EXPLORING LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE IN A TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
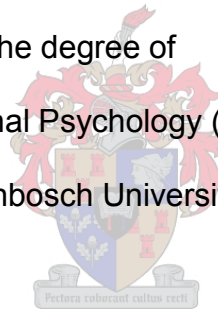
BY

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Signature   Date

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ABSTRACT

School violence is a reality in South African township schools contaminating the school environment and jeopardizing the educational process.

The aim of this study is to explore adolescent learners' experience of school violence in township high schools in order to develop and recommend a school prevention intervention programme/strategy. The study is explained in the theoretical framework of the bio-ecosystemic theory where violence is discussed as a reaction and as an action that occurs through reciprocal interaction between systems and the social environment. Through this interaction, adolescent learners are exposed to individual, family, school and community risk factors which place them at risk. Literature shows that schools in the township are sites of widespread violence; and these impacts on learners' emotional well-being. School violence also reflects the relationship that exists between what occurs in schools and what happens in learners' homes and communities.

The specific design selected for this study is a case study and is qualitative and explorative in nature. Unstructured interviews were conducted with individual learners and focus groups to gather information regarding adolescents' experiences of school violence. The data was analysed with three main themes emerging during the participants' interviews. The findings revealed that a significant number of adolescent learners in the township school have experienced some form of gender-related violence at school, and that boys are more often the perpetrators of this school violence. The findings further showed that lack of safety and class management is another cause of violence and the violent activities within the school are a symptom of the social ills of the community within which the school is situated. Conclusions drawn from the study are that school violence is a multifaceted phenomenon and, based on these findings, it is recommended that a 'whole school' and an integrated approach be taken when dealing with violence in schools.

OPSOMMING

Toenemende geweld in skole in Suid-Afrikaanse townships bederf die skoolomgewing en belemmer die opvoedkundige proses. Die doel van hierdie studie is om leerders se ervarings van geweld in hoërskole in townships te verken, ten einde 'n voorkomingsprogram/-strategie vir skole te ontwikkel en aan te beveel.

Die studie gebruik die teoretiese raamwerk van die bio-ekosistemiese teorie waarbinne geweld bespreek word as 'n aksie en 'n reaksie wat plaasvind deur wedersydse interaksie tussen die sisteme en die sosiale omgewing. Hierdie interaksie kan adolessente leerders aan individuele, gesinsverwante, skool- en gemeenskapsrisikofaktore blootstel. Die studie wys dat skole in townships die ligging is van wydverspreide geweld wat 'n uitwerking het op leerders se akademiese prestasie. Dit wys ook dat geweld in skole 'n weerspieëling is van die verhouding wat bestaan tussen gebeure in die skool en gebeure in die leerders se huise en gemeenskappe.

Die navorsingsontwerp vir hierdie studie is dié van 'n gevallestudie. Dit is kwalitatief en verkennend van aard. Ongestruktureerde onderhoude is met leerders en fokusgroepe gevoer om inligting rakende hulle ervarings van geweld in skole in te win. Die data is ontleed na aanleiding van drie temas wat tydens die onderhoude na vore gekom het. Die bevindinge het gewys dat 'n noemenswaardige aantal adolessente leerders in townshipskole een of ander vorm van geweld ervaar het, en dat seuns gewoonlik die aanrigters van die geweld is. Die studie het voorts gevind dat akademiese prestasie ernstig beïnvloed word deur geweld wat binne en buite die skoolgronde plaasvind, en ook dat geweld binne die skole 'n simptoom is van die sosiale euwels van die gemeenskap waarbinne die skole geleë is. Die studie se gevolgtrekking is dat geweld in skole 'n veelvlakkige fenomeen is. Die aanbeveling wat op hierdie gevolgtrekking berus is dat 'n "heel skool" geïntegreerde benadering gevolg moet word wanneer daar met geweld in skole gewerk word.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Rates of violence in South Africa are disturbingly high, constituting one of the most significant public health crises in South Africa (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007:95). The extent of violence in South Africa, especially in township schools, has led to South Africa's reputation as being a country with a culture of violence (Short, 2006:1).

According to Urbani, Zulu, and Van der Merwe (2004:170), schools in South Africa have become highly volatile and unpredictable places, and violence has become a part of everyday life in some schools. In real terms, South African learners are victimized at a rate of 160 learners per 1000. This rate, according to the Snapshot results of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention National Schools Violence Study (April 2008) is significantly higher than in the United States, where the latest data reveals a rate of 57 learners per 1000 falling victim to many forms of violence at school.

Sewsunker in Urbani et al. (2004:170) lists a number of incidences of violent actions that took place in KwaZulu-Natal schools as illustration. For example, pupils at Khumbulani High School went on the rampage causing damage estimated at R1-million; they stoned classrooms, breaking 249 windowpanes. Other incidents of school violence include murder, armed robbery, drugs, damage to and destruction of school property, knife attacks and stabbings and assaults of educators by learners. Another frightening picture of life in some South African schools has been painted by Professor E. van As, head of the trauma unit at the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town. In his submission to the Human Rights Commission, which held public hearings on school violence in the Western Cape in 2006, Van As maintains that children are more likely to be violated at school than in other places, making schools a dangerous place for children to function in (*Sunday Times*, 15 October 2006:33).

The school plays an important role in a learner's socialization and it is essential that schools offer a safe environment in which learning and development can take place. Violence contaminates the school environment and jeopardizes the educational

process. It also infringes on the learner's right to education, freedom and security (Neser, 2002:33-34). Victimization of learners by acts of violence is intolerable and in order to develop effective strategies that will prevent school violence and improve learners' safety at school, it is important for policy makers and educators to understand what the victims of violence actually experience (Neser, 2002:34). As experience implies the knowledge gained from participation in an event, such knowledge is indeed needed, given the prevalent scenario within South African society concerning violence (Neser, 2002:33-34)

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As has been mentioned in the introduction, school violence and violence-related deaths in township schools is evident in South Africa as was reported in several media sources as well (*Cape Times,* 15 November 2006:4; *Sunday Times*, 15 October 2006:33). Learners are often terrified to attend school, and when they are at school are even afraid to go to the school's toilets. Some of them are fearful that they may be stabbed by other learners who come to school armed, while others fear that they may be raped by other learners (De Wet, 2003:89).

School violence has gained momentum and poses a threat to education and to secondary/high school township learners in particular. This was highlighted in August 2006 by the tragic incidents at Oscar Mpetha High School in Nyanga Township, Cape Town in which two learners stabbed each other in a fight (*Cape Times,* 15 November 2006:1). Further headlines in Western Cape newspapers like "Crime wave engulfing schools" (*Cape Times,* 7 May 2007:2); "Violence at schools the order of the day" (*Cape Argus,* 19 January 2006:4; "Stabbing of pupil sparks probe into security" (*Cape Argus,* 19 January 2006:6); "The rapists in school uniform" (*Sunday Times,* 15 October 2006:33) are becoming common (Xaba, 2006:565).

As was mentioned in section 1.1, violence contaminates the school environment and jeopardizes the educational process. Violence in township schools is therefore a matter of significant public concern due to the history of violence in South African townships, especially within the school context (Lewis, 1992:12). Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:136) argue that if crime and violence in schools continue to increase in this way, the education of many learners will be severely affected.

Furthermore, the study of violence in township schools is important for research because the violence threatens the safe development and wellness of learners in township schools (Human Sciences Research Council, 2006:166). The presence of violence, but more importantly the fear of violence, affects the attendance of students and their ability to focus while they are at school (Schafii, 2001:56).

According to Bach and Louw (2010) and Steyn and Roux (2009:24), school violence in South Africa has largely been researched from a quantitative methodology and often lacks a specific contextualization that is exploratory, descriptive and gives rise to "lived experiences". Experience and its position within the individual's life world are cardinal in understanding the very nature of a phenomenon, including township school violence. To Husserl (*in* Henning, 2004:9), referring to experience and its position within the individual's life world, this:

> "[i]mplies that every individual experience must be seen as embedded in and bearing the imprint of a conceptual world ... a world that is continually changing, shifting its horizons in past and future, a life world or *Lebenswelt,* to use Husserl's famous word".

This quotation illustrates the complexity of the human experience, and can just as easily apply to the experience of violence. To De Wet (2003:253) "[t]he causes of violence (school) are multifaceted, complex and even conflicting." Given the complex nature of the phenomenon, a description of school violence can be expanded by understanding it in a specific context (a South African township high school) and life world (adolescent township school learners' experiences). Adolescents are increasingly exposed to violence and the frequency of engaging in violent behaviours is greater for adolescents than for all other age groups due to the very nature of the teenage years: stress due to emotional and physical changes and also a search for identity which may bring them into conflict with authority and several others (Gouws, Kruger & Burger 2000:75). This approach provides the possibility for exchanging the "telescope with the microscope" (Henning et al., 2004:8) on this particular social issue in this instance exploring adolescent learners' experiences of school violence in a township high school.

This study is furthermore important and necessary in order to understand the causes and effects of violence in township schools on adolescent learners: By

understanding the risks to learners, and the effects that violence has on learners, educators, together with support staff, would be in a better position to develop interventions that would help those affected by violence in township schools, but also to understand what might cause this violence and what can possibly be done by the authorities to address this specific phenomenon. While general preventative and intervention strategies are beneficial, specific, contextual approaches are also needed, in this instance a township high school in the Western Cape.

Thus the questions related to this problem are:

1. What is township high school learners' experience of violence?

2. Based on this understanding, what programme or model can be developed for learners in a township high school to cope with school violence?

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore learners' experiences of school violence in a township high school in order to develop and recommend a school prevention and/or intervention programme/strategy.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand what violence and (township) school violence is.

- To understand the different forms of violence experienced in a township school.

- To understand adolescent learners' experiences of school violence within a township setting.

- To recommend possible prevention and/or interventions/programmes for the particular township school studied.

1.5 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Several reasons motivated this research: There is a high prevalence of school violence in the township schools, experienced personally by the researcher. The researcher is a School Psychologist at the Metropole South Education Centre,

Western Cape, South Africa whose work entails giving psychotherapy to both educators and learners affected by, amongst others, violence in schools. The researcher therefore wanted to understand township school learners' experience of violence and the impact it has on them.

The researcher works with learners both at Primary and Secondary school level and is often called upon to debrief learners or educators after a shootout, assaults or stabbings amongst learners or learners assaulted by educators. This work involves, amongst others, trauma debriefing whenever there has been traumatic events. This behaviour, in my experience, has become the norm, especially in the township schools, and with such an immense challenge in our schools, the question arises: what prevention and intervention by school authorities and Educational Psychologists would suit this situation and be perceived as meaningful? A first step in this direction would be to understand learners' experiences of violence, and to propose effective preventative and intervention strategies based on this understanding. It is with this in mind that the researcher embarked on a study of exploring learners' experiences of school violence with the intention of providing support for learners and educators of a township high school and possibly assisting schools in similar contexts.

1.6   PARADIGM

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:36) describe paradigms as all-encompassing systems of interrelated practices and thinking that define the nature of the researcher's enquiry. Daniels (*in* Babbie & Mouton, 2001:42) further describes a paradigm as the fundamental model or frame of reference we use to organize our observations and reasoning. The paradigm I use for this study is the interpretive/social constructivist paradigm from a bio-ecosystemic perspective and will be saliently discussed below.

1.6.1 The Interpretive/Social Constructionism Paradigm

Social scientists of this paradigm are concerned with understanding the social construction of reality: The way people create and share meaning. According to Burrel and Morgan (*in* Naicker, 2001:41), the interpretive paradigm is informed by a

concern to understand the world as it is, to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience.

The interpretive/social constructionist paradigm considers an inter-actional process where the researcher is actively involved in gaining information of lived experiences of the external world from the population (Terre-Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:148). Social constructionist methods, like interpretive methods, are concerned with meaning. Vygotsky, a social constructionist, asserts that children and adults are engaged in constructing shared meanings through their interactions with parents, peers, teachers and others in their particular context (Gouws et al., 2000:47-48). In the context of this study, for example, the practice of corporal punishment as an effective disciplinary measure by teachers in township schools increases the possibility of violent behaviour by township learners, because the meaning attached to corporal punishment (by teachers and parents growing/brought up in black townships) as an effective disciplinary measure socialize learners in township schools to accept violence as an instrument of empowerment (Burnett, 1998:789). It is therefore necessary to understand learners' specific understanding of violence in their township school in order to address the research problem meaningfully.

1.6.2 Bio-ecosystemic Perspective

School violence does not exist in isolation, and learners in these contexts are not isolated, but are part of various interacting systems. In order to understand the experiences of violence of adolescent learners in a specific school context, it is necessary to understand the influencing systems. The bio-ecosystemic perspective is one way of understanding these processes. This perspective has evolved out of a blend of ecological and systems theories (Donald et al., 2002:35). Its main concern is to show how individual people and groups, at different levels of society, are linked in dynamic, interdependent, interacting relationships. Donald et al. (2002:40) further explain that different levels of systems in the social context influence one another continuously so that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

Urie Bronfenbrenner developed the bio-ecosystemic model and applied it to child development. It was previously known as the ecological systems theory, but since the child's biological dispositions join with environmental forces to mould

development, Bronfenbrenner recently characterised his perspective as the bio-ecological model (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:73). Basic to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecosystemic model are four interacting dimensions that have to be considered in understanding the development of a child. These are: Person factors (the temperament of the child or parent), process factors (the forms of interaction that occur, for example, in a family), contexts (families, schools or communities) and time factors (changes over time) (Donald et al. 2002:51).

Donald et al. (2002:51) further explain that the interaction that occurs in a face to face, long term relationship (for example, between a mother/guardian and a child) are called proximal interactions. The process of proximal interactions is affected by person factors as well as by the nature of the contexts within which they occur (for example school and community as a context makes certain kinds of interaction between a child and an educator or the people in that environment possible). These processes, person and context elements all change over time: All human systems change and develop over time. Developmental changes in parts of the system influence the whole, thus schools and communities are systems that change and develop over time. The nature of the development in one influences the nature of the development in the other in continuously interacting cycles.

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecosystemic perspective envisions the environment as a series of five nested structures or systems that includes but extends beyond home, school and neighbourhood settings in which children spend their everyday lives. Every layer of the environment is viewed as having a powerful impact on children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:115). The five systems in Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystem. These will be discussed briefly below.

1.6.2.1 The microsystem

These are systems such as the family, the school, and the peer group in which children are closely involved in continuous face- to- face interactions with other familiar people (Donald et al., 2002:51).

In the context of this study, this refers to violence in the family and the home environments. This context is proximal and exerts a great influence on the

individual's mental health and well-being and therefore has a more profound influence on a learner's experiences. The family serves as an important agent for socialization, therefore patterns of violent behaviour at home may be internalized and perpetuated from generation to generation. Through exposure to violence, the horror associated with it lessens and it becomes normal (De La Rey, Duncan, Sheffer & Van Niekerk, 1997:173). Furthermore, the way in which violence is portrayed in black communities (as an appropriate and desirable way of control), constructs violence as a socially acceptable way of behaving, particularly in the townships (SABC 1, 3 February 2008).

1.6.2.2 The mesosystem

At this level, peer group, school and family systems interact with one another. The mesosystem is a set of microsystems associated with one another (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:11). Thus what happens at home or in the peer group can influence how learners respond at school and vice versa. For example, in the context of this study, a child might be in a peer group where there is lots of bullying. This behaviour can be carried over to the school environment, where the child models the same behaviour to other learners.

1.6.2.3 The exosystem

This level includes other systems in which a child is not directly involved, but which may influence, or be influenced by the people who have proximal relationships with the child in his/her microsystems, e.g. the parent's place of work, a brother's peer group and a local community organization (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:11). Thus the parent's relationship with an employer does not involve the child, but its stressors will possibly influence the quality of that parent's relationship with the child. The child who has a brother, who lives in neighbourhoods that are characterized by gangs that are always involved in violent fighting, will experience an increased possibility of internalizing the culture of violence.

1.6.2.4 The macrosystem

This level involves dominant social structures as well as beliefs and values that influence and are maybe influenced by all other levels of the system. For example,

South African men brought up in black communities (townships) are particularly vulnerable to the belief that as men they must assert their authority over their families through the use of violence (physical, verbal and sexual) because of a very strong societal belief in traditional gender roles. Because children are the most powerless members of society, they emulate or bear the brunt of this family violence discourse (Khosa & Zwane, 1995).

1.6.2.5 The chronosystem

This system reflects changes in a child and simultaneous changes in a child's context over time. One aspect of the chronosystem could be a historical time that surrounds other systems. The idea here is that the child's behaviour may be influenced by the historical features of the period during which it is occurring. These features may contain stable or disruptive elements. The latter element might include influences such as political changes which may give rise to violence (Dawes, 1994:5). This is reinforced by Duncan and Rock's (1997:133) argument that past experiences of political violence influence the impact of violence on children, in that exposure to political violence can either "sensitize" or "steel" the child to current incidents of violence. However, this appears to be largely dependent on a host of factors that may include the quality of the child's relationship with his or her primary caregivers. For example where primary relationships with the child had earlier been problematic, past exposure to incidents of political violence tends to increase children's vulnerability to violence.

The bio-ecosystemic approach is suitable to study violence in township schools because, based on this model, violence is seen as a reaction and as an action that occurs through reciprocal interaction between the systems and the social environment (Crawage, 2005:38). Through this interaction, learners could be exposed to individual, family, community, societal and school related risk factors which could have a psychological impact on their development and could further lead to a path of violence.

Donald et al. (2002:43) argue that the power people have to change things at any level of their social context is constrained by two fundamental factors: Their position in the systems of which they are part, as well as the position of the systems

themselves in relation to the whole society. For example, learners may, through the way the school is structured, have limited power to function optimally within that system. The system itself may also have limited power within the broader society. In the context of this study, the township schools may not have control over the influence of the broader society when it comes to political violence that is a norm in their social context. Also, the influence may be reciprocal in that the smaller systems may influence the larger systems.

There is a common and fundamental link between the bio-ecosystemic perspective and the (social) constructivist perspective in that in both perspectives people are seen as shaped by and as active shapers of their social context (Donald et al., 2002:42). In an attempt to understand human behaviour, theorists with these perspectives link the individual and his/her social context. Thus the ways in which individuals behave or how they feel is linked to the social structures and relationships that make up their environment and is therefore suited to this research.

1.7   RESEARCH DESIGN

The study will be qualitative in nature. Bheekie (2002:2) defines qualitative research as "research concerned with the meanings people attach to their experiences of the social world and how people make sense of that world". Qualitative research attempts to interpret social phenomena (for example, interactions, behaviours and experiences). I used qualitative research because my study seeks to explore participants' views and experiences of township school violence, and what violence means to them. In this way it relies predominantly on interviews with learners and other collateral evidence where their meaning of violence in real life will be explored.

The specific design selected for this study is a case study; the case being a high school in a township of the Western Cape. Merriam (1998:19) describes a case study as a design that is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of a situation and meaning for those involved. In the context of this study, the researcher tries to gain an in-depth understanding of learners' experience of violence at school, and what that means to them, via a case study.

