

# **SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN THE UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT**

**BY**

**SANDILE CAIPHAS SHABALALA**

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**SANDILE CAIPHAS SHABALALA**

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## **DECLARATION**

**I, SANDILE CAIPHAS SHABALALA,** declare that:

- the research done in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work;
- this dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university;
- this dissertation does not contain any other person's data, pictures, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from someone else;
- this dissertation does not contain any other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged; and
- where other written sources have been quoted they have been fully referenced.

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**Signature**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my family, my wife Lungile and my two children Luyanda and Oluthando.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals, without whose assistance, this study would not have been possible. They are:

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- The KwaZulu Natal Department of Education for giving me permission to conduct research in the schools.
- Mr Joe Magwaza for editing the study.

## **Summary/Abstract**

Violence in schools is one of the most challenging issues facing educators, policy makers, learners, parents and the community in South Africa at large. Sometimes it occurs without educators and parents being aware of it and in most cases, learners specifically girls are reluctant to report their experiences of violence. Because the entire community is continually searching for ways to address this problem in schools, it is hoped that this study may offer some valuable insights. This study focuses on school violence in the Umbumbulu circuit affecting the safety and learning of learners. Educators are also affected to a great extent. Many factors were considered when investigating the problem of school violence. The problem was traced from the theorist's perspectives and the factors related to the family, school and the community. An extensive literature review shows that the above-mentioned factors contributed to school violence. In order to support or reject the findings of the literature study, qualitative research was conducted. Empirical data from four high schools in the Umbumbulu circuit in Durban in the South region of KwaZulu Natal were collected by means of individual interviews. Thirty two educators were interviewed including principals and senior educators in order to determine whether violence is increasing or decreasing. The study was aimed at investigating the common types of violence and the nature thereof. The causes of violence including the triggers, all form an integral part of this investigation. The teacher experiences and responses to the interviews as part of the qualitative research revealed that a culture of violence existed in these schools, and that corporal punishment was still practised. Educators' perceptions on school violence at their schools revealed that bullying persisted, especially when there was no teacher supervision. Deep anger from learners, tribal disputes and drugs were some of the factors that triggered violence in the Umbumbulu circuit. Based on these findings recommendations for the implementation of prevention programmes were made.

## **Key concepts**

School violence

School discipline

School safety

Educators

Learners

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The rates of violence in South Africa are disturbingly high. Schools are especially prone to violence due to several factors which consequently influence learners' experiences of schooling. The researcher focused on the prevalence of violence in the Umbumbulu circuit which is situated in the Umlazi district. Educators' experiences of school violence were explored in order to assist the researcher in understanding the phenomenon of school violence which, in turn, can inform the formulation of school programmes and strategies for the prevention of and intervention with violence in schools and similar contexts. Espelage, Holt and Henkel (2003) maintain that school violence, such as student-to-student victimisation and bullying, remains a national concern in communities across South Africa. This is collaborated by Burton and Leoschut (2012) who found that schools in KwaZulu-Natal suffered severely because of crime and violence. Conversely, Roberts, Zhang, Truman and Snyder (2010) highlight that, the prevalence of extreme forms of school violence is decreasing in general, but they argue that its aftermath continues to create significant problems for learners, educators, staff, and school governing bodies. As an educator in a school in the Umlazi District, the researcher has noted the high rate of violence related incidents in schools during the past number of years. Moreover, a review of related literature has revealed that educators, school governing bodies, and learners in particular face serious violence-related problems in schools. This prompted the researcher's interest and led to the research project to investigate the prevalence of school violence and to determine if school violence is increasing or decreasing with specific reference to the Umbumbulu circuit.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Empirical evidence reveals that school violence has become synonymous with physical violence perpetrated by children within the school domain. Shootings, stabbings and physical and emotional violence have taken place in both public and private schools (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker & Goesling, 2002; Zulu, Urbani & Van der

Merwe, 2004). Over the past years, the researcher has personally witnessed acts of violence in some of his neighbouring schools in the Umbumbulu circuit. The researcher has observed incidences of learners stabbing one another on the school premises. As an educator in such an environment, the researcher concurs with the generally held views that incidents of high-profile school violence contribute to educators', students' and parents' decreasing sense of security in the schools. Kaufman, Philip, Xian lei, Choy, Ruddy, Chandler, Chapman, Rand, and Ringe (1998), note that, since 1989, there has been an increase in the percentage of students who feel unsafe at school. The hypothesis advanced by Kaufman et al. (1998) is also strongly supported in this research project. Nowadays, schools are no longer safe.

School violence can come from different sources, can take on many forms and can involve different factors. For example, bullying may be learned outside the school but perpetuated inside the school because the school ignores it or does not deal with it in a satisfactory and efficient manner. It may also involve different actors at different times inside the school; for example, learners may bully each other, teachers may bully learners, learners may bully teachers, parents may bully teachers, and principals may bully teachers or are bullied by them (Williams, 2009). This statement is supported by Snyder and Sickmund (1999) who found that 8% of students reported being victimised at school and that fear of school violence kept 4% of all high school students home from school at least one day a month. They concluded that the level of school violence remained unacceptably high. A new form of school violence observed by the researcher in the school where the researcher teaches is that, older learners would make a younger learner hold on to the tyre of a car during break and then they would beat that particular learner. This form of violence has resulted in young learners being reluctant to attend school. Smith (2005) posits that, despite many years of expensive research and intervention, bullying in schools has not been reduced at all. Teachers are afraid to discipline learners, because the latter carry knives and pangas while others bring drugs on to the school premises, and female learners are often raped in school toilets (Matlala, 2011).

The media, educators and the community have also raised concerns about poor safety and security in schools. For example, Van Wyk (2010) reports that an unsuspecting educator had been stabbed by a learner in the stomach for ordering the learner not to

use a mobile phone in class. Such incidences have been witnessed by the researcher in his township school where learners verbally and sometimes physically assault educators. In 2013, a learner was suspended and later expelled by the school governing body for coming to school drunk and assaulting an educator. Another form of violence that impacts severely on educational provision is gang violence involving theft, drugs, and weapons. Such form of violence extends from the surrounding community and streets into schools where learners are seen as fair game. Acts of violence take place when learners are on their way to and from school, on the school premises, and when gang members enter schools to sell drugs, steal or extort money (Le Roux & Mokhele, 2011 and Harber, 2001).

A new drug called whunga is now very popular in townships schools. This drug has hooked many learners and many cases of violence caused by learners who are taking this drug are prevalent. X High School in Y section is a typical example of many schools experiencing school violence, theft and fighting. It has often been alleged that learners who attend this school broke into the school and stole computers. The principal and educators blame drugs and whunga in particular for theft-related problems in the school.

However, school violence is not unique to South Africa. There is range of evidence from countries across the globe. Harber (2004) reveals that, despite the fact that most countries signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, for the majority of learners schooling is an essentially authoritarian experience. He further advocates that this finding has important implications for modes of schooling and violence because an authoritarian organisation provides an environment where learners' rights and needs can too readily be ignored or suppressed and where it is difficult for teachers or learners to act independently and to critique and challenge dominant social and political orthodoxies, including those that lead to violent behaviour and conflict. This authoritarian situation of relative powerlessness and neglect of their human rights, lead to learners to be mistreated violently or be influenced by potentially violent beliefs, because the dominant norms and behaviours of the broader society are shared and not challenged by many adults in the formal education system (Harber, 2004).

This phenomenon is prevalent in many township schools where principals are so authoritative that they refer to the schools they head as their schools. They dictate and undermine educators who in turn influence learners to cause violence in schools. It should be noted that schools are a microcosm of society and that they reflect or mirror the often violent behaviour of the broader society. This in itself is worrying because not only does it signal that schools are no better than the society they serve, but also that they cannot protect children from the negative elements of the broader society. However, schools are not necessarily completely vulnerable to external violence in a violent society. A key factor in the extent to which schools can resist violence in the broader society is the extent to which the school is, and sees itself as, a well-organised and managed community with a determination to protect and care for its learners by means of a clear approach to safety and security. Harper's (2001) research that was conducted at three schools in the Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal highlights that if a school was run effectively, the chances of violence coming in from the outside and the chances of it being generated from the inside were limited. It is in such contexts that extreme forms of school violence are decreasing in prevalence (Robers, Zhang, Truman & Snyder, 2010). It remains a matter of concern; however, that school violence and its aftermath continue to create significant problems for students, teachers, staff, and the community.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Despite the declaration of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA, 1996) which states that everyone is entitled to live in a safe environment, media reports often reveal horrific incidents of different forms of violence that occur in South African schools. Acts of violence and crime are frequently observed and/or experienced in schools by educators, learners and school governing bodies. The violence in schools has affected teaching and learning to such an extent that the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) recently suggested that teachers should be paid a danger allowance. Teachers often work in fear because some learners go to school carrying weapons. This implies that teachers work in situations that are dangerous and life-threatening (Matlala, 2011). Violence in South African schools is

therefore a matter of serious concern. The main question of the study is the level of violence in schools in the Umbumbuli circuit.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following questions serve as a means to elucidate the problem of violence in the Umbumbulu circuit. They are:

Main question:

- What are the common types of violence prevalent in the Umbumbulu circuit schools?

Secondary questions:

- Are school violence levels decreasing in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?
- What are the nature, the causes and the triggers of violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?
- What are the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?

#### **1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objectives are to:

- ascertain the levels of school violence in the schools under study and identify the common types of violence prevalent in the schools;
- understand the nature, causes and triggers of school violence; and to
- analyse the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning.

## **1.6 DELIMITATION**

The delimitation of the study pertains to demarcating the boundaries of the research problem. These boundaries are incorporated in the study to narrow it down to ensure that the topic can be effectively researched. This study was demarcated as follows:

- The study was restricted to a limited geographical area that is Umbumbulu circuit;
- Umbumbulu circuit is one of the four circuits under Umlazi district namely: Dukumbane, Umxenge, Maphundu and Umbumbulu. Umbumbulu has four wards which are Amanzimtoti, Folweni, Mafa and Umbumbulu central. For the purpose of this research one high school was selected from each ward to make a total of four high schools;
- Limited resources, finances, time and work commitments limited the researcher to study a selected number of high schools in the Umbumbulu circuit, because he was familiar with the locality.

## **1.7 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS**

### **1.7.1 School violence**

School violence is defined by Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988), as cited in Zulu (2004), as any behaviour of learners, educators, administrators or non-school persons' attempt to inflict injury on another person or damages school property. Internationally, violence affects schools and is perpetuated in schools (Harber, 2004 and Pinheiro, 2006). The Centre for the Prevention of School Violence (2002) of the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency defines school violence as "...any behaviour that violates a school's educational mission or climate of respect or jeopardises the intent of the school to be free of aggression against persons or property, drugs, weapons, disruptions, and disorder. Other forms of violence include malicious insults, acts of racism, bias based hate crimes, racial profiling, assaults, theft, and racketeering". The World Health Organisation's WHO (2002) reports on violence and health and defines violence as: "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of



resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development or deprivation (WHO, 2002). Burton and Leoschut (2012) argue that the terms “violence at school” or “school violence” refer to a neatly delineated picture of violence – that is, violence that occurs within the physical border of the school environment. But this image does not contain the complete picture. Included in the definition is violence associated with the way young people “experience” school. This therefore includes acts that are, on a daily basis, associated with school, specifically travelling to and from school, or arriving at or waiting outside the school grounds.

### **1.7.2 School discipline**

School discipline is the system of rules, punishments and behavioural strategies appropriate to the regulation of children or adolescents and the maintenance of order in schools. Its aim is to control the student’s actions and behaviour. The term school discipline is also applied to the punishment that is the consequence of breaking the rule. The aim of school discipline is to set limits and restrict certain behaviours or attitudes that are seen as harmful or going against school policies, education norms and school traditions.

### **1.7.3 School safety**

School safety is a variety of programmes and services that are designed to contribute to the maintenance and establishment of safe and positive learning environment. School safety refers to a school with a positive and welcoming school climate where students succeed academically while protecting them from engaging in high risk behaviours like substance abuse teen pregnancy and violence. School safety can also refer to the critical and necessary environment in which effective teaching and learning takes place and students, staff and visitors feel physically, emotionally, socially and academically secure ([www.colorado.edu/cspv](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv)).

## **1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To address the research problem, both an in-depth literature review and an empirical investigation based on a qualitative research design was undertaken.

### **1.8.2 Qualitative study and instrumentation**

The research approach adopted in this study was a qualitative one which was aimed at drawing insights from the experiences and perceptions of educators on the factors, the extent and the impact of school violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit. The use of a qualitative investigation allowed for elaborate interpretations of phenomena without depending on numerical measurements (Zikmund & Babin, 2013). The qualitative method was intended to provide detail and depth to the more generalizable, but also more superficial, view of school violence expected from qualitative research (Spindler, 1982). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain data. This was achieved by means of a case study which was undertaken in four high schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit with the aim of developing detailed, intensive knowledge about a single case (Robson, 1993). The case study method is supported by Rule and Vaughn (2011) who argue that a case study permits the researcher to conduct a systematic in-depth investigation into a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge. The focus on high schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit as a case study assisted the researcher in generating insight and understanding of the problems, the factors, the extent to and the impact of school violence in this area. Finally, it is envisaged that the researcher was able to provide guidelines and recommendations for suitable interventions for alleviating the problem of violence in schools.

### **1.8.3 Population and sampling**

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) and Christensen (1997), population is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. The cases include all events, things and people from which the sample is to be selected. The population for the purposes of this research was four high schools in the Umbumbulu circuit. There are 30 high schools in this circuit from which a sample of four schools was drawn. The sample schools were purposively selected for characteristics of crime, gangsterism and school violence. Thirty two educators were selected as participants to participate in the research. These educators were interviewed which translates into eight educators per school: one principal, one deputy principal, two HODs, two senior educators, and two post level 1 educators. For ethical reasons, permission to conduct research in schools was sought from the relevant district office. Permission to conduct

the interviews was also requested from the principals of the selected schools. Access was first negotiated telephonically. Once access had been confirmed, selected educators were approached to participate in the study and they were advised in person of the research process. Non-probability sampling was used to allow the researcher to choose a representative sample. This form of sampling was chosen because it best allowed the researcher an approximation to the truth that had the least cost implications (Saunders *et al.*, 2000).

#### **1.8.4 Format of the interview questions**

The interview questions were divided into four parts with each part focusing on the aims of the study. Question 1 focused on the levels of violence in Umbumbulu circuit. Question 2 focused on the common type of violence. Question 3 focused on the trigger of violence. This question focused specifically on factors that lead to school violence. Question 4 focused on the impact of violence on teaching and learning. This question asked educators to describe the problems they encountered that were related to school violence. These open-ended questions elicited responses from educators to determine whether they had the capacity to deal with school violence effectively and, if so, which interventions worked best (See annexure D).

#### **1.8.5 The administration of the interviews**

The semi-structured interviews were personally conducted by the researcher because the application of investigator-administered interviews allowed the researcher the opportunity to clarify the questions. The presence and supportive demeanour of the researcher should also encourage the participants to respond openly and frankly. Moreover, research that uses investigator-administered interviews has a high response rate (Mitchell & Jolly, 2010). Overall high response rates serve to raise the reliability of the data. A case study design was undertaken which, according to McMillan and Schumacher (1997) assists the researcher in understanding one phenomenon in depth regardless of the number of sites, participants or documents used for the study.

### **1.8.6 Data analysis**

The interviews were conducted by the researcher. These semi-structured interviews were recorded using tape recording. Notes are not always perfect so voice recording ensured accuracy of transcriptions and also ensured reliability and validity of data. Questions were asked according to a protocol. As soon after the interviews as possible, the responses were transcribed and coded according to emerging themes. Data were then interpreted to make meaning. Data analysis is an on-going process. Coding is the process of assigning numerical scores or other character symbols to previously edited data, as proposed by Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013). The data collected from the interviews were transcribed and edited.

## **1.9 THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

The research study was planned as follows:

### **Chapter 1**

Chapter 1 dealt with the introductory part to the research. It provided the background to the study, objectives, critical questions as well as an overview of the entire research. These were followed by the discussion of key concepts and demarcation of the study. This chapter concluded with the chapter summary.

### **Chapter 2**

Chapter 2 dealt with the literature review and theoretical framework. In research terminology, this section of the report is referred to as the literature review. The literature reviewed was drawn from both the international and national arenas regarding school violence. This chapter also provided the background information of school violence in the South African Education System with particular reference to KwaZulu-Natal.

### **Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 outlined the research design and methodology. This is an extension of the literature review section of the report; however, this chapter focused specifically on the research design and methodology. Here, the researcher provided the aims and

objectives of the study. The chapter provided a clear indication of where the study was conducted and who participated in the study. A detailed account of how the research is designed was presented, which involved providing information regarding the types of research methods the researcher considered before choosing the one which was eventually used and included providing an account of how the data were collected. In this chapter the researcher focused on information regarding the sampling methods that the researcher considered before choosing the one that was eventually used. The sample and the population of the study were clearly identified in this chapter. The chapter also provided information on how the research instrument was constructed and subsequently dealt with. This was followed by a brief discussion of how the data were analysed. In research there were ethical issues that needed to be observed by the researcher and these were discussed in this chapter.

#### **Chapter 4**

Chapter 4 dealt with an analysis and interpretation of the data with reference to the research objectives and questions.

#### **Chapter 5**

Chapter 5 presented the findings, the summary and the recommendations.

### **10. SUMMARY**

Chapter 1 covered the main themes of this study and clearly stated the aim and objectives of the study. The research questions were also clearly stated. The background information on the history of school violence was summarised here. The challenges of school violence facing the South African Education Sector were clearly stated in this chapter. The layout of the whole research report was explained in broad terms. The following chapter on the literature review, as discussed above, will give a broader view of school violence in the South African Education sector with particular reference to KwaZulu-Natal education sector.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Violence in South African schools, particularly in the townships, escalated some thirty years ago when thousands of learners protested to Afrikaans being the medium of instruction in South African schools (Lewis, 1992). During these years, the black youth began a full-scale campaign to reject the school system that they saw as a primary agent of their enslavement (Khosa & Zwane 1995). Khosa and Zwane (1995) further argue that the education system for black people under the apartheid government was a vital instrument of oppression and contributed to subsequent school violence. This is supported by Kollapan (2006) who asserts that, when exploring school violence it is important to consider this phenomenon in a broader societal context. South African, public and independent school learners, have a very unique history that is plagued by various forms of violence (Kollapan, 2006). South Africans live in a country that was born painfully through conflict, often escalating into violence of war and political struggles. According to Kollapan (2006), South Africans have indeed come a long way since the first democratic elections in 1994 and although the political goodwill and that of the general public have created a platform for a transition into a more peaceful future, South Africans experience many symptoms of a society that is influenced by a heritage of violence and disruption. The researcher aims to elucidate the problem of violence in schools in the literature review and describes the existing body of knowledge. The body of knowledge is thus seen as the context within which the current study is embedded (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This context provides a platform for further discussion and the positioning of research findings (Kaniki, 2006). In addition, the literature review aims to provide the contextual basis for the particular focus of the research within the general topic being studied (Mertens, 2005). The literature review therefore aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the research topic by advancing, refining or revising what is already known (Merriam, 2009). In Chapter 1, the focus was on orientation and background to the study. Chapter 2 deals with literature review and theoretical framework. The background and history of education in South Africa are provided. Violence, in Kenya

as a developing country and the United States, a developed country, is looked at. The purpose will be to explore school violence in these countries in order to draw on their ways of dealing with this problem to assist the researcher in the findings of the study.

## **2.2 THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

### ***School violence in South Africa: a reflective perspective***

The factor that needs to be taken into account when attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school violence in South African schools is the greater social, cultural and political context. The South African society has argued to have a culture of violence (Ward, 2007). The country currently has to manage the after effects of the Apartheid regime in which discriminatory policies entrenched structural forms of inequality and promoted high levels of poverty (Jefthas & Artz, 2007; Ward, 2007; Burton, 2008). During this era the youth, specifically black youth, were brought up in a context in which violence was a part of everyday life and it became a means of overthrowing the apartheid regime. Thousands of youth and children engaged in the struggle with the aim of liberation and freedom from the oppressive apartheid system (Kipperberg, 2007). It can be argued that the heightened politicisation of adolescents during the period 1970-1990 in South Africa offered a temporary reprieve for certain black adolescents from the extremely negative impact of the South African society (Stevens & Lockhat, 2003). The structural inequalities entrenched in this regime also resulted in townships becoming places of severe poverty and overcrowding. With the end of apartheid and the commencement of democracy in 1994 there came a need to redefine the role of youth. The youth were no longer expected to be 'young lions' but rather functioning members of the new dispensation (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). According to Kipperberg (2007), this shift in role meant that the youth no longer played a central role but rather a peripheral one. It can be argued that this shift was not easy as many of the heroes pre-1994 had to battle against the levels of poverty and inequality characteristic of apartheid. Continued inferiority and a lack of power lead the youth to turn to criminal and violent activities (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). It can therefore be argued that the apartheid regime developed an alienated generation for whom violence was the only means of making change. Apartheid also resulted in the

development of a generation of parents who were products of an abnormal society and broken family structure, therefore tending to lack vital parenting skills needed to raise healthy children (Kipperberg, 2007).

The schooling system in South Africa was a brutal instrument of oppression against the intellect and aspirations of the country's youth for decades. Yet that same system also served as a site for an intense struggle against oppression, a struggle in which many of today's leaders learnt the meaning of freedom and justice. (National Education Plan of action, 2003). According to SAHO, project before the democratic government, the word 'Bantu' in the term Bantu education is highly politically charged and has derogatory connotations. The Bantu Educational system was designed to train and fit Africans for their role in the newly (1948) evolving apartheid society. Education was viewed as a part of the overall apartheid system including 'homelands', urban restrictions, pass laws and job reservation. This role was one of labourer, worker, and servant only. As H.F Verwoerd, the architect of the Bantu Education Act (1953) conceived it: "There is no place for the African in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. It is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim, absorption in the European community" (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

### **2.2.2 Pre-Apartheid Education of Africans**

It is mistaken however, to understand that there was no pre-apartheid educational marginalisation of black South Africans. Long before the historic 1948 white elections that gave the Nationalist Party power, there was a system of segregated and unequal education in the country. While white schooling was free, compulsory and expanding, black education was sadly neglected. A lack of financial provision and an urban influx led to gravely insufficient schooling facilities, teachers and educational materials as well as student absenteeism or non-enrolment. A 1936 Inquiry identified problems, only to have almost nothing done about these needs (National Education Plan of action, 2003).



### **2.2.3 Bantu education and the racist compartmentalising of education.**

In 1949 the government appointed the Eiselen Commission with the task of considering African education provision. The Commission recommended 'resorting to radical measures' for the 'effective reform of the Bantu school system.' In 1953, prior to the apartheid government's Bantu Education Act, 90% of black South African schools were state-aided mission schools. The Act demanded that all such schools register with the state, and remove control of African education from the churches and provincial authorities. This control was centralised in the Bantu Education Department, a body dedicated to keeping it separate and inferior. Almost all the mission schools closed down. The Roman Catholic Church was largely alone in its attempt to keep its schools going without state aid. The 1953 Act also separated the financing of education for Africans from a general state spending and linked it to direct tax paid by Africans themselves, with the result that far less was spent on black children than on white children (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

In 1954-1945 black teachers and students protested against Bantu Education. The African Education Movement was formed to provide alternative education. For a few years, cultural clubs operated as informal schools, but by 1960 they had closed down. The Extension of University Education Act, Act 45 of 1959, put an end to black students attending white universities (mainly the universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand) separating tertiary institutions according to race. This Act set up separate 'tribal colleges' for black university students. The so-called 'bush' Universities such as Fort Hare, Vista, Venda, and Western Cape were formed. Blacks could no longer freely attend white universities. Again, there were strong protests.

