violence practices in schools. Stories include those involving learner-on-learner sexual violence, teacher-on-learner sexual violence, and teacher-on-teacher sexual violence.

4.3.3.1 Learner-on-learner sexual violence

Story 1:

> *I am looking at a 5 year period between 2001 and 2005. I had about 6 cases, but these cases involved learner-on-learner sexual violence. It happens after school when learners stay behind to sweep the classrooms. By the time they sweep … uh … boys come to propose love to them. Those are habits learners do. We had two cases of this nature. One was in 2002 and the other one was in 2004. When they were caught the girl said that the boy was just proposing love to her. The boy said "the girl is my girlfriend". As the girls were sweeping the boy chased the other girls out and held behind the one girl he was interested in and forced her to lean against the wall behind the door. That is when we decided that we should do something about leaving the girls to sweep after school.*

The above story indicates that sexual violence acts happen after school hours in unsupervised classrooms. In addition, it seems like the parties involved somehow do not regard the behaviour as a serious sexual violence act. The teacher reported the incident as 'habits learners do' suggesting that it is an ordinary occurrence, while both the girl and the boy denied that the act was some form of a sexual violence act. Instead, the girl regarded the act as an act of love propositioning while the boy seemed to feel like he was entitled to his behaviour, because the girl was his girlfriend. It seems like sexual violence is trivialised and normalised and this has the potential to perpetrate sexual violence practices in schools.

Story 2:

One participant related a story of a learner who was accosted by grade 9 boys in an empty class telling her:

> *We want to see if you will be sexually aroused if we touch you there (pointing her private part). The girl went out to report to teachers thinking that she would be safe after reporting. Teachers responded by saying: "Anyway you usually show great interest in boys, why they picked you and not others?" Feeling unprotected and unsafe in class even after reporting to teachers, the girl decided to go home and overdosed pills. Her condition*

complicated and the girl was taken to a local clinic which transferred her to a provincial hospital. In hospital, she explained what happened. The matter came to school from a senior social worker.

In this story too, classrooms remain unsafe locations for sexual violence acts due to lack of supervision by teachers. To add to the problem is lack of support from teachers for learners who experience sexual violation by boys when they come to report such incidents. Instead teachers add to the problem by reprimanding and blaming the girl. This indicates normalisation and desensitisation of sexual violence acts that has become common in schools.

4.3.3.2 Teacher-on-learner sexual violence
Story 3:
One participant reported:

"During the period between 1996 to 2000, there were 5 very serious cases, serious because they involved teacher-learner relationships. When learners were interviewed regarding the problem, they could not say it all. But in one instance in 1999, one learner gave all the details, however the problem got blocked from the parent's side". The teacher further explained that when a learner is below 18 years, the school supports a child by referring the case to the Social Workers who then take the matter forward, but when a learner is above 18 years the school leaves it up to the child to report the matter to the social workers. The case with this learner is that she was above 18 and to continue supporting her did not happen. The reports I got from the child is that her mother told her that the best thing to do was to bring the teacher to her so that they would discuss the matter with him, as the matter could cause trouble at school and in the community. So if a child is confronted with such challenges she gets confused whether to report or not to report the matter. Because she had already talked about it, the dilemma was whether to continue with the matter or not. Ultimately what I discovered after that is that the learner disappeared at school and did not continue with the matter at hand. The disappearance of a learner means the disappearance of evidence".

The above story highlights that there are sexual violence acts that are perpetrated by teachers in schools and they are regarded as very serious by participants. What makes matters worse is that there seems to be lack of support given by school and parents to their children when they get sexually victimised. Instead, parents side with perpetrators. In addition, it seems like the justice system lets victims down because of their age, even though the girl was still a learner attending school. It seems like schools discriminate against certain learners in terms of age or use a technicality to avoid intervening.

Story 4:

One participant quoted a recent case that took place the previous year. It involved a teacher and a learner. She reported:

"I have noticed in 2012/2013 that most cases involve grade 8 learners who become victims of abuse at school. Male teachers do it mostly to grade 8 learners. When grades 8 arrive at high school, they get excited when male teachers call them or give them attention. They feel proud that teacher so-and-so called me, so other learners will hear that so-and-so is a teacher's pet". "This teacher used to call a learner to his class and ask her to pull up her skirt a little bit so that he would see what is 'there'. This time around this girl decides to report that she has got a problem. The teacher instructed the learner not to report the incident at home. When I followed the matter, I got blocked from the mother's side. The teacher is a regular visitor at the girl's home and is known by the girl's mother".

"When the case was discovered, the teacher secretly 'solved' the matter with a parent and the learner was instructed by her parent never to mention the story again at school. Well what I have noticed amongst us committee members is that when you speak about protecting learners from sexual violence, we teachers at times take it for granted. I still feel that we as educators still need to be educated about these things because a child will always be a child. We become judgemental and pass comments like, "this one indeed like teachers and she doesn't waste time when teachers call her and not the other ones. Teacher so-and-so called her because she 'fancies' them". So once a case gets perceived in that manner, it spoils the whole process of solving that case".

The story highlights vulnerability of grade 8 learners when they get to high school. It seems like these young girls 'welcome' the attention they get from male teachers, but their behaviour gets perceived in a negative way by some teachers who then stigmatise or criticise learners. Again parents seem to downplay their role as parents; instead the parent colluded with the perpetrator by accepting a bribe at the expense of their child.

The participant seemed to be highly affected by how teachers responded when the learner came to report her experience. She reported: "We don't have to judge them. We have to create a safe space for them to report rather than to make them feel that reporting causes more harassment within the school". The participant reported that teachers' attitudes "spoils the whole process of solving that case" whereas teachers "have got social responsibility to deliver the content at the same time learners we work with need even more support regarding a variety of challenges they experience".

In addition, participants seemed to feel that when sexual violence acts involves a teacher it is very serious. One participant commented: "During the year 1996 – 2000 … I had about 5 very serious cases, serious because it is a learner and a teacher." Participants seemed to feel that learners were hesitant to talk about the problem if the teacher is involved. For example, one participant said: "But then the problem is that when you interview a learner that has a problem of sexual violence perpetrated by a teacher, learners could not say it all". This indicates silence around the issue of sexual violence practices by teachers.

4.3.3.3 Teacher-on-teacher sexual violence

One participant quoted the early 2000s when vacancies for teachers were very scarce. He pointed out that it was a widely known trend that some principals would ask for sexual favours from female teachers before they could offer them teaching posts at school. Participants reported that sometimes principals would threaten female staff members with dismissal if they refuse to sleep with them. Out of desperation to get jobs, female teachers would fall prey to abusive principals. Participants in the FGD unanimously agreed that this was a common

practice and perpetrators of these criminal acts were widely known in schools and communities, yet no-one stood up or spoke firmly against the practice.

It was clear from the participants' comments that the practice is still in existence today. For example, one participant whom I learned was in a management position and a very active member of a teacher union said: "As 'kushaywa isdudla' (a current term used in teaching circles meaning re-hiring a teacher after they have resigned), people in leadership would say "let's start by having sex before you get a post" or else the person would not get a job if she refuses.

The same participant expressed great shock and disillusionment when he heard an old respectable principal telling other principals: "You fail to maintain discipline at school if you do not engage in sexual relationships with female staff members". He was supported by another participant who reported: "Principals say if there are internal conflicts at school, the best method is to have girlfriends amongst female teachers". A further finding was that the practice is not confined within schools only, but it is so widespread that it prevails even in teacher unions, ward managers' offices and circuit managers' offices.

Participants further reported that in one teacher union, you hear people saying: "Conflicts that happen within the union develop because you do not engage in sex with female members. That is why they get out of control, whereas if there is conflict, engaging in sex with a person easily tames her". This highlights the use of sex as a form of control.

It seems like sexual violence of female teachers was understood as a mechanism that is sometimes used to control females if they do not comply with male teachers'/ principals'/union officials' demands.

Participants further reported: "Even our circuit managers, not only ward managers, are having sex with married women teachers left-and-right". "They send them to schools and demand sexual favours from them in order to get principalship, that is teacher-on-teacher-sexual violence, you see".

The above comments reveal that sexual violence permeates every level of the education system and is practised by the very custodians of teacher-learner safety rules in schools. It is also used as a form of control.

4.3.4 Perpetrators and targets of sexual violence in schools

Table 2   *Table 3*

In instances known to you, who were the perpetrators of such sexual violence?			**Who were the targets of such sexual violence?**		
Male teacher	**34**	38%	Male teacher	**3**	4%
Female teacher	**6**	7%	Female teacher	**11**	15%
Boy learner	**24**	27%	Girl learner	**44**	61%
Girl learner	**9**	10%	Boy learner	**11**	15%
Male management member	**12**	13%	Male management member	**1**	1%
Female management member	**0**	0%	Female management member	**2**	3%
Other	**4**	4%	Other	**0**	0%

When asked who the perpetrators of sexual violence in schools are, most respondents reported that the perpetrators are most often male teachers (38%), boy learners (27%) and male management members (13%) with only a few girl learners (10%) and female teachers (7%) mentioned as likely perpetrators. Participants in the FGD corroborated these findings.

Although this study identified male teachers as the main perpetrators of sexual violence acts in schools, participants stated that sexual violence incidents in schools were not limited to teacher-on-learner cases only; at times cases involved learner-on-learner sexual violence and teacher-on-teacher sexual violence as has already been revealed earlier in participants' stories.

Participants admitted that both male learners and female learners as well as male and female teachers are affected by sexual violence in schools. However,

they felt that these incidents are experienced at far higher levels by female learners and female teachers as shown by data on targets of sexual violence in *Table 3*. For example, a higher number of respondents (44) reported that girl learners were mostly the targets of sexual violence. 11 participants reported that the targets for sexual violence are female teachers. Another 11 participants reported that boy learners are the targets of sexual violence. 2 participants reported female management teachers as the targets of sexual violence practices in schools. 3 participants reported male teachers as the targets of sexual violence while only 1 participant reported male management member as target of sexual violence. Clearly, gender and power affects the chances of being a target of sexual violence.

4.3.5 Location of sexual violence acts

Participants pointed to (empty) classrooms as sites of sexual violence acts affecting learners. Staffrooms and offices were also mentioned as common sites of sexual violence affecting teachers.

4.3.6 Causes of sexual violence practices in schools

The following themes emerged prominently as reasons for sexual violence acts in schools:

- *Poverty:*

  Participants reported that poverty seems to cause girl learners to engage in sexual relations with male teachers. One respondent pointed out: "The young learner feels that she will benefit from the relationship from a monetary point of view and get special favours from the adult teacher". All this is "due to lack of funding, accommodation and other resources; students who are vulnerable end up having to experience such abuse from those in power".   In addition, "young girls are mostly 'easy to get' as they are unable to say no to male educators with money and cars". Parents too were reported to benefit financially because they "bribe parents."

- *Power*

  Participants felt that sexual violence in schools happen because of the power and status accorded to boys and men in society. They pointed out that "it occurs because of patriarchy. Men are considered to be from the agent group with the dominant discourse and are raised to believe that they are powerful and in control. As such, their dominance over women often leads to women being sexually abused because of the target status as females". They further added that "one gender group wants to show its superiority over them", because "our society is undoubtedly patriarchal - men and boys still view themselves as the dominant discourse that have the power in society". Participants feel that sexual violence is a form of oppression. One participant reported: "Being oppressed leads women to being vulnerable and they often feel afraid of speaking out".