1.7.1 Sampling

For this study, purposive sampling is used. Purposive sampling is occasionally used in exploratory research as it aims towards understanding the opinions and experiences of the people being researched (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:281), an approach suited to this study.

The researcher's sample population is the learners of a high school in the township of Nyanga in the Western Cape. From this population, a representative sample of thirteen learners (made up of girls and boys) from grades 10 and 11 (was selected. The thirteen learners who took part in the individual interviews were identified by the safety officer at the school for several reasons: All of those learners had experienced some form of violence while at school. The ten learners who took part in focus group interviews were a different group of learners and they also volunteered to take part in the interviews and this was done with the help of the safety officer at the school. Their data and experiences were used as collateral information to thicken the data. These learners also had experienced some kind of violence over the years, hence their selection and participation.

The above- mentioned grades were selected for several reasons, chief amongst which is that these learners are experiencing the developmental challenges of adolescence. They are still exploring the concept of who they are and where they are going (Donald et al., 2002:78). Furthermore all the learners have been at the school long enough to have witnessed violent incidents which occurred at the school, and they are therefore suitable candidates for this research project.

Permission to get access to the school was asked from the Director of the Education Management and Development Centre (EMDC South of the Western Cape), the central district office in this region of the Western Cape to which schools are accountable, this one included (see appendix A).

1.7.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the variety of methods employed to obtain the required knowledge. This qualitative study's research methods mainly comprised unstructured interviews and focus group interviews.

1.7.2.1 Interviews

The interview is described as a conversation with a purpose (Webb & Webb, 1982 *in* Ellman, 2004:46). This conversation can range from being highly structured to being unstructured.

Unstructured interviews were conducted to gather information during this research. Unstructured interviews are very useful in cases where the researcher wants to launch an explorative investigation (Welman, Kruger & Mitchel 2005:198). Unstructured interviews can be described as follows:

> In unstructured interviews, an attempt is made to understand how individuals experience their life world and how they make sense of what is happening to them (Welman et al., 2005:198).

The present study is an exploration of learners' experience of school violence, and these interviews therefore are suitable to achieve this aim.

In this type of interview, the interviewer's question should be directed at the participant's experiences, feelings, beliefs, and convictions about the theme in question. Furthermore the interviewer interacts with the individual with whom the interview is conducted and does not assume the role of detached interviewer which could prohibit one from exploring experiences, feelings, beliefs, and convictions about the theme. A Dictaphone® tape was used to record information. Permission to use the Dictaphone® during the interviews was asked from the participants, in accordance with the principle of gaining informed consent, to facilitate analysing the interviews in an ethical fashion.

1.7.2.2   Focus Group Interviews

A focus group interview can be described as a purposive discussion during which a group of between six to ten individuals discuss a specific topic. These individuals often have a similar background and a common interest. It is in this open conversation that each participant may make comments, ask questions or respond to comments by the researcher or other participants (Van Breda, 2006:92). For the purpose of this study, focus group interviews were used to gain more insight into the

school violence phenomenon. The focus group candidates are previously discussed in section 1.7.1.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed by transcribing the participants' responses from the Dictaphone® tape-recorder. The researcher coded the participants' transcriptions with different colour coding pens so that themes could materialise that would make it easier to categorise them. According to Cresswell (2003:203), data analysis in qualitative research seeks to identify and describe patterns and themes from the perspective of the participant(s), then attempts to understand and explain these patterns and themes. During data analysis, the data was organised categorically and chronologically, reviewed repeatedly, and continually coded as is endorsed by Cresswell (2003:203).

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE INQUIRY

Since this is a qualitative study, the results cannot be generalized to other township schools that have been victims of school violence. However, the data collected may help understand the phenomena under study in more depth so that schools in similar contexts can understand the phenomena, learn from them, and so benefit from preventative and intervention strategies/programmes that will be provided.

1.10 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In this section, key concepts from the study will be explained:

1.10.1 Township

South African cities and towns have been shaped to a large degree by practices that were a result of racist policies. The Group Areas Act of 1950 which divided residential and business areas according to race is one such example. Cities were partitioned into various zones based on race (Khosa & Zwane, 2005:11). The central business core was surrounded by residential areas traditionally reserved for the white population. These areas were usually characterised by sophisticated and well maintained infrastructure and facilities. On the periphery of the city, townships were created for the black population. Most of these areas were underdeveloped and

lacked adequate infrastructure and recreational facilities. Often the "Coloured" and Indian communities were situated between the white and black areas to act as a buffer. According to Khosa and Zwane (1995), these townships were created to segregate Black, Indian and "Coloured" South Africans into contained communities without a self-sustaining infrastructure so that they would be economically dependent on white communities, while remaining socially segregated.

These townships, as remnants of the apartheid system, are still prevalent today and form the context of this study.

1.10.2 Violence

Violence can be defined as a destructive harm that not only includes physical assault, but also the many techniques of inflicting harm by mental or emotional means (McKendrick & Hoffman, 1990:26) resulting from various systems. The concept of violence will be looked at in more depth in Chapter 2. The concepts aggression and violence will be used concurrently, as they generally carry the same meaning.

1.10.3 School Violence

School violence, according to MacNeil and Steward (2000:232), is any intentional verbal or physical act producing pain in the recipient of that act while the recipient is under the supervision of the school. Again, this may involve mental, emotional and physical harm in several settings. Hagan and Foster (2000:5) agrees with the above definition, but goes further to describe school violence as the exercise of power (usually negative) over others in school-related settings by some individuals or a social process. This process, according to Hagan and Foster (2000:6) denies those subjected to it their humanity to make a difference, either by reducing them from what they are or by limiting them from becoming what they might be. This behaviour disrupts the safe learning environment of a school.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, school violence occurs when educators, learners and members of the community abuse each other physically and/or mentally and/or emotionally, in order to disrupt the safe learning environment.

1.10.4 Adolescence

As previously mentioned in section 1.7.1, the main focus of this research is on adolescent learners at a specific township high school in a certain area of the Western Cape. Adolescence is the transitional stage of development between childhood and adulthood (usually thirteen to eighteen years), and represents the period of time during which a person experiences a variety of physical, emotional, intellectual, emotional and social changes (http://en.wikipedia.org/adolescent psychology accessed on 16 August 2008).

This period is associated with notable changes in mood and they may view their friends and peer group as more important than their parents. They may also indulge in activities not deemed socially acceptable, generally due to peer pressure (http://en.wikipedia.org/adolescent psychology accessed on 16 August 2008), hence the possibility of being at risk of being harmed by violence and also meting it out. Adolescents furthermore need to search for their own role and place in the world. This process adds up to a search for identity. Donald et al. (2002:79) argue that identity is both an individual and a communal issue, so the adolescent has to balance a sense of 'who I am' with a sense of 'how do others see me' and 'how do I connect with the larger picture' of values and cultural norms. Inevitably then, this search will waver between experiences of certainty and confusion. Therefore, they are particularly vulnerable to the negative influences of the surrounding environment that they find themselves in.

According to Whittle, Yap, Yucel, Fornito, Simmons, Barrett, Sheeber and Allen (2007), adolescence is a key period for the development of brain circuits underlying affective and behavioural regulation. My study is focusing on adolescent learners who are at the key period for the development of brain circuits underlying affective and behavioural regulation (with the amygdala being one of the key brain regions representing critical nodes in neural networks supporting affective regulation), it is possible that some learners might be negatively susceptible to an increase in the amygdala volume which, linked to not being regulated by the cortex can lead to emotional instability, violence sometimes being the outcome. According to Polk (http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/nowg/ythadolvio.html accessed on 16 August 2008), adolescence is a time of heightened susceptibility to violence and the

frequency of engaging in violent behaviours is greater for adolescents than for all other age groups. Violence risk differs among adolescents, with those generally at greater risk being adolescents who live in poor urban dwellings (http://ag.arizona accessed on 16 August 2008).

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

(Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:66) point out several ethical principles that should guide all research projects and will therefore serve to guide this research.

1.11.1 Autonomy

Respecting the rights of participants to participate voluntarily and with informed consent is paramount to qualitative research. To achieve this aim, in the context of my study, I handed informed consent forms to all the learners and the parents of the learners who voluntarily participated in the study.

1.11.2 Nonmaleficence

This requires the researcher to be mindful that no harm should come to research participants. The researcher assured learners of the particular high school that this is a study that requires their experiences and views, and the intent is not to harm them.

1.11.3 Beneficence

This has to do with designing a research project that will be of benefit to the specific community, but also society at large (participants, future researchers, the school's teachers and the provincial and national education departments). In the context of this study, a letter asking permission to conduct a study in Western Cape Education Department schools to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) was written (see appendix A). In the letter of permission, it was agreed (between the researcher and the WCED) that the findings and recommendations would be provided to the Director: Research Services of said department. Invariably the findings would be shared with the school under investigation via the directive of said director, respecting the research participants' autonomy.

1.11.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality

All participants' identities were considered anonymous, and confidentiality was stressed at all times. This research was guided by the ethics committee of Stellenbosch University. Permission to conduct this research was granted on 20 April 2008 (Stellenbosch University reference number: 121/2008).

1.12 PROGRAMME OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 introduced the problem of school violence in townships and provided a motivation for the study. The aims and objectives of the study are also described.

Chapter 2 is a literature review of violence and how it pertains to (township) schools. The theories of school violence, and the ways in which it manifests bio-ecosystemically, are also discussed in this chapter. In Chapter 3, the following are discussed in detail: the research design and methodology, the subjects/participants, and the data analysis procedure.

A presentation and discussion of the empirical data are reflected in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, an evaluation will be made (findings, conclusions and recommendations) with prevention and intervention suggestions being made.

1.13 CONCLUSION

The study of school violence is important as it threatens the safe development of learners in township schools, a relevant and pressing issue with education stakeholders in South Africa. By understanding the experiences and effects that school violence has on learners within a specific context (i.e. a township), educators, school and educational psychologists and other stakeholders would be in a better position to develop interventions and preventative measures that would go a long way in creating a safer school environment.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to understand school violence within the context of township schools and its impact on learners, one first needs to understand the phenomenon of violence. Violence (and school violence for that matter) has both a universal as well as specific impact and it is necessary to take this into consideration before conducting research on school violence within a specific context. It is furthermore imperative to understand violence bio-ecosystemically because individuals and/or groups at different levels of the social context are linked in dynamic, interdependent and interacting relationships (Donald et al., 2002:44). The internal characteristics of the person and the external barriers in the system are continuously developing and interacting. Social Constructivism maintains that the beliefs, truths and meanings that people hold about their subjective world are socially constructed through interaction. The experience of violence cannot be divorced from the ecology in which it occurs; it is therefore imperative and effective to view violence as occurring within a context.

In light of the above, the aim of this chapter therefore is to explore the theory and literature pertaining to the global and specific phenomenon of violence, and school violence within the context of township schools from a bio-ecosystemic and constructivist perspective.

2.2 VIOLENCE

The word "violence" is derived from the Latin root *violentia*, which refers to 'force'. In most cases, on the one hand it refers to physical force and is mostly applied to human actions (Crawage, 2005:56); however this is a narrow view of the concept and needs further elaboration. In most academic literature on the other hand, both physical and psychological components are included in the definition of violence and expand on the Latin derivative. McKendrick and Hoffmann (*in* Hamber & Lewis

1997:1) argue that definitions of violence can be seen to include not only abuse, but also neglect and they define violence as:

> Destructive harm including not only physical assaults that damage the body, but also [t]he many techniques of inflicting harm by mental or emotional means.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (1998), the term violence refers to the intentional use of physical force or power (threatened or actual), against oneself, another person, a group or community that either results in or has a likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi & Lozano, 2002:5). This definition takes a broader and systemic view of the term that incorporates several possible etiological factors situated in the individual, community and society at large. In the context of the present study, WHO's definition is relevant, because South Africans are and have also been subject to structural forms of violence. Structural violence refers to unequal power relationships and manifests in unequal life chances. In its most basic form, the systematic deprivation underpinning apartheid can be seen as a form of structural violence which in turn resulted in other types of violence (Hamber & Lewis, 1997:3).

Furthermore, McKendrick and Hoffman (*in* Hamber & Lewis, 1997:1) argue that what constitutes violence is always a social construction because acts of violence deemed as legitimate in one society or cultural group may be considered illegitimate or culturally unacceptable in another. This aspect is of importance for this research as it is framed within a constructivistic paradigm which acknowledges that perceptions of violence differ, leading to varied thinking and behaviour around the phenomenon.

This research will recognise these definitions in understanding the phenomenon of violence and they will guide the study.

2.3   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

School violence is a multifaceted phenomenon; therefore to understand it and be able to respond to violent behaviour occurring at schools requires an understanding of theories surrounding the phenomenon (Leone, Mayer, Malmgren, Kimber & Sheri, 2000:1). This necessitates a theoretical exposition of the phenomena of violence and

aggression in an attempt to achieve this aim. Several theories explain the phenomena, and although they are in no way complete, they do contribute towards an understanding of the causes of violence and aggression.

2.3.1 Instinct Theory and Drive Theory

The Instinct theory is an approach to the study of human aggression influenced by the theories of the psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This theory is based on the view that aggressive behaviour stems mainly from the understanding that human beings are somehow "programmed" for violence by their very basic nature. This theory suggests that human violence stems from inherited tendencies to aggress against others. Aggression, according to Freud, stems from a forceful death wish – *thanthos* – which all people possess which is initially directed towards self-destruction. However in most people, it is soon redirected outward, and serves as a source of hostile impulses towards others. Freud goes on to explain that such impulses build up as time goes on and if they are not released periodically in safe ways, they reach dangerous levels that are capable of producing strong acts of violence (Baron & Byrne, 2002:327-328).

An alternative view of the instinct theory is a drive theory of aggression, in which it is suggested that aggression stems mainly from an externally elicited drive to harm or injure others. Drive theory suggests that various external conditions arouse a strong motive to engage in harm-producing behaviours and are reflected in the frustration-aggression hypothesis. The aggressive drive in turn leads to the performance of overt assaults against others perceived to be the cause of the frustration (Baron & Byrne, 2002:329).

The above theories attempt to explain violent and aggressive behaviour in terms of a one-sided singular view, where behaviour is depicted as being shaped and driven by internal dispositions or being shaped and controlled by environmental influences. However, according to the Social Theories, (violent) behaviour is seen as the dynamic interplay of personal and situational influences. The central construct of social learning theorists is reciprocal determinism.

2.3.2 Social Learning Theory

The Social Learning Theory is an approach to the study of social behaviour and personality influenced mainly by Albert Bandura and Richard Walters. Their joint efforts illustrated the critical role of modelling in human behaviour and led to a program of research into the determinants and mechanisms of observational learning (Baron & Byrne, 2002:337).

Bandura was of the opinion that the exposure to violence influences human's (read adolescents') violent or aggressive behaviour by modelling, reinforcement and practice. In the case of violent behaviour, the individual may observe acts of violence in his/her environment and see these acts as desirable. Bandura further explains that when a parent or educator uses corporal punishment as a model of discipline, the child learns that being aggressive gives authority and solves problems. In the South African context, within a high violence community, different patterns of violent behaviour are passed down from one generation to the next as children and adolescents model adults' violent modes of discipline or resolving conflicts. Therefore observational learning requires the observer to actively attend to, encode and retain the behaviours displayed by social models (Shaffer, 2002:48).

2.3.2.1 Modelling

In light of the above, it is safe to say that most people have learned through the influence of example and observation of other people's behaviours, a process called modelling. The modelling of violent behaviour is thus a consequence of direct observation of violence and its outcomes, sometimes resulting in acceptance of the behaviour by the individual (Donald et al., 2002:241).

2.3.3 Social Control Theory

Travis Hirschi's theory of Social Control provides the basis for an exploration of the school-delinquency relationship, an aspect which reflects aggressive and violent behaviour within certain contexts. The Social Control theory suggests that the school experience provides social bonds that restrain children and adolescent involvement in anti-social behaviour (Burton, 2008:2). Hirschi (1969:31).argue that similarly unattached youth drifted together into delinquent groups because weak social bonds

failed to prevent both association with delinquents and delinquency itself. Hirschi mentions that the groups that could strengthen the social bonds were, amongst others, the family, school, peers and religious institutions – systems reflected in the bio-ecosystemic perspective.

The social bonds have four elements (attachment, commitment, involvement and belief) which all contribute to the school bond. The presence of these factors can provide or reinforce existing protective factors (factors that enhance resiliency to violence and anti-social behaviour), while the absence of any of these factors can increase the risk of engagement in anti-social or delinquent behaviour. A strong commitment to school, which is most easily threatened by unfavourable experiences such as violence within the school environment, provides a protective factor for young people at risk. Attachment, according to Hirschi (1969:31), corresponds to the affective ties which the youth forms to significant others. The family environment is the main source of attachment because parents act as role models and teach their children socially acceptable behaviour (Hirschi, 1969:31). Hirschi goes on to explain involvement as adolescent participation in conventional activities which lead towards socially valued success and status objectives. The quality of a youth's activities and their relationship to future goals and objectives are important in preventing delinquency. Time spent on homework, for example, is seen as antecedent to success in attaining educational goals which are prerequisites to high-status occupations (Hirschi, 1969:31).

Belief is acceptance of the moral validity of the central social value system (Hirschi, 1969:32). This variation in the acceptance of social rules is central to social control theory, because the less rule-bound people feel; the more likely they are to break the rules (Hirschi, 1969:32).

2.3.4 General Strain Theory

Also of use in explaining violence is Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (Burton, 2008:1) which focuses on the influence of an individual's immediate social environment. Agnew argues that an individual's actual or anticipated failure to achieve positively valued goals results in strain (Agnew, 2001:136). Strain emerges from negative relationships with others. If individuals are not treated in the way that

they expect or want to be treated, they will lose their belief in the role others play for realizing expectations (Burton, 2008:1). Should attempts to realize goals be blocked by others, the negative effect may lead to pressure which in turn may persuade any individual to adopt unacceptable (e.g. violent) means to attain the goal.

According to Burton (2008:1), strains on children within the school environment are particularly likely to result in crime and violence when they:

- Are seen as unjust;

- Are associated with low self-control; and

- Create some pressure or incentive to engage in violent behaviour.

2.3.5 Attachment Theory

The Attachment Theory is also applicable to violence and aggression, especially pertaining to several systems as identified by the bio-ecosystemic perspective. The Attachment Theory originated in the early 1950s with John Bowlby, a child psychiatrist, and Mary Ainsworth, a psychologist, who both became interested in young children's responses to experiencing loss. It also assumes that the nature of the bond established between a child and his or her caregiver during the early years of the child's life can predispose the favourable or unfavourable accomplishment of normal and essential developmental tasks. The nature of the attachment between a child and his or her caregiver has an effect on the behavioural systems that may be related to aggression.