Expenditure on Bantu Education increased from the late 1960s, once the apartheid Nationalist government saw the need for a trained African labour force. Through this, more African children attended school than under the old missionary system of education, albeit grossly deprived of facilities in comparison with the education of other races, especially whites. Overcrowded classrooms were used on a rotating basis. There was also a lack of teachers, and many of those who taught were under qualified. In 1961, only 10 % of black teachers held a matriculation certificate (i.e. the last year of high school). Black education was essentially retrogressing, with teachers being

less qualified than their students. The Coloured Person's Education Act of 1963 put control of 'coloured' education under the Department of Coloured Affairs. 'Coloured' schools also had to be registered with the government. 'Coloured' education was made compulsory, but was now effectively separated from white schooling (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

The 1965 Indian Education Act was passed to separate and control Indian education, which was placed under the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1976, the SAIC took over certain educational functions. Indian education was also made compulsory. Because of the government's 'homelands' policy, no new high schools were built in Soweto between 1962 and 1971 students were meant to move to their relevant homeland to attend the newly built schools there. Then in 1972 the government gave in to pressure from business to improve the Bantu Education system to meet business's need for a better trained black workforce. 40 new schools were built in Soweto. Between 1972 and 1976 the number of pupils at secondary schools increased from 12,656 to 34,656. One in five Soweto children was attending secondary school (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

#### **2.2.4 Oppression through inferior education and the 1976 Soweto Uprising**

The literature reveals that there was an increase in secondary school attendance which had a significant effect on youth culture. Previously, many young people spent the time between leaving primary school and obtaining a job if they were lucky in gangs, which generally lacked any political consciousness. But now secondary school students were developing their own. In 1969 the black South African Student Organization (SASO) was formed. Though Bantu Education was designed to deprive Africans and isolated them from subversive ideas, indignation at being given such 'gutter' education became a major focus for resistance, most notably in the 1976 Soweto uprising. In the wake of this effective and clear protest, some reform attempts were made, but it was a case of too little, too late. Major disparities in racially separate education provision continued into the 1990s. When high-school students in Soweto started protesting for better education on 16 June 1976, police responded with teargas and live bullets. It is commemorated today by a South African national holiday, Youth day, which honours all the young people who lost their lives in the

struggle against Apartheid and Bantu Education (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

In the 1980s very little education at all took place in the Bantu Education system, which was the target of almost continuous protest. Political violence was at the very heart of the parenting generation of our current students at school. These parents were often caught up in the struggles of an unjust apartheid system. Data obtained from a study done by Dawes, Tredoux and Feinstein (1989) indicate that children of families brutally evicted from their homes during the apartheid era displayed emotional, conduct, and physical disorders not present before the attacks that were evident two months thereafter. The legacy of decades of inferior education underdevelopment, poor self-image, economic depression, unemployment, crime, etc. lasted far beyond the introduction of a single educational system in 1994 with the first democratic elections, and the creation of the Government of National Unity (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

The South African Education System developed along racist lines through the policy of Apartheid. The management of facilities was organised along racial lines and even statutory bodies controlling the Education System were arranged along racial lines. This resulted in facilities that were completely different, with those belonging to Whites superior and those belonging to Blacks inferior. This resulted in a system that over the years became fragmented and biased towards serving mainly urban dwellers. It also promoted the development of a private sector to cater for the few privileged people and the small black middle-class. When the democratic government was voted into power these imbalances of the past had to be addressed. This was a huge challenge for the government of the day, because it was not only the Public Education System that needed to be reshaped, but also the economic and social injustices caused by Apartheid. The democratic government, led by the African National Congress, had to come up with a new National Plan for the Education System (National Education Plan of action, 2003).

## **2.3 INTERNAL TRIGGERS TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

Osher, Van Acker, Morrison, Gable, Dwyer, and Quinn (2004), describe school level factors that are related to school violence, such as the structural aspects of the school for example, the restrictive institutional environments, social context variables, the school establishment, the value of student participation, the school resources for example, social capital of the school community and also peer groups are looked at.

### **2.3.2 Schools as restrictive institutions**

The literature reveals that schools as restrictive institution triggers violence. This is supported by Burton and Leoschut (2012) who state that violence in South African schools is not a new phenomenon. It is likely that as long as formal schools have existed, violence of some form has taken place within the physical walls of the environment. School violence has undoubtedly permeated the school safety literature and initiatives that have emerged over the past ten years (Burton & Leoschut, 2012). Osborne (2004) views schools as restrictive institutional environments that rigidly impose laws on students, leaving them with little choice and freedom.

According to Van der Aardweg (1987), teachers who respond to learners with either authoritarian or coercive behaviours, followed by manipulation and persuasion, reduce the learner's self-esteem and often this behaviour results in the persistence of disruptive behaviour. Gable et al. (1996) explain that learners' aggressive behaviour often results from flawed educational practices. The principal is also mentioned as a determinant of educator misconduct. In this regard principals who are unable to control staff or who adopt an authoritarian approach lead to resentment. The lack of support of principals by education departments and the power of unions are contributing to ill-discipline in schools (Van Wyk, 2001). Frustrations build up in some of the students, especially in those who misidentify with the academic identity held dear by those academic institutions. Osborne (2004) emphasises the fact that in some cases, school systems need to rethink the way they manage schooling,

particularly at the secondary level where the academic focus is often over emphasised. This is especially important for those students who are at risk of violent behaviour. They are often pressured to identify with the school's academic aspirations, yet are unable to achieve the expected academic outcomes. It is critical that the faculty and staff at the school assist these students in either improving their performance to meet their goals, through the increased access to resources, remediation and extra practice or they should be guided in forming alternate expectations and more realistic goals.

### **2.3.3 Social dynamics context**

The literature has revealed that social dynamics can have a major impact on school violence. These social dynamics include dangerous aspects of the school environment, such as a large number of risky student behaviours and non-existent school safety policies. School-based red flag areas that can be measured by schools include teacher-student relationships, student-peer relationships, disciplinary practices, school building characteristics, parent involvement, teacher support, fairness of rules, and student perceptions of the school safety environment (Dwyer, Osher, &Warger, 1998). According to Defour (2005), as fear among learners increase, confidence in school administrators or other adults diminishes and informal social control against violence weakens. As a result, learners will resort to carrying weapons. Schools, where learners feel safe, foster high-quality relationships among learners and teachers, for instance, while decreasing the probability of violence (Loukas, 2007).

In the South African context, one needs to understand that various factors contributing to the risk of violence are present, such as poverty, neglect, ineffective parenting, dysfunctional family life, high-density housing in townships and informal settlements, diverse racial, ethnic or tribal composition, organised crime, as well as childhood exposure to violence, crime, and the abuse of alcohol and drugs (De Wet, 2003). According to Du Plessis (2008), all these factors reverberate in our schools. De Wet (2003) concludes that not only could all of these factors spill over into the schools, with serious consequences for education, but they could also lead to a collapse of a learning culture. Blandford (1998) claims that some of the causes of violence in schools are the effects of a poor socio-economic environment, and factors such as drug abuse, child abuse, neglect, and community- and media-related violence, all of

which reverberate in many classrooms worldwide. At the same time, however, there are many schools in the world which, regardless of their size, socio-economic influences, student composition or geographic setting, have safe and orderly classrooms and school grounds. This is corroborated by Mncube and Harber (2013) who maintain that schools are more directly involved in internal forms of violence where they actually perpetrate the violence themselves or reproduce it by their failure to act, rather than have it imposed upon them from the outside. Skiba, Simmons, Peterson, and Forde, (2006) and Swearer and Espelage (2004) echo this view that schools do not merely reflect outside influences, but they also create internal social contexts that can alter enhance or exacerbate outside influences on school violence. Thus, social dynamics within the school, such as school policies, teachers' support of students, and student participation, are examples of internal school social-context variables that can have a major impact on school violence.

Benbenishty and Astor (2005) posit that one striking feature of school violence centres on the heterogeneity of schools in their levels of violence within the same cultures even more surprising; heterogeneity of violence exists in schools within the same neighbourhood. According to Bemerk and Keys (2000: 16), the principles of modelling and social learning are at work when youngsters socialise with others who use violence and aggression to achieve the desired outcomes.

Natalie (in Gable & Manning 1996) states that some learners commit violent acts because they believe their choices in dealing with aggression and violence is limited; learned aggression becomes a viable tool for coping with conflict. Research indicates that some schools may have up to five times more violence than other schools within similar geographic boundaries and one reason for this variation stems from the fact that in many schools, students, teachers, and the school social dynamics continually change, leading to varying degrees of the problem over time (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005).

#### **2.3.4 The school factor**

The perceived increase in student violence sits within a wider cultural environment in which the use of violence as part of being tough, settling differences and resolving

conflict is strongly endorsed. Such endorsement occurs on football fields, on the roads, and as young people start to go out, at parties and clubs. This may be reinforced by a peer group in which alcohol and machismo are highly valued. Students' understanding and attitude toward violence are thus shaped in contexts other than the school. Students may receive messages from the school of no tolerance for physical violence at the same time as receiving messages of its normalisation and acceptance outside the school context. Parents sometimes implicitly condone violence even if not directly promoting it (Grunseit *et al.*, 2005). For example, parents may caution their child 'not to look for a fight', but urge them if bothered by another student to make sure they give the opponent a good hiding. However, considerable evidence suggests that youth violence in schools is not merely a reflection of what goes on in the environment surrounding it.

Beyond the influence of individual and cultural factors predisposing students to violence, factors associated with the management, organisation or culture of a school make a significant difference to the likelihood of a student becoming involved in violence or school misconduct (Grunseit *et al.*, 2005; Jenkins, 1997). Welsh, Greene and Jenkins (1999) found that almost all the variation in school behaviour disorder rates in their study could be explained by various school-level factors, including perceived fairness of school rules, clarity of school rules and attachment to the school. Important factors influencing the likelihood of being violent included students' knowledge of whether there was a school discipline policy, the formal teaching of school rules, and student attitudes regarding school rules, the classroom culture, racism and bullying in the school. The likelihood of attacking another student was higher among those who felt that students were uninformed about school rules, spent a lot of class time copying from textbooks or the blackboard, or felt that good behaviour was not rewarded in the school. A lower likelihood was found among students who felt that their teachers were prepared for class lessons, who felt that they always received help with their schoolwork, and who felt that their teachers curtailed racism and bullying (Grunseit *et al.*, 2005). Frank (2006) observes that the school setting is in fact a double-edged sword as it has the potential to offer interventions to violent behaviour, but is also the system where children are vulnerable to violence through offending and victimisation.

Kandakai (in De Wet 2007) argues that learner conflict takes place more easily in unkempt, graffiti-covered and unhygienic schools than in neat schools where a positive school climate prevails. Furlong and Morrison (2000) mention that there are several characteristics that make schools more conducive to violent behaviour: schools being too big; a bad school ethos, discipline challenges and the school's failure to confront issues of sexual harassment. Vally and Dalamba (1999) posit that schools in South Africa also play a part in reproducing violence through their continuing failure to confront issues of sexual harassment. However, sexual harassment, abuse and violence at school also occurs in prestigious, affluent schools and are not only limited to township schools. Furthermore, corporal punishment in schools has been banned in South Africa, yet despite this, it still prevails in township schools (Motseke, 2010; Morrel, 2001). In addition to the violence they are subjected to outside of school in their communities. These children are also regularly abused in their schools by their teachers. Schools have been accused of contributing to violent behaviour.

According to Burton (2008), schools are generally seen as mechanisms to develop and reinforce positive citizens with pro-social attitudes and as sites where individuals are prepared for the role they are to play in society at large. However, studies, media reports and the like suggest that despite popular discourse schools are in fact the sites of violence (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). What is becoming evident in South African society is that violence is a serious worry in both primary and secondary schools across age, gender, race and school categories. Importantly, not only children, but also teachers are being affected by the high rates of violence in schools. What research is finding is that in many cases children are the perpetrators of the violence, with teachers also becoming the victims (Burton, 2007). Spitznagel (2002) accuses American schools of the lack of a spiritual focus. The prohibition against prayer or anything connected to religion in these schools has left the learners without one of the main focal points of his or her life. It creates a void filled by other things. The schools' actual physical space may be conducive to aggressive behaviour (Bemak & Keys, 2000). Large numbers of learners in small spaces, a limited capacity to avoid or respond to confrontation, routines and demand for learners' conformity contribute to feelings of anger, resentment and rejection (Gable & Manning, 1996).



Bemak and Keys (2000) and Van der Aardweg (1987) postulate that school rules that require rigid and unquestioned conformity may also routinely lead to feelings of anger, resentment and rejection. Gable et al., (1996) suggest that problems of aggression and violence often grow more acute when the governance of schools becomes too authoritarian. According to Van der Aardweg (1987), teachers who respond to learners with either authoritarian or coercive behaviours, followed by manipulation and persuasion, reduce the learner's self-esteem and often this behaviour results in the persistence of disruptive behaviour. Gable et al., (1996) explain that learners' aggressive behaviour often results from flawed educational practices. The school curriculum, whether prescribed by accrediting agencies or more subtle aspects, such as teacher attitudes towards learners, may contribute to or aggravate situations that lead to learner aggression. Alshuler in (Van Wyk, 2001) concurs with Van de Aardeweg when he argues that the most prevalent forms of violence are discipline conflicts initiated by teachers who oppress, exploit, and fail to recognise learners as persons.

#### **2.3.5 The school resources**

Schools' actual physical space may be conducive to aggressive behaviour (Bemak & Keys, 2000). Large numbers of learners in small spaces, a limited capacity to avoid or respond to confrontation, routines and demand for learners' conformity contribute to feelings of anger, resentment and rejection (Gable & Manning, 1996). Bemak and Keys (2000) and Van der Aardweg (1987) postulate that school rules that require rigid and unquestioned conformity may also routinely lead to feelings of anger, resentment and rejection. Gable *et al.*, (1996) suggest that problems of aggression and violence often grow more acute when the governance of schools becomes too authoritarian. The literature (Burton, 2008) further reveals that in terms of school management, educators in township schools exhibit a lack of adequate classroom management skills, a perception that to some is exacerbated by the banning of corporal punishment as a disciplinary option. Previously, discipline was generally maintained through fear of physical punishment. Alternative effective discipline measures appear to be lacking in this specific context. Furthermore, the Schools Act acknowledges the role that the governing body should play in ensuring a safe school environment (Prinsloo, 2005).

### 2.3.6 Peer pressure

One cause or factor, which may contribute to school violence, is that of peer pressure (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). According to Mathews, Griggs and Caine (1999), the need for status and power among peer groups can be understood to be one of the causes of violence amongst the youth. Several of the highly violent students are members of violent peer groups (Fuchs, 1995; Eisner *et al.*, 2000; Fuchs & Luedtke, 2008). This has raised the question to what extent the interaction with the gang might stimulate violent behaviours at school. However, it should be noted that the causal direction is not yet confirmed and it might also well be that violent students choose to enter a violent peer group because they themselves are prone to aggressive behaviours. With specific reference to male learners, it can be argued that there exists great pressure to be seen as brave, to be accepted in the peer group as well as to have a girlfriend. Girls on the other hand, are more easily reported as victims due to constructions of femininity and gendered dynamics. For example, girls may experience the pressure to be sexually active due to the wish to be accepted in a peer group.

Research conducted in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, with pregnant Xhosa-speaking adolescent girls found that most of the girls viewed sex as a mechanism to avoid peer exclusion (Wood, Mafoah & Jewkes, 1996). This perspective is based on the finding that the most consistent characteristic of students who are violent is having friends who are violent. Peers have a significant effect on many aspects of youth behaviour, and when the peer norm is machismo, bravado, anti-authoritarian or violent behaviour it has a strong link with an individual's tendency to be violent. However the mechanism is not well understood. According to Gottfredson (2001), it could be that children rejected by prosocial peers for whatever reason do not experience opportunities to learn appropriate ways to interact; or it could equally be that a peer group in which antisocial behaviour is considered normal is more accepting. Peer groups can become a breeding ground for violence hence an individual's peer group may place him or her at risk. Van der Aardweg (1987) maintains that the major portion of school learning takes place within the context of the peer group. The peer group commands one's allegiance and individuals find peers are meaningful and necessary to them. He further states that group norms and values are critical to the shaping of perceptions, cognition and action. Coleman and Hendry (1995) indicate

that the desire to identify with one's peer group requires adherence to particular norms, behaviour and role performance that impose conformity. According to Bemak and Keys (2000), the principles of modelling and social learning are at work when youngsters socialise with others who use violence and aggression to achieve the desired outcomes. Natalie (in Gable & Manning 1996) states that some learners commit violent acts because they believe their choices in dealing with aggression and violence is limited; learned aggression becomes a viable tool for coping with conflict.

## **2.4 EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTING TRIGGERS TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

When attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school violence in South Africa, one needs to explore the problem from multiple perspectives taking into account the many different dynamics that have influenced this phenomenon. According to Burton (2007), there is no single cause of violence, but rather, a series of interrelated factors that impact on young people in different ways, one of which will be the perpetration of violent acts against other young people and society in general (Burton, 2007). In other words, it is extremely difficult, or impossible, to pinpoint one primary reason for the high rates of violence. Rather, there are a variety of interlinking and compounding factors that are contributing to the high rates of violence amongst South African children, especially transpiring in contexts such as the school, which should be safe for children. External contributing variables are outside forces that contribute to school violence for example, parental involvement, poverty, community delinquency, and gang violence and bullying. The community, school, classroom, family, and peer group interact with student characteristics to influence both desired and undesired school behaviours (Osher et al., 2004).

### **2.4.2 Parental involvement**

Parental violence has been identified to stimulate violence at school. This correlation has been demonstrated either for aggressive patterns among the parents (Benson & Fox, 2004) or even more pronounced for parental violence against their children (Lober & Stouthamer-Lober, 1998; Mansel, 2001; Straus, 2001). Children of families

in severely underprivileged socio-economic conditions have been proven to be more violent than children of better-off families. This is especially true for parents who are out of work or draw local welfare support. However, given the literature at hand it is not clear whether this effect results directly from the socio economic disadvantage or whether the relative deprivation compared to better-off class mates stimulates violent behaviours by these children (Lipset, 1964; Hofstadter, 1964). When attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school violence in South Africa, one needs to explore the problem from multiple perspectives taking into account the many different dynamics that have influenced this phenomenon.

According to Burton (2007), there is no single cause of violence, but rather, a series of interrelated factors impacting on young people in different ways, one of which will be in the perpetration of violent acts against other young people and society in general. Hill and Hill (1994) assert that a second wave effect of the absence of family structure includes children turning to cults, gangs, drugs or crime for escape, recognition and identity. Because children under 18 years are seldomly convicted or are easily paroled in certain legal systems, they are used as perpetrators.

Lysled (1994) states that violence of one family member towards another is an increasing problem. From such unstable beginnings, children learn violent behaviour that is then carried over to school. Roland (in O' Moore, 1990) found that negativism on the part of the mother and father and negative emotions between the parents themselves were strongly related to bullying in children. Guetzloe (2000) states that family factors associated with violent behaviour include inadequate parental management skills, harsh or inconsistent discipline, coercion and non-compliance, limited or non-existent supervision, parental distance or un-involvement, parental pathology or criminology, and stressful external events. A distinction should be made between external factors that are easily alterable and factors that are relatively stable. Individual schools ought to focus on external factors that are amenable to change by the specific school. For instance, increasing positive parental involvement could contribute to a peaceful school (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandier, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005).

### **2.4.3 Poverty**

Poverty is another factor that is linked with violent behaviour. Neighbourhoods with inadequate housing, high unemployment rates, high rates of crime and violence and few or non-existent community based services such as job training, day care, recreation, and public transport are seen by Bemak and Keys (2000) as contributory factors to violence. According to Friedlander (in Hill & Hill 1994), poverty itself does not generate violent behaviour. It is the combination of poverty plus alienation and the hopeless feeling of despair in an uncaring nation that is the seedbed of hostility, conflict and violence. For disadvantaged children, violence is a way of life and very real and to cope with violence is to survive (Forster in Van der Aardweg, 1987).

Privilege does not protect the learner from sexual violence, but the poverty that is prevailing in township schools has been found to often render a learner more vulnerable. This needs to be contextualised within the framework of poverty-stricken areas where learners need to travel long distances in order to arrive at school, often making use of public transport, which in itself is inherently unsafe and dangerous (Naylor, 2002).

### **2.4.4 Community delinquency**

When attempting to understand the problem of school-based violence it is imperative that one looks beyond the school to the community and the neighbourhoods in which the school is located. Ward (2007) contends that the everyday social contexts in which children learn and grow play a critical role in the socialisation of children. This perspective is based on the concept of the school culture as an expression of a wider community which Mazerolle (2010) describes as having a disordered values framework.

It recognises the impact of wider issues e.g. poverty, availability of drugs, and acceptance of exposure to violence in student violence. Schools may find their students are struggling with the disjunction of differing views on violence, and having to find a way to exist in the wider community in which other powerful truths about violence are promoted (Grunseit *et al.*, 2005). One could argue that violent

communities plague South African society. Research shows that the experience of violence in communities is across class areas. That is violence does not only exist in poor and impoverished communities. Problematically, the experience of violence has become normalised within the South African society. Burton (2008) reports, drawing on the National School Violence Study (NSVS), half of the secondary school learners report feeling safe and liking their neighbourhood despite high levels of crime (Burton, 2008). Other community factors, which increase the risk of school violence, include the high rates of weapons and drugs in schools. This implies that these goods are easily available outside of schools in the home or community context. Exposure to high levels of violence and being brought up in violent contexts has been found to negatively affect children's understandings of how the world works. For example, children's sense of safety in the world is reduced causing feelings of anxiety and fear to be experienced. Children may also battle to sleep which in turn will negatively impact their ability to concentrate at school. In order to cope with these feelings and also as a result of exposure to violent behaviour, children may come to learn that acting violently is the normal or legitimate way of handling conflict and keeping safe (Schwartz & Hopmeyer Gorman, 2003). School violence aetiology may stem from a larger community and societal factors over which the school has little or no control (De Wet, 2007).

According to Burton (2008), weapons, drugs and alcohol are available in many schools across the country. For example three in ten learners at secondary school know fellow students or learners who have brought weapons to schools; three in ten report that it is easy to organise a knife, and one in ten reports that it is easy to organise a gun. With such easy access to substances and weapons, it is not unanticipated that levels of violence in South African schools would be so high. Many studies show that the age at which learners start drinking is getting younger and younger. Now, it is very common for school learners to bunk classes or to be seen drinking alcohol on their way to school. Political violence in South Africa from 1948 onwards led to high levels of intolerance and subsequently to much violence especially within the black education system (Lewis, 1992; De Wet 2007). Morrell (2008) argues that schools in South Africa were the trenches of the liberation struggle especially during the 1970s and 1980s. He further argues that it seems as if the situation has not changed since the African National Congress came into power in

1994, because instead of producing a new generation of peace-loving and industrious pupils, the new freedom was followed by an increase in crime and violence in South African schools. The pervasive condition of poverty, especially in black communities who generally live in townships allows for unemployment, resulting in many people in these areas being economically inactive for large periods of time, or sometimes indefinitely (Bennett-Johnson 2004).

This has resulted in people seeking social and economic survival through selling alcohol and drugs. These conditions exacerbate the social conditioning of those children and adolescents who pattern themselves on these perceived role models. The modelling continues to other violent behaviours such as using weapons and joining gangs, with this kind of behaviour spilling over into schools (Bennett-Johnson 2004). However, given this, Donald et al. (2002) refer to research evidence from South Africa and other countries where adolescents, especially males, have shown resilience to violence.

Characteristic of communities in which there are high levels of violence is the accessibility of alcohol, drugs (illegal or addictive substances) and weapons (Leoschut, 2008). Besides, high levels of exposure to violence in disorganised communities also became evident in the Schools Violence study. According to Burton (2008), those children whose family members used illegal drugs or had been incarcerated were twice as likely as other children to experience school-based violence. Research also indicates that there is a strong connection between substance abuse and crime. For example, high levels of alcohol consumption and the use of drugs increase the levels of aggression and therefore the levels of violence used in the committing of the crime. With specific reference to the school context, what is becoming evident is the increasing availability of drugs and alcohol amongst school learners. It seems that not only learners are the ones bringing these substances onto the school premises, but that some teachers are using children to get alcohol from the shebeens or missing classes to go and drink.

Socio-economic factors within the community and society also impact on school violence. The ready availability of drugs in these communities, as well as the high numbers of adults involved in crime further increases the probability of youth

involvement in violence (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). Researchers agree on a link between alcohol and other drugs and youth violence. Van der Aardweg (1987) maintains that drug abuse and school vandalism and violence go hand in hand. Bemak and Keys (2000) assert that communities where alcohol is easily available to underage youngsters place the youngsters who live in those communities at a higher risk for violent encounters. They further state that the use of alcohol makes a person less inhibited and thereby increases the likelihood of violence.

