The Dynamics of Violence in Schools in South Africa

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The Dynamics of Violence in South African schools: Report

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HSY style

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When children are trained, they learn how to train others in turn. Children who are lectured to, learn how to lecture; if they are admonished, they learn how to admonish; if scolded, they learn how to scold; if ridiculed, they learn how to ridicule; if humiliated, they learn how to humiliate; if their psyche is killed, they will learn how to kill … (Miller 1987:98).

A Newcastle school principal has been suspended with immediate effect after he allegedly repeatedly punched and struck a teacher with a home-made knife in full view of teachers and learners at the school yesterday morning … (provincial) Spokesman Muzi Mahlambi said, "The Head of Department has just handed a letter of suspension to the principal. We cannot be urging our learners not to carry weapons to school while teachers, especially the principal, are guilty of just that" … (the teacher said that) the principal assaulted him for his late arrival at work the previous day (*The Mercury* 27/4/2012).

1. Introduction

The scourge of violence in South African schools is cause for concern; daily reports appear in the written and electronic media about high levels of violence, physical and sexual abuse, and gang-related activities in our schools. Carrying knives, guns and other weapons has become part of daily school life. These incidents underline the extent of violence and crime we experience in our communities, which generally impacts negatively on education and what happens in the school in particular.

During the process of data collection for this study, two learners died on school premises in two unrelated incidents. The *Eye Witness News* (01 March 2012) reported that a 16-year-old boy was killed at Beauvallon Secondary School in Valhalla Park, Western Cape. The learner was stabbed by another learner during break time. Three others were wounded. Two learners fled the scene and a third one was treated on the school grounds. In another incident *The Citizen* (02 March 2012) reported that an 18-year-old boy was stabbed once in the neck and died outside the school gates of Vorentoe High School in Auckland Park, Johannesburg, allegedly in a fight over a ball.

Schools are supposed to have in place policies and a learner code of conduct to deter violent behaviour. These school policies and the learner code of conduct are meant, among other things, to impede the use of drugs or any intoxicating substance, the carrying of weapons or any sharp objects, the use of violent or vulgar language, and also to discourage threats against persons or their property. Despite the existence of such policies, violence, physical and sexual abuse, and gang activities are still the order of the day in many South African schools. This study is not only exploring the problem in South Africa within a wider international context but is also suggesting some underlying reasons for the prevalence of violence in South African schools and what might be done to improve the situation.

1.1   Violence

In this report "violence" is understood in the direct manner as indicated by the Gulbenkian Foundation's Commission on Children and Violence – "Violence is defined as behaviour by people against people liable to cause physical or psychological harm (1995:4)." The World Health Organisation further defines violence as:

> The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood or resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (WHO 2002:5).

It is also the understanding of this report that the basis of violence is social rather than genetic or biological, and therefore there are ways and means of reducing human violence. The authoritative 1986 Seville Statement on Violence signed by twenty scientists from such fields as animal behaviour, psychology, sociology, neurophysiology, genetics, and biochemistry – adopted by UNESCO in 1989 – rejected a biological basis to human violence and war altogether. They argued that biological explanations had been misused to justify violence, for example, that the theory of evolution had been used to justify not only war but also genocide, colonialism, and suppression of the weak. They stated their position in the form of five propositions (which are more elaborated in the original):

- It is scientifically incorrect to say that we have inherited a tendency to make war from our animal ancestors.

- It is scientifically incorrect to say that war or any other violent behaviour is genetically programmed into our human nature.

- It is scientifically incorrect to say that in the course of human evolution there has been a selection for aggressive behaviour more than other kinds of behaviour.

- It is scientifically incorrect to say that humans have a "violent brain".

- It is scientifically incorrect to say that war is caused by "instinct" or any single motivation.

They concluded that "biology does not condemn humanity to war … just as 'wars begin in the minds of men', peace also begins in our minds" (UNESCO 1989).

However, it is still the case that "regrettably crime and violence in South Africa are a way of life" (Le Roux & Mokhele 2011:318).

Reading the daily newspapers in South Africa for the duration of a week would be enough to convince anyone of this, but moreover would a simple but stark comparison between South Africa's (reduced) murder rate of 15,940 (www.saps.gov.za/statistics) in 2012 and that of the UK, with a larger population, of 619 (www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jan/20/mu) for the same year. In February 2007, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation was contracted by the South African government to carry out a study on the nature of crime in South Africa. The study concluded that the country is exposed to high levels of violence as a result of different factors, including:

- The normalisation of violence. Violence comes to be seen as a necessary and justified means of resolving conflict, and males believe that coercive sexual behaviour against women is legitimate.

- The reliance on a criminal justice system that is mired in many issues, including inefficiency and corruption.

- A subculture of violence and criminality, ranging from individual criminals who rape or rob to informal groups or more formalised gangs. Those involved in the subculture are engaged in criminal careers and commonly use firearms, with the exception of the Western Cape where knife violence is more prevalent. Credibility within this subculture is related to the readiness to resort to extreme violence.

- The vulnerability of young people linked to inadequate child rearing and poor youth socialisation. As a result of poverty, unstable living arrangements and being brought up with inconsistent and uncaring parenting, some South African children are exposed to risk factors which enhance the chances that they will become involved in criminality and violence.

- The high levels of inequality, poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and marginalisation. (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation 2009)

While, as suggested above, violent crime in South Africa seems to have been reduced in recent years (www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/africa–9/9/2010), it seems to remain at a high level internationally. Moreover, violent xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa have become a regular phenomenon in recent years (Neocosmos 2010). The high levels of violence in South Africa could be attributed to the violent legacy of apartheid, which involved not only gross economic and political inequality but also social dislocation caused by the physical removal of entire communities, violent repression by the apartheid state unavoidably resulting in violent resistance to it, the widespread availability of guns, and the perpetuation of patriarchal values and behaviours.

Furthermore, South Africa, as the above suggests, is as a result also marked by continuing "structural violence", that is the existence of oppressive and unequal socioeconomic and political relationships (Galtung 1975). So that, despite a relatively strong performance in respect of economic growth since 1994, South Africa still has one of the most unequal societies in the world with between 45% and 55% of the population categorised as poor and between 20% and 25% living in extreme poverty, According to McGrath and Akooje there are spatial, racial and gender dimensions to this poverty (2007:422/3). In reply to a parliamentary question which expressed concern that South Africa's Gini coefficient (a way of measuring economic inequality in societies) was the world's worst, the President of South Africa acknowledged that the benefits of economic growth at present "go disproportionately to the richest ten percent of households" (*Business Report* 29/11/2011 www.iol.co.za). Interestingly, in their book *The Spirit Level*, Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) provide evidence of a link between inequality and violence in the societies of OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries – the higher the level of economic inequality, the higher the level of violence.

1.2   Violence in schools

School violence is defined by Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988), cited in Zulu et al. (2004:70), as any behaviour of learners, educators, administrators or non-school persons, attempting to inflict injury on another person or to damage school property. Internationally, violence both affects schools and is perpetuated and perpetrated by schools (e.g. Harber 2004; Pinheiro 2006; PLAN 2008; Smith & Vaux 2003). Violence in schools can come from different sources, take on many forms and involve different actors. For example, bullying may be learned outside the school but perpetuated inside the school because the school ignores it or doesn't deal with it satisfactorily. It may also involve different actors at different times inside the school – for example, learners may bully each other, teachers may bully learners, learners may bully teachers, parents may bully teachers, and principals may bully teachers or be bullied by them. School violence also takes place in different ways and in a wide range of contexts. In England, for example, about 14 children aged 5 and below are suspended from school every day for violence – i.e. pushing and shoving a teacher or other learners (Williams 2009). Girls in Nepal reported being sexually harassed by male learners and subjected to inappropriate touching by male teachers, which include touching their buttocks, breasts and even undoing their bras. Unfortunately, most of these incidents of sexual harassment went unreported (Dunne, Humphreys & Leach 2006). Female learners in Papua New Guinea also described their fear of sexual assault and violence in both schools and in society

in general (Dunne et al. 2006). In Brazil about three quarters of the 4 150 schools included in a national survey reported acts of violence. The investigation revealed: (a) that the most frequent type of violence among learners was physical aggression (66%); and (b) adult aggression towards children and adolescents (28%) and derogatory comments (20%) (UNICEF 2009). De Mattos (2009), reviewing the production of school failure in Brazil from 1996 to 2006, has shown that violence promotes failure but, at the same time, school failure has been generating violent practices among teachers and learners, resulting in young people being excluded from educational opportunities (De Mattos 2009).

School violence is a problem of particular significance in South Africa. Shootings, stabbings, and physical and emotional violence have taken place in both public and private schools (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker & Goesling 2002; Zulu, Urbani & Van der Merwe 2004:70). A report by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) (2008); suggested that only 23% of South African learners said they felt safe at school. In contrast, research suggests that schools in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden were the safest in the world with approximately 70% of learners saying they felt safe at school (SAIRR 2).

Prinsloo (2005:5) defines a safe school as a school that is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm, a place where non-educators, educators and learners may work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence. School should be a safe environment that encourages effective teaching and learning. Squelch (2000/1) identifies the following features of a safe school:

• Presence of physical features such as secure walls, fencing and gates

• Buildings that are in good state of repair

• Well maintained school grounds

• Good discipline and a culture conducive to teaching and learning

• Professional educator conduct

• Good governance and management practices

• Absence of (or low level) of crime and violence

While violence in schools is a global problem, it is important to understand the different types of violence that occur and its causes. Next, therefore, we begin to categorise different forms of violence that affect schools.

1.3   The impact of external violence on schools

Violent conflict has an impact on education. As UNICEF puts it:

> In the armed conflicts of recent years children have been not only unintended victims but deliberate targets of violence. The number of children who have been directly affected is enormous. Millions of them have been killed, disabled, orphaned, sexually exploited and abused, abducted and recruited as soldiers, uprooted from their homes, separated from their families and faced with heightened risk of disease and malnutrition (UNICEF 2001:1).

A casual glance at a world atlas brings home the wide range of countries where such conflicts have taken place over the past 15 years – Afghanistan, Albania, Bosnia, Chechnya, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Kosovo, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Liberia, Nepal, Northern Ireland, Palestine, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Turkey, Zimbabwe and so on.

Such conflicts have regularly affected the provision of schooling in a direct manner and in such circumstances learners are not necessarily safe at school. This has led to a significant increase in interest in and publications on education during conflicts as well as post-conflict education (Harber 2012). Indeed, two books on education in post-conflict societies (Paulson 2011; Nicolai 2009) included chapters on South Africa, reflecting both the effects of serious levels of political violence on education during apartheid and civil violence subsequently. However, as we shall see, the categories of "external" violence are impacting on schools and "internal" violence happening within schools or caused by schools are not necessarily watertight or clear-cut. For example, while the war in Sierra Leone in the 1990s definitely impacted on the provision of education within schools, Wright (1997) is very critical of the pre-war education system in Sierra Leone for having an over-emphasis on conformity and sycophancy, which has helped to bring about a population that is too docile in the face of dictatorial leaders, despite noting that the very violent Revolutionary Front had "… an unusually high proportion of ex-teachers and ex-learners in its ranks" (1997:25). Paulson's discussion of the 20-year violent conflict between governments and Shining Path guerrillas in Peru (where there was also a Truth and Reconciliation Commission following the end of the fighting), which had a major impact on schools nevertheless, notes that Shining Path had a great deal of support membership among teachers and that:

> It helped that Shining Path indoctrination mirrored the authoritarian, didactic and unquestionable pedagogic style that had long characterised teaching and learning in Peru's state schools (Paulson 2011:130).

Apart from political violence and war, other forms of external violence could impact on educational provision. For example, gang violence involving theft, drugs, and weapons could extend from the surrounding community and streets into the schools where learners are seen as fair game. This can take place on the way to and from school and inside school as well when gang members enter schools to sell drugs, steal or extort money (Le Roux & Mokhele 2011:318; Harber 2001). Even this is not a straightforward form of "external" violence, however, as some learners at the school may be in league with gang members and may help and facilitate their activities while other learners may be willing consumers of drugs. The atmosphere at the school and the sense of belonging and identity among learners may be a significant factor here. A case in point where school violence has been triggered by external factors is the school shootings phenomenon that has occurred in America, such as the shootingat Columbine High in 1999. At one level these factors are "external" to the school, being caused by the problematic psychological development of the individual school members concerned and the availability of guns in American society. However, others argue that the phenomenon of rampage school shootings in American schools is not just a problem of the activities of individual learners, however socially isolated from families, friends and communities, but essentially results from the organisational failings of schools. In each case the learners had a troubled history, including

bullying, but the schools failed to act upon their own records because information in the schools was fragmented due to the segregation of tasks and ambivalence about the key purposes of the school. As a result of this ambivalence, traditional academic concerns win out as a priority over emotional and social development, both teachers and counsellors are not properly trained to identify and deal with personal problems, and there is a dearth of resources devoted to such concerns. The learners who eventually went on to shoot fellow learners and teachers were not disruptive and so were not noticed:

> In loosely coupled systems like schools, we argue, serious personal problems are allowed to fester because they do not impede the dominant organisational goals: order and minimum academic standards. Our study of Heath and Westside suggest that school shooters go unnoticed because many are not behaving in ways that interrupt the functioning of their schools and hence their behaviour is not interpreted as indicative of a potential for violent behaviour or of social and emotional problems (Fox & Harding 2005:82).

The authors of this article also point out that at Columbine there were reports that the shooters had been viciously humiliated by their peers in the presence of their teachers, who failed to intervene on their behalf. In a number of other similar cases it was also reported that individual members of the school staff were aware that the shooters were being bullied or humiliated but did little to end the abuse. The conclusion is that these shootings didn't happen by accident or on a completely random basis but were the result of interplay between the priorities of the cultural environment in which the schools operate, the organisational structure of the school, and the routine cognitive practices of its staff.

1.4   Internal/external

Another form of violence that can reflect the wider society and exist in schools relates to racial or ethnic discrimination, i.e. hostility towards the "other" based on skin colour or cultural differences. There is no doubt that the wider apartheid political system and resistance to it impacted on schools in a violent way in the 1970s and 1980s. However, schools themselves have been used to overtly teach learners to hate learners from other ethnic groups, thus reproducing racial and ethnic tension and violence in a range of different societies (Harber 2004:Ch.6). In South Africa, from 1948 to 1994, the entire education system was based on "racial" separation and inequality with an assumed hierarchy of racial groups. Despite progress in respect of more democracy in schools since 1994, there continues to be problems with "race" as historically defined in South Africa – "black", "coloured", "Indian" and "white". An audit of 90 desegregated schools across all nine provinces published in 1999 showed that racism in schools continued to be pervasive (Vally & Dalamba 1999). A further study of a community near the Western Cape sheds some interesting light on how education continues to reproduce racial separation and antagonism in South Africa. The researcher found that both "coloured" and "black" parents and children had negative stereotypes of each other but that the school did little to combat this situation. The national language policy prescribing that children be taught in their mother tongue in the first three grades meant that almost no racial integration took place in those grades. This also affected interaction among teachers with at least one school having a separate common room for each ethnic/linguistic group.

Most teachers expressed exasperation at having to commit to adopting an anti-racist pedagogy and effectively turned a blind eye to the racial antagonisms displayed by parents in and out of school. Indeed, most of the churches and cultural and sports groupings that used the schools' facilities also did so on the basis of race (Fataar 2007). In her study of four schools that had been differently racially categorised under apartheid (Hunt 2007:Ch.7) found that the schools had done little to embrace a new culture actively based on non-discrimination and equality but that learners who are not from the dominant group had been expected to assimilate into existing practices and discourses.

Motala et al. (2007:92–3) also described the continuation of more subtle but nevertheless important manifestations of racism:

> The Education Inclusion and Exclusion in India and South Africa project (INEXSA) has analysed a less overt form of racism. This project investigated processes of integration in 14 schools in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Western Cape (Soudien 2004), and found that a tendency towards assimilations was the overriding approach taken by these schools. Assimilationism took three forms: aggressive assimilationism, which is "brusque [and] characterised by high degrees of intolerance and often violence"; assimilationism by stealth, in schools which have political credentials, such as some former Indian and coloured schools, but which leave racial issues unaddressed; and benign assimilationism, where schools (usually formerly white and English-speaking) presents themselves as multicultural but maintain dominant relationships (Sayed & Soudien 2003:104–105). In sum, these schools discriminated against learners who were different from the dominant culture – by race or class – by discouraging their admission, or including them on the assumption that they would be made to fit in with predetermined norms. Using findings from the INEXSA project, Sayed and Soudien (2003) showed that the new exclusionary practices invoked discourses around "standards", "language" and school fees. Admission to former white, Indian and coloured schools was controlled at the entry gate as schools attempted to preserve their established ways of doing things and explained their access policies as upholding standards of excellence, or argued that learners' inability to speak the language of learning and teaching disqualified them from admission.

However, Vandeyar (2008:296) struck a slightly more optimistic note arguing that the data she presented suggested that:

> … young South Africans are subliminally rejecting racial categories of old … A decade of democracy has witnessed learners moving on from overt racial practices as in derogatory name-calling and stereotyping … to a situation of improved intercultural attitudes and less negative stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination in the schools … Although, as this study has uncovered, it may be only a few learners at these schools, the potential for intercultural harmony cannot be underestimated.

Nevertheless, this seems to be despite of rather than because of schools, since the study also found that the "… attitudes of schools and teachers have resisted change" (2008:297).

We now discuss two further forms of violence in schools that may have its origins outside of the school in relation to the socialisation of the individuals concerned within their families and communities, but which nevertheless take place within schools and could be reproduced by schooling by omission when it is ignored or even passively condoned. The first is bullying and the second is sexual harassment of female learners by male learners.

Bullying can take on many forms, such as physical violence, threats, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, exclusion from a group, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, and abusive comments. O'Connell, Pepler and Craig (1999:438) define bullying as negative actions which may be physical or verbal, have hostile intent, are repeated over time and involve a power differential. They contend that bullying unfolds in a social context, namely the dyad, peer group, the playground setting, and the school environment. Bullying can be direct or indirect. Direct bullying involves physical contact or verbal abuse whereas indirect bullying involve subtle social manipulations such as gossip, spreading rumours and exclusion.

Bullying can be looked at through the lens of the social learning perspective of modeling and reinforcement by Bandura (1977). Bandura identified three conditions that influence the likelihood of modeling. Children are more likely to imitate a model when:

- The model is a powerful figure.

- The model is rewarded rather than punished for the behaviour.

- The model shares similar characteristics with the child.

Bullies may influence their peers to become involved in bullying as active participants. This may result due to peer pressure. Some learners reinforce bullying by passively watching. Victims are known to enlist the help of their brothers who are not usually learners in that particular school to seek revenge for bullying.

It has been known to be a serious problem in schools in many countries for many years but little seems to have changed (Roland & Munthe 1989; Oshako 1997; Ruiz 1998). One study of 13-year-olds in 27 countries found that the majority had been engaged in bullying at least some of the time (WHO 2002:29–30). A summary of research on bullying in developing countries between 2003 and 2005 found that between one fifth and two thirds of children reported being bullied in the previous 30 days. The same report found that the picture was similar in OECD countries. Almost a quarter of seven million learners questioned in Spain and a third of those surveyed in Australia reported being bullied by classmates. The report goes on to summarise research findings from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia, all with depressingly high levels of bullying in schools:

> Yet despite the scale of the problem, only five of the countries examined in this report – Korea, Norway, Sri Lanka, the UK and the US – have laws explicitly prohibiting bullying in schools.

The report points out that reducing or eliminating bullying is more difficult because many teachers and parents view bullying as an inevitable part of school life and growing up, though this isn't necessarily the case. The report also details the consequences of bullying, loss of self-esteem, shame, anxiety, truancy, concentration

problems, reactive aggression, stress and serious psychological problems and even suicide. The bullies themselves also suffer from anxiety and depression and are at a higher risk of suicide and self-harm as well as getting involved in criminal activity (PLAN 2008:36–41).

Learners certainly seem to be afraid of being bullied. A study of learner fear of becoming a victim of school violence based on the percentage of learners across 33 countries who thought another learner might hurt them at least once during the previous month found that on average 25,8% thought they might do so. There was no country where almost all learners feel safe to learn at school (Akiba 2008).

The inclusion of young people with special educational needs into mainstream schooling and away from special schools is an international policy issue in education. However, the inclusion of such learners will only work if mainstream schools (or special schools for that matter) and the learners within these schools act in a genuinely inclusive manner. These disabled learners who are more likely to be the targets of bullying may be more willing to put up with abuse in order to gain access to social groups (Moore, Jones & Broadbent 2008). One study put it that:

> Having a disability or special educational needs is another risk factor for being a victim. Children with special educational needs are 2 to 3 times more at risk of being bullied; they are also more at risk of taking part in bullying others (Smith & Ananiadou 2003:192).

Bullying is also not confined to boys. Girl to girl bullying is an increasing problem and tends to be verbal, based on sexual insults and about competition for boys. Apart from the distress and unhappiness caused, this could also result in absenteeism and some victims moving away to another school to escape the problem (Bloom 2009; Duncan 1999 and 2006).

In South Africa, one study found that female learners with an intellectual disability were indeed vulnerable to sexual bullying and violence (Silanesu 2012).

While it is known that bullying in schools exists and is widespread and that schools can help to reproduce such behaviour through inaction, it is usually assumed that bullying results from faults in the characters of the individual learners in school. However, a review by Smith (2005) revealed that, despite many years of expensive research and intervention, bullying had not been reduced much at all. This might well be because it is the school organisation and culture itself that can be conducive to bullying:

> Imagine being made by law to attend an institution six hours a day, five days a week where you were controlled in everything you do, for no pay nor worthwhile outcomes for you personally. Imagine you were so controlled in this environment that you were punished for speaking without permission, for not sitting in a particular position, for laughing out loud, for whispering. Imagine being told to do things you had no interest in, and then being harassed for not doing it as well as that person thinks you can. Imagine your ability or performance being constantly measured and compared against your peers. Imagine being told what to wear down to the tiniest detail, being forbidden expressions of personality such as jewellery or make-up. Imagine being forced to cut or grow your hair until it met with someone else's approval.

Imagine being so controlled in every way that even your bodily functions are at someone else's discretion and you need permission to eat, drink or go to the toilet (Duncan 2007a).

As Duncan points out, given the oppressive ethos, it's a wonder there isn't more trouble in schools. However, the ethos of schooling is also essentially competitive, with winners and losers. Hence when people are considered to be losers and bossed around in a situation they can't change, and where they daily witness double standards in respect of the behaviour that is expected of them and those in authority, they take out their frustration and anger on the only targets available – their weaker peers. However, the good news is that the rate of bullying do vary among individual schools, and there is much that can be done about the policies and ethos of schools regarding inclusivity and meeting individual needs that can genuinely reduce bullying (Duncan 2007b). Nevertheless, it first has to be recognised that the problem isn't necessarily or solely with individual learners and, as we have seen from the evidence on bullying presented above, this institutional analysis is not yet sufficiently accepted and acted upon.

Sexual harassment is another form of violence that is both internal and external to schools. It is external in the sense that the type of masculine identities that lead to sexual harassment are learned by male learners outside the school through their families, communities and the media. However, this form of violence becomes internal by omission when, on the one hand, the school fails to deal with it, and on the other hand when it is perpetrated by teachers themselves. In 2008 PLAN had this to say:

> The number of children across the world subjected to sexual abuse is shocking. The World Health Organization estimated in 2002 that 150 million girls and 73 million boys under the age of 18 had been raped or suffered other forms of sexual abuse (PLAN 2008:22).

Of course, as PLAN is also pointing out, completely reliable and accurate figures indicating to what extent this is taking place in and around schools are difficult to come by because victims are experiencing feelings of shame; there is a lack of certainty that reporting will lead to action against the perpetrator; and furthermore it should be added that others are covering up for perpetrators and keeping silent about such acts. However, it is possible to gauge the extent of the problem and to conclude that it is serious. In 2008, for example, Amnesty International published a report tellingly entitled *Safe Schools: Every Girl's Right*. In the introduction it states:

> Every day, girls face being assaulted on their way to school, pushed and hit in school grounds, teased and insulted by their classmates, and humiliated by having rumours circulated about them through whisper campaigns, mobile phones or the internet. Some are threatened with sexual assault by other learners, offered higher marks by teachers for sexual favours, even raped in the staff room. Some are beaten or caned in the name of school discipline … Violence against girls takes place in and around many educational institutions all over the world. It is inflicted not only by teachers, but also by administrators, other school employees, fellow learners and outsiders. The result is that countless girls are kept out of school, drop out of school, or do not participate fully in school (2008:1–2).

According to this report there is also an increased risk of violence if the girl is lesbian or disabled. The report continues to quote evidence from the USA, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Latin America on high levels of sexual harassment in schools. In Togo it is so common that an entire vocabulary has evolved to describe it. One US-based organisation dedicated to the prevention of school violence found that in just 10 days in early 2007 the number of sexual assault cases that occurred in US schools amounted to 18 (2008:18, 29, 31).

As put forward by the Amnesty International report, acknowledging that there is a problem and that it is causing harm is the first step along the way. Yet, in its review of the Educational Sector Plans of ten African countries that are being supported by the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative, the Global AIDS Alliance (2007) found that none of these sector plans outline a comprehensive intervention package to prevent, counter and respond to school-related violence. However, "… recent studies in Africa demonstrate that between 16 and 47 per cent of girls in primary or secondary school report sexual abuse or harassment from male teachers or classmates." They are also critical (p. 13) of two major aid donors, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the British Department for International Development (DFID), for falling short of what is needed to ensure that schools are safe learning environments for the world's children, including girls. Research for the British Department for International Development in Ghana and Botswana also found bullying, sexual harassment and aggressive behaviour by boy learners against girls in schools and that such behaviour is rarely punished as teachers regard such acts as normal and a "natural" part of growing up (2005:21). UNESCO's *Education For All Global Monitoring Report* (2008) also recognises that sexual harassment and sexual violence are a major problem, citing the UN's own report on violence against children (Pinheiro 2006) as to the widespread nature of the problem.

PLAN (2008:22–33) cites evidence of significantly high levels of sexual violence against girls by learners and staff in Uganda, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Thailand and Nepal. On the other hand, the phenomenon is not only located in developing countries. For example, a study in the Netherlands showed that 27% of learners reported being sexually harassed by school personnel. In Sweden researchers found that among 17 and 18-year-olds 49% felt that sexual harassment at school was a significant problem. In France 3,3% of *all sexual* attacks take place within the school environment. Evidence that this is a worrying issue that occurs at unacceptable levels is also cited from Switzerland, Spain, Germany, Belgium and Canada. In Britain, Ministers ordered urgent action to tackle sexual bullying and harassment in the classroom (*The Guardian* 6/12/2008), while the Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council said that it was preparing itself for "an upsurge in the number of teachers being publicly accused of unacceptable sexual conduct" (*Times Educational Supplement* 7/9/2007). In South Africa, a study conducted by Peterson, Bhana and Mckay (2005) in a poverty-stricken community in semi-rural KwaZulu-Natal revealed that girls are subjected to sexual violence including rape as a result of environmental influences, peer pressure, poverty, parental neglect, and lack of parental monitoring. The sample of the study consisted of focus groups of boys and girls aged between 13–16 years.