According to Renn (2007:30), the evolutionary function of anger is the key to understanding aggression from an attachment theory perspective. He goes on to explain that angry protest is an instinctive biological response to fear of separation from the preferred attachment figure, whose physical presence and emotional availability afford the safety, protection and psychobiological regulation that promotes exploratory behaviour. When parents are unavailable or abusive, and there is no substitute attachment figure to turn to for emotional support, the child may defensively exclude attachment-related information from the consciousness as a

maladaptive means of suppressing affective states that threaten to overwhelm him or her (Renn, 2007:30).

Carr (2006:55) points out that those children who were separated from their primary caretakers for extended periods of time during their first months of life, fail to develop secure attachments, and so later in life do not have internal working models for secure trusting relationships and may develop antisocial/violent behaviour.

This may apply to children growing up or being brought up by parents in townships, as most of these parents have minimal education and skills and are in jobs that do not provide essential benefits (like maternity leave). Mothers are forced to go back to work immediately after giving birth in order to support their families. Often these parents leave their babies with neighbours or other children, resulting in these children developing insecure attachments (cf. Carr, 2006:55), possibly leading to antisocial behaviour patterns, including aggression and violence.

2.3.6 General Affective Aggression Model (GAAM)

Whereas the several theories of aggression and violence generally focused on singular factors as the primary cause of aggression, a modern theory of aggression (violence), known as the General Affective Aggression Model (GAAM), proposed by Anderson (1997 *in* Baron & Byrne, 2002:444), suggests that aggression is triggered or elicited by a wide range of input variables: situational or social, and personal or individual determinants of aggression. It therefore recognises the input and influence of several systems and variables.

Variables falling into the first category (situational differences) include frustration, some kind of attack from another person (insult), exposure to aggressive models (other persons behaving aggressively), the presence of cues associated with aggression (e.g. guns or other weapons), and anything that causes individuals to experience discomfort (Baron & Byrne, 2002:444).

Variables in the second category (individual differences) include traits that predispose individuals toward aggression (high irritability), certain attitudes and beliefs about violence (e.g. believing that it is acceptable and appropriate), values about violence (e.g. the view that it is a "good" thing - perhaps that it shows an

individual's worth or masculinity), and specific skills related to aggression (e.g. knowing how to fight, and knowing how to use various weapons) (Baron & Byrne, 2002:444).

According to the GAAM, the situational and individual difference variables can then lead to overt aggression through their impact on three basic processes: e.g. *arousal* - they may increase physiological arousal or excitement; *affective states* - they can arouse hostile feelings and outward signs of these (angry facial expression); and *cognitions* - they can induce individuals to think hostile thoughts or bring hostile memories to mind (Baron & Byrne, 2002:444).

2.3.7 Conclusion

The above theories provide broader insights into aggression and violence and therefore school violence in particular, and they further help in understanding human behaviour in general. By looking at aspects of the psycho-analysts' instinct and drive theories, Anderson's General Affective Aggression Model (GAAM), Bandura's Social Learning Theory, Hirschi's Theory of Social Control, and Agnew's General Strain Theory, the importance of understanding the contexts/systems in which violence/school violence takes place, as well as the dynamic interactions of these contexts/systems with each other and the individual, is recognised. Violence, it appears, also has varied explanations and causes and in order to understand the phenomenon within the context of this study, its complex nature has to be acknowledged.

According to some of these theories, it has become clear that learners cannot be studied outside of the contexts in which they develop and are located. It must be stated that a few of these theories looked at violence from an individualistic/reductionistic point of view, but there were some that took a broader multifaceted view of violence, the latter view being more acceptable to this study as this complex phenomenon cannot be explained by one single factor or theory.

I chose to view school violence from an bio-ecosystemic perspective because, as it is often acknowledged that children spend more time at school than anywhere else outside of home, it would seem that schools play a vital role in breaking the entrenched patterns of violence. However, when a community's social and physical

environment is hostile, the school environment will most likely reflect this (Aitken & Seedat, 2007: vii). As stated by Pinheiro (*in* Aitken & Seedat, 2007: vii), the constitution and intensity of school violence is often a reflection of the constitution and intensity of violence within families, communities and countries. This acknowledges the dynamic multi-layered systemic interaction of phenomena as well as its contextual nature. Burton (2008:8) argues in the National Schools Violence Study Paper (2008) that exposure to and direct experience of violence within the home, as well as outside of the home in the wider community, is common. He goes on to say that learners are also bombarded with violence in the media. The alcohol, drugs and weapons that are so easily available to learners within the school environs, come from the homes and communities in which the learners spend a lot of their time. Similarly, the behaviour, attitudes and examples of parents and other adults in the home and community all have a profound impact on learners' academic development and performance, as well as on their social attitudes, behaviour and responses at school (Burton, 2008:8).

2.4 UNDERSTANDING (SCHOOL) VIOLENCE FROM AN ECOSYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE

Given the previously discussed theories of violence, and in light of the previous argument in looking at the phenomenon of violence from a wide range of variables and systems, it is necessary to understand violence from a bio-ecosystemic perspective.

As mentioned previously in Chapter 1, this perspective has evolved out of a blend of ecological and systems theories (Donald et al., 2002:35) with its main concern being how individual people and groups at different levels of society are linked in dynamic, interdependent, interacting relationships. Donald et al. (2002) further explain that different levels of system in the social context influence one another continuously so that the whole is more than the sum of its parts (2002:40). Bronfenbrenner (1979:82) is of the opinion that human behaviour is shaped by social-ecological contexts that include individuals with whom we interact daily, as well as broad societal contexts that deliver messages about appropriate behaviour and relationships among people. A first step in this process would be to saliently understand school violence and then look at it from a systemic perspective.

2.5   SCHOOL VIOLENCE

According to MacNeil and Steward (2000:232), school violence is any intentional verbal or physical act producing pain in the recipient of that act while the recipient is under the supervision of the school. De Wet (*in* Wolhuter et al., 2007:249) highlights the difficulty of reaching a definition of what school violence constitutes, but sees violence in schools, in broad terms, as being present in any situation where a member of the school community (educator, learner, other education worker, parent or visitor) is intimidated, abused, threatened or assaulted, or their property deliberately damaged by another member of that community or the public, arising out of their activities in a school and which occurs within normally accepted school hours and within normally accepted school boundaries and situations. Furthermore, violence in school is any specific, concrete behaviour intended to cause psychological or physical harm to fellow learners or to school staff; acts intended to damage school or learner property; and acts that create a threatening or frightening atmosphere, such as verbal threats of violence or intimidation. Hagan & Foster (2000:5) upholds the above definition, but goes further in describing school violence as the exercise of power over others in school-related settings by some individuals or social process. This process, according to Hagan & Foster denies those subjected to it their humanity to make a difference, either by reducing them from what they are or by limiting them from becoming what they might be. This behaviour disrupts the safe learning environment of a school.

Its prevalence is also pervasive and is reflected at several levels of children's development. School violence, according to a study by the International Bureau of Education is increasing at an alarming rate worldwide (Ohsako in Soen 2002:190). The survey conducted between 1992 and 1993 found that among the 16- to 17-year-age-group in England, the Netherlands, Spain and Italy, the violence figure reached 16-26 per cent (Soen, 2002:189). The prevalence of serious violence by age 17 years in the United States is even higher than that. Another survey that was carried out in Israel in 2002 among 1750 school children regarding school violence indicated that 67, 2 per cent of those sampled held the opinion that school violence is a serious problem. Of those sampled, 51.9 per cent stated that either they themselves or someone else close to them encountered violence in school (Soen,

2002:189). According to police reports submitted to the Israeli Parliament, 2 760 criminal dockets were opened for juveniles in 2000 for school violence (Ha'aretz *in* Soen, 2002:190). In Israel, schools turned out to be more violent than clubs, community centres, cinemas, sports clubs and sport grounds. As far as verbal abuse, bullying, threatening, beating, stabbing, blackmailing and inflicting injury were concerned, school premises turned out to be far worse than all the other places (Soen, 2002:193). Having seen the extent of violence internationally, it would be imperative to gain insights to school violence in the South African (township schools) context.

In South Africa, schools in disadvantaged areas such as townships, suffer from serious problems of unsafe learning environments (Harber, 2001:261). This is highlighted by Professor Peter Kallaway, an education specialist at the University of the Western Cape, who found township schools in South Africa to be the most dangerous of all educational settings. He is quoted as saying: "I am very worried about our township schools; they are sinking from violence" (*People's Post*, 12 February 2008:4). In the same article, a source who is investigating safety conditions in township schools also mentions the shocking situation in this specific context. He is also quoted as saying: "During our visit to one school in Langa, two learners stabbed each other with knives, while another set fire to a patch of grass". While these comments emanate from media sources, the origin of the information constitutes reason for concern and more credible research.

Violence in South African schools, particularly in the townships, escalated some 30 years ago when thousands of learners protested because of the imposition of Afrikaans as medium of instruction (Lewis, 1992:56). 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, 1995:17). Khosa and Zwane (1995:18) further argue that the education system for blacks under the apartheid government was a vital instrument of oppression and contributed to subsequent school violence. To support this, Donald et al. (2002:236) note that: "The reasons behind political violence are usually related to imbalances and distortions in the power and access to resources of different groups in society, and to basic differences in political viewpoints and goals." Education was one such imbalance

and was a reflection of the prevalent unequal political system. The education system for black people formed a critical cornerstone of the apartheid government's strategy of separate development with townships and the schools situated within them being part thereof. This strategy ensured that the conditions in black South African township schools were not conducive to effective learning. Township schools had extremely overcrowded classrooms, inadequate or non-existent teaching and learning resources and infrastructure, and poorly trained educators. The resistance against the apartheid education system by black township learners through fighting subjected these school children and their communities to violence which left students with a legacy of self-destructive coping strategies which they now use to respond to the difficult challenges of creating a new society (Khosa & Zwane, 1995:21). School violence and disruption remain realities in these contexts and systems and are even gaining momentum in certain townships according to De Villiers (1997:76).

Despite national efforts to restore a culture of learning and teaching in township schools, incidents of vandalism, rape, stabbings and even murder are still reported on school grounds (Eliasov & Frank, 2000:140). Learners' experience of being violently victimized in South African schools has become a normal feature of everyday life, particularly in the township setting (Hamber & Lewis, 1997:132). While this is but one reason for school violence, especially within township schools, it remains a reality.

Violence "contaminates" the school system and environment and even jeopardizes the educational process. There can be serious long-standing physical, emotional and psychological implications for educators and learners as well as those in the community. These include stress, reduced self esteem, risk of depression and suicide, reduced school attendance, impaired concentration, fear and a diminished ability to teach (WHO, 1997). Schools play a central role in the socialization and development of children, and it is critical that schools offer a safe environment in which learning and growth can take place, otherwise the children will be socialized into violence.

FORMS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Several forms of school violence occur of which the following are a few thereof as illustration of how they feature within various systems. Donald et al. (2002:236) note: "There are different kinds of violence. It is important to be clear about these differences as violence is often taken to be a single, general problem in society."

2.6.1 Sexual Abuse

In this instance, sexual abuse means any unlawful physical act of a sexual nature and includes indecent assault, sexual harassment, attempted rape and actual rape(http://wced.wcape.gov.za/documents/abuse-no-more-contents.html accessed 16 October 2009) and usually occurs within the family, but also in other institutions such as the school (Donald et al., 2002:239).

In South African schools, thousands of girl learners are encountering sexual violence and harassment within school settings that impedes their access to education (Human Rights Watch Report, 2001). This research project interviewed girls from a variety of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds; the results show that sexual violence occurs in a multitude of systems and settings - prestigious as well as township schools. Furthermore, it found that at most of the previously disadvantaged schools, there was very little or no monitoring of what happened on school premises during and after school hours as learners were being abused in toilets or secluded classrooms where there was no supervision at the time. Alcohol and drug abuse on school premises also contributed to the problem of sexual violence (Naylor, 2002).

2.6.2 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. In essence it is characterised by unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature within several settings and systems. Sexual harassment and sexual violence against learners within the school system has been identified as being a serious problem in educational institutions across the country (Naylor, 2002:1).

2.6.3 Verbal forms of abuse

This type of abuse includes unwelcome innuendoes, suggestions and comments made by other people (such as learners) to others that have a negative impact on their emotional well-being and may constitute a form of bullying (Elliot, 1998:2).

2.6.4 Physical Violence

This action involves using a fist or a weapon of some form and is common in township schools. In areas and schools that are characterised by gangs, aggressive play can easily escalate into violence particularly at the secondary school where learners tend to be more impulsive and resort to extreme forms of violence (Boqwana, 2009:17).

External fighting or physical violence may be between rival groups in the community and that can spill over into school, and impede learners' realization of the right to education (Naylor, 2002:3). Within poor urban areas, the reasons for this are complex and include poverty, the search for power, resources control and group discipline (Donald et al., 2002:238).

2.6.5 Bullying

Smith and Carlson (1997:78), define bullying as a behaviour that is intentional and causes physical and psychological harm to the recipient. It involves repeated oppression, either physical or psychological of a less powerful person by a more powerful one (Dunn, 2001:2).

In South Africa, bullying at schools is common within schools, and experts attribute it to, amongst others, learners that have been exposed to violence in society, learner's lack of self esteem, their dislike of school and several other systemic factors (Byrne, 1994:13). High levels of violence (bullying) inflicted by other learners to others in the school premises is likely to undermine effective learning and experience of schools as caring and healthy places where children and young people can feel safe.

2.6.6 Political violence

Imbalances and distortions in the power and access to resources of different groups in society and to basic differences in political viewpoints is the reason behind political violence (Donald et al., 2002:262). It is common opinion that youth involved in this form of violence will be permanently damaged in their psychological development but it is important to know that most children are not likely to carry the political violence they have experienced into other social relationships but are likely to depend on other factors in the society and the individual's particular social context and developmental experiences (Donald et al., 2002:263).

Once again, this reinforces what has been said about ecosystemic interactions, and how social problems are determined through different levels of the social context.

2.6.7 Gang Violence

Generally in poor areas, gang violence is a growing and very disturbing social problem in the South African society. According to Donald et al. (2002:263), this kind of violence can be traced back to economic needs in a disadvantaged social context. The particular route chosen by gangs to get and control what they want is usually based on power, territory (control over resources), and group discipline. Thus, violence within the gang (to maintain discipline): Between the gang, other gangs and the community at large (to claim and retain power over resources); and as a means to specific ends (violent robbery, rape, and gang defence) become a common means of maintaining the gang and the survival of its members (Donald et al., 2002:263).

De Wet (2003:92) maintains that the presence of gangs at schools and in adjacent areas/townships increases the incidence of victimization of non-gang members. Learners involved in schools situated in townships where gang activities are rife, are fearful that they will be attacked by gang members on their way to school or back home. Learners are also afraid that they will be attacked during school hours by learners who are members of gangs.

2.7 PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE

The psychological effects of (school) violence continue to reverberate in the lives of many learners. Therefore any research endeavours to ascertain the psychological impact of these environmental experiences on adolescent learners remains a top priority (Govender & Killian, 2001:1). Growing up in an environment where there is widespread violence and where adolescent children learn how to live and how to be is of great concern. The central issue that emerges from this chapter suggests that the continued experience of violence is likely to induce a process of learning and imitation, culminating in the acceptance of violent conduct as a dominant and normal mode of resolving conflict on adolescent learners in township schools (Dawes, Tredoux, & Feinstein, 1989:18).

A discussion of some of these major psychological effects of school violence on learners follows.

2.7.1 Fear

MacDonald and Kirkpatrick (1983:258) describe fear as a painful emotion excited by danger or the apprehension of danger or pain. Learners in township schools may experience this kind of fear when they are exposed to school violence. School violence may influence them psychologically and they may experience intimidation and fear at school. This may contribute to avoidance of certain parts of the school building, such as toilets, playgrounds where monitoring of learner behaviour is less. Truancy may be the option to minimize stress possibilities. In addition, sometimes learner's fear of being bullied force them to stay absent from school or to become withdrawn and isolated.

2.7.2 Stress

Smith and Carlson (*in* Boqwana, 2009:20) define stress as an event, situation, or combination of situations in which the child or adult view the perceived demand as exceeding his or her capacity to respond in a comfortable way. They go on to say that early stress may be harmful to learners. This implies that stress that is interpreted as harmful or threatening tends to have a negative inference. Stress can interfere with learners' engagement and learning at school. Stress can impact on

behaviour and emotional well-being and severe or prolonged stress can contribute to health problems.

2.7.3 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Children throughout the world are subjected to a multitude of traumatic experiences which vary from natural disasters, accidents, political, familial and community violence. Such exposure can pose a severe threat to a child's well-being (Bach & Louw, 2010:25). A child's vulnerability to the damaging effects of stressors is greater than that of adults. Severe stress triggered by a traumatic event has been related to increased chances of children developing psychological problems such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Bach & Louw, 2010:25).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a diagnostic category used to describe symptoms arising from emotionally traumatic experience(s). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition or DSM-IV-TR (APA), the disorder presumes that the person has experienced a traumatic event involving actual or threatened death or injury to themselves or others, and where they felt fear, helplessness or horror.

Epidemiological estimates suggest that the incidence and lifetime prevalence rates of PTSD in the general population are 1%-9%. These levels increase markedly for young adults living in inner cities (23%). In particularly violent areas, the incidence may be even higher (Hamber & Lewis, 1997:10).

Straker and The Sanctuaries Counselling Team (1997 *in* Hamber & Lewis, 1997:10) assert that the term post-traumatic stress disorder is a misnomer in the South African context. In particular, they were referring to individuals living in South Africa's black townships, who were subject to continuous stress. This stress was attributed to the high levels of violence in the townships. Hamber and Lewis (1997:11) assert that in terms of therapeutic interventions for PTSD, the most serious difficulty was in regard to the inability to protect the individual from further trauma.

2.8 CAUSES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

In dealing with causes of school violence, the following aspects will be considered: The individual, the home, school in general, the community and society and will invariably incorporate the previous forms of violence. This is in recognising the complex nature of the phenomenon within and across systems. It is recognised that these systems are dynamic and influence each other reciprocally.

2.8.1 Individual

Much of the local and international research evidence on violence pertains to the individual level, and is drawn from studies conducted within a psychological or psychiatric perspective. This, it is argued, is reductionist by implication, yet it forms an integral part of the bio-ecosystemic perspective as it recognises one system of violence, but not all. In the South African case, we need to be aware that there are a range of contextual drivers to antisocial and violent behaviour in young people (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007:95) and it needs to be approached in that way.

Within the person, individual temperaments and acquired biological deficits may contribute to children's violent dispositions and tendencies. For example, antisocial personality disorders, attention deficit disorders, impulsiveness, hyperactivity, low resting heart rate and neurotoxin exposures, as well as serious head injuries are among the factors that may push a child in the direction of violent behaviour (De Wet, 2007:255).