Bemak and Keys (2000) assert that access to firearms is a factor in many youth homicides loaded (Hill & Hill, 1994). In a study by Eliasov and Frank (2002) on the nature and extent of crime and violence in twenty schools in South Africa, the researchers found that, although problems were reported across all school categories, disadvantaged schools persistently experience more severe problems, particularly relating to vandalism, physical violence, gangsterism and the possession of drugs and weapons. The availability of these guns to a youngster who typically employs violent and aggressive encounters may result in a lethal outcome. Increase in gun sales to wider audiences lead to outbreaks of violence. Guns purchased in response to fear are commonly kept at home.

#### **2.4.5 Gang violence**

The former system of apartheid education ensured that conditions in black schools generally did not ensure effective learning (Lewis 1992; Mdhluli & Zwane cited in Crawage 2005). These conditions included unqualified educators and a lack of equitable education for all learners, as well as a lack of resources to provide quality education. Township schools were overcrowded, had little resources, and in some schools learners did not even have desks. Dissatisfaction with these conditions led township learners to engage in riots and resort to violence (Lewis 1992; Van Zyl Slabbert, cited in Crawage 2005; Meier 2005) in order to ensure an equitable education. These and other community and societal factors encouraged the formation of subcultures as alternatives to the dominant culture from which they experience themselves as marginalised and excluded. These subcultural formations manifested themselves by way of, amongst others, gang formation and ensuing violence. Lazarus and Lolwana (2006), maintain that external variables such as gang violence are often



born out of needs and a social disadvantaged situation to which, due to the influence of a free market democracy, our schools might unwittingly be contributing. Musick (1995) classifies gangs into three different categories. In the first category, named the scavenger gang's crimes, transgressions are usually not planned, and this group's members are often low achievers or school dropouts.

Secondly, territorial gangs are well-organised gangs that have initiation rites which separate members from non-members. Often, prospective members have to prove their loyalty to the group by fighting. The third category is the corporate gangs which are highly structured criminal conspiracies that are organised to sell drugs. It is believed that teenagers as young as fourteen could become members. According to Donald et al. (2006), it is important to distinguish between the different kinds of violence, as it can easily be looked at as a single or general problem in society. They claim that although they sometimes overlap, a clear distinction can be drawn between political violence, gang violence, general criminal violence, and violence in relationships.

All of these types of violence are in some way affecting many of our South African schools and are often interrelated. Gangs often engage in criminal violence to maintain power and control. According to Kodluboy (2004), school systems are prone to ambivalence about or outright denial of gang presence or the significance of gang presence in schools. We often find this to be true within South African schools. Gang-related activity is sometimes broadly defined as any antisocial behaviour committed by or among gang members, and it is sometimes more restrictively defined as antisocial behaviour occurring as a discernible function of gang membership or for a discernible benefit to the gang itself (Kodluboy, 2004). Thompkins (2000) points out that learner believe that if they retaliate against an act of aggression that is committed by one gang member, they will have to deal with the entire gang; therefore they refuse to report gang activities at their schools.

One has to agree with Dissel (1997) that gangs in schools should be seen as a community problem in South Africa and, since schools are a part of the community, they reflect the problems of that community (Crawage, 2005). Gangs which cause violence in schools is not restricted to one province but are found in schools

throughout South Africa and the sad fact of the current situation in South Africa is that, as Donald *et al.* (2006) point out, “gang violence is often born out of need and a socially disadvantaged situation”. In support of this view Thompkins (2000) states that sometimes, innocent learners can be drawn or forced into violent behaviour, alcohol and drug abuse by joining gangs, as this provides them with a sense of belonging. Barbarin and Richter (2001) argue that youngsters may, on the other hand, suffer psychological trauma and encounter social alienation, resentment and suspicion from their families and community as a consequence of their involvement in gang-related activities.

Therefore, it is important that teachers understand the nature of all these feelings of aggression when developing a disciplinary plan for their schools. Researchers (Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998) also state that there is a relationship between violent crimes in schools and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. In township communities, where alcohol and drugs are easily available to under-age children, the availability of these commodities places those who live in these communities at a higher risk of violent encounters. Ensink *et al.* (1997) conclude by agreeing that the use of alcohol makes a person less inhibited, and thereby increases the likelihood of violence in situations where violence is not frowned upon.

#### **2.4.6 Bullying**

The literature reveals that bullying can take on many forms, such as physical violence, threats, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, and exclusion from a group, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, and abusive comments. O’Connell, Pepler and Craig (1999) define bullying as negative actions which may be physical or verbal, have hostile intent, are repeated over time and involve a power differential. They contend that bullying unfolds in a social context, namely the dyad, peer group, the playground setting, and the school environment. Bullying can be direct or indirect. Direct bullying involves physical contact or verbal abuse whereas indirect bullying involves subtle social manipulations such as gossip, spreading rumours and exclusion. Bullying can be looked at through the lens of the social learning perspective of modelling and reinforcement (Bandura, 1977).

Bandura (1977) identifies three conditions that influence the likelihood of modelling. Children are more likely to imitate a model when the results also indicate that bullying is rife in schools. Both learners and teachers are guilty of bullying. De Wet (2006) defines bullying as intentional, hurtful acts, words or other behaviour, such as name-calling, threatening, or shunning, committed by an individual or individuals against another individual or individuals. De Wet (2006) adds that bullying is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the rights of learners and teachers to learn and to teach in a safe environment. One could argue that bullying compromises the quality of interpersonal relationships among learners and between learners and teachers. Teachers will no longer be regarded as beacons of hope and as role models.

Prinsloo (2005) maintains that South African educators have an important duty to protect the learners who have been placed in their care, not only in terms of the Constitution and other legislation, but also in terms of their *in loco parentis* status. Prinsloo (2005) further argues that human dignity is a critical and extremely fragile component of the multifarious relationships making up the educational environment, especially because so many minors or otherwise vulnerable and defenceless people are involved. The study also showed that those in power perpetrated violence directly and indirectly – directly when they themselves bully learners, and indirectly when not acting when violent behaviour is reported to them. Learners need to feel that they can trust and that they are supported by school teachers and the principal. According to the Code of Conduct of the South African Council of Educators (SACE 2011), teachers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of learners.

#### **2.4.7 Summary**

This section of the study has highlighted school violence in South Africa focusing on the background, Internal and external triggers of school violence. The following section will review school violence in a developed country. The review of school violence in this country will guide and assist the researcher in the findings of the study. For the purpose of this study, the researcher has chosen the United States.

## **2.5 SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN UNITED STATES**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

The previous part of the study highlighted school violence in South Africa. The background and the history of South African Education, internal and external triggers were provided. This part will highlight school violence in the developed country and the United States was opted for. The purpose is to guide the researcher in the findings of this study. The literature reveals that, in the United States, thirteen adolescents are murdered every day. Eight children and teens die in gun-related incidents. Almost every year there is some kind of mass shooting in an elementary or secondary school (Centers for Disease Control, 2010, 2007). The Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup polls on education over the past decade have cited a lack of discipline and school violence as the worst problems confronting the public schools in the United States (Gallup, 2009). Some authorities point out that public perception of the frequency of violent acts may be exaggerated somewhat by intense media attention when incidents of school violence occur, and that most of the nation's schools are safe (National Education Goals Panel, 2000).

The survey conducted reveals that the number of crimes committed at or near the 85,000 U. S. public schools was estimated at more than 3 million annually, with 185,580 people injured (National Crime Survey, 2004). It further reveals that on any given day, it was not uncommon for students to carry guns to school. However, since the emergence of zero tolerance policies and some state's enactment of the Weapon-Free School Zones Act, the number of dangerous weapons brought to school has decreased significantly (Alexander & Alexander, 2011). Our nation's schools should be safe havens for teaching and learning free of crime and violence. Any instance of crime or violence at school not only affects the individuals involved but also may disrupt the educational process and affect bystanders, the school itself, and the surrounding community (Brookmeyer, Fanti, and Henrich 2006; Goldstein, Young, and Boyd 2008). The purpose of this section highlights school violence in United States in order to guide the research findings of the study by looking at the levels also factors that trigger violence in the United States.

### **2.5.2 Gang Activity**

According to Arnold (210), fifteen percent of all students report the presence of gangs in their schools. This is supported by Smith et al. (2011) who posit that gang activity in the vicinity of schools poses a risk to staff and student safety and to school security. Intimidation of staff and students by gang members has a large impact on the educational environment and perception of school safety. Further, “these gang activities which include theft, violence both at school and while going to and from school can affect the overall health and well-being of adolescents, interfere with educational goals, and stall normal healthy development” (Fredland, 2008). This view is also shared by Crews, Crews, and Turner (2008) who state “This type of victimization can also lead to higher-than-average rates of teacher turnover, increases in student dropout rates, students changing schools, principals and teachers retiring early, increases in student fear of violence at school, and a decline in learning.”

### **2.5.3 Bullying**

Bullying is now recognised as a widespread and often neglected problem in schools that has serious implications for victims of bullying and for those who perpetrate the bullying (Swearer et al. 2010). The literature reveals that managing inappropriate behaviours and classroom disruptions is time-consuming and takes away from valuable instructional time and student engagement in academic behaviours (Riley, McKevitt, Shriver, and Allen 2011). This is collaborated by a number of researchers who state that growing violence, bullying, and chaos in classrooms are a regular part of the school day for an increasing number of students (Ayers, 2009; Barter, 2012; Carlson, 2011; Davis, 2011; Ellis, 2011; Espilage, 2011; Lane, 2011; Ludwig, 2011; Scott-Coe, 2011; Shapiro, 2011).

The literature further reveals that gunshot wounds are one of the leading causes of death among high school students in the United States, second only to motor vehicle deaths (Gerdes, 2011; Langman, 2011; Marsico, 2011). The literature concludes by adding that when discussing school violence, the researchers cannot leave out the most applicable kind of bullying that is occurring today which is cyber bullying. Around 4% of all students in 2007 reported being bullied and this figure has risen

steadily since then. It is estimated in 2014 it will be at least twice this number. This type of bullying is increasing daily and is occurring on so many levels due to the instant easy access kids have to media and technology, the vast array of social media, and the way someone can have such anonymity online and often never get caught. Parents and schools need to be even more proactive into this new form of bullying and criminal acts due to the dangers to the victims and their reputations today. (Gerdes, 2011; Langman, 2011; Marsico, 2011).

#### **2.5.4 Community violence**

According to (Lunenburg & Irby, 2000), if our schools and neighbourhoods are unsafe for our children, the graduation rate, improving student achievement in challenging subject matter, and ensuring the ability of our students to compete in a world economy, and carry out their responsibilities of citizenship will be much more difficult to achieve. This view is further shared by Benbenishty (2011); Heitmeyer (2011); Hoffman (2012) who posit that frequently the violence in a community spills into the schools. Although according to (Chavis, 2011; Lunenburg & Irby, 2006; Melvin, 2012), the situation in some schools and neighbourhoods is more serious than in others and creating a safe, disciplined learning environment is a challenge for all school principals.

The literature further reveals that in the United States urban students are more likely to report having serious problems with hostile remarks, physical fights, threats or destructive acts, and gang violence than suburban or rural students. Also African-American and Hispanic students are twice more likely than white students to report experiencing very serious problems with turf battles and gang violence (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). The serious concerns advanced by Ayers (2009); Larson (2011); Merino (2011) is the proportions of reporting which indicate a consistent increase in violence across geographic areas in the United States.

### **2.5.5 Summary**

This part of the study highlighted school violence in a developed country, and for the purpose of this study, the United States was chosen. The literature reveals that growing violence, bullying, and chaos in classrooms are a regular incidence of the school day for an increasing number of students. Also, frequently, the violence in a community spills into the schools. Although the situation in some schools and neighbourhoods is more serious than in others, creating a safe and disciplined learning environment is a challenge for all schools in The United States. The following section will look at school violence in a developing country in Africa. For the purpose of this study, the researcher has chosen Kenya.

## **2.6 SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN KENYA**

### **2.6.1 Introduction**

In the previous section, the focus was on school violence in a developed country and the United States was chosen for this purpose. This was done in order to guide the researcher on the findings of the study. This section deals with school violence in a developing country and Kenya was chosen for this purpose. The literature reveals that there is public concern about conflicts in Kenya's educational institutions which has often been reported in the media and numerous studies have vividly underscored the pervasiveness of this problem. It also reveals that conflicts in educational institutions have largely been attributed to a lack of management skills, especially in conflict management and resolution.

It adds that conflicts have persisted in Kenyan secondary schools, middle level colleges, and tertiary institutions even though there have been various legislations that serve as guidelines for management and administration of educational systems, yet, in spite of these policies, there has been an increase of the problem of school violence in Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2008).

### **2.6.2 School factor**

Medlen (2012) states “times have changed inside schools; there is no doubt about that, the issues that confront schools or educational institutions are different, sophisticated, frequent and complex”. This view is shared by Kiumi *et al.*, (2012) who describe the condition of student discipline in secondary in Kenya as disheartening, because violent behaviour incidences are widespread and frequent. Dunne *et al.*, (2010) add that violent behaviour manifests in a wide range of aggressive acts from name calling to physical assault to sexual abuse. They further add that some of these aggressive acts have grown in sophistry due to technological advancement, for instance, bullying now includes cyber-bullying, texting, through social media, through emails and through silent treatment.

Dunne *et al.*, (2010) describe it as interpersonal violence or social exclusion. This also reflects a certain degree of sophistry in the way students intimidate their peers and teachers (Medlen, 2012). Dunne *et al.* (2012) observe that “bullying aggression and other forms of violence in schools can blight student experiences of formal education and their abilities to make the best of the opportunities they have.” Similar views are also expressed by Medlen (2012) who reflects on the impact of cyber-bullying and who states that a lot of students will go home distressed from school which is a shame because school should be a positive component of a child’s life.

### **2.6.3 Family violence**

The literature reveals another factor that triggers school violence in Kenya includes family violence. Family violence contributes to violence or delinquent behaviour and perpetrates the cycle of youth violence (Matsoga, 2003; Oteyo and Kariuki, 2009). According to Njoya (2008), parents mediate security, health, justice, orderly knowledge, affection and peace. He adds that in homes where there is a lot of violence between spouses or when parents are constantly absent from home, a sense of insecurity and lack of self-esteem develops in the children. This can cause a build-up of tension in students to an extent that they release it through violence even in schools.



#### **2.6.4 Bullying**

The literature reveals that bullying is one of the problems of school violence in Kenya. Ngigi (2010) gives the following breakdown about bullying. He states that in May 2006, a 15 year old Form One learner in one of the high school in Nyeri district Central province succumbed to injuries caused by a bully. In June 2006, students in Taita Taveta District, Coast Province, also went on the rampage demanding to be allowed to bully form one students. Later in the month, one high school in Moyale district, North Eastern Province, was closed after students protested about the suspension of 11 bullies from the school. Snodgrass (2005), Egbochuku (2007), Giddens (2006), Kambo (2012) Kibui (2013) and Beauchamp (1993) maintain that violence and bullying in particular, is a worldwide problem and it often leads to negative lifelong consequences both for the students who bully and for their victims, because it creates a negative atmosphere for the general school climate and on the right of the students to learn in a safe environment without fear. Dunne *et al.*, (2010) contend that physical and psychological bullying are prevalent in many schools in Kenya and students experience them on a daily basis.

According to (Poipoi *et al.*, 2010), bullying is one among other forms of violence in school; others include sexual violence, rioting and fighting. He adds that verbal bullying characterised by negative comments about victim's appearance, being the target of rumours and sexual comments and these have been reported as prominent occurrences of bullying for both males and females. Poipoi *et al.* (2010) in conclusion cite that "more males than females reported being victims of physical bullying which involved hitting, slapping and pushing."

#### **2.6.5 Summary**

This section dealt with the literature review focusing on the prevalence of school violence in South Africa and the background and history of education were provided. Two countries were also chosen to give us an in-depth understanding on the topic under study that is, violence in a developed country which is United State and a developing country which is Kenya. This was done in order to have a global perspective and view on the subject under investigation. The factors that contribute to

school violence were highlighted from the two chosen countries and the literature reveals that violence increasingly prevails in schools and that the roots of violence are complex. The following section deals with theoretical framework the researcher has relied upon to guide the research findings of the study.

## **2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.7.1 Introduction**

The previous section highlighted school violence in South Africa, the United States and Kenya. The aim was also to guide the researcher in the findings of the study and to have a better understanding of the topic under research. This section deals with theoretical framework of the study which attempts to explain how school violence develops, why it occurs and how it is sustained.

Some researchers have also relied upon theoretical frameworks to guide their research findings (Sommer, 1990). Conversely Knight and Hatty (1987) point out that the theories put forward by various researchers can be separated into those reflecting the orientations of sociologists, on the one hand, and those reflecting the orientations of psychologists, on the other hand. A sociological perspective places the phenomenon of school violence within a macro model of society; violence is seen as an outgrowth of social factors. A psychological perspective accounts for violence within a micro level of society; violence is attributed to such intra-individual factors as aggressiveness, impulsiveness and paranoia (Straus, 1980). The current study reflects upon both sociologically and psychologically based theories which inform the discussion of school violence. The discussion that follows will review the conceptual framework in terms of school violence and how that is understood.

### **2.7.2 Sociological perspective: social learning theory**

Sommer (1990) notes that social learning theory is a conceptual framework that has its origins in the work of the psychologist Albert Bandura (1965). She further notes that according to Bandura (1986), children's acquisition of much complex behaviour

ensues from their exposure to competent role models that display appropriate behaviour in solving problems and coping with their world. In as much as positive behaviours can be acquired through positive role models, conversely, negative behaviours can also be acquired through the modelling of negative behaviours. With this in mind, Bandura (1979) applied social learning principles to the acquisition and maintenance of aggressive habits (Sommer 1990). Furthermore, Sommer (1990) also notes that it is the latter set of circumstances that has been of interest to those researchers that study family violence.

Researchers have applied social learning theory to explain the following aspects of the development and transmission of family violence: the patterning of violence amongst adult children observing violence in their families of origin (Kalmuss 1984); the intergenerational transmission of family aggression (Cappell and Heiner 1990); the generalisation of aggression from one relationship to another across time (Malone *et al.* 1989); and the continuation of marital violence in remarriage (Kalmuss & Seltzer 1986). The research referred to above provides support for the modelling effects of early exposure to violence within the family of origin (Sommer, 1990).

### **2.7.3 Psychological theory: Personality theory**

As noted by Sommer (1990), Eysenck (1965) developed a genetic theory of personality that proposed that the nature of an individual's biology is a determinant of his or her personality make-up. He suggests that some of the variability in human behaviour could be accounted for by the finding that criminals consistently score higher than the general population along extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism personality dimensions (Eysenck & Eysenck 1985; Wilson 1981). Research by Malamuth (1988) demonstrates that high scores on psychoticism among males were also associated with sexual aggression, and predicted aggression against females in a laboratory setting. The existence of a continuum of antisocial behaviour (Eysenck & Eysenck 1985), ranging from minor infractions (e.g. drinking alcohol at a bar while below the legal age) to major criminal offences (e.g. armed robbery) is indicative of an individual's predisposition towards criminality. It is along this continuum that the perpetration of partner abuse is thought to lie.

According to Eysenck and Eysenck (1985), individuals who are most likely to abuse their partners would be those who are:

- impulsive and disinhibited, and therefore fail to acquire social rules extraverter;
- anxious, and whose anxiety acts as a trigger to learnt deviant responses such as neurotic violence; and
- uncaring and unlikely feelings of guilt, empathy or sensitivity, and therefore having little difficulty in behaving antisocially psychotic.

While heredity is thought to be a strong predisposing factor the actual way in which a crime is carried out is subject to the vicissitudes of everyday life (Eysenck 1977).

This delineation suggests that the interface between people's inborn characteristics and those found in their social environment is extremely important in determining the likelihood that a deviant mode of conduct will emerge.

#### **2.7.4 Disinhibition theory**

The application of disinhibition theory is evident in research conducted by both sociologists and psychologists. While the former are interested in the effects of alcohol consumption as a social force (Kantor & Straus, 1987), the latter focuses on the biochemical effects alcohol has on the behaviour of individuals (Gustafson 1985). From a psychological perspective, alcohol consumption is linked to violent behaviour through its physiological effects, as it releases an individual's violent impulses and tendencies, and suppresses inhibitions (Hamilton & Collins 1981; Spielberger 1970). Kantor and Straus (1987) explain that alcohol's effects on the central nervous system release inhibitions by depressing brain function or suppressing super-ego function, thereby allowing the expression of rage." Walker (1979) proposes that there may be similarities between the specific blood chemistry changes evident under a generalised stress reaction such as battering and those found in alcoholics. The high rates of alcohol consumption associated with family violence suggest that the disinhibition theory is an appropriate conceptual framework for the study of school violence.

### **2.7.5 Feminist perspectives**

The women's movement has been responsible for bringing the issue of wife battering to the fore. Dobash and Dobash (1979) were the first to suggest that the fundamental causes of violence against women are to be found in "a patriarchal society." Within a feminist framework, women abuse is viewed as being the result of an imbalance of power between men and women. Feminists have asserted that throughout time, women have been subjugated by the greater patriarchal society that has placed limits on their opportunities and left them vulnerable to a number of abuses. The cycle of violence theory, which emerged from the research conducted by Lenore Walker (1979) is based on the premise that women are not constantly being abused, and that their willingness to remain in an abusive relationship is related to cyclical fluctuations between periods of abuse and relatively peaceful coexistence. The theory also explains how women become victimised, how they fall into learned helplessness behaviour, and why they do not attempt to escape (Walker, 1979).

### **2.7.6 Traditional and conventional theories on violence**

According to De Keseredy and Perry (2006), traditional or conventional theorists have attempted to explain violent behaviour in a simplistic, one-dimensional way, limiting the dimensions of their theory to one or two factors contributing to violent behaviour. Some of these factors such as, for example, gender-related violence, cultural or ethnic violence or violence relating to inequalities are frequently referred to in existing literature on violence. Most of those explanations of violence underscore the behavioural expression of persons to the relative exclusion of the institutional and structural expressions thereof (DeKeseredy & Perry, 2006).

### **2.7.7 Abuse and violent behaviour**

Supporting the Exchange and Social Learning theories, Wolfe (1999, in Wenar & Kerig, 2006) links violence with the physical abuse and neglect by parents in terms of deviations. Traditional theories underscore the behavioural expressions of a person to the relative exclusion of the institutional and structural expressions. From the normal pattern of authoritarian child rearing Van der Kolk (2005) mentions that physical

abuse and neglect are associated with very high rates of arrest for violent offences. His research findings suggest that most of the interpersonal trauma on children is perpetuated by victims who grow up to become perpetrators or repeat victims of violence. This causes a cycle of violence in our society that is experienced in our schools. As shocking as physical abuse of children is, it is even more disturbing to consider that it is just one manifestation of aggression in a society marked by violence (Wenar & Kerig, 2006).

### **2.7.8 Gender and violent behaviour**

Patriarchal theorists hold the view that males abuse females to control them (DeKeseredy & Perry, 2006). Although this theory is not dismissible, it would seem that violence does follow a gender pattern. Mills (2001) claims that issues of masculinity are seldom raised in the school context, despite the fact that in the majority of instances the perpetrators of this type of violence are males.

Dobson (2001) remarks that although many people think that male and femaleness are the natural expression of a genetic blueprint, gender is regarded as a product of human thought and culture, a social construction that creates the 'true nature' of all individuals. In the classroom a gender prejudiced teacher can easily project his or her view upon the learners. Such a projection might reinforce the socially constructed 'gap' between men and women (boys and girls) and will not be productive in the process of changing social views. Some teachers, for example, do not believe that harassment occurs or they see it as the natural order of things: Boys will be boys (Mills, 2001). Although the chemical differences in the make-up of the two genders plays a significant role in contributing to males being more prone to acts of violence, according to Lorber and Farrell (1991), society clearly makes a contribution in maintaining the socially constructed roles within communities. In most cases therefore men and boys are the perpetrators of violence and girls, women and younger boys are the victims. Young men between the ages of 16 and 30 are the most likely group in the population of late capitalist countries to be injured in violent attacks or fights (Mills, 2001).