In April 2012, the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper had this to say in its editorial on the violent rape of an intellectually disabled teenager:

South Africa is often called the rape capital of the world. A Gender Links study last year indicated that 75,5% of men in Gauteng admitted to having perpetrated some form of violence against women (April 20–25 2012).

The main cause of sexual harassment and violence in schools is that traditional gender stereotypes and unequal power relationships within the broader society are not challenged but rather reproduced by the school. Moreover, the authoritarian, closed nature of schooling in general, meshed with patriarchal values and behaviours, provides a conducive context for the patterns of sexual harassment as described above. As the PLAN report says (2008:26):

> Girls in societies where women are accorded a lower or more passive status (and where practices such as infanticide, female genital cutting and honour killings take place) are more likely to suffer sexual violence at school.

The report also points out that unless teachers themselves have been educated about gender and power issues, they are likely to model behaviour that reflects their own experiences and those of the broader community. It further notes that a South African survey found that 47% of female teachers in a pilot project had suffered physical abuse at the hands of an intimate partner, and 25% of male teachers admitted that they had been physically abusive to an intimate partner (PLAN 2008:26).

The values and behaviours of different models of masculinity are socially learned, not genetically determined (Harber 2004:Ch.7). So, while using the school subject of Life Skills in schools to promote greater agency amongst female learners in the face of continuing sexual harassment and violence in schools in South Africa (Bhana 2012) is to be commended, there is also a need to use such subjects to teach boys and girls the nature of masculinity (and femininity), including alternative nonviolent forms of masculinity. This means that in addition to individual life skills (agency) such courses also need to teach about the wider social structures that shape our lives – including gender. This has implications for teacher training in the sense that a survey of South Africa and English teacher training students found that few had studied or discussed gender issues, including the nature of masculinity, either at school or as part of their teacher training (Harber & Serf 2006). Masculinity is further discussed below.

An additional problem is that not only do schools neglect to educate learners about masculinity in order to curb violent interpretations of it, but it in actual fact sometimes encourages such violent interpretations.

> Schools, clubs and colleges are institutions where gender is actively forged. Gender isn't just reflected or expressed. They are places where a certain type of "top dog" masculinity is made, celebrated confirmed through daily acts of violence and bullying (Salisbury & Jackson 1996:105).

In her essay "Cultural Capital and High School Bullies", Klein (2006) argues that in order to build cultural capital in male peer hierarchies in schools, boys have to exhibit the hallmarks of normalised masculinity – hyper-masculine identification, athletics, fighting, distance from homosexuality, dominant relationships with girls, socioeconomic status, and disdain for academic study. She further argues, through a study of 12 boys, that the perpetrators of high school shootings between 1996 and 2002 in America were bullied and harassed because they lacked these characteristics

and eventually responded by trying to prove their masculinity through resorting to overwhelming violence. She concludes that schools need to find a way to have a larger continuum of value activities to support a more diverse learner body and not just accept dominant and violent forms of masculinity.

> Schools can convey values of community, support, cooperation and compassion … Today, however, … Faculty and parents often support values that spurn less masculine – seeming, less athletic, less typical boys. This is dangerous destructive, and in the wake of school shootings, unconscionable … schools and suburbs can become associated with prisons, where outcasts know no way out, and can hardly imagine life being different … School faculty also maintain these conditions through lack of appropriate intervention and prevention practices or sometime through direct support of destructive cultural mores (2006:66/7).

1.5   Internal or direct forms of school violence

As the above discussion suggests, distinctions between how external violence affects schools and how schools themselves indirectly reproduce violence are not necessarily clear cut. With regard to school violence, there are often connections between what goes on outside the school and what goes on inside the school. However, as we have started to see, schools are also more directly involved in internal forms of violence where they actually *perpetrate* the violence themselves or reproduce it by their failure to act, rather than have it imposed upon them from the outside.

Continuing with the theme of sexual violence, in this regard we have seen that the sexual harassment of female learners by male staff is a direct form of violence perpetrated by schools in respect of female learners, and this type of sexual violence is both a global problem and certainly one in South Africa. A Medical Research Council survey, carried out in 1998, found that among those rape victims who specified their relationship to the perpetrator, 37,7% indicated that they were raped by their schoolteacher or principal (Human Rights Watch 2001:42). Section V of this report details many actual cases of sexual abuse carried out by teachers in schools. Sexual violence against girls remains a particular problem in South African schools.

> Violence within schools and violence against girls is a serious problem. Going to and from schools, girls are at risk of harassment, beating and rape. Inside schools, relationships between male teachers and female learners can find expression in everything from the 'sugar daddy' phenomenon to girls being demeaned and treated as less than equal in the classroom … Pinning responsibility on teachers for action that may be seen as normal by both themselves and children, simply by virtue of habit and continual abuse, is a hard task (Nelson Mandela Foundation 2005:61).

Twenty-seven complaints of sexual misconduct against teachers were received by the South African Council of Educators between January and October 2008, and in some cases the teacher-learner relationships took place with the consent of the children's parents based on some kind of financial agreement. The Chief Executive Officer of the Council said:

> It has been very disturbing that there have been cases where learners have been minors. Children as young as nine have been found to be involved

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with teachers. There have also been cases of impregnation. Council finds that completely intolerable. While girl learners are abused by other members of society, we definitely have jurisdiction over teachers. The age of learners, their consent, parental consent or their location in a different school will not mitigate the culpability of a teacher in this regard (*Mail and Guardian Online* 8/12/2008).

In 2006, the former Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, simply stated outright that schools were "not safe" for girls (cited in Motala et al. 2007:93).

A second form of direct, internal violence perpetrated by schools with regard to learners is corporal punishment. This is a form of violence institutionally sanctioned in many schools around the world. Children may well be hit at home but not necessarily in the systematic way that corporal punishment can and is carried out in schools. Moreover, many children go to school from homes where no physical punishment (or sexual harassment) exists and are then exposed to it for the first time in school. So, corporal punishment is a form of violence internal to schools both in the sense that it exists at school and that the people who experience it there don't necessarily experience it outside.

In 90 out of 197 countries monitored by the *Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children*, corporal punishment remains legal despite consistent and overwhelming evidence of its harmful effects and the fact that it is not in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In respect of the developed or industrialised world, it is still legal in France, Korea and a number of Australian and American states (PLAN 2008:12, 14). In other countries where it has been officially banned, such as South Africa and China (PLAN 2008:12), it is still widely used, suggesting that corporal punishment in school still exists in at least one third and perhaps as much as half of the countries of the world. Further examples of contexts where corporal punishment is still in use can be found in Harber 2004:Ch.5 and PLAN 2008:11–19. In relation to South Africa, Hunt (2007), using observation and interviews, found that corporal punishment was still used in three out of four of her case study schools in the Western Cape area and that learners were subjected to incidents of verbal insult and humiliation. Corporal punishment also remains widespread in rural areas (Nelson Mandela Foundation 2005:17). In a recent study of schools in three provinces of South Africa that:

> Corporal punishment is banned in South Africa, yet such incidents were observed on numerous occasions. For instance, during recess at one school in Pietermaritzburg an act of bullying by a male learner towards a female learner resulted in … six strokes of a stiff plastic tube across the palm of the hand (Hammett & Staeheli 2011:275).

In a recent investigation into corporal punishment in schools in South Africa by the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper (John 2012), it was reported that corporal punishment was rife in Gauteng according to the children's rights body *Childline*, which said that more than 300 cases were reported to its Gauteng crisis line in 2011. Childline visited 76 schools in Gauteng in 2011 and in almost every school children reported that corporal punishment was still happening. The chief executive of Childline said that corporal punishment was widespread across South Africa but is not reported. The same article reported that four teachers in KwaZulu-Natal were arrested for allegedly beating a learner so severely that he needed surgery on one of his testicles.

The spokesperson of the South African Council of Educators said the council had received 161 formal complaints since April 2011 but warned that incidents of corporal punishment were "grossly underreported". The article further reported that many parents still favoured corporal punishment and that teachers were not trained in alternatives. However, the Director of the Centre for Psychological Services at the University of Johannesburg noted that in cases where corporal punishment was administered learners viewed violence as some kind of solution to problems, and added that there was a direct link between corporal punishment and violent crime in South Africa.

While there has been a drop in the number of countries officially using corporal punishment since the 1960s, the practice remains common globally despite widespread debate, all that is known about its harmful effects, and the existence of many positive alternatives. Indeed, in June 2006 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted General Comment No. 8 on "The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment".

So while there is no evidence that corporal punishment improves behaviour or academic achievement – quite the opposite (PLAN 2008) – there is considerable evidence of its harmful effects, including physical harm and even death. The World Health Organization, which explicitly includes corporal punishment in school as part of child abuse, states that:

> Importantly there is now evidence that major adult forms of illness – including ischaemic heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, irritable bowel syndrome and fibromyalgia – are related to experiences of abuse during childhood. The apparent mechanism to explain these results is the adoption of behavioural risk factors such as smoking, alcohol abuse, poor diet and lack of exercise … Similarly there are many studies demonstrating short-term and long-term psychological damage. Some children have a few symptoms that do not reach clinical levels of concern, or else are at clinical levels but not as high as in children generally seen in clinical settings. Other survivors have serious psychiatric symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, aggression, shame or cognitive impairments. Finally, some children meet the full criteria for psychiatric illnesses that include post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, anxiety disorders and sleep disorders (WHO 2002:69/70).

Not surprisingly, corporal punishment also rarely makes learners feel enthusiastic about schooling or learning. In Nepal corporal punishment is an important reason for school drop-out (Teeka-Bhattarai 2006) while in Botswana:

> The more obvious effects of corporal punishment included increased learner anxiety, fear or resentment in class. Girls, in particular, remained silent, and were mistakenly dubbed as "lazy" or "shy" by some teachers, and so did some boys. Other boys absconded or refused to cooperate in female teachers' classes … Other studies have also found that excessive physical punishment, generally of boys, can prompt truancy (Humphreys 2006).

Nevertheless, historically, authority and order in schools have been consistently associated with violent imposition:

From their inception, formal schools in Western capitalist societies have been designed to discipline bodies as well as to regulate minds. A key purpose of modern state schooling has been the formation and conduct of beliefs, as well as the acquisition of prescribed knowledge. School discipline has frequently been overt and physically violent, with learners most often the target of teacher-administered punishment (Rousmaniere, Dehli & Ning de Coninck-Smith 1997:3).

A major factor in its global spread was colonialism, particularly British colonialism. In Africa, for example, it has been argued that although corporal punishment is now sometimes justified on the grounds that it is "part of African culture", evidence on pre-colonial education systems suggests that this is unlikely. As Tafa argues in relation to pre-colonial Botswana, where corporal punishment is still widely used in schools, "There is no evidence to suggest that children were flogged every step of the way" (2002:23). He notes that when neighbouring Zambia banned caning in 2000 it was described as "a brutal relic of British rule". He argues that:

Caning became ingrained in the popular minds as critical to school discipline hence the common refrain that its abolition equals classroom disorder and failure. The result is a cycle of caning transmitted from one generation to another and justified on the basis of experience and sentiment … In a class of 35–40 authoritarianism is a means of orchestrating "mob control". Instant punishment and military style parades typical of Botswana schools are all about social control. Teachers are saddled with systemic constraints of large and mixed class sizes for which no extra resources were made available (Tafa 2002:23).

Another form of direct, internally generated violence within schools is bullying of learners by teachers. Interviews carried out with 40 first-year university learners in Russia found that teachers called learners a wide range of insulting words if they did not learn fast enough; used their classroom pointers as tools of punishment and intimidation; destroyed school accessories if they did not comply with school regulations; threw various objects at learners; and physically attacked them by hitting them against their heads, pushing them or banging their heads against the blackboard (Zdravomyslova & Gorshkova 2006). A study of violence in the Free State of South Africa found that of a sample of 800 teachers 43% reported that educators in their schools had threatened one or more learners at their schools over the period of a year, whereas 17% had attacked or assaulted one or more learners at their schools during the same period (De Wet 2007). A study of stress among 271 learners in Poland found that an important factor was teachers' verbal abuse of children (Piekarska 2000). In sub-Saharan Africa research suggests that female teachers often call on male teachers to carry out corporal punishment while they themselves resort to emotional abuse and insulting language to control learners (PLAN 2008:13). In America a study of 50 learners at alternative schools found that 86% reported at least one incident of adult physical maltreatment and 88% reported at least one incident of adult psychological maltreatment while they were in mainstream schools. Almost twice as many learners reported that an adult rather than a peer was involved in their worst school experience. The authors commented that "these findings indicate that learners are being bullied by teachers to a surprising degree and in a wide range of destructive and harmful ways" (Whitted & Dupper 2008).

1.6   Violence as a barrier to learning

The end results of school-based violence of the types discussed above manifest themselves through school dropout and a reluctance to attend school, an increased risk of teenage pregnancy, the transmission of HIV/Aids amongst youth, community disintegration, and academic underperformance. Exposure to such violence could result in serious long-standing physical, emotional and psychological implications for both teachers and learners, including: distress; reduced self-esteem; risk of depression and suicide; reduced school attendance; impaired concentration; fear; and a diminished ability to learn. Furthermore, crime and violence are severe threats to the fragile democracy, peace, and economic stability in South Africa. It corrupts the social fabric of communities and the nation as a whole and endangers the health of both children and adults. It disrupts the provision of basic services and destroys respect for human rights. Violence further deepens gender and social inequalities and reduces the overall quality of life.

2.   Theoretical frameworks: the why of violence in schools

How do we explain violence in schools? One argument, suggested in the discussion above, is that schools are a microcosm of society and that they merely reflect or mirror the violence of the broader society. This in itself is worrying – the fact that schools are no better than and cannot protect children from the negative elements of the broader society. However, schools are not necessarily completely vulnerable to external violence in a violent society. A key factor in the extent to which schools can resist violence in the broader society is the extent to which the school is, and sees itself as, a well-organised and managed community with a determination to protect and care for its learners by means of a clear approach to safety and security. Research conducted at three schools in the Durban area of Kwazulu-Natal (Harber 2001a) suggested that the more effectively the school is run, the less chance of violence coming in from the outside and the less chance of it being generated inside. Indeed, a well-run school with a more inclusive, democratic environment helps to foster a climate of openness and a sense of ownership, commitment, and responsibility amongst all members and therefore strengthens its determination to resist external violence and minimise internal violence. It was also important that all three schools had actually stopped using corporal punishment in line with the law, therefore both reducing an internal climate of violence and improving relationships between staff and learners. Instead, through codes of conduct, clear implementation of the rules and alternative forms of punishment, such as clearing up litter in the schools, are used to provide an ordered, safe, and essentially peaceful environment where both internal and external crime and violence are reduced to a minimum. Such a school also tries to reach out to and have good relationships with the local community, though at these three schools this is not easy because of the physical distance of many parents from the schools.

There are many effective and well-organised schools in South Africa. Importantly, there are many examples of such schools that are functioning effectively, achieving good examination results despite the fact that some of them are situated in areas affected by poverty and poor resources (Harber 2001b:66–68; Bloch 2009:Ch.5). Bloch quotes the head of Bhukulani High School in Soweto, which has a matriculation

pass rate of over 90%, who is of the view that schools work simply because there are people who are prepared to work, who are turning up for class on time, and who are teaching effectively. Comparing this school to another equally successful school in a poor area, Block comments that: "There is a detailed set of planning processes and systems to ensure success, no magic formula." The role of the head is important as "teachers need the administrative efficiency and ordered predictability of a well-run school" (2009:136–7). He further cites a ministerial committee that examined the nature of successful schools in South Africa, which found that the key to success was doing the basics well:

> Firstly, all of the schools were focused on their central tasks of teaching, learning and management with a sense of purpose, responsibility and commitment. Secondly, they had a strong organisational capacity, including leadership and management and professionalism was valued. Thirdly, all of the schools carried out their tasks with competence and confidence; all had organisational cultures or mind-sets that supported hard work, expected achievement and acknowledged success. And lastly, all had strong accountability systems in place which enabled them to meet the demands of external accountability, particularly in terms of Senior Certificate achievement (2009:138).

However, the problem of disorganised schools has also been recognised as a serious issue in post-apartheid South Africa for some time. Recently, the State President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, called on teachers to be "in class, on time and teaching" and to spend the rest of the day on preparation and marking (*Mail and Guardian* 2–8 September 2011), a theme he returned to in his 2012 State of the Nation Address. In the same vein, Duncan Hindle, a senior education official in South Africa, has argued that school accountability is lacking when even the basic minimum terms of employment are not being complied with. He describes a situation where:

> ... teachers are absent without good reason, some arrive late or leave early, and others are perhaps at school but not in class. Funerals, council duties and union meetings provide convenient excuses. Fridays become "early closing" days and on paydays non-attendance is the norm in many schools. Learners display similar traits … (*Mail and Guardian* 2–8 September 2011).

On one day in April 2012, while this report was being complied, the Durban-based newspaper *The Mercury* reported that more than 1 000 teachers across South Africa did not show up for the beginning of term because they were "exhausted from playing sport over Easter" (11/4/2012).

A research report of 2007 noted that educator attendance varies widely between schools but is known to result in significant loss of learner time. Apart from arriving at school late and leaving early, reasons for educator absence include strikes and stay aways, examinations and sporting events, and municipal activities. The report also noted that loss of learning time will undoubtedly adversely affect achievement, outcomes, and progression (Motala et al. 2007:58–9).

Further recent evidence also suggests that these problems persist. The South African Human Rights Commission report on the right to basic education in 2006 describes

a dysfunctional schooling system for the majority and a privileged, functional sector serving a minority. The report followed public hearings in October 2005 on a litany of problems that schools are facing, including low teacher morale, lack of accountability, and non-attendance of learners. Teacher absenteeism and lack of enthusiasm also remain to be problems (Hunt 2007; Nelson Mandela Foundation 2005). Moreover, various forms of corruption are also not unknown in South African schools (Harber 2001b; Fataar 2007).

In a sustained analysis of what he terms "dysfunctional" schools, Bloch (2009) relates, in some detail, evidence of poor educational outcomes in South Africa to poor internal organisation. Acknowledging serious problems with infrastructure in schools in relation to the supply of electricity, libraries, laboratories, computers, clean water, and suitable toilets, he also notes the enormous difficulty of recruiting competent heads to manage all 27 000 schools in South Africa. As a result, according to Bloch:

> Schools are often not well organised, timetabling is poor, institutional process is arbitrary and ineffective. At a teaching level, haphazard planning and time management are often reflected in a poor ability to plan and timetable teaching plans for the curriculum over the year (2009:82–3).

Bloch argues that the dysfunctional nature of many schools in South Africa is not only a problem for success in respect of outcomes such as test scores and examination results, but it also has implications for democracy. Firstly, in relation to the Zuma administration's commitment to creating an efficient "developmental state" because:

> There are too many tales of salaries not being paid by departments, of strikes being unfairly monitored by officials, of transport for poor scholars not being in place, of corruption and theft, of non-transference of moneys to fee-free schools, and so on. The disappearance of millions in school nutrition money in the Eastern Cape is the most extreme and perhaps the most shocking example, but it is not entirely unrepresentative (Bloch 2009:117).

Secondly, it has more direct implications. He quotes Taylor to the effect that:

> More disturbing is that dysfunctional schools are unable to socialize young people into the attitudes of mind required for citizenship in a democracy … school leavers are easy prey to a life of crime, poverty, corruption and inefficiency (cited in Bloch 2009:68).

This is important because while a well-run, inclusive and more democratic school can help to reduce external and internal forms of violence – as the results from this study further indicate – a poorly-run and badly organised school is more prone to various forms of violence.

On a more fundamental level, why does violence occur in and why is it perpetrated by an institution (the school) that is supposed to nurture learning in a safe and caring environment? One argument, supported by a range of evidence from countries across the globe (Harber 2004–2009), is that – despite most countries having signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – for the majority of learners schooling is an essentially authoritarian experience, and that this has important implications for the later discussions of modes of schooling and violence. This is because authoritarian organisation provides an environment where learners' rights, needs, and feelings

can too readily be ignored or suppressed, and where it is difficult for teachers or learners to act independently and to critique and challenge dominant social and political orthodoxies, including those that lead to violent behaviour and conflict. Authoritarian schools are therefore schools that reproduce and perpetrate not only the socioeconomic and political inequalities of the surrounding society, but also the violent relationships that often go with them.

With regard to schooling, with certain exceptions (Harber 2004:Ch.10; Harber & Mncube 2012), the dominant or hegemonic model globally remains authoritarian rather than democratic. Education for and in democracy, human rights, and critical awareness are not primary characteristics of the majority of schooling systems. While the degree of harshness and despotism within authoritarian schools varies from context to context and from institution to institution, in the majority of schools power over what is taught and learned, how it is taught and learned, where it is taught and learned, when it is taught and learned, and what the general learning environment is like is not in the hands of learners. It is predominantly government officials, headteachers, and teachers who decide – not learners. Most schools are essentially authoritarian institutions, however benevolent or benign that authoritarianism is, and whatever beneficial aspects of learning are imparted. In this authoritarian situation of relative powerlessness and neglect of their human rights, learners can be mistreated violently or be influenced by potentially violent beliefs because the dominant norms and behaviours of the broader society are shared and not challenged by many adults in the formal education system.

There are two closely interconnected social/psychological explanations of the causes of violent behaviour in relation to socialisation that are relevant to the authoritarian role of schooling in reproducing and perpetrating violence.

The first is the idea of role modelling, that is if those adults who young people are expected by society to admire, respect and imitate are consistently authoritarian to them, they will come to accept this as the normal way of relating to others – giving orders or taking orders. Similarly, if those in authority over them are physically violent and abusive towards them, then this becomes normal for them and they will reproduce this violence in their own relationships with others. In other words, they become socialised, through imitation, into authoritarianism, repression and violent means to achieve ends. The psychoanalyst Alice Miller has written convincingly about the authoritarian roots of violence in child rearing, driven partly by her need to understand how leading Nazis could have behaved in the way that they did. She stated that she was unable to find a single figure amongst the leading Nazis who did not have a strict, rigid and authoritarian upbringing. Indeed, her book *For Your Own Good* begins with a telling quote:

> Rudolph Hess, Commandant at the Auschwitz concentration camp, said,
>
> It was constantly impressed upon me in forceful terms that I must obey promptly the wishes and commands of my parents, teachers and priests, and indeed of all grown-up people, including servants, and that nothing must distract me from this duty. Whatever they said was always right. These basic principles by which I was brought up became second nature to me (Miller 1987:xxiii).

In her book Miller analyses what she terms the "poisonous pedagogy" of doing harm to children while using a language that purports to be doing them good. Miller argues that the poisonous pedagogy of the role models of parents and teachers imparts to the child from the beginning beliefs about behaviour and relationships that have been passed on from generation to generation, even though they are false. Some of these as outlined by Miller are:

- children are undeserving of respect simply because they are children

- obedience makes a child strong

- a high degree of self-esteem is harmful

- a low degree of self-esteem makes a person altruistic

- tenderness is harmful

- severity and coldness (including corporal punishment) are a good preparation for life (Miller 1987:59/60)

It is interesting to note that in the Cambridge study of Delinquent Development in the UK the biggest difference between the violent offenders and nonviolent frequent offenders was in parental authoritarianism, with the violent offenders having more authoritarian parents (Gulbenkian Foundation 1995:48).

The second, related idea is that authoritarianism and its emphasis on automatic obedience to orders is very dangerous as it conditions and permits individuals to carry out violent acts by proving a justification or legitimation for them – "I was only obeying orders". Many individual acts of violence have been carried out and justified in the name of the duty to obey. Milgram's experiments using ordinary people to carry out what they thought were acts of violence against others simply because the authority said that it was necessary indicated that behaviour similar to that of officials in Nazi Germany could be replicated in American citizens. The experiment involved two people: an actor playing the part of a learner trying to remember different words and the other – the real subject – playing the role of the teacher. The subject was told to give the learner an electric shock every time he missed a word and to increase the voltage as he got more answers wrong. They had no idea that the shouting and writhing of the "learners" were not real, but in many cases continued to administer the shocks at dangerous levels when pressed by their instructor. Before the experiments it was predicted that about 1% would obey the order to use violence whereas incidences between 33% and 50% were recorded (Milgram 1971). As Professor Philip Zimbardo of Stanford University, who carried out similar experiments using "prisoner"/"guard" roles, said in a film on the origins of violent tyranny: "More crimes are committed in the name of obedience than disobedience. It is those who follow any authority blindly who are the real danger" (Bright 2000). His subsequent book, *The Lucifer Effect*, which included a study of behaviour at the American run Abu Gharib prison in Iraq, was subtitled *Why Good People Turn Bad*. In other words, he argues that in the right social context and circumstances anybody is capable of inflicting violence on others. We are all capable of doing good or perpetrating violence, depending on our social contexts and socialisation.

Of course, in an authoritarian setting with an expectation of obedience, with low levels of concern for social justice, and with no other ways of dealing with dissent

or difference, individuals or groups who reject what is happening to them may well resort to physical violence because there is no other way to respond, or because they have learned that this is the normal way to behave and respond – violence may be an inevitable reaction to violent structures. Learners in Canada, for example, were asked in focus groups to identify what it was about schools that made them angry. Learners listed hundreds of things that made them angry but at the crux of the matter were power relationships and matters of equity (Ross Epp 1996:8). Many aspects of these two explanations for the causes of violence discussed above have been and could still be found in the organisation, values and practices of formal schooling.

At this point it should be made clear that the alternative to these authoritarian forms – more democratic relationships in schools as a means of reducing violence – does not mean a lack of discipline or order but rather a change to more democratic forms of discipline and order (Harber, Davies & Schweisfurth 2002, 2005). Schools organised along more democratic lines would have a culture of mutual respect, civility and politeness, as well as the freedom to make constructive criticism and engage in free and open debate (Harber & Mncube 2012). Indeed, post-apartheid education policies have had an overwhelming emphasis on the role of education in helping to create a more democratic and peaceful society:

> The realization of democracy, liberty, equality, justice and peace are necessarily conditions for the full pursuit and enjoyment of lifelong learning. It should be a goal of education and training policy to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take root and prosper in our land, on the basis that all South Africans without exception share the same inalienable rights, equal citizenship and common destiny, and that all forms of bias (especially racial, ethnic and gender) are dehumanising (Department of Education 1995:22).

A study of three schools operating in a more democratic manner in South Africa at the end of the 1990s (Harber & Muthukrishna 2000) suggested that:

> … the schools were clearly and recognisably carrying out their basic functions as schools in a consistent and reliable way, something which cannot necessarily be taken for granted in South Africa. All three schools exhibited an orderly, purposeful and calm atmosphere with clean premises and businesslike behaviour. Teachers and learners were in classrooms when they were supposed to be and learners experienced a full day's planned curriculum each day. However, the schools were also interesting in that they went beyond these possible minimum level indicators of functional effectiveness in their willingness to embrace change and in their commitment to implementing a new educational ideology aimed at fostering a nonviolent, nonracist democratic society (2000:430).