Furthermore, a negative self-image, together with peer rejection and low frustration acceptance, directly affects the adolescent's predisposition to express violent behaviour. According to Stancato (*in* De Wet, 2007:255), a negative self-image and low self-esteem may equate with a state of confusion in the adolescent's search for meaning in the form of self-acceptance, self-esteem and an acceptable identity. Indicators that an adolescent is in a state of confusion include social isolation, loneliness, poor impulse control, and defiance of authority, mood swings and an obsession with weapons, violence and death.

School education, according to De Wet (*in* Wolhuter et al., 2007:256), should go beyond the learning of academic subject matter and play a key role in facilitating a

positive identity and meaning for adolescents. De Wet (*in* Wolhuter et al., 2007:256) concludes by saying that if schools fail in this moral obligation, then they can indirectly be held responsible for school violence.

2.8.2 Family and Home

The primary socialization of a child is generally provided by the family and home, while secondary socialization is provided by the school, peers and the media. The first social relationship of each child lies within the family; it is the parent-child bond. Bowlby (1980:56) states that attachment relationship is a tie of affection that the infant forms with one specific adult caregiver (usually the birth mother) that binds them together in space, endures over time and fosters survival. This bond, according to Bowlby, forms the foundation for future social development, by creating a secure base from which the child can explore the physical and social environment.

South African children living in black townships come from poor conditions, where some do not even live with their parents, but with caregivers who do not have sufficient parenting skills or resources to meet the basic needs of children, thereby creating an environment susceptible to destructive behaviour (Marks, 2001:167). Most children in township schools come from single-parent homes: Homes where fathers are absent and homes headed by children. Causes for this include migration working conditions and parents dying due to HIV/AIDS. These circumstances rob children of the fulfilment of their basic need for belonging, thereby leaving them with few role models for positive lifestyles (Strategy for Enhancing Positive Behaviour in schools, 2004:8). These children feel worthless and helpless and display a perpetual craving for reassurance and gratification that never seems to be satisfied, leading to new frustrations that may be reacted to with anger and violence (Van den Aardweg, 1987:176).

Parental pro-violence attitudes and family conflict are risk factors for violent behaviour, because modelling is a central learning process (also see section 2.3.2) (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007:98). Exposure to antisocial norms which present violence as an acceptable means of problem-solving normalizes the occurrence and use of violence. Furthermore, harsh and/or inconsistent disciplinary practices in homes and by family members, including severe physical punishment and abuse,

are significant determinants of violent behaviour (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007:98). Poor monitoring and supervision of child activities, and inadequate limit-setting (permissive or lax parenting) have repeatedly been associated with violent behaviours in children and adolescents (Patterson, DeBaryshe & Ramsay, 1997:270). Other home factors that may lead to violent behaviour include large family size, low maternal education, low family bonding and poor family management practices (Patterson et al., 1997:265). These violent patterns and problem-solving skills very often get transferred from the family to the school system (De Wet, 2007:255) thereby reflecting the interaction and transference of violence from one system to another.

Violence in South African township homes has created physically and emotionally chaotic environments where children are not safe or nurtured. For most township children, their homes, which should be safe havens, are often the most dangerous places to go (Khosa & Zwane, 1994:13).

2.8.3 School

After looking at the individual and the learner's home and family environment, it is crucial to examine the school as a setting and system, since the adolescent learner is in this environment for a large part of the day. Frank (2006:38) observes that the school setting is in fact a double-edged sword: It has the potential to offer interventions to violent behaviour, but is also the system where children are vulnerable to violence through offending and victimization. Studies mentioned by De Wet (2007:256) examining school-related factors contributing to school violence indicate that a more positive school climate, positive perceptions of the school, and more years of educators' teaching experience are associated with lower rates of misbehaviour.

Kandakai (*in* De Wet, 2007:256) 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. De Wet (2003, *in* Wolhuter et al., 2007:256) posits that poor infrastructure and overcrowded schools in which learners have limited space to move around may lead to learner frustration and violence. Furlong and Morrison (2000:78) argue similarly that there are several characteristics that make

schools more conducive to violent behaviour: Too big schools; bad school ethos (e.g. discipline problems); and the school's failure to confront issues of sexual harassment. School size is an essential factor for determining rates of violence. The National Centre for Educational Statistics in America indicated that violence is more prevalent in large schools compared to smaller ones. 89% of the large schools surveyed admitted to one or more criminal incidences in a year, whereas only 38% of the smaller schools did. Concerns over similar factors were reiterated at the International Conference on Learner Discipline, held on 1 April, 2007 at Potchefstroom, by an academic, Dr Gilbert Masitsa, when he said the: "The Department of Education should ensure that teachers do not teach large classes. Large classes have more disciplinary problems, are intimidating to a teacher and difficult to control. Large classes are so intimidating that they can force a teacher to be violent or to use methods of punishment that inflict pain, such as corporal punishment to demonstrate authority and to show that he/she is in control" (*Cape Times,* 4 April 2007:4).

Schools in South Africa also play a part in reproducing violence through their continuing failure to confront issues of sexual harassment and their continuing use of corporal punishment, despite its illegality (Vally & Dalamba, 1999:37). The statistical occurrence of sexual harassment and abuse in township schools shows that one in five high school boys admits to rape, and many of these boys claim to have been as young as nine when they started forcing girls to have sex with them (*Sunday Times*, 29 October, 2006:6). Some reports in the newspapers indicate that sexual harassment of female learners in many township schools is a serious concern. More than 30% of girls in township schools are raped, sexually abused, sexually harassed and assaulted by male learners and educators (Prinsloo, 2005:29). Sexual harassment, abuse and violence at school also occurs in prestigious, affluent schools and is not only limited to township schools. 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 contextualized 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. It also means that learners are

more open to accepting transport from educators, which may in turn result in some form of sexual abuse and violence (Naylor, 2002:1).

Corporal punishment in schools is banned in South Africa, but despite this, there is still a widespread use of "caning" especially in black township schools (Final Report of the Children and Violence Intervention Project, 1994-1995, CSVR). Many teachers argue that because corporal punishment is used in children's homes, it is the only form of discipline that children will understand. When they use other forms of discipline, educators feel that they do not get the desired results except when they use the cane. This is further complicated by the fact that many parents encourage educators to use the cane when disciplining their children. So in addition to the violence they are subjected to outside of school in their communities, children are physically abused on a regular basis in their schools by their teachers (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 1993:4).

2.8.4 The Community and/or Society

School violence's etiology may stem from larger societal factors over which the school has little or no control (De Wet, 2007:253). According to Van den Aardweg (*in* De Wet, 2007:253), isolation, powerlessness and dissatisfaction with the treatment by those in authority may be important factors contributing to school violence in a community. Especially within the South African context, this has been experienced by learners attending township schools.

Political violence in South Africa from 1948 onwards led to high levels of intolerance and subsequently to much violence especially within black education system (Lewis, 1992:57; De Wet, 2007:253). Morrell (2008:40) argues that schools in South Africa were the "trenches of the liberation struggle" especially during the 1970s and 1980s. He goes further to argue 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.

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 idle for large periods of time, or sometimes indefinitely (Bennett-Johnson,

2004:2). Idleness has resulted in these people seeking social and economic survival through the selling of alcohol and drugs. These conditions exacerbate the social conditioning of those children who pattern themselves on these "role models". The "modelling" continues to behaviours such as using weapons, being easily provoked and joining gangs, with this kind of behaviour spilling over to schools (Bennett-Johnson, 2004:200). De Wet (2007:254) argues similarly in that the most frequently cited community causes of school violence are the deterioration of living conditions accompanied by poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, a high population turnover, and racial and ethnic heterogeneity. She goes further to say that the lives of many disadvantaged children growing up in disadvantaged communities may be subject to violence, hostility, aggression, anxiety and instability. This invariably has a negative impact the psychological well-being of children. However, this is not always the case. Donald et al. (2002:237) refers to research evidence from South Africa and other countries where adolescents, especially males, showed resilience to violence. This resilience is attributed to a more developed cognitive situational understanding, and also to strength gained from political identification and peer camaraderie.

Socio-economic factors within the community and society also impact on school violence. Some scholars have argued that poverty in communities is more strongly associated with the continuity of violence rather than the onset of violence, and that once involved in a violent lifestyle, individuals from socio-economically disadvantaged communities have fewer opportunities to make successful transitions to the fulfilment of pro-social and conventional adult roles (Elliot, 1994:121). The ready availability of drugs in the community as well as the high numbers of neighbourhood adults involved in crime further increase the probability of youth involvement in violence.

The Safe Schools Project head at the Western Cape Education Department, Narriman Khan, who drives safety projects in the "high risk" township schools is quoted as saying: "We get 40-odd *shebeens* operating in the areas (communities) around these (township – author) schools where illegal substances are sold, and learners sometimes bring the substances on to school premises to sell" (*The Argus* 7 May 2007:2). Furthermore, the previous Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, indicated that violence in the community has to be addressed and is also quoted as

saying: "If we reduce the violence in our communities and the negative effect of it on children, we might be able to fight the violence in schools" (*City Press*, 19 October, 2008:1).

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecosystemic model (refer to Chapter 1 and section 2.4.1) is useful in explaining the effects of community violence on individuals. Within the construct of this model, community violence has both a direct and an indirect effect on the individual. The direct effect is explained as the individual's personal experience with violence in his/her community, and his/her participation in or witnessing of a violent incident. The indirect effect of community violence relates to the effect that the presence of violence has on the individual and the other systems in the ecosystem. Furthermore, Bandura's Social Learning Theory Model (refer to section 2.3.2) may further provide a theoretical link between adolescents who are exposed to violence and the development of a violent behaviour, as repeated exposure to community violence may result in South African youth becoming desensitized and uncaring towards others and thus acting out the violent behaviour modelled by significant others in their lives. For many children growing up in disadvantaged communities "violence is a way of life which is very real, and to cope with it is to survive" (De Wet, 2007:254).

2.9   OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE

2.9.1 Lack of safety and security at school

Effective teaching and learning can only take place in a safe and secure school environment. According to Xaba (2006:565), school safety encompasses the total learning environment, including (adolescent) learners, classrooms, school grounds, parents and the community. He goes on to say that a safe school is a school that is free from danger and possible harm, where learners can learn without fear or ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation or violence. Anecdotal reports in the media however contradict this viewpoint (Prinsloo, 2005:5).

While a significant amount of finance has been spent by the Western Cape Education Department (the provincial authority where this research was conducted) to create safe schools, particularly in the townships, the crime and violence rate has not decreased (*Sunday Times,* 9 September 2007:1). The Safe School call centre in

the Western Cape (*Cape Times,* 7 May 2007:1) revealed that it had received hundreds of reports of crime, vandalism from schools only four months after the start of the 2007 school year. The latest statistics from the Safe Schools call centre for the period January 2007 to April 2008, indicate that there have been 270 reports of vandalism and burglaries, 174 reports of crime, 167, 53 reports of gang-related violence and activities in the township schools, further showing the prevalence and pervasiveness of violence in township schools. What is common about these incidents is that they all seem to have occurred in and around school premises and some during school hours, which highlights the vulnerability of schools to safety-threatening incidents. This includes the ease with which schools are accessed and intruded into by unsafe elements, sometimes with violent and criminal consequences (Xaba, 2006:566).

Township schools are especially vulnerable to unsafe conditions and threats of violence due to, among other things, poor resources and infrastructure, their location, especially in and around informal settlements, the types of their building and environmental design (Curriculum Review, 1999). A common safety threat identified on township school grounds, especially in older schools, is the poor level of maintenance. These ranged from broken fences, exposed electrical wiring (due to theft of electrical cables), broken window panes, damaged gates, broken toilets and damaged furniture lying around the school grounds – aspects not conducive to sound and authentic education. A study that was conducted by Xaba in 2006, to investigate basic safety and security in township schools revealed that even when gates were closed in most of the schools, they were not properly secured which allowed for acts of violence to take place. They find that locks were unlocked and dangling from the attachment holes. The reason given for this was the shortage of support staff that could be in charge of the gates. In some schools, the perimeter fencing was old and with gaping holes in some sections. Added to this trend, in the light of school intrusions as reported in the media, was the observation and discovery of the ease with which most schools were accessed (Xaba, 2006:574).

2.9.2 Gender-based Violence

Schools like families are one of the primary arenas in which children are socialised and masculinities and femininities shaped (Redpath, Morrell, Jewkes & Peacock,

2008:35). The gender composition and hierarchy of teaching staff also influenced the gender perceptions of young people which are among the reasons why education departments in South Africa have been subjected to demographic gender transformation designed to promote women into more senior positions. According to Redpath et al. (2008:35), South African schools are a microcosm of South African society and within them are found violence, sexual abuse, HIV/AIDS, and gangs.

In South Africa, there is now the anomalous situation that schooling outcomes increasingly appear to favour girls rather than boys. Gender is also explicitly addressed in the curriculum. Despite these changes, constructions of masculinities and femininities in schools are complicit in the crime and violence experienced in schools, with a high rate of teenage sexual activity and bullying (Morrell, 2008:40).

A study conducted to examine the prevalence of bullying among adolescents from Cape Town found 36.3% of learners were affected by or involved in bullying, male learners were most perpetrators and both boy and girl learners were victims (Redpath et al., 2008:38). Sexual violence is another form of violence present in schools. Human Rights Watch and the Medical Research Council have both documented extensive sexual abuse and harassment of girls committed by both teachers and male students. Sexual violence in society generally is common and disproportionately affects young black women of school-going age (Redpath et al., 2008:38). Khosa & Zwane (1995:4) claims that sexual violence against school girls in the township schools occurs within the framework and discourse of a male-dominated society. In the African society, men have very often been taught to define their power in terms of their capacity to affect their will over women with or without the consent of those women involved. This is a society where young males are taught to be assertive and masculine and women/girls are expected to be subordinate and submissive. It is also a society in which young black men grow up to see their mothers living under the domination of their fathers and other adult males (Simpson, 1993:6).

2.10   TOWNSHIP VIOLENCE

As school violence has been discussed earlier on, and since my study is focused on violence in a township school, it is imperative to look at the history of township violence and the Nyanga Township as the context where this study is taking place.

Township violence in South Africa is largely an overflow of the apartheid years and is generally influenced by racist policies of the past. The history of townships dates back from the time when the apartheid government created townships within the Group Areas Act (Act No 41 of 1950) to segregate Black, Indian and "Coloured" South Africans into contained communities without a self-sustaining infrastructure so that they would be economically dependent on white communities, while at the same time remain socially segregated (Khosa & Zwane, 1995:43). The Group Areas Act forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races (http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsaws.htm accessed on 19 October 2008). Urbanization and the migration of black people from rural areas caused overcrowding, and an increased strain on the poor resources available in these townships. Unemployment rates were (and are) still high in townships. Poverty and tensions from overcrowding resulted in internally violent communities. It was and is a very common experience for township children to witness assaults, stabbings, and shootings. Drug-related crime is on the rise in townships, and the numbers of children being reported as victims of sexual and physical abuse is also rapidly increasing (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 1995:18).

Apartheid was a system through which the state exercised control over the majority of its population through segregation and oppression. It was during this era that violence became entrenched within the communities that were oppressed, as a means to react to this oppression. The response of the people in these oppressed communities to the strained living conditions they were subjected to was to resist, whereby violent oppression was also met by violent resistance (Marais, 1998:185). A wave of political violence gripped the country from the late 70s, mid-80s until 1994. It was during this period that liberation movements escalated their violent attacks against the apartheid government in response to the apartheid government repression; the government responded violently by killing many people (CSVR,

1995:15). Much of this violence took place in townships and also within the schools there (Lewis, 1992:56).

South African township youth became involved in this cycle of violence which continued throughout the liberation struggle. Theorists are concerned that the history of violent liberation has robbed many children of their childhood and left a legacy of rebellion in schools, and that that legacy interferes with a peaceful culture of learning in Black Township schools (CSVR, 1995:21). Some have even referred to this generation as the "lost generation" as they have basically lost their right to be educated. The township of Nyanga in the Western Cape is one such township that experienced these racial policies and the resultant violence. It is in this light that it is also important to look at the history of Nyanga Township as this high school is situated in Nyanga.

Nyanga Township is one of the oldest black townships in Cape Town, established as a result of apartheid's migrant labour system which was a result of racist governmental policies (http://tools.wikemedia, accessed on 1 June 2007). In the early 1950s, black migrant workers were forced to settle in Nyanga as Langa (another black township) became too small. This township is one of the poorest and most dangerous parts of Cape Town and its unemployment rate is estimated at around 70% (http://tools.wikimedia, accessed on 1 June 2007).

A study of the history of township school violence in South Africa also shows that the former system of Bantu education ensured that conditions in black schools did not ensure effective learning (Lewis, 1992; Mdhluli & Zwane cited in Crawage, 2005:4). These conditions included unqualified educators and a lack of equitable education to all learners, as well as a lack of resources to provide quality education. Township schools were overcrowded, had no resources, and learners did not even have desks in some schools. Dissatisfaction with these conditions led township learners to engage in riots and resort to violence (Van Zyl Slabbert, cited *in* Crawage, 2005:24) in order to ensure an equitable education. The irony is that, although this resistance ended apartheid education, it contributed to a prevailing culture of violence within (especially township) schools.

Mogano (1993:9) also argues that the majority of learners in township schools come from a working class background. Factors such as the general disillusionment with the dominant racist culture of apartheid filtered through Bantu Education (Lewis, 1992:57) and the economy (experienced through the lack of career prospects, unemployment, impoverished communities and a breakdown of supportive family or community structures), a situation which encouraged the formation of subcultures as alternatives to the dominant culture from which they experience themselves as marginalized and excluded. These sub-cultural formations manifest themselves by way of gang formation and ensuing violence.

2.11   PREVENTATIVE AND ANTI-VIOLENCE PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS

From the aforementioned, it appears that schools internationally and in South Africa have been confronted with violence. Educators are confronted with violent behaviour of learners as well as threatening situations. The outcome of this phenomenon is that effective teaching and learning is seriously jeopardized. The right of learners to learn in a safe school environment is similarly threatened by a culture that is socially destructive and demeaning. In view of this situation at schools regarding to and by learner, there is a need to look at anti-violence/ preventative strategies/ programmes that are and can be used at schools. Numerous preventative anti-violence programs across the globe (United States, United Kingdom, and Israel) have shown encouraging results (Leone et al., 2000:1). The researcher will attempt to look at several preventative approaches that have been used.

(a)   Positive Behavioural Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Positive Behavioural Interventions and Support (PBIS) is a systems approach to creating and sustaining school environments that foster academic and behavioural competencies for all learners. As compared to traditional school-based approaches that target problem behaviour demonstrated by individual learners, PBIS, focuses broadly on identifying policies and practices of the school itself that support or impede successful outcomes. In this approach, classroom management and instructional practices are viewed as parallel processes; effective teaching of both academic and social skills involve strategies such as direct instruction, positive

reinforcement, modelling, and pre-correction (Sugai, Kameenui et al., 2000 *in* Leone et al., 2000:9).