- *Women and girls are not vocal.*

  Some felt that "women and girls are not vocal enough and do not do enough to challenge these assumptions in schools, hence allowing men and boys to assert their misguided sense of power." Yet the same participants acknowledge that victims "are vulnerable because they do not have the physical strength to overpower men and they feel ashamed of what's happened." It seems like participants blame the victims for their plight. Participants reported that survivors of sexual violence are silent about their victimisation. Sexual violence is full of such contradictions and complexities.

- *Part of growing up and desire to experiment.*

  Interestingly, others felt that sexual violence is part of growing up. This indicates that sexual violence has been normalised and trivialised. This suggests that such sexual acts will be left unchallenged, because it is seen as part of the ways things happen when children grow up.

- *Lack of parental guidance.*

  Participants also felt that parents fail to speak to their children about sexual matters. Sex is a taboo subject in many homes.

- ***Lack of knowledge and open debates on the subject.***

  Participants felt that "people are less educated about its consequences" and that "sex education is not effectively taught in schools." In addition, others felt that "young girls are not taught basic human rights from a very young age."

- ***Women's dress code.***

  For some it seems like women's way of dressing serves as an invitation for sexual violence to happen to them. One respondent reported: "I believe that men perceive a woman's dress code to be an invitation to sexual taunting!"

- ***Violent home background.***

  Participants felt that learners who come from homes where family members always fight tend to have an inclination towards sexually abusing others because violence is what they commonly see in their homes.

- ***Culture***

  Participants felt that in certain communities they still practice 'ukuthwala' (abduction of young women to make them future wives) and they regard this as part of their culture. This provides a cultural cover for sexual violence and the violation of the rights of girls and women.

- ***Teachers' immaturity***

  Participants felt that teachers do not act like grown-ups, instead they act like teenagers.

- ***Other reasons mentioned are:***

  Satanism, drugs, lack of self- control, desire to experiment.

4.3.7 Ways in which sexual violence cases have been dealt with and are likely to be dealt with.

Table 4   *Table 5*

If there have been any instances of sexual violence at your school or in another school, how was the incident dealt with?		
The principal was informed	**27**	24%
Police were informed	**19**	17%
Parents/guardians were informed	**21**	19%
SGB was informed	**11**	10%
Staff were informed	**18**	16%
Nothing was done	**9**	8%
Other	**6**	5%

If no cases took place, what would you do if it were to happen in your school?		
Report to the principal	**24**	25%
Report to department	**10**	11%
Report to the police	**20**	21%
Tell other teachers	**12**	13%
Report to SGB	**8**	8%
Report to parents/guardians	**15**	16%
Keep it to myself	**4**	4%
Other	**2**	2%

When asked how the incident had been dealt with when it occurred, respondents stated that cases had been reported and the principal was the individual most often informed about the incident as they are the person in charge of the school. They reported: "It's the protocol" and it seemed participants know and wanted "to follow correct channels of communication". The same feeling was shared by those who claimed to have never had cases of sexual violence happening in their schools. They too indicated that they would inform someone, first the principal (24), then police (20), parents/guardians (15), staff members (12), DoE (10) and SGB (8) about the incident if it were to happen. Findings suggest a greater inclination towards reporting of cases of sexual violence to school authorities than keeping quiet. However, it is notable though that some respondents (4) said they will keep it to themselves.

Participants in the FGD reported that principals were implicated in dragging their feet when it comes to reporting of cases as some were perpetrators themselves.

4.3.8 Preferred person to report sexual violence to

Table 6

Parents/Guardians	**10**	9%
Teachers	**14**	13%
Principal	**25**	23%
SGB	**5**	5%
Police	**11**	10%
Department of Education	**8**	7%
Social workers	**28**	25%
Media	**2**	2%
Local leadership	**3**	3%
Union	**3**	3%
Other	**2**	2%

When asked who would be the *best* person to tell if there are instances of sexual violence in their schools, 28 (25%) respondents opted for social workers rather than the principal 25(23%), staff 14(13%), police 11(10%), parents 10 (9%), DoE 8 (7%), SGB (5) or union 3 (3%). Teachers in the FGD shared the same sentiment. It seems like teachers have slightly more trust in social workers than in principals, staff, parents and police in dealing with sexual violence incidents. Or perhaps they want someone external to the school so that incidents are not covered up, because of the view that "the principal would try to protect the rapist and organise bribes". Parents also seem to be a barrier to reporting. One participant complained: "When we tried to involve the police, parents stopped us and wanted payment of damages to the amount of R5000 from the teacher". In the case of police, "… they are not trustworthy; they report that you are the one who came with information". Teachers too cannot be trusted, "your colleagues start pointing fingers at you for reporting". These findings point to high levels of fear in reporting and the possibility of negative consequences for whistle-blowers.

Nevertheless, it is important and encouraging to note that very few respondents (9) reported that nothing is done or that they will keep the incident to themselves (4) if it were to happen in their school. This finding points to fairly high levels of willingness to report or/and to take action against sexual violence practices. This shows agency and concern by participants. However, what happens after reporting is another case.

4.3.9 Reasons for not reporting

Table 7

Feeling scared	**18**	37%
Protecting my career	**17**	35%
It's not my business	**2**	4%
Other	**12**	24%

It seems there is still some silence around sexual violence practices in schools. When asked why they keep incidents of sexual violence practices to themselves, concern for safety became a central reason for most participants 35 (72%). They reported that it is because they either feel scared, or they prefer to protect their careers. A small number, 2 (4%) felt it is none of their business. A quarter of respondents (24%) felt that nothing will be done even if they report. This latter finding is also an indication of how violence may become normalized over time as apathy and non-reporting is promoted by lack of action or consequences for perpetrators.

Problems cited by respondents for not taking any action included the following amongst others:

- *Fear of intimidation of victims and witnesses:* Teachers feared for their safety if the accused would discover that they are the ones who disclosed their names. One respondent said: "It's a matter of life and death. Report the case and face the bullet or keep quiet and continue breathing". "I am not in a position of being fair enough because of fear". Participants stated that "reporting makes it difficult because male teachers end up hating you and they threaten you." It seems like ostracization from colleagues seems hard to bear and force teachers to opt for silence.

- *Lack of trust in the system.* Respondents feel that there is no support from the department and the school management. This became evident from participants' comments. One respondent reported that at one stage the school management failed to take action to address the problem and that disappointed her. A learner had been impregnated by a teacher and the matter was reported to the principal, but no further action was taken. So "students are scared to speak to anybody, because they don't even know who is on their side". "Reporting such cases is useless sometimes, because your colleagues start pointing fingers at you for reporting. In another case a matter was reported to the principal but he did nothing, so that is why I kept quiet in other cases". Another point related to fear is that "witnesses do not show up and the rapist walks free and threatens the victims and witnesses." Participants indicated great "fear for their

identities as well as for their own safety in the community" if they reveal names of perpetrators.

- **Lack of coordination and communication of policies**. Respondents seem to be affected by inappropriate reporting channels in schools. They reported that "schools do not have written policies on how to deal with sexual violence" and that due to "poor monitoring it makes it hard to report cases**."** It seems that teachers "don't know what procedure to take once a learner reports a case". In addition, "learners are not taught about various steps they should take if they experience sexual violence or harassment."

- **Inadequacies in identifying and tracking abusive teachers.** Participants feel that "the process of investigation and charging a teacher is too long and slow".

- **Lack of protection of complainants.** The justice system too seems to be weakly trusted as an institution to report cases of sexual violence acts as one respondent reported: "I think fear can overcome me, so I will not be fair to inform them, I fear for my life, because the police are not trustworthy. They report that you are the one who came with information".

- **Lack of consequences for the perpetrator**. A majority of respondents feel that it is useless to report cases, because the system lets victims down by not bringing perpetrators to justice. Teachers felt that "reporting it will be a waste of time as nothing will be done to the perpetrator or offender". For example, one respondent reported that in a case where the educator was confronted, "it was very light", that is, the incident was not handled in the serious manner it deserved. So many teachers feel that no-one wants to report something that is ignored. Participants felt that cases were swept under the carpet to protect colleagues.

- **Inefficiency in investigation of cases by the department and police.** Inadequacies in the legal and law enforcement spheres have also discouraged many victims to seek justice. Respondents feel that "teachers have sexual relationships with girls left and right but nothing is done; they say we can't prove it".

- ***Normalisation and trivialisation of sexual violence in school.*** The problem of sexual violence is not prioritised or taken seriously in schools and society. One participant reported: "School management is swamped with so many issues and sexual violence may not necessarily be prioritized as an issue requiring intervention". In addition, male teachers think "it is a woman thing". Incidents may also go unreported because of the attitudes of teachers, who may see boys' intimidating behaviour towards girls as just being "part of growing up". Participants raised concerns that it is a great challenge to curb incidents of sexual violence practices when certain teachers still side with perpetrators and pass comments like "do you really mean to say that a person can lose his job because of *this!*"

- ***Prejudiced thinking***: "It is none of my business what others do. These girls want to explore with life".

- ***Protection of colleagues.*** Teachers can be unwilling to report on their colleagues' sexual misconduct.

- ***Parents siding with their children and perpetrators*** (male teachers). It seems like participants feel that reporting is useless and that parents let them down, because "if you report parents side with their children and male teachers".

- ***Girls siding with perpetrators.*** It appears that victims/survivors of sexual violence do not report incidents, because they sometimes do not regard certain practices as acts of sexual violence. Some girls say "teachers are ministers of finance who provide them with financial needs like buying them farewell dresses". One respondent alluded to a story of a girl who said she wanted the teacher to buy her a farewell dress.

- ***Cultural attitudes and normalisation of sexual violence practices in society.*** Participants reported that some people consider sexual violence as normal while some say it is their culture.

- ***Fear of stigmatization:*** It seems that incidents of sexual violence are not reported because of the shame associated with sexual violence. Participants stated: "People are still afraid of stigmatization" "Those who are affected do not want to speak about it and those who are not, do not

feel they should be doing anything to assist." It seems as if victims "do not have enough courage to face it and not empowered to deal with it."

- **_Everyone has the "I don't care attitude."_** Others say: "It's not my concern it's the parents' problem." No one cares.

4.3.10 Impact of sexual violence on teachers

Participants reported negative feelings towards sexual violence practices in schools. These ranged from feeling sad and hurt, frustrated, angry, traumatised to feeling embarrassed and blaming themselves for the event. Symptoms of emotional stress were highly noticeable from teachers' verbatim responses and through their reactions and gestures during the discussion. When they talked about the number of sexual violence cases that they have witnessed at school, you could tell from their facial expressions that the issue affected them deeply.

Participants even indicated a dire need for a platform whereby they could express their feelings. At one stage one participant sighed and said, "Even we teachers find ourselves working under a lot of pressure and finding ourselves more stressed. You feel like you as a teacher you need to get a confidante where you can ventilate[vent] and offload all these problems… teachers do need spaces where they can ventilate [vent] … Adolescents do so many, many things. It's frightening".

Remarks like: "It is very devastating emotionally… " "I get affected intensely" were frequently mentioned. It seems like it is a great struggle for teachers to come to terms with emotional experiences of sexual violence. They stated that "emotional scars are created …"

Key themes that emerged from findings regarding how sexual violence practices affect teachers include the following emotions.