However, authoritarian practices stubbornly remain in some South African schools. A report on research, carried out by the Presidential Education Initiative and published in 1999 (Vally 1999), indicated that OBE is succeeding in the ideological domain, with teachers embracing its main intentions. However, many teachers did not have the conceptual resources to give effect to it in the classrooms. Teachers, particularly in poorly resourced schools, were not in a position to translate the broad outcomes of Curriculum 2005 into appropriate learning programmes nor to develop their own assessment strategies. The researchers observed significant contradictions between teachers' verbal support of the learner-centred pedagogy of Curriculum 2005 and

the actual practices of these same teachers. The following teacher-centred practices were commonly observed:

- The teacher talks and low-level questions dominate lessons.

- Lessons are generally characterised by a lack of structure and the absence of activities which promote higher order skills such as investigation, understanding relationships and curiosity.

- Real world examples are often used but at a very superficial level.

- Little group work or other interaction occurs between learners.

- Learners do little reading or writing. When it exists, it is often of a very rudimentary kind.

A study of schooling in rural South Africa found that, while 90% of teachers claimed to be using a variety of active teaching methods, the responses from learners and the observations of the researchers strongly suggested that the majority of teachers continued to use traditional, teacher-centred methods of monologue and rote learning. Classroom activity was dominated by three modes: reading, writing and correcting (Nelson Mandela Foundation 2005:Ch.5).

In 1996 the new democratic state published a White Paper on the organisation governance and funding of schools (Republic of South Africa 1996b), from which emanated the *South African Schools Act* 84 of 1996 (SASA). The SASA became operative at the beginning of 1997 and mandated that all public state schools in South Africa must have democratically elected school governing bodies (SGBs) composed of teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and learners (the latter in secondary schools). Parents are supposed to be the majority in the SGBs and the chair of the governing should come from the parent component (Mncube, Harber & Du Plessis 2011). The SASA provides for secondary school learners, who are members of the Representative Council for Learners (RCL), to be part of school governance through participation in School Governing Bodies. Furthermore, this Act is regarded as a tool aimed at, *inter alia*, redressing past exclusions and facilitating the necessary transformation to support the ideals of representation and participation in the schools and the country. With the introduction of the SASA, the state was purporting to foster democratic school governance, thereby introducing a school governance structure that involves all educational stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles in order to promote issues of democracy: tolerance; rational discussion; and collective decisionmaking (Department of Education 1996:16).

However, despite the existence of these democratic principles and practices, Naidoo still found that learners were insufficiently involved in decisionmaking in the two schools. Indeed, a number of scholars in South Africa have been critical of the actual practices of SGBs (see, for example, Naidoo 2005). They have argued that conflicts and dilemmas among the membership of School Governing Bodies are central to the experience of school governance. Studies on the functioning of the new School Governing Bodies (Mncube 2005; Bush & Heystek 2003; Brown & Duku 2008; Ministerial Review Committee 2004) found that members of governing bodies tended to be male, that principals still played a dominant role in meetings and decisionmaking processes, and that teachers tended to participate in

meetings more than other stakeholders. Parents, the numerically dominant group under the legislation, were hampered in many areas by a skills capacity deficit and communication and transportation problems. Learner participation was only moderate and concentrated on fundraising, learner discipline and sports activities. Subsequently, while the structural dimension of democratic governance had been established, power relations, i.e. the dominance of the principal, remained much the same. So, if, as argued above, authoritarianism plays a significant part in reproducing and perpetrating violence, it is still unfortunately also a significant element in the continuation of violence in South African schools.

Finally, as we have seen above, sexual harassment of females by males persists as a serious problem in South African schools. So why is it that in many societies men are more predisposed towards perpetrating violence than women? The answer lies in the learned or socialised behaviour around what it means to be and act as a man. Although there are multiple forms of masculine identity within and between societies, there are also dominant or hegemonic forms of male identity internationally, which have traditionally preserved patriarchal power and privilege. Among the characteristics of this hegemonic form of masculinity are misogyny, homophobia, racism, compulsory heterosexuality, the importance of sport, a denial of emotions, competition, success, individualism, strength, toughness and the threat or use of violence to get what is wanted or, often, what it is assumed the male is entitled to and has a right to. Boys or men who deviate from this dominant model are seen, labelled, and treated as "unmanly" (Morrell 1998; Salisbury & Jackson 1996; Frank 1996). It is obviously a model of masculinity that predicates aggressive behaviour and a proclivity towards violence. As Salisbury and Jackson put it: "… men and boys aren't violent because they have male bodies. They are violent in order to become more masculine (1996:106)."

What role does schooling play in not only reproducing this model by omission but also actively encouraging such potentially violent, macho models of masculinity? The first and most obvious point is that, for better or worse, teachers are role models. Male teachers act as role models for male learners. By being involved in sexual harassment and rape, male teachers are actively encouraging their male learners to behave in a similar manner.

Salisbury and Jackson (1996) identify a number of ways in which schools actively perpetuate forms of masculine identity that lend itself to violent interpretation. Although writing primarily about a British context, the aspects they identify are common features of schooling internationally. Firstly, they argue that the way in which schools are organised – their authority patterns and forms of discipline – reinforces key aspects of the hegemonic masculinity outlined above, which is why men have traditionally dominated school management:

> Teaching is seen to be about control and authoritarian certainty. It is also the visible face of material male power in the establishment. The characteristics of effective teaching become talking from the front and controlling any child's responses. It is also about a system of duties, patrolling corridors and the constant checking of learners' presence. The atmosphere of control will be underpinned by the need to impose a strong, hard, authoritarian disciplinary system … Many male teachers maintain their authority over learners by a "hard-line" rule of fear. They control by threats and a loud voice to reduce

learners to frightened silence. From such an aggressive disciplinary style boys learn that "this is how you get what you want". Male teachers are also very competitive around their ability to establish firm discipline. There is ridicule of "soft" members of staff behind their backs … Boys learn to expect dominant authoritarian behaviour from male teachers since it provides a role model for superior power and strength. It mirrors much of the power they see exhibited by other men in their daily lives – their fathers, brothers, uncles and grandfathers (1996:18/22/28).

Secondly, the curriculum is seen as "academic masculinist" in that knowledge is presented as abstract, neutral, and value free:

> School knowledge retains the academic form of a self-referring, abstract body of knowledge which strongly separates what is learned from the personal and social experiences of the learner. Knowledge is also organised hierarchically from the less difficult to the more difficult. This emphasises the idea of there being one path through the material which is necessary to follow. The way knowledge is imparted is by means of transfer teaching i.e. something the teacher knows is transferred to the mind of the learner, i.e. a "delivery" model. This still occurs by means of chalk and talk and teaching from the front so that impersonal science demands an impersonal teaching style with no attempts to link what is done with the lives of children. Links with learners as people are superficial because of the way teachers know their subject and desire to impart subject knowledge. Knowledge control and what needs to be known is in the hands of men (1996:25).

While alternative forms of knowing can be found in schools, the above form tends to be taken more seriously. An interesting example of this is provided by Hutchinson (1996:113/114) in relation to Australia. A national curriculum mapping study was conducted by the directors of curriculum from the various school systems across the country. In the eight state systems functional literacy in reading and writing, numeracy, and computer literacy were consistently given high priority while social literacy/problem solving skills/social living skills/conflict resolution skills were given medium priority in four states and low priority in the other four.

Thirdly, they argue that closely allied to this curriculum is the way learning is organised and tested. The emphasis on individual competition is closely linked with patriarchal values. They argue that:

> Competition brings up many kinds of unpleasant feelings, such as being pushy and arrogant around winning and sneakily resentful around failure (p. 31).

> While competition and testing and the resulting stress and illness is the major theme of the next chapter, here the important point is that exams, league tables and competition "activates the notion of manly values around winners and losers" and "that not to shape up properly as a boy in competition with others causes pain, resentment and antisocial behaviour in the form of truancy, disruptiveness and other attention-grabbing devices. After all, a competitive system that fails some boys academically and physically compels a compensatory assertion of masculine pride, a competition in machismo to enable male power to be demonstrated and admired" (p. 32).

A fourth way in which schools reinforce hegemonic models of masculinity is through sport. Playing sport in a manly way implies a determination to win at all costs by gritting teeth and ignoring the hurt of physical clashes:

> The language of school sports for many boys is the language of warfare – "Hit them hard today, lads!" All the talk is of combat, battles, seeing your opponent as the enemy and military conquest. There is a gladiatorial type of imagery of sparring, grappling and not deserting your post. The results of this sport-as-welfare approach are often to normalise aggressive competitiveness in the lives of many boys (p. 205).

A note on official strategies for reducing violence in South African schools

In line with the provision of the Constitution, the South African Schools Act (SASA) 1996 prohibits corporal punishment (Republic of South Africa 1996b). With regard to discipline, the SASA empowers School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to adopt a learners' code of conduct after consulting teachers, learners, and parents (Republic of South Africa 1996). In terms of the provision of the SASA a code of conduct is intended to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment (Republic of South Africa 1996). Teachers should be guided by the "Code of Professional Ethics" of the South African Council for Educators. Some of the provisions of the code of conduct that should be borne in mind when reading the results of this research project are, for example, that an educator (teacher) should,

- respect the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners and in particular children, which includes the right to privacy and confidentiality.

- acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner; guiding and encouraging each to realise his or her potential.

- exercise authority with compassion.

- avoid any form of humiliation, and refrain from any form of abuse, physical or psychological.

- refrain from improper physical contact with learners.

- promote gender equality.

- refrain from any form of sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of learners.

- refrain from any form of sexual relationship with learners at any school.

- use appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners and act in a way to elicit respect from learners.

- take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the learner.

- not be negligent or indolent in the performance of his or her professional duties.

To demonstrate their seriousness about the safety of learners in schools, the South African government passed an amending Act (*Education Laws Amendment Act* 31 of 2007) in this regard, which stipulates in relation to searches in schools that:

8A. (1) Unless authorised by the *principal* for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* onto *school* premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on *school* premises or during any *school* activity.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the *principal* or his or her delegate may, at random, search any group of *learners*, or the property of a group of *learners*, for any *dangerous object* or *illegal drug*, if a fair and reasonable suspicion has been established

(a) that a *dangerous object* or an *illegal drug* may be found on *school* premises or during a *school activity*; or

(b) that one or more *learners* on *school* premises or during a *school activity* are in possession of *dangerous objects* or *illegal drugs*.

(3) (a) A search contemplated in subsection (2) may only be conducted after taking into account all relevant factors, including

(i) the best interest of the *learners* in question or of any other *learner* at the *school*;

(ii) the safety and health of the *learners* in question or of any other *learner* at the *school*;

(iii) reasonable evidence of illegal activity; and

(iv) all relevant evidence received.

(b) When conducting a search contemplated in subsection (2), the *principal* or his or her delegate must do so in a manner that is reasonable and proportional to the suspected illegal activity.

Finally, the *Education Laws Amendment Act* 31 of 2007 is intended to, *inter alia*, provide guidance pertaining to drug testing, random search and seizure at schools. Section 8A of this section prohibits any person to bring to the school any dangerous objects and illegal drugs unless the principal has granted permission to such a person. The section further stipulates procedures that should be followed when searching learners and testing them (Republic of South Africa 2007).

3. Research design and methodology

3.1 Research problem

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa declares that everyone is entitled to live in a safe environment, yet this safety is not entirely realised in South African schools due to violence. In essence, as we have seen above, violence is a problem in schools globally and is commonplace in South African schools. Media reports often reveal horrific incidents of different forms of violence that occur in South African schools. As a result of violence in schools, the South African Democratic

Teachers Union (SADTU) is suggesting that teachers should be paid a danger allowance because some learners go to school carrying weapons. The union argues that teachers work in dangerous situations like the police (SAPA 2011). Violence in South African schools, therefore, is a matter of concern. The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP 2009) in its study reported feelings of fear in South African schools, with 11,6% of female learners and 8% of male learners feeling safe in schools. Learners and teachers are equally exposed to violence. Teachers and learners in schools alike are exposed to school violence in one way or another. The study conducted by Rossouw (2008) revealed that teachers have been subjected to physical and psychological violence in South African schools. In one incident a pregnant teacher was kicked and injured by learners, and in one of the schools in the Western Cape, the school principal was allegedly beaten up by a parent (Rossouw 2008). In spite of attempts to protect the interests of teachers through the *Employment of Educators Act* 76 of 1998, teachers don't feel safe in schools. Many teachers are planning to quit and others are demanding armed guards at schools (Rossouw 2008). A survey of recent media reports shows numerous incidents of violence against teachers (SABC 2011). In an alarming example of such violence, a female teacher was stabbed in the stomach in class at one of the public schools in Soweto, Gauteng (SABC 2011). It is against this background that this study explored the dynamics of school violence in schools in six South African provinces.

The ***objectives*** of the project were to:

1. Elicit perceptions and experiences of learners, teachers, other school staff, governors and parents about school violence.

2. Categorise the types of violence that occur in South African schools both in terms of the nature of the violence and the actors involved.

3. Compare such perceptions, experiences, and incidences across six provinces of South Africa.

4. Generate and assess quantitative and qualitative data and typologies of violence within the school environment, which can be used for self-evaluation by a school.

5. Identify and evaluate measures and initiatives taken by schools and their communities to promote a violence-free or secure environment in the school.

6. Investigate the extent to which violence is a barrier to learning.

Significance of the study

It is hoped that this research will contribute to national and international debates on violence in schools. It is different from most of the studies conducted in this area as it uses a range of stakeholders of the school community – learners, parents, teachers, School Governing Body members in garnering information on issues of violence across six different provinces in South Africa. The study is also high on validity and reliability since it utilises a variety of data collection instruments namely interviews, observations, and a questionnaire. Also, it is hoped that it contributes to developing theories on school violence by looking beyond incidents and types of violence in an attempt to understand more about both how and why schools play a part in both reproducing and perpetrating violence. What is it about the nature of schooling generally, and the way in which it operates in South Africa in particular, that makes violence more possible? While the study recognises and details how violence within

the broader society impacts on schools, it is however the beliefs, practices, and behaviours *within* schools that sanction violence – either directly or by omission by doing nothing – that are the real significance of this study.

3.2   Research methodology

This is a primarily qualitative study that also employed some "quantitative" research methods. In order to get at the "lived" reality of violence in schools, qualitative research was used. Semi-structured interviews with teachers, learners, principals, members of the non-teaching staff, and members of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) as well as focus group interviews with learners, and observations allowed the researchers to get a feel for the "flesh and blood" and more nuanced and detailed reality of what happens inside schools. This allowed the researchers to obtain insights and an understanding of the how and why of violence in schools based on the perceptions and experiences of those involved. The attempt was to get at the "truth" of violence in schools as seen by the key participants.

Questionnaires were also administered across the six provinces in order to obtain a broad, quantitative feel for the situation across South Africa. To get a picture of the overall structure or skeleton of violence in South African schools, the questionnaires were aimed at: What does it look like? How big is it? What shapes is it? Furthermore, the aim of using questionnaires was to reveal a generalised, more quantitative "truth" of the bigger picture. The aim was therefore to balance the reliability of using a large sample for the questionnaires to make generalisations about South Africa with the validity of more in-depth, qualitative, first hand, face to face research in the schools in order to get two different types of complementary pictures.

Selection of schools and sampling: qualitative research

Four secondary schools were selected from each of the six provinces for the purpose of carrying out interviews. The criteria used for selection were based on anecdotal evidence of incidences – this evidence was garnered from media reports and conversations with "critical friends" (teachers, principals, ward managers, and school governors etc.). The schools were chosen based on the perception that these schools are violent, as per discussion with the critical friends mentioned above. Further, based on the criteria, all the schools identified were put on the short list in each province and the four most convenient schools in respect of access and proximity to the researchers were finally chosen.

Interviews

This research project focused on experiences and insights of the participants, which was the main reason for using mainly qualitative approaches. Interviews were used to "get under the skin" of the organisations concerned. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to examine the dynamics of violence in schools and the measures used to prevent it. Mertens (1998) contends that interviews allow intimate, repeated and prolonged involvement of the researcher and the participant, which enables the researcher to get to the root of what is being investigated. Rubin and Rubin as cited in Arskey and Knight (1999:33), suggest that semi-structured interviews are a way of uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin people's lives, routines, behaviours, and feelings.

Sampling procedures for interviews

The sample comprised the following:

Learners: Learners who were 14 years old were used for the sample. Two groups of learners were interviewed. One group consisted of learners who had been affected by violence, while the second group consisted of those learners who had perpetrated violence.

Teachers: A purposive sample of two teachers (the school principal and the Life Orientation teacher for Grade 9) in each school in each province was used.

School governors: A purposive sample of two representatives of School Governing Bodies (the chair of governors and the chair of the school's discipline, safety and security committee) in each province in each school was used.

Support staff: A purposive sample of two members of support (general assistant and a security guard in the school) in each school in each province was used.

Table – Interviews conducted in each province

Participants	School A	School B	School C	School D	Total
School governors	2	2	2	2	8
Teachers	2	2	2	2	8
Support staff	2	2	2	2	8
Learners: Victims	1	1	1	1	4
Learners: Perpetrators	1	1	1	1	4
Total					**32**

The total number of interviews conducted in the six provinces was 32 x 6 = 192

Case studies

The study used case studies as one of the approaches of qualitative research. Two case studies were carried out by teachers working in schools in KwaZulu-Natal where the project leader conducted research. Funding levels restricted the number of case studies that could take place. The findings from the two case study schools are presented at the end of the discussion of the findings.

A case study is a type of research approach that involves the intensive study of an individual or a group as an entity, using for example interviews, observations, and document reviews (Cohen et al. 2002). Keeves and Lakomski (1999) define a case study as a term referring to the investigation of an individual group or a phenomenon, observing that:

> The distinguishing feature of case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose connection of traits.

This implies that in order to understand why things happen as they do requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies and the pattern that emerges. It is important to mention that in case study, researchers do not aim to cover a whole population but to provide an in-depth picture of a particular area of the educational world (Drever 1995). Edwards and Talbot (1999) contend that in the social sciences, case studies are employed to allow a finely-tuned exploration of complex sets of inter-relationships.

Edwards and Talbot (1999) view a case as an integrated system. Denscombe (1998:30) highlights, as follows, those characteristics that differentiate case studies from survey research and experimental research:

- *Spotlight on the instance:* A case study focuses on one instance of a thing to be investigated. The reason for this is to gain insights that might otherwise not have emerged if a large number of instances were used. It is for this reason that in the present study only four case study schools out of thousands of schools in the country were chosen. In addition, only one province out of the nine provinces in the country was be used. This enabled me to get the "gist of the matter" in respect of the functioning of School Governing Bodies in the country.

- *In-depth study:* A case study is used to "get under the skin" of the instance being investigated, so that some valuable and unique insights may be obtained.

- *Focus on relationships and processes:* Social settings are characterised by the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of relationships and processes. Denscombe (1998) suggests that the case study approach offers more chance of focusing on relationships and processes than other approaches because it goes into sufficient detail to unravel the complexities of a given situation. For this reason case studies are said to be "holistic rather than dealing with isolated facts" (Denscombe 1998:31).

- *Multiple sources and multiple methods:* One of the main merits of a case study is that it allows the researcher to use a variety of research methods, a variety of sources, and a variety of other types of data as part of the investigation. In the light of this, the present study used observations, interviews, and document analysis. This facilitates validity and triangulation.

- *Natural setting:* The instance to be investigated occurs in a natural setting, and not in a situation that is generated artificially for the purpose of the research. Yin (1994) stresses the fact that the case is a naturally occurring phenomenon, which existed prior to the research project and continues to exist even when the research project is accomplished. In summary, Denscombe (1998:32) contends:

Case studies focus on one instance (or a few instances) of a particular phenomenon with a view to providing an in-depth account of events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in that particular instance.

Edwards and Talbot (1999) suggest that case studies are used in a variety of ways and their use depend on the research approach employed. They suggest that case studies can be used to explain, describe and to explore how processes operate. The present study explored the nature and sources of violence that occur in schools in South Africa.

Boundaries of a case study

> The use of a case study approach assumes that the researcher is able to separate some aspects of social life so that it is distinct from other things of the same kind and distinct from its social context (Denscombe 1998:37).

Without a boundary it would be difficult to define a case study. Denscombe goes on to suggest that "if the case has no end-point, no outside, then it bleeds into other social phenomena and ceases to have any distinct identity" (Denscombe 1998:38). It is, therefore, imperative that the case study has a boundary that would allow a researcher to see what is contained within the case study so that what is outside of it will be excluded. Determining the boundary of the case study was problematic in this study. For instance, when looking at issues of violence in schools, it was difficult to solely consider violence taking place in schools excluding the community where it is situated. When investigating violence in schools, it is for instance, necessary to look at the history of the school, staffing, physical structure, social environment, provisions, and its community location.

Generalising from case studies

Denscombe (1998:35) proposes:

> The value of the case study approach is that it has the potential to deal with the subtleties and intricacies of a complex social situation … The social researcher is likely to confront scepticism which arises from doubts about how far it is reasonable to generalize from the findings of one case.

He provides advice that it is a good practice for any researcher who undertakes a case study approach to pre-empt possible criticism by addressing the issue head-on, by stating that one cannot generalise from case study findings. However, each case, no matter how unique it might be, can serve as an example of a broader class of things (Denscombe 1998). With regard to the present study, the two case study schools are used as an example of whether or not schools contribute to violence and how.

There are certain advantages to using a case study approach. Edwards and Talbot (1999:56) categorically outline some of these:

- It captures complexities.

- It allows in-depth focusing on shifting relationships.

- It provides readable data that brings research to life and are true to the concerns and meanings under scrutiny.

- It allows focus on the local understanding and sense-making of the participants in the case and the opportunity for the voices of the participants to be heard.

Furthermore, Denscombe (1998:39) adds:

- Case study approach allows the investigator to deal with the subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations, by way of enabling the researcher to deal with the relationships and social processes which would have been otherwise difficult to deal with using a survey approach.

- Case study approach allows the investigator to employ a variety of methods to capture the complex reality under investigation.

- It is possible to achieve the valid data (validity) through triangulation because a case study approach fosters the use of multiple sources of data.

- Theory-building and theory-testing could both use case study approach successfully.

- Case study approach is useful where the researcher has little control over events.

- Case study occurs in a natural setting, therefore, there is no pressure on the researcher to impose controls.

- Case study approach fits in well with the needs of small-scale research through concentrating effort on one or less research sites.

However, Denscombe (1998:40) also outlines the following disadvantages of a case study approach:

- The case study approach is mostly criticised in relation to credibility of generalisation made from its findings. It is therefore the task of the case study researcher to allay suspicions and demonstrate the extent to which the case is similar to, or contrasts with, other cases of its type.

- The boundaries of the case are very difficult to define in an absolute and clear-cut fashion. This creates a problem in terms of deciding which sources of data to incorporate in the case study and which to exclude.

- Case studies are seen to be producing 'soft' data. The approach is criticised for lacking the degree of rigour that is required of social science research.

- Negotiating access to case study sites can be demanding and time-consuming. Access to documents, people and settings can generate ethical problems, particularly on the issues of confidentiality.

- The presence of a researcher in a setting can affect the investigation. The participants, though in a natural setting, may alter their behaviour and act in an unnatural or unusual way. This in turn distorts the research findings.

Case study methods

Participant observation

The two case studies used participant observation by teachers employed in two different schools as a key research method. The participant observation took place over a three month period following discussions with the research project leader, and having seen paperwork, about the nature and purposes of the research. Each participant observer kept notes based on what they saw and heard in informal comments and discussions.

Participant observation is used to get "under the skin" of the organisations concerned and to understand the culture and processes of the organisations being investigated

(Denscombe 1998). Denscombe (1998:139) notes the following characteristics of participant observation:

- *Direct observation:* The researcher is part of the situation unlike in documents, where the researcher is removed from the action and in interviews and questionnaires which are based on what the participants tell the researcher.

- *Fieldwork:* The collection of data is in real life situations in the field. Since the data is collected in the field, this method renders itself to the empirical method of data collection. The researcher goes in search of information and does not rely on secondary documents.

- *Natural setting:* Fieldwork observation occurs in natural settings, it occurs in situations which would have occurred whether or not the research has taken place. The essence is to observe things as they normally happen and not as they happen under artificially created conditions, as is the case with the laboratory experiments.

- *The issue of perception:* It is argued that the process of observation is far from straightforward. Observations are sensitive to the possibility that the researcher's perceptions of situations might be influenced by personal factors and the data collected could thus be less reliable.

Documents

In each case study school various sorts of school documents were also scrutinised. Subject to confidentiality considerations, these included: School policies on violence, bullying, harassment; general school behaviour policies; codes of conduct for teachers and learners; punishment and discipline records; recording of violent incidents, engagement with the police; complaints procedures and logs; minutes of meetings held by staff which discuss related areas; minutes of learner council or other learner meetings; communications with outside agencies such as police, probation service, and community organisations; inspection reports; misconduct book (serious cases); disciplinary hearing/s with the SGBs warranting suspension and expulsion; records of misconduct per class; ground duty book and correspondence to parents about the violation of rules.

Questionnaire: quantitative research

In addition, a questionnaire was used in order to generate quantitative data on the incidence of violence and to reach the wider audience for issues of generalisability. A questionnaire was used to gather data from learners, the rationale being that learners are the ones who are mainly affected by violence in schools and they are also the ones who are in the majority with regard to the stakeholders of a school. A questionnaire was distributed to learners who were in Grade 9 (14-year-olds) in 2011. Based on Grade/Age norms, as determined by the Department of Education, the assumption is that all learners who are 14-year-olds are in Grade 9 (Department of Education 1996).

Two researchers in each province self-administered a total of 200 questionnaires. Two schools were randomly selected in each province and 100 questionnaires were self-administered in each school. In total 1 200 questionnaires were administered in all of the six provinces in line with the following table.

Province	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
	200	200	200	200	200	200	1 200

Since there are six provinces involved in the project, it means 1 200 questionnaires were self-administered in the six provinces. Self-administration of a questionnaire was done in order to achieve a good return rate. Teachers in most schools where questionnaires were administered, were also very supportive in many ways. They helped with the administration of questionnaires, and, in some cases, they made photocopies where there was an unexpected shortage in the number of questionnaires. The study opted for self-administration of questionnaires to learners by researchers after learning a lesson from teachers who were very reluctant to complete questionnaires despite having agreed to take part in the study. The return rate of teacher questionnaires was so poor that the study had to drop the idea using a questionnaire for principals and teachers. However, due to the self-administration of learner questionnaire by researchers the return rate was very good. Out of 1 200 questionnaires administered, 1 050 were returned – a return rate of 88%.

Analysis of data

Qualitative data

Qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis. Since a voice recorder was used for interviews, the study had to get transcribers who were fluent in the language of the participants in the particular province or area. For example, in North West the study had to get transcribers who were fluent in Setswana to do the transcription as well as interpretation.