(b)   Skill-Building: Violence prevention Curricula

Violence prevention curricula based on social learning theory are used in school settings to improve learner problem solving and anger management skills, and to increase their knowledge of non-violent responses to interpersonal conflict (Leone et al, 2000:9). Conflict resolution and social skills are taught directly as a distinct curriculum or through the integration in other coursework. In this approach, parents and educators are trained to instruct learners directly using specific thinking and communication skills designed to prevent conflict in school and at home (Shure, 1999 *in* Leone et al, 2000:9).

(c)   Mental Health and Social Services in Schools: Linkages to Learning

Linkage to Learning is a prevention model for the delivery of mental health. The programme was established in 1992 as a joint effort between public and private sector in Montgomery Country, Maryland to respond to the increased needs of low income children and their families. Parents are viewed as partners in this effort, taking an active role in developing solutions to individual, family and community challenges. The overall goal of the program is to address social, emotional and health problems that undermine children's ability to succeed at school.

Participating children and families receive a mental health assessment and counselling; assistance in obtaining shelter, food, housing and employment; medical care and educational support including academic tutoring, mentoring and adult education classes. The evaluation of this programme found a positive outcome for children and parents, including improved academic achievement and behavioural functioning at home and school (Leone et al., 2000:10).

In South Africa, there are broad ranges of strategies that seek to reduce school-based violence. These strategies can be divided into strategies that change the school environment and the individual.

(a)   Environmental-change strategies

Research by Eliasov and Frank has shown that the school environment and quality of day-to-day classroom interactions can counter the negative influences that children experience in their homes and neighbourhoods and instil pro-social citizenship (Eliasov & Frank, 2000:11). Strategies include:

- **Whole school development**: This involves building school capacity, changing the authority structure to being more democratic including policies and the decision-making processes. These interventions usually involve teams of people from inside and outside the school undertaking activities to improve or develop the whole school environment.

- **Discipline planning**: This represents school-wide efforts to redefine norms and communicate appropriate behaviour to children (through newsletters, posters and ceremonies).

- **Classroom management and instructional design**: Educators are empowered to become more effective managers of behaviour and role models. Changes in classroom management techniques and instructional methods aim to increase learner engagement in the learning process and foster a positive bond with the school.

(b)   Individual-change strategies

These strategies are designed to foster change in learner knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. Individual-change strategies include:

- **Instruction**: This strategy is widely used in schools. Programmes attempt to create awareness around particular issues, teach factual information, expand the behavioural repertoire available to learners and increase learner appreciation for diversity and differences.

- **Recreational, enrichment, and life-skills programmes:** Aims to empower young people and build resilience.

- **Behaviour modification and cognitive strategies:** These programmes aim to set up systems and structures that can reinforce desired behaviour and positive thought patterns.

- **Peer programmes:** These programmes attempt to build peer leadership and support structures.

- **Counselling:** This can be provided on an individual or group level by trained personnel or professionals.

According to Eliasov and Frank (2000:12), schools are the best places to lead anti-violence prevention programmes because a school can reach a large number of children (including those who are most vulnerable) as well as the community. Also, educators are generally accessible and can play an important role in early assessment and intervention and much of the structures and resources needed to contribute to violence prevention are often in place at schools.

2.12   CONCLUSION

It is apparent that violence in black township schools cannot be attributed to a single causal theory or factor. The range of issues that have been explored above should not be regarded as the only theories and factors which shape the pattern of violence in schools; however, they will assist in the empirical investigation that is to follow. Before commencing with the investigation, it is necessary to refer to the research methodology and design.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research design and research methodology are discussed in view of the research question set out in Chapter 1. To Henning et al (2004:31): "Researchers select methods and a research genre (read also design type – researcher) that will not only suit the research question optimally, but will also indicate the researcher's (reflexive) knowledge of how language makes meaning, what role theory plays in interpretation and understanding, and how ideology and politics manifest in the research". The research design denotes the manner in which research is put together, thought through and executed with the ultimate putting together of findings (Mouton *in* Henning et al 2004:31). Methodology consists of the research instruments, the research procedure as well as the process of data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The specific design selected for this study is a case study. To Babbie and Mouton (2001:640) a case study is "an intensive investigation into a single unit" or to Henning et al (2004:32) the investigation of a phenomenon as a "bounded system", be it people, documents or an aspect of the media. The reason I selected this design is because it is an empirical study of qualitative nature and its aim is to provide an in-depth description of a specific case, in this instance a high school situated in Nyanga Township in the Western Cape. Before discussing the case study, it is imperative to briefly discuss the paradigm within which this study is situated.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

As was stated in Chapter 1 (section 1.6.1), an interpretive paradigm will be followed in this research. Interpretive researchers want to make sense of feelings,

experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world, and therefore they want to study them in their natural setting. This situates the current study within the interpretive paradigm as it looks at adolescents' experiences of violence in a specific context. When a researcher works in an interpretive paradigm, the reality to be studied consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world (ontology) (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:6). The key assumption which all types of qualitative research are based on is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. In other words, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed; that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in that world (Merriam, 1998:6). This approach will constitute my paradigm of research.

3.4 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

The study to explore learners' experiences of school violence in a township high school was conducted in a high school situated in the Nyanga Township in the Western Cape Province (see sections 1.2 and 2.8). This school was selected because it has been a centre of numerous attacks, with quite a number of gun shootings and knife stabbing incidences that have been reported at the Metropole South Education District office. The Nyanga Township has, for the fourth year running, been named the Western Cape's murder capital (*Cape Argus*, 23 September, 2009). It has 2.5 per cent of the province's total number of *shebeens* (*Cape Argus*, 23 September 2009). It is also number one in the Western Cape top 10 crime areas and rated number two in the Western Cape's top 10 sexual crimes areas (*Cape Argus*, 23 September 2009).

3.5 METHODOLOGY

3.5.1 Qualitative Approach

The study was done within a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is an inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their natural settings (Mouton, 2001:107). Furthermore, as a qualitative researcher, I am interested in understanding the participant's experiences within a context. In this instance, as I have previously mentioned in section 3.4, the

context is violence that occurs in the school environment, specifically a high school in a specific township.

In this study, semi-structured interviews, an interview schedule and focus groups were used in order to gain information. In the context of the present study, the researcher was interested in understanding the meaning and experiences the high school learners have constructed regarding violence at school. In doing so, interviews and focus groups were used to achieve this aim. The interviews were conducted in the participants' home language (isiXhosa); this was imperative to put the participants at ease and let them express themselves clearly. Merriam (1998:6) suggests that the key assumption which all types of qualitative research is based on is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. In other words, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam, 1998:6). ... Being interviewed in the language that one is most comfortable with contributes towards achieving this goal.

Merriam (1998:6) goes on to suggest that qualitative research "implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'". It is also assumed that meaning is embedded in people's experiences and that this meaning is mediated through the investigator's own perception. Patton (1985, *in* Merriam, 1996:6) explains:

> Qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting - what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting - and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting ... (Merriam, 1998:6).

3.6 SAMPLING AND SITE SELECTION

For this study, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling is occasionally used in exploratory research as it aims towards understanding the opinions and experiences of the people being researched (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:281), hence its suitability for this study.

As was previously mentioned, in section 1.7.1, the researcher's sample population was the learners of a high school in the township of Nyanga in the Western Cape. I purposefully selected this school for the whole study because I intended to do an in-depth case study. Also this school is situated in an area (township) known for violence, as indicated through several media reports (see sections 2.8 and 3.4).

From this population, a representative sample of thirteen learners (made up of girls and boys) from grades 10 and 11 (five Grade 10's and eight Grade 11's) were selected from the school. As was mentioned in section 1.7.1, this school has been involved in numerous violent attacks: For example, in 2006 an eighteen-year-old boy from this school was stabbed by another pupil from the same school. These learners were part of the school population that experienced this violence. Below is the list of participants with their (age, gender and grade) that took part in the individual interviews.

Table 3.1

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Candidate	Age	Gender	Grade
Learner 1	17	M	10
Learner 2	17	M	11
Learner 3	16	M	10
Learner 4	16	F	11
Learner 5	16	F	10
Learner 6	18	F	11
Learner 7	18	M	11
Learner 8	17	F	11
Learner 9	16	F	10
Learner 10	17	M	11
Learner 11	18	M	11
Learner 12	17	F	11
Learner 13	17	F	10

Table 3.2

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Candidate	Age	Gender	Grade
Un	16	F	10
Yo	17	F	11
L	16	F	10
Bo	17	M	10
Tl	17	F	11
Lw	18	M	11
Th	19	F	11
Ma	17	M	11
Li	17	M	11
Mi	16	F	10

3.6.1 Criteria to identify learners

The sample of learners partaking in this research should fulfil certain criteria which make them suitable for this project:

They should:

- Have been at the school for at least four or five years;

- Be learners from Grades 10 and 11;

- Be boys and girls.

These points were chosen because some of the incidents that are mentioned in the study happened four and five years ago, which makes the grade 10 and 11 learners eligible candidates as they were at the school long enough to have experienced some kind of violence in this context. The researcher saw it as important to choose learners who experienced violence at school although not all the participants experienced violence. It was also important to hear the experiences from both the boys' and the girls' perspective in order to understand the impact of violence on these two groups.

3.7   METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is a strategy to gain information systematically from participants through interviewing, observation, talking and listening without interjecting one's own opinion (Cresswell *in* Crawage, 2005:208).

As mentioned in section 1.9 and 3.6, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were employed as chief data collecting methods. Texts were recorded, transcribed and analysed. In this study, the interviews were used as the main source of information because of the complexity and the personal nature of the topic. The interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data collection in qualitative research and lends itself to being flexible, iterative and continuous as opposed to being rigid and "locked in stone" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:289) is suitable for the collection of data in exploring humans' experiences.

3.7.1   Data Analysis Method

Data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing emerging and iterative process (Henning et al., 2004:127). Before one begins with an analysis, data are transcribed, which means that texts from interviews are typed into word-processing documents, these transcriptions are then analysed either manually or with computer programs (Henning et al., 2004:127) According to Miles and Huberman (1994, *in* Henning et al. 2004: 127), to analyse data means to break into bits and pieces which is a process known as "coding" or "categorising".

Henning et al. (2004:138) mentions different methods of data analysis with phases, e.g. Content analysis; Global analysis; Grounded theory analysis; Discourse analysis Narrative analysis, Conversation and ethnomethodological analysis.

The qualitative data collected for the study was analysed using content analysis method.

Below is the summary of phases and types of qualitative content data analysis which were employed in this research.

Types of Analysis	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Content analysis	Reading data sets to form overview and to apprehend the context	Coding segments of meaning. Categorising related codes into groups. Seeking relationships between categories to form thematic patterns.	Writing the final themes of the set of data. Presenting pattern of related themes.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

(Terre Blanche & Durrheim*., *1999:66) point out several ethical principles that should guide all research projects, and which will therefore serve to guide this research.

3.8.1 Autonomy

Autonomy refers to respecting the rights of participants, to participate voluntarily and with informed consent (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999:6). In the context of my study, I handed consent forms to learners and to the parents of the learners who wanted to voluntarily participate in the study.

3.8.2 Nonmaleficence

Nonmaleficence pertains to requiring the researcher to take into cognizance that no harm should come to research participants (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999:66). The researcher had to assure learners of the high school that this is a study that requires their views, and that no harm of any kind is intended. As I am schooled in dealing with traumatic events in my training as an Educational Psychology student and intern as well as the nature of my job, any secondary trauma that could be experienced by the participants would be dealt with professionally and ethically.

3.8.3 Beneficence

Beneficence is a process whereby a researcher designs a research project that will be of benefit to future participants, future researchers, and society at large. It was agreed (between the researcher, the school and the WCED) that the findings and recommendations would be shared and provided to the Director: Research Services.

3.8.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality

All participants' identities were considered anonymous, and confidentiality was stressed at all times. The learners were not asked to give and write their names in the consent forms (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999:67).

This research received ethical clearance from Stellenbosch University. Permission to conduct this research was granted on 20 April 2008. The Stellenbosch University ethical clearance number was 121/2008.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research design and research methodology was discussed. The research paradigm, research approach and type in which this study is situated have also been explored. This was followed by sketching the context of the study, the sampling and site selection. The chapter concluded with methods of data collection and ethical considerations. These aspects were discussed in preparation for the next chapter, in which a data analysis and detailed discussion of the results of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 provided and outlined the research methodology that guided the data collection. This data is described and analysed in Chapter 4 below in terms of the themes as they emerged.

Data gathered from individual learners was analysed firstly to give a description of the learners' experience of school violence. The following abbreviations are used in the data analysis in order to maintain confidentiality. Thirteen learners took part in the individual interviews (see codes on pp. 45-46). The abbreviation "L1"-"L13" was used during individual interviews with learners to indicate each one of the 13 participants.

The following questions about school violence were posed to individual learners, focus group interviewees and served as an interview schedule. The analysis of the transcripts is provided later on in this chapter (see sections 4.2.2; 4.2.3; 4.2.4).

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

• Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?
• Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that??
• Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?
• What makes you feel unsafe?
• What common forms of violence are happening at your school?
• Who are the perpetrators of this violence?
• What do you think make learners violent?
• Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?
• How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?
• Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?
• Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE THEMES EMERGING FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

Three general themes emerged from the responses to the questions posed to all participants (individual learners and focus groups):

Theme 1: Lack of safety and classroom management

Theme 2: Community-induced violence

Theme 3: Gender-related violence

These themes will be discussed hereunder:

4.2.1 Theme 1: Lack of safety and classroom management

It is evident from the individual interviews that all of the participants (N=13) stated that they do not feel safe within their school setting due to the nature of violence that is evident within and outside their school premises. ... Linked to this experience was a feeling of the lack of effective classroom and school management which led to their environment being perceived and experienced as violent.

Several learners spoke of this lack of safety as well as the lack of effective classroom management which is reflected in, amongst others, absent teachers within the classroom and ineffectual monitoring of facilities: The following serve as an example:

Oh yes teacher, only last week 2 learners were fighting in the toilets, in fact one was stabbed. I think there is no system in place like for instance learners are always left on their own in their classrooms, teachers that are suppose to come to class do not come and in that way it's free time and this is what causes lots of problems in classes [L2 individual transcript].

Let there be no free periods at school because that's where the problem starts, some learners take chances when there is no teacher in the classroom ... [Learner 3 individual transcript].

Inside the school, there must be people that monitor/guard the toilets as some learners are violated in the toilets, and teachers must always be in their classrooms.[individual transcript].

This lack of effective management is linked to the lack of safety experienced within the school, as learners at the school feel that security fencing is ineffective, damaged and even obsolete - holes in fences, security gates are left open, and even security lights that are not working. For example:

I can say the Department of Education must erect electric fence and remote controlled gates there must be guards or caretakers always at the gates. Let no learner get out of the gates during lunch time [Learner 6 individual transcript].

It further appears that the perimeter fencing needs to be monitored daily and school authorities, together with school governing bodies, must assume responsibility for monitoring and maintaining the safety infrastructure, as elements from the community do not respect the sanctity of the school's boundaries. In support of the above several learners revealed:

How can I feel safe here? Can you see there's a taxi rank just next to the fence and the fence has got holes because of them, in fact not only taxi drivers and learners, but from people who want to cross (using school grounds) to the other side and the shortcut is crossing through the school. Also, you never know when these taxi drivers or gangs are going to fight, so how can I feel safe? [L3 individual transcript].

As you can see, the back side of the fence is broken and when there is a fight outside the school, it affects learners inside the school [L5 individual transcript].

The Department of Education or the school must employ security guards to man the gates [L7 individual transcript].

The Principal and the teachers must monitor the toilets. Maybe there should be parents who monitor the toilets when learners go there. Let there be an armed-response company that monitors inside and outside the school yard. [L4 individual transcript].

The majority of learners from the focus group also felt that educators should attend to their own class time tables, as most fights happen in classrooms during their absence. Both individual interviews and focus group interviews identified classrooms, open grounds or playing fields and toilets as the sites of most of the violence at their school. The focus group interviews gave a clear picture of the situation in this instance where a learner was stabbed in the toilet:

Learner in the focus group:A Learner was stabbed in the toilet.

Learner in the focus group: ... We wish there could always be teachers in the classrooms because if they are not there, learners start to make noise and some start fighting.

Individual learners felt that the visibility of police could make a difference regarding their safety at school. This further reflects their experience of not feeling safe at school, but also that the South African Police Service are seen as necessary within this context of maintaining a violence-free environment, together with teachers who a considered an important and necessary part of the educative process. As one learner noted:

Police must be around the school premises quite often and search learners for weapons and drugs [L2 individual transcript].

Chapter 2 of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) (the Bill of Rights) contains various rights that are applicable to a safe school environment - that is an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. According to Prinsloo (2005:5), South African educators have an important duty towards the safety and the protection of learners, not only in terms of the Constitution and other relevant legislation, but also in terms of their *in loco parentis* status (i.e. the educator "acting as parent"). The *in loco parentis* status of educators furthermore compels schools to foresee potential dangers to which learners may be exposed at school and to act pro-actively by taking steps in the form of safety measures or policy to protect learners from harm (Prinsloo, 2005:6). This includes their safety and security as well as ensuring that the school manages this aspect. In this context, adolescent learners experienced their environment in such a way that they felt that the police were necessary in also maintaining a violence-free environment.

Literature further reveals that in terms of school management, educators in townships 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 (Burton, 2008:78). Previously, discipline was generally maintained through fear of physical punishment. Without this option, educators felt that learners had no reason to behave responsibly within the classroom. Alternative (effective) discipline measures appear to be lacking in this specific context. Furthermore, Section 24 of the Schools Act (Prinsloo, 2005:7) cites a role that the governing body should play in ensuring a safe school environment. A primary role of school governing bodies is to develop school policy, which includes policies dealing with safety and effective school discipline.

Most learners who report access to weapons at schools feel that there is a need for action on the part of the Department of Education to deal with the problem while the Western Cape Department of Education has already taken steps to implement school safety measures such as security fencing, security gates, alarm systems and security guarding. There is a feeling amongst learners in this school that these steps should also go some way towards preventing learners from other schools and gang members from surrounding communities from entering schools and causing violence. All this speaks to effective school (micro-) management. ... Effective management systems within the school enable and enhance effective discipline and control both within the school's boundaries and outside them (Burton, 2008:78), thereby improving and ensuring the effectiveness of learning. Gouws et al (2000:75) note that if the educator assumes "the role of adolescent escort and companion" as opposed to being absent and authoritarian in their discipline, significant relationships can be forged.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Community induced violence

Learners in this specific study experience the community system as influencing the prevalence of violence within this specific context. In this study, community-induced violence refers to school violence activities that stem from or are perpetuated from the community under investigation. Schools do not operate in a vacuum with the relationship between school and home and/or community violence has already been

emphasised in earlier discussions (see Chapter 2), and the synergy between the two was apparent when interviewing the learners, especially within this context.