### **2.7.9 Life-Course developmental theories on violence**

According to DeKeseredy and Perry (2006), superior explanations of violence of the traditional theories can, however, be found in theories taking a more integrative perspective on violence by integrating the contributions made by many of the traditional theories. Life-course developmental theories view the development of violent behaviour over a life course, considering the causal influences shaping behaviour over time (DeKeseredy & Perry, 2006).

Perry (2005) focusing on the developmental practices of society and its effect on neurodevelopment, especially through early childhood development, states that you do not become human just because you are born into the species but because someone was kind to you, held you, and shared with you. He found that many children, materially poor as well as wealthy, suffer from forms of neglect, which he defines as failing to provide a pattern of developmental experience required to express a fundamental potential. DeKeseredy and Perry (2006) note that although dynamic theories usually account for internal as well as external motivations and constraints at the interpersonal level, they generally ignore similar interactive, reciprocal, and dialectical relationships involving the structural and at times, the institutional domains of violence.

### **2.7.10 Theories: brief assumption manifestations**

Moffitt's Theory of Life-Course-Persistent Antisocial Behaviour Children's neuropsychological problems interact cumulatively with their environments across development, culminating in a pathological personality from Oppositional-Defiant disorder to Conduct disorder to Antisocial personality disorder Sampson and Laub's Theory of Informal Social Control and Cumulative Disadvantage. There are important events and conditions that alter and redirect deviant pathways. They are:

- Structural factors e.g. racism or poverty;
- Social conditions and labelling; and
- Development of social capital later in life. Childhood delinquency to adult criminality

### **2.7.11 Summary**

This part of the study has dealt with the literature review and theoretical framework. This was done to provide the researcher with a sound scientific base from where the research can be conducted and monitored to ensure data quality and to maximise the dependability of the study. The researcher attempted to move towards exploring the research design and methodology in the following chapter against the backdrop of this theoretical framework. Chapter 3 highlights how the research was conducted. This is done by first highlighting the aim and objectives of the study, then giving a clear indication of where the study was physically conducted. It highlights which members of the population constituted the sample, give a precise outline as to which methods of sampling were considered and which one was eventually chosen for this study.

This also indicates how this study was designed and which research designs were considered before the appropriate one was selected. The description and purpose of the research design and methods, the construction and administration of the research instrument and the recruitment of the study participants are provided, and the researcher explains how such pretesting was done. Lastly, a number of ethical issues that were observed to ensure that the study complied with the general research ethics and more importantly with the University of Zululand's ethics policy are discussed and also given an accurate account of how the study met the hallmarks of sound scientific research.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Research is one of the most important tools for answering questions. People who work in the behavioural sciences use research typically to find answers to questions that affect themselves and the people they help (Reaves, 1992). Reaves (1992) posits that research is a systematic way of answering questions which leads to even more questions.

In the previous chapter that is chapter 2, the focus was in literature review and theoretical framework. This chapter, chapter 3 underscores how the research was conducted. This is done by first highlighting the aim and objectives of the study and then giving a clear indication of where the study was physically conducted. In a research study of this type, it is important for the researcher to give a clue of how the research population is chosen. Once this has been done, it is imperative for the researcher to determine whether it is possible to access all the members of the population or not. In case it is impossible to access all members of the population, the researcher has to choose members who will represent the population.

In research terminology, those members of the population who have been chosen to represent the population are referred to as a sample. In this study the researcher reached the conclusion that it would not be possible to reach all the members of the population, therefore a sample of the population had to be chosen. The chapter therefore highlights which members of the population constituted the sample. There are many approaches suggested by existing literature which can be followed when choosing a sample. This chapter will give a precise outline as to which methods of sampling were considered and which one was eventually chosen for this study (Maree, 2013).

In any study the researcher has to consider a variety of research methods and then decide which one is best suited for the study at hand. These research methods are

briefly discussed in this chapter where after the one chosen is identified. In research there are data collection methods which the researchers of existing literature suggests must be used. Those methods are clearly highlighted in this chapter and the one chosen is briefly discussed. This chapter also indicates how this study was designed and which research designs were considered before the appropriate ones were selected. This is done by providing the description and purpose of the research design and methods, the construction and administration of the research instrument and the recruitment of the study participants.

The research instrument plays a major role in the study and, as a result, it must be designed in such a way that it is able to obtain information that the researcher can rely on (Maree, 2013). This necessitates pre-testing the research instrument. This chapter explains how such pretesting was done. In this chapter the researcher discusses a number of ethical issues that were observed to ensure that the study complied with the general research ethics and more importantly with the University of Zululand's ethics policy. Lastly, the chapter gives an accurate account of how the study met the hallmarks of sound scientific research.

## **3.2 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The researcher embarks on a research project for a reason or purpose. In this study, the researcher was particularly concerned with school violence within the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education in general and Umbumbulu circuit in particular.

### **3.2.1 The Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to establish the triggers, the prevalence and the extent of violence in the Umbumbulu Circuit which falls under the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

### **3.2.2 Objectives of the study**

The overall objective of the study is to establish the prevalence of violence in the Umbumbulu Circuit which is situated in the Umlazi District. Educators' experiences

of school violence will be explored in order to assist the researcher in understanding the phenomenon of school violence which, in turn, will inform the formulation of school programmes or strategies for the prevention and or intervention of violence in schools in similar contexts. Through this study, the researcher aims to:

- ascertain the levels of school violence in the schools under study and identify the common types of violence prevalent in the schools;
- understand the nature, causes and triggers of school violence; and
- analyse the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning.

The following questions serve as a means to elucidate the problem of violence in the Umbumbulu circuit. They are:

- What are the common types of violence prevalent in the Umbumbulu circuit schools?

Secondary questions:

- Are school violence levels decreasing in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?
- What are the nature, the causes and the triggers of violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?

### **3.3 LOCATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in the Umbumbulu Circuit which falls under the Umlazi District in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. The study was restricted to a limited geographical area that is the Umbumbulu circuit; the Umbumbulu circuit is one of the four circuits falling under the Umlazi district namely: Dukumbane, Umxenge, Maphundu and Umbumbulu. This circuit has four sections which are Amanzimtoti, Folweni, Mafa and Umbumbulu central. For the purpose of this research one high school was selected from each section to make a total of four high schools.

### **3.4 PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY**

When conducting an investigation, it is very imperative for the researcher to know the people that the study is about. These people are referred to as the population of the study. According to Cooper and Schindler, (2006) the population of the study is defined as the total collection of elements about which we wish to make some inferences. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) and Christensen (1997), population is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. The cases include all events, things and people from which the sample is to be selected. Participants in the study comprised of educators working in the Umbumbulu circuit high schools. Four high schools were identified by the research for the purpose of this study. Participants include educators on salary Level 1, 2, 3 up to the principal and they were 32 in number.

### **3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A variety of descriptions of research design have been advanced by different authors. According to Mouton (1996) the research design serves to "plan, structure and execute" the research to maximise the "validity of the findings." It gives directions from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design, and data collection. Trochin (2001) maintains that research design is seen as providing the glue that holds the research project together. The author goes further to name the different parts that form research projects. Cooper and Schindler (2006) assert that research design constitutes a blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of the data. Yin (2003) adds further that "colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where 'here' may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and 'there' is some set of conclusions answers.

Cooper and Schindler (2006) argue that, through research design, the researcher is able to decide which research methodology to choose for the research project, and this helps the researcher allocate the resources efficiently. Furthermore, Cooper and Schindler (2006) look at the research design process as the plan and structure of investigation, so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions. Research design is also defined by Selltitz, Wrightsman, and Cook (1976) as the arrangement of

conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Selltiz *et al.*, 1976).

When looking at the different descriptions of the research design process it becomes clear that research design is an activity that is conducted over a certain period of time. The descriptions of the research design also indicate that the research process is undertaken to answer a question or questions, and that this is done by outlining the procedure by which the researcher will go about answering that question or questions. Research design can also be thought of as the logic or master plan of a research that throws light on how the study is to be conducted. It shows how all of the major parts of the research study the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programmes all work together in an attempt to address the research questions. The research design is similar to an architectural outline. The research design can be seen as actualisation of logic in a set of procedures that optimises the validity of data for a given research problem.

### **3.5.1 Exploratory, descriptive, and causal studies**

Different authors have advocated different categories of research designs. For example, Selltiz *et al.*, (1976) distinguish between exploratory, descriptive, and designs which permit inferences about causality. According to Emory (1980), this distinction is the same as the one advanced by Green and Tull (1981) where they argue that the research design can be exploratory, descriptive, or causal. Bryman and Bell, however, distinguish between five different types, namely experimental design; cross-sectional design or social design; longitudinal design; case study design; and comparative design (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Although Bryman and Bell (1981) argue that there are five types of research designs, when these are looked at closely, it is clear that they also fall under the four types advocated by Selltiz (1976) and, Green and Tull (1981).

The researcher in this study had to examine the objectives of the study and then categorise the type of design the research was going to take. For the purpose of this study the researcher chose a qualitative case study that involves educators from the Umbumbulu high schools. The case study is a research strategy which focuses on

understanding the dynamics present within single settings (Eisenhardt, 2002). This strategy was selected after carefully considering the purpose and outcomes of this study. According to Berg (1998), the case study involves a systematic gathering of sufficient information to permit the researcher to effectively understand how a particular person, social setting, event or group operates or functions and seeks to understand and interpret that 'world' in terms of its actors. The aim is to understand the case in depth and in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context. It also has a holistic focus, with the aim to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case (Punch, 2005). Punch (2005) further sketches the advantages of a case study as having clear boundaries and having a clear focus in a naturalistic setting. Thus a case study as research design could therefore best serve the rich and in-depth perspective the researcher would like to portray through this research.

### **3.5.2 Time dimension**

In conducting this research the researcher was mindful of the time dimension the research was going to take. The researcher decided that this study was to be carried over a period of time. Studies that are carried out over a period of time are known as longitudinal studies. Longitudinal research studies are also referred to as continuous research, in that they are conducted at regular intervals so as to monitor changes over time (McGivern, 2006). When a study is carried out once it is referred to as a cross-sectional study. Cross-sectional research studies are sometimes referred to as *ad hoc* research which implies that they provide a snapshot at a given point in time (McGivern, 2006). Longitudinal studies are comparatively better than cross-sectional studies in that the investigation can follow changes over time.

### **3.5.3 Data collection process**

The researcher before choosing the appropriate data collection method looked at the data collection process itself. According to Collis and Hussey (2003), a typical data collection process involves seven steps.

### ***Identification of research variables***

According to the authors the first step is to identify the variables that the research problem and objectives are all about. In this study such variables included the population being studied, school violence, teaching and learning and the community. These are the variables about which data were collected and analysed.

### ***Selection of the sample***

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) and Christensen (1997) sampling is the selection of individual observations intended to yield some knowledge about a population, especially for the purposes of statistical inference. In selecting the sample, the researcher tried to put it across that the sample was representative of the entire population being studied. There are two categories of sampling techniques which are called non-probability sampling technique and probability sampling technique. Probability sampling is defined by Jackson (2008) as a sampling technique in which each member of the population has an equal likelihood of being selected to be part of the sample. Non-probability sampling is defined by Jackson as a sampling technique in which the individual members of the population do not have an equal chance of being selected to be a member of a sample (Jackson, 2008). The two definitions are in line with definitions advanced by other leading authors in research methodology such as Collis and Hussey (2003), Welman and Kruger (2001), Devlin (2006) and many others.

According to Jackson (2008), non-probability sampling can either be convenience sampling where the researcher acquires respondents wherever he or she can find them, or quota sampling where the sample is like the population, but is selected because it is convenient to select it. This suggests that the researcher decides which group of people should be considered for sampling purposes based on convenience. (Sekaran, 1992 Bryman and Bell (2007) provide another form of non-probability sampling called snowballing. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), this form of sampling technique is similar to convenience sampling; the difference is that in snowballing sampling the researcher chooses a group of respondents to be part of the sample and then uses these respondents to establish contacts with others. Bryman and Bell (2007) also provide another form of non-probability sampling called purposive

sampling. This type of sampling technique is also known as judgmental or authoritative sampling.

### **3.4 Types of non-probability sampling**

#### ***Convenience sampling***

Convenience sampling is probably the most common of all sampling techniques. With convenience sampling, the samples are selected, because they are accessible to the researcher. Subjects are chosen simply because they are easy to recruit. This technique is considered the easiest, cheapest and least time consuming (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

#### ***Consecutive sampling***

Consecutive sampling is very similar to convenience sampling except that it seeks to include all accessible subjects as part of the sample. This non-probability sampling technique can be considered as the best of all non-probability samples; because it includes all subjects that are available that makes the sample a better representation of the entire population (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

#### ***Quota sampling***

Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling technique wherein the researcher ensures equal or proportionate representation of subjects depending on which trait is considered as basis of the quota. For example, if the basis of the quota is college year level and the researcher needs equal representation, with a sample size of 100, he must select 25 first year students, another 25 second year students, 25 third year and 25 fourth year students. The foundations of the quota usually embrace age, gender, education, race, religion and socioeconomic status (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

#### ***Snowball sampling***

Snowball sampling is usually done when there is a very small population size. In this type of sampling, the researcher asks the initial subject to identify another potential subject who also meets the criteria of the research. The downside of using a snowball sample is that it is hardly representative of the population (Bryman & Bell, 2007).



### ***Purposive Sampling***

According to Bryman and Bell (2007), purposive sampling is used in cases where the specialty of an authority can select a more representative sample that can bring more accurate results than by using other probability sampling techniques. The process involves nothing but purposely handpicking individuals from the population based on the authority's or the researcher's knowledge and judgment. A purposive sampling design is usually used when a limited number of individuals possess the trait of interest. It is the only viable sampling technique in obtaining information from a very specific group of people. It is also possible to use judgmental sampling if the researcher knows a reliable professional or authority that he thinks is capable of assembling a representative sample.

## **3.5. Types of probability sampling**

### ***Simple random sampling***

According to Bryman and Bell (2007), simple random sampling is the simplest and most basic of all the probability sampling techniques. In simple random sampling every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected to become a member of the sample. When employing this technique, there is no guarantee that the selected sample would be representative of the population. For this reason researchers developed a table of random numbers that could be used to alleviate the problem of underestimation.

### ***Systematic sample***

In some cases the researcher is faced with a situation in which there is no sampling frame. In such a case a systematic sample can be used, however Oakshott (2001) warns that this is possible only when the size of the population is known. Consider a case where the size of the population is 40 000 and a sample size of 20% is needed. Using the systematic sampling technique advanced by Oakshott, the researcher would calculate 20% of 40 000 which is 4000 people, then every 4000<sup>th</sup> person would be selected to be a member of the sample.

### ***Stratified random sampling***

Stratified sampling is defined by Bryman and Bell as “a sample in which units are randomly sampled from a population that has been divided into categories (strata)” (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Each population has different categories according to which it can be stratified. Stratified random sample simply means that the population is divided according to set criteria to form strata. Once that has been done a sample from each stratum can be randomly chosen so that, in the end, the researcher has a proportional representation of each stratum or category.

### ***Multi-stage cluster sampling***

In a case where the researcher had to cover a huge geographical area for investigation and to achieve the objectives of the study could be very expensive and even impossible to do within the specified period of time. The researcher may then divide the whole area into smaller geographical areas and randomly select the sample from these smaller areas (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

### ***Sampling method chosen***

The researcher considered all of the above sampling methods and made a decision that, probability sampling techniques could not be applied to this study. After serious consideration the aim and objectives of the study dictated that the most relevant and appropriate sampling method was the non-probability sampling technique and purposive sampling was therefore used. Non-probability sampling was used to allow the researcher to choose a representative sample. This form of sampling was chosen because it best allows the researcher an approximation to the truth that has the least cost implications (Saunders *et al.*, 2000).

## **3.6 SELECTION OF THE RESEARCH METHOD**

The third step in the data collection process advocated by Collis and Hussey (2004) is to select data that are relevant to the study. According to authors such as Bryman and Bell (2007), Cooper and Schindler (2006), Collis and Hussey (2004) and many others, data can be described as either quantitative or qualitative. It was however noted by the researcher that there has been an evolution of what is referred to as mixed- methods research which employs a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data.

Authors who support the mixed data method have emphasised the importance of mixing the data, for example Cresswell and Plano Clark (2007) said, “The use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2007). It therefore became important for the researcher to have a clear understanding of these different types of data since that would determine which one was appropriate for this study. The researcher interrogated each of them in detail and then selected the most appropriate one which was the quantitative research method.

### *Quantitative research methodology*

In this study the researcher made use of the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research methods given by Cooper and Schindler (2006). According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), the quantitative research method is useful when the population of the study is large. The authors argued that in quantitative research methodology there was a very limited researcher involvement and such involvement is sometimes controlled to prevent bias. Cooper and Schindler (2006) went on to say that the quantitative research method is most appropriate when the purpose of the researcher is to describe or predict, or when the researcher is aiming to build and test theory. Another distinction given by Cooper and Schindler (2006) is that quantitative research methodology uses a probability sample design as opposed to qualitative research which uses non-probability sampling.

As mentioned above, quantitative research methodology involves a large number of participants. This suggests that the researcher is faced with time constraints and therefore cannot afford to probe respondents as is the case with the qualitative research methodology. This inability to have a high level of contact with the participants limits the feedback turnaround time. The sheer size of the population and the sample suggests that it is not easy for the researcher to re-interview the participants. Cooper and Schindler (2006) argue that in quantitative research methodology, this causes data collection and data entry to be followed with insights, whereas in qualitative research methodology insights can be formed and tested during the research process. The above description of the quantitative research method is shared by McGiven (2006), however the author goes on to argue that in the qualitative research method the researcher incurs a relatively higher cost per respondent.

### *Qualitative research Method*

According to Du Plooy (2006), when conducting research it sometimes happens that the researcher does not have prior information that would “describe behaviours, themes, attitudes, needs or relations that are applicable to the units analysed” (Du Plooy, 2006). In such an instance Du Plooy (2006) argues that qualitative research would be an ideal research method. When describing something the researcher is essentially looking for an in-depth understanding of the units being studied. Therefore, as supported by Cooper and Schindler (2006), qualitative research methodology aims to build theory by gaining an in-depth understanding of the units being studied.

Another distinct quality of qualitative research methodology is the manner in which data are collected and analysed. According to Du Plooy (2006), in qualitative research methodology data can be collected using “observation and surveys, using open ended questions in questionnaires or interview schedules” (Du Plooy, 2006). This is a view supported by Cresswell and Plano Clark (2007) when they argued that qualitative research’s intent is focused on open-ended questions. Cooper and Schindler (2006) hold the view that the type of data that are largely associated with qualitative research is mainly verbal or in pictorial form. This, as argued by Cooper and Schindler (2006) who suggest that there is a high degree of human analysis of data in qualitative research and that it often follows computer coding.

Cooper and Schindler (2006) also hold the view that in qualitative research methodology there is a high level of contact between the researcher and the participants. It is argued by Cooper and Schindler that the smaller sample size associated with qualitative research methodology ensures that the feedback turnaround is shortened. Cooper and Schindler also posit further that the qualitative research methodology, due to its very nature of having free-response questions, provides a deeper understanding of the situation being studied. In other words the qualitative research methodology relies heavily on being open-ended. Another interesting point advocated by Cresswell and Plano Clark (2007) is that the validity procedures employed in qualitative research methodology relies “on the participants, the researcher or, the participants” (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

According to Cresswell and Plano Clark (2007), qualitative research studies are often conducted at a few research sites as opposed to quantitative research which could have many sites. The authors also argued that in the qualitative research methodology the literature review does not play a major role as is in the case of quantitative research methodology. In clarifying this point the authors said “the intent in quantitative research is either to support or to refute an existing theory. A review of the literature is included in the research, and it may serve several purposes. In qualitative research, the researcher reviews the literature and uses it to provide evidence for the purpose of the study and the underlying problem addressed by the inquiry” (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007). For this very reason, Creswell and Plano Clark maintain that literature reviews in qualitative research studies are often brief.

#### *Mixed research methodology*

As mentioned above there has been an evolution of mixed-research methods. Creswell and Plano Clark are two of the advocates of mixed-research methods. They argue that the research world has become complex and therefore requires a research method that goes beyond the limits of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Cresswell and Plano Clark (2007) identify four stages that this type of research has gone through. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), these stages are the formative stage, the paradigm debate period, the procedural development period, and the Advocacy as separate design period. The authors argue that each stage has its own champions. For example, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) name the following authors as champions for the formative period: Campbell and Fiske (1959), Sieber (1973), Jick (1979), and Cook and Caracelli (1979) can be mentioned in this regard. These periods will not be discussed in this chapter, however the researcher had to familiarise himself with them. In this study the researcher had to consider this method since its advocates support due to its evolution over the years.

#### *The Chosen Research Methodology*

Before deciding which research method was appropriate to this study the researcher re-visited the aim and objectives of the study. After a proper analysis it was clear to the researcher that the research would not involve a large number of participants. Based on the discussion above on quantitative research, this in itself suggested that

the quantitative research method was not considered. The researcher also realised that it would not be difficult to have direct contact with all the participants. In view of the type of participants the research required, and the time participants needed to complete the research instrument and again, to address the research problem, both an in-depth literature review and an empirical investigation the research approach adopted in this study was a qualitative method which will draw insights from the experiences and perceptions of educators on the factors, the extent and the impact of school violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit.

The use of a qualitative investigation will allow for elaborate interpretations of phenomena without depending on numerical measurements (Zikmund & Babin, 2013). The qualitative method is intended to provide detail and depth to the more generalisable, but also more superficial, view of school violence expected from qualitative research (Spindler, 1982).

### **3.7 SELECTION OF AN APPROPRIATE DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

According to Collis and Hussey (2003), the selection of an appropriate collection method forms the fourth step in the data collection process. In this study the researcher considered a number of data collection methods before choosing what was deemed an appropriate one.

#### *Critical incident technique*

The researcher looked at this technique, but realised it was not suitable since it focuses on behaviour in defined situations. Although this technique would have been more relevant in a qualitative research project, it is more of a controlled approach. According to Collis and Hussey (2003), this technique is more useful in an interview. It has limitations though, in that respondents are expected to remember specifics of critical behaviours.

#### *Diaries*

Preliminary fact-finding by the researcher indicated that the potential respondents in this study did not keep diaries of what happened at work on a daily basis. Even if the respondents kept such diaries, the limitations associated with this data collection

method are immense. For example, it would be difficult for the researcher to analyse the data because the manner in which respondents would have recorded their data would not have been the same. Furthermore, the researcher would have struggled to find enough respondents since such a technique relies mainly on volunteers. This technique was therefore discarded.

### *Focus groups*

Focus groups were also considered as a method for collection of data in this study, but were deemed inappropriate. It must be borne in mind that when the researcher uses a focus group there has to be a leader of each focus group to ensure that the boundaries of the study are observed. The group leaders must also provide guidance in terms of the main questions that respondents must focus on. In view of the resources available, the researcher would not have been able to afford such a technique, but more importantly, it would have been difficult to organise the respondents into different focus groups (Bless et al., 2013).

### *Observation*

In this type of study observation would not have been possible. For example, when the researcher talks of school violence, the researcher is talking about something that happens over time which could not simply be observed by the researcher within a short space of time. The main variables of the study could not be easily observed even if there had been fewer constraints. Observation involves determining mental processes of respondents in problem-solving, which was not the aim of this study. This technique is more suitable in business research (Bless et al., 2013).

### *Interviews*

Having looked at the above data collection methods the researcher realised that if a carefully structured document which could elicit reliable responses was to be used, reliable data would be obtained. A lot had to be considered by the researcher in constructing the interviews. Such considerations are briefly discussed below. The researcher, therefore, conducted face-to-face individual interviews with the participants. This took place by means of in-depth unstructured interviews, using open-ended questions to probe the subject. The unstructured interview is a powerful research tool, widely used in social research and capable of producing rich and

valuable data (Punch, 2005). An unstructured interview can provide a greater depth of data than other types of interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The essence of unstructured interviewing can be further described as the establishment of a personal relation with the respondent and the desire to understand rather than to explain. The purpose of the application of an unstructured one-to-one interview is to understand the experiences of other people and their interpretation of those experiences (Greef, 2005).

The advantage of using this type of interview is that the researcher will be using a very naturalistic way of gathering data, with the full potential to gather more data for an in-depth perspective. The researcher recorded the interviews through taking of notes. Interviews may also include video-tape recordings, after considering practical constraints, participant cooperation and approval (Punch, 2005). Interviews were preferred by the researcher as the most appropriate data collection method, since it is easier to compare information obtained from interviewees. Interviews require the researcher to spend time with the interviewees.