As indicated above, interviews were conducted in the home language for learners and had to be translated after the transcriptions were done. The study was cognisant of the fact that translating has a number of problems regarding validity or reliability of the data collected. However, caution was used to check the accurateness of the data transcribed and translated. In a nutshell, the interviews were subsequently transcribed and analysed according to the phenomenological steps analytical frameworks of Giorgi et al. (1975) where we:

(1) Read each transcript to get an overall sense of the whole.

(2) Re-read the transcripts and identify transactions in the experience (each transition signifying a separate unit of meaning).

(3) Eliminate redundancies in the units of meaning, and begin to relate the remaining units to one another.

(4) Transform the participants' language into the language of science.

(5) Synthesise the insights into a description of the entire experience of leadership practices.

After the transcriptions and interpretation of data was done, responses were arranged according to each question asked and for each category of participants. Researchers (team members) were encouraged to print the arranged responses in order to analyse them using the analytical frameworks of Giorgi et al. (1975) above. Researchers read

and re-read the transcriptions in order to get the deeper sense of what is contained in each of the interviews in order to make sense for analysis. While doing the thorough reading, they were able to identify the themes on which the write-up of the report is based.

Quantitative data from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. The project employed a statistician who prepared a SPSS tool in which the data was captured, thereafter we employed the services of a data capturer who captured all the 1 050 questionnaires. Once the data was captured it was sent back to the statistician for analysis.

Using provincial reports from the six different provinces, Professor Clive Harber from Birmingham University, who is also an Honorary Professor at Unisa, compiled this national report to ensure that the literature review and theoretical frameworks were strengthened in relation to the data.

Ethical issues

A number of ethical issues were taken into account in this sensitive research area.

1. Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy were respected. An exception would have been on an occasion that information emerged that could allude to harm being done to an individual, which would have to be reported to the appropriate agency. This proviso was communicated and agreed to before the start of any interview. The participants were promised anonymity and they remained anonymous regardless of the information they provided. However, if respondents were warned beforehand in writing that such cases would be reported to the police, it would have meant that nobody would have been willing to share their stories with researchers; which would have rendered this research exercise null and void. Researchers stated beforehand that they were not there as police nor as government officials but as researchers, so participants were free to share with the researchers whatever information they wanted to share.

2. Provision was made in the event of participants being traumatised in the process. In situations where participants were likely to be traumatised through relating traumatic experiences, free psychological counseling was to be offered through the use of the Department of Education's District-based psychological services personnel. Also, agreement was sought from the school counseling or psychological service beforehand that if such an event occurred, then the respondent would be referred to them. If no such agreement could be made, then the research did not use that particular school.

3. The consent of all participants was sought. Information sheets were provided on research aims; process and use of data; and consent forms were provided and completed by the school, parents, and respondents. These specified the right to withdraw from the research at any point, with data from that respondent not used.

4. Permission from educational authorities was sought where applicable.

5. A system of secure data storage was established for interview transcripts, questionnaires, etc.

6. Rewards and incentives for participants were established where necessary. Any respondent could ask for, and would be sent, a summary of the research findings.

A summary would also be sent to the head of each participating school. Also, in the longer run all schools in all provinces would benefit as the research will hopefully make a contribution to reducing violence in South African schools. In addition, although the subject is sensitive, it is hoped, as previous research has demonstrated, that victims may find the project a "safe forum" to air what they had battled to tell other people in their immediate environments. Subsequently, professional help (much of which is availed through universities, municipalities and other NGO services free of charge) will be used for reference purposes.

7. Feedback to participants was provided, both to verify data used for analysis and to comment on its interpretation. Draft reports will be provided to each school before wider dissemination to make sure that they are comfortable that they cannot be identified and/or that the information is correct.

8. It was made clear that researchers and research assistants could not use the findings of the research in total as their thesis/dissertation or monograph.

9. Any dissemination of the research by any member of the research team in each province would acknowledge the contribution of each member and share the paper with them beforehand; the initiator however could put their name as lead writer.

10. The project was funded by the College of Education at the University of South Africa.

4. Research findings

Introduction: good and bad news

The majority of this report is concerned with incidents and causes of violence in schools in South Africa. While there are some positive elements in the findings, there is much that is negative. So it is important to start with some good news. Some schools in the interview sample did not report a problem. For example, these two learners from schools in North-west Province said:

> Madam this school is okay, it's fun. The teaching Madam, the teachers are okay everything is okay. For me, Madam, everything is okay (Learner North West).

> The reason why I like this school is that because when you come to school you know that the teachers/you are going to learn and also you yourself you are excited because the teachers are going to teach you, because you get more excited as you come to school and learn and you are not coming to play. You are coming here to learn, not only learning about education. Our teachers teach us important things not only the subject but also the morals how to behave also in school. So that also make you feel it's important to listen to the teacher because the teachers are the ones that are making your future to be bright. So that's why I think at school it's important (Learner North West).

Even in the largely urban province of Gauteng some learners reported low levels of violence:

> Violence is not rife in my school; there are few incidents that are being reported now and then (Learner Gauteng).

Violence is not rife in my school (Principal Gauteng).

Violence is reported once in a while in my school (Principal Gauteng).

One key issue stemming from this study is the need to create a well-managed school community where learners feel they belong, are valued and have values that support peaceful conflict resolution. For example, one principal in Gauteng said:

… [in] our school the values are still there because our teachers are still being trained and always at assembly we share these good values. Another caring, what we did at assembly I emphasised the 67 minutes of Mandela … What they do is they sit in group in class. Then I encourage them to help one and other …

This effort by the school is augmented by an initiative by the Department of Education which is referred to as the Soul Buddies. This is a group of learners who are trained into taking some responsibilities within the school such that they take care of other learners to some extent. The principal of this school in Gauteng saw good things coming out of the Soul Buddies initiative, which could help to cultivate a culture of nonviolence in the school. She states:

… there was one boy, a Grade 7 boy, he would bring messages from the Grade R practitioner … He said they have been grouped and that he is in charge of the Grade R learners during break. It is sort of caring for instance there are those that have been distributed according to the zones. For instance, there are those that are put in charge of the feeding station. Then there are those perhaps who monitor.

In a focus group interview, a learner at the same school indicated that those learners who have problems are introduced to the Soul Buddies, who then help them accordingly.

In addition, the school has a charter with the words "How do you feel today valued citizen?" According to the principal, these words are applied by teachers making it a point that they ask learners every morning how they feel. This, according to her, shows that teachers care and that everybody in the school is valued. The principal also states:

… sometimes when we hold awareness and at the assembly, we keep on hammering that there are constitutional values. For instance respect, "ubuntu". We keep on doing that and I also tell the teachers [to] hammer only one or two things to these children so they must know we are free, we are in a democratic world, freedom.

While these are positive examples, the majority of respondents did comment on incidents of violence in schools both in responses to the questionnaire and in the interviews. In relation to the questionnaires, 55% of learners responded that they had been victims of violence in schools:

Table 1 – Have you been a victim of any form of violence in schools, for example bullying, corporal punishment, or abuse by teachers?

Histogram of question 1.1
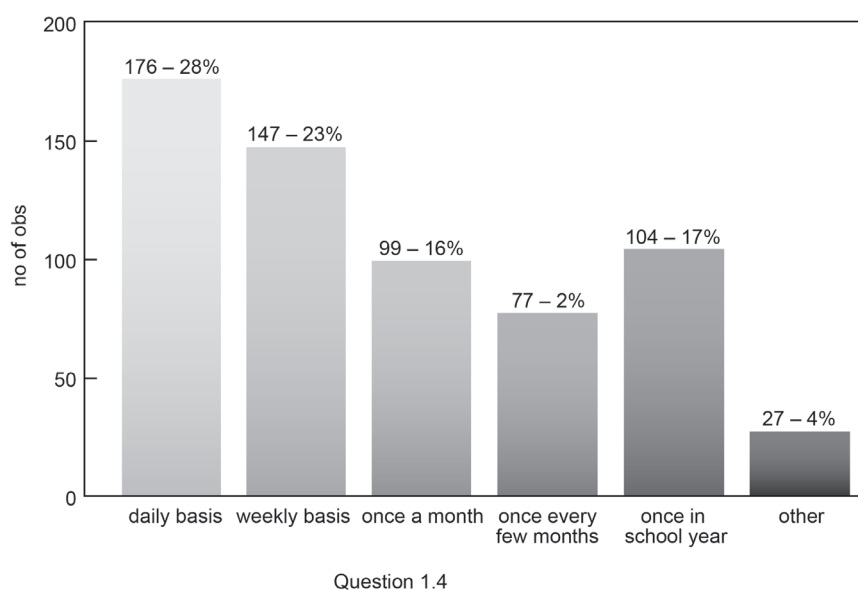Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
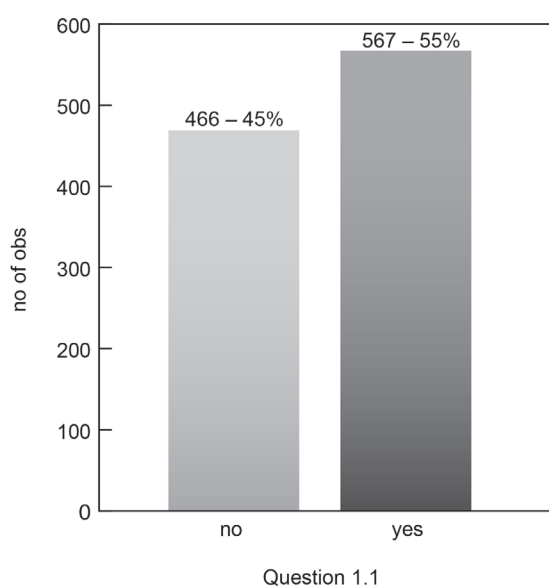
Question 1.1

No	Yes
45	55

Moreover, violence seems to happen in schools on a frequent basis, as displayed in Table 2 below:

Table 2 – How often did these incidents (of violence) occur?

Histogram of question 1.4
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 1.4

A principal in Gauteng, for example, provided the following list for their school in an interview:

Stabbing with pair of scissors
Stabbing with a knife
Stealing a teacher's cell phone
Taking other learners stuff such as books and pens
Using drugs
Bullying
Verbal abuse which lead to physical fighting
Pointing fingers at teachers and promising to beat them

However, there was not necessarily universal agreement as to what constituted violence. One principal of a primary school in Gauteng, for example, thought that when there are no knives involved, it cannot be regarded as violence:

… from there the rest is only fighting and beating one another with stones but not using knives … you know it is caring because of this of throwing the stones to one another, fighting, that is children's behaviour and some of that is their tendency. They are born with that … the type of food that they are enjoying nowadays … makes them to have more energy in their bodies and as such those energies are to be released by doing something, by running all over, by fighting and by throwing stones.

Some principals put the blame for violence solely on the learners:

Learners are involved in all the violent acts that are occurring in the school premises (Principal Gauteng).

… they (learners) do not respect themselves and the teachers (Principal Mpumalanga).

… learners are behaving badly (Principal Mpumalanga).

Learners have conflicts which results in fighting (Principal Mpumalanga).

Learners are involved in all the violent acts that are occurring in the school premises (Principal Mpumalanga).

However, as we shall see below, learners are in fact not the only roleplayers in schools that are responsible for violence.

External factors

Community as a problem

Many respondents who were interviewed blamed the violence in schools on poor upbringing and the nature of the local community:

Who are these violent learners? They are from dysfunctional homes (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Most of the learners are from dysfunctional homes and this is seen in their behaviour in the court of law (Member of SGB Mpumalanga).

The school is located inside a rough community, it's easy for learners to get anything illegal/prohibited in the school premises when they want to (Learner Mpumalanga).

We do have some quite kids who are disciplined and you can see the background that this one is coming from a good home … [but] others have abusive parents. So they end up coming to school and being abusive to other learners (Teacher KZN).

So, where the school is located as well as the learner's home ethos, are understood as playing a significant role in the manner in which learners behave at school. Some participants were of the opinion that if the majority of community members are originally not from the local area, or are tenants, then crime and violence in that community are inevitable. For example, statements like the following were common amongst the interviewees in KwaZulu-Natal:

… unfortunately the tenants are in the majority [in Clermont]. [They] have literally taken over … given the fact that you have people coming from various areas … Obviously if you have people coming from different areas you will have crime related violence (Principal KZN).

This statement is an example of how some of the participants in a township school blame school violence on nonlocals.

In some cases the whole community from which the learners come is blamed for violence in schools. In other words, the blame is not on nonlocals or individual parents but the kind of community from which learners come. For example:

… a school … reflects the kind of society [where it] is situated and learners in our school are also a reflection of the society. So, the society where the school is situated in is a poor society … and there is violence (Principal KZN).

Similarly, the another participant from KwaZulu-Natal indicated: "Most of them come from the RDP homes, less advantaged homes."

As generalising as these statements may be, however, they are still blaming violence to a particular class of people: the poor. In other words, it is poverty that is associated with school violence.

One teacher interviewed in this study related the following story. He states:

… one girl was hit by the other one. They called the brothers … The brothers came to school. They wanted to fight back to that one who stabbed their sister. The other one called her brother as well … It was like the war amongst communities because [the two girls stay in different areas within the community] … and the other one is now a no-go area (Teacher KZN).

Other respondents mentioned the issue of children coming from child-headed households (primarily because of the impact of HIV/AIDS):

I think also the environment where these kids come from plays a role in them being violent because at home they are staying alone there are no parents to guide them. Others they are staying with their grannies, so that is why they

become so violent because there is no one to guide them, so when they come here, whose it's problems (Teacher NWP)!

Learners from age 14 up to age 21 years and other severe cases are well represented in our institution. Now the most challenging things about these learners are that most of them or a high number of them are from poor family backgrounds, that is why you will see in a different shifted manner those learners sometimes would have absolutely nothing, who are unable to pay for school fees, some of them are child-headed households, maybe the eldest in the family is in Grade 9 looking after his or her siblings, but, fortunately, the mayor is helping in that regard (Teacher NWP).

While other respondents were critical of the lack of support for the school among parents:

The other truth is that the parents are not supportive to a great extent, they are not supportive for the good cause. Why I'm saying they are not supportive of the good cause, is if you call parents now to support you about an issue like end of this week, parents do not come to the meetings. Do you understand? That learner has been here since 2005 and believe me we have never had a parents meeting of a total of about 300 parents, except at the end of the year where we issue reports to the parents that's when they are interested in getting here. So that is why I'm saying to a great extent they are not supportive of the good cause of the institution but you then hear about several incidences like the primary school where they are accusing the principal of abusing funds or stealing funds. I'm to understand that thousands of rands were stolen (Teacher NWP).

Finally, in respect of a wider interpretation of community, one principal in Gauteng turned to cultural stereotyping to explain violence in schools:

… [primary school] children can be naughty but their level is still immature, so it's alright. More especially the culture of the Vendas is not rude by nature. Unlike these others, for instance the Zulus who, I'm sorry to say this, are rude and violent … The Vendas you know they are humble people by nature …

While another principal in Gauteng said:

What I like about this school is that it is a Tsonga school because the area in which it is situated is Sakane … Sakane, which means "happy"… people who are here are mostly Tsonga and Zulu …

Of interest here is that the Xitsonga name "Tsakane" means happy, but the isiZulu name of the area from which some of the learners come from is Kalambazo, which may be interpreted as "axe in operation". The same principal had this to say about Kalambazo:

… where there are Zulu-speaking people … it was a very notorious place. When they say Kalambazo, there was a lot of violence that was taking place there.

Gangsterism

One of the themes of external violence affecting schools that became apparent in all provinces was gangsterism and particularly so in the Western Cape. However,

as we shall see, internal school factors also play a role in why young people join gangs. These factors have significant implications for the ways in which schools are organised and managed and the ways in which learners do or do not see themselves as part of a genuine school community. Gangsterism is one of the sources of school violence in the Western Cape schools. Learners as young as 13 years of age are being recruited to join the ranks of gangs. Because there is strength in numbers when fights break out, gangster groups compete to recruit as many learners as possible. Carrying weapons, be it a gun or a knife, is a symbol of power. Fear is a great determining factor in joining a gang. A school is often regarded as a microcosm of the society as it reflects what happens in the society. Diesel (1997) in Smit (2010) argues that gangs in schools should be seen as a community problem in South Africa and, since schools are a part of the community, they reflect the problems of that community.

> There is also other type of violence that we are exposed to and that is the violence in the area, the gang violence and that also exposes the school to a particular type of violence, and what happens here is that whatever happens in the community impacts on the school, so we are also exposed to now the area that we work in is particularly over the years there's always been a flair up at different stages of the year like just at the beginning of this year when we returned to school, there was huge amount of gang violence. Then they signed a peace form which well was very fragile and will last a very few weeks or months and then an incident happens. You must understand that, especially in the coloured community, gangs is part of the fabric of that community. There is a huge number of gangs in any coloured community especially given the social community background that people lives in here. There is a lot of gangs in these areas (Principal Western Cape).

The Portfolio Committee on Education (18 June 2002) found that gangs emerge from within communities themselves and this phenomenon has many root causes. Firstly, there are the socioeconomic conditions such as low-income employment, unemployment, and poor living conditions all leading to conditions of poverty and deprivation. Secondly, within schools, and particularly in the Grade 4 year, the following behaviours become more and more prevalent:

- Antisocial behaviour because of having no sense of belonging resulting in a low self-esteem.

- Poor academic performance.

- Learning difficulties are multiplied.

- Finally, truancy and the incidence of dropping out.

The views of the Portfolio Committee on Education on gangsterism are consistent with Last's (2001) observations, that there are many reasons why young children choose to join a gang. In the school setting learners who are underachievers, poor learners, or have language difficulties see themselves as losers in the academic setting. They can be approached by a gang and be recruited into the organisation. Here they become "someone", part of an organisation of kids just like themselves. They have a new "family" whom they tend to spend more and more time with. These gang leaders recruit younger members who are unhappy and struggling. They lure them with the promise of fraternity and brotherhood. They are told that the worst that can happen

to them if they commit a serious crime is two years in a juvenile facility, which is a small price to pay for belonging (Last 2001).

This study found in the interviews that during gangster fights both learners and educators are terrified of being caught in crossfire, not only at school, but also on their way to school and on their way back home. Therefore they opt not to go to school until the situation is calm and this has a negative on teaching and learning:

> Last year, we experienced random shooting in front of the school gate, whereby two gangs were shooting at each other and a stray bullet hit a learner and up till today we don't know who the person is that shot the girl, and in the community that we live in a lot of our kids, during the time of gang violence in the area, get caught in the cross fire and they miss out a substantial amount of academic time. We have learners who have been shot in a leg or stomach and some paralysed for life because of stray bullets during gang shootings. Last year, we buried two of our school kids and they were shot in the gang-related violence, I mean last year was a particularly a bad year for us as a school when it comes to violence from outside in the area (Principal Western Cape).

According to a disciplinary teacher in Limpopo: "We have a problem with our community, sir, not the school; there are gangs of boys and girls around that are involved in drugs." The problem of outside gangs affecting the school was also mentioned by one of the security guards in Limpopo. He mentioned that "learner from other school do come and gang outside the gate" in order to disrupt and fight other learners from his school for one reason or the other. This problem brings violence in the school and at times teachers do not know the reasons for the fights:

> ... if you check some [fights] are from the same areas not something that relate to school and it has nothing to do with school issues (Disciplinary Teacher Limpopo).

Gangster activities in the area were also confirmed by the learners in the Western Cape:

> Many learners in our school are in gangsterism in the community and now there is violence in the community and the gangs are fighting with each other and then the learners can't come to school because they are gonna get hurt because the school is near the American's gang so they will have to pass there to get to school, so they will get hurt. And then also some learners that are gangsters come to school and we as learners we don't know whats gonna happen because he is class and he is a gangster and that other gang is gonna come and hurt him while I am in the class because we are in fear and we don't now whats gonna happen because they come any time and hurt him. There is no fence in the school so they come in and look for the gangsters, we can't come to school in the morning because they are shooting (Learner Western Cape).

Responses in Limpopo suggested that there are learners who form "crews". The learner participant said that at her school there is:

> this crew that me and my friend were fighting with so I had to go to DC and when we arrived there the crew that we were fighting with started telling the teachers all the things we did and all that stuff and the teachers didn't want

to tell them what they did [was wrong because] … on that crew there were two learners which their parents were teaching here so they didn't give us that chance and I think it took us about two weeks trying to solve this thing only to find out they were pointing fingers at us (Learner Limpopo).

Cliques form and fights start as learners feel that they need to protect themselves or have to fight what they perceive as favouritism.

According to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED 2003), gangs appear to choose the arrival and departure times of educators and learners deliberately, and they wait for learners at the school gate. This brings with it a terrorising "fear factor" which traumatises educators, learners and parents. Threats, intimidation and harassment engender fear, and result in the absenteeism of both educators and learners (Segoe & Mokgosi 2006:5). The Western Cape Education Department (WCED 2003) reported that not only does violence have a serious impact on learning, but educators are often absent because they need time off for trauma counselling and debriefing. According to a procedural manual for managing safety and security within WCED institutions, activities outside the school can often have a disruptive influence on what happens inside the school in a variety of ways (WCED 2003). De Wet (2003:93) points out that gang violence is therefore both an internal and an external problem.

Donald et al. (2002) contends that "gang violence is often born out of need and a socially disadvantaged situation." Thompkins (2000:7) states that sometimes innocent learners can be drawn or forced into violent behaviour, alcohol, and drug abuse by joining gangs, as this provides them with a sense of belonging. According to one learner in Limpopo:

> … you might find that some are coming from families that do not have that support that most teenage individuals lack. Teenage people I think that they need to be supported because we end up engaging ourselves in a lot of things peer pressure, because we want to blend in and feel wanted.

Racial tensions

In one school in the Western Cape, one of the main sources of violence is racial tension amongst isiXhosa-speaking and the coloured learners. Historically this school was mainly the school for the coloured community, but with the dawn of democracy in South Africa it opened its gates to all races. In respect of the learner population the school consists of 1 Indian learner, 250 black Xhosa and 759 coloured learners. Given the dynamics of the school of having black and coloured learners in the school, it is exposed to the potential for racial violence. Black learners are transported from the surrounding areas such as Nyanga, Langa, Gugulethu, Khayelitsha, and Philliphi. According to the principal any clash or disagreement that involves a coloured and a black learner is reduced to race, which results in racial tension and violence.

> Just yesterday we had an incident that involved a black kid and a coloured kid; it has now been reduced to race. I mean a simple thing … a coloured will take a packet of chips from a black boy and a fight will start along racial lines with other learners taking sides. And it is not the issue of what the coloured kid did was wrong, it is reduced to race in the area. So that exposes us to a school of

a particular type of violence which is racially motivated (School A Principal Western Cape).

This is corroborated by a learner who states that:

> There is also the so called coloureds and the isiXhosa learners in our school. There is racial conflict that is always coming up, for instance, if one of the Xhosa learners has a conflict with a coloured learner then all of a sudden the coloureds are on one side and the Xhosa are on one side. The fight breaks out and continues even outside school premises, so it will be the coloureds versus the Xhosa learners. And some of the Xhosa-speaking children won't be able to come to school because they are scared of being beaten and all that. So the police will have to escort the Xhosa-speaking learners (School A Learner Western Cape).

Racial tension amongst learners is cause for concern for the school because when this escalates it throws the school's basic functionality into turmoil and disarray. In 2011, one school was on the TV news after a black learner stabbed a fellow coloured learner just because a coloured learner took a packet of chips from an African learner's bag without permission. This incident sparked racial tension, with coloured learners threatening to take revenge on all black learners. Since the incident black learners had to stay at home in fear of retaliation from the coloured learners. The Western Cape Education Department sent in some psychologists to council staff and to reduce tensions between the learners. Mediators from the Safer Schools Project and the police were stationed at the school to calm the situation.

While such tension, hostility, and violence may as such reflect in the surrounding society, the interesting question is the extent to which schools openly confront issues of "race" and racial tension in their school policies and practices and in teaching about such matters in the classroom – How much of an effort, and of what quality, do schools make in this regard? If they ignore the issue, then are they guilty of violence by omission, i.e. by contributing to the problem by ignoring it?

Drugs

> We have "nyaope" dagga, ecstasy, seluwan (Learner NWP).

> I got busted for weed three weeks back. I think, the police found weed on me three weeks back (Learner NWP).

A report in the *Sunday Times* newspaper indicated that hundreds of schools across South Africa are subjecting their learners to drug and breathalyzer tests because of the widespread problem of drug use in schools (1/4/2012). This study also found evidence of a link between drug use and violence in schools. In an interview for this study a principal in Gauteng mentioned the case of an old lady who sells dagga to learners in the area where the school is located. This has become such a problem in the school that the police and community have been informed by the school. The principal had this to say about learners and drugs:

> They [smoke] … and most of them went to high school … this year … we had a trip to Boksburg. So in the morning we had to search their bags so that we can make sure that there is nothing … Then I called them. By that time they

didn't even have time to hide their bags … there was a bottle in disguise and they put the benzene in a tin of fresh milk … When I opened that container there was only benzene inside … So they stayed behind.

Drug abuse was also found to be rife in the schools of the Western Cape. The most common drugs identified were dagga and tik because they are cheap and easily accessible. Methamphetamine usage in the Western Cape is widely documented; the drug is commonly referred to as tik. According to the *West Cape News* (20 March 2012) some of the basic ingredients in methamphetamine manufacture can include flammable and volatile solvents such as methanol, ether, benzene, methylene chloride, trichloroethane, toluene, muriatic acid, sodium hydroxide and ammonia.

> Dagga smoking, I think that one we have the biggest problem with. If I would open my drawer now, you will smell dagga confiscated from the learners. So if the police can come here now, they'll take me. We tell the security to bring the kids that are smoking or caught with dagga and the problem that we have is that the parents will always cover for their children and I think they sell or something but I think the outside people use them to sell it and I think they sell cigarettes also and it's like there is territories here and the other boy stabbed the other because of territory (School C Principal Western Cape).

Drugs are in many cases linked to violence in schools, which has also increased rapidly in recent years. Research examining possible links between violence and drug use has consistently found a strong relationship among adolescents and young adults (Ellickson & McGuigan 2000; Elliott, Huizinga & Menard 1989; Kingery, Mirzaee, Pruitt & Hurley 1991; Valois, McKeown, Garrison & Vincent 1995). Elliott et al. (1989) presented national baseline epidemiological and etiological data showing the joint occurrence of delinquent behaviour and alcohol and drug use. Their work further revealed that not only was there a relationship between delinquent behaviour and drug use in America, but that there was an escalation from minor delinquency and "gateway" drug use to more serious offences and increased use of illicit substances. Kingery et al. (1991) surveyed 1 004 eighth and tenth grade learners in 23 rural communities and found that youths who took drugs also took more risks, carried weapons more often, engaged in more fights, and were more likely to be victimised.

In a representative sample of US 8th and 10th graders, Kingery, Pruitt, and Hurley (1992) examined the relationship between violence, drug use, and victimisation. They found that adolescent drug users were more inclined to engage in physical altercations with their peers, take more risks that made them susceptible to assault, and were also more likely to be assaulted at school and victimised outside of school supervision.