- **_Frustration and anger_**: Teachers feel angered to see how old people like teachers can be so cruel to others, especially young kids. One respondent stated that she "become angry and short tempered when I hear about this word", sexual violence. "You would get frustrated,

irritated, and upset, because you wish you can do something about it, but you can't". "I am constantly worried about the safety of the female learners."

- **Feelings of guilt**: At times teachers feel guilty for not doing anything "yet I fear for my life if I do something". "It makes me feel guilty it makes me feel bad because it may be my child next time."

- **Feelings of stress** "It depresses me to think that a girl/ boy child is robbed of their future by a selfish person who has had their youth and now destroys the future of this one "

- **Respondents feel traumatized, scared, withdrawn, pain, hurt and helpless:** It seems that teachers are deeply hurt by sexual violence incidents which they cannot do anything about. One respondent said, "Very much, it affects the learner's performance." "The fact that sexual violence affects the kids academically … it kills me to see kids in that space. It makes me feel very hurt that I cannot do anything." One respondent said, "It makes me feel sorry for the young girls because male teachers leave them for their wives or older girlfriends. Once these young girls become pregnant male teachers do not want to have anything to do with them."

- **Loss of hope and confidence in adults.** Respondents seem to feel irritated and frustrated by the behavior of irresponsible adults. "It makes me to lose confidence and hope in men/ or in adults who are doing this, it can be male or female."

4.3.11 Impact of sexual violence on teachers' profession:

Sexual violence seemed to affect teachers' profession in the following ways.

- **Poor professional self-concept:** Sexual violence seems to take away a sense of pride of teachers and respondents feel quite disturbed by how they should treat learners. "It can spoil my reputation as a teacher because it would be like I am not playing my role as it should be. It makes my job more difficult since I have to be extremely vigilant when the girls are outside the class".

- *Lack of discipline:* Sexual violence makes it hard for respondents to discipline teachers' lovers. One respondent reported that "it is difficult to teach a learner who is in love with a teacher. Disciplining that learner becomes difficult because she thinks you are nothing, the male teacher chose her over you."

- *Negativity towards profession:* The following statement indicates that sexual violence seems to harm teaching as a profession and it makes it uninviting. "This tarnishes the image of the profession if the perpetrator is a teacher." "It takes away pride in the profession."

- *Feelings of guilt:* Respondents always mention feelings of guilt for not taking action and they admit that they are not acting responsibly as educators. "I feel guilty for being unable to face it as it is thereby having a feeling of being an irresponsible educator."

- *Poor academic performance:* Teachers reported evidence of poor work ethics and low self-esteem from learners and staff. One respondent stated: "It affects me seriously because if I'm affected emotionally that would have an effect on my teaching as well as learning. Furthermore, sexual violence leads to "uneducable learners due to mental disturbance, one cannot teach a learner who is abused."

- *Lack of peace:* Respondents seem to lack peace of mind as a result of sexual violence. One respondent reported that it is "very bad and I feel much pity for the victim, they affect me by not teaching freely because of the knowledge that I should have helped the learner but fear stopped me. It affect me very much because it affects learners performance"

4.3.12 Proposed responses to curb the problem of sexual violence in schools

Figure 3

Enough is done	**4**	8%
Quite a lot is done	**10**	20%
Too little is done	**37**	73%
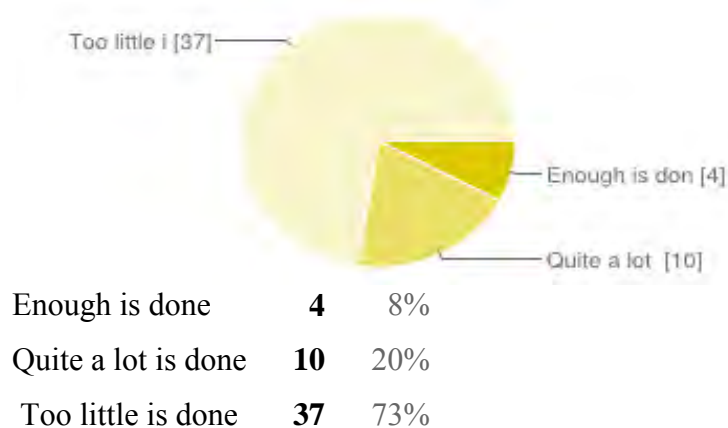
When asked if the person they had informed about sexual violence had taken any action following the report or if anything is done to curb the problem of sexual violence, 37 (73%) respondents compared to 14 (28%) reported that too little is done even after the principal, staff, parents, SGB and police have been informed of the incident. One participant reported: "In previous cases no action was taken against the teacher who had a relationship with a young girl". She was supported by another participant who said: "In another case a matter was reported to the principal but he did nothing". Respondents in the survey reported that principals sometimes do not report cases because they protect their colleagues.

These findings refuted what participants in the FGD claimed. Most of them reported that a lot is done. One participant remarked: "It is not like we are folding our arms towards it, we explain about sexual violence during assembly time …, we create awareness about sexual violence and even invite guest speakers from different departments to explain about this". It seems the main challenge is lack of further action taken against perpetrators after cases have been reported.

Though many participants indicated that cases of sexual violence get reported or that they will report cases if they were to happen in their schools, it is

important to note also that a small number of respondents acknowledged that sometimes they do not report cases of sexual violence, but they keep it to themselves.

To conclude, this chapter highlights the important findings on how sexual violence in schools affects teachers emotionally and professionally. Sexual violence seems to take away a sense of pride of teachers and respondents feel quite disturbed by how they should treat learners. Not taking any actions against sexual violence practices fills teachers with constant guilt and lack of peace. In schools sexual violence happen between teacher-to-teacher, teacher-on-learner, learner-on learner and learner-on-teacher. The following chapter discusses the findings highlighted in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented earlier. In relation to the literature and theoretical framework, the discussion focuses on the perpetrators and targets of sexual violence practices in schools and what is done to curb the problem. Factors that shape secrecy around reporting of cases are also discussed. The chapter ends with recommendations for future research and policy.

There have been increasing reports of sexual violence in educational settings (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). The sexual violence phenomenon in schools is not confined to South Africa, but is so widespread that it affects countries everywhere (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). Leach & Machakanja (2003) uncovered that male teachers who sexually exploit learners are rarely expelled from the teaching profession. The findings of this study, namely, that sexual violence in schools, especially on girls/women is common and widespread is therefore in line with research findings in America, Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa, and elsewhere.

Findings of this study indicated that most teachers had some awareness of sexual violence practices and its occurrences in both primary and secondary schools in KZN province. Participants agreed that sexual violence in schools is a pervasive problem that affects teachers emotionally and professionally, though it appears that there is some debate about what constitutes serious sexual violence practices. This concurs with literature in the field which indicates that there is uncertainty in what is considered sexual violence due to different definitions and cultural beliefs (Bott, et. al, 2004; The Panos Institute, 2003).

Teachers gave various convincing accounts of sexual violence practices that they are aware of in schools and provided examples of these. However, participants felt that issues related to sexual violence practices are not taken

seriously in schools, the main focus rather is on curriculum issues. They reported that sexual violence issues are treated and spoken about in a very casual way and are condoned by some school administrators and is thus perpetuated.

5.2 Evidence of Sexual Violence Practices in Schools

Teachers related incidents where girls and female teachers often fell prey to unwanted sexual touching, sexually explicit language and other forms of sexual victimisation perpetrated by boys, male teachers, principals and male teacher-union officials.

In the stories that teachers gave, it was evident that sex was used as a commodity that could be exchanged for favours like money, better grades for learners, and for senior positions and teaching posts for teachers. In this way sex was used as a commodity. In addition, sexual violence was used as a mechanism to control girls/women. This is consistent with literature in the field wherein sex gets to be used as a form of enforcing discipline and control over women (Petersen, Bhana, McKay, et al. 2005). In the stories that teachers related, there was a strong sense of helplessness amongst teachers.

5.3 Perpetrators of Sexual Violence in Schools

Findings in this study implicated male teachers as the main perpetrators of sexual violence acts in schools whilst girls/women were found to be the main common targets of sexual violence practices in schools. It has been discovered that male teachers, including principals engage in sexual relationships with school girls and sometimes impregnate learners without facing any consequences. In addition, principals solicit sex from female teachers in exchange of teaching posts. Furthermore, male teacher-union officials demand sex from female teachers in exchange for senior positions.

This mirrors a more general concern in the literature that more girls/women than boys/men are victims of sexual violence (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; Masehela and Pillay, 2014; Proulx and Martinez, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools Report, 2014; Snodgrass, 2015; Timmerman, 2003). This indicates heterosexual abuse which has a strong link

to patriarchal thinking or male domination (hooks, 2000). The findings also concur with literature in the field which acknowledges that in many South African schools, educators have sexually harassed and abused learners in their care (Burton and Leoschut, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2001; IOL, 2008; Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools Report, 2014; Winthrop and McGivney, 2014). According to African Child Policy Forum (as cited in USAID Report, 2008) in a national study in South Africa, it was found that teachers carried out 32 percent of reported child rapes.

This trend is not unique to South Africa, but is so widespread that it happens even in other regions of Africa and elsewhere (Leach, 2013). For example, in studies that were carried out in schools in at least 15 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa it was discovered that the sexual exploitation of female students by male teachers is widespread (Leach, 2013). Rosetti (as cited in Wellesley Centers for Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003) alludes to a study of sexual violence in Botswana schools where 560 students were surveyed. In the above study 67 percent of girls reported sexual harassment by teachers. This indicates that teachers who are the very custodians of teacher-learner safety at schools are the ones who perpetrate acts of sexual violence. They appear to abuse their position of power and trust.

Teachers expressed great shock at the prevalence of sexual violence acts perpetrated by teachers in schools. This tendency was said to be "more widespread than most institutions care to admit" (Hallam, cited in USAID Report, 2008, p. 9). Teachers felt that the way things are it would appear that teachers are not ashamed of their despicable acts, instead, they "appear to act with impunity … it has become … at least an accepted and 'normal' part of school life" (Leach, 2013, p. 90).

However, the findings of this study that male teachers are the main perpetrators of sexual violence in schools are in stark contrast with what is commonly reported in literature. For example, it was noted in a study by Leach (2013) that student perpetrators "outnumber staff in absolute terms" (Leach, 2013, p.89). Again, in Timmerman's study (2003) on the differences or similarities between

sexual harassment perpetrated by teachers and that perpetrated by students, findings revealed that most sexual violence experiences involved students harassing other students and not teachers harassing learners. In fact "abuse by classmates and peers is far more common" (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, p. 9). Though this may be the case, many studies in Sub-Saharan Africa have found sexual abuse by teachers to be a major problem (Leach, 2013).

A lot can be said about this discrepancy in the findings. It seems like teachers 'over emphasized' sexual victimization of learners by teachers and a normalisation of boys sexual violence, thus supporting the claim that "it is often the dramatic cases of abuse by teachers that finally draw public condemnation" (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, p. 9). Teachers in this study regarded sexual violence practices by teachers as "serious, very serious, because it involved a teacher" and a normalisation of boys sexual violence.