### **3.8 CONSTRUCTION OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The quality of the information obtained from the participants depends mainly on how the research instrument is constructed. Once the researcher had decided that interviews would be used for this study, the researcher then had to decide how the interviews would be structured and what type of a questionnaire would be appropriate. The researcher felt that semi-structured interviews would be the most appropriate. According to (De Clerck, Helene M W, Roos T, Christiane C, Jorgen, 2011) semi-structured interviews combine the flexibility of the unstructured, open-ended interview with the directionality and agenda of the interview instrument.

The structure of the interview questionnaire used by the researcher took the form recommended by Hair, Babin, Money, and Samuel (2004) which follows a four-part sequence. The authors recommended that interview questions be divided into four, with each question focusing on the aims of the study. Their proposed sequence was used in this research. Part 1 consists of questions which focused on the levels of violence in Umbumbulu circuit. Part 2 consists of questions focusing on the common



types of violence. Question 3 consists of questions that prompted educators to describe the triggers of violence. Part 4 consists of questions that would enable the researcher to draw insight from the experiences of educators about the impact of violence on teaching and learning. These open-ended questions would elicit responses from educators to determine whether they had the capacity to effectively deal with school violence and, if so, which interventions worked best.

Having decided on how interviews would be structured, the researcher looked at the research objectives and then formulated questions that would help achieve these objectives. The researcher constructed open-ended questions. Open-ended questions gave recipients an opportunity to express their views. Such questions gave respondents an opportunity to answer in their own words. They gave participants space to give their answers the way they wanted to without restriction. Respondents were able to describe the kind of challenges they were facing in Umbumbulu circuit schools and what needed to be done to address these challenges (De Clerck *et al.*, 2011).

The interview questionnaire comprised four research questions. All the questions were asked in English since this is the language that was deemed to be familiar to all the respondents. The researcher ensured that all the instructions in the interview were clearly articulated so that they could be easily understood by the respondents. According to Emory (1980), the researcher has to decide whether the questions to be asked in the questionnaire should be open-ended or closed questions. The researcher felt that the use of open-ended questions would elicit responses from educators to determine whether they had the capacity to effectively deal with school violence and, if so, which interventions worked best. In the formulation of these closed questions, the researcher bore in mind Emory's (1980) assertion that closed questions had their own limitations. The researcher argued that closed questions sometimes force respondents to give an opinion that they would not otherwise have given if the questions were open-ended.

The author argued further that when closed questions are used, the participants of the study find themselves having limited response alternatives that do not adequately cover what they would have liked to say. Emory (1980) also states that the

alternatives given as possible answers to the closed question may exclude some alternatives that the participants of the study might have considered. These views are also shared by Jackson (2008) who also argues that closed questions seriously limit the responses of the respondents. The researcher took all these concerns into account when choosing open-ended questions. Hair *et al.*, (2003) recommend that the research questions should be asked in a logical sequence. This view is supported by Oakshott (2001) when he said “Do have a logical sequence to the questions”. In this study, a logical sequence was structured by first asking general questions and thereafter specific questions. The researcher took the recommendations made by Hair *et al.* (2003), that the wording of questions should be familiar to the respondents, in other words, the questions must not be ambiguous. The above-mentioned authors also recommend that the questions that are asked should be short, straightforward and to the point so as to avoid confusion. These recommendations were used in the construction of the questionnaire for this study.

According to Jackson (2008), some respondents have a tendency to consistently give the same answer to almost all the questions. The author calls this tendency response bias. The researcher prevented this by ensuring that all the research questions were worded in such a way that there could not be the same answer given for all the questions. Jackson (2008) recommended that double-barrelled questions be avoided. Welman and Kruger (2001) also warned against the use of double-barrelled questions. According to Jackson (2008), a double-barrelled question is one that asks about more than one issue at a time. When there are two or more issues in one question and the respondent has to give one response it becomes difficult to tell whether the response is in relation to the first or second issue. In line with this recommendation, the researcher ensured that each question involved a response to one issue at a time.

As recommended by Hair *et al.*, (2003), and Welman and Kruger (2001), the researcher must maintain neutrality at all times. This was done firstly, by avoiding leading questions and secondly by avoiding loaded questions. A leading question is described by Hair *et al.* (2003) as a question that gives an indication as to which answer is desired by the researcher. A loaded question is described as a leading question in which social acceptability or unacceptability may likewise influence the respondent to reply in a particular manner (Welman & Kruger, 2001). Such questions

are undesirable because they encourage participants of the study to respond in a particular way.

The interview questions' design described above is in line with the dos and do nots suggested by Oakshott (2001). Oakshott (2001) also suggests that the questions need to be as clear and straightforward as possible. The author also supported the view that personal questions must be avoided as much as possible. He suggests that where this is necessary, for example, in the case where the respondent has to indicate his or her age, personal questions should be avoided. According to Oakshott (2001), personal questions may sometimes seem threatening and embarrassing. The researcher also paid special attention to the layout of the questionnaire by ensuring that the questions were straightforward and to the point. The researcher ensured that all the questions were applicable to all the respondents in line with the recommendations of Welman and Kruger (2001). The authors warned against asking questions that were applicable to all the respondents when the available responses were not. Lastly, the researcher took all ethical considerations into account.

### **3.9 PRE-TESTING**

Pre-testing is defined as the assessment of questions and instruments before the start of a study (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Bryman and Bell (2007) agree that wherever possible, it is advisable and desirable to conduct a pilot study before the actual data collection is done. The authors argue that piloting the case study is most desirable. According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), the main purpose of pre-testing is to improve the overall quality of the interview data. Pre-testing also helps the researcher determine whether the research instrument measures what it purports to measure.

The main purpose of the pilot study was to identify any weaknesses in the interview questions. First of all, the researcher wanted to establish whether all the questions in the interview were understood. If questions are presented in a clear, concise and unambiguous manner the likelihood of participants remaining in the case study is increased. Secondly, problems may be caused by the sequence in which words have been used. Pre-testing, as argued by Cooper and Schindler (2006), discovers such content, wording, and sequencing problems prior to the full study.

Thirdly, pre-testing was used to identify sensitive questions that the respondents would be uncomfortable answering. In the fourth place, the researcher wanted to identify questions that are often not answered. Lastly, it was important for the researcher to establish whether the questions were viewed as too lengthy. This was important because most respondents are reluctant to participate in the study if the interview is lengthy. According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), most interviews tend to be too lengthy. The pilot study was carried out on people who were not members of the sample which would be used in full study.

### **3.10 VALIDITY**

Validity is defined as the extent to which a test measures what we actually wish to measure (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). This definition is similar to the one reported by Jackson (2008) which states that validity refers to whether a measuring instrument measures what it claims to measure. In formulating the interview questions, the researcher ensured that all the questions that were asked related to the concept of school violence. The manner in which the interview questions were designed ensured that there were both internal and external validity. External validity occurs when the results of the study can be generalised to all members of the population. Given that, in this study, a sample was used, it was imperative that results emanating from the study could be generalised to all members of the population. The interview questions were also designed in a manner that ensured internal validity.

Internal validity occurs when the researcher can ascertain the causal effects of variables in the study. As suggested by Cooper and Schindler (2006), the researcher ensured that the interview questions covered all the investigative questions guiding the research. When the research instrument covers all the areas that the research questions are about it is said to have content validity. When the researcher was constructing the interview questions care was taken that it was not affected by situational factors. In other words, the interview questions were constructed in a way that it could be used at different times, areas, and conditions. When the research instrument displays such a characteristic it is said to be reliable. The researcher also ensured that the interview questions used were stable. Stability means that if the research were to be carried out on the same respondent for a second time, the

interview questions would produce the same result. This point was supported by Jackson (2008) when he stated that the term 'reliability' means that the individuals must receive a similar score each time they use the measuring instrument. The design of the questionnaire took other factors into account, such as stated earlier, the questions were written in simple and unambiguous English to ensure interpretability. These factors ensured that it was practical for the researcher to conduct the study. Lastly, the interview questions were refined in accordance with the recommendations that the respondents made during the pilot study.

### **3.11 RELIABILITY**

Dependability is analogous to reliability, which involves ensuring the consistency of observing the same findings under similar circumstances. According to Merriam (1998), it refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context. It emphasises the importance of the researcher accounting for or describing the changing contexts and circumstances that are fundamental to consistency of the research outcome. Reliability is problematic and is practically impossible as human behaviour is not static, is highly contextual and changes continuously depend on various influencing factors. It is further compounded by the possibility of multiple interpretations of reality by the study subjects; a similar study with different subjects or in a different institution with different organisational culture and context or by a different researcher may not necessarily yield the same results. The quality of inferences also depends on the personal construction of meanings based on the individual experience of the researcher and how skilled the researcher is at gathering the data and interpreting them. As a result of all these, reliability in the traditional sense is not practical in a qualitative case study. Merriam (1998) suggests that reliability in this type of research should be determined by whether the results are consistent with the data collected.

According to Bryman and Bell (2007), reliability is fundamentally concerned with issues of consistency of a measure. This definition is similar to that advanced by Jackson (2008) where the author defined reliability as an indication of the consistency or stability of a measuring instrument. For the purposes of this study, the factors of reliability that were considered by the researcher are those advanced by Bryman and

Bell (2007), namely stability; internal reliability; and inter-observer consistency. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the measuring instrument is said to be stable if little variation between the results obtained in the first instance and those obtained when the measure was administered for the second time could be discerned. When that happens, in research terminology the measuring instrument is deemed to have stability. It was very important for the researcher to ensure that this was achieved, for example: Questions asked were not hypothetical, but were related to true scenarios. This was done to show internal reliability.

### **3.12 ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

The administration of a research instrument basically refers to the method used to get the questions to the respondents. In the case of this study the researcher first decided whether the questions would be interviewer-administered. The method chosen had to ensure that there was a high response rate.

### **3.13 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

Interpretive researchers attempt to derive their data through direct interaction with the phenomenon being studied. An important aspect of data analysis in qualitative case study is the search for meaning through direct interpretation of what is observed by themselves as well as what is experienced and reported by the subjects. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define qualitative data analysis as “working with the data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesising them, and searching for patterns”. The aim of analysis of qualitative data is to discover patterns, concepts, themes and meanings. In case study research, Yin (2003) observes the need for searching the data for “patterns” which may explain or identify causal links in the data base.

In the process, the researcher concentrates on the whole data first, then attempts to take it apart and to re-construct it again more meaningfully. Categorisation helps the researcher to make comparisons and contrasts between patterns, to reflect on certain patterns and complex threads of the data deeply and make sense of them. The process of data analysis begins with the categorisation and organisation of data in search of

patterns, critical themes and meanings that emerge from the data. A process sometimes referred to as “open coding” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) is commonly employed whereby the researcher identifies and tentatively names the conceptual categories into which the phenomena observed would be grouped. These emerging categories are of paramount importance as qualitative researchers tend to use inductive analysis. In a case study like this one, the data collection and analysis can also go hand in hand in an iterative manner in that the results of the analysis will help guide the subsequent collection of data. Data collection and analysis inform or drive each other, with the result that the analysis becomes a higher level synthesis of the information. The iterative cycle is repeated and course design and development checked and revised as the process continues.

Data analysis consists of identifying emerging themes throughout the data collection process. The emphasis was on the conceptualisation of the data, and generating conceptually abstract thematic categories from the data. This approach requires the researcher to analyse the data above on an empirical level, and to work towards a condensed, abstract and emerging interpretation of what is central in the data (Punch, 2005). The conceptual analysis described the specific and distinctive recurring qualities, characteristics, discourses and concerns expressed. The researcher selectively analysed aspects of human actions and events that illustrate recurring themes. This study went beyond descriptive analysis, to add a theoretical dimension (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The researcher therefore transcribed the interviews and coded the concepts. The data collected were coded to represent the various categories of responses.

### **3.14 HALLMARKS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OBSERVED**

In this study the researcher paid particular attention to the hallmarks of good scientific research. Sekaran (2003) identifies eight of these distinguishing characteristics of sound scientific research, namely purposiveness, rigour, testability, replicability, precision and confidence, objectivity, generalisability, and parsimony.

#### *Purposiveness*

In undertaking this study the researcher had a definite aim and clear objectives, and

these were clearly stated at the beginning of this chapter. The aim and objectives of the study precisely spelt out the purpose of the study.

### *Rigour*

The manner in which the population and the sample of the study was clearly identified, as well as the manner in which the whole research process was designed, indicated that the researcher was concerned about adding rigour to the study. The researcher added rigour to this purposive study by identifying different research designs and methods. Furthermore, the selection of the sample for the study was carefully done by ensuring that there was not any bias. The sampling method used was chosen to ensure that the sample was as close as possible to being a representative sample of the entire population being studied.

### *Testability*

The validity of the answers to the questions asked in the interview can be tested without much difficulty.

### *Replicability*

The researcher was also concerned about the replicability of the study. In other words, the research process was designed in such a way that the study could be repeated with other participants at different times and locations. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the replicability of the study lies in the extent to which the researcher explained the procedures followed in the conducting of the study. In this chapter all procedures followed have been clearly stated. The authors argued that if the results of the study could be repeated, then the study could be deemed to be reliable. Based on the confidence limits obtained from the statistical data this study could be deemed to be reliable, and thus repeatable.

### *Precision and confidence*

As argued by Sekaran (2003) the fact that the researcher is not always able to reach all members of the population, necessitates reliance on the sample. The author argued that this reliance on the sample tends to create some bias and errors. For this reason the researcher had to establish some precision and confidence. In this research such precision and confidence was achieved by using statistical tools that gave confidence



levels on the results obtained. To this end t-tests and chi square tests were used.

### *Objectivity*

The researcher ensured that the results of the study were based on the interpretation of the data provided by the participants of the study and not on the researcher's own views. This meant that the conclusions reached in this study were objective and not subjective. According to Sekaran (2003), when the interpretation of the data is more objective the study is more scientific.

### *Parsimony*

Parsimony is Sekaran's last distinguishing characteristic of sound scientific research which the researcher had to ensure existed in the study. According to Sekaran (2003), one of the ways in which a researcher can ensure parsimony is to base the study on a thorough literature review of previous similar research work as well as building in a few research variables to be analysed. The researcher was able to do that as is displayed in Chapter 2.

## **3.15 CREDIBILITY**

Credibility in qualitative research is defined as the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. Credibility is analogous to internal validity, that is, how research findings match reality. However, according to the philosophy underlying qualitative research, reality is relative to meaning that people construct within social contexts. Qualitative research is valid to the researcher and not necessarily to others due to the possibility of multiple realities. It is up to the readers to judge the extent of its credibility based on their own understanding of the study. Most rationalists would propose that there is not a single reality to be discovered, but that each individual constructs a personal reality (Smith & Ragan, 2005). Thus, from an interpretive perspective, understanding is co-created and there is no objective truth or reality to which the results of a study can be compared. Therefore, the inclusion of member checking into the findings, that is, gaining feedback on the data, interpretations and conclusion from the participants themselves, is one method of increasing credibility. Although it has its own disadvantages, Lincoln and Guba

(1985) consider member checking into the findings as “the most critical technique for establishing credibility.”

### **3.16 TRANSFERABILITY**

The researcher kept in mind that the research results had to be able to be generalised to the entire population being studied. This was ensured firstly by selecting a representative sample, secondly by obtaining a fairly large sample and, as has been discussed above, by being objective.

Research findings are transferrable or generalisable only if they fit into new contexts outside the actual study context. Transferability is analogous to external validity, that is, the extent to which findings can be generalised. Generalisability refers to the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times or setting than those directly studied (Maxwell, 2002). Transferability is considered a major challenge in qualitative research due to the subjectivity of the researcher as the key instrument, and is a threat to valid inferences in its traditional thinking about research data. However, a qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by detailing the research methods, contexts, and assumptions underlying the study. Seale (1999) advocates that transferability is achieved by providing a detailed, rich description of the settings studied to provide the reader with sufficient information to be able to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings that they know.

Since this study adopts a single case study approach, the process of generalisation that aptly matches it is inferential generalisation which is best explained as generalising from the context of the research study itself to other settings or contexts (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Therefore, it is a requirement that the researcher documents and justifies the methodological approach, and describe, in detail, the critical processes and procedures that have helped him to construct, shape and connect meanings associated with those phenomena. Further, throughout the process of this study, the researcher was sensitive to possible biases by being conscious of the possibilities for multiple interpretations of reality. In qualitative research, generalisability is sometimes simply ignored in favour of enriching the local understanding of a

situation. However, the researcher has provided a rich, thick description of the study to such an extent that data and description speak for themselves to enable readers to appraise the significance of the meanings attached to the findings and make their own judgment regarding the transferability of the research outcomes.

### **3.17 TRIANGULATION**

In social research, the term triangulation is used in a less literal sense. It involves the use of multiple methods and measures of an empirical phenomenon in order to overcome problems of bias and validity (Blaikie, 2000; Scandura and Williams, 2000). Triangulation arose from an ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes and, in case studies. It can be achieved by using multiple sources of data (Yin, 2003). It is an approach that utilises multiple data sources, multiple informants, and multiple methods (e.g., participant observation, focus groups, member checking, and so on), in order to gather multiple perspectives on the same issue so as to gain a more complete understanding of the phenomena. Triangulation is used to compare data to decide if they correspond (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002), and thus, to validate research findings. It is one of the most important ways to improve the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. Triangulation being a way of mutual validation of results, can uncover biases when there is only one researcher investigating a phenomenon.

Triangulation may incorporate multiple data sources, investigators, and theoretical perspectives in order to increase confidence in research findings. Since any method can have weaknesses and strengths, triangulation is also a method to increase reliability by reducing systematic method error, through a strategy in which the researcher employs multiple methods or sources. If the alternative methods do not share the same source of systematic error, examination of data from the alternative methods gives insight into how individual scores may be adjusted to come closer to reflecting true scores, thereby maximising the richness and validity of the data, and thus, increasing reliability.

Triangulation is also often cited as one of the main ways of ‘validating’ qualitative research evidence. Yet much debate exists as to whether triangulation offers

qualitative researchers a satisfactory method of verifying their findings. Many viewpoints have been expressed, resulting in the argument that the worth of triangulation is the provision of broader insights.

### **3.18 LIMITATION**

A challenge with regard to this study is to stay aware of and guard against potential bias from the researcher. Although it might be an advantage that the researcher is an educator, the researcher should be aware of his own vulnerability with regard to potential bias. The researcher will therefore adopt the following procedures to prevent possible bias: Firstly, member checking will take place; which involves having the participant confirm the findings of my research before final acceptance. Secondly, findings will continuously be verified under the supervision of a senior researcher. And lastly, a thorough literature control will be conducted. Mouton (2001) mentions the fact that the conducting of a case study can be time consuming, especially when it comes to the data collection and analysis. It is often quite time consuming to transcribe and analyse the data through proper member checking. This is a dissertation of limited scope, which implies that the researcher will have limited number of participants for the research. The researcher, however, experienced the challenge of working around the busy schedule of the chosen participants. The challenge of the participant trying to misrepresent herself, for whatever reason, should have a limited impact due to proper triangulation of data.

### **3.19 ETHICAL ISSUES**

In this study the researcher ensured that the Ethics policy of the University of Zululand was adhered to. In doing so the researcher ensured that all the participants were intellectually and mentally sound. The manner in which the research was conducted, and the manner in which the questions were designed ensured that the participants were not embarrassed. All the procedures used in this study were neither stressful nor upsetting to the participants. The researcher ensured that at all times the participants were not deceived. All of the participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. The participants were also made aware that anonymity and confidentiality would be ensured. The

researcher clearly indicated to all the participants how the research data would be stored and disposed of once the research was complete. The researcher conducted the study after having secured permission from the appropriate authorities of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education (See annexure D).

The researcher informed the participants of their obligation to participate faithfully. In other words, as suggested by Hair et al. (2003), the participants had to follow the instructions given by the researcher as best as they possibly could.

### **3.20 SUMMARY**

In undertaking this study the researcher had a definite aim and clear objective. In this chapter the researcher clearly demonstrated that the study was purposive. This was done by providing a sound explanation of how the research methodology was designed. The main aim of providing a sound methodological design was to add rigour to this purposive study. This chapter gave a broad overview of how the qualitative research was carried out and provided a clear picture of the aim and objectives of the study. A brief discussion was given to explain who the population and sample of the study consisted of.

The researcher, wherever possible, tried to provide definitions of all the terms that were deemed important to define. The location of the study was adequately identified. The researcher gave clarity on the different sampling methods that were considered before the appropriate one was chosen. The researcher also gave a clear distinction of the research methods that were considered, and gave reasons why the qualitative research method was chosen. The researcher was able to provide an accurate picture of how the research instrument was constructed and administered. This chapter provided information on how the research data were collected, presented, and analysed. An indication of the type of software used to analyse the data was also given. An outline of the most important ethical issues which the researcher observed was provided. In view of all the above-mentioned it is proper to conclude that this study possesses all the hallmarks of sound scientific research. The following chapter which is chapter 4 deals with analysis, presentation, and interpretation of empirical data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4. ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 3, the focus was on research design and methodology. This chapter focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the empirical data that was elicited from the respondents by means of the items that were part of the interviews. The following aspects were taken into consideration:

- Part 1: The background for the interviews: this will provide the information about how interviews were conducted. The profile of the respondents is discussed. The educational background, general information and the categories of schools used in this study are provided;
- Part 2: The findings: specific themes that emerged during the study, the results of the analysis of the interviews and data obtained from the individual interviews are mentioned and discussed. The role of violence and the themes resorting under violence are included;
- Part 3: Findings on occurrences as experienced by teachers are shared;
- Part 4: Insight and advice from teachers; and

The consolidation of township and rural schools where a brief summary and synthesis is provided. Deliberate attempts are made to connect the findings to existing literature on the topic.

The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

#### **4.2 SETTING FOR THE INTERVIEW**

Cohen *et al.* (2000) assert that if researchers intend to probe into the private aspects of individuals' lives, their intentions should be made clear and informed consent should be sought from those who are involved. For this study, official permission was obtained from the Department of Education in writing to conduct this research (See

annexure A). Access to conduct the research was first negotiated telephonically. Letters were also written to all the school principals asking for their consent to conduct research at their schools and to explain the purpose of the study as well as the procedures to be followed during the research process (Annexure B). The participants in this study were informed in writing that their anonymity and privacy would be treated ethically and confidentially. On the consent form and on each interview instrument the following was printed: ***“The information gathered will be used with confidentiality for this study only and your anonymity will be ensured. Participation is voluntary and you could withdraw at any point should you wish to do so. There are neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study*** (See annexure C).

The researcher also asked permission prior to conducting the interviews to use a tape recorder; the recordings were only used to transcribe the data and then securely stored where they would not fall into the hands of others. They were also assured that none of the information used for the purpose of the study would compromise their identity in any way. To gather qualitative data, individual interviews were conducted in quiet school settings, in school A and B it was conducted in the library and in school B and C it was conducted in the staffroom.

It is crucial that one determines in advance what style of interviewing will be suitable and also, according to Greenfield (2002), which form of recording will be most suited for one's research. Many researchers warn that transcribing will inevitably lose data from the original live interview situation, and that there is a potential for distortion and the reduction of complexity. Patton (1990) argues that verbatim transcription is regarded as the essential raw data for qualitative analysis. Patton (1990) underscores the value of using field notes, especially those made immediately after the interview. Therefore the researcher made use of a combination of tape recordings and note taking to record the data in all four schools in Umbumbulu circuit. Hughes (2002) suggests not using the tape recorder for at least the first five minutes of the interview in order not to make the respondents edgy, and to create a relaxed atmosphere.

The researcher also made use of direct observations while conducting interviews in schools, listening attentively to the respondents' responses, and looking for changes in

body language such as laughter, nervous shifting on the chair, or hand movements and refusing eye contact. This observation took place in a naturalistic way while the interviews were actually being conducted. Henning (2004) mentions that while interviews are being conducted the researcher should take notes about how the interview develops structurally. These notes are intended to harness some of the contextual factors that are not verbalised, such as gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, change in tempo of speech and general body language. The researcher used this strategy of note-taking as unobtrusively as possible. Henning (2004) argues that deeply-held beliefs and feelings cannot truly be determined through quantitative survey questionnaires. Henning (2004) also agrees that participants can narrate their experience more efficiently when asked to do so in their own words in interviews.