Additionally, Furlong, Caas, Corral, Chung, and Bates (1997) reported findings from the California Drug Use Survey and the California School Climate Survey that indicated both self-reported substance use and perception of frequency of substance use on school property were significantly associated with school violence.

Respondents from all provinces in this study also see drugs as a key source of violence in South African schools and these are available in the local community:

The school is located inside a rough community; it's easy for learners to get anything illegal/prohibited in the school premises when they want to (Teacher Gauteng).

Of the four schools visited in NWP, two schools had vandalised toilets seats. Some learners blame this on learners who are taking drugs and one learner said:

… last time Mr X was asking us why are we vandalising the toilets and it was like no sober person would jump on a toilet seat up and down, it is virtually impossible to jump on a toilet seat that you are going to use, for five minutes jump on while you are sober … (Learner NWP).

In Limpopo a security participant in one of the schools explained that, after noticing strange behaviour from one of the learners, they took the learner to the doctor and found that the learner was using drugs. According to the security guard "yesterday, we suspected one of the learners and we took the learner to the doctor and it was found that the learner was using a drug called nyaope." The Life Orientation teacher from another school in Limpopo further indicated that "one learner went to spy another learner who had dagga in his socks so some teacher went to find them but they didn't arrest them but drugs were handed to the police because police comes several times in a year."

Drugs seem to be mainly a problem with boys. One teacher, for example, states:

… the boys … go out during break time and have these drugs "WUNGA" which is most common drug that they are using at the moment … they come back after break being arrogant and they don't want to listen to teachers. When you are trying to calm them down they try to be more aggressive to the teachers and at the end of the day you end up not knowing how to control them … they can hit you. Sometimes they do carry knives in their bags (Teacher KZN).

This, however, may still be associated with the influence of community on school violence in the sense that, as indicated in the quotation above, learners acquire wunga outside school and come back to school in an arrogant and belligerent mood. It can therefore be assumed that should these learners have remained inside the school premises, they would not have been violent in school. Therefore, this particular problem of violence goes back to external influences on schools.

Indeed, drugs can influence the behaviour of even some of the more potentially responsible learners such as the head of the representative council for learners:

… yesterday the president of the representative council for learners … attempted to stab one fellow who is in Grade 12 … This fellow slapped the president across his face and the president went to and opened his bag and took a knife and attempted to stab this fellow … For your information Prof., this fellow [the president] takes drugs … which suggest the damage that is caused by this "wunga" this drug to the learners (Principal KZN).

Wunga is not the only drug however that is identified as a problem in schools. One participant mentioned the issue of some learners selling another drug in the disguise of muffins. He states:

…. we had an incident where some learners were selling something called the muffins … when they mix dough, they mix with the dagga inside … when they come and sell it to the kids, the kids feel drowsy … some of them get sick until you take them to the clinic and then they find that there is a drug in their food … until the principal stopped them from selling the muffins … (Teacher 2 KZN)

While the local community is blamed as being the source of drugs:

… just across the road about 15 to 20 meters from the school is a bottle store and most of the people who sell drugs, "wunga" in particular, are there. So during break learners will just go there and pretend to be going to buy something or anything to eat yet they are doing to access those drugs (Principal KZN).

Drug use can also cause problems in the homes from which the learners come:

Ya, our learners are extremely violent because from the other cases, most of the time we have cases that are committed by these learners out of the school parameters in the location and so on. Where you find that the learner for example was arrested in terms drugs or something and now maybe they were unable to trace the location or something they were able to trace them here in the school, so those are some of the things. We have learners who stay with their grandmothers and abusing grandmothers to that extreme they even seek protection order and the child is abusing substances and at the same time is also abusing the old lady like assault when he needs money and so forth and these are kind of violence (Teacher NWP).

It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that a concern in schools can be a lack of fencing around the school:

Fencing, that is the one thing and the fence is for our own safety and the safety of our teachers and if there is no fence we don't feel safe and we as learners feel that our safety has been taken away from us and which means our education cannot continue because if you sit in the class wondering what's gonna happen, when is the gangster gonna come in and open fire on the learners that is what is going through our minds as learners and I think the fence play a big role in the safety of the learners and the teachers in our school, so that is one thing that must be changed at the school (Learner School A Western Cape).

Weapons

While weapons don't cause violence, they make the potential consequences of a violent dispute or attack a lot more serious and, according to respondents in this survey, weapons do seem to be a significant problem in South African schools:

A learner stabbed at the back with a knife. Inside the classroom during the teacher's absence (Member SGB Mpumalanga).

Here at school there are those learners who bring knives along (Learner NWP).

This guy, madam, wanted to talk to another guy then it happened that he took a knife wanting to stab that guy (Learner NWP).

Yo! What happened, madam, was that someone owed me money so like we were gambling he didn't want to pay me back, so we were gambling tail spin and he won. So I told him that he owe me, I'm taking the money back then he started pushing me, then I pushed him back then he saw that I would beat him up then he took his knife out then I ran away chasing me with his knife (Learner NWP).

Eh, guns even guns, madam! (Learner NWP)

As this boy is saying, madam, there is a lot of violence. Some bring guns to school knives and stuff, sir, and it's like some bring weed (dagga) to school, stuff like that. And they think they can control us, madam (Learner NWP).

Sometimes you get them where they bring weapons, for example sometime ago there was a kid who brought a grass cutter to school. This is what I confiscated from them. He brought this to school and he was fighting with another one and when you get to the reason why they were fighting, they will tell you something, like the other one says I'm too black then they start fighting over that, but we find that maybe he's got a history of maybe you find he has done something before to that other one (Teacher NWP).

Sometimes this is seen as a form of self-protection.

I'm not blaming the people who come with weapons to school. Some people who are short tempered like me but the only thing that I dislike about me is that before I gave my gun away I used to come with it to school (Learner NWP).

Internal/external

Drugs – internal

In the introductory literature review we suggested that that there were no clear-cut lines between what were factors external to the school in causing violence and those that were internal. Drugs are a case in point. Above drugs were presented as a problem external to the school causing violence within – but why do learners take drugs? There are some interesting interview responses that suggest that schools are failing to provide an environment that gives learners the feelings of security, confidence, and the sense of personal worth and wellbeing they need and as a result they resort to drugs:

It helps me to get the guts to do things that I couldn't do before. It makes me stronger and much more confident to ill-treat some people and tell them that what they did to me then wasn't right (Learner NWP).

Emotionally violence as I've said is when you as a person makes yourself a victim by disclosing yourself to an extent whereby you let teachers pick you and label. There shouldn't be violence because we are not being encouraged to be ourselves we turn to smoking dagga, vandalising the school in order to express ourselves. I'm not trying to shift the blame but if as I said we are encouraged to be ourselves maybe there wouldn't be such violence because everyone

would be in their classes learning, but everyone is trying to avoid teacher X, because teacher X beats the hell out of you and teacher Y sees some things that displease then they make you feel small. Then you are outside, you are gambling from gambling what happens you do lose, you do lose your temper you lose everything, and you lost your money now you are trying to fight with the person who won. That's where violence starts but if you were encouraged to be yourself you wouldn't do that (Learner NWP).

Also, teacher absenteeism (further discussed below) can be a factor in letting drug-related behaviour get out of control:

(As a result of drugs) Yes, madam, like if there is no teacher in the class, we kick and bang the doors and go (Learner NWP).

Fights

One of the most common forms of violence among learners in schools seems to be disputes turning into physical fights, with disputes originating both inside and outside the school:

Learners fight in front of the teachers (SGB member Gauteng).

Fighting over other learners possessions, e.g. I participated in the fight. I fought for my own school bag which another learner was taking/claiming it to be hers (Learner Gauteng).

In the school precisely it fights, fights and most of the times it is fights. They fight a lot inside the school yard, big girls or big boys but when they because they know we've got a, we deal with very seriously when they have got weapons. They either put them outside and when they go outside they pick them up and they start fighting (Teacher NWP).

Fighting, because they are fighting almost everyday … I saw two girls while we were still in there; the one was wearing an orange jersey they were fighting. They like to fight even they like to bring their issues from the village to school. Even after school you'll find them fighting there or it starts here and ends outside. Others they even bring their brothers from the village to come and fight (Teacher NWP).

The first girl accuses the other of having a child. Then the other girl responded by telling the first one that she is aware that she has just perform an abortion, and then a fight ensued (but) teachers never entertained it because it happened outside school premises and the conflict/fight was not based on school matters. It was a private affair (SGB member Mpumalanga).

We have experienced some incidents of violence in the school, like most of our learners fighting, they like to fight in the school and others they are fighting with their own fists physically but not with weapons. They are also using vulgar language and somewhere during this year it was last year, last we had … no, it was this year we had a strike by learners were toyi-toying. They locked the gates took some of the furniture, burned it and they were even threatening learners who were coming to school not to come. We called the police and fortunately was resolved so we were able to tackle because we were not even reporting here, we were reporting at the APO (Teacher NWP).

Sometimes violence is a response to provocation:

> The boy use to harass me, this day I decided to have a fight with him (Learner Mpumalanga).

> I was a victim once, so this time I decided to defend myself (Learner Mpumalanga).

Or a case of revenge:

> I don't think the violence from the schools will stop, especially the physical one, because I myself was a victim of violence and if somebody makes me a victim, then he will be my victim. The thing that makes learners to get learners from another school is that other people think they are better than us, this means they've got more strength than us, so we bring those guys from another schools to beat them (Learner NWP).

And sometime the violence gets serious:

> … I had one incident here about three weeks ago where a very troublesome boy in Grade 8A ... almost strangled a girl (Principal KZN).

The South African education system is still marked by extreme inequality with regard to the provision of resources, and sometimes fights are sparked by a lack of resources that still exists in some South African schools:

> Yes, I was fighting with another and we were fighting over a chair … There were shortages of chairs … He said this is my chair and he grabbed me with my clothes and I slapped him and we fought (Learner Limpopo).

In Limpopo province even some teachers do not have chairs and compete for the chairs with the learners. The consequence of these fights over resources could also lead to further violence. One learner indicated that their parents were called in after a fight about furniture and the teacher asked that the learner be suspended. However, the parents insisted that the learner be beaten by the teacher, which he did.

Finally, learners are not the only ones involved in fighting and violence. One female teacher in Gauteng told the following story:

> My husband and I were undergoing divorce and we were separated … he came to school and said he wanted to see me … I told him I was still busy … he waited for me … I could tell that something was wrong but I said let me just let it go. My husband waited for me until … I joined him in the car … we started talking and … he said to me that maybe today I am going to see you for the last time … he then pulled out a gun … he didn't speak, he just started firing at me … until I fell down … I could hear his footstep pressing me down not to talk or say anything. I could hear him jumping … over me … When I did wake up most of the learners were surprised … and there was another child there whom we used to buy some vegetables for her family because the learner is from the poor family. She said to me "ma'am, don't die because who is going to buy me food!" … and I said to her "I'm not going to die … because I have to buy you what I used to buy" … some of the bullets went through the head, in my jaw and for three months I couldn't eat …

Bullying and theft

When learners were asked in the questionnaire what kind of violence they experienced, they responded as follows: (Table 2)

Table 3 – If yes (in Table 1) , what form of violence have you experienced? (you can give more than one option)

Bar/Column Plot of Court of yes
Spreadsheet 9 3v*4c

Question 1.2
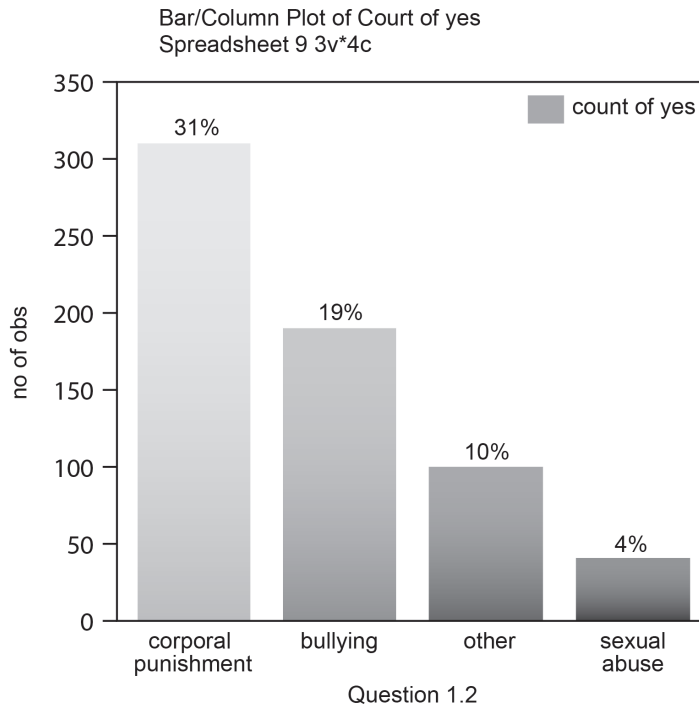
Each of these will be discussed below. In this section we discuss bullying. However, we said in the introductory literature review that there are different actors, and different combinations of actors, involved in violence in schools and Table 4, which is based on the questionnaires, demonstrates this further:

Table 4 – Who did this to you (the above)?

Bar/Column Plot of Count of yes
Spreadsheet 10 3v*5c

Question 1.3

53
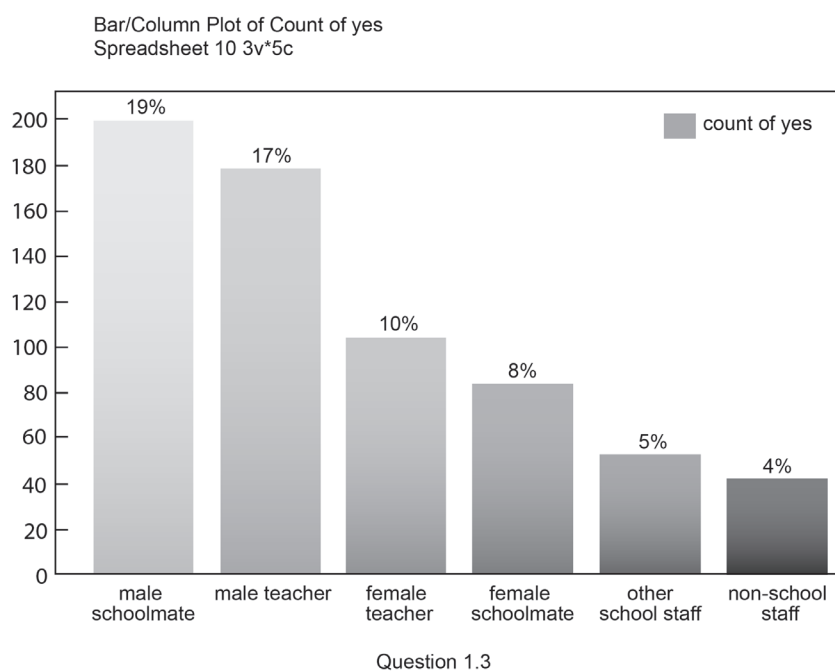
Indeed, one interview respondent said:

> Learners are afraid of bullying teachers … Learners are also afraid of each other … Teachers are afraid of bully learners (SGB member Gauteng).

Liang et al. (2007) did what they claimed was the first large-scale study of bullying among adolescent schoolchildren in South Africa. They found that bullying was indeed a serious problem and that bullying was an indicator of other behavioural difficulties. The questionnaire data sheds further light on bullying in schools in South Africa. Bullying was both physical and verbal:

Table 5 – If you were a victim of bullying, was this abuse mainly verbal or physical (e.g. fighting, beaten up)?

Histogram of question 2.8
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.8
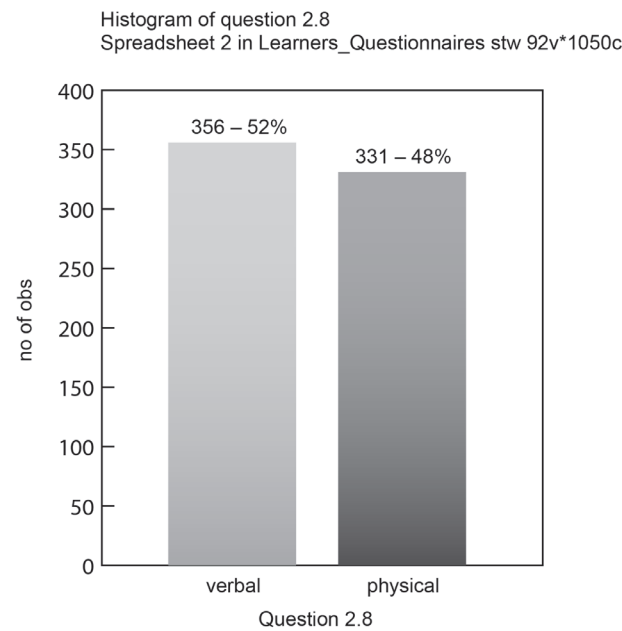
Bullying also had serious consequences for a significant proportion of learners:

Table 6 – If physical, were you injured?

Histogram of question 2.9
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
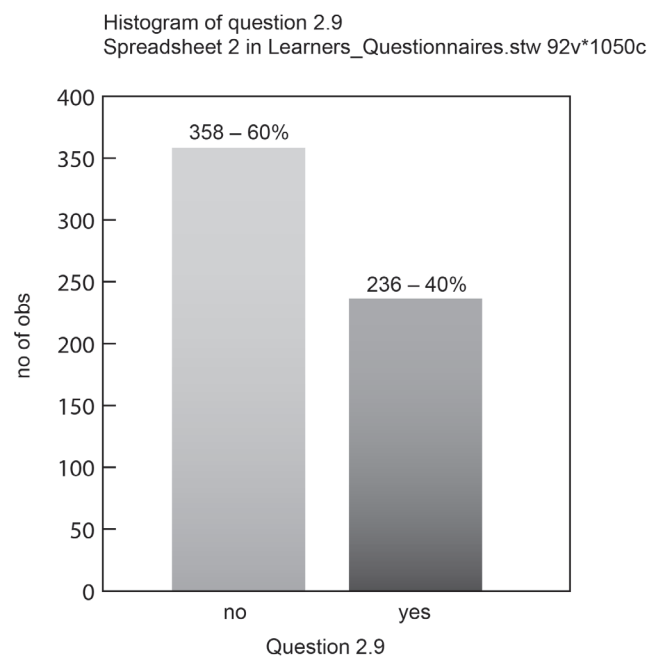
Question 2.9

Table 7 – If you were injured, was the injury moderate (e.g. no major consequences) or were you severely injured (so that you couldn't go to school, had to seek medical attention)?

Histogram of question 2.10
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
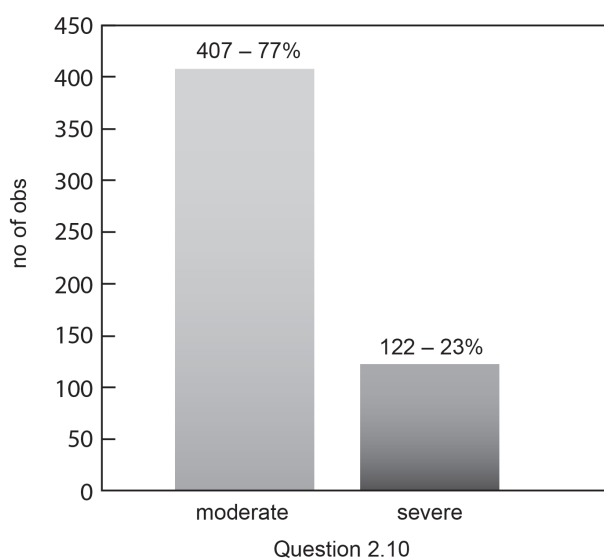
Question 2.10

Table 8 – If severe, what were the consequences?

Histogram of question 2.14
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.14
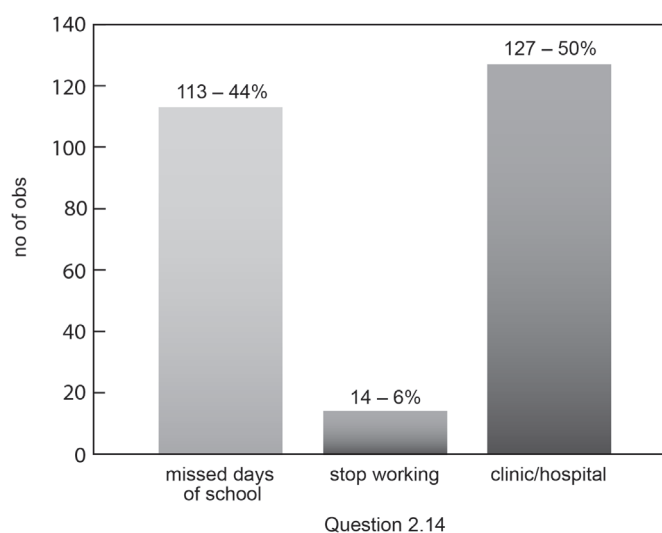
We now report from the interview data gathered on bullying among learners and on teachers but, as was suggested above and as will be further discussed below, bullying goes beyond learner to learner and learner to teacher bullying of learners.

As this boy is saying the school is full of violence, some people are bullying us they like to bully us, like I'm a person who has a small heart and I don't like to be teased. So some other guys know that I have a small heart, he likes to tease

me in class everywhere I go he likes to tease me, you know, and make me feel small like I don't belong here (Learner NWP).

Moreover, bullying seems to be predominantly carried out by boys:

> I hate the violence among the learners; boys are more bully when compared to girls (Teacher Gauteng).

> I hate the violence among the learners; boys are more bully when compared to girls (Teacher Mpumalanga).

> … most of the victims are the girls and the young boys … the older boys harass the younger ones … they want their money … they want their food. This money they go out to the tuck shops and buy their things, we don't know what because we are not there … they are bullying one another and girls also. Most boys are bullying the girls (Teacher 3 KZN).

Bullying isn't only learner to learner, however. In this study it became apparent that teachers are also victims of bullying:

> Teachers are afraid of bully learners (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Female teachers are sometimes harassed by both boys and girls.

> [one form of violence is] disturbing the classroom, especially lady teachers are victims. Even girls as well, they are very rude … making it very difficult for teachers to manage the class. But with us male teachers they rarely do that (Life orientation teacher KZN).

Relationships between learners and the teachers have, in some instances, deteriorated to such an extent that learners also fight, either physically or verbally, with their teachers. This unfortunate and embarrassing state of affairs even leads to learners physically attacking their teachers when reprimanded. One learner in Limpopo commented that "violent things in schools … don't happen with other learners [only] … they also do it with teachers." Another participant continued and added that where violence involved a learner and a teacher, the learners, despite knowing what the school's policy is:

> would like slap a teacher because she … the policy of the school says no phones and no gadgets are allowed and you come with the phone they take it. You will get it at the end of the year, that's the policy of the school. So you come with a phone and you just expect them to look at you and say that is fine, no they are going to take it and when she tries to take it away from you, you slap her.

Another learner said:

> Yes, it happened and it was not so long ago, about three weeks ago, and this other kid she was verbally attacking with the teacher because instead of slapping me I got down and he [missed and] slapped you accidently and he [teacher] said sorry but you [learner] didn't take it and you started saying hey, you [teacher's name] are taking out your stresses on me (Learner Limpopo).

In this study bullying was often connected to theft. One of the participants, for example, mentioned a case of not only quietly stealing cell phones at school but openly grabbing them:

> Cell phone stealing [is one of the forms of violence in the school]. Sometimes they don't steal cell phone, they grab them. You are carrying your cell phone and they just grab them so that they can go and sell and get some money to buy wunga. (Learner 1 KZN)

> Maybe before or after break or maybe at break because people when they don't have money (the bullies) they wait at the toilet and they beat you for your money and take your money (Learner Focus Group Gauteng).

> … [the bullies] when they don't have money they wait at the toilet and they beat you for your money and take your money (Learner Gauteng).

One learner in a focus group stated:

> We are afraid to go to the toilets because they take our money and cell phones. There are some places that we no longer go to because of fear of what fellow learners might do to us (Learner KZN).

> Fighting over other learners possessions. e.g. I participated in the fight. I fought for my own school bag which another learner was taking/claiming it to be hers (Learner Mpumalanga).

According to a disciplinary teacher in Limpopo, "learners fight because they take each other's pencils, pens, calculators and other things that are used at school." This leads to classroom disruption because, in most cases, the learner will bully other learners for their during the lesson when an older, stronger and popular learner realises that he/she does not have the stationery to do his/her school work. However, bullying can also be done under the guise of stationery theft, but in reality learners are not fighting for a ruler, for instance, but something else and in most cases it is about the strong person excreting his/her will on the meek as noted by an Life Orientation teacher in Limpopo:

> You will find that they are squabbles and fighting for a ruler or a pen but when you to get deeper into their issue you find that they are fighting about something else.

One teacher added an important point about why some learners are bullies, which has significant implications for the 'sifting' function of schooling into those who succeed and those, who 'fail'.

> learners who are violent they are the learners who usually fail because they are not doing well because they only concentrate on being bullies, fighting and so on and not listening to teachers and then at the end of the day they don't pass (Teacher NWP).

It is also interesting to note that violence in some instances has been conveniently used for security at school. Those learners who have violent relatives get protected from violence. When asked if they have ever been victims of violence, one participant stated:

> … I've never been a victim [of violence]. This is so because I had an older brother, a cousin, in the school who was feared by most learners. He was famous for selling drugs. Nobody gave me trouble (Learner KZN).

Learners can also be reluctant to report bullying:

> They are certain cases of bullying but as I indicated that most of all is that the learners don't want to talk about it, if you say the learner must talk about it will lead to a great extent that this is untolerable where now the learner is crying and then you say no I'm going to tell the principal then you see the learner coming to the office, sometimes we have for example a case where a parent will learn from other people or learners that his child was chased by five boys knives the previous day. So the parent will come into the school but the learner didn't report to the mother that this thing happened the other day, only when start questioning his whereabouts it's when he start to realize that this thing happen yesterday, what happened then start getting the story out of him (Teacher NWP).

What happens, then, when learners report bullying to teachers? According to learners in Limpopo, teachers are not doing enough:

> Last time when I was fighting with the other boys I was just going to the class and they said what do you want and I said I just want to talk to my friend and they slapped me and the whole class they used to beat me and I will go to the teachers and tell them that I just wanted a pen to my friend because I did not have mine and they said I was wrong to go to that class and I was not being good.

Indeed, most learners in Limpopo expressed the view that they did not raise the issue of being bullied with their teachers because they are scared and that some teachers seem to have favourites at school. A learner participant explained that:

> so when they fought I was involved and I was told I was the cause of this fight and we had to go to the disciplinary committee and no matter how hard I tried to explain I don't even know these girls whether they are cool people of the school I don't know them, [but only talk to them in class, however,] I was told that they should never see me with that girl she should go back to her cool friends I am a bad influence.