The prevalence of and easy access to weapons and drugs within schools suggest that these things are readily available outside the school, a fact that was verified by the data. While a definitive cause-effect relationship is often hard to pinpoint, there is a strong correlation between substance abuse and violence, especially within this specific context. Often both alcohol and drugs are used to generate the courage needed to commit a violent act. Carey (2008:1) observes that adolescent victims of abuse tend to abuse more substance in higher doses than their non- abused counterparts. This is revealed by several of the learner interviews:

It's because learners are growing up in violent areas and they think it is ok to be violent. Sometimes it is the drugs that they buy in the community that they use that makes them violent [L 2 individual transcript].

Some of them are because where they come from there are always street fights, especially if they stay near the shebeens, but sometimes at their homes, their parents fight, so they think there's nothing wrong in doing that [L3 individual transcript].

Sometimes it is because they [the community members] sell guns in the neighbourhood, so they will buy them to use the guns to rob during weekends and bring these guns to schools sometimes. Also drugs like marijuana or tik are easily available in the neighbourhood so they buy these drugs and smoke them inside the school toilets so that they can be brave to do anything wrong they have been thinking of while they were sober [L5 individual transcript].

Gouws et al (2005:115) observe that adolescent's moral development can also be influenced by the community they live in. During my interview with individual learners, focus groups and then it became clear that school violence is a spill-over from the community. All participants revealed that most violence that is happening at this school, originates from the community. For example, gangsters' actions are copied by learners from their community, which can be either neighbourhoods or family members. During my interview with the focus group and individual learners the interviewees reported learners sneaking out to *shebeens* in the community during

school time to buy alcohol for their own consumption during school time. This testifies to both a lack of effective management and the influence of the community on the school- the influence of various systems on one another.

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecosystemic model is useful in explaining the multifaceted and systemic effects of community violence on individuals, especially within this context. This is further explained by the GAAM theory on violent behaviour (see section 2.3.6). Within the construct of these models, community violence has both a direct and an indirect effect on the individual. The direct effect is explained as the individual's personal experience with violence in his/her community, and his/her participation in or witnessing of a violent incident. The indirect effect of community violence relates to the effect that the presence of violence has on the individual and the other systems in the ecosystem.

School violence is a symptom of the overall social dysfunction of the community within which the school is situated (Steyn & Naicker, 2007:146). This implies that schools are often mirror images of the communities and families they serve. The Nyanga Township and the surrounding community where most of these learners come from is an area that is experiencing a lot of tension due to, amongst other facets, challenging socio-economic conditions. Also, the selling of alcohol and drugs is the order of the day within this community context as is reflected in media reports of the community (*Cape Argus*, 23 September 2009).

4.2.3 Theme 3: Gender-related violence

The study provided evidence that violence at this specific school largely reflected a specific gender-based physical, emotional and verbal type of violence. Boys were mostly identified as the perpetrators of this school violence with girls often bearing the brunt of their physical or sexual assault. In support of the above explanation, several (girl) learners revealed:

Boys just kick us without any reason. In this area, there are many groups of boys that threaten or intimidate us by forcefully robbing our cell phones [L1 individual transcript].

Boy learners are verbally abusing us [L6 individual transcript]

Yes, these boys will forcefully propose love from us and if you reject his proposal, they just kick you or slap you [L2 individual transcript].

Boys and male educators are also sexually abusers [Learner 4 individual transcript]

As far as gender-based violence is concerned, Mills (2001:3) acknowledged the fact that for many boys, being tough is their understanding of what it is to be male. In a patriarchal society aggressive play by boys towards girls is often described as 'typical' or 'boys will be boys' behaviours, and such behaviour is even encouraged. It is the acceptance of this behaviour as being normal that is most damaging in the school environment. It is this use by boys of aggression to gain power and to dominate which is intimidating and threatening to girls and undermines their whole experience of school (Bester & Du Plessis 2010:224). Within this school, characterised as being predominantly black, African, this discourse is indeed characteristic and prevalent and reflects an identity confusion, a negative form of adolescent identity formation as identified by Eric Erikson (Gouws et al, 2000:66).

This type of violence may be seen as a violent expression of masculinity (Bhana 2005:100). According to Connell (1999:8), there is a widespread belief in some societies that it is natural for men to be violent. Some boys see violent actions as being synonymous with manliness (De Wet, 2002:92). The subordination of females to the authority of males may therefore as illustrated in this study result in physical, sexual or psychological harm to female learners. The gender hierarchies in black communities thus have a profound influence on school violence.

This data reflects the findings of The Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) commissioned in 1996 by the Department of Justice to analyse the education system from a gender perspective, identified the problem of sexual violence in schools as severe and systemic. The forms of violence experienced within the school system have been identified to include:

- Sexual coercion

- Sexual harassment

- Sexual assault

- Intimidation

- Emotional abuse in the form of threats of violence (Naylor, 2002:2).

Girls in this context were found to often encounter highly sexualised verbal degradation in the school environment. The different forms of sexual violence were found to be committed by other learners (mainly boys). These forms of violence as identified by GETT are evident from the following excerpts experienced by learners in this school:

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: *Sexual harassment, assault, verbal abuse, stabbings [focus group]*

Sexual abuse from boy learners, stabbings, gun shootings, bullying, verbal abuse from educators and from learners [L3 individual transcript].

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: *It's mostly the boys [focus group].*

4.3   SUMMARY

Chapter 4 described several dominant themes that emerged from the data collected. A discussion of the themes was presented and was augmented with what the literature had to say in this regard. There were commonalities between the themes, and it was imperative to articulate a clear profile of each participant's opinion because this study seeks to understand the learner's experience of violence, and its impact, in order to develop and recommend a school prevention and/or intervention programme/strategy.

The next chapter provides us with findings, a conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide the findings of this research, which will be followed by conclusions and the recommendations. This evaluation will result in general conclusions being drawn so that guidelines can be developed for this specific school context.

As stated in **Chapter 1**, the objective of this study was to understand learners' experience of school violence within a township setting, to understand the different forms of violence experienced in a township school, and, based on this understanding, to see what possible programmes or models can be developed and be recommended for adolescent learners in a township school to cope with school violence.

The study was informed by a literature review in **Chapter 2,** which addressed the different theoretical perspectives with regard to violence in general, and school violence in particular. This overview of the literature highlighted the multifaceted nature of school violence, arguing that violence in black township schools cannot be attributed to a single causal theory or factor, but that there are several factors which shape the pattern of violence in schools. The study highlighted the relationship between experiences within schools and the environment that learners live in outside of their schools.

Chapter 3 described the research design and methodology, the research paradigm, the research process and the instruments that were used in the study. This was followed by sketching the context of the study, the sampling and site selection. The chapter concluded with methods of data collection and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presented and discussed the results of the study. Three dominant themes emerged from the responses to the questions posed to all participants and reflected learners' experience of violence at a township school within a specific context. These themes were:

- Lack of general safety and ineffectual classroom management;

- Community-induced violence;

- Gender related violence.

5.2   FINDINGS

The current study's empirical investigation found that the rate of violence at this particular school is high and pervasive; individual and focus group interviews with learners have shown that a significant number of learners have experienced some form of emotional violence while at school, and a significant number of these learners have either witnessed or been victims of school violence. Most people who committed these acts of violence are known to the victims, which reinforce the fact that the majority of violent acts are by classmates and/or fellow pupils.

The study also found that learners experienced a lack of safety and effective classroom management, which invariably led to their school environment being experienced as violent. This lack of effective management is linked to the lack of security within the school as learners at the school feel that security fencing that has holes, security gates that are left open, or security lights that are not working, are useless. Learners felt more vulnerable inside the classrooms and school premises which invariably led to them not experiencing the learning environment as effective and optimal. They feel that their classrooms and the school environment do not promote safety.

The current study found that school violence is a manifestation of gender inequality, and that boys are more often the perpetrators of school violence. It also found lack of safety and classroom management is another cause of violence. Another finding is that violent activities within the schools are a symptom of the social ills of the community within which the schools are situated.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

From the previous findings, several conclusions can be drawn:

School violence, and in this instance township school violence, has multiple reasons for its origin and cannot be attributed to one single theory or causal factor. From the evidence provided by the literature study, individual interviews, and focus group interviews, it is clear that schools, especially those within townships, are very often sites of widespread violence, and that violence has a definite psychological/emotional effect on the well-being of learners. Also there is evidence of gender-based violence as boy learners have been seen as perpetrators of this gender-based violence since they are involved in or implicated in instances of school violence. Classrooms, open grounds or playing fields and toilets are the sites of most violence at their school. From the participants' responses it can be concluded that there is a great need to intensify security measures within school premises to promote an effective environment of learning and teaching and therefore ensuring the right to education. With regard to school management, it was evident that educators show a lack of adequate classroom management skills and that there is a definite need for this within this specific community.

Throughout the interviews, it has been evident that the school reflects what is happening in its community. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the community has an influence on what is happening at school, and that the school is a mirror image of the community within which it is situated. These learners reflect these experiences of the community as such.

The experiences of these learners resonate with media reports on school violence, and could potentially extrapolate their experiences to other learners at large. This could possibly facilitate an understanding that learners are human beings with particular needs. Learners are also a vulnerable group at risk of feeling demotivated and thus leave school to join gangs.

This study highlights the need for further research on the phenomenon of the escalating school violence, especially within a specific context. These further studies could possibly include comparative case studies of learners' experiences (of violence) in other school environments (not necessarily the township).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Learners' experiences of school violence highlight the need for a systemic and developmental approach to violence at school. Rather than focusing on individual aspects of the school or environment, it is suggested that a "whole school" integrated approach be taken when dealing with violence in schools. It has also been clear that the role of other departments (such as the police**)** other than the Education Department is needed. The school as an institution consists of several components, all of which are interdependent: Learners, educators, principals, school management teams, school governing bodies and parents. All these components interact within the greater system of the home and community. By dealing with all these aspects of the system violence will be understood better, be reduced and eventually be eradicated.

In light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

5.4.1 Understanding what leads to violence and its specific manifestations is a first step to prevent school violence. Knowledge of a phenomenon and its specific manifestations is cardinal in understanding the experience thereof by learners. Linked to this is understanding the specific developmental stage that learners are in and how they experience violence. Continued Professional Development (CPD) of educators through workshops may address this specific aspect.

5.4.2 Schools function within specific communities and getting local community initiatives to assist is important in making such assistance legitimate. In this specific context, the Education Department's Specialised Learner and Educator Support teams (SLES) can invite organizations like the Cape Town Drug Centre to offer information and workshops on the dangers of drug abuse. Furthermore, organizations such as *Ilitha Labantu* correctional services, and other organizations that deal with crime and related behaviour problems may also contribute to a situation where all learners will be engaged in positive behaviour programmes and counselling. This can be done on a monthly or quarterly basis, based on the availability of the support personnel mentioned above.

5.4.3 Boys, it has been found in this context, are more often the perpetrators of school violence. To address this, programmes may be developed, in consultation with professionals from the EMDC that will expose these boys to skills training in problem solving and conflict management programmes which specifically address these gender issues.

5.4.4 Educator management skills training is a need for this specific school to assist in addressing the violence that goes on within the school and beyond its boundaries due to skills lacking, specifically at micro- and meso-level. It is strongly recommended that the management bodies at the school see to it that educators adhere to their class time-tables, as some of the violence happens inside the classrooms when lessons are supposed to be taking place. Educators not adhering to their lesson periods should be held accountable by the principal and the district office.

5.4.5 Safety measures (current and future) at school should be effective and in good working condition. It is recommended that the school writes a proposal to access funds through their safety officer from Safer Schools (a WCED initiative) working at the school, to buy metal detectors to be used by the *Bambanani* volunteers[1] for preventing dangerous weapons being brought onto the school premises. The school has been identified by the Safer Schools Project as one of the 109 high risk schools and therefore justifies requesting funds to address this problem. Furthermore, appointing more *Bambanani* security personnel at the school on a permanent basis for a quick response to any violence that may erupt at the school will be effectual. This initiative makes use of community members to ensure learners' safety and contributes towards community upliftment by employing local inhabitants.

5.4.6 Community leaders and interested parties should be invited to participate in problem-solving workshops at the school to address the phenomenon of violence within this specific context. By incorporating the community, the school therefore does not function in isolation.

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[1] *Bambanani* volunteers are the Departments of Community Safety and of Education's initiative. The volunteers are dispersed in all the high risks schools to curb violence.

5.4.7 Specialised Learner and Educator Support teams from the Department of Education should provide training for educators in effective classroom management and positive discipline. Training in the early identification of potential violence within a school is one such area which can be targeted and skills training may be provided.

5.4.8 That the school approach the local branch of the South African Police Service and liaise closely with them on several matters: create substance-free zones, and reduce the availability of weapons within the community and individual homes may be initial steps in this process.

5.5 FINAL WORD

During the research process, the researcher became aware that there is a lack of an integrated approach to address school violence beyond education. The role of government departments other than the Education Department has been alluded to throughout the interviews, especially in relation to the causes of school violence inside and outside the school environment that impact on learners while at school.

The researcher also became aware that the Western Cape Education Safer Schools Programme has targeted just over 100 High Risk Schools that are receiving security infrastructure, ranging from remote control gates with CCTV cameras and intercom systems in order to do evacuation and safety drills, to maintenance on broken fences and barbed wire depending on the need as identified by the safety committee. Fortunately this High School is one of those schools identified that will be receiving the security infrastructure. This study contributes towards the justification of such funding.

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APPENDIX A:
LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THE WCED

<table>
<tbody>
<tr><td>Navrae
Enquiries
IMibuzo</td><td>Dr RS Cornelissen</td></tr>
<tr><td>Telefoon
Telephone
IFoni</td><td>(021) 467-2286</td></tr>
<tr><td>Faks
Fax
IFeksi</td><td>(021) 425-7445</td></tr>
<tr><td>Verwysing
Reference
ISalathiso</td><td>20081212-0019</td></tr>
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Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Mrs Sheilia Ngqela-Sithole
45 O'Kiep Road
RONDEBOSCH EAST
7780

Dear Mrs S. Ngqela-Sithole

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE: A CASE STUDY IN A TOWNSHIP SCHOOL.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from 23rd March 2009 to 31st July 2009.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

for HEAD: EDUCATION
DATE: 23rd March 2009

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE / NCEDA UBHALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: http://wced.wcape.gov.za

INBELSENTRUM /CALL CENTRE
INDIENSNEMING- EN SALARISNAVRAE/EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY QUERIES ☎0861 92 33 22
VEILIGE SKOLE/SAFE SCHOOLS ☎ 0800 45 46 47

45 Okiep Street
Rondebosch East
7780
14 July 2008

The Head: Education
(For Attention: Director: Education Research)
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
Cape Town
8000

Dear Dr Cornelissen

RE: APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH IN WCED SCHOOLS

I am currently registered for the M.Ed in Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University, and have to completer a thesis as part of the requirements for the programme. The title of my intended research study is as follows:

"Exploring learner's experiences of school violence in a township High school"

As a school psychologist at the EMDC SOUTH, I would often be called to debrief learners because there has been a shootout, assaults or stabbings amongst learners. This behaviour has become a norm in the township schools, and with such a huge challenge in our schools, the question arises: what Intervention by educational psychologists would suit this situation and be perceived as meaningful?

I would like permission to conduct a qualitative research study (case study) during the third term of 2008 at Oscar Mpetha High School in Nyanga. This school has been a centre of numerous attacks previously with quite a number of gun shootings and knife stabbings incidences being reported at the EMDC. As part of the data collection process, I intend to interview 20 learners from grade 10 and 11.

All the information collected during the interviews will be ethically handled. The participants will be assured of anonymity and the research data will be treated as confidential.

Thank you for helping me to achieve my aims as this will also contribute to my own professional development.

You are welcomed to contact my supervisor, Dr Andrew Lewis at 082 874 6112, should you need more Information.

Yours faithfully
Sheilla Nozuko Ngqela

Supervisor: Dr. A. Lewis (Department of Educational Psychology) U.S

APPENDIX B:
LETTER OF PERMISSION APPROVAL
FROM THE SCHOOL

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Sir or Madam

RE: STUDY ON LEARNER'S EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

I am studying Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. My supervisor is Dr Andrew Lewis. I have written to the Western Cape Education Department for permission to conduct research in your school. This letter is written to get permission as well as support from the head of the school.

The purpose of this study is to understand the causes of school violence within a specific context and what can possibly be done by the WCED authorities to address this phenomenon. The findings will be used to recommend possible intervention strategies of addressing violence at schools.

I hope that this study will make a contribution across the different and various disciplines, as the problem around school violence has a social, psychological, and economic impact on the entire South African context.

Thank you for helping me to achieve my aims as this will contribute to nation building.

Yours faithfully

Sheilla Nozuko Ngqela

APPENDIX C:

LETTER OF EXPLANATION TO PARENTS

LETTER TO THE PARENTS

Bazali abathandekayo /Dear Parents

RE: LETTER OF EXPLANATION TO PARENTS ABOUT THE RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC: LEARNER'S EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

I am studying Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. My supervisor is Dr Andrew Lewis. I have written to the Western Cape Education Department for permission to conduct research at your child's school. This letter is written to get permission for your child to participate in the study.

The purpose of this study is to understand the causes of school violence within a specific context and what can possibly be done by the WCED authorities to address this phenomenon. The findings will be used to recommend possible intervention strategies of addressing violence at schools.

I hope that this study will make a contribution across the different and various disciplines, as the problem around school violence has a social, psychological, and economic impact on the entire South African context.

Thank you for helping me to achieve my aims as this will contribute to nation building.

Yours faithfully

Sheilla Nozuko Ngqela (student)

APPENDIX D:

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM PARENTS

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM PARENTS

INCWADI EVUMAYO UKWENZA UDLIWANO-NDLEBE NOMNTWANA WAKHO

I (mna) ... understands (ndiyakuqonda) the importance (ukubaluleka) of the research topic: (kwe risetshi):

"Learners' experience of school violence"

"Uziva njani okanye kwenzeka ntoni kuwe xa kusenzeka udlame esikolweni"

I give permission (ndinika imvume) for my son/ daughter (kunyana /intombi yam) to participate (ithathe inxaxheba).

Signature: ....

Date: ....

APPENDIX E:
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

- Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

- What makes you feel unsafe?

- Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

- What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

- Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

- What do you think make learners violent?

- Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

- How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

- Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

- Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?

APPENDIX F:
EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNER TRANSCRIPTS

Individual Interviews

Learner 1

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: Mhm ... so ... so ... not really.

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe or unhappy?

Learner: Well. It's actually things that are happening inside and outside the school yard. Here you just don't feel safe because of group fights between learners from our school and group of learners from other schools. Sometimes its groups from the community or other areas, if they feel like coming and fight they just come and unfortunately the Bambanani volunteers do not have guns to scare them, so it's easy for them to just walk into the school yard.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Yes, lots of violence takes place here, things like fighting between learners, talking rude and boys just kicking us without any reason. In this area, there are many groups of boys that threaten or intimidate us by forcefully robbing our cell-phones, monies. Some of them are from our school and some are boys around here who are friends with the ones at our school.

Researcher: Why?

Learner: I don't know Miss, maybe they are just frustrated.

Researcher: Frustrated about what?