This advice was followed, and it proved to be successful. The researcher conducted in-depth personal interviews with the PL 1 educators, principals and other members of the senior management teams of the Umbumbulu circuit schools, focusing on the participants' individual circumstances in their own setting. The researcher audio-taped the interviews and transcribed them directly afterwards. Questions were categorised in the following areas: Question 1 focused on determining the levels of violence in Umbumbulu circuit schools. Question 2 focussed on the type of violence. Part 3 focused on the triggers of violence. Question 4 focused on the impact of violence in teaching and learning, educators' encounters that are related to school violence and lastly.

## **4.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

### **4.3.1 Part 1: Educational background and general information**

Four high schools (A-d) were chosen for this research and the researcher grouped them into two categories. Category 1, is a rural school which is school A, School B is in the townships but servicing learners from Ezimbokodweni which is rural and which is an informal settlement. Category 2, are township schools embracing school C and school D, they are situated in the township and are servicing learners from the township. This grouping was done in order to ascertain the levels of violence, the



nature, triggers, impact on teaching and learning and the patterns of violence in Umbumbulu circuit. All the researched schools in this study are situated in low class and low-income areas, where most of the learners come to school either by taxi or by walking to school. All the four schools service learners coming from poor families. Most of the learners come from extremely down trodden circumstances and most of them come from a child headed family environment. They come to school hungry. Category 2 schools, though in the township, service learners that come from informal settlements. All four schools are fee paying schools, but because of the poverty stricken community they service, parents do not pay school fees which make the school difficult to function and to uphold certain norms and standards which they receive from the government.

From all four schools, it transpired that they have experienced serious incidents of violence, which involved mostly knives, bullying or sharp objects. All serious incidents were reported and disciplinary steps were taken, involving parents being called in, and most of these incidents resulted in the suspension of the perpetrators. The researcher found that schools with inadequate security systems tend to be more vulnerable to burglary, vandalism, gangsters and the infiltration of trespassers. Two of the researched schools in this study were situated in high crime areas, yet also showed a lack of security at their schools (Schools A and B). At school A the fence was broken, and in places it was completely open. School D had a fence and security gates; however, the gates were wide open for anyone to enter, including at break-time. School C reported that they do have a problem with trespassers, especially past learners who come and go as they want to.

The Deputy Principal reported that the school had repaired its own fence several times with money from school fees; however, when they had asked for financial assistance from the Department of Education, it was refused. The fence is now open at several points, and because of financial problems it cannot be repaired by the school. The researcher noted that only one school had a single security guard at the gate. This shortage of safety precautions could be a contributing factor that could increase violence in schools in the Umbumbulu circuit.

### **4.3.2 Profiling of respondents**

For processing the interview data, the units of data from the interviews with the educators, principals and senior management members were grouped on the basis of similarity in the data analysis process. The researcher formulated themes from interviewee's responses to codify the data. The researcher used P1 to P32 in order to identify respondents with whom interviews were held. Sixteen respondents from rural schools (P1-P16) and sixteen respondents from township schools (P16-P32) were captured during the interview.

### **4.3.3 Part 2: themes connected to violence**

In analysing interview data, the researcher used thematic analysis which involved: reading verbatim transcripts and identifying possible themes, comparing and contrasting themes.

#### **4.3.3.1 *Levels of violence***

All 16 participants stated that violence was increasing based on the cases of violence that they witnessed and attended to every week. They all raised the concern that the level of violence was increasing daily. There is an increasing use of weapons carried to school by learners to attack or defend but both resulting in bodily harm and serious trauma.

P1 stated: "Cases of fighting and bullying are also increasing, because of many factors. At home they are raised by single parents; you find that a learner has one parent, either father or a mother so they have deeply rooted anger and that anger is displayed at school, because in our schools learners come with guns and knives to pay revenge at school."

P2 asserted that: "Violence is rising in schools because of gangsters, also because of the fact that, the community itself harbours criminals, because they live with them within the communities. Learner activities are influenced by the community they live in that is full of criminal elements and some of these elements are brothers, uncles and

sometimes fathers, so they copy from them. Learners see crime as a way of life and to these learners doing crime is a normal thing.” This view is supported by Burton (2008) who states “weapons, drugs and alcohols are available in many schools across the country. For example: three in ten learners at secondary school know fellow students/learners who have brought weapons to schools; three in ten report that it is easy to organise a knife, and one in ten report that it is easy to organise a gun. With such easy access to substances and weapons, it is not unanticipated that levels of violence in South African schools would be so high” (See paragraph 2.44).

The level of violence is also affected by aspects such as poverty and neglect. Teachers mention that poverty was major cause of violence as people had trouble eking out an existence at home and struggled with accommodation. Many people living together with a lack of enough space for each individual also caused friction among family members.

P3 stated: “If the fathers of one group got injured in wars by the fathers of the other group, it triggers violence in school between to the groups of learner now trying to pay revenge on behalf of their fathers.” De Wit posits that in the South African context, the various factors contributing to the calamity of violence are present. These factors embrace poverty, neglect, dysfunctional family life, ineffective parenting, the problem of high-density housing in townships and informal settlements, diverse tribal, racial and ethnic, organised crime, as well as exposure of children to crime, violence and the abuse of drugs and alcohol (De Wet, 2003) and according to Du Plessis (2008), all these factors reverberate in our schools (See paragraph 2.3.3).

P4 said: “Violence is increasing because of many factors. Once at home they are raised by single parents, either fathers or a mothers so they have deeply rooted anger and that anger is displayed at schools because in the schools learners come with guns and knives to pay revenge at school.” This view is supported by another researcher who states Parental violence has been identified to cause violence at school. This correspondence has been demonstrated either by aggressive patterns among the parents (Benson & Fox, 2004) or by even more pronounced acts of violence inflicted on the children by the parents (Lober & Stouthamer-Lober, 1998; Mansel, 2001; Straus, 2001) (See paragraph 2.4.2).

A lack of discipline measures at school also caused violence as the perpetrators who had to be controlled became unruly and assumed power controlling even those in powers. It was mentioned that in the days when corporal punishment was still allowed discipline at school was not such a problem. They said that teachers were left helpless and had no advice as to improve the situation at school.

P5 stated: “Violence is increasing because the discipline that is used now is not effective and does not make learners to behave. The discipline that was used before was corporal punishment which was effective, wrong as it was; it was able to create order, to make learners to behave. Today learners do not fear anything.” This is collaborated by Burton (2008) who reveals that in terms of school management, educators in township schools exhibit a lack of adequate classroom management skills, a perception that to some is exacerbated by the banning of corporal punishment as a disciplinary option. Previously, discipline was generally maintained through fear of physical punishment. Alternative effective discipline measures appear to be lacking in this specific context (see paragraph 2.3.5).

P6 also shared the view of P5 who said: “It is increasing reason being that learners are not being punished anymore in schools, and other measures like detention are really not effective. If you detain the learner it is like you are detaining yourself, because the learner does not feel any effect whatsoever and you end up wasting time to do other important things. The next day that learner will do the same thing he or she has been detained for again.” also (See paragraph 2.3.5).

Any competition of any nature had the potential to stimulate violence as it was always about gaining power. Gaining power gave certain privileges and those privileges also included violent dominance.

P7 stated “violence is increasing because of a number of factors which are tribal wars over land dispute between different Izinduna in this area. The land disputes between the local chiefs cause violence if differences are not resolved peacefully. Violence in our school is also caused by sport. The group who lost will attack the one who won and unfortunately they will attack each other inside the school premises. Conversely De Wet (2003) states that not only could all of these factors spill over into the schools

with serious consequences for education, but they could also lead to a collapse of a learning culture (See paragraph 2.3.3).

P8 said: “There is no cooperation between the community and the police as a result school violence is increasing. Drugs are also everywhere in the area and are sold to learners by adults members of the community, and it is because of the effects of the drugs that learners misbehave.” This view is supported by (Burton, 2008) who states “Other community factors, which increase the risk of school-based violence, include the high rates of weapons and drugs in schools. This implies that these goods are easily available outside of schools in the home or community context” (see paragraph 2.4.4).

P9 stated: “it is increasing because it is from learner to another learner, and when learners fight with friends and families of the learners will be involved and then violence will involve many people inside and outside the school.”

P10 also shared P 9s view by stating “It is increasing because, learners come to school carrying weapons such as knives and sometimes guns. There is no random search policy in place in the schools, so when learners have weapons in their school bags, they will be tempted to use them, sometimes not intentionally, but as a way to show off to their peers that they are the men (isikhokho) which refers to a tough person.” One cause or factor, which may contribute to school violence, is that of peer pressure (Jefthas & Artz, 2007). Both P9 and P 10’s view are supported by Mathews, Griggs and Caine (1999) who state the “need for status and power among peer groups can be understood to be one of the causes of violence amongst the youth.” They add that “Several of the highly violent students are members of a violent peer group.” (Fuchs, 1995; Eisner *et al.*, 2000; Fuchs & Luedtke, 2008) (See paragraph 2.3.6).

P11 stated: “It is increasing because the department of education is doing nothing to address violence in schools; unions have been fighting with the department about the issue of security in schools for a long time to address the issue of violence in schools without success, so that is why it is increasing. Teachers are not securities; we were not taught how to handle violent learners, but to teach normal learners.”

P12 posited: “Violence is on the rise because of poverty; there is no work. These learners come from families where no one is working; some learners come from the family where liquor or drugs are sold and the only language they know and respond to is violence, it is very painful though we are educators we are also parents and we have compassion because these are kids the same age as mine.” This view is shared by Bemak and Keys (2000) they postulated that poverty is a prime cause of violent behavior. Neighborhoods characterised by high unemployment rates, inadequate housing, high rates of violence and crime with few non-existent community based services including job training, recreation, day care and public transport are regarded as causative factors of violence (see paragraph 2.4.3).

P13 stated: “Yes, violence is increasing indeed. There has always been violence in school since the apartheid era, when the new government we elected took over we thought things would be better, but things have become worse especially in schools as they abolished corporal punishment and did not come with effective methods to control violence.” This argument is collaborated by the National Education Plan of action (2003). According to this plan:

“The South African Education System developed along racist lines through the policy of Apartheid. The management of facilities was organised along racial lines and even statutory bodies controlling the Education System were arranged along racial lines. This resulted in facilities that were completely different, with those belonging to Whites superior and those belonging to Blacks inferior. This resulted in a system that over the years became fragmented and biased towards serving mainly urban dwellers. It also promoted the development of a private sector to cater for the few privileged people and the small black middle-class. When the democratic government was voted into power these imbalances of the past had to be addressed. This was a huge challenge for the government of the day because it was not only the Public Education System that needed to be reshaped, but also the economic and social injustices caused by Apartheid. The democratic government led by the African National Congress, had to come up with a new National Plan for the Education System” (see paragraph 2.2.3).

P14 stated that it was going up. The researcher personally blames drugs especially the one called wunga, which makes learners to be crazy. They steal whatever they come across then there are fights which result in violence in the school. The teachers expressed the wish that government would do something about the violence as the

teachers were also not safe. Researchers support this view (Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998). Fagan and Wilkinson (1998) further state that there is a relationship between violent crimes in schools and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. In township communities, where alcohol and drugs are easily available to under-age children, the availability of these commodities places those who live in these communities at higher risk of violent encounters (see paragraph 2.4.3).

P14 stated: “Violence is increasing because as long as there is poverty, if people are unemployed and if people are hungry there will be violence in schools. I am saying this because cases of violence that we are experiencing here in this school and around Umbumbulu circuit where learners fought as a result of stealing, and when you do a little investigation you discover that the perpetrators come from a terrible background where you find that no one in the family is working.” This view is supported by Bemak and Keys (2000) who assert that poverty is another aspect that is associated with violent behaviour. Neighborhoods characterised by inadequate housing, high rates of crime and unemployment, violence and a lack of non-existent community based services such as job training, recreation, day care and public transport are seen as factors conducive to violence. (See paragraph 2.4.3) Researchers (Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998) state that there is a relationship between violent crimes in schools and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. In township communities, where alcohol and drugs are easily available to under-age children, the availability of these commodities places those who live in these communities at higher risk of violent encounters (see paragraph 2.4.5).

P16 concurred: “Yes violence is increasing in this area, because it has become a norm that we deal with. We experience cases of violence including bullying and sexual harassment almost daily and we do not see violence going down because there is no intervention on the side of the Department of Education. Schools are left to their own devices to deal with the problem and we are not competent as educators to address this as we do not have necessary skills to deal with the problem.” This view is supported by Van Wyk (2001) who states “The lack of support of principals by education departments and the power of unions are contributing to ill-discipline in schools” (see paragraph 2.3.2). De Wet (2006) also adds that bullying is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the rights of learners and

teachers to learn and to teach in a safe environment. One could argue that bullying compromises the quality of interpersonal relationships among learners and between learners and teachers (see paragraph 2.4.6).

All participants P17 –P32 stated: “violence is increasing in the school.”

P 17 asserted that: “It is the lack of the policy of age restriction in high schools as one of the causes of violence in schools that adds to the problem. Learners do not live in harmony because of the huge gap in age group; you find that a boy of 18 years old comes to do Grade 8. How is he going to live in a class with learners as young as 12 or 13 years old, because they will tease him and he will respond with a slap or a fist, because they are not of the same age.” Researchers added “Beyond the influence of individual and cultural factors predisposing students to violence, factors associated with the management, organisation or culture of a school make a significant difference to the likelihood of a student becoming involved in violence or school misconduct (Grunseit *et al.*, 2005; Jenkins, 1997).” Welsh, Greene and Jenkins (1999) maintain that almost all the variation in school behaviour disorder rates in their study could be explained by various school-level factors, including perceived fairness of school rules, clarity of school rules and attachment to the school. Important factors influencing the likelihood of being violent included students’ knowledge of whether there was a school discipline policy, the formal teaching of school rules, and student attitudes regarding school rules, classroom culture, and racism and bullying in the school (See paragraph 2.3.4).

P 18 stated: “Another cause of an increase in violence at school is that, our school services learners from informal settlements, do not have respect and so there is no respect amongst the learners. They talk and see violence in the community they live in and bring it to school because violence that we experience in the school is fighting, stealing and because some of them live on their own they survive by stealing in their community but it does not end there, they also steal in school and then that habit causes violence.” Researchers agree on a link between alcohol and other drugs and youth violence. Van der Aardweg (1987) maintains that drug abuse and school vandalism and violence go hand in hand. Bemak and Keys (2000) assert that communities where alcohol is easily available to underage youngsters place the



youngsters who live in those communities at higher risk for violent encounters (See paragraph 2.4.4).

P19 stated that: “It is increasing because of a number of factors, which is fighting amongst learners themselves and educators who abuse learners and that results in violence. Poverty is another cause. These learners come to school hungry so they are easily irritated. The common type of violence is fighting amongst learners.” The study conducted by SACE (2011) also showed that those in power perpetrated violence directly and indirectly – directly when they themselves bully learners, and indirectly when not acting when violent behaviour is reported to them. Learners need to feel that they can trust and that they are supported by school teachers and the principal and according to the Code of Conduct of the South African Council of Educators (SACE 2011), teachers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of learners (See paragraph 2.6.4).

P 20 asserted that it was increasing, because of the experience he had in the school that he was currently working at. Learners always fought and bullied one another. What is frightening is the fact that most of these cases were not reported by the schools authorities. “There is that culture of silence within the schools in this circuit.” De Wet (2006) adds that bullying is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the rights of learners and teachers to learn and to teach in a safe environment. (See paragraph 2.4.6).

P 21 maintained that it was increasing, because there were more drugs in the community than before. He continued to say that there were more people who lived in poverty and there were more children who were abandoned by their parents at birth, so when all these societal issues affect schools hence the learners that they taught came from the same community, therefore what did they expect? high levels of violence in school as the school is a microcosm of the society. According to Friedlander, who shares the same view (in Hill & Hill 1994), poverty itself does not generate violent behaviour. It is the combination of poverty plus alienation, the hopeless feeling of despair in an uncaring nation that is the seedbed of hostility, conflict and violence. For

disadvantaged children, violence is a way of life and very real and to cope with violence is to survive (Forster in Van der Aardweg, 1987) (see paragraph 2.4.3).

P 22 exclaimed: “It is increasing because of the fact that, the methods of discipline that are currently prescribed for educators to implement in schools like detention and isolation are not working or in other words are not effective for an ‘African child’ so to speak. The discipline that was used before which was corporal punishment was effective, although some believe that it was wrong but it was able to make learners to be disciplined in schools.” (Burton, 2008) adds that in terms of school management, educators in township schools exhibit a lack of adequate classroom management skills, a perception that to some is exacerbated by the banning of corporal punishment as a disciplinary option ( see paragraph 2.3.5).

P 23 added that today learners are not afraid of punishment. If you detain a child it is like you are making a joke or you are playing. The law is also protecting learners, in other words the protection and the right they are enjoying make them to be disciplined which make them to be rude and being rude leads to disrespectful behaviour towards the educators and to each other which ultimately leads to violence.” This is collaborated by Prinsloo (2005) who asserts that “Alternative effective discipline measures appear to be lacking in this specific context. Furthermore, the Schools Act acknowledges the role that the governing body should play in ensuring a safe school environment” (See paragraph 2.3.5).

P 24 stated that the background of these learners was a problem, poverty in particular. The community itself was not doing anything toward helping the learner to have discipline, because most of these learners were heads of the family and their hearts were bitter, because they had their own children who caused them to be frustrated, because they could not afford them they did not have money. They came to school stressed, because at home they were mothers and father and also had to come and learn at school so the educators sit with the problem that they do not have solutions to help. This view is shared by Forster in Van der Aardweg (1987) who postulates that it is the combination of alienation and poverty that is at the heart of the hopelessness and despair experienced at school. It is these factors and an uncaring nation that is the seedbed of conflict, hostility and violence (See paragraph 2.4.3).

P 25 stated that violence was increasing, because of anger these learners had which was caused mainly by their upbringing. Learners came home where there was poverty. They lived with uncles, step parents or grandparents mostly grannies. Most of them were not brought up with values. They experienced a lot of hardships in their home which made them to be violent when they came to school and the only place that anger could be released is school unfortunately in the form of violence. That was why violence would never go down because the problem was back at home for these learners. This view is supported by Blandford (1998) who propounded that some of the causes of violence in schools were the effects of a poor socio-economic environment, and factors such as drug abuse, child abuse, neglect, and community- and media-related violence, all of which reverberated in many classrooms worldwide (See paragraph 2.3.3).

P 26 asserted that violence was increasing, because the government or the department had been unable to come up with proper mechanism to deal with violence in schools. Learners were uncontrollable these days and they did as they pleased, because they knew that they could not discipline them. Gable et al. (1996) attest to this view by explaining that learners' aggressive behaviour often resulted from flawed educational practices (See paragraph 2.3.2).

P27 stated that: "It is increasing because learners are exposed to criminal activities in their communities; some learners are criminals themselves, so when they come to school they continue with their criminal activities." Ward (2007) also contends that the everyday social contexts in which children learn and grow play a critical role in the socialisation of children. This perspective is based on the concept of the school culture as an expression of a wider community which Mazerolle (2010) describes as having a disordered values framework (See paragraph 2.4.4).

P 28 was of the opinion the fact that the constitution of this country especially South African Schools Act, made it hard for educators to discipline learners which put learners in the position to resort to criminal activities. He said that: "Learners are not scared of educators anymore and are not scared of punishment either most of all they carry dangerous weapons in school which they are not afraid to use." Gable et al. (1996)

explain “learners’ aggressive behaviour often results from flawed educational practices” (see paragraph 2.3.2).

P 29 postulated that violence was increasing, because learners reflected the community they came from, so in the difference community they came from, crime was on the rise and hence schools served the learners who came from different communities and who were exposed to criminal activities of different kinds such as shootings, stabbings and robbery on a daily basis. He further elaborated that: “When they come to school their minds are already contaminated with violence and they are like time bombs waiting to explode.” This view was shared by Benbenishty (2011); Heitmeyer (2011); Hoffman (2012) who posit that violence in a community spills over into the schools (see paragraph 2.5.4).

P 30 stated: “Yes it is increasing because of the environment we live in, the type of learner we teach and also the system, crime is everywhere in this country so schools are no exception. The learners that we teach come from these communities. They come to school to continue the activity that they do in their communities. I don’t know but things are not good here; we have cases every week to solve, cases of violence and we are tired, I am telling you.”

The common perception among the respondents was that violence in school was increasing and that violence could be attributed to parental neglect and unresponsive relatives and society. This impacted on the learners in a negative way as they developed and resulted in a couldn’t-care-less attitude. Learners were always angry, hungry and ready to attack if someone irritated them even educators were not safe.

Drugs and alcohol were seen as the major perpetrators when it came to causative factors of violence.

P 32 asserted: “yes, it is increasing, I blame drugs and alcohol. These learners smoke dagga during break and when they are drunk or high they become untouchable and even girls are also using drugs and alcohol, which is why violence is increasing in this school.” Burton (2008) supports to these opinions and he states that children whose family members used illegal drugs or had been incarcerated were twice as likely as

other children to experience school-based violence. Lunenburg and Irby (2000) maintain that if our schools and neighbourhoods are unsafe for our children, the graduation rate is affected. Improving student achievement in challenging subject matter, and ensuring the ability of our students to compete in a world economy, and carry out their responsibilities of citizenship will be much more difficult to achieve if violence is allowed to continue (See paragraph 2.4.4).

#### **4.3.3.2 *Types of violence***

Types of violence discussed next embrace physical bullying, sexual harassment and verbal bullying. Gangsterism and gender discrimination are also included as type of violence emanating from strained relationships and violence at home. Tribal conflict and drug abuse were also regarded as causes of violence.

##### *Physical bullying*

All participants (P1-P32) agreed that the common type of violence included bullying, sexual harassment and fighting using weapons like knives and guns. It was observed that learners discriminated against one another, because they came from different areas (izigodi). They were at loggerheads as an echo of parental hostility. They also fought, because of things like peer competitions in the community about issues such as who won the music contest or latest fight. Bennett-Johnson (2004) asserts that bullying was also rife in the school and female learners were often at the receiving end. The literature reveals the tendency of people living in the townships to resort to selling drugs and alcohol culminating in a pervasive condition of poverty and unemployment. Many people in these areas investigated were economically inactive for large periods of time, or sometimes indefinitely. This lack of income had devastating consequences as it gave rise to more illegal ways of surviving.

These above-mentioned conditions exacerbated the social conditions of those adolescents and even younger children who patterned themselves after these perceived role models. The modelling continued to include other violent behaviours embracing the use of weapons and joining gangs, spilling over into schools. Bennett-Johnson (2004) asserts that learners tend to imitate the behaviour of their parents and if the parents are violent children learn to become violent too (See paragraph 2.4.4).

P2 stated: “We have a case here at school which happened yesterday where two boys fought and the other boy nearly died because of a serious head injury.” They fought over a minor thing like a cell phone. P3 added that they were exposed to daily fighting both at school and at home. The media did not really help as aggression and violence in the circuit of Umbumbulu of are common themes on the front pages of their local newspapers. P4, 5 and 6 were in agreement that senior learners abused their authority and abused the younger learners, which caused the younger learners to respond with carrying weapons such as knives to defend themselves.

#### *Bullying because of teacher absence in class*

P 8 asserted that: “The type of violence that we have in this school is fighting, which takes place inside the classroom where there is no teacher, and also fighting resulting from gambling that takes place inside school premises involving the outsiders who sometimes come to school to gamble.” It became apparent that even outsiders became involved in the violent behaviour involving illegal aspects such as gambling. Fighting about money could be seen as a major causative factor of aggressive behaviour.

Another prominent factor was the absence of the teacher in class and leaving learners unattended. P12 stated: “The type of violence that we have in our school is bullying, fighting and sexual harassment. It takes place during breaks but sometimes in the classroom where there is no teacher but sometimes even if the educator is present. These learners undermine female educators, because they can fight even if they are present in class. They do not only fight in the presence of female teachers, but even the new young male teachers are disrespected.”

#### *Sexual harassment*

Sexual infringements and disrespecting privacy were also aspects mentioned by the respondents. Girls and boys were also fighting because of partners that were taken by others. They fought about love and for love. Theft was also linked with violence as basic respect of property was a problem. A lot of unresolved conflict caused violence in school.