According to a learner focus group in Limpopo, at times when there are fights in the school and the teachers are informed about this they (the teachers) are not interested and do not want to get involved. Thus more learners directly or indirectly become the victims of violence in the school. According to one participant who reported being beaten by other learners at school, he was shocked by the teacher's response: "They just said it's not their problem so I should go and solve it myself." "I should go and solve it myself" might easily be interpreted by the learner that he was given permission by the teacher to go and take revenge and thus do whatever it takes in the way of retaliation. Another learner in Limpopo said: "I am afraid of the teachers because they won't do anything about it and if I tell them that there is someone who wants to beat me up they will ask me who is it and I will them and they will expel learner. They don't want to listen to the situation, they just act on it."

As a result, learners do not engage with the teachers about school activities and other relationship problems that they encounter at school, and therefore violence and

bullying persist. There is a need for schools to have strategies of addressing bullying in schools, especially in the case where the learners are exposed to it during breaks. However, a challenge is the lack of human personnel to monitor the learners during break. According to a disciplinary teacher in Limpopo break time "is still a challenge because it will require [that] a teacher should be there to monitor and that won't be an easy to do because we are also eating by that time and preparing yourself for the next class, so we are not able to put an eye on them and we can't extend break time." Supervision of learners at break time to ensure their safety is a school management issue and one that needs to be addressed.

Sexual harassment and violence against females

In line with research on gender violence and education as discussed in the literature review, this study found many instances of sexual harassment of female learners by male learners in schools. Du Plessies, Fouché and Van Dyk (1998:418) define sexual harassment as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. They add that sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

(a) The behaviour is persistent (although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment);
(b) The recipient has made it clear that the behavior is considered offensive; and
(c) The perpetrator should have known that the behavior is regarded as unacceptable.

Forms of sexual harassment

According to Prinsloo (2006:306) sexual harassment refers to unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct, and include but is not limited to the following examples:

(a) Physical conduct of a sexual nature includes all unwanted physical contact, ranging from touching to sexual assaults and rape, and includes a strip search by or in the presence of members of the opposite sex.
(b) Verbal forms of sexual harassment include unwelcome innuendoes, suggestions and hints, sexual advances, comments with sexual undertones, sex-related jokes or insults, or unwelcome graphic comments about a person's body made in their presence or to them, unwelcome and inappropriate enquiries about the person's sex life, and unwelcome whistling at a person or a group of people.
(c) Nonverbal forms of sexual harassment include unwelcome gestures, indecent exposure, and the unwelcome display of sexually explicit pictures and objects.
(d) Sexual favouritism exists where a person who is in a position of authority reward only those who respond to his/her sexual advances.

Sexual harassment and violence in schools are barriers to learning and deprive learners of their inherent constitutional right to equality and dignity. It could also prevent them from participating fully in education. The impact on learners who are directly affected may include a drop in self-esteem and confidence, emotional withdrawal, and absenteeism, and it may also contribute to low achievement. Sexual harassment and violence affect learning environments negatively, creating an atmosphere of fear and aggression.

The questionnaire responses from female learners showed that sexual abuse remains rife in schools, and that it has serious consequences for the victims in respect of pregnancy, sexual diseases, and psychological stress.

Table 9 — If you experienced *sexual abuse*, was it mainly verbal or physical?

Histogram of question 2.15
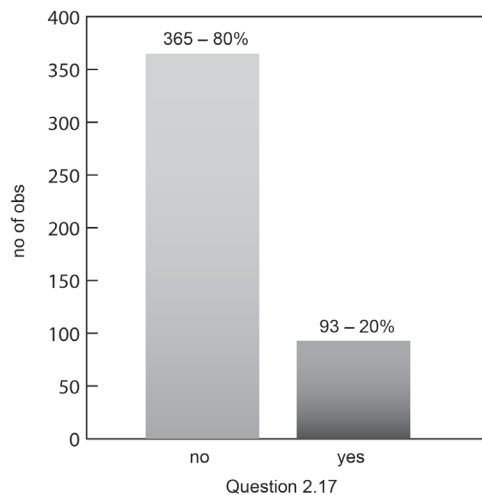Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
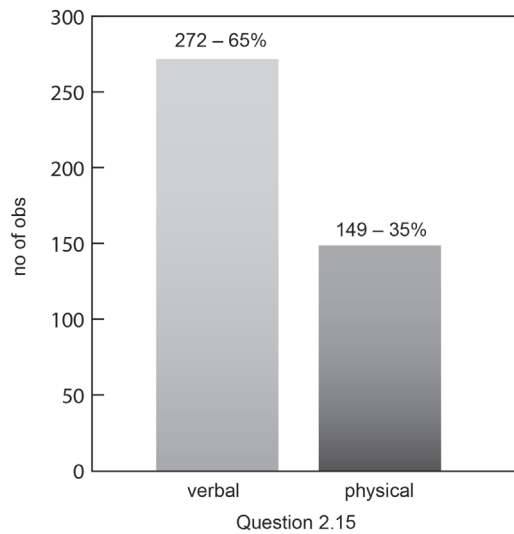
Question 2.15

Table 10 — If physical, were you physically injured? (e.g. forced intercourse/rape)

Histogram of question 2.16
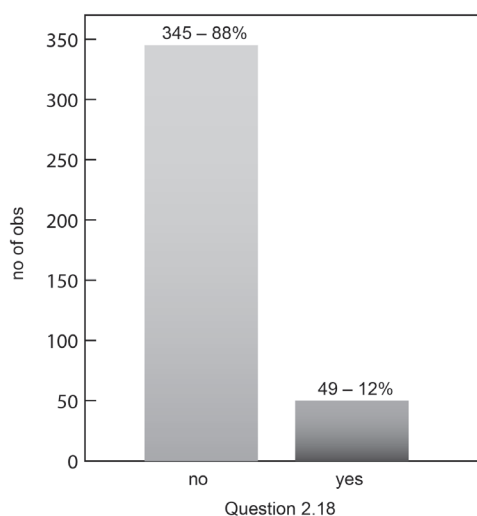Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
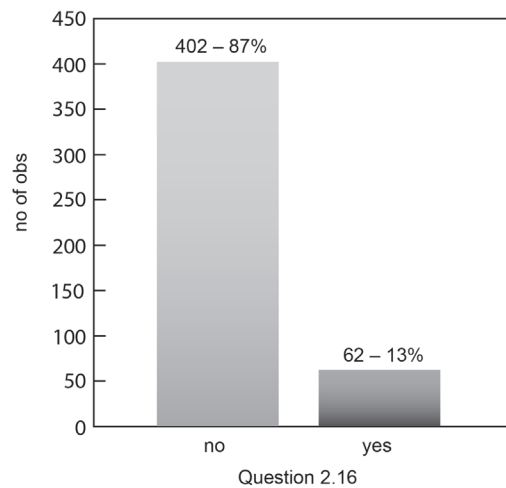
Question 2.16

Table 11 — If physical, did you seek medical attention?

Histogram of question 2.17
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.17

60

Table 12 — If you were the victim of rape, did you become pregnant as a result?

Histogram of question 2.18
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.18

Table 13 — If raped, are you aware of having contracted any STI (HIV/AIDS, Chlamydia, etc) as a result?

Histogram of question 2.19
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
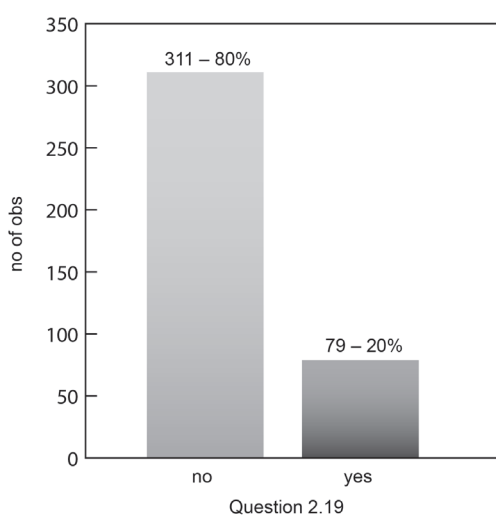
Question 2.19

Table 14 — If yes, have you sought treatment and/or needed to purchase medicines to cure it?

Histogram of question 2.20
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.20

61
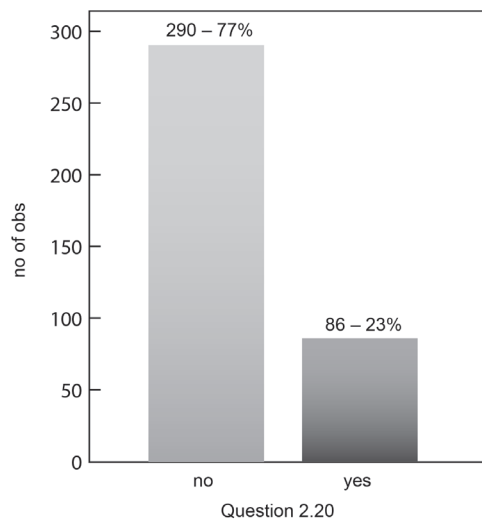
Table 15 — If yes, do you know which STI you were diagnosed with?

Histogram of question 2.21
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
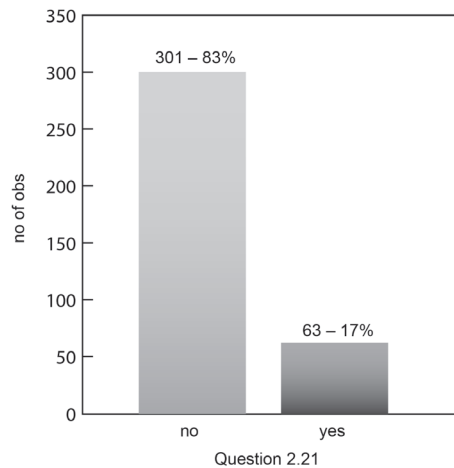
Question 2.21

Table 16 — Did you feel emotional distress as a result of the episode of violence?

Histogram of question 2.22
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.22
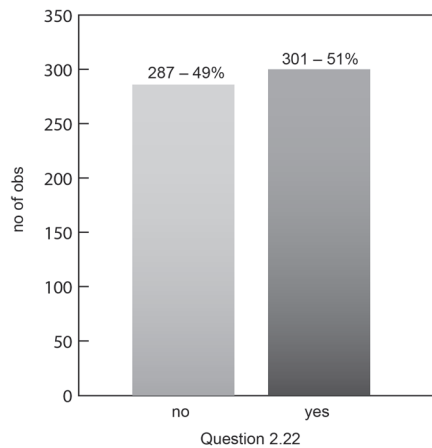
While some female respondents reported feeling more resilient than others, it is interesting that only a minority of female learners sought psychological treatment after sexual abuse. For those that would have liked it, financial factors and availability were the main barriers.

Table 17 — If yes, did you seek counselling, psychological support?

Histogram of question 2.23
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.23

Table 18 — If no, why not?

Histogram of question 2.24
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.24
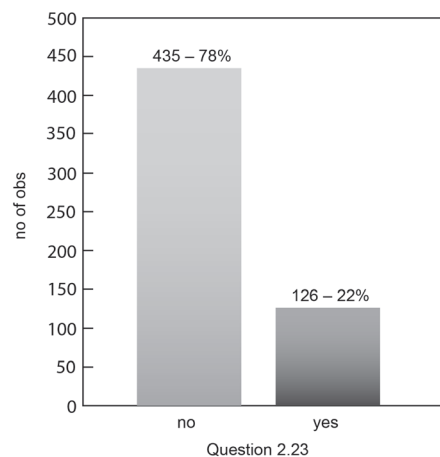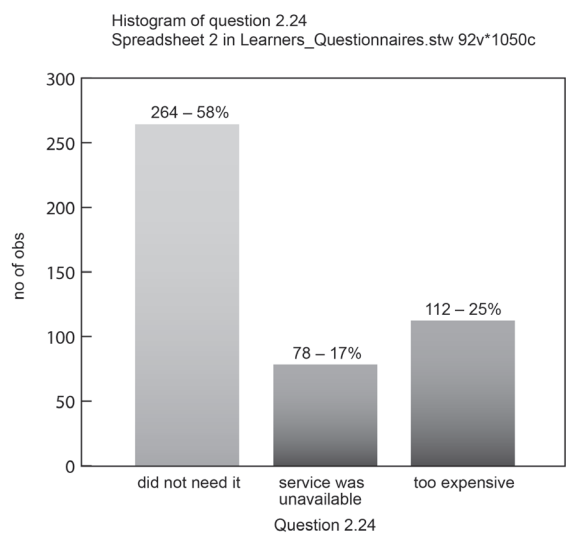
Table 19 — If yes, who provided the service?

Histogram of question 2.25
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
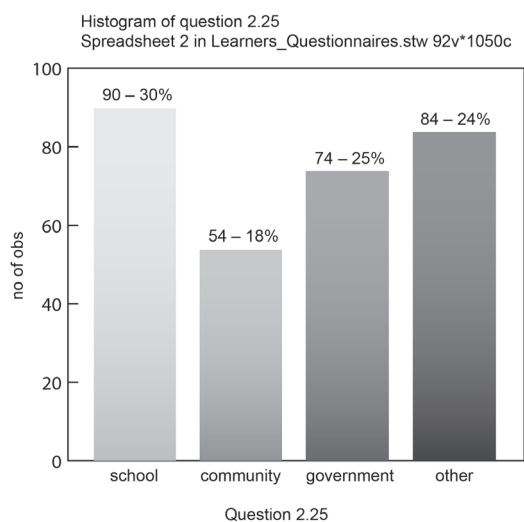
Question 2.25

When asked who paid for the services, the majority of the respondents said that they or their family had to pay while some borrowed the money. Only one fifth received the services free.

Table 20 — Who paid for these expenses?

Histogram of question 3.2
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.2

63
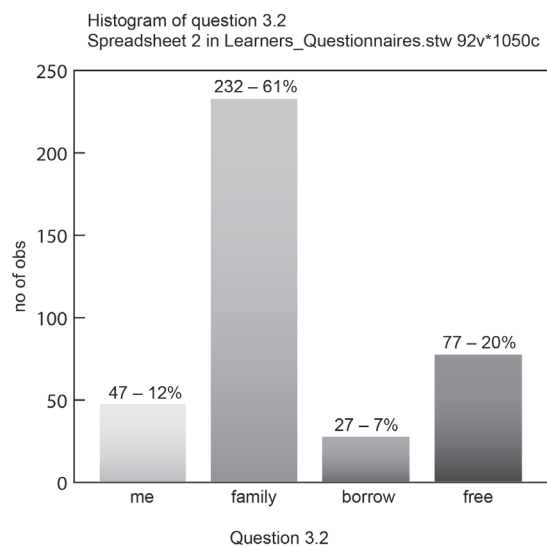
The questionnaire also recognised that some female learners may well have part-time jobs outside of school to help pay for fees and other living costs. Sexual harassment can impact on such sources of livelihood as well. About 34% of the sample were affected in this way:

Table 21 – If you were working prior to the pregnancy/birth, have you had to stop working as a result?

Histogram of question 3.10
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.10
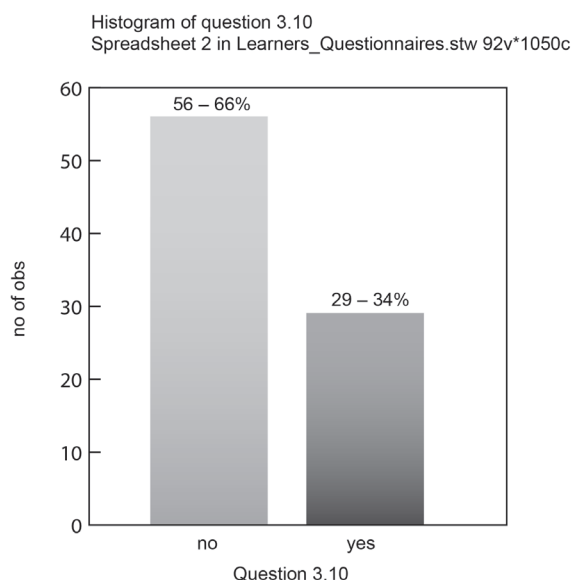
Table 22 – If yes, how much did you lose?

Histogram of question 3.11
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
median=330.0 mean=6623.9 sd=18271.1967 min=1.0 max=100500.0
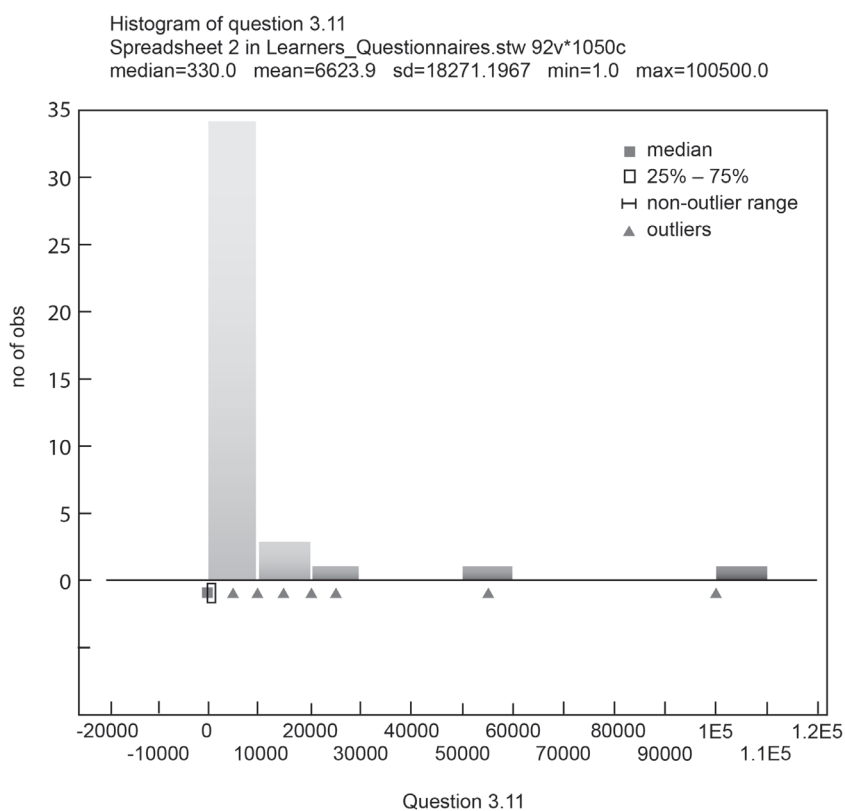
Question 3.11

Table 23 – Do you have to pay for child care costs?

Histogram of question 3.12
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
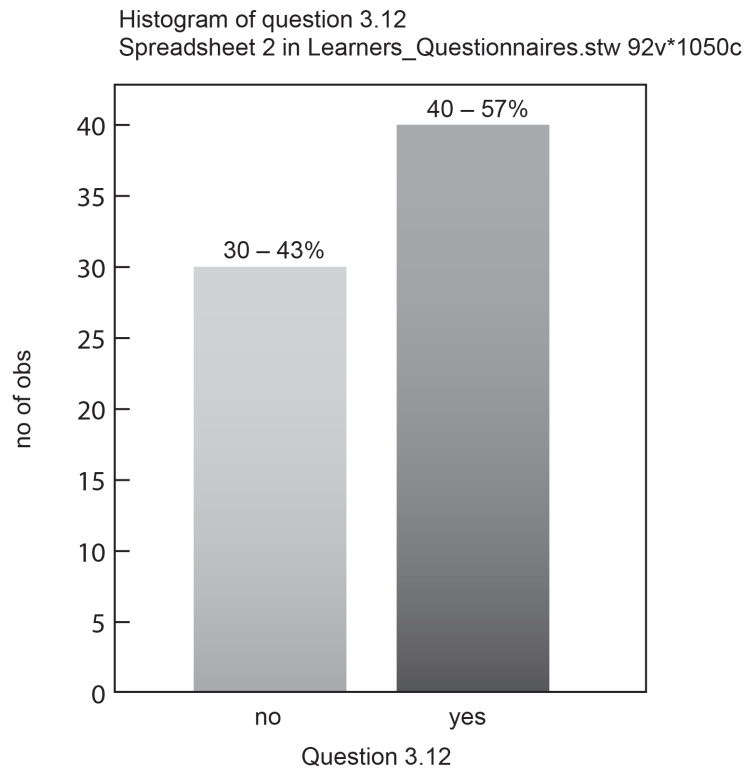
Question 3.12

Table 24 – If yes, how much do you have to pay?

Histogram of question 3.13
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
median=300.0   mean=6144.8718   sd=16291.428   min=1.0   max=79369.0
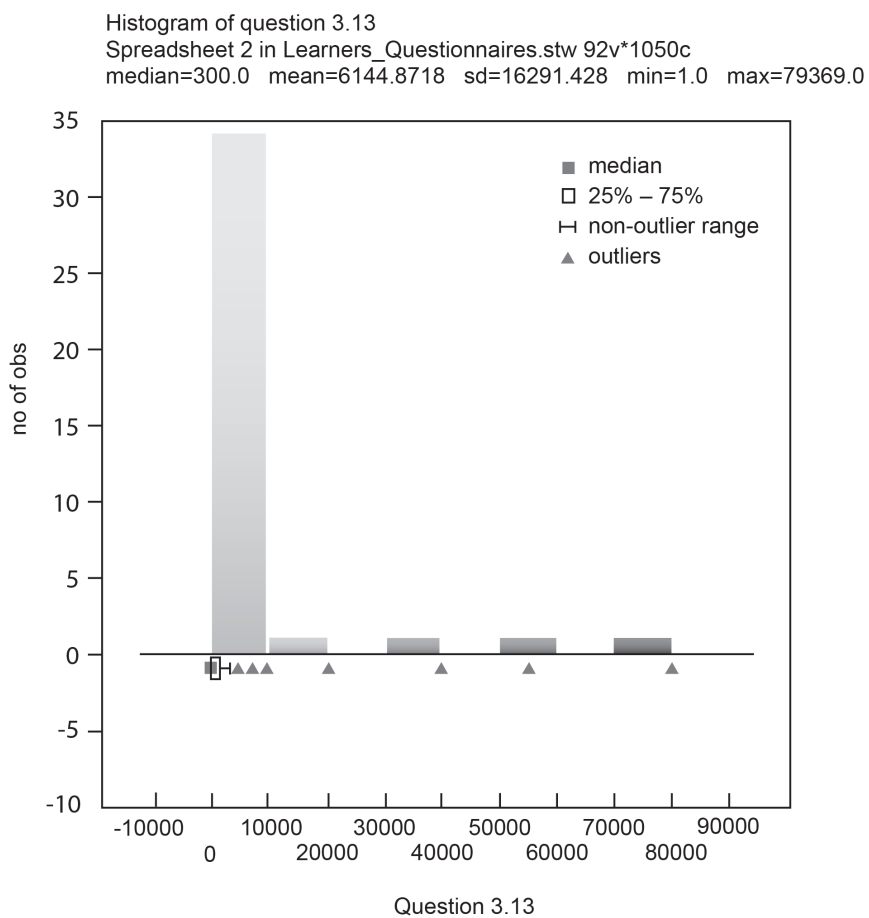
Question 3.13

Table 25 – What other costs have you needed to pay for related to the care of your child? (State the three most important costs):

Histogram of question 3.14-1
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires stw 92v*1050c
median=335.0   mean=36694.3333   sd=182518.9701   min=10.0   max=1000000.0

Question 3.14-1
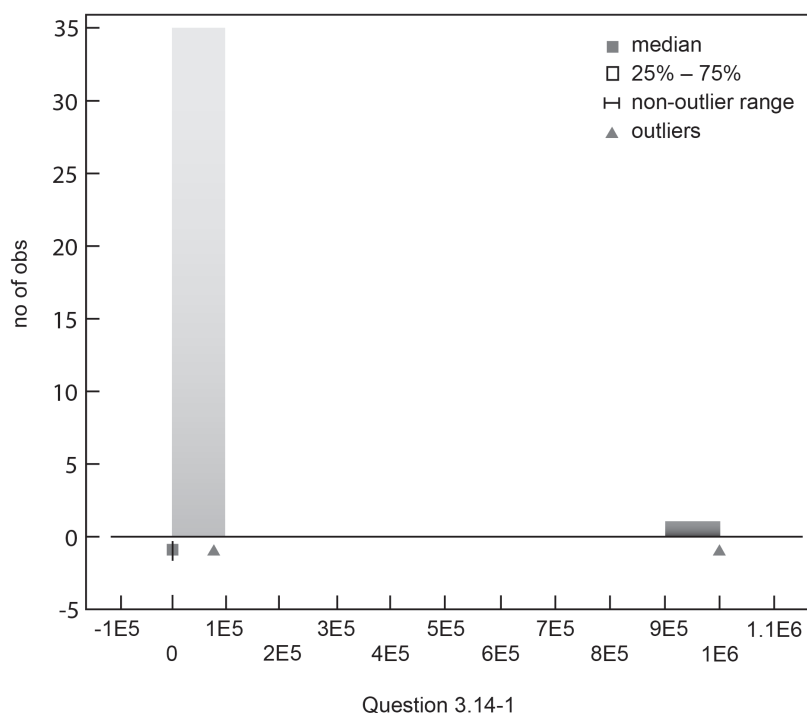
School violence (and disproportionately sexual violence) impacts on girls' learning and attendance in particular as can be seen from the following female responses to questionnaires:

Table 26 – If you miss classes, how often do you miss classes?

Histogram of question 3.20
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.20

66
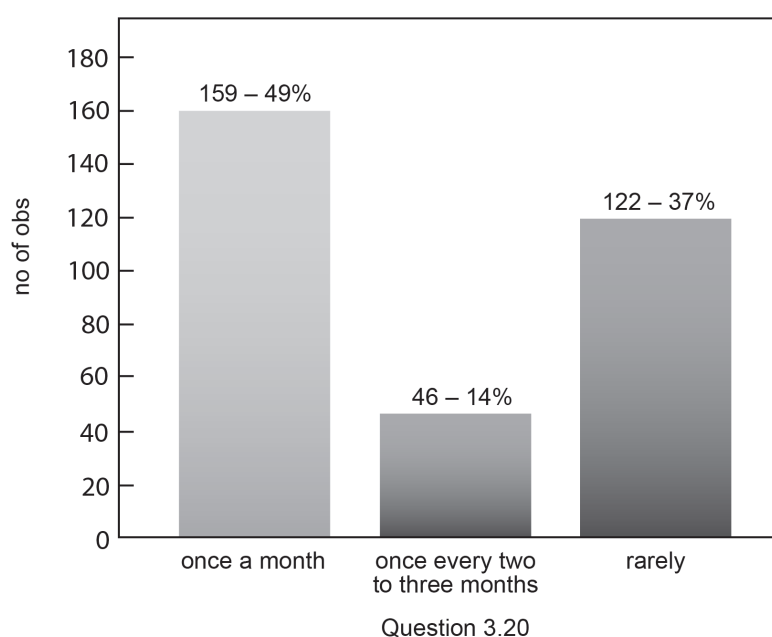
Table 27 – If at least once a month, how many days of school have you missed in one month?