Learner: Maybe they have also been bullied so they want revenge.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Yes, a lot, boys just kicking us for no reason, maybe he propose love to you and you do not accept, then they kick you. Some of them clap you, sometimes in front of a teacher.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Sexual abuse, bullying, teasing that I can think of. Oh. I forgot also fighting with scissors or knives that end up in stabbings.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Uh ... boys as usual.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: I think they see their older brothers at home or in the neighbourhood doing the same and they think it is right.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Anyone like boys or girls but mostly its girls, but sometimes the boys that are quiet.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: Fearful, sometimes not feeling like coming to school.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Educators must monitor those places that are dangerous, like the toilets, because they know that most of these fighting happen in the toilets. They must be searched at the gate for weapons. Those that commit violence must be punished.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes, what would you like to learn about in violence?

Learner: How to protect myself and where to go if I am victimized.

Individual Interviews

Learner 2

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: No - No at all, how can you feel safe here?

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe or unhappy?

Learner: Fights, gun fights inside and outside the school premises, sometimes police chase after criminals and they jump over the fence from outside to inside the school yard.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Oh yes Miss, only last week 2 learners were fighting in the toilets, in fact one was stabbed. I think there is no system in place like for instance learners are always left on their own in their classrooms, teachers that are suppose to come to class do not come and in that way its free time and this is what causes lots of problems in classes.

Researcher: Any other form?

Learner: Yes, these boys will forcefully propose love to us and if you reject his proposal, they just kick you or slap you.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Yes, because I was stopping another girl from teasing the other one, so this girl that was teasing wanted to fight with me.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Talking rudely, fighting with pens or scissors, kicking, slapping, sometimes teachers do that to learners or learners to teachers.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boys and girls. You know what, teachers are also perpetrators.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: Some of them are because where they come from is always street fights especially if they stay near the shebeens, but sometimes at their homes, their parents' fights, so they think there's nothing wrong in doing that.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Boys, especially the quiet ones or those who do their work or who wear their uniform full. Also girls shame, they are always victims. Not forgetting teachers, they are also victims of learners because learners sometimes come to school drunk or smoke marijuana.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: Uh ... I don't know, I feel like going and attending school in those better areas.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Police must be around the school premises quite often and search learners for weapons and drugs – and workshops should be held to teach us about the dangers of violence.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes what would you like to learn about in violence?

Learner: Yes, I would like to know what causes it and what I can do if I am a victim.

Learner 3

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: How can I feel safe here? Can you see there's a taxi rank just next to the fence and the fence has got holes because of them? In fact not only them but from people who want to cross to the other side and the shortcut is crossing through the school, and you also never know when these taxi drivers or gangs are going to fight, so how can I feel safe?

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe or unhappy?

Learner: You know what? Just outside the school fence people are selling drugs and these learners go and buy and when they are intoxicated, they come and disturb the class, start a fight with whomever.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Oh yes, it's a big problem - almost every day there are fights, I mean dangerous fights because learners are fighting with sharp objects

like knives, scissors and "incula" sometimes they bring guns to schools and you can't talk nonsense to that one. I think teachers are scared of disciplining learners because learners bring guns at school. Even if the teacher sees two learners fighting they just don't even stop the fight, they make as if they did not see, so learners take chances.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Yes, ooh ... it's so sensitive don't want to talk about it.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Sexual abuse from boy learners, stabbings, gun shootings, bullying, verbal abuse from educators and from learners.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boy learners, and educators who are verbally abusing us.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: I don't know, but I think sometimes it's the teachers, they can be very rude and insensitive when they talk to us, so maybe learners are modelling them and think it is right. Sometimes it is because they sell guns in the neighbourhood, so they will buy them to use the guns to rob during weekends and bring these guns to schools sometimes. Also drugs like marijuana or tik are easily available in the neighbourhood so they buy these drugs and smoke them inside the school toilets so that they can be brave to do anything wrong they have been thinking while sober.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Anyone can become a victim.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: I feel nervous, as a result I struggle to get the opportunity to study because I cannot study at home; it is too cramped. So this affects my studies, I mean I am in Grade 11 now, I need to have ample time to study.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Let there be no free periods at school because that's where the ... problem start, some learners take chances when there is no teacher in the classroom, they start fighting.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes what would you like to learn about in violence.

Learner: Certainly because some people think it is no violence to kick or slap a girl or anyone, they take it as a norm.

Learner 4

Researcher: Tell me do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: No, I don't feel safe here; this is not a safe area around this school.

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: Crime that is happening everyday in this area. Some days it's taxis fighting against each other, then police fire rubber shots and people start taking cover inside the school. Also can you see that fence? It was vandalised long time so it easy for people to make it their short cut to walk to the other side of the settlement.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school and why?

Learner: Yes Miss a lot - as I say sometimes members of gangs from the community fight and some of those members are learners at this school so when they see each other, they start fighting, shooting using guns. But also learners fight amongst themselves and you don't know the reason. Maybe they are in the toilets smoking and they start fighting. They skip the lessons and go and hang around the toilets.

Researcher: Have you ever been the victim of violence at your school and how?

Learner: Oh yes, it was part of initiation when I started my Grade 8, they demanded our lunch money from us and they forcefully took our money and we did not have lunch money for the 2 days until I fought with this grade 10 girl.

Researcher: What common forms of violence do you mostly experience at school?

Learner: Bullying, teasing, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, fighting, stabbings and gun shooting,

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boys and male educators also.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: Jealousy when they don't afford to get what they want like money, clothes, school uniform, school shoes etc. Sometimes you can see that there is no discipline back home, so how do you expect discipline from that learner?

Researcher: Who is likely to be the victim of this violence?

Learner: Boys, girls and educators.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school?

Learner: It makes me angry, fear for my life, sometimes I feel like leaving the school.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in and around the school?

Learner: The Principal and the teachers must monitor the toilets. Maybe there should be parents who monitor the toilets when learners go there.

Let there be armed response company that monitor inside and outside the school yard. Also promoting sport at school like building fields because we do not have sporting fields or equipment. If we can have that, we can spend time playing sport at school. Also have regular search for weapons. The government can deal with those people selling drugs (to learners).

Researcher: Would you like to know/learn more about violence?

Learner: Yes, maybe if we understand violence and its causes, we can try to curb it.

Learner 5

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at school?

Learner: Safe at this school? That's a dream. How many incidents have been happening at this school since I have been here? There is always break-ins every weekend, they break windows, steal the doors and door handles to sell, they also break the fence.

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: You don't know who is having a gun, knife inside your class. Or you don't know who belongs to a gang in the neighbourhood. Another thing, you don't know when these taxi people are going to fight because as you can see the back side of the fence is broken and when they fight it affects learners inside the school.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school and why?

Learner: Yes, I think I've already mentioned that learners are fighting, stabbing others with scissors or pens, there was also a shooting in 2006 and in 2007, one of our learners was shot by members of gangs from outside, but they shot him inside the school. I think there is no security system the Bambanani people cannot actually stop the violence because I doubt if they are trained and also they don't have guns even if they are attacked.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence and how?

Learner: Yes, I have also witnessed it.

Researcher: What common forms of violence do you normally witness at your school?

Learner: Stabbing, verbal abuse, fighting, using sharp objects, sometimes gun shooting although this does not happen frequently inside the school premises

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Gangs in the community and members of gangs inside school, learners and even teachers.

Researcher: What do you think makes learners violent?

Learner:	Accessibility to weapons, drugs, alcohol that is being sold around school premises.
Researcher:	Who is likely to be the victim of this violence?
Learner:	Anyone can be, I can't say who is likely.
Researcher:	How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school?
Learner:	Shoo! I become stressed and feel like changing school but I cannot because I will not have money to travel to a far school, not mentioning buying new uniform for another school.
Researcher:	Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in and around the school?
Learner:	Visibility of police around the school. Search for weapons when learners enter the gates.
Researcher:	Would you like to know/learn more about violence?
Learner:	I think so. Even if I'm not going to do anything but I need to be educated about it.

Learner 6

Researcher:	Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?
Learner:	No not just at school, in the classroom as well.
Researcher:	What makes you feel unsafe?
Learner:	The boys are bullying us by kicking us, stealing our belongings and once you confront him, he hits you and they know that nobody is going to say anything to them.
Researcher:	Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?
Learner:	Yes, there is violence taking place at my school like for instance if the learners had smoked dagga or tik, they become so bold to commit any kind of violence ranging from fighting using a pen or knife or verbal abuse. You know why? During break they sneak out of the school yard and go to the nearby houses to buy alcohol or drugs. Learners are always out of their classes because educators are not there, they do not attend their classes, but sometimes even if they are there, they hide in the toilets to smoke cigarette or dagga.
Researcher:	Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?
Learner:	Yes Miss, especially of verbal abuse.
Researcher:	What common forms of violence are happening at your school?
Learner:	Kicking, verbal abuse, slapping. I can also say stealing our pens, maths instruments, and our lunch money.
Researcher:	Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boys.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: It's because they are growing up in violent areas and they think it is ok to be violent. Sometimes it is the drugs that they buy in the community that they use that makes them violent.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: All of us, girls and boys.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: I feel like moving to a better area, where I will learn peacefully. I mean the violence affects my studies because if I know that I have a problem with a boy learner. I stay at home maybe for about three to four days, and that affect my studies.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Inside the school, there must be people that monitor/guard the toilets as some learners are violated in the toilets, and teachers always in their classrooms. Outside, I can say the Department of Education must erect electric fence and remote controlled gates there must be guards or caretakers always at the gates. Let no learner get out of the gates during lunch time.

Researcher: Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?

Learner: Yes.

Learner 7

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: No, I do not feel safe.

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: Violence everywhere, in the school premises, in the classrooms, toilets, even outside the school premises.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Of course yes, don't you read in the paper? There are gangs here in New Crossroad and they fight against the gang that is here in Nyanga. Now there are learners here at school that belong to both of those gangs, can you imagine what's going to happen? There's always knife stabbings here at school, they sometimes happen inside the classrooms so we always run for our life, mind you, you are not safe even outside the classroom. I think the gates must be manned by strong people like security guards so that they are unable to get inside the school yard.

Researcher:	Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?
Learner:	Yes, I had a conflict with one of the grade 11 learner, she told one of her bold friend to come and confront me, we ended up fighting and I was so angry because I felt I was victimized. I reported to the safety support officer and we sort of resolved it.
Researcher:	What common forms of violence are happening at your school?
Learner:	Assault, name calling, knife stabbings, gun shooting and sexual abuse.
Researcher:	Who are the perpetrators of this violence?
Learner:	Boys and sometimes girls.
Researcher:	What do you think make learners violent?
Learner:	I think it's the communities that they come from, but also drugs that are easily available to them. I also think they are modelling a wrong behaviour from their friends.
Researcher:	Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?
Learner:	Both boys and girls.
Researcher:	How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?
Learner:	Can you believe that four of my classmates belong to one of the (izikrelemnqa) gang group? It is so sickening that you live in fear in your neighbourhood and also inside your classroom. We know that some of the community leaders that were killed a year ago, they are involved. Benza ngathi ngathi ngabantwana besikolo kanti ngootsotsi bakudala. Siyayazi kaloku ukuba babaleka isigwebo esikhulu ukuba baye bathi abangobantwana besikolo. (We know that they hide behind the school uniform as if they are serious about school, while they are running away from a long sentence).
Researcher:	Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?
Learner:	The Department or the school must employ security guards to man the gates and deal with perpetrators and anyone who is a perpetrator must be punished, they must make examples with 1 learner so that no one repeats the violent behaviour.
Researcher:	Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?
Learner:	Oh yes, let us have the skills to deal with violent behaviour.

Learner 8

Researcher:	Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?
Learner:	No, what is safe here?
Researcher:	What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: Everything in and around here. Just go around and search those boys in their classrooms and tell me if you're going to ask the same question.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Yes Miss, everyday there are fights either in the field or classroom, its either they stab each other with a pen or any sharp object like (incula) sometimes just fist fight that end up being a gun fight. I don't know really why but I think some of the learners have brothers that are taxi owners so they get these guns from them or they can't cope with books or subjects so they rather find something else to do.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Yes.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Sexual harassment, assault, verbal abuse, stabbings (this is an everyday thing).

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: It's mostly the boys (here at school) that come from new Crossroad and from Barcelona also ...

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: It's drugs they are smoking inside the school premises. I think the influence from the community. Poverty is one of the things that I can think of because they are angry about their situation.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Educators, other boys and girls.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: Frustrated, I don't want to come to school. Sometimes it takes a couple of days like three days then we cannot come to school. I mean my work lag behind because I am in Grade 11 now. It will affect my results at the end of the year.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: The police must be visible, they must also talk with the community about these shebeens. Police and community leaders must track down all the houses that sell drugs around the school because during break time learners just go and buy drugs in the nearby houses. After break they become violent or some sleep while the teacher is busy teaching.

Researcher: Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?

Learner: Yes, maybe we can teach each other about violence.

Learner 9

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: No it is not safe here, what do you mean by saying safe?

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: Here at school we are treated like we're not human beings, we're not respected by other learners, the area itself is not right.

Researcher: What is happening and what are they doing?

Learner: They are fighting amongst each other, and they engage in violent crimes like stabbing each other, abusing us physically and sexually.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Yes, assaulting with weapons, verbal abuse, drug use, disgraceful behaviour, I don't know maybe they are copying all this behaviour from people around.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Oh yes, verbal abuse and assault.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Assault with weapon, possession of sharp weapons, sexual abuse, drug use.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Learners and sometimes educators.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: I think it is how they have been brought up in their homes and also copying the behaviour from the people in their communities.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Learners and educators.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: Frightening because you don't know whether you will be the next victim. I feel like leaving the school and look for a better school where there is less violence but unfortunately my parents do not have the money to take me to a better school. At the end of the day my studies suffer because you don't know what will happen next.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Let the department build facilities like gymnasium, field for playing soccer and netball and all other sporting codes at school. If we can start debating societies here at school with other neighbouring schools.

Researcher: Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?

Learner: Yes, we need to learn more about violence and be taught how to protect ourselves.

Learner 10

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: No.

Researcher: What makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: It's all the things happening at this school. One learner was stabbed inside the premises, his perpetrators from a nearby school jumped the fence and stabbed him at the back. Two years ago three learners fought in class over a pen, but that erupted causing a big fight, this caused some of those learners moving from this area, but were followed and stabbed to death.

Researcher: Is there any violence taking place at your school or is violence a problem at your school and why is that?

Learner: Yes Miss, like fighting but ending up in gun shooting or fatal stabbing most of the time. I think there should be a policy here at school that states clearly that any learner fighting will be suspended it's because they know that nothing will happen to them. How many cases of perpetrators go unpunished? Maybe if the school can be strict on that maybe some will stop all this nonsense.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim of violence at your school?

Learner: Yes, in the sense that I stay in the Kosovo area, there are gangs coming from that area, so by virtue of me staying in that area I was a victim from the gang coming from New Crossroad. Most learners at school come from these areas.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Assault, kicking and stabbings.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boy learners at school, sometimes members of gangs from the surrounding schools.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: Easy accessibility to drugs, and weapons. Most of the times it is what is happening at their homes, so they model that.

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Boys and girls and sometimes educators.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner:	Angry, frustrated, to be honest with you I deliberately stay absent from school because ...
Researcher:	Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?
Learner:	Soccer fields in the community, visibility of police, frequent search of learners when they enter school premises.
Researcher:	Do you feel it is important to understand violence and the causes thereof?
Learner:	Yes.

Learner 11

Researcher:	Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?
Learner:	Not always.
Researcher:	What makes you feel unsafe?
Learner:	Violence that sometimes happen inside the school premises
Researcher:	Where inside the school premises? Do you want to be specific?
Learner:	Anywhere, sometimes inside the classes, sometimes in the toilets and on the playground as well.
Researcher:	How often does violence take place at your school or is violence a problem at your school tell me more about that?
Learner:	I don't think 2 months can pass without any violence taking place here at school. And it's mostly learner on learner violence.
Researcher:	The violence you are talking about, is it serious violence?
Learner:	Sometimes it does start as a petty thing but it end up being very serious and involves friends of either the victim or the perpetrator.
Researcher:	Have you ever been a victim or have you experienced any violence at your school?
Learner:	No I won't lie I, have only witnessed it.
Researcher:	What common forms of violence are happening at your school?
Learner:	Stabbings, verbal abuse.
Researcher:	Who are the perpetrators of this violence?
Learner:	Boy learners.
Researcher:	What do you think make learners violent?
Learner:	There is violence everywhere, on TV, community, at home, that is why learners are so violent.
Researcher:	Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?
Learner:	It's mostly girls but boys also.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: I feel frustrated, angry and feel like leaving this school.

Researcher: To go where?

Learner: To another school where there is no violence.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Police must always be around, and teachers must manage the classrooms by being in class because sometimes these fights happen when there is no teacher around or in the classes.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes what would you like to learn about in violence, where would you like to learn about violence and who do you think must teach you about violence?

Learner: I want to learn about everything concerning violence, it must be compulsory in one of the learning areas.

Researcher: Who must teach it?

Learner: Educators ... .

Learner 12

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner: What do you mean feel safe?

Researcher: What I mean is "do you feel your school is a safe place to be"?

Learner: I can't say that.

Researcher: Why? Tell me more.

Learner: There are sometimes fights.

Researcher: Who is fighting?

Learner: Learners fighting with other learners.

Researcher: In this case is it learners from your school?

Learner: Yes, but sometimes it is gang fights in the community where the other one (maybe who is not from our school) invite his gang friends to come and attack a learner from our school (maybe they had a fight in their place of stay) then the fights start like that. ...

Researcher: So, what makes you feel unsafe?

Learner: Exactly these fights, you become scared that maybe you might get caught up ... .

Researcher: How often does violence take place at your school or is violence a problem at your school tell me more about that?

Learner: I can't say how often but there are always fights here at school.

Researcher: The violence you are talking about, is it serious violence?

Learner: What do you mean by serious because some learners end up in clinics or hospitals.

Researcher: What warrants them to end up in hospital?

Learner; It's because a learner is sometimes stabbed by another learner.

Researcher: Have you ever been a victim or have you experienced any violence at your school?

Learner: No.

Researcher: What common forms of violence are happening at your school?

Learner: Stabbings, bullying, verbal abuse.

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?

Learner: Boys.

Researcher: What do you think make learners violent?

Learner: I don't know, is it not because they are sometimes bullied or think they have power more than others?

Researcher: I don't know either.

Learner: Oh maybe they are angry because of their circumstances and now they project this to others?

Researcher: Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?

Learner: Boys and girls but mostly boys.

Researcher: How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?

Learner: I become angry and frustrated.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: Let us learn about violence in our subjects, so that we understand how dangerous it is.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes what would you like to learn about in violence where would you like to learn about violence and whom do you think must teach you about violence?

Learner: Yes, I said we must learn about it at school.

Researcher: Who must teach it?

Learner: Teachers or safety officers ... .

Learner 13

Researcher: Tell me, do you feel safe at your school?