Although this study identified male teachers as the main perpetrators of sexual violence acts in schools, boys too were implicated in perpetrating unwanted sexual violence against girls. The study found that boys accost girls in classrooms in the afternoon during sweeping time. Boys also touch girls' private parts and use sexually explicit language with girls. This is consistent with previous studies where findings show that "perpetrators of sexual violence are predominantly male, may be of almost any age, any ethnicity, social class and have a variety of abilities (physical and intellectual)" (Jewkes, Dartnall & Skweyiya, 2012, p. 4) regardless of the sex of the victim.

There is, however, very little data in the literature and in this study on sexual violence perpetrated by females maybe because violence by females is not as equally highlighted as male patriarchal violence (hooks, 2000). The majority of studies have focused on sexual violence by boys/men against girls. Very little was mentioned about girl-perpetrated sexual violence incidents in this study. Furthermore, this study found very little evidence of boys as victims of sexual violence acts. This may be due to the fact that boys are usually thought of as perpetrators rather than victims of sexual violence (hooks, 2000; Leach, 2013;

Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). It could also be that boys rarely report sexual abuse due to fear of consequences and resulting social stigma against homosexual behaviour, and the desire to appear self-reliant. Boys grow up in societies where masculinity is emphasised and they grow up believing that they should be strong and not talk about painful experiences related to sexual helplessness (Haile, Kebeta & Kassie, 2013). However, girls too can be perpetrators of sexual violence as was reported in a study in Malawi where females made unwanted sexual advances toward boys, including peeping at their private parts when they visited the toilets or physically touching them (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). By ignoring this kind of sexual violence it would mean that 'it is ok for girls/women to perpetrate sexual violence acts (hooks, 2000; Leach & Humphreys, 2007). If more focus were to be put on sexual violence practices by girls and sexual violence against boys, more cases may be discovered. These are areas that require future research.

Although female-perpetrated sexual violence has been studied less than sexual violence perpetrated by males, in this study female teachers were implicated in perpetuating acts of sexual violence in schools. For example, male teachers were reported to be victims of 'staffroom conspiracies' where female teachers report sexual violence by a male colleague only when it suits them. For example, teachers seem to make cases known when they want to get back at someone because of a failed relationship between the perpetrator and a colleague. This inconsistency in reporting can also explain why at times there is disbelief that the incident actually occurred, because some teachers are said to 'fabricate' stories to get back at their 'enemy' colleague. Lack of consistency in reporting can be a challenge in rooting out sexual victimisation in schools.

Again, female teachers were found to be in support of teacher-learner relationships even to the extent of forcing girls to have 'love' relationships with their male colleagues. These findings indicate that females too do on occasion perpetrate sexual violence acts in schools as was evident in findings in a study by Masehela (2011) and Shepard (2000) who also reported incidents of female

teachers who have 'love' relationships with school boys. However, this is less common (Knoll, 2010).

5. 4 Where Does Sexual Violence Take Place?

Classrooms, school toilets, staffrooms and other administrative buildings emerged as the sites where most sexual violence acts take place. This is consistent with the literature where classrooms were discovered to be the primary site for violence occurring at schools (Burton, 2008; Burton & Leoschut, 2012; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). This high level of sexual violence occurring within classrooms is quite disturbing since classrooms should be among the safest areas in the school, and a place that is supposed to be under the constant supervision of educators according to the SACE Code of Conduct.

Also quite disturbing is that some of these sexual violence incidents had taken place after school when everybody had gone home except for the girls who were left to sweep. This suggests that teachers leave learners behind to sweep classrooms unsupervised, thus exposing learners to sexual victimisation. Furthermore, this indicates that teachers do not do their duties to monitor the classrooms and toilets. This is consistent with literature in the field where sexual abuse, in particular, is perpetrated in empty classrooms and corridors, staffrooms, toilets and teachers' offices (Burton & Leoschut, 2012; Parkes & Heslop, 2013). In leaving classrooms unattended teachers violate the SACE Code of conduct which expects teachers to monitor everything that happens within the school premises.

5.5 Responses to Sexual Violence

Findings in this study indicate that cases of sexual violence get reported to school authorities. Even those who never had cases of sexual violence happening in their schools indicated that they would inform someone about the incident if it were to happen.

However, there is a discrepancy between what is mostly covered in the literature about reporting of cases and what participants in this study reported. The

findings deviate from the norm in that participants in both the survey and FGD held that incidents of sexual violence were generally reported to school authorities instead of keeping quiet about them. In that way these findings refute repeated claims made in literature that cases are rarely reported (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Leach, 2013; Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). What emanated from findings in this study is that teachers report cases of sexual violence to principals, staff, parents, SGB and others; however, perpetrators are rarely brought to book. This corroborates the literature in the field which postulates that perpetrators rarely face consequences (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). This study indicates that rather than non-reporting being the problem, it is lack of action after reporting which seems to be the problem.

It is important to note that there are teachers (though a small number compared to those who said they will report the incident) who stated that they will keep quiet and not inform anyone about sexual violence incidents. This indicates that there are sexual violence practices in schools that seem to/may go unreported. These claims are backed by literature in the field where concerns have been raised that data on the extent of the problem may be unreliable, because certain cases go unreported. (Proulx & Martinez, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in Schools, 2014; The Conversation, 2015; Wilson, 2007).

Also, the fact that literature indicates that most of the available data on sexual violence typically comes from police, clinical settings, non-governmental organisations and survey research (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003), would mean that it is largely based on reported instances. This would suggest that what is presented in the literature about sexual violence in schools is not the whole picture regarding the magnitude of the problem; instead it is "an iceberg floating in water … the small visible tip represents cases reported (World Report on Violence and Health, p. 152) to school administrators who then take action allowing for police and other services to become involved.

Given that some teachers stated that they will not report sexual violence incidents, it means that there are cases that do not get/ have not been/ will not be reported to school officials or to police. The actual number of teacher/learner - perpetuated sexual violence cases could thus be higher than the official figures if there was no underreporting. Without adequate prevalence statistics the success of any intervention programme to curb the problem is severely constrained. A substantial component of prevalence statistics of sexual violence in schools still needs to be explored in future research. Without this, sexual violence will continue unabated.

Nonetheless, it is encouraging to discover that principals are most often informed of the sexual violence practices occurring within schools, since according to Sexual Offences Act (RSA, 2007) it is an offence for an adult to ignore a report of sexual violence against a child. This reveals that teachers at least trust their seniors that they will take action against sexual violence. So, this places great responsibility on principals to take action against perpetrators as soon as sexual violence incidents are reported to them. Not taking any action against perpetrators may send a message that sexual violence at school is acceptable.

Despite obvious willingness by teachers to report sexual violence incidents to senior school officials, it is disheartening to discover that principals themselves, the custodians of learner safety in schools have been implicated in perpetrating sexual violence acts and sweeping the incidents under the carpet (Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). Consistent with previous studies examining sexual violence in schools, principals and some male teachers were identified in committing sexual crimes against female learners and teachers and most of the time these shameful acts were covered up (Masehela & Pillay, 2014; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014).

It was interesting to note the response of teachers when asked who would be the *best* person to tell if there are instances of sexual violence in their schools. Contrary to practice, teachers believe that informing social workers would be preferable to informing the principal, parents, other teachers, police, DoE, SGB or union member about sexual violence incidents. It seems like teachers have

more trust in social workers than in principals in dealing with sexual violence incidents. Perhaps they want someone external to the school so that incidents are not covered up and so that their identities could be better protected. This finding highlights the importance of social workers' involvement in safety initiatives at schools. Having greater preference for social workers to seek assistance from than anyone else suggests that social workers could play an important role in the safety of learners. This finding is also supported by Burton & Leoschut, (2012).

If incidents of sexual violence continue in schools even when they are reported, it means that reporting cases is not sufficient on its own to improve school safety. Instead, once sexual violence incidents get reported at school, it is of utmost importance that action should be taken against perpetrators to prevent further victimisation.

The questions to ask are: Where does the problem lie? Why are there no further steps taken against perpetrators after reporting them? This points to a need for further investigation of this issue in future research.

5.6 Cover or Collusion versus Reporting

There seems to be a dragging of feet or covering up when it comes to reporting sexual violence incidents. Principals were reported to facilitate transfer of a member of staff from their school to another school if the said member had been discovered to have engaged in sexual relationships with learners. This suggests that perpetrators get away with their criminal acts. In such cases preference is given to the perpetrator and no justice is afforded the victim. Principals seem to do this either to protect the image of the school or because they themselves are perpetrators of sexual violence in schools (Masehela & Pillay, 2014). This corroborates findings in previous research where principals have been found to drag their feet on taking action against perpetrators (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium (2003). In this way school administrators appear to collude

with perpetrators by maintaining silence about this problem and by protecting the perpetrators.

Most worrying is that many such incidents are known to the community, but most go unreported to police or no action is taken against perpetrators. By keeping quiet when culprits are known, schools and communities also collude with perpetrators at the expense of children. In addition, not reporting cases of sexual violence means that teachers are in contravention of Section 42 (1) of the Child Care Act which provides them with a duty to report cases of child abuse that come to their attention. One could speculate that lack of institution of justice may be due to inadequacies in the legal and law enforcement spheres or it may be that principals themselves commit sexual violent acts and this creates a barrier for them to act against other staff. This finding is consistent with existing literature that suggests that the legal fraternity is fraught with challenges when it comes to taking action against perpetrators (Leach, 2013; Luyt, 2008; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). No one ensures that action is taken against principals who break the law. Lack of consequences for perpetrators seems like giving licence to the culprits to continue with their illegal and immoral acts. Hence sexual violence is perpetuated and schools remain unsafe.

In this study female teachers were said to be begging school girls to engage in 'love' relationships with their male colleagues. When girls refuse to fall in love with teachers, they face reprisals or ostracization from teachers and the matter does not get further attention because girls choose to keep quiet. They remained silent about the oppressive condition they found themselves in. Consistent with previous studies, it is well documented that survivors of sexual violence often face challenges where schools in many countries are found to turn a deaf ear to the female student's complaints and many girls do not even complain because of a fear of reprisals, especially from teachers, but also because they believe that nothing will be done (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003).

One explanation why female teachers who are themselves part of the target (oppressed) group oppress young girls, other females, could be that teachers have internalised sexual violence and this has consequently dehumanised them. By supporting their male colleagues instead of speaking against sexual violence practices that harm learners, female teachers have stopped acting like caring human beings. They have now lost authenticity and instead colluded with the oppressors, their male colleagues (Freire, 2000). Freire states that "as the oppressors dehumanize others and violate their rights, they themselves also become dehumanized" (Freire, 1970, p. 56). That is, the system of oppression also harms those from the privileged group as well. By keeping quiet girls too appear to collude with their oppressors, the teachers. Instead of challenging sexual violence both teachers and learners have in turn colluded with oppression. Hence Freire (1972 says that oppression is as damaging to the oppressors as it is to the oppressed.

Reprimands and ostracisation cause learners to suffer in silence. Freire (1975) terms this condition 'the culture of silence'. A culture of silence keeps people in 'bondage', lacking the voice, critical awareness and response to change their situation (John, 2008). Freire (1970) argues that when the oppressed keep quiet about their oppressed condition, they are acting in collusion with their oppressors. So, when school-girls resort to silence and do not challenge their teachers' actions, they seem to feel hopeless and helpless to ever change their situation. They have become hosts to their own oppression (Freire, 1970) having accepted things the way they are. In that way they collude with their oppressors.