Histogram of question 3.21
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
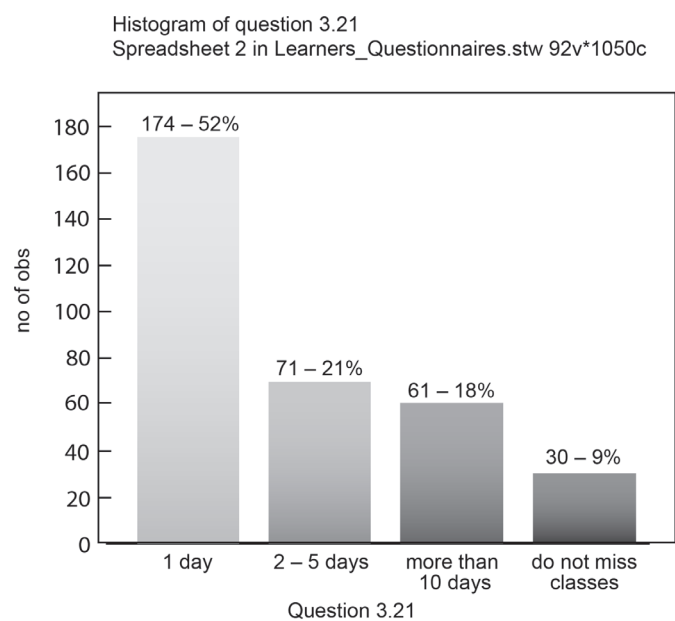
Table 28 – If you have missed courses, how many have you failed?

Histogram of question 3.22
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
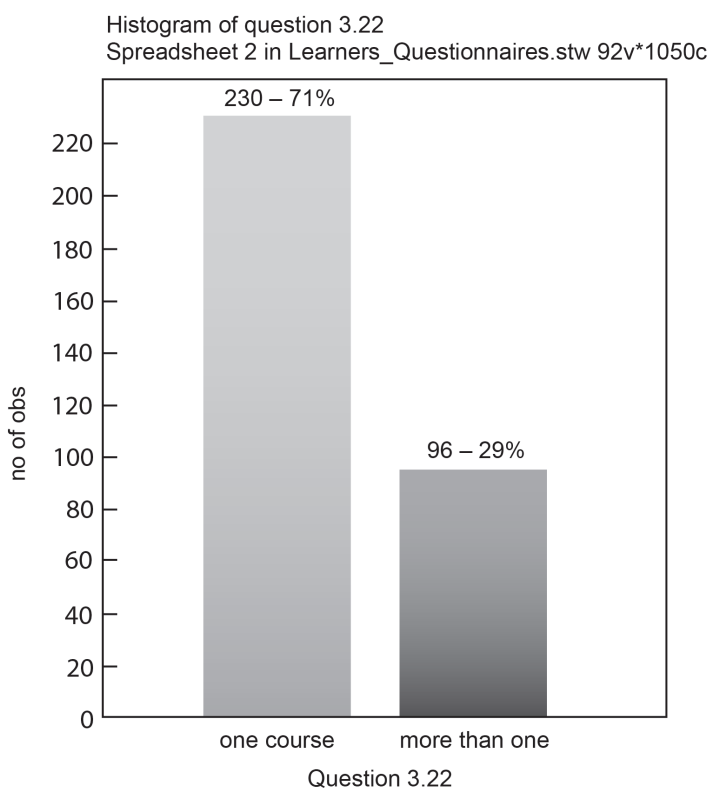
Table 29 – During how many years of school have you failed courses?

Histogram of question 3.23
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.23
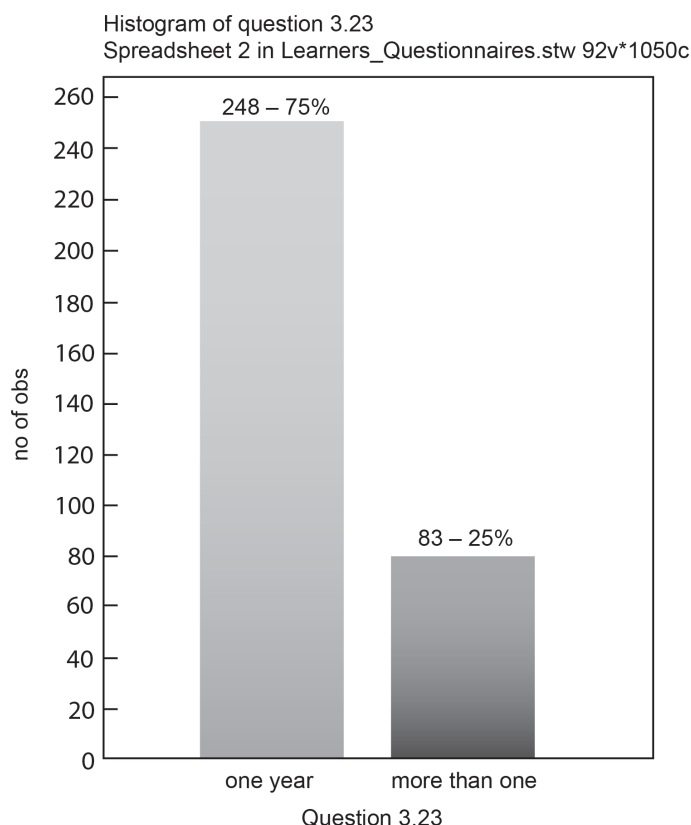
Table 30 – Would you go back to school if you were sure not to experience episodes of violence again?

Histogram of question 3.25
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.25
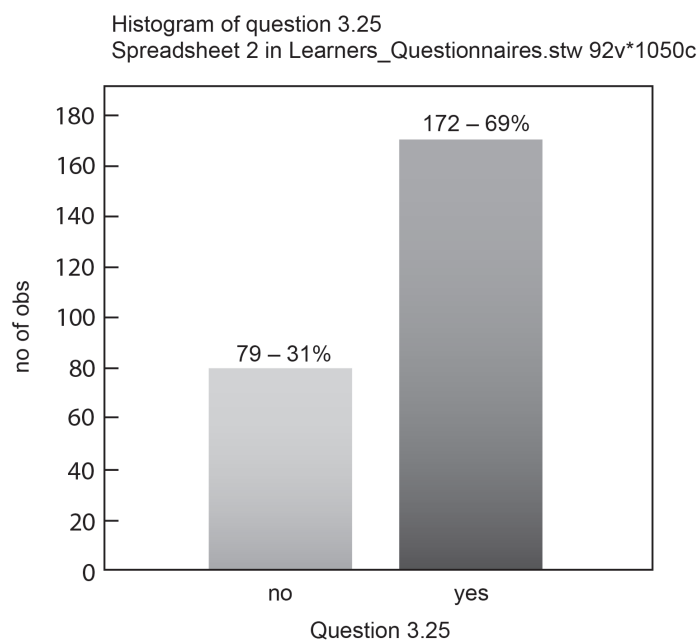
The fact that 31% of the girls responded that they would not return to school as a result of the violence that they have experienced has serious implications for the future health and productivity of the South African society and economy. Although boys are predominantly the ones who bully others, girls are also affected by it. In keeping with published literature on bullying (Duncan 2006), girls are more likely to be the victims of verbal than physical bullying compared to the sample as a whole.

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Table 31 – If you were a victim of bullying, was this abuse mainly verbal or physical (e.g. fighting, beaten up)?

Histogram of question 3.26
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 3.26
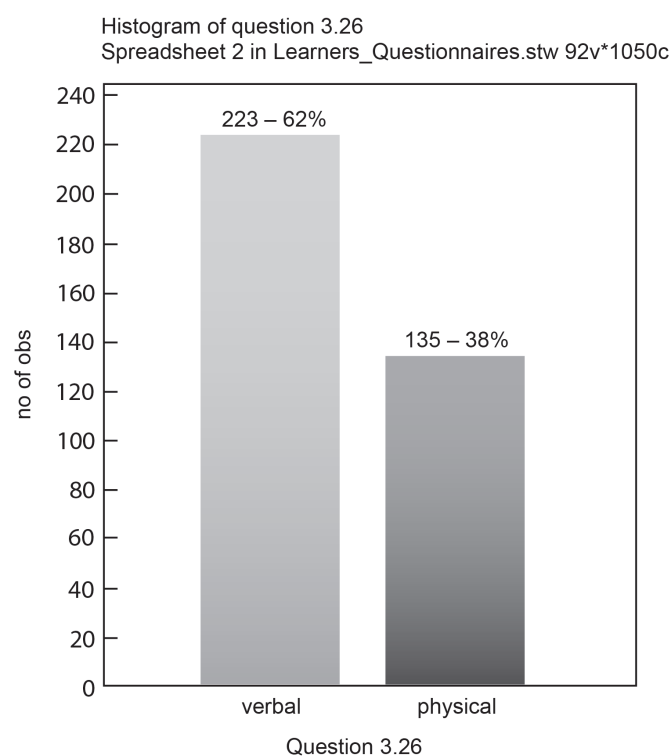
Table 32 – If physical, were you injured?

Histogram of question 3.27
Spreadsheet2 92v*1050c

Question 3.27
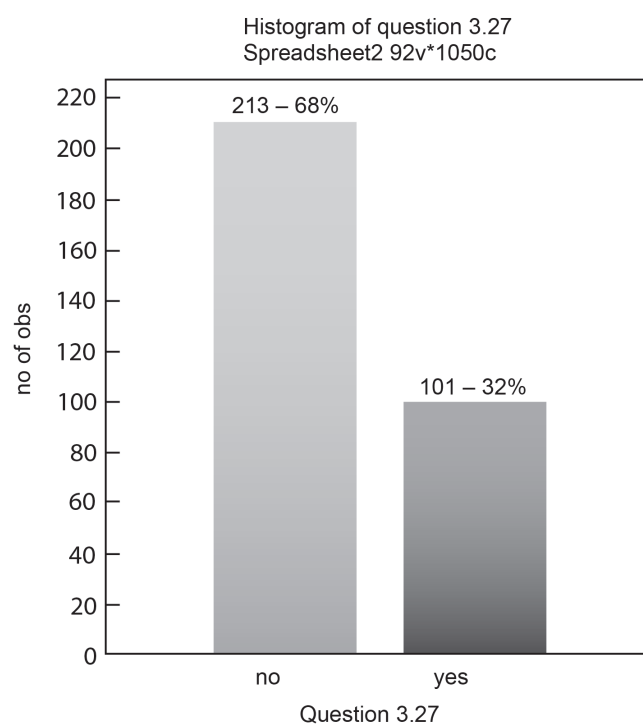
The interviews also revealed evidence of sexual harassment in schools:

> Boys being in girls toilets uninvited (Teacher Gauteng).

> The boys hide inside the girls toilets then grab them and put them inside the washing basin (Learner Focus Group Gauteng).

> Photos are taken of the girls private parts/they make movies out of the girl's private parts (Teacher Mpumalanga).

> … sexual harassment. Yah that one is very dominant … inappropriate touch … Boys doing it to girls and the younger ones like those who are in Grade 11 and 12 coming to those that are in Grade 8, the little … (Principal KZN).

> I think since I got in this school I'm always afraid to express myself, like every time anyone tells me to do something I'm too scared to refuse because I am a soft person, because every time somebody wants to touch me like, when I say no, they don't believe me because they know I'm too scared to report. Sometimes I'm too scared to fight for myself (Learner NWP).

And sometimes the act of harassment, itself a form of violence, comes with an added threat of violence:

> Many boys are doing it to girls, they try to touch our bums but when you're telling them to stop they say they are going to kill us or something (Learner NWP).

> A girl was forced to kiss a boy. The more the girl learner refused to kiss the boy the violence intensified (Teacher Mpumalanga).

> The boy was heard saying "I'm going to force myself on you, until you surrender" (Teacher Mpumalanga).

> Boys force girls to fight without wearing their underwear underneath (Teacher Mpumalanga).

The initial act of sexual harassment can also cause violent retribution:

> I have experienced some physical violence; I have been harassed in the school violently. That guy he touched my behind, and then that felt really uncomfortable and I went and told my brother and he wanted to hit him with a scissor (Learner NWP).

The research also showed that old habits of blaming the victim die hard:

> In sexual violence, I think the females also contribute to this harassment because you can find a girl with a skirt that barely covers her and she expects a guy to just walk past and not do anything. I am just saying because people are attracted to these things, and there are perverted minds out there that think otherwise; while you think such and such won't happen while it will happen (Learner NWP).

> There are girls with short skirts. Sometimes they come to us just to sit on top of you, stuff like that in class, the worst part in class, what do they expect you to do (Learner NWP)?

Similarly, in Limpopo boy learners said that they feel encouraged by how the girl learners are dressed:

> There is sexual harassment at the school and girls wear short dresses, and they do not wear underwear. And it disturbs me as I do not concentrate well in class, and I want to touch (Male learner Limpopo).

And the attitudes of some male learners continue to be highly questionable,

> I touch girls to feel what they are selling … I do not see it as sexual violence, because I see them as if they are selling, and in a shop if they are selling, you can go in and touch without buying (Male learner Limpopo).

In the Western Cape, low incidents of sexual harassment were reported. The common forms of sexual harassment involved verbal sexual harassment (i.e. calling of names), and fondling. Some boys are of the opinion that fondling girls does not constitute sexual harassment. They regard it as mere teasing. They even went a step further to say that girls like being fondled, because if they did not like it, they would report the incident.

Sexual harassment also has negative consequences for the female learner:

> [A girl was forced to kiss a boy.] The more the girl learner refused to kiss the boy, the more the violence. The girl was prepared to give the boy sex and put the problem behind her. I'm not happy because the learner that was violated couldn't stand the humiliation from other learners, she eventually dropped out of school (Learners are between 14 and 15 years) (Teacher Gauteng).

> [A boy pulling up the skirt of a learner who refused to kiss him.] The boy literally exposed the learner's private parts ... Matter was reported in the principal's office. This however affected the girl's performance ... I'm not happy, more effort was supposed to be focused on the victim, instead the perpetrators got all the attention (Teacher Mpumalanga).

This study suggests that there is still much to be done in the way of educating male learners about sexual harassment and encouraging them to think about the types of masculinity that are not based on sexual entitlement and violence.

Internal factors

So far we have reported on and discussed forms of violence, which either originate outside school or where the school plays an indirect role in reproducing violence by omission, i.e. by not taking decisive steps to stop or reduce the impact of such violent norms and behaviours. However, there are also other forms of violence in schools that are internally generated, and where the school plays a significant role in actually causing violence or creating the conditions in which violence can exist and even thrive.

Teacher verbal and physical violence

> … the teachers that are teaching me are not *that* abusive … (Learner Limpopo).

One obvious way in which violence could take place in schools through role modelling is when teachers are violent towards learners and one another, which will have serious implications for the broader society. This research has found instances of such behaviour:

> Teacher calls us by vulgar words (Learner Gauteng).

> Teacher calls us by vulgar words (Learner Mpumalanga).

We would like you to talk to teachers not to ill-treat us (Learner NWP).

The first thing, some teachers are being rude to you. They don't talk to you nicely, they swear, they talk about your parents. So it's like you do one mistake like making noise, she won't say keep quiet normally, she would say wrong things like swearing at you and use big words (Learner NWP).

Most of the emotional violence is from teachers who swear at learners and in an inappropriate way, like calling names and shouting and things (Learner NWP).

There are some teachers who call us these nasty words, like bitch because of our short skirts (Learner NWP).

We are being abused emotionally and physically by those teacher who stand at front and tell you that saying "I'm in place of your mother and father", but still has the nerve to tell someone sitting next to me that you are busy opening your thighs like nandos chicken. How do you expect that person to feel, is this not bunking of classes? Is this not causing high failure rate? And then you blame the learners while the teachers are still there. They are not taking responsibility for anything and they are the adults in this situation (Learner NWP).

Some teachers will slap you even if there is nothing wrong you are doing (Learner NWP).

… another thing that I can see from the staff, is that bullying is all over and you find that some of the staff members are too emotional … when they talk. There are those people who don't have an approach … verbally. They attack one another (Learner Gauteng).

In Limpopo province it was overwhelmingly clear that teachers still use verbal abuse, which is discouraging to learners. One learner said that:

Teachers that are discouraging us to do some things, like last year this teacher discouraged me and said, oh, you have no future on this stream. And I ended up failing because of that, because always when I think of reading I think of her that it is the same I am not going to pass as she has said so. I ended up changing the stream (Learner Limpopo).

Verbal abuse not only affects learners emotionally but can also result in them failing the grade. One learner, for example, said that:

I am coping very well because the teachers that are teaching me, they are not that abusive. If you don't understand something, they are willing to answer you, unlike like last year when you say you don't understand something they will say maybe you will understand tomorrow and when you ask them tomorrow they will tell you that go and tell your parent. So this year I am coping very well with a positive attitude towards those subjects. So I think I will pass this time (Learner Limpopo).

A South African teacher has a legal obligation towards the safety and protection of learners in terms of the teacher's *loco parentis* status. Teachers are there to protect and shape these young adults in positive directions, but the results are indicating

that teachers are sometimes doing the opposite. Not only does such behaviour by teachers not demonstrate mutual respect but it also contradicts the professional code of conduct for teachers. Such unprofessional behaviour by teachers contributes to the disorganisation in schools, creating an atmosphere where violence is more likely and more acceptable.

We saw above that learner respondents to the questionnaire reported that they are still experiencing corporal punishment. Also, in the interviews in NWP there were some incidents of the use of corporal punishment in one of the schools visited, where the teachers used a stick after break to force learners back into their classroom. According to one learner participant in Limpopo, "there is also a high rate of corporal punishment in our school which is worrying me" and, in addition, another learner reported:

> this teacher, she started telling … [at me that] I am a bad person, why am I not telling them [fellow learners] that it was June examinations, why am I not encouraging them, because I am serious and they are busy making a noise. So she beat her with a belt, she asked one of the boys for a belt, and she hit her like seriously in front of all of us in the class. That was traumatizing because that made me feel like this is my fault and they are beating her because of me, if only I didn't say that funny thing it, wouldn't have happened (Learner Limpopo).

Learners in schools in Limpopo did not feel safe and fear corporal punishment. Some of them indicated that they do not complain or inform their parents because this might actually encourage teachers to use it, despite the teachers knowing that they are breaking the law. According to one leaner, "we were suspended for a week and when we came back my parents decided to tell them to punish me and then they beat me with a shambok." In one school in KZN visited for purposes of observation, the male teachers still used corporal punishment. Learners in Limpopo also said that they do not feel comfortable with their teachers because they are not sympathetic to their most basic right of dignity as they cannot go to the sanitation block during breaks because teachers administers corporal punishment when they are late, even though they (teachers) know the state of the toilets in their schools. According to one learner:

> And the other thing that does not make us feel comfortable at this school is that in breaks the short break, lunch and long break and now our toilets are far from our classes, so when we go to that side of the toilet we use almost 15 minutes, let's say 5 minutes to go to the toilet and 3 minutes to help yourself and another 5 minutes to come back, which means the break is already over. Then we find the teacher at the gate here with a shambok and they are going beat us. that's the thing we don't feel comfortable with.

This is interesting, given the following section below on teacher absenteeism and lateness. Though corporal punishment might not now be used in certain schools, this does not necessarily rule out other forms of physical punishment:

> Sometimes teachers become aggressive always when they interact with the learners and they slap them … When maybe there is violence. They are angry also – the teachers. They want to … discipline these kids you see … No, we don't use corporal punishment but at that time you are going to use your hands … We know it is but it is just going to come voluntarily … Yes, I want

to tell the truth (laughter). I do it. I do, I slap them … Not so hard because five fingers must not appear on a child … at least on top of the head and on the shoulders (Principal Gauteng).
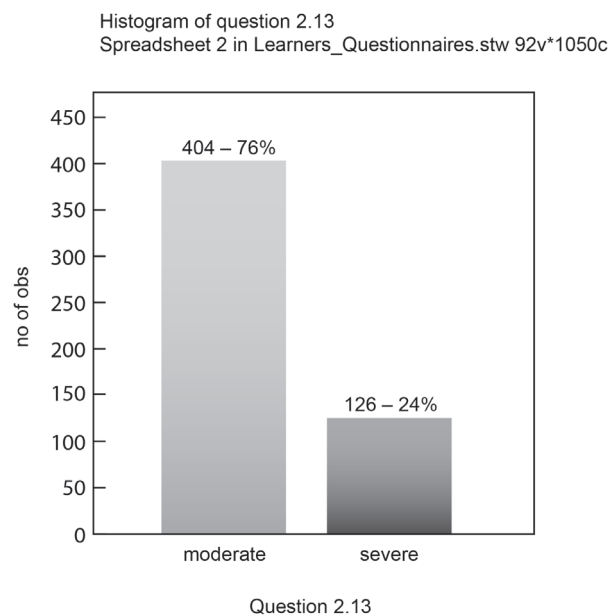
It was also interesting that some teachers in Limpopo acknowledged the use of corporal punishment by some of their colleagues and their excuses for not standing up and putting a stop to it. One Life Orientation teacher participant acknowledged that, "there are those that use it and they have a reason of using it … I do not talk to them." It is this silence that helps to perpetuate violence in schools.

It is important to stress that corporal punishment can have serious physical (as well as psychological) consequences. Learners gave the following responses to the questionnaire,

Table 33 – If you were the victim of corporal punishment, were you injured?

Histogram of question 2.12
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.12
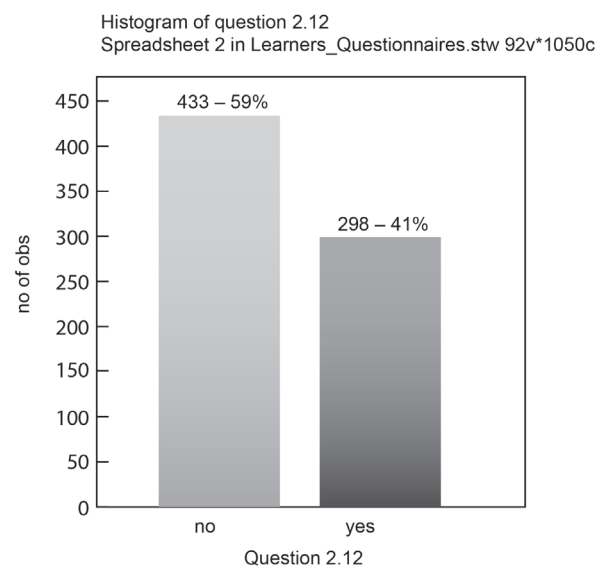
Table 34 – If you were injured, was the injury moderate (e.g. no major consequences) or were you severely injured (so that you couldn't go to school, had to seek medical attention)?

Histogram of question 2.13
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.13

Table 35 – If severe, what were the consequences?

Histogram of question 2.14
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.14
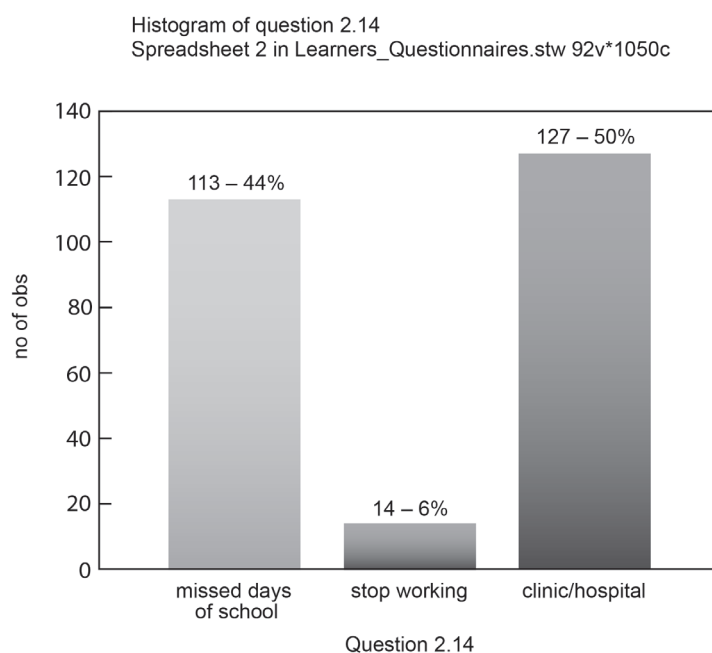
Teacher absenteeism (unattended classes)

We argued in the literature review that the ethos of the school can contribute to a context where violence is more or less likely or possible. The more disorganised, unreliable and inconsistent the school the more chance of violence as learners feel that in a laissez faire atmosphere anything goes and they too can do as they please. Thus, the consistent reports of teacher absenteeism during the interviews for this study is of serious concern,

> Teachers come late to school (Teacher Gauteng).

> Teachers are always absent from school and this results in learners coming late and leaving early from school (Teacher Gauteng).

> Teachers are often not free to discipline learners as they are also part of the problem (Teacher Gauteng).

> Some teachers send learners to go buy cigarettes during school hours (Teacher Gauteng).

> I don't feel safe during break time, because there is no security in the school (Learner Gauteng).

> [During the free time.] Maybe there is a teachers' meeting then the fighting starts in the class. They harass each other, then the other one gets angry then they [fight]. They hit you on your face and you put your bag on the face and start (Learner Focus group Gauteng).

> I feel very scared when there is no teacher in class (Learner Gauteng).

> When the teacher is not in the class. Some kids start fighting for the pencils or the ballpens (Learner Focus group Gauteng).

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I don't feel safe during break time, because there is no security in the school (Learner Mpumalanga).

I feel very scared when there is no teacher in class (Learner Mpumalanga).

… a couple of [violence] cases [take place] in the toilets, boy's toilets … but also in the classroom … in most cases when you hear of kids fighting it's more than 90% chance that there was no teacher in that class. So it's mainly in the classroom (Teacher KZN).

Teachers are also irresponsible, they once left their marking of internal examination and went to mark at the marking centre. Learner's results were delayed and full of errors (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Yes, we experienced that they usually fight alone in classroom when there is no teacher is where they will be fighting about the squabble that they had. So they continue to fight during those times and it will start maybe fighting for a chair or where they are having girls because some situations belong to girls maybe is in the school or outside school. So these are the games which lead to this so we do experience fight (Teacher Limpopo).

One principal in Gauteng said:

… like last week, children were fighting right in the classroom. Girls were fighting right in the classroom … One period was over and another teacher had to go to the classroom. So that is how we used to experience this fighting …

While another principal in Gauteng stated:

[fighting occurs] when the teacher is not present in the classroom … it does happen for the mere fact that the teacher is not there in the class, they misbehave.

Teacher expectations

It has long been a criticism that the mass model of formal schooling is based on a "one size fits all" model with little scope for support and development of individual needs (see, for example, Harber 2009). In this study some learners indeed complained that they are not allowed to be themselves in the school. Teachers want them to conform to their "stereotype" view of the world and like to compare them with other learners:

They don't encourage you to be yourself … they want you to be like so and so. They paint up a picture and they want every single one of the learners to fit into that picture and it's virtually impossible. We all come from different backgrounds, coming to school where we are supposed to get a better education, a brighter future for tomorrow but why aren't we getting that if run away from our problems at home and come here to get relief, well we are not getting it. All we are the stress that we have I mean as teenagers we go through a lot of things, a lot and our escape is supposed to be school. This where I meet my friends, this is where I should have fun, instead I come to school to smoke, I come to school to slap the teachers why is that, who started

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that. If I was encouraged to be myself at a young age maybe this wouldn't have happened (Learner NWP).