P 14 stated: “The type of violence we face in this school is fighting and bullying mostly coming from stealing of bags, cell phones and money. Female learners also fight over

boys and male learners fight over girls, we have a lot of cases of that nature in this school that we are currently dealing with.”

P 15 stated: “The type of violence that we experience in this school is fighting which is caused by dispute over different issues e.g. traditional music, sport stick fights and also indeed tribal dispute over land (imingcele).”

### *Verbal bullying*

The literature contends with all the 16 participants that bullying unfolds in a social context, namely the dyad, peer group, the playground setting, and the school environment and that bullying can be direct or indirect. The research further reveals that direct bullying, as a manifestation of violence involves physical contact or verbal abuse whereas indirect bullying involved subtle social manipulations such as gossip, spreading rumours and exclusion. Harmful words were also a form of bullying of the learners and teachers as unacceptable language and tone were also forms of disrespect and intimidation and could also be observed in the schools under discussion.

Bullying and verbal intimidation can be looked at through the lens of the social learning perspective of modelling and reinforcement. It can be concluded that both learners and teachers were guilty of bullying (Bandura, 1977) conversely, Snodgrass (2005), Egbochuku (2007), Giddens (2006), Kambo (2012) Kibui (2013) and Beauchamp (1993) maintain that violence and bullying in particular, is a worldwide problem and it often leads to negative lifelong consequences both for the students who bully and for their victims.

Verbal bullying creates an unpleasant atmosphere which influences the general school climate in a negative way. Children’s rights are perpetrated and their need for learning in a safe environment is ignored. Poipoi et al. (2010) assert that verbal bullying is characterised by negative comments about the victim’s appearance, rumours and sexual comments and these have been reported as prominent for both males and females (See paragraph 2.4.6 and .2.4.4.4). Poipoi et al., (2010) adds that verbal bullying characterised by negative comments about victim’s appearance, targets of rumours and sexual comments and these have been reported as prominent for both males and females (Poipoi et al., 2010) in conclusion, he cites “more males than

females reported being victims of physical bullying which involved hitting, slapping and pushing”.

*Gangsterism in the Umbumbulu circuit.*

It was reported that sometimes learners fought because they belong to different areas and different gangsters and this caused fights in the school. There was an incident which happened in this school where an intruder came into the school and stabbed one of the learners. Other learners became involved and tried to intervene. The learner who mustered the courage to defend the fellow learners was stoned to death in front of them and unfortunately there was nothing that defenders could do. Bullying is also rife in the school of which younger and female learners are the victim of older boys who belonged to certain gangs and they became dragged into fights they had no interest in. This forced involvement is also observed by a number of researchers who maintain that bullying is a global problem (Poipoi *et al.*, 2010). Poipoi et al (2010) identify sexual violence, rioting and fighting as an integral part of violence which is also part of gangsterism (see paragraph 2.5.2).

*Drugs as causative factor of physical violence*

P 22 stated: “The common types of violence is bullying and fighting where younger learners are bullied by adults. Learners that are doing higher grades are also fighting because of being under the influence of drugs. Some learners smoke weed and they become untouchables even some educators are afraid of them.”

It became evident that drug abuse such as alcohol and weed were a major influence in causing undesirable behaviour all culminating in violence and bullying. It was also reported that the younger groups were at the receiving end of the violent behaviour ranging from sexual abuse to physical assault. Little was done to curb the aggressive behaviour as teachers were also in fear of the bullies who were reigning and enforcing their authority. Theft also occurred due to hunger and poverty and the outcome was physical fighting and bodily harm.

P 25 said: “Violence that we experience in this school is fighting, often as a result of stealing, gambling, drugs and sexual harassment. Everyday both learners and



educators really are not safe. You cannot confront or reprimand a learner anyhow, because you don't know what is inside his bag."

P 26 exclaimed: "Violence experienced in this school is bullying, sexual harassment and fighting. Sometimes the argument starts outside the school during weekends in the sheebens or in the playgrounds but it spills over to the school premises."

Sheebens could therefore also be seen as a factor contributing to the abuse of alcohol which had devastating effects for the learners at school as learners were reported to be drunk and under the influence of drugs and misbehaving as a result of inebriety. Bullying occurred as a serious problem due to alcohol and drug abuse.

P 29 responded: "The type of violence that we encounter in our school is fighting, sexual harassment and also bullying. Sometimes these learners come to school high after smoking different kinds of drugs and they assault one another and that triggers violence in the form of fighting."

P 31 said that: "The common type of violence that educators experience in this school is fighting which is caused by drugs, stealing of cell phones and school bags, which is a result of poverty and lack of proper guidance from their parents."

P32 said: "The type of violence that we have in our school and in other schools in this area is fighting. These learners lack respect and they don't know even how to talk with us as educators. I blame drugs and the abolition of corporal punishment in school for this violence which we are experiencing on a daily basis."

The abuse of alcohol and drugs at sport activities were also linked with criminal acts such as pickpocketing during sport gatherings. This criminal behaviour was so bad that teachers did not wish to attend any of those sport activities as they lived in feared for their lives.

P5 stated "Drugs like marijuana especially during sporting activities and alcohol. The tendency of learners where there are sports activities they see an opportunity to get drunk triggers violence. And when they are drunk they will also do pick pocketing

because they see themselves powerful when drunk and even educators feel threatened by these learners and they will not want to discipline them. That is why educators don't want to involve themselves in school sport."

De Wet (2006) contends that bullying is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the rights of learners and teachers to learn and to teach in a safe environment, also that bullying compromises the quality of interpersonal relationships among learners and between learners and teachers. Teachers will no longer be regarded as beacons of hope and as role models. This is corroborated by a number of researchers who state that growing violence, bullying, and chaos in classrooms are a regular part of the school day for an increasing number of students (Ayers, 2009; Barter, 2012; Carlson, 2011; Davis, 2011; Ellis, 2011; Espilage, 2011; Lane, 2011; Ludwig, 2011; Scott-Coe, 2011; Shapiro, 2011). (See paragraph 2.4.6 and 2.5.3).

#### **4.3.3.3 *Triggers of violence***

##### *Boundary disputes*

P1 stated; "The causes of especially the triggers of school violence are the boundary disputes of the traditional leaders who want to control bigger portions of lands so that they could claim that their area was bigger than the area of other chiefs nearby. You will find that the chief will have his team of fighters and the other chief will also have his team of fighters heavily armed and that conflict would spill over to schools and schools would be affected because learners will not attend school, and only few learners will be able to attend."

It became clear that tribal fights were rife and that there was no clarity about boundaries concerning land ownership. Chiefs even resorted to their own type of war fighting about areas to dominate as the main ruler over a certain area. It also became apparent that these fights impacted the learners negatively.

##### *Personal family background*

Broken families and illegitimate children were also a cause of violence as the unrest at home was felt at school and even in class where members of different families were at

loggerheads and rejection of siblings born out of wedlock surfaced. Strained emotional relationships at home were seen to influence learners in their emotional stability and academic performance. Some learners had to grow up with their grandparents as a result of the circumstances at home. It was also evident that some learners lost their family ties completely and changed their surnames as they had no connection with a family anymore. Apart from the absence of family ties, strong family ties also caused trouble as once someone was hurt at school an entire family would pitch at school to reckon with the culprit.

P2 stated that most learners were born out of wedlock so they came with problems from home. Some of them were raised by grandparents and they came with bitterness because they were not raised by their biological parents. Those factors triggered bad behaviour and violence. The background played a big role as most learners in that school were raised by grandparents who survived on government grants and some came from foster parents who did not know their biological parents and some, when they reached matric, changed their surnames because they did not know who their parents were. These circumstances made them to be violent because they did not have a sense of belonging because everybody needed a sense of belonging.” Blandford (1998) shares the same view with P1 and P2 by stating that some of the causes of violence in schools are the effects of a poor socio-economic environment, and factors such as drug abuse, child abuse, neglect, and community- and media-related violence, all of which reverberate in many classrooms worldwide (See paragraph 2.3.4).

P 7 stated: “Violence is triggered by relationships between learners, also faction fights like, if the fathers of one group got bittern in wars by the fathers of the others group, that triggers violence in school in this area because, the groups of learner whose fathers lost will now try to pay revenge for their fathers. Sports also trigger violence if one group of learner got beaten in community games they will fight at school. There are those underlying factors that we think are normal in our culture, like being raised by a single parent. To our kids being raised by a single parent makes them to be violent. Our learners are likely affected emotionally, physically and spiritual because of not being raised by stable family and that triggers violence,” In support of this view Jefthas and Artz (2007) state that cause or factor, which may contribute to school violence, is that of peer pressure (See paragraph 2.3.6).

Violence which occurred within the family was also a bad example to the youngsters who learnt that conflict was resolved by aggressive behaviour. Matsoga, (2003) and Oteyo and Kariuki, (2009) are of the opinion that family violence gives rise to violence in all areas of communication.

Family violence, in this study, contributed to violence or juvenile delinquency and perpetrated the cycle of youth violence. P9 stated that “Some learners are molested by their stepparents and they come with burdens to school where they sleep and will not tell anyone what worries them and those factors make them to be violent or trigger violence which is within the learner which is waiting to erupt like a volcano.”

It was also observed that poor family background had an effect on academic performance and that led to frustration which was not always dealt with appropriately. P10 maintained “Violence in our schools is triggered by frustration of learners caused by poor family background. Learners become frustrated in terms of academic performance and they become trouble makers in the school which at the end of the day causes violence.”

It also became evident that a lack of food was also a crucial causative factor giving rise to violence as learners who did not have a proper meal were ill-mannered and short-tempered at school. Discrimination against poor learners also had a negative influence on their self-esteem which made the learners feel unwanted. They also lacked a sense of belonging and then resorted to violent behaviour.

P 14 stated “Violence is triggered by learners’ family background. They come to school hungry because of poverty which makes them to be short-tempered and sometimes they argue about minor things and then they fight. In support of P9 – P14 Barbarin and Richter (2001) argue that youngsters may on the other hand, suffer psychological trauma and encounter social alienation, resentment and suspicion from their families and community as a consequence of their involvement in gang-related activities. It is important that teachers understand the nature of all these feelings of aggression when developing a disciplinary plan for their schools (See paragraph 2.4.5).

### *Traditional music as a form of art and culture*

It was surprising that art could be a cause of violence but in this research study it was true. It was reported by P15 that it happened in her school and also other schools in that area where they found that two groups from different areas did not see eye to eye. Even ingoma (traditional music) sometimes caused violence as groups accused each other of cheating and competitions where one group boasted about their powers to belittle the other group sparked off violent behaviour. This manner of chant mocking also had an impact in school as any kind of ridicule is then associated with the traditional music chants.

Ward (2007) is of the opinion that a “factor that needs to be taken into account when attempting to understand the reason for such high rates of school violence in South African schools is the greater social, cultural and political context. South African society has been argued to have a culture of violence.” This is collaborated by Jeffthas and Artz, (2007), Ward (2007) and Burton (2008) who assert that the South Africa currently has to manage the after effects of the Apartheid regime which was characterised by discriminatory policies entrenched in structural forms of inequality and high levels of poverty (see paragraph 2.2).

### *Gender discrimination*

Females were seen as a soft target and had to bear the brunt of violent behaviour inflicted by bullies. Since the emancipation of females, girls started talking back and standing up for themselves. They started fighting back. Their stance of defending themselves also sometimes caused violent behaviour as other people also became involved in a few incidents.

P3 stated: “Bullying triggers violence, older learners bullied younger ones, and gender based violence, sometimes female learners provoked male learners which ends up in male learners hitting female learner, and boys like in the past still undermine girls. Girls of today talk back and they end up in a fight where boys end up hitting a girl. Girls now are more assertive they stand up for their own rights therefore, that friction between boys and girls triggers violence in the school because if a girl is hurt by a boy, the brothers of that particular girl will come to school carrying dangerous weapons to attack the boy and then violence will erupt.”

P4 commented that sexual harassment was still prevalent in the school as touching body parts where they were not supposed to be touched, occurred. Girls were called names like bitches. The issue of sexual harassment where boys touched girls' private parts, and the issue of crime e.g. stealing of bags, triggered violence. Just recently there was a case where one learner suspected the other of stealing his school bag, and that suspicion caused violence in the school because the two learners fought and some learners also took part in the fight which caused the fight to spread like a wild fire.

P 6 stated that: "Violence started at home because the child represents the family where she/he comes from. If the parent is violent the child also will be violent and also if the child lacks a father figure and lives with the granny there is no one to control or guide the child. That child is likely to be influenced by peer pressure and that is what I think triggers violence in schools. In this school violence was triggered by learners provoking one another which always ended up in a fierce fight where it even spilled over to the community and then came back to school worse than before. Bullying and theft also cause violence in our school." This view is supported by Njoya (2008) who adds that the parent mediates security, health, justice, orderly knowledge, affection and peace. He adds that in homes where there is a lot of violence between spouses or when parents are constantly absent from home, a sense of insecurity and lack of self-esteem develops in the children. This can cause to build-up tension to such an extent that they release it through violence and even transfer it to schools (See paragraph 2.5.4).

### *Poverty*

All the participants (P 17 -P 32) stated that poverty is a crucial factor in triggering violence in Umbumbulu circuit schools.

P 17 refers to the role of poverty in violence. She said: "It is poverty that causes learners from informal settlements to suffer. They do not have respect for themselves or others and so there is no respect amongst the learners. Some learners live all by themselves and fight and steal to survive."

Poor families had to share a single room and everything was done in that room from cooking to sleeping. There were also cases of murders and children witnessing

murders all in one room. The effect of this personal background characterised by poverty impacted on the learners' behaviour and academic achievement as these learners could not study properly in a small room while others were communicating and even sometimes fighting.

P17 said:” This is supported by Burton, (2007). Hill and Hill (1994) assert that a second wave effect of the absence of family structure includes children turning to cults, gangs, drugs or crime for escape, recognition and identity. Because children under 18 years are seldom convicted or are easily paroled in certain legal systems, they are used as perpetrators. Lysled (1994) states that violence of one family member towards another is an increasing problem. From such unstable beginnings, children learn violent behaviour that is then carried over to school (See paragraph 2.4.2).

P 18 asserted: “Most of these learners come from poor a family where nobody is working. Most survive through government grants, so all the above-mentioned factors affect learners such that they become easily irritated and are always angry and those emotions drive them to be violent when they get annoyed by other learners or even educators.”

It was also evident that poverty surfaced in all areas of their lives as some learners had to act as parents since they themselves had to take care of their siblings because there were no parents to help provide for them.

P 21 stated: “Because of the fact that these learners are head of families, some of them are mothers and some are fathers, yet when they are at school they must act like children. If a learner provokes that particular learner who has family burdens, the consequences will be an act of violence against that learner.”

P 22 however stated “When there are violent incidents in the school let them be dealt with seriously and get the attention that it deserves, because some incidences are caused by the fact that there are similar incidents that occurred previously but could not receive proper attention or were ignored, therefor similar incidents will build from the previous one that were not treated seriously. If a child is troublesome in school proper

measures are not taken, the child will do more serious incidents in school but if the child is dealt with accordingly he will stop.”

The respondents in this study reported that poverty had an effect on their bad behavior but a lack of discipline was the main trigger of violence. If the school were strict in disciplining learners, there would be no such increase of violence in schools” P 18-P 23’s views are supported by Bemak and Keys (2000) who state that poverty is another factor that is linked with violent behaviour. Neighbourhoods with inadequate housing, many unemployed people, high rates of crime and violence and a lack of services including job training, day care, recreation, and public transport are seen by Bemak and Keys (2000) as contributory factors to violence (See paragraph 2.4.3).

#### *The abolishment of corporal punishment*

It was also generally accepted that the lack of proper punishment measures due to the abolishment of corporal punishment caused huge challenges as violent learners could not be controlled in any way. Teachers observed the negative effects of the lack of a proper punishment system.

P 24 stated: “I think, one can say a lack of discipline in school as result of the abolishing of corporal punishment by the government left teachers powerless. There are other forms of punishments which are not as effective as corporal punishment. You will find that schools that are doing well and producing well results it because they practice this form of punishment secretly. Learners are too comfortable to do criminal activities in school with no fear of being punished. You cannot even expel the learner because you can lose your job as an educator”.

P 25 stated “it criminal elements in the school who steal cell phone, schoolbags and demand money from other learners and the resistance from other learners results in violence in the form of fighting trying to defend themselves.”

P 26 said: “Stealing mostly that triggers violence. Learners steal bags and cell phones and that erupts into violence since there are no proper punishment measures. Learners are accusing other learners of stealing their property. So stealing triggers violence in schools around this circuit.”



P 27 said: “A lack of discipline affects violence as well as and the availability of drugs taken by learners in school.” Learners do not fear teachers anymore because using sticks to punish learners is no longer allowed in schools. Other forms of punishments were not reported to be effective in their schools. Drugs and gangsters also triggered violence in schools. Cases of learners stealing from other learners also triggered violence in schools, not forgetting romantic relationships between learners.

#### *Romantic relationships*

Romantic relationships were seen to be a serious factor causing violence. P 32 reported that violence in that school was triggered by the fact that learners took drugs and alcohol and also engaged themselves in sexual relationships with different partners inside and outside the school environment. When the outsider discovered that his girlfriend or boyfriend was cheating in the school, there were evidence of violence.

#### **4.3.3.4 Part 3: Occurrences of explicit incidents of violence at school**

The examples mentioned by the participants on violent incidents in class were quite alarming especially looking at the severity thereof and the cruelty that went along with it. A few of these incidents were reported by the participants and they are briefly mentioned.

P 1 told about an incident when she could not discipline a learner because he had used traditional medicine during a ‘war’ (intelezi) which they claimed protected him. What they noted was the side effects of these traditional medicines which were so dangerous in that it made the ‘patient’ extremely aggressive and violent towards other learners and educators as well. He became extremely unruly and bullied others in the school. The teacher felt quite powerless to control the situation which was a very humiliating experience as the learners witnessed her feelings of despair.

P2 related of an incident of extreme danger when a dad came to school with a weapon. She stated: “There was an incident where one parent came to school and bit the learner who happened to be the father of the child. He also took out his gun and wanted to shoot the learner apparently for stealing money. He did that in front of the learners

and educators. That incident was never reported to the authorities as that issue was suppressed.”

P 3 told about an attempted car hi-jacking incident. Two boys came to school and tried to hi-jack a car there at school. Learners tried to intervene and were seriously injured. They even had guns which caused for real fear and chaos. It occurred to her that the schools were really not safe at all. It made her re-consider if she wished to stay on as a teacher.

P5 told about an incident where she intervened when two boys were fighting over a cell phone and she almost became injured in her endeavor to stop the fight. It was quite a traumatising incident to her. She stated “I intervened and nearly got hurt in the process because the fists were flying.”

P7 told of an incident that happened just the previous day when two boys had such a serious fight that the one had to be taken to hospital because of the severity of the blows inflicted to his. The child almost lost his life in the process. It was quite upsetting especially witnessing all the blood.

P8 recalled an incident where two boys threatened each other’s lives as they were fighting about money and the fight divided the school into two factions. Nobody wanted to come to school as they feared for their lives. The parents had to be called to school to address the problem and it was quite difficult to solve.

P 9 remembered an incident where two boys were fighting about school bags that looked similar but the one was in a better condition. It caused two classes to start fighting physically and the teacher was also injured in the process. It was a very alarming incident and proved that teachers are not really safe at school anymore.

P 10 said there was an incident where a person from outside gained access to the school environment and the girl was raped. She quit school because of the incident. It left teachers powerless and shocked.

P 13 stated that there was case of a boy who sexually harassed and raped female learners and made them pregnant. These learners did not want to reveal that they were forced into sleeping with this boy. Other learners encouraged this boy and they applauded him for having many girlfriends maybe not knowing that he raped them. This was a problem because young girls were victimised and they were disturbed academically. The school where they were supposed to be safe put their lives in danger of being raped.

P14 stated: “I have come across violence in school where boys were fighting over the winnings after gambling and also the case which has just happened in my class of two boys fighting over a cell phone of which one of them almost lost his life. The case is still on.”

P15 stated: “For example last week, I had a male learner slapping a female learner in my presence in class, but with that one it was discovered that the boy was under the influence of alcohol.(See paragraph 2.4.6). In the past I had a case where teachers in my school went to fetch learners who were hooligans from other schools to come and attack teachers from her school that they had differences with.

P16 stated that: “Learners don’t want to learn. One minute the teacher is out of the class and when the teacher comes back the learners are fighting. As you can see right now over there, there is a case of fighting between female learners, fighting over male learner. This is what we deal with almost every day.”

There was also a case of stoning of a child at school which was one of the most upsetting cases ever reported at the school.

P17 stated: “Bullying, fighting and stealing are an ordinary occasion. There was a boy who came to school and stabbed a learner. The other learner came and attacked him bit that boy and stoned him to death.”

Unfortunately there were also cases where teachers participated in the violence using children to fight their personal battles. P 19 stated: “We have such violent cases where educators are using kids to fight their battle and some teachers’ leave learners unattended to go to unions meeting and the learners will fight.”

P 20 stated “It is mostly boys fighting but also even girls do fight, we had a case where two girls fought over a boy, even though the case was about fighting, you could see that the girl’s background had to do with their behaviour. The manner, in which they spoke in front of their parents, was very disrespectful. It showed that even back at home there is no proper guidance from the parents”.

P24 stated “One learner was severely stabbed by an intruder inside the school premises. They were gambling inside the school. The learner almost died, but luckily survived. I have come across a number of cases involving fighting between learners.”

A severe case of violence was also reported which highlighted the fact that parents are also to be blamed for the violence that surfaces at school. There was a case of unacceptable behaviour at school which turned out to be a case of rejection by the parents.

P28 stated: “The problem is that these learners are bullies, and I suspected drugs to be the culprit. I had a case in my class of a boy who was so chaotic and all the educators were complaining because he was fighting, disrupting teaching and learning and when I went to talk to his parents about the problem, I found out that the boy was on drugs and the family knew about it. The father of the boy had even chased him away.”

One of the cases that was really upsetting was a female learner who was physically abused by a male in school. Onlookers were too scared of this boy to intervene and the girl was seriously injured.

P32 stated;” The incident of a girl being attacked, hit and kicked by a boy was also one occurrence that was really traumatising. I will never forget that and it made me aware of how females are vulnerable subjects.” Views are supported by (Poipoi *et al.*, 2010) by stating that bullying is one among other forms of violence in school; others include sexual violence, rioting and fighting. He adds that verbal bullying characterised by negative comments about victim’s appearance, targets of rumours and sexual comments and these have been reported as prominent for both males and females (Poipoi *et al.*, 2010) in conclusion, he cites “more males than females reported being

victims of physical bullying which involved hitting, slapping and pushing” (see paragraph 2.5.3)

#### ***4.3.3.5 Part 4: Perception of educators regarding the impact of violence in teaching and learning.***

##### *Communication*

The teachers all had contributions to make with regard to how to solve the problem. They were all in agreement that talks with the learners and parents could help a great deal as silence was not the answer. They also realised that to ignore the problem would not make it to go away. Silence is also a way of condoning such behaviour and that it was also not an option to just keep quiet and implicitly approve the violence. Communication was a solution to the problem in that causes of violence could be addressed.

P 5 stated: “School violence demoralises the spirit of teaching in a sense that the educators come to school prepared to teach but at the end of the day they find themselves solving cases of violence and they have to mediate and they don’t go to classes. They sit in the office solving cases as I did this morning, I had to go to the principal’s office to talk about the case of the boys who fought in class and injured one another. I do think dialogue and conversations about the causes of violence can help solve the problem.”

##### *Leading by example of nonviolent behaviour*

Another solution to the problem was proffered by teachers as setting an example of non-violent behaviour. Once the learners saw that the teachers were calm and seemed in control, avoiding emotional outbursts, they tended to follow the example and to some extent tried to be more in control themselves.

P 8 stated: “School violence disturb teaching and learning severely, maybe that is one of the reason many educators are resigning from the profession due to the fact that working conditions are bad, even those who are still in the profession are there just because of perseverance or that they have nowhere to go, like me. I am approaching 50 years. If I have to start a new job no one will employ me. There is a lot of commitment that I

have made in the department in terms of saving and if I resign now because of this violence that is taking place in schools I will not be able to get employment I will lose a lot. I therefore hang in there and try to solve the problems. Problems can be solved by a good example set to the children of self-discipline and self-control. If learners witness good behaviour they will copy this type of behaviour.”