Hooks (2000) terms this kind of behaviour *patriarchal violence* saying it is a behaviour highly linked to sexism and sexist thinking and male domination. She points out that this behaviour stems from the belief that it is acceptable for a more powerful individual, be they female or male, to dominate others through various forms of coercive force. She argues that children most often are victims of adult patriarchal violence enacted by women and men. In her explanation she acknowledges that females play a role in maintaining and perpetuating sexism

by allowing sexist thoughts. In fact she argues that "many violent attacks on children are perpetrated by women" (hooks, 2000, p. 62).

So, when female teachers who are themselves from the target group (oppressed) force school girls to engage in 'love' relationships with adult males, they seem to do this on the basis of exercising their power and control over children as adults, even in the face of blatant injustice caused to children. They seem to be driven by sexist thinking which condones oppression. Teachers could also be doing this because they have internalized their oppression, so they endorse the oppressive behavior, they normalize it. Oppression dehumanises an individual be they oppressors or the oppressed (Freire, 1970; hooks, 2000). So, sexual violence as a form of oppression seems to have dehumanised teachers and it has distorted their capacity to love and protect children under their care.

In this study, girls sometime seem to welcome sexual violence acts and not regard them as acts of violence. Instead, girls call male teachers their 'ministers of finance', because they provide them with money. This is consistent with literature in the field that sometimes girls do not view themselves as victims, instead they welcome the attention given to them by men and they use sexual attention as a way of gaining economic power (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Parkes & Heslop, 2013; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). Girls seem to believe that teachers are doing them a favour when they offer them material things; they think that such relationships benefit them when in reality teachers are abusing their position of power and learners' financial vulnerability to get what they want from learners.

Freirian theory provides an explanation why girls do this. Learners' acceptance of sexual violence could be attributed to internalisation of violence. It appears girls have come to believe and accept teacher-learner relationships as the natural way of things. Freire (1970) argues that oppression is a psychological process that manipulates one's mental and emotional states and it distorts one's perception of reality. The end result is an individual who has limited thinking, limited feeling, and limited self-expression. According to Freire, this situation

eventually leads to one's 'self- oppression', a condition where a person internalises his/her condition and accepts it as 'normal' or given, thereby denying freedom to oneself (Freire, 1970; Clark, 1975).

Using Freire's theory, it can be said that teachers are exploiting their positions of authority and failing in their duty of care by having sexual relations with learners, and girls appear to accept the relationships as 'normal'. Financial gain has stopped learners to perceive the relationship for what it really is i.e. oppressive. Instead, learners have come to think of the relationship as beneficial to them. Poverty and sexual violence has distorted learners' thinking and it seems it has kept learners trapped in the oppressive situation. By allowing such relationships to continue, learners are exercising self-oppression and this denies them freedom. Regardless of the financial benefits girls get from teacher-learner relationships, sexual activity between teachers, or other school personnel, and students is considered abuse because of the age and power differentials between the two. Such a relationship involves power and struggle, because a person who has power over another limits one's ability to refuse which then puts them in an awkward position. Even if learners voluntarily enter into these cross-generational relationships, 'love relationship' or sex with an adult is considered sexual violence, it is exploitative in that poverty leaves girls with few choices. Saying no to sexual relations with teachers may have negative repercussions for learners.

Kandiyoti also provides an explanation for this behaviour and says "women strategize within a set of concrete constraints" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p. 275). She terms this behaviour 'patriarchal bargain' (ibid), wherein women tend to strategize in the face of their oppression. These girls seem to be strategizing under the oppressive circumstances by using teachers for their own benefit.

5.7 Sexual Violence as Power and Control

This study found that the main perpetrators of sexual violence are teachers, people who are in positions of power in schools. The use of force to maintain dominance is evident in the way principals and male teachers gain sexual favours. Principals use psychological intimidation, blackmail or threats in

feeding their sexual desires. For example, they threaten female teachers with withholding a job that is sought.

One participant alluded to a story where a principal was heard telling other principals: "You fail to maintain discipline at school if you don't engage in sexual relationships with female staff members". He was supported by another participant who reported: "They say if there are internal conflicts, the best method is to have girlfriends amongst female teachers". Even in teacher union, you hear people saying: "Conflicts that arise within the union happen because you do not engage in sex with female member teachers. That is why they get out of control whereas if there is conflict, engaging in sex with a person easily tames her".

In the above comments, those in power seem to suggest that the best way to solve conflict in an organisation is to have sex with subordinates. These males seem to believe that having sex with 'troublesome' females would make principals succeed in maintaining their dominance over females and in turn succeed to remain in control of schools. Sex is portrayed as a means to solve conflicts, to control a person and a means to tame a person.

This mirrors a general concern in the literature where it has been found that sexual violence is used as a common method for enforcing discipline and control over women in South Africa (Snodgrass, 2015; Wood and Jewkes, 2001) and a way of solving conflicts (Simpson, as cited in Bhana, et al, 2005). hooks (2000) rightly states that:

> given a hierarchal system in a culture of domination … dominant parties maintain power by the threat (acted upon or not) that abusive punishment, physical or psychological will be used whenever the hierarchal structures in place are , threatened, whether that be in male-female relationships, or parent and child bonds (hooks, 2000, p. 64).

Therefore, this offence is not only about sexual desire, but is often initiated by someone to exert power over someone else (hooks, 2000; Leach & Humphreys,

2007; Masehela, 2011; School-Based Violence Report, 2011; USAID Report, 2008, Wilson 2007). It is a form of oppression that seems to be fuelled by patriarchy. Patriarchy rests on the assumption that women need to be always dominated and to be subservient to men. In patriarchal thinking women are treated as the property of men and are expected to gratify male sexual desire (ActionAid, 2009; hooks, 2000; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Masehela, 2011). Women' subordinate status in society seems to leave them with little or no negotiating power on matters related to their sexual choices (hooks, 2000).

Principals seem to use their power over females just because they are males and they believe that women are their subordinates who need to be kept under control through sex. It appears male teachers and principals have a sense of sexual entitlement towards school girls and female teachers. Sexual violence is then used as a mechanism of disciplining, solving conflicts and controlling female teachers.

Compounding matters is that South Africa has a culture of violence stemming from a violent past attributed to apartheid and African men particularly, learned that one attains what one wants through violence (De wet, 2007; Lamb & Snodgrass, 2015; Wright 2007). Violence was normalised as a solution to solving problems. Hence, in schools, young boys and men use violence to coerce girls and women into having sex with them, because they have learned that one achieves what one wants through violence. This is in support of what Hooks (2000) states that in a culture of domination everyone is socialized to see violence as an acceptable means of social control.

Silence around acts of sexual violence against children also happens not only because learners fear stigmatisation and ostracisation, but also because they are socialised to trust adults and not to question them (Leach, 2013; USAID/Management Systems International, 2008). Most cultures teach children to respect and obey elders, adults (including teachers). Girls/women are taught to be submissive to boys/men and not to challenge them. This is oppression in that those in power, teachers, exploit young girls' naivety and vulnerability

thereby oppressing these less powerful, girl learners. Teachers do this because of their dominant, superior status as older males and as teachers. Learners may find it hard to resist teachers' sexual advances by virtue of teachers being senior to them. This causes young girls to become overwhelmed by their oppressed situation.

Freire (1970) says that oppression harms people's sense of agency and it leaves them with the "absence of doubt". Oppression by male teachers seems to prevent survivors of sexual violence from questioning and stopping sexual exploitation that happens in schools. Oppression silences them. The status quo cannot easily change when "lots of women believe that a person in authority has the right to use force to maintain authority" (hooks, 2000, p. 64).

5.8 Challenges to Uncover Sexual Violence

Participants mentioned a number of reasons why teachers maintain silence on the issue of sexual violence. Teachers' and learners' silence could be attributed to the following issues.

5.8.1 Fear

Fear seemed to be the key issue in maintaining secrecy and silence for teachers. Teachers expressed fear for their safety and they stated that they feel scared to lose a job should the perpetrator and other people discover that they are the ones who identified the perpetrator. Another fear centred on being labelled, stigmatized and victimized by fellow teachers. At the same time teachers expressed a sense of guilt and frustration for not taking action against sexual violence incidents. The fear expressed by participants in the survey and FGD mirrored a more general concern in literature regarding the crippling effect fear has on the mental well-being of a person (Freire, 1970; Goltenberg, 1978).

It hurt teachers and caused them to live in constant fear and guilt to not act on their responsibility as 'parents' by speaking out against sexual violence acts in schools. Teachers said, "It makes me feel guilty … feel hurt that I cannot do anything when learners get hurt". They said it gives them "no peace of mind … become angry and short tempered … it makes me to lose confidence and

hope… they affect me by not teaching freely because of the knowledge that I should have helped the learner but fear stopped me".

Freire (1970) points out that oppression instils a sense of fear to the oppressed and it causes an individual to stop looking at the situation critically. Oppression also immobilises humans and prevents them from taking agency to change the oppressive situation (John, 2008). According to Freire, oppression "interferes with man's [and women's] … vocation to be more fully human" (Freire, 1970, p. 40). Sexual violence is a form of oppression that unfairly or unjustly constrains an individual and it seems to have affected and manipulated teachers' mental and emotional states. Fear has distorted teachers' perception of reality by making them incorrectly think that they "cannot do anything when learners get hurt". Fear caused teachers to not speak out and take action against shameful sexual violence acts. Instead, teachers have subjected themselves to live under continuous oppressive conditions of frustration and guilt, thinking they are protecting themselves.

Freire points out that oppression dehumanises an individual. It appears sexual violence has dehumanised and crippled teachers' minds. Having been stripped of their humanity, teachers have become "ambiguous and indecisive, even in the face of blatant injustice" (Darder, 2009, p. 569) and they allowed sexual violence practices in schools to continue unchallenged and to go unreported.

One may assume that girls too suffered the same consequences as teachers as a result of fear. Girls are reluctant to complain about their circumstance. This confirms what is said in the literature, that girls themselves often regard violence as inevitable and feel powerless to complain (ActionAid, 2009). Freire (1970) argues that people faced with economic, social and political domination are denied a voice and feel paralysed to name their world (Freire, 1970) and even worse to change their circumstances. Sexual violence as a form of oppression has diminished learners' sense of agency to challenge sexual violence. Children seem to lack a voice to speak the reality of how they feel about being the objects of female and male violence. Teachers are adults, they have power over learners and they have money. They promise learners some favours to lure

them into 'love relationships' and this is a "sweetener" or mask for their acts of abusive power over young learners.

According to Freire oppression causes the oppressed to be unable to name their own reality, but is forced to live under conditions imposed on them by the oppressor (Freire, 1970). Teachers and learners suffer from a condition Freire calls a 'culture of silence'. A culture of silence keeps people submerged in their oppressed condition (John, 2008). Fear seems to have weakened teachers' capacity to resist oppression. It caused them to feel hopeless, powerless and fearful to ever question or challenge the oppressive situation. They became resigned to the status quo. As a consequence silence has become a solution for them rather than risk being ostracised and victimised (Freire, 1975).

Both teachers and learners appear to perpetuate sexual violence by not standing firm against it. Freire, (1970) believes that each participant in oppression, the oppressors/dominant, and the oppressed/subordinate have a role to play through their individual behaviours, actions, attitudes and beliefs, in either continuation of oppression or in dismantling the entanglement caused by oppression. Teachers (oppressors) in abusing learners and by allowing sexual violence acts to continue without challenging them perpetuate these immoral acts. Again, when female teachers accept teaching posts in exchange for sexual favours to principals, they "perpetuate and sustain male dominance in exchange for power" (Snodgrass, 2015, p. 2). It appears they approve sexism. In accepting the status quo, they appear to have colluded with their oppressors. Also, by keeping silent about their victimization, learners (oppressed) seem to send a message that 'it is ok' and this condones sexual violence in schools.