If you are encouraged to be yourself and the teachers do what they are supposed to do, to trim these young adults to be successful young man and woman, leaders of the future of tomorrow by encouraging to be themselves by showing them the right route at all times in a right way, in a rightful manner that means sitting them down (Learner NWP).

They want you to fall into that stereotype, they want you follow into their perfect picture and if you refuse then what happen is disciplinary hearings, you get kicked out of the classes (Learner NWP).

It means you have to be quiet, you have to obey whatever they say is right. I'm not saying we shouldn't, we should but they should learn to accommodate everyone and not try to accommodate themselves only. In the class they want it to be quiet, the whole hour we have to sit down like this and when it's time to discuss we have to whisper instead if it was moderate for them to say you know what talk, say this and this because you want to say it but say it a rightful manner, say it in a respectable manner instead they are not doing that they want you to be quiet. They want you to fold your arms and sleep when they want to, when a teenager sleeps in the class because they are very hyperactive believe me they are, instead they want you to keep quiet sit down and not go to the toilet or drink (Learner NWP).

Learner attitudes and behaviour

If learners are consistently late for school, or absent without good reason, this adds to the problem of disorganisation and lacking a clear sense of structure and purpose. This also seems to be a problem in schools, but it is not helped along by the corresponding teacher behaviour described above:

Well late coming, there is late coming because some of our learners drag their feet on coming to school like the school starts at 07:45 the bell rings at but then they should get for registrations and the school starts at 8, but you find that even at 8 'o clock there are leaners coming in and while the teachers they arrive at 07:30 (Teacher NWP).

Absenteeism for leaners without having maybe for certain reasons like taking like taking leave but on the side of teachers absenteeism is not that rive, it's like maybe if we've got something to do then you take a leave and what was the other question about? (Teacher NWP)

What we do is that we start taking them from 07h30 in the morning but in fact our school starts from 07h40 the second bell that we ring, actually it's a bell which is sticking out to the side of the school and then 10 minutes later then the school starts. We try to take them from as early as 07h30 in order for those who are saying they are late they will be on time before the bell rings. We close our gate at 08h00 and for those who have come late we start doing manual work with them as a punishment, so we also try to identify sometimes those who are habitual latecomers and we seek the parents intervention and increase as well the correct task we should be giving them (Teacher NWP).

If there is no sense of collective order and purpose, then learners will take their cue from the organisation:

> It's not strict that's why I like it (Learner NWP).

> Many learners are bunking classes and they attend maybe two times per week, that's why I like it. For me it's not bad (Learner NWP).

And a resulting sense of anomie or lack of identity with the school can mean that learners even collaborate with criminals outside the school:

> The thing is even if the school's security was tight, we make holes in the school, we cut the wires out the fences down so that those guys may come in (Learner NWP).

> No security in this school, like some other guys bring their friends from their areas and come to rob the children in the school (Learner NWP).

School management

Ultimately, it is the management of the school that is responsible for creating an organisational culture or school ethos which minimises violence. Yet there is a basic lack of respect and trust between learners and teachers evident in many of the themes and responses discussed so far. Many learners lack confidence in the school and teachers – they do not seem to be on the same side or a true educational community. It is clear from the present respondents that all that is possible is not currently being done in relation to reducing violence in terms of codes of conduct, security, consistency in the application of rules, or responding to learner needs and issues.

> There is a code of conduct but some teachers are not aware of (SGB member Gauteng).

> Although the school has the school code it is not emphasised and as a result not followed (Teacher Gauteng).

> We do have a school code although we do not use it much (Learner Gauteng).

> We do have a school policy but we do not emphasise it much (Learner Gauteng).

In fact, in NWP the code of conduct was visible only in the principal's office in the four schools. All four schools did not have notice boards displayed in the school where learners were able to see the code of conduct, school rules, or warnings.

> Although learners are expelled they are allowed to return to school after some time, which creates more problems for the victims (Learner Gauteng).

> Learners are afraid to report most of the incidents for fear of victimisation (SGB member Gauteng).

> Sometimes they take the problem for granted and moving on without considering the seriousness part of the problem and when the problem becomes severe its then that they consider doing something about it (Learner NWP).

Lack of fencing in the school premises; learners come and go inside the premises as they please (SGB member Gauteng).

The poor system of registering at school in school allows troublesome learners to drop out of school and come back when they feel like (Teacher Gauteng).

My school is too open there is no fence, learners are free to move in and out the school premises as they pleased (Teacher Gauteng).

Learners are doing as they please, they drop out of school and come back again when they are bored (Teacher Gauteng).

Parents were called in but never showed up, in such cases the incidents are dropped (Learner Gauteng).

We report violence cases to teachers, but nothing is being done (Learner Gauteng).

My school is too open there is no fence, learners are free to move in and out the school premises as they pleased (Teacher Mpumalanga).

We report violence cases to teachers, but nothing is being done (Learner Mpumalanga).

Ah, mam! You just sit back with your problems. There is no use because when you tell the principal, she take side on teachers (Learner NWP).

In this school, I went to the principal to report what that guy did. Then the principal told me to sit down there. How does that make me feel? The person is chasing me with a knife then she tells me to sit down there, it's unfair (Learner NWP).

Like the principal once told us that she always take side on teachers, and she will always take side no matter what. This means the teacher is always right and then learners are always in the wrong side of everything (Learner NWP).

I was too afraid to take the matter to the office because they don't take you seriously and they say okay, we are going to suspend the child for a week and you see the very child coming to school and attending the classes in the suspension (Learner NWP).

If we reported about sexual harassment, they should be serious about it like they should call the police and make an example with one person and that will lead an example to others, I think so (Learner NWP).

Like the security here, the reason that the knives enter the school is because of low security, if they could close all the gaps and when you come in the school you are searched (Learner NWP).

They must use the small gate to come in and not the big one for cars and they must search every person who enters in. So if they close all those gaps and the security gets a bit tighter (Learner NWP).
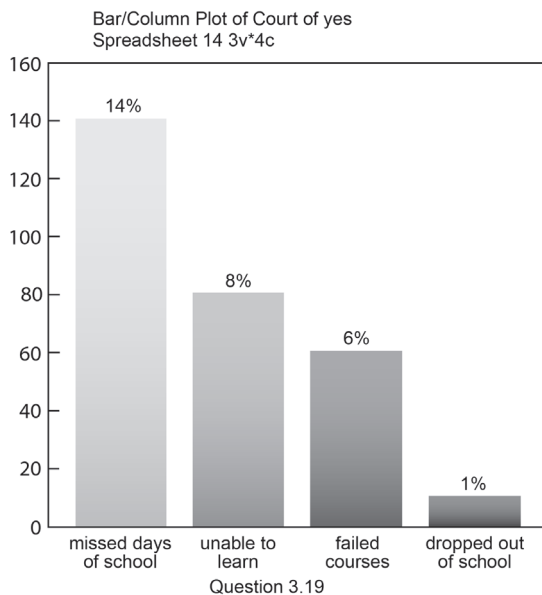
The poor system of registering at school in school allows troublesome learners to drop out of school and come back when they feel like (Teacher Mpumalanga).

If reporting a teacher was not exaggerated as such as in like the learner has done something wrong, they never call these teachers to order, it's like they are saints and like these teacher think they are untouchable like they are above this law of South Africa. Teachers are busy talking about the Constitution citing that the Constitution says there is way of curbing violence but the teachers do not enforce it (Learner NWP).

Violence as a barrier to learning

It is also clear from the respondents in this study that violence in schools has serious and negative consequences for school attendance, learning, and achievement among a significant proportion of learners. Learner responses (boys and girls) to the questionnaire are set out in the following table:

Table 36 – As a result of violence have you missed classes?

Bar/Column Plot of Court of yes
Spreadsheet 14 3v*4c

Question 3.19

Table 37 – If you miss classes, how often do you miss classes?

Histogram of question 2.2
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c

Question 2.2

80
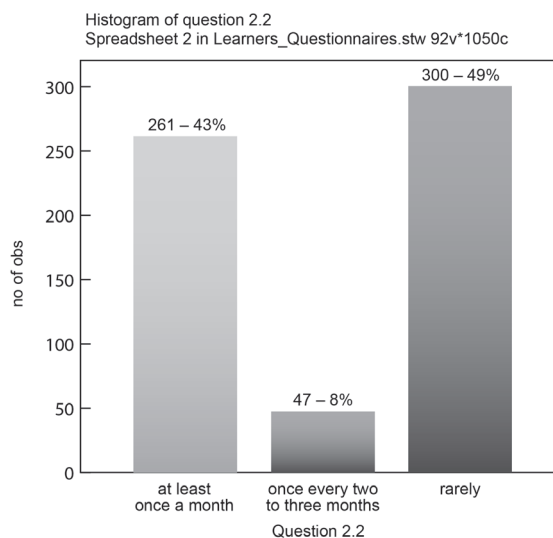
Table 38 – If at least once a month, how many days of school have you missed in one month?

Histogram of question 2.3
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
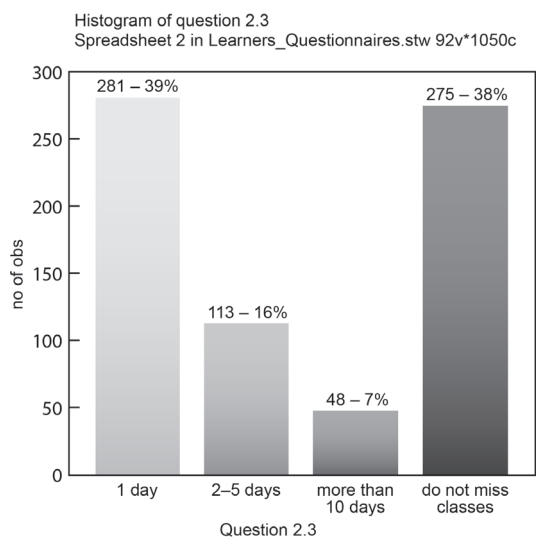
Table 39 – If you have missed courses, how many have you failed?

Histogram of question 2.4
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
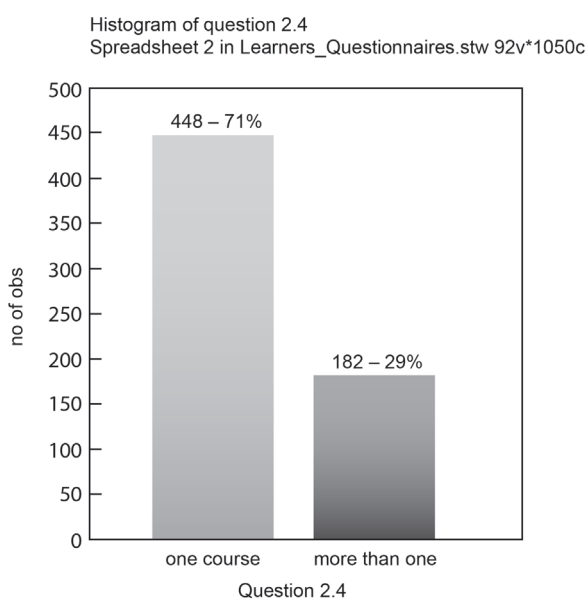
Table 40 – During how many years of school have you failed Learning Areas/Subjects?

Histogram of question 2.5
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
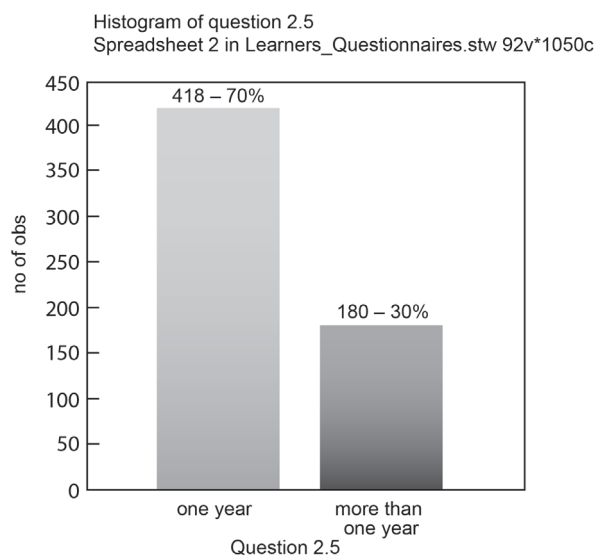
Table 41 – Would you go back to school if you were sure not to experience episodes of violence again?

Histogram of question 2.7
Spreadsheet 2 in Learners_Questionnaires.stw 92v*1050c
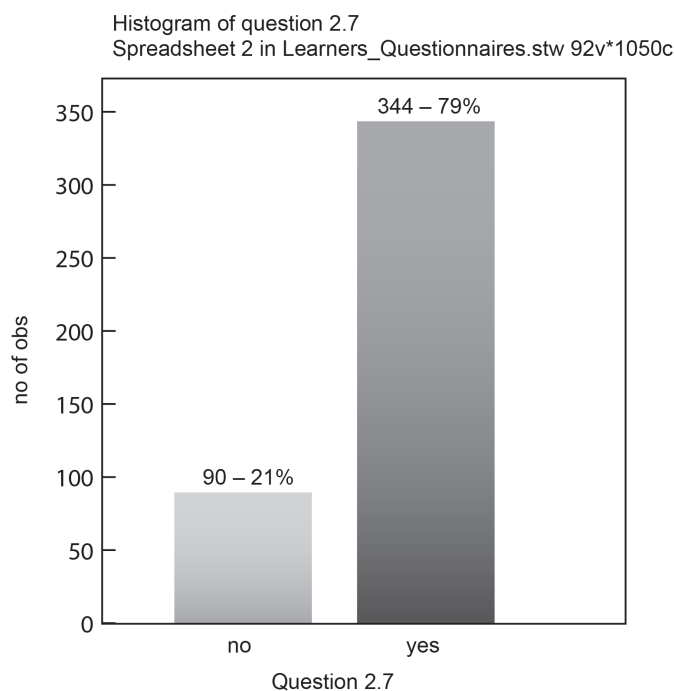
Responses to the interviews also revealed the negative consequences of violence in schools:

> It wastes a lot of learning time. Learners end up focusing/paying more attention to the perpetrator because they are not sure of what he is going to do next (Teacher Gauteng).

> This happened outside the school. A girl promised to beat me daily after school hours. I got so scared that at times I used to go home immediately after break just to run away from them (Learner Gauteng).

> The stereotyping made by this learner to be, made me feel as if I was less human this affected my learning (Learner Gauteng).

> I don't feel safe inside the classroom (Learner Gauteng).

> Learners end up not learning but, concentrating on the perpetrator of violence (Learner Gauteng).

> It affects/hinders learning, in most cases classes are destructed, teachers spent quality time trying to calm down the situation (Principal Gauteng).

> Victims of violence don't cope; they end up dropping out from school (Principal Gauteng).

> If a teacher is somehow linked, whether directly or indirectly, it will affect teaching because, the teacher has to attend to the pressing issues (Principal Gauteng).

> It hinders learning (Teacher Mpumalanga).

I'm not free to teach (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Violence create barriers to learning (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Teachers are scared to discipline learners (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Time is wasted try to calm down the situation ... (Teacher Mpumalanga).

It wastes a lot of learning time. Learners end up focusing/paying more attention to the perpetrator because they are not sure of what he is going to do next (Teacher Mpumalanga).

A cell phone was stolen from a handbag of teacher by a learner, police were called to search the school, the teacher concerned has to abandon her classes and went to the police station to write a statement about the incident (Principal Mpumalanga).

Classroom management is problematic to handle and this end up affecting the teaching and learning processes (Teacher Mpumalanga).

I got so scared that at times I used to go home immediately after break just to run away from them (Learner Mpumalanga).

I don't feel safe inside the classroom (Learner Mpumalanga).

Learners end up not learning but, concentrating on the perpetrator of violence (Learner Mpumalanga).

We are not schooling properly (Learner Mpumalanga).

If a child is always a victim in the toilet, now the child is going to fear to go to the toilet and when the child has got to respond to call of nature where shall the child go? He goes to the toilet he is going to be victimised. As a result of that the child will be tempted not to attend school and that affects teaching and learning (Life orientation teacher KZN).

… if now and again one is fighting with another one, usually the stronger one or the weaker one tend to think going to school is not good because he is going to be beaten by other person … even when they are in the classroom the one who has been beaten is no longer going to be interested or pay attention because other learners will be in the know that he has been beaten … So because of that it means that this fighting or violence has an effect on the one's performance … The learner may withdraw from school thinking that going to school is harmful. If not so, it may also enhance his behavior to change … he may even pick up a dangerous weapon [to protect] himself from being hurt by others when he comes to school (Principal Gauteng).

… the child will become demotivated. This will also encourage truancy and again this child is not going to be able to perform well at school because the child will be affected and instead of the child concentrating in class, always this child will be thinking about the perpetrator. During break I'm going to give this person money or after school. How am I going to go home? Maybe they will be waiting for me somewhere around the corner (Principal Gauteng).

The following is a case that was reported from Mpumalanga:

> Two school girls who organised boys and other girls from nearby school to fight with one of the girls in their school. This group consists of 8 people. The girl that was fought was tried and forced to participate in the fighting. When the fight was still on the boys pulled down the skirt of the girl and made movie out of her naked body.

> It was difficult to handle it because some learners were from another school. The learners from the same school were placed under rehabilitation for three months … these actions motivated learners to commit more crime of this nature … She was traumatised, her school marks/work was greatly affected … She eventually left the school (dropped out) (SGB member Mpumalanga).

While the following incident has been reported from KwaZulu-Natal:

> It was a girl in grade 9 and … I think she had diarrhoea and she was afraid to ask for permission to go out to the toilet … the moment she recognised it was already a mess on the desk and then the others just started to laugh at her … the skirt was already dirty and then they laughed, you know … she was afraid to come back to the class … The next day I went to the class … she was not there … She came with the parent to school and then she explained that the kid is afraid to come because they were laughing.

Mention above was made of a serious case of violence from KwaZulu-Natal where a boy tried to strangle a girl and this had negative consequences for the victim:

> … when the schools reopened on the 18th the [girl] literally refused to come back to school … In fact, she was beaten up badly and almost strangled out of nothing (Principal KZN).

Even if a learner does not drop out of school, bullying can make a learner reluctant to participate or contribute in class as one of the participants explained:

> … [bullying] impacts negatively on [learners'] self-esteem … let us take a case where a child is in the classroom and he is bullied by one fellow. So the child is going to be withdrawn and reserved in a classroom situation … because of being ridiculed, because of being bullied, so it impacts negatively on their self-esteem. As a result of that the child is not going to give off his or her best in terms of learner participation in class (Principal KZN).

Violence also affects teacher motivation:

> … educators become demoralised because there is no respect from the learners. They take advantage that I won't be punished and I won't be caned … You see they confuse issues of responsibility. So teachers … find themselves helpless because learners are like, you don't touch them (Principal Gauteng).

> … you are going to find that teachers enter the class … prepared [to teach]. Now instead of teaching, you are going to lecture them, trying to motivate them to leave what they are doing. And sometimes we must start punishing them [sending them] to work in the gardens or maybe to pick up the papers around the school. Sometimes it affects us [in the sense that] that some teachers don't want you to punish those kids. They see that thing was not so important, and then it causes friction between the teachers (Principal Gauteng).

Dealing with violence: the police

One possible way in which schools can help to deal with violence is to call in the police, but the schools seem to have mixed experiences in this regard:

Police, they don't come to search in my school (SGB member Gauteng).

I have never seen police in my school (SGB member Gauteng).

Police do come at anytime and learners are aware of this (SGB member Gauteng).

Police has never come to search in the school (SGB member Gauteng).

Police don't come to my school (Learner Gauteng).

Police do come unannounced but not very often (Learner Gauteng).

Police, they don't come to search in my school (SGB member Mpumalanga).

I have never seen police in my school (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Police do come at anytime and learners are aware of this (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Police has never come to search in the school (SGB member Mpumalanga).

I have never heard that police came to search my school (Learner Mpumalanga).

Police don't come to my school (Learner Mpumalanga).

Police do come unannounced but not very often (Learner Mpumalanga).

They come when called. There is a police attached to my school, he has never come to search the school for illegal drugs, and other stuff (Principal Mpumalanga).

We have made several request to the police to come and search in my school but in vain (Principal Mpumalanga).

Police, they don't come to search in my school (Teacher Mpumalanga).

I have never seen police in my school (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Police do come at anytime and learners are aware of this (Teacher Mpumalanga).

Police has never come to search in the school (Teacher Mpumalanga).

A learner whose private parts were made a video reported the acts to another teacher. Parents were called, case was reported to the nearest police station BUT I'm not happy because the learner that was violated couldn't stand the humiliation from other learners, she eventual dropped out of school … The perpetrators got away with a three months police service. They were placed

under a psychologist and they had to report to the police station for three months (Teacher Mpumalanga).

There was a boy who used to harass me last year. So it was just too much for me, so I decided to organise people to come and deal with the boy, and then the teachers found out about that and called the police for him. The police came to arrest him. He said the hand cuffs were very painful (Learner Focus Group Gauteng).

There are the CPFs … They take rounds here at school. We also invite people to come and give learners a talk to address this unbecoming behavior … (Principal Gauteng).

They call the CPF's … They call them so that they can break [the fight] off then take you to the office to the principal … Then if you keep on doing it then they call your parents so that they can sit down with you and talk (Learner Gauteng).

So, experiences of getting the police in to help seem variable and in some cases unreliable. Of course, it is an interesting question as to what role model the police play for learners anyway, given the fact that they themselves have been accused of lacking accountability and using excessive force and violence (see, for example, Southey 2012). Two responses suggest that using the police to prevent or solve crime in schools might have its own problems:

No, randomly or if I suspect these learners may be having some things in the school or those whom I know are always troublesome. As I came across them you'll find that there are some but in the past future I would get into the class unannounced but we resorted into calling the police *because they get physical* (writer's italics), we either got some once or twice in the two years. So we asking then maybe sometimes they should come and visit here maybe five of them just to get into our classes to see what is happening (Teacher NWP).

Even when called, they at times do not show up. Police are at times part of the problem as they are friends with some of the most violent kids (Principal Gauteng).

Role of the school in reducing violence

So, what do respondents think about ways in which schools can reduce violence? The following are some examples of responses from interviews:

Cases are reported to disciplinary committee, cases behind our scope are reported in the nearest police station (Principal Mpumalanga).

Parents are involved in the discipline of their children (Principal Mpumalanga).

Cases are referred to the disciplinary committee, tribunal, the HOD; the last step is the principal (Principal Mpumalanga).

Parents sign agreements forms; they agree to be responsible for their children's behaviour (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Learners receive warnings before they are finally expelled (Learner Gauteng).

Learners have to report to their teachers, the principal, and the last step is suspension (SGB member Mpumalanga).

We involve parents in the disciplining of their children (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Learners have to report to their teachers, the principal, and the last step is suspension (Teacher Mpumalanga).

We involve parents in the disciplining of their children (Teacher Mpumalanga).

If we arrive late to school, we are either sent back home or we clean the school premises (Learner NWP).

If you arrive late or beat another learner by mistake, you will be sent to the principal's office and they oppress you. When teachers see you going to the bathrooms, they say you are always playing (Learner NWP).

If you arrive late, you clean the school and the dustbin (Learner NWP).

Police are called at times to intervene in serious cases (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Letters are written to parents of perpetrators of violence (SGB member Mpumalanga).

Learners have to report to their teachers, the principal, and the last step is suspension (SGB member Gauteng).

We involve parents in the disciplining of their children (SGB member Gauteng).

Letters are written to parents of perpetrators of violence (SGB member Gauteng).

Parents sign agreements forms; they agree to be responsible for their children's behaviour (SGB member Gauteng).

Cases are reported to teachers, and then principal, the last step is suspension (Learner Gauteng).

Learners are forced to pick up papers after school (Learner Gauteng).

Parents are also being involved in the disciplining (Learner Gauteng).

The school staff members do period search for drugs and weapons (Teacher Gauteng).

Schools do conduct their own search for drugs (Learner Gauteng).

At times learners are told to take out things from their bags and they always leave certain items in their bags (Learner Gauteng).

Cases are reported to disciplinary committee, cases behind our scope are reported in the nearest police station (Principal Gauteng).

Parents are involved in the discipline of their children (Principal Gauteng).

Cases are referred to the disciplinary committee, tribunal, the HOD; the last step is the principal (Principal Gauteng).

… expelling learners is the best thing to do for the school and the other learners (Principal Gauteng).

As some of these responses suggest, apart from punishment some emphasis is put on searching for drugs and weapons. In the Western Cape, despite the fact that the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act clearly states that no person may bring any dangerous objects, alcohol or illegal drugs onto the school premises during or after school hours, the study found that learners are commonly caught in possession of these objects and substances. The Act, which was passed in January 2011, empowers any school principal or his or her delegate to search any learner, or the property of any learner, for any dangerous object, alcoholic liquor, or illegal drug, if the principal reasonably suspects the presence of a dangerous object, alcoholic liquor, or an illegal drug on the school premises or during a school activity. If there is reasonable and reliable evidence that a learner is concealing a dangerous object or illegal substance in the body of that particular learner, the principal may request a member of the South African Police Services to conduct a more extensive search of that learner's person, which may entail the removal of clothing.

The Western Cape Provincial School Education Act is in line with the Education Laws Amendment Act, 2007, which provides for random search and seizure and drug testing in schools. This piece of legislation is designed to allow schools to stop learners from bringing weapons and drugs to SA's public schools by strengthening the principals' powers.

As part of the intervention strategies to curb violence in schools in the Western Cape, schools have resorted to search and seizure and drug testing within their premises. One school has a standing agreement with the local police station that from time to time, during the course of the day, police would patrol around the school area and also conduct search and seizure in the school:

We always conduct search and seizures anytime, we have a community forum they call it cluster committee, in this committee there is a police officer who is the commander of the cluster committee. So about two times in the month I call him and to request his visibility, and they will bring all the forces that they have, like the sniffer dogs and everything. Then they will say we are here for about seven days and he will ask which classes are problematic. Then we will send them to those classes and then they will go and conduct searches in those classes. Through this we are sending a message to the learners that carrying of weapons and drugs in our school premises will not be tolerated. We never had a gun in our premises. I'm not saying that these boys don't have guns because I don't stay with them in the townships but they never get exposed to us, because they know that if they get exposed they will be arrested. So the police, in that way they actually help me (School B Principal, Western Cape).

While teachers hail random search and seizure as a deterrent for school violence, learners view it in different light. According to the learners the random search and seizures rob them of valuable time for learning and sometimes in the process their rights are violated.

> Now on the point where the police is searching the learners, this is my personal opinion that is also stealing time off our education whether the search is for our safety, but I personally think if they have search for three to four hours how many hours is left on the clock for our learning. That is a point that I have to make. So if it is possible for the department of education that they can provide the schools with metal detectors so as to save time (School A learner, Western Cape).

Another learner