### *Disciplinary committees*

Disciplinary committees seemed to have their place to curb violence as these committees addressed the problems in a professional way and also tapped into the resources of many leaders to find help. Seeking professional advice is definitely also an option in curbing violence. Professionals bring with them the necessary skills to deal with abnormal and disruptive behaviour such as to know how to pay genuine attention to the learners and how to make them feel good about themselves. If they have a better self-esteem they also avoid violent behaviour as self-respect has a lot to do with this type of behaviour.

P 10 stated: “You see during third period, I could not go to class because I had to attend a case because if I did not attend it, the learner would have continued to fight. So classes are disrupted. Sometimes a case is not solved by class teacher only and it has to be referred to a disciplinary committee and once it is there, a number of educators will be involved to help solve the problem. Professionals are also called in to assist.”

### *Counselling*

P 11 stated that she was fully aware that counselling was an option to help solving the problem of violence. I had to assist a girl who went through a lot of trauma as she was exposed to cyber bullying and really needed help to overcome this type of behaviour. Standing up against bullies was also an important aspect noted by the teachers who participated as the teacher had to be comfortable teaching the learners and the learners had to be comfortable in the presence of all children in class as group work was also done and that implied that individuals had to participate and communicate with other group members. P 12 stated: “Matric results are dropping because we waste lots of time on cases of violence and teaching time is wasted. It is difficult as the teacher has to become a police officer.”

*Focusing and good academic performance as the ideal*

The participants all agreed that academic achievement was really crucial in the schools and that this area of development was negatively affected by violence. By focusing on rewarding good academic achievement teachers could encourage learners to escape their lives of poverty and abuse. The teachers agreed that they just had to keep up the efforts to focus on good marks attained in school work.

P13 said: “a Violence impact negatively on academic performance of learners and that is why we have a low matric pass rate. Educators don’t have enough time to finish their work, and most of the time is taken by cases of violence that needed to be solved every week. I think we should keep persevering to encourage good academic achievement by rewarding learners for good work.”

P16 stated: “School violence is a problem in this area. Once there is fighting in school everything stops and learners become excited and refuse to go to classes. Educators also become depressed and the smooth-running of the school which is conducive for teaching and learning is highly affected. The focus must stay on encouraging learners to study and achieve a good pass rate.” P1-P16’s views are collaborated by Morrell (2008) who argues that schools in South Africa were the trenches of the liberation struggle especially during the 1970s and 1980s. He further argues that it seems as if the situation has not changed since the African National Congress came to power in 1994, because instead of producing a new generation of peace-loving and industrious pupils, the new freedom was followed by an increase in crime and violence in South African schools (see paragraph 2.4.4)

*Stimulating lessons and prepared teachers*

Teachers were also of the opinion that if the teachers would make a serious effort to deliver interesting lessons at least some of the learners will benefit. They were also of the opinion that the teacher had to be prepared in order to be in control.

P 18 stated: “Time is wasted due to solving of cases of violence every day. Sometimes you come to a point where you decide to teach those who want to be taught in order to avoid conflict with unruly learners but at the end of the day learners suffer academically, so school violence impact negatively in schools around this circuit. I

think lessons must be interesting and attention-grabbing so that all will become fascinated in class.”

P19 stated: “We sometimes in order to maintain a peaceful environment ignore learners with bad behaviour and focus on those learner who want to learn but at the end of the day that affects teaching and learning, the smooth running of the school and the morale of educators and learners. Eventually the results become poor at the end of the day (See paragraph 2.3.4).

P23 stated; “Unfortunately time to teach is taken by time to solve crises of violence in school. Both learners and teachers suffer, because of violence, learners lose on the content that they must cover and teachers do not finish the work that is supposed to be covered in time, therefore smooth-running of the school is affected by violence cases. We however try to uphold good teaching and learning even though it is difficult (See paragraph 2.3.4)

#### *Uplifting the morale of teachers*

P24 stated that whenever teachers attended to these cases of violence time was wasted and learners lost learning opportunities. The morale of educators also decreased and it was hard to stay positive. Teachers expressed the need for moral support and motivation. Acts and incidents of violence affected the teachers very negatively as they fell into despair experiencing a low level of motivation. This could be improved by calling motivational experts to inspire teachers to teach effectively again.

P27 stated: “School violence steals educators’ and learners’ time which impacts negatively of the performance and the standard of teaching of the educators.”

P28 stated: “Having taught in this school for 20 years, the one thing that takes this school backward is violence, dropping of results, teacher leaving the profession it is because of violence.”

P32 exclaimed: “This violence steals time for educators as many are depressed, like for example if you attended these cases you always come out depressed and exhausted, which affects our performance to teach.” Fredland (2008) asserts that: “This type of



victimization can also lead to higher-than-average rates of teacher turnover, increases in student dropout rates, students changing schools, principals and teachers retiring early, increases in student fear of violence at school, and a decline in learning” (See page 2.5.2).

#### *Working at the levels of anger*

A fact that could also not be ignored was the responsibility of teachers to work at handling angry learners. They realised that the manner in which a teacher can deal with a violent incident can also help to alleviate stress and solve the problem amicably if possible at all. It also seemed viable to investigate the reasons for the anger and to deal with that in time.

P 27 stated: “These learners are extremely angry and I don’t know why. I have encountered cases of threats in the school you find that the learner will remind you that when you go home you walk on feet and those threats are very stressful. Sometimes there were reasons for the unacceptable behaviour that needed a sensitive reaction and help.

P4 said: “One learner was so violent towards me when I asked him questions in class he overreacted by stating that his mother was dying of AIDS.”

Younger educators also had a challenge because they always had to weigh their words so carefully as learners were sensitive and very fragile and once you said something that would offend them and the teacher would be in danger.

#### *Teacher training to handle angry learners*

The teachers also expressed the wish to be trained professionally to handle angry learners. Strategies to avoid violence could help a great deal to ensure amicable teaching and learning.

P18 stated that: “The educators also carry the burden of learners, because if a learner comes crying, we act as a shoulder for that learner at times you as a teacher end up crying. It has an impact because most of the time we are in the staffroom attending these violent cases and the time is wasted and hours of learner contact time is wasted. Teaching and learning time is wasted in this school. We wish that we had someone or guidance

teacher who will be responsible for attending the cases or that someone could come to train us to deal with angry learners.”

#### *Training to deal with cyber-bullying*

With the advent of cell phones came Facebook and cyber-bullying which were also causes of violence. Teachers wished to be guided towards using technology and also how to assist a learner who was bullied by the use of technology. They claimed that learners were more informed to use technology and knew better how to use it.

P 25 stated: “I will be honest. To me the victims struggle to learn unless they receive counselling. Learners who were bullied on Facebook had to get help and we did not quite know what was going on as we cannot operate technology that well.”

#### *Promotion of a culture of teaching and learning*

It became clear that violence became a culture at these schools as learning was seriously affected by all these violent incidents already mentioned in the earlier sections. There existed a serious need for a new culture of teaching and learning to be part of a new initiative of curbing violence.

The schools’ culture of teaching and learning was disrupted. A lot of time was consumed by cases of violence which needed to be attended to by educators. Instead of going to class and teach we are busy solving cases of violence.”

#### *Counselling on alcohol abuse*

The teachers also raised the matter of counselling specifically aimed at making learners aware of the threat of drugs and alcohol abuse. They also wished for motivational speakers to visit the school to talk to the learners about the dangers of alcohol and drugs and to alert them of what abuse could do to them. According to Burton (2008) weapons, drugs and alcohol are available in many schools across the country. In a study by Eliasov and Frank (2002) on the nature and extent of crime and violence in twenty schools in South Africa, the researchers found that, although problems were reported across all school categories, disadvantaged schools persistently experienced more severe problems, particularly relating to vandalism, physical violence, gangsters and the possession of drugs and weapons.

### *Feeding schemes*

The teachers acknowledged that a feeding scheme was in place but that it needed to be improved in order to ensure that learners are physically able to concentrate on their work in class.

## **4.4 CONSOLIDATION OF TOWNSHIP AND RURAL SCHOOLS**

In analysing interview data, the researcher used thematic analysis which involved: reading verbatim transcripts and identifying possible themes, comparing and contrasting themes.

All 32 Participants interviewed stated that violence in Umbumbulu circuit was increasing identifying poverty, drugs and wars as the main causes. According to Leoschut, (2008) characteristic of communities in which there are high levels of violence is the accessibility of alcohol drugs (illegal or addictive substances) and weapons. Besides, high levels of exposure to violence in disorganised communities it also became evident in the schools under study. Research also indicated that there was a strong connection between substance abuse and crime. For example, high levels of alcohol consumption and the use of drugs increased the levels of aggression and therefore the levels of violence used in the committing of the crime.

All 32 participants interviewed stated that the nature of violence experienced by the schools was very dangerous to the learners because it involved bullying and fighting where learners use dangerous weapons such as guns, knives and sharp objects. Many learners left schools in fear of their lives; educators also left the profession because of violence in schools.

All 32 educators interviewed stated that violence impacted negatively on teaching and learning and they very strongly agreed that something needed to be done. Participants stated that violence demoralised the spirit of teaching, because of violent cases they had to solve every week. Solutions to the problem were also suggested and embraced: counselling, talks on violence, training on how to deal with angry learners and motivational talks to increase self-esteem and up the academic achievement. The next

chapter deals with the summary and addresses how the research questions were answered.

## **4.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter was able to provide the background for the interviews which was highlighted in part 1. This provided the information about how interviews were conducted. The profile of the respondents was discussed. The educational background, general information and the categories of schools used in this study was also provided. Part 2 of this chapter dealt with the findings where specific themes that emerged during the study, the results of the analysis of the interviews and data obtained from the individual interviews were mentioned and discussed.

The role of violence and the themes resorting under violence were included. Part 3 dealt with the findings on occurrences as experienced by teachers. Part 4 provided an insight and advice from teachers; and summary. Lastly, the consolidation of township and rural schools a brief summary and synthesis was provided. Deliberate attempts were made to connect the findings to existing literature on the topic. The following chapter, that is chapter 5, deals with a summary of the results obtained through the research which is presented along with a literature control for the results obtained during this research study, followed by a discussion of the conclusions drawn from the results after which reference is made to the research questions, the perceived contribution of this study and recommendations with regard to research and practice will be provided and finally, the limitations inherent in this study will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5. SUMMARY, THE SUMMARYS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter 4 the focus was on analysis, presentation and interpretation of empirical data. Chapter 5 deals with the findings, the summary and the recommendations. A summary of the results obtained through the research is presented along with a literature control for the results obtained during this research study. That is followed by a discussion of the summary drawn from the results, after which reference is made to the research questions. The perceived contribution of this study and recommendations with regard to research and practice, while acknowledging the limitations inherent in this study are also discussed.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

The summary of the study was aimed at determining if the following objectives were met:

- ascertain the levels of school violence in the schools under study and identify the common types of violence prevalent in the schools.
- understand the nature, causes and triggers of school violence, and
- analyse the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning.

Chapter one focused on orientation and background to the study. The introduction provided a brief information on the rate of violence in South Africa prone to schools which is disturbingly high due to several factors which consequently influence learner's' experiences of schooling. According to (Burton and Leoschut, 2012), schools in KwaZulu-Natal suffered severely because of crime and violence (See paragraph 1.1). This information and other violence incidences in Umbumbulu circuit schools prompted the researcher to investigate the prevalence of school violence and to determine if school violence is increasing or decreasing with specific reference in this circuit. The following aspects in this chapter were discussed: the background to

the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, delimitation, and definition of operational terms, research methodology, population and sampling, format of the interview questions, administration of the interviews, data analysis and concluded with the structure of the study.

The background of the study was provided here which revealed empirical evidence that school violence has become synonymous with physical violence perpetrated by children within the school domain where according to (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker & Goesling, 2002; Zulu, Urbani & Van der Merwe, 2004). Shootings, stabbings and physical and emotional violence have taken place in both public and private schools over the past years. Finally, the researcher has noted with great concern that, there is a new drug called Whunga which is now very popular in townships schools. This drug has hooked many learners and many cases of violence have been reported by most high principals in Umbumbulu circuit who have witnessed that perpetrators use this dangerous drug called whunga (See paragraph 1.2)

Chapter 2 dealt with literature review and theoretical framework. The literature review has revealed that South African society has been argued to have a culture of violence (Ward, 2007). The country currently has to manage the after effects of the Apartheid regime in which discriminatory policies entrenched structural forms of inequality and promoted high levels of poverty (Jefthas & Artz, 2007; Ward, 2007; Burton, 2008). During this era the youth, specifically black youth, were brought up in a context in which violence was a part of everyday life and was constructed as a means of overthrowing the apartheid regime. Thousands of youth and children engaged in the struggle with the aim of liberation and freedom from the oppressive apartheid system (Kipperberg, 2007). The structural inequalities entrenched in this regime also resulted in townships becoming places of severe poverty and overcrowding.

The literature also revealed that the school as restrictive institution contributed to triggers of violence in schools. According to Van der Aardweg (1987), teachers who respond to learners with either authoritarian or coercive behaviours, followed by manipulation and persuasion, reduce the learner's self-esteem and often this behaviour results in the persistence of disruptive behaviour. Gable et al. (1996)

explain that learners' aggressive behaviour often results from flawed educational practices. The principal is also mentioned as a determinant of educator misconduct. In this regard principals who are unable to control staff or who adopt an authoritarian approach lead to resentment (See paragraph 2.3.2).

Chapter 3 highlighted how the research was conducted. This was done by first highlighting the aim and objectives of the study (See paragraph 3.2.1 and 3.2.2), then giving a clear indication of where the study was physically conducted. In research term it is called, the location of the study (See paragraph 3.3). This chapter also indicated how this study was designed and which research designs were considered before the appropriate one was selected. This was done by providing the description and purpose of the research design and methods, the construction and administration of the research instrument and the recruitment of the study participants (See paragraph 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 & 3.8)

This chapter further on explained how such pretesting was done (See paragraph 3.9) In summary, the researcher discusses a number of ethical issues that were observed to ensure that the study complied with the general research ethics and more importantly with the University of Zululand's ethics policy (See paragraph 3.19)

Chapter 4 dealt firstly, with the setting for the interviews; this will provide the information about how interviews were conducted (See paragraph 4.2)

Secondly, it dealt with findings where education background and general information is provided (See paragraph 4.3 and 4.3.1)

Thirdly, it provided the information about how the researcher profiled the respondents in the study (See paragraph 4.3.2)

Fourthly, in analysing interview data, the researcher used thematic analysis which involved: reading verbatim transcripts and identifying possible themes, comparing and contrasting themes (See paragraph 4.3.3)

Fifth, it outlined the problems of school violence (See paragraph 4.4)

Sixth, it focussed on the experience of educators with regard to school violence (See paragraph 4.3.3.4).

Seventh, focussed on the impact of violence in teaching and learning (See paragraph 4.3.3.5).

Lastly, consolidation of township and rural schools, a brief summery and synthesis was provided. Deliberate attempts were made to connect the findings to existing literature on the topic (See paragraph 4.4) and summary of the chapter (See paragraph 4.8).

### **5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

In part 1 educational background and general information of the four schools chosen for this study was provided. (See paragraph 4.3.1.). Themes were also formulated from interviewee's responses to codify the data. The researcher used P1 to P 32 in order to identify respondents with whom interviews were held and captured (See paragraph 4.3.2).

In part 2, themes connected to violence were provided and in analyzing interview data. The researcher used thematic analysis which involved reading verbatim transcripts and identifying possible themes, comparing and contrasting themes (See paragraph 4.3.3).

The following questions served as a means to elucidate the problem of violence in the Umbumbulu circuit. They were:

1. Are school violence levels decreasing in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?

It became clear that the levels of school violence were escalating to become worse to the extent that they seemed to be out of control. Teachers expressed the wish for professional intervention as many teachers felt like giving up and leaving teaching. They were in dire need of assistance, training and counselling. The study has revealed that violence is increasing based on the cases of violence that are witnessed and attended to by the responded every week in their respective schools. All participants raised the concern that the level of violence



is increasing daily. There is an increasing use of weapons carried to school by learners to attack or defend but both resulting in bodily harm and serious trauma. (See paragraph 4.3.3.1).

2. What are the common types of violence prevalent in the Umbumbulu circuit schools?

The researcher could answer this question after the literature review and responses by the interviewees. It became clear that violence assumed many forms in schools. The following types were identified viz.: bullying, physical abuse due to alcohol, drug abuse and unresolved emotional problems. Gender-based discrimination culminating in sexual harassment, gangsterism, verbal abuse and cyber-bullying could be observed. The fighting because of land ownership and tribal wars were also evident.

3. What are the nature, the causes and the triggers of violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?

The nature of school violence is severe as teachers mentioned instances of stabbing, murder, verbal abuse and cyber bullying. It became apparent that school violence had its root in unresolved emotional and family problems. Poverty was also at the root of many problems such as child headed families and children having to fend for children due to a number of causes of which AIDS was a prominent cause.

4. What are the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?

All 32 educators interviewed stated that violence impacts negatively on teaching and learning and they very strongly agreed that something needed to be done. Participants stated that violence demoralises the spirit of teaching, because of violent cases they had to solve every week. Teachers came up with solutions to the problem of violence by suggesting counselling, motivation of teachers and learners, professional help, rewarding of good behaviour and leading by example. They were also of the opinion that child headed families needed financial assistance which could be done in the form of feeding schemes and improved feeding at school (See paragraph 4.3.3.5).

Consolidation of township and rural schools was done around the following themes: Level of violence, types of violence, nature causes and triggers of violence, problem related to violence encounter in schools and perception of educators regarding the impact of violence in teaching and learning (See paragraph 4.4)

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are based on the research findings and the discussion that has been advanced in Chapter 4:

1. Security needs to be tightened, an admin block should be provided, parents should engage in conversations with learners about good behaviour to stop bullying and parental involvement should be encouraged. The SGB should also be more vigilant;
2. When there are violent incidents let them be dealt with seriously and get the attention that these deserve, because some incidences are caused by the fact that there are similar incidents that occurred previously, but could not receive proper attention or were ignored, therefore similar incidents will build from the previous one that were not treated seriously. If a child is troublesome in school and proper measures are not taken, the child will do more serious incidents in school but if the child is dealt with accordingly he will stop;
3. The department should give the structures within the school e.g. SGB more powers to be able to expel if there are children who are a problem and the police should be allowed to do random searches more frequently;
4. Road shows and campaigns should be done more and we should talk about these things in the community, because learners come from the community and the school is a microcosm of the community. The problem start from the family to the community and ended up in schools; micro chasm is a deep hole

5. Securities should be employed to check weapons from learners;
6. Psychologist are needed to help learners and teachers to clear their minds;
7. Security personnel is needed;
8. Psychological services should come to schools;
9. The department of safety like in companies such as safety liaison in circuit should come to inspect schools safety;
10. The guidance teacher should take responsible for dealing with violent cases;
11. Bring back discipline;
12. Educators should be given liberty to discipline learners;
13. Strong security should be moving around the classes.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS**

The study was limited to Umbumbulu Circuit. Data obtained from the four schools in Umbumbulu circuit does not represent all the schools but it calls for further and broader research on school violence in Umbumbulu circuit.

## **5.6 SUMMARY**

Chapter 5 dealt with the findings, the summary and the recommendations. A summary of the results obtained through the research was clear presented. That was followed by a discussion of the summary drawn from the results, after which reference was made to the research questions. The recommendations while acknowledging the limitations inherent in this study were also discussed. This chapter also highlighted that in order to ensure the safety of the learners and to create an environment that is conducive to learning, school discipline and school safety should be a priority. These two concepts are related to schools' success, and they cannot be separated. This chapter also revealed that teachers play an integrated role in the learning that takes place in our schools which is why it is imperative that the community as well as the educational authorities remain aware of their unique experiences.

The findings in the study have revealed that a demoralised educator will be detrimental to the building of new South Africa in general and Africans in particular therefore, educators, more than ever, are in need of effective support to cope in the

increasingly challenging field prone to violence. This support should come from the educational authorities, in the form of emotional support as well as clearly stipulated disciplinary support that empowers the teacher as the responsible adult in the school environment. Drastic measures should be taken to ensure school safety and to restore the teaching profession to its rightful level of esteem. To be able to attain this, society as a whole should be re-educated. Educators must be carefully selected, well-trained and properly remunerated. A well-coordinated multi-faceted approach, including all spheres of society, would be necessary to succeed in this challenge.

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# ANNEXURES

## ANNEXURE A



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Tel: 033 341 8610

Ref:2/4/8/154

Mr SC Shabalala  
No 55 North Ridge Park  
360 Kenyon How den Road  
Montclair  
4004

Dear Mr SC Shabalala

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN THE UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 June 2014 to 30 May 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 11 June 2014

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa  
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [kehogile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:kehogile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za); CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;  
WEBSITE: [www.kzndoe.gov.za](http://www.kzndoe.gov.za)

## ANNEXURE B

No 55 North Ridge Park  
360 Kenyon Howden Rd  
Montclair  
4002  
12 -11- 2015

Dear Principal

### **RE: REQUEST PERMISSION TO CONDUCT MY RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOOOR SCHOOL**

I am Sandile C Shabalala, a student presently enrolled for a Master's Degree in Social Science Education at the University of Zululand (Ongoye). I am required to do a full dissertation. My research will focus on *School violence in the Umbumbulu Circuit*. I will be conducting interviews in order Ascertain the levels of school violence in the school under study, to identify the common types of violence prevalent in the schools. And lastly to understand the nature, causes and triggers of school violence. This research will provide insights of how teaching and learning is affected by school violence.

I seek your permission to come to your school to do a research. This will help me to analyse data later on. The information gathered will be used with confidentiality for this study only and your anonymity will be ensured. Participation is voluntary and you could withdraw at any point should you wish to do so. There are neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with the school participation in this study. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact me at 083 471 4920 or at sandile6@live.co.za. You may also contact my supervisor Dr M.A.N Duma at (035) 9026495 or at dumam@unizul.ac.za.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

.....

S.C Shabalala

(Student no. 19920148)

## ANNEXURE C

No 55 North Ridge Park  
360 Kenyon Howden Rd  
Montclair  
4002  
12 -11- 2015

Dear Sir/ Madam

### **RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN MY RESEARCH PROJECT**

I am Sandile C Shabalala, a student presently enrolled for a Master's Degree in Social Science Education at the University of Zululand (Ongoye). I am required to do a full dissertation. My research will focus on *School violence in the Umbumbulu Circuit*. I will be conducting interviews in order to Ascertain the levels of school violence in the school under study, to identify the common types of violence prevalent in the schools. And lastly to understand the nature, causes and triggers of school violence. This research will provide insights of how teaching and learning is affected by school violence.

You are hereby requested to participate in this research project. I also seek your permission to interview you and tape record our discussion. This will help me to analyse data later on. The information gathered will be used with confidentiality for this study only and your anonymity will be ensured. Participation is voluntary and you could withdraw at any point should you wish to do so. There are neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact me at 083 471 4920 or at sandile6@live.co.za. You may also contact my supervisor Dr M.A.N Duma at (035) 9026495 or at dumam@unizul.ac.za.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

.....

S.C Shabalala

(Student no. 19920148)

## ANNEXURE D

### SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT RESEARCH INSTRUMENT OF THE INTERVIEWS

1. Question 1 will focus on determining whether violence is increasing or decreasing in Umbumbulu circuit schools.
  - **In your opinion would you say school violence is at increasing or decreasing levels in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit what are the common types of violence prevalent in these schools, please explain briefly?**
2. Questions focusing 2 on the experiences of educators with reference to school violence. The questions will focus specifically on factors that lead to school violence.
  - **Can you elaborate what are the nature, the causes and the triggers of violence in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?**
3. Question 3 will ask educators to describe the problems they encounter that are related to school violence.
  - **Can you describe the problems relate to violence that you encounter at your school?**
4. Question 4 that will enable the researcher to draw insight from the experiences of educators about school violence.
  - **What are the perceptions of educators regarding the impact of school violence on teaching and learning in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit?**

**NB:** *“The information gathered will be used with confidentiality for this study only and your anonymity will be ensured. Participation is voluntary and you could withdraw at any point should you wish to do so. There are neither foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study.”*