However, Freire constantly rejected the idea that nothing could be done to change the oppressive situation, the idea that "it should be that way" (Freire, 1997, p. 41). Instead, Freire argues that through conscientization changes to the status quo become eminent. Conscientization empowers humans to see reality for what it actually is and it empowers humans about options open to them to challenge and change the status quo. This is to say that conscientization has power to transform. Therefore, through conscientization

about the oppressive nature of sexual violence, teachers can become aware of the systems at play which cause them to lack a voice and critical awareness to change the situation. Once conscientized teachers can challenge sexual violence incidents and report incidents should they occur.

5.8.2 Stigma and shame

Findings in this study show that when learners tried to report sexual violence perpetrated by teachers, they were reprimanded and labelled. This may discourage learners from reporting incidents of sexual violence in future. This is congruent with literature in the field where children "are often shamed by sexist adults (particularly mothers) and other children" (hooks, p. 75). In addition the literature states that schools in many countries have been found to turn a deaf ear to girls' complaints and many girls do not even complain because of a fear of victimisation and punishment, especially from teachers, but also because of being hopeless that anything will be done (Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014).

The stigma and shame of sexual assault keeps many survivors silent about their abuse (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, Masehela & Pillay, 2014, Sexual Violence by Educators, 2014), making rape one of the most underreported violent crimes (Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003; Luyt, 2008). Shame associated with sexual victimisation seems to be devastating for children, leaving them feeling isolated and powerless to change their situation. Stigmatization affects a person's self-worth. Sexual victimisation has thus dehumanised girls/women and robbed them of a voice; they have then opted to suffer in silence and not report their circumstance (Freire, 1970).

5.8.3 Victim blaming

Linked to shame and stigma is the issue of blaming the victim instead of blaming the perpetrator. Victim-blaming may be rightly tied to low reporting of sexual abuse in that at times victims are not believed about their victimisation; instead they are blamed for it. Teachers sometimes pass comments like: "Anyway you usually show great interest in boys, why they picked you and not

others?" The tendency seems to stem from a belief that girls/women who are abused or raped have somehow enticed the boy/man; maybe through dressing provocatively, thus sending the message that men who abuse and rape cannot help themselves because they cannot control their sexual urges (Akanle & Asebiomo, 2012; Lawoyin & Kanthula, 2010).

Learners and teachers do not report sexual violence practices because of fear of being blamed for the sexual violence incident and for reporting it. This oppressive situation seems to make them feel hopeless and helpless and they seem to lack critical awareness to identify that they are not the source of the problem. They are not the ones who invited sexual victimisation upon themselves. Instead the problem lies within the unjust structures and mechanisms in societies which they are part of (Freire, 1970; Osajima, 1995). It is systemic. That is, the problem may lie with sexist thoughts which are oppressive in nature (hooks, 2000); sexist thoughts which portray women as the temptresses who make men stray. It appears fear makes teachers and girl learners believe that if they report the incident somehow they may be labelled as the cause of their colleagues' or their teachers' downfall. Freire writes:

> *As long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their conditions, they fatalistically accept their exploitation. Further, they are apt to react in a passive and alienated manner when confronted with the necessity to struggle for their freedom and self-affirmation.* (Freire, 1970)

Teachers and learners have come to believe that they might be victimised if they speak out, or call attention to themselves. They seem to have internalised their oppressed condition and have opted for silence rather than risk being blamed. Freire postulates that internalized oppression often causes people to feel that silence will make them safe (Freire, 1975).

5.8.4 Loyalty to perpetrator
Participants reported that learners found it hard to disclose all information when the incident involved a teacher. This finding contradicts what Proulx & Martinez (2013) found in their study in Awaso, a small town in the Western Region of

Ghana where students were reported to be the least hesitant to admit the existence of unlawful relationships between teachers and students. A study by Mbassa (2001) in public and private secondary schools in the city of Yaoundé also found that many students were willing to talk about their experiences.

One may assume that fear to reveal all the information when it involves a teacher could be because these learners do not want to break loyalty to their teachers by reporting them. This concurs with literature in the field where, "many researchers have found that reporting of sexual assault is strongly influenced by the relational distance between the victim and the offender" (Luyt, 2008, p. 62). This is to say that, survivors of sexual violence are far less likely to report sexual victimisation committed by a familiar person than by a stranger and may be more inclined to internalize blame for their victimization (Luyt, 2008). Once the blame for victimization is internalised, the survivors of sexual violence eventually become resigned to their oppressive situation and do nothing to challenge the situation seeming to think that their circumstance is permanent. They continue to live under a condition called '*culture of silence*' (Freire, 1970) where the oppressed believe and feel that they do not have a voice in defining the circumstances of their world (Freire, 1970; Osajima, 1995).

Findings in this study reveal that most sexual violence acts in schools are perpetrated by boys (schoolmates) and male teachers, people very familiar to their victims. This may explain why girls and female teachers seemed to find it hard to disclose all information when the incident involved a teacher or colleague.

5.8.5 Poverty

Poverty seems to have drawn victims closer to their perpetrators due to the 'benefits' they get from them even when these relationships are exploitative. This concurs with literature in the field which postulates that when staff are poorly paid and poorly motivated, and students struggle to pay fees and other costs, sexual exploitation may occur, because these people lack certain essential goods like school fees, uniform, money and jobs to support families (Leach, 2013). Consequentially female teachers and girls engage in

"exploitative sexual relationships" (USAID/Management Systems International, 2008, p. 3). Because of the gains, it appears victims find it hard to challenge and break away from the oppressive situation. It leads to dependency syndrome, wherein the oppressed are forced to perpetually depend on a male for survival. Poverty causes women/girls to be unable to exercise their agency and to resist sexual advances by males/boys. It keeps the oppressed ignorant of their oppression. Such is the nature with structural violence like poverty and patriarchy where the agents or perpetrators are less visible and are part of systems and structures in society (Galtung, 1969).

One may then conclude that the financial and material benefits girls and female teachers receive from such relationships may also serve to discourage parents, from objecting to or stopping them. This is consistent with literature in the field where parents were sometimes found to put pressure on girls not to report or pursue a case as they have decided to obtain financial ''damages'' from the rapist's family (Masehela and Pillay, 2014; Sexual Violence by Educators in Schools, 2014, USAID Report, 2008). This is transactional sex because those involved in it do it to fulfil their desperate needs emerging from poverty and lack of social support.

5.8.6 Lack of consequences for the perpetrators

Teachers raised great concerns about lack of consequences for the perpetrators despite laws and regulations designed to protect teachers and learners. A teacher who is alleged to have committed sexual or any other form of harassment may be charged with misconduct and the teacher may be disciplined in terms of the Code of Professional Conduct of the South African Council for Educators (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014). Furthermore, Section 17 of the Education Laws Amendment Act, No 53 of 2000 (Prinsloo, 2006) provides for dismissal of a teacher should he or she be found guilty of committing an act of sexual assault on a learner, student or other employee; or having a sexual relationship with a learner of the school where he or she is employed. Shockingly, sexual violence practices against girls/ women continue in schools regardless of these laws. School management teams (SMT) fail to take stringent measures against perpetrators.

Lack of consequences for perpetrators or lack of leadership in schools seems to lead victims to be hesitant to report sexual violence acts. Eventually, it seems most students accept sexual harassment as part of their school life and remain silent, while some drop out thinking that reporting would not change the situation. This seems to legitimise perpetrators' morally corrupt behaviour and it becomes similar to 'licencing' perpetrators to continue harming others (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014) making it much harder to stamp it out (Leach, 2013). This is supported by literature in the field where it is said that perpetrators often take advantage of people's silence on their wrong-doings (Masehela & Pillay, 2014).

Related to lack of consequences for perpetrators was a concern that little time is provided to talk about sexual violence matters in school; instead the main focus is on curriculum issues. This may leave teachers ignorant about how to respond when problems crop up. This may in turn affect reporting of cases if survivors of sexual violence see that no further steps are taken against perpetrators as a result of teachers who lack information on what to do.

5.8.7 Normalising and trivialising sexual violence

Sexual violence practices seemed to have continued unabated as a result of normalisation and trivialisation of sexual violence incidents when they occur. Participants expressed frustration, shock and growing concerns at the 'matter-of-fact' way in which some teachers talked and reacted to the sexual violence incidents in staffrooms and in meetings.

One participant alluded to an incident where teachers were seriously discussing a case of a girl who had been sexually abused by a boy, but this teacher jokingly responded: "*You are talking about that!* The boy just had sex with the girl, *what's the big deal?*" This was further supported by a participant who alluded to a story of a teacher who was accused of sleeping with a school-girl and the case was reported. His colleagues were heard accusing those who were against the teacher's behaviour saying: "Do you honestly think that he

should lose his future over this offence?" Saying 'this' offence implies that the behaviour of sexually violating a learner is trivialized by these teachers.

Interestingly, some teachers seemed to feel that touching girls' bums is just "habits that learners do" which is "part of growing up" for boys. Touching girls' bums has become so common an occurrence that it has been regarded as a 'normal' behaviour by boys as they grow up. It appears teachers have tended to trivialize these unwanted sexual acts. This is congruent with literature wherein some types of attention from boys are considered acceptable (Abrahams, 2003).

Again, one respondent said: "Inappropriate talk constitutes sexual violence which is not major sexual violence." It appears teachers are still not aware of the damaging effects caused by 'unwanted' sexual touching and inappropriate talk. Ignoring these sexual violence practices and trivialising them, despite their serious damaging effects has a danger of perpetuating sexual violence (Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools, 2014).

This suggests that such forms of sexual violence by boys are dismissed as serious acts of violence; instead the perpetrators' actions are regarded as 'acceptable', 'normal', and an ordinary occurrence. They talk about it in a matter of fact way and it creates tension amongst educators. This is supported by findings in literature where Haffejee (as cited in School-Based Violence Report, 2011) states that communities that normalise gender-based violence produce casual narratives in which this issue is talked about in a matter of fact way

When sexual violence is no longer seen as violence, but as ordinary socially acceptable behaviour by boys, it dangerously becomes a part of people's 'normal' life and it will rarely be condemned (Galtung, 1990; hooks, 2000). Freire (1970) calls this normalisation of violence. Freire warns that normalisation of violence condones oppression. So, boys growing up under conditions where sexual violence is not condemned, but tolerated (like in schools), may grow up believing in coercive sexual behaviour against women (Burton, as cited in Lamb

& Snodgrass, 2015). Normalisation of sexual violence means that cases may hardly get reported.

It was evident from teachers' statements that they were negatively affected by sexual violence practices that occur in schools. Frustration, shock, anger and guilt could be seen on the participants' faces when they shook their heads. One even remarked: "You get shocked by such a *foolish* comment this person is making about a serious issue. People are teaching for the sake of being there, they don't have the *in loco parentis* … to others it is something they talk about in passing … others even make a joke out of it".