Learner:	Yes or no.
Researcher:	What do you mean by yes or no?
Learner	It is because it's not always safe.
Researcher:	What would make it unsafe?
Learner:	Violence that sometimes happens whether its outside or inside the school premises.
Researcher:	Where inside the school premises? Do you want to be specific?
Learner:	Anywhere, inside the classes, in the grounds sometimes in the toilets.
Researcher:	How often does violence take place at your school or is violence a problem at your school tell me more about that?
Learner:	Am not sure, what can I say? Not often.
Researcher:	The violence you are talking about, is it serious violence?
Learner:	Sometimes serious sometimes not. I don't know whether you regard harassment as serious or not because to me it is serious.
Researcher:	Do you want to tell me more about harassment? If you don't want it is still fine, or anything that you regard or think is violence?
Learner:	Harassment is harassment.
Researcher:	Who are harassing by the way?
Learner:	Boys.
Researcher:	Have you ever been a victim or have you experienced any violence at your school?
Learner:	Yes.
Researcher:	What common forms of violence are happening at your school?
Learner:	Sexual abuse, threats, there's also stabbings.
Researcher:	Who are the perpetrators of this violence?
Learner:	Boy learners.
Researcher:	What do you think make learners violent?
Learner:	I wouldn't know but I think it is how they were brought up or they come from an environment where there is lots of violence, I don't know really.
Researcher:	Who is likely to be a victim of this violence?
Learner:	Both girls and boys.
Researcher:	How do you feel when there is violence happening at or around your school? What does this violence do to you as a person?
Learner:	I fear, feel threatened and frustrated.
Researcher:	And then?

Learner: Don't want to come to this school but I don't have a choice I must come.

Researcher: Is there anything that you can think of that can be done to prevent violence in/around your school?

Learner: I can say there must be security guards around the school, inside, I think there need to be teachers every time in the classes.

Researcher: Do you like to learn about violence? If yes, what would you like to learn about in violence where would you like to learn about violence and whom do you think must teach you about violence

Learner: Yebo, I want to learn about everything about violence, at school please so that we're all informed. Maybe the police are the best people to teach us about violence.

APPENDIX G:

EXAMPLES OF FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS

Focus Group

Umbuzi:	Like, uh ... I see iquestion endiye ndifun' ukubuza ukubana do you feel safe apha eskolweni, [do you feel safe at school]? ... Ndumiso ngobani abafilisha safe? ... ngobani abangafilishi safe? ... So it seems like most of you do not feel safe at all.
Learners:	Yhee ... yes.
Umbuzi:	Uh, are there reasons mhlawumbi that you can tell me of that make you not to feel safe at school?
Learner:	[Ewe yhu zininzi]
Umbuzi:	Sure ... okay ... hmm zitshoni kaloku ...
Learner:	[Abafundi abalwayo, abahlabanayo apha eziklasini okanye ezi toilet ngazo zonke izinto ezibukhali sometimes kulwa ono taxi from apha erenkini woyike because awuyazi ukuba ingaphumela apha esikolweni isichaphazele. Ingaske kubekho I security guard.
Learner:	You find intobana mhlawumbi ikhona i security guard egeytini but because zinintsi indawo zokungena and ayikwazi ukubona ezinye iindawo as we are saying in other words ezisecurity okanye amapolisa, they are not ... they are not watching in all places abantwana beskolo ba stout ukuba ababoni mntu bayalwa ... (We wish there could be security guards or police that are always visible)
Umbuzi:	Oh injalo?
Learner:	[Exactly]
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm.
Learner:	[Akavakali]
Umbuzi:	So in other words you say iilearners esikolweni are not safe some bring weapons, banezixhobo they are ... you know ... they are ... having ii iweapons? ...
Learners:	Yes.
Umbuzi:	ingaba yenzeka qho? ...
Learners:	Haaa ... ibakhona lomini ayibikho oko qho.
Umbuzi:	Okay ... okay ... oh right ... okay ... fine, someone else, uh ... uh ...
Learner:	Mhlawumbi xa kwenzeke into like ngoku bekuhlatywe umntwana apha e Esikolweni. ...
Umbuzi:	Bekuhlatywe umntwana where, where was it, was a boy?
Learners:	Yes.
Umbuzi:	Where was he stabbed ... inside the school?
Learners:	E-toilet.
Umbuzi:	In the toilet?

Learners: Yes. We wish there could always be teachers in the classrooms, b

because if they are not there, learners start to make noise and

some start fighting.

Umbuzi: I can't believe it! Who, who stabbed that boy?

Learner: A learner.

Umbuzi: Was it a learner from your school?

Learners: Yes.

Umbuzi: Okay ... do you have full information yobana bahlabene, do you think baxabene outside kwipremisi okanye was it a fight that was inside the classroom?

Learner: Baxabana eklasini kuba kaloku kwakungekho titshala asiyazi nathi ukuba ibiqalele phi (They started fighting inside the classroom, we do not know how it started; what we know is that there was no teacher in the class).

Umbuzi: Uh huh?

Learner: [Ewe kaloku abafundi bathatha I chance phofu ke apha esikolweni akoyikwa notitshala]

Umbuzi: Yhu ... so ithethi uthi ikhona this kind of violence as we are saying ... do you think istabbing siright ziyenzeka, ziyenzeka ngaphezu kwayo neziphi na ezinye I kinds of violence ... i-kinds of violence, let's hear apha kuni into kubana yeyiphi ikind ye violence eni ... eniyi experiyesayo?

[Silence]

Learner: Ndizakuthi ne abuse in sex, sexual, verbally and other ways ... ixhaphakile seyide yaqheleka ukumitha kwabantwana and sometimes ne ... neetitshala indlela athagetha ngayo thina bafundi. ... [I can say sexual abuse is very rife here at school, I mean between learners and educators]

Umbuzi: Sure ... sure ... ne abuse ne? okay ... hmm ... masingangxoli kaloku ... hmm ... ee ... ee em yha alright. [Please can we keep quiet]?

Learner: Enye into ... eyesibini ... abanye ke mhlawumbi bayibona ukubangaba si status into yokulala no titshala [to sleep with the teacher] utitshala ... but one ... another thing we are getting involved. [Another thing is that learners see it as a status to have a love affair with an educator.]

Umbuzi: So benithe neverbal abuse amongst learners ininzi?. Hmm, sure, okay, alright. Sure, sure sure. Okay, do, do you think that when it happens where learners ziba involve no titshala ... ngobani aba advansayo ngotitshala who are advancing to learners ... so ke ngutitshala ogqulayo? [When learners have these relationships with educators, who are making the advances]?
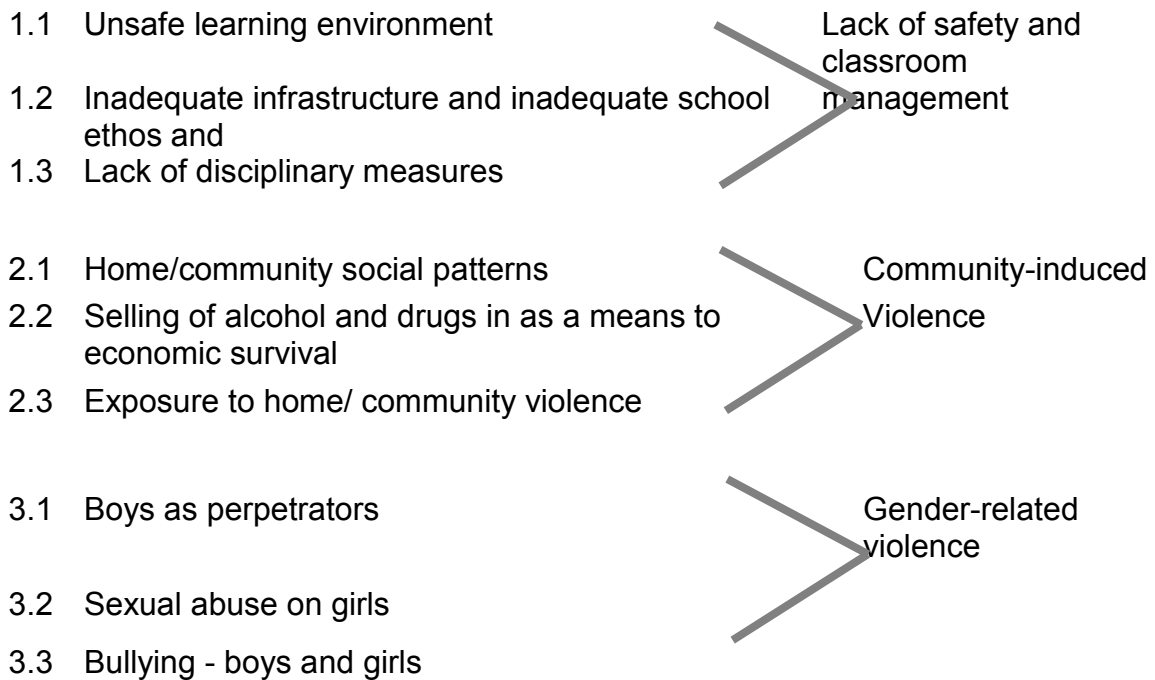
Learners:	(*Shouting*) ngotitshala. Educators!!
Umbuzi:	Okay, fine no fine ee ... ngutitshala ogqulayo and then do you think ababantwana bajola nabo otitshala bayazenza because bayazixelela ndijola notitshala okanye because ootitshara ndiqond'ukubana you alright ukubana ma, ma mawumvume uyaqonda ikho int'obana uqond'uba ndonqena ... utitshala uba andimvumanga mhlawumbi uzanditshonisa okanye ... tell me, tell me? [The educator advances and those learners that are in those 'love relationships' are scared not to engage in them because they don't want to be failed. Tell me.]
Learner:	Injalo kanye abafuni ukutshona enye into utitshala unxiba kakhle [Its like that, learners don't want to fail and sometimes because they like the fact that the educator dresses smartly].
Umbuzi:	Hmm, okay, okay utitshala unxiba kakhle, umhu ... that is nice lento sitshoyo, handsome, yhu! [Oh, because the educator dresses smartly]?
Learners:	*(Laughing)*
Umbuzi:	Okay, anyone, anyone who want to say something?
Learner:	Soyika ukutshoniswa okanye ... [We're scared of being failed] ...
Umbuzi:	Hmm, ... mhu ... ukhona umntu obe phakamisleyo hmm, hmm, okay mhu ... okay, okay ... bendibuzukuba zeziphi ezinye icommon forms of iviolence, ... ezi fumanekayo ... other than I sexual ne verbal abuse that are happening apha esikolweni senu ezinye forms ndivile lena yokuhlabana ne, stabbing and then kubekho le ye-abuse,and verbal uKhaya athethe ngayo, and then kubekho ne-abuse, sexual abuse ayaqonda that is now, is it teachers to learners? Am I hearing that ...
Learner:	*(It's learners to other learners or teachers to learners)*
Umbuzi:	abantwana bangama boys ... ngabantwana bodwa ayikho enye I abuse eniyifumanayo?
Learner:	Ikhona like aku proposer nge force ...
Umbuzi:	Zeziphi iikinds of violence eziqhubekayo aph'eskolweni?
Learner:	Smoking dagga or I tik.
Umbuzi:	Ingaba ixhaphakile I dagga or I tik?
Learner:	Kakhulu.
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, so okay zeziph'ezinye? (What are the other kinds of violence that you experience)?
Learner:	yi-bullying. (Bullying)
Umbuzi:	Yibullying, okay masimameleni. (Okay let us listen)
Learner:	[Akavakali]
Umbuzi:	Does it happen to iboys or girls okanye girls?
Learner:	Both boys and girls.

Umbuzi:	Sure, hmm, hmm, hmm, interesting yazi ... ee.
Umbuzi:	So yi-bullying bayabhulisha?
Learner:	Yi bullying and verbal abuse mhlawumbi ufumaniske ukuba ... (*Laughing*) ... like aph'eskolweni namhlanje.unxibe isihlangu or I teki enegama bakuthuke ngaso bathi yi fake ... or livovo ...
Umbuzi:	Okay yintoni abayenzayo i ... okay (is that what they are doing)? ...
Learner:	[bayakukhwaza kaloku bekuthuka] They shout at you calling you names.
Umbuzi:	Okay, so in other words ibullying or verbal abuse is so much ...
Learners:	Yes.
Umbuzi:	Sure, hmm, sure, hmm, hmm, sharp buti Hmm, uh, hmm, interesting, thanks.
Learner:	Ukubizwa ngamagama ... (name calling)
Umbuzi:	Name calling. Uh, uh ...
Learner:	[ewe] Yes.
Umbuzi:	Uh, hmm, hmm, where do abuse, verbal abuse by teachers or by a teacher, where do abuse by a teacher, ngubani owakhe wa-abuswer?
Learner:	[bakhona baninzi]
Umbuzi:	Why, why, what makes learners violent?
Learner:	I think yi-anger.
Umbuzi:	Yi anger ne, hmm, hmm, sure, you think its all about anger?
Learner:	Yeah!
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, sure.
Learner:	So omnye mhlawumbi ... usuka nayo endlini I anger or oku kulwa.
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, like ukopa into eyenziwa endlini?.
Umbuzi:	Hmm, okay thanks for that ...
Learner:	iAnger yabo like isuke mhlawumbi kulondawo esuka nayo kokwabo xa efika apha esikolweni akafuni ukuzibonakalisa ukuba ulala engatyanga ufik'azenze bhetele kuba ugquma lant'ukuba mhlawumbi umama wakhe uyasokola.
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, so i-anger yenziwa yi-poverty, most of the time uyaqonda,ukuba kufuneka siyazi? ...
Learner:	[yes]
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, it's interesting ...
Learner:	.. mhlawumbi yintombazana igezele enye intombazana ... into zininzi **...**
Learner:	... umhlawumbi mhlawumbi omnye sube elele engatyanga kokwabo aphinde axhome uyabona. (*Laughing*)

Umbuzi:	Nantoni enye?
Learner:	Yi peer pressure.
Umbuzi:	Yi peer pressure ne?
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm, yipeer pressure (It's peer pressure) yonke goes back, peer pressure because you want u, u-azidentifaya, (because you want to identify yourself with a certain group).
Learner:	[That's the problem; people want to identify themselves with certain groups in the community ne group yalapha ekuhlaleni or igroup egezayo eyoyikwayo apha esikolweni].
Umbuzi:	Ohayo bo! Isekhona into ye groups/gangs esikolweni? (Oh, do you have gangsters even at school)?
Learner:	[ininzi ukufa] Yes.
Umbuzi:	So yenza ntoni le group or izibonakalisa ngantoni? (How do they identify themselves?)
Learner:	[Batshaya ii drugs bazithengise nokuzithengisa baphathe nee guns] They smoke drugs and sell guns.
Umbuzi:	Sshe bathini ke mhlawumbi xa betshayile or bazithini ezo guns? ...
Learner:	benza izinto mhlawumbi abangaqhelanga ukuzenza abanye bayalala apha eklasini bathuke ootitshala nabantawna beklasi balwe.
Umbuzi:	Hmm, hmm; so idrugs zibenzisa izinto abangaqhelanga kuzenza. Bazithatha phi ezi drugs nee guns? (Where do they get these guns?)
Learners:	Apha ekuhlaleni kaloku abanye zithengiswa komawabo (in the community/neighbourhood or drugs are sold in their own homes).
Umbuzi:	Yhu!
Umbuzi:	So I community inegalelo kwisimilo esivezwa ngabanye abafundi apha esikolweni.
Learner:	[Kakhulu kaloku bathi nabo bayasokola yindlela abaziphilisa ngayo].
Umbuzi:	Oh! But then what I was saying ... [ke ngoku], ... how do you feel about like being violated aphana esikolweni, its very important ubana how do you feel uyaqonda, that is very important ubana, niye nibenjani?, yintoni efika kuwe and all that?
Learner:	[fearful, threatened, andifuni nokuxoka indenza ndonqene nokuza apha esikolweni] I don't want to lie, I don't feel like coming to school.
Umbuzi:	So inonqenisa isikolo nhe? Does it make you lazy to come to school? ...
Learner:	u doje uye kwi boyfriend yakho or uye kwi girlfriend yakho [I must say I get a chance of going to see my boyfriend, some of us to our girlfriends.]
Umbuzi:	Where, where okanye mhlawumbi wena uxolela u uku-abuswa(er) sexually. So you don't mind being abused?

Learner: Yes infact its either kukho I homework ndonqene ukuyenza or sometimes I project ndingayenzi because andikwazanga mhlawumbi ukuya e library uyokufuna I information because ndiyoyika ukubethwa. Yenza ntoni ke loonto ndingabinazi marks zaloo subject or subjects. Ekugqibeleni ke phofu ndi feyilishe. [You know what? Sometimes there is a homework that I cannot do maybe I am supposed to get the information at the library I cannot go because I am scared. At the end of the day it leaves me without marks for certain subjects and maybe I end up failing].

CODING

1.1   Unsafe learning environment   Lack of safety and
                                                   classroom
1.2   Inadequate infrastructure and inadequate school   management
      ethos and
1.3   Lack of disciplinary measures

2.1   Home/community social patterns   Community-induced
2.2   Selling of alcohol and drugs in as a means to   Violence
      economic survival
2.3   Exposure to home/ community violence

3.1   Boys as perpetrators   Gender-related
                                                   violence

3.2   Sexual abuse on girls

3.3   Bullying - boys and girls

Yellow: Lack of safety and classroom management

Green: Community-induced violence

Red: Gender-related violence

L4:   The Principal and the teachers must monitor the toilets. Maybe

L7: Let there be no free periods at school because that's where the problem start, some learners take chances when there is no teacher in the classroom.

L6:   Erect electric fence and remote controlled gates there must be guards or caretakers always at the gates. Let no learner get out of the gates during lunch time.

L2:   Police must be around the school premises quite often and search learners for weapons and drugs. Also workshops to teach us about dangers of violence.

L2: Oh yea teacher, only last week 2 learners were fighting in the toilets. I think there is no system in place like for instance, learners are always left on their own in the classrooms, teachers that are suppose to come to class do not come and in that way its free time and this is what causes lots of problems in classes.

L5:   Because as you can see the back side of the fence is broken and when they fight it affects learners inside the school.

L10: Easy accessibility to drugs, and weapons. Most of the times it is what is happening at their homes, so they model that.

L6:   It's because they are growing up in violent areas and they think it is ok to be violent. Sometimes it is the drugs that they buy in the community that they use that makes them violent.

L3:   Sometimes it is because they sell guns in the neighbourhood, so they will buy them to use the guns to rob during

L8:   It's drugs they are smoking inside the school premises. I think the influence from the community.

L2: Yes, these boys just forcefully propose love to us and if you reject his proposal, they just kick you or slap you.

L1: Boys just kicking us without any reason. In this area, there are many groups of boys that threaten us or intimidate us by forcefully robbing our cellphones.

L3: Sexual abuse from boy learners, stabbings, bullying, verbal abuse,,,,

Researcher: Who are the perpetrators of this violence?
Learners: It's mostly the boys [focus group]