Nonetheless, it is quite pleasing to note that educators indicated awareness of sexual violence remarks which they found unpalatable. It appears that when teachers recognise statements that are oppressive in nature, it may serve as an opportunity for liberation and justice, which may encourage others to speak out as well. This was supported by teachers' remarks in the FGD when they felt that they needed more of these chances so as to vent. Teachers even suggested intervention strategies to curb the problem of sexual violence in schools. There is hope that teachers may take agency to break the culture of silence around sexual violence acts by speaking/fighting against oppressive situations that keep them, particularly girls and women under oppression. Such critical reflection suggests that teachers have the potential to use their voice to name the world (John, 2008). Through various intervention strategies teachers and learners may become educated about the harmful effects of sexual violence.

Freire argued that the purpose of education is to conscientize people, liberate their minds and to humanize them and not to domesticate them. For Freire, education should aim to create critical understanding about how oppression operates. Once teachers understand how sexual violence acts as a form of oppression, they may liberate themselves from the oppressive condition they live in. Hence Freire says "no one liberates himself … neither is he liberated by others" (Freire, 1970, p. 66). And this is Freire's ideal of conscientization.

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CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents a synthesis of the findings and discussions reflected in the previous chapters. The limitations of the study and recommendations for future research and policy are also discussed.

Although sexual violence in schools has been the subject of a growing number of studies particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (Bekele, 2012; Leach, 2013), most studies have focussed on bullying or male youth violence (Leach, 2013). There has been a dearth of research approaching sexual violence as 'gender blind' i.e. - affecting both girls and boys, including male and female teachers. This is thus a neglected area of research, yet the evidence suggests that sexual violence in schools is a serious human rights issue that is endemic and is escalating at an alarming rate (Leach, 2013; Sexual Violence by Educators in South Africa Schools, 2014).

Previously the majority of studies and interventions have focused on sexual violence against girls with less attention paid to sexual violence as it affects boys/males or that is perpetrated by girls/females to girls/females (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). There is also very little attention to school-related sexual violence perpetrated by females/girls to boys or by boys to boys. For this reason so much research on sexual violence needs to be done to better understand the phenomenon and to prevent it from escalating further. This study attempted to address this gap by approaching sexual violence in schools in all its forms. It explored teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices as perpetrated by and to anyone within the school setting.

This is a qualitative study positioned within the interpretive paradigm as the researcher believes that there are diverse ways in which people interpret the world, and that there are multiple realities about sexual violence in schools. As its lens the study used Paulo Freire's theorisations of a culture of silence and of conscientization.

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6.2 Important Issues Raised by This Study

Findings from teachers' stories revealed that teachers are aware of a high prevalence of different kinds of sexual violence practices happening in schools in KwaZulu-Natal, both at primary and secondary schools. A higher number of teachers stated that there had been sexual violence incidents which had occurred in their schools. Male teachers were identified as the main perpetrators of most sexual violence acts brought to the principal's attention. Male teachers were found to be soliciting sex from female teachers and school girls. However, perpetration of sexual violence acts was not limited to male teachers alone; female teachers were also implicated in forcing girls to engage in 'love' relationships with their male colleagues. Boys too were implicated in using sexually-toned language and in touching girls' private parts in unsupervised classrooms, especially after school. Though on a very small scale, male educators also fall victim of sexual violence acts. They were said to be victims of staffroom conspiracies where female teachers came up with made-up stories which blamed a male colleague of sexual misconduct especially after a failed relationship with a female colleague.

Mostly, the acts of sexual violence are experienced at far higher levels by female learners and female teachers (Leach, 2013; Wellesley Centers for Research on Women and The DTS Consortium, 2003), indicative of strong culture of male dominance and a strong sense of sexual entitlement of men.

Very little data on school-related sexual violence perpetrated by females/girls to boys was reported and no data of boys to boys was reported in this study. Sexual violence occurring within schools is a complex phenomenon.

While the study found that there is great inclination towards reporting cases of sexual violence incidents to school administrators, it emerged that there are multiple complex factors that shape secrecy and reporting of sexual violence practices. Concern for safety was a central reason deterring teachers from reporting. Fear of stigmatisation, being intimidated and losing a job were among the key factors for underreporting of cases. Exacerbating the situation was a lack of support and protection for survivors of sexual violence and those who want to

report incidents. Instead, blaming of the victim and trivialisation and normalisation of sexual violence practices discouraged many victims to speak out and seek justice. In addition, lack of action or consequences for perpetrators was another great cause for concern amongst teachers in this study. Inadequacies in the legal and law enforcement spheres add to the problem. Some attitudes of teachers seem to support sexual violence practices in schools. For example, for some teachers the reporting of sexual violence incidents was treated as "none of their business". They seemed to be unwilling to report on their colleagues' sexual misconduct, but chose to protect them instead.

Findings in this study also revealed that teachers are deeply and negatively affected by sexual violence practices in schools. It emerged that sexual violence practices affect teachers emotionally and professionally. Teachers mentioned being angered, hurt, devastated, frustrated and traumatised by sexual violence acts in schools. Findings revealed that sexual violence acts also bring loss of hope and feelings of severe guilt to teachers for not taking action and speaking out against sexual violence practices. Some even stated that "emotional scars are created…" It appears that sexual violence acts also bring negativity towards the teaching profession, making it uninviting as a profession. Teachers stated that it "tarnishes the image of the profession" and "takes away pride in the profession."

The study also found that sexual violence practices lead to poor academic performance and lack of discipline. Teachers stated that "it is difficult to teach a learner who is in love with a teacher … because she thinks you are nothing, the male teacher chose her over you". Teachers felt that "there would be evidence of poor work ethics and low self-esteem from the learners and staff" which results in "uneducable learners due to mental disturbance".

6.3 Limitations of This Study

There are limitations to this study. Firstly, the findings cannot be generalised due to the size and convenience nature of the sample. This is an exploratory qualitative research. It has no intention of providing final and conclusive answers to challenges posed by sexual violence practices in school nor does it intend to

provide generalized findings. Exploratory research by nature cannot provide exhaustive answers to the problem at hand; instead, it helps us to gain a better understanding of the problem while leaving room for further research (Bell, 2010).

Secondly, the study covered a broad area of sexual violence practices in schools, i.e. teacher-to-teacher sexual violence, teacher-to-learner sexual violence, learner-to-learner sexual violence and learner-to-teacher sexual violence. For this reason, certain areas could have been overlooked unintentionally. For example, sexual violence practices against boys/male teachers were not deeply investigated yet findings in this study indicate that male teachers too can be victims of sexual violence practices in schools. Sexual violence by boys against female teachers did not emerge from findings of this study. These are areas for future investigation.

In addition, the study covered teachers' perspectives only and learners' views and voices were not explored. Time constraints to complete the project and ethical challenges made it impractical to include learners' views. There is a gap in this area; therefore, future research should approach the problem from learners' perspective.

6.4 Recommendations

A number of insightful recommendations emerged during the survey and focus group discussion. The following recommendations were offered as key solutions which require implementation in order to curb the problem of sexual violence in schools:

- *Awareness campaigns:* There is a need for awareness-raising campaigns and open debates in communities where people can be made aware of the challenges posed by sexual violence. In these meetings children, teachers, parents and community members could be sensitized and conscientized about different situations which they sometimes dismiss as 'innocent' exchanges, but which are indeed acts of violence. Here girls/women can also learn about and discuss their rights. Awareness

campaigns may increase public action on the issue of violence against women and girls.

- **Training of teachers**: Because a considerable number of teachers in this study can be deemed to display unprofessional behaviors, their role as *in loco parentis* is questionable. Prevention of unwanted sexual behavior in schools should therefore not only be directed towards learners. It is recommended that efforts to prevent sexual harassment in schools focus on teacher training as well. Teachers need to be trained on ethical and professional standards. Also, sexual violence related matters should be prioritized in schools and focus should shift from concentration on curriculum issues only. It is then imperative that teachers need to be acquainted with children's rights and protection issues and to acquire the skills to apply a more open and gender-sensitive education, which prioritizes children's knowledge, opinions and viewpoints.

- **Inclusion of sexual violence in the school curriculum:** There is a strong feeling that sexual violence should become part of the school curriculum by being included in Life Orientation. Teachers need to teach about gender and violence, and sexuality education.

- **Empowerment of victims (learners and female teachers):** Learners and female teachers need to be empowered to stand up against sexual violence practices in schools. They need to be sensitized about their rights and supported in protecting and enjoying such rights.

- **Reporting of cases:** Teachers and learners should be encouraged to consistently report cases of sexual violence and not to report only when it suits them. Without trustworthy, confidential procedures within institutions and local government, the number of reported cases will remain extremely low.

- **Creation of support systems:** Support systems like having school counselors/psychologists, social workers and police readily available and formation of support groups are some of the measures suggested. Reporting should be kept confidential and private.

- **Parental involvement:** Parents need to be encouraged to speak openly about sexual violence to their children and to stop colluding with perpetrators by accepting bribes or payments for "damages".

- *Conducive, safe environment*: There is the need for conducive environments where learners and teachers can feel free to open up on the subject. Effective support services such as confidential counseling and helplines can encourage victims to come forward and report. Teachers need to be seen as approachable and trustworthy to encourage reporting by learners. All reporting should be done privately and the victim must be able to remain anonymous. Teachers need to show love and care to learners so that they become free to come forward if they experience sexual violation.

- *Safety in classrooms:* Classrooms were found to be sites of sexual violence for learners, especially after school when most people have left for home. Teachers should then ensure constant monitoring of classrooms throughout the day and should refrain from leaving girls to sweep unsupervised after school.

- *Strict law enforcement:* School Management Teams were found to be adopting a 'low profile' in addressing sexual violence matters, thereby 'licensing' perpetrators to continue victimising teachers and learners. Therefore, school management, teacher unions, police, parents and the education department should be decisive in enforcing regulations and codes of conduct in educational institutions. Prevention policies, as well as grievance procedures need to be clear and implemented without fear or favour.

- *Challenge of cultural beliefs:* This research suggests that sexual violence happens within a social and cultural context of widespread patriarchal gender relations. This includes the economic marginalization of women and the lack of confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to protect women against violence. Male masculinity should then be challenged and teachers can do this by openly discussing sensitive topics, in which traditional cultural views are questioned. Learners must be allowed to express fears and to seek advice without fear of retaliation at school or at home. Schools need to design programs that give learners the opportunity to address the rights of girls to live free of gender violence by using human rights education perspectives to help all learners.

6.5 Conclusion

This study has shed some light on the challenges posed by sexual violence practices in schools. Sexual violence is widespread in schools. It affects teachers, learners, families and communities. Findings in this study revealed that sexual violence incidents in schools are not limited to teacher-on-learner cases only; at times cases involve learner-on-learner sexual violence, teacher-on-teacher sexual violence and violation of female teachers by education department officials.

According to Freire sexual violence is a form of oppression. Freire (1970) points out that oppression is social injustice and under oppressive situations people lose their ability to see themselves as individual human beings. Oppression distorts one's perception of reality and eventually leads to one's 'self-oppression', a condition where a person internalises their condition and accepts it as 'normal' or given, thereby denying freedom to oneself (Freire, 1970).

The findings show a level of normalization of such violence. This is a great concern as such problems, when normalised, become harder to address and become part of structural violence. Freire offers conscientization as a way of challenging the normalization of oppression. Conscientization, critical reflection and taking action on the basis of this new awareness can lead to freedom from such oppression.

The findings show fear and a culture of silence about sexual violence. The stigma, fear and protection of perpetrators seem to prevent those who are victimised and those who are aware of it from telling anyone about these occurrences. Attitudes that condone or tolerate violence against women and blame the victim still seem to be deeply entrenched throughout society. That is common under conditions of oppression. Freire encourages processes that allow for dialogue and give voice as ways of countering this aspect of oppression.

Availability of support systems and proper education about sexual violence can play a huge role in reducing stigma that is associated with sexual violence. This

may in turn empower girls/ women and liberate them to speak up about being sexually violated.

Despite the limitations like lack of generalization of findings and broadness of scope, findings of this study have the potential for making a contribution to the limited literature on sexual violence in schools. Also, this study breaks new ground by gaining insight about sexual violence from teachers' perspectives and by identifying areas that could be examined in future cases.

Of great significance most recommendations to curb challenges posed by sexual violence in schools came from teachers themselves in the survey and during the FGD. As teachers are people who are aware of the realities of sexual violence challenges in schools, this brings hope that solutions to the problem are relevant and could be implemented. At practical level, this study could thus be of benefit to the Department of Basic Education, principals, teachers, learners and parents.

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South Africa. The Education Amendment Act of 2000.

APPENDIX A: Informed consent form

P O Box 89
Estcourt
33l0
07 November 2013

Dear Teacher

 RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN MY STUDY

I am a Social Justice Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. In order to complete this degree, I have to carry out a study. The purpose of the study is to gain insight into sexual violence practices in schools. The study is aimed at identifying causes and nature of harassment and strategies that can best assist in making schools safe havens for learners and teachers. Your contribution in this regard is highly valued. Please note that you are not required to identify any perpetrator or victim of harassment and will not be required to name a school. I'm interested in your views of this practice and how it can be addressed.

I hope you will take about 20 minutes of your time to complete a questionnaire. You will not be asked to put your name on the questionnaire. That way nobody will know which questions were completed by you and no one will know whether you participated in this study. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if you do not participate. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time and for any reason without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you feel uncomfortable to answer.

A second phase of this data collection will involve focus group discussions. If you wish to participate in this phase of the study, which will involve an hour long discussion with a group of teachers on the topic of research, you can indicate your interest at the end of the questionnaire and provide a contact number. Here too, you are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Your name will not appear on any report or data collection instrument.

All information gathered will be treated in the most confidential manner and it will be stored in a safe place until it is destroyed. Should any such information be used in the dissemination of findings, participant anonymity will be strictly ensured. For more information and any questions regarding this study, you can contact MY SUPERVISOR Dr Vaughn John on 033 260 5069.

Thank you for your time.

Yours faithfully
Ms BP Mabaso

APPENDIX B: Request for permission to distribute questionnaire to students

P O Box 89

Estcourt

33l0

07 November 2013

Dear Lecturer

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DISTRIBUTE QUESTIONNAIRE TO YOUR STUDENTS

I am a Social Justice Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. In order to complete this degree, I have to carry out a study. The purpose of the study is to gain insight into sexual violence practices in schools. The study is aimed at identifying causes and nature of sexual violence and strategies that can best assist in making schools safe havens for learners and teachers. Students' contribution in this regard is highly valued.

Permission is hereby requested from you to allow me to distribute questionnaires to your students on this matter. Please note that students will not be required to identify any perpetrator or victim of harassment and will not be required to name a school. I'm interested in their views of this practice and how it can be addressed.

Students will not be asked to put their names on the questionnaires, unless they are interested to participate in the next phase of the study which involves focus group discussion. Their participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if they decide not to participate. If they volunteer to participate, they may withdraw at any time and for any reason without consequences of any kind. They may also refuse to answer any questions they feel uncomfortable to answer. Students are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Their names will not appear on any report or data collection instrument.

All information gathered will be treated in the most confidential manner and it will be stored in a safe place until it is destroyed. Should any such information be used in the dissemination of findings, participant anonymity will be strictly ensured. For more information and any questions regarding this study, you can contact MY SUPERVISOR Dr Vaughn John on 033 260 5069.

I look forward to a positive response.
Yours faithfully
Ms BP Mabaso

APPENDIX C: Informed consent to participate in FGD

P O Box 89

Estcourt

33l0

07 November 2013

Dear Teacher

RE: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

I am a Social Justice Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. In order to complete this degree, I have to carry out a study. The purpose of the study is to gain insight into sexual violence practices in schools. The study is aimed at identifying causes and nature of sexual violence and strategies that can best assist in making schools safe havens for learners and teachers. Your contribution in this regard is highly valued. Please note that you are not required to identify any perpetrator or victim of harassment and will not be required to name a school. I'm interested in your views of this practice and how it can be addressed.

I kindly invite you to participate in focus group discussion with a group of teachers on the topic of research. This phase of the study will involve an hour long discussion. You will not be asked to reveal your name, but can use a pseudonym. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time and for any reason without consequences of any nature. You are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Your name will not appear on any report or data collection instrument.

All information gathered will be treated in the most confidential manner and it will be stored in a safe place until it is destroyed. Should any such information be used in the dissemination of findings, participant anonymity will be strictly ensured. For more information and any questions regarding this study, you can contact MY SUPERVISOR Dr Vaughn John on 033 260 5069. Also provided are contact details of counselling services at UKZN campuses and that of the DoE's psychological

services should you experience any discomfort arising from participating in this study. UKZN Counselling services numbers are as follows: 033 2606062, 033 2605758, 0332605657. The DoE's psychological services numbers are as follows: 033 846 5290/5284/5303/5332.

Yours faithfully
Ms BP Mabaso

APPENDIX D: FGD Interview Schedule

Note: You are not required to name any persons or institutions when answering the questions below.

Main interview question:

Tell me about your views and feelings regarding sexual violence practices in schools.

Probing questions

Do you know of any instances of sexual harassment or sexual abuse in schools in KwaZulu-Natal province? In such instances, who are the perpetrators and who are the victims?

Have any instances of violence occurred at your school? Please tell me about these incidents.

If no cases took place, what would you do if it were to happen in your school and why would you follow this cause of action?

How do incidents of sexual harassment or sexual abuse in schools affect you as a teacher?

Do you believe enough is done to curb the problem of sexual abuse in schools? If not, why? If yes how is it dealt with?

What are the difficulties if any that prevent reporting of sexual harassment or sexual abuse incidents?

Do you believe this problem can be addressed? Why? Why not? What would you suggest as effective ways to address the problem of sexual abuse in schools?

Thank you very much for your time and for sharing your views with me.

APPENDIX E: Survey Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this important study!

You are not required to provide your name or the name of any school in this questionnaire.

Your responses will always remain confidential and anonymous.

The following questions relate to your understandings of sexual violence in schools. Sexual violence includes many different acts of a sexual nature where consent is not given for such acts or where consent is not possible because a party is a minor. These acts include sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and rape amongst others. These acts involve all persons at school, including, girl learners, boy learners, male teachers, female teachers and members of management of both genders.

(Please select the MOST APPROPRIATE response).

1. My gender is: Male   [ ]
                      Female   [ ]

2. My position is:

                      Post level 1   [ ]
                      Post level 2   [ ]
                      Post level 3 and above   [ ]

3. I work at a:
    1. Primary [ ]   2. Secondary [ ]   3. Combined school [ ]

4. My school is located in:
    1. A township [ ]   2. Urban area [ ]   3. Rural area [ ]

5. My SA population group is:

1. African [ ]   2. White [ ]   3.Asian [ ]   4. Coloured [ ]

6. Do you know of any instances of sexual violence in schools in KwaZulu-Natal province?

1. Yes [ ]   2. No [ ]   3. Unsure [ ]

7. Mention the types of sexual violence acts that you are aware of:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. In your view, why does school-based sexual violence occur?

_____

_____

_____

9. In instances known to you, who were the perpetrators? You can tick more than one box where possible.

1. Male teacher [ ]   2. Female teacher [ ]   3. Girl learner [ ] 4. Boy learner [ ]
5. Male management member [ ]   6. Female management member [ ]

10. Who were the victims?   You can tick more than one box where possible.

1. Male teacher [ ]   2. Female teacher [ ] 3. Girl learner [ ]   4. Boy learner[ ]
5. Male management member [ ]   6. Female management member [ ]

11. Have any instances of sexual violence occurred at your school?

1. A few [ ]   2.Quite a lot [ ]   3. Not at all [ ]

12. If there have been any instances of sexual violence at your school or in another school, how was the incident dealt with? You can tick more than one box where possible.

1. The principal was informed [ ]   2. Police were informed [ ]   3.Parents were informed [ ]   4. SGB were informed [ ]   5. Staff were informed   [ ] 6. Nothing was done [ ]   7. Other _____

13. If no cases took place, what would you do if it were to happen in your school? You can tick more than one box where possible.

1. Report to the principal   2. Report to the police [ ]   3. Tell other teachers [ ] 4. Report to SGB [ ]   5. Report to department [ ]   6. Report to parents [ ] 7. Keep it to myself [ ]   8. Don't know what to do [ ]   9. Other response _____

14. Why would you follow this course of action indicated in question 11?

_____
_____
_____

15. If you decide to tell no one, can you indicate the main reason for keeping   it to yourself? You can tick more than one box where possible.

1. Feeling scared [ ]   2. Protecting my career [ ]   3. Nothing could be done [ ] 4. Other reasons _____

16. If you were to tell someone about sexual abuse in your school, who would be the best person to tell?

1. Parents [ ] 2. Teachers [ ]   3. Principal [ ] 4. SGB   5. Police [ ]   6. Department [ ] 7. Social workers [ ]   8. Media [ ]   9. Local leadership [ ] 10. Other _____

17. How do incidents of sexual violence in schools affect you emotionally?

_____
_____
_____

18. How do incidents of sexual violence in schools affect you professionally?

_____
_____
_____

19. Do you believe enough is done to curb the problem of sexual violence in schools?

1. A little [ ]   2. Quite a lot [ ]   3. Not at all [ ]

   If not, why?

   _____
   _____

   If yes, how is it dealt with?

   _____
   _____

20. What are the difficulties, if any that prevent reporting of sexual violence incidents in schools?

_____
_____
_____

21. What would you suggest as effective ways to address the problem of sexual violence in schools?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

22. Do you have any story you would like to tell about sexual violence acts in your school or any other school you that you know?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your cooperation. Please be assured that your identity and your responses will be treated with strictest confidentiality.

NB: Tick the appropriate box below and fill in the blank space.

- **I am willing to take part in a focus group discussion for this study [ ]**

- **I am not willing to take part in a focus group discussion   [ ]**

Contact details: (provide name only if you are interested to take part in the focus group discussion**)**

Name: ……………………………   Telephone Number: …………………

You can email the completed questionnaire to bpmabaso@gmail.com should you decide to return it electronically.

APPENDIX F: Ethical Clearance Certificate

1 October 2013

s Busisiwe P Mabaso (942411674)
hool of Education
etermaritzburg Campus

otocol reference number: HSS/0697/013M
oject title: An exploration of teachers' understandings of sexual violence practices in schools

er Ms Mabaso,

Expedited Approva

wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval.

ny alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form,
tle of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through
c amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above
ference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period
5 years.

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

urs faithfully

Shenuka Singh (Acting Chair)

s

Supervisor: Dr Vaughn John
Academic Leader Research: Dr MN Davids
School Administrator: Mr Thabo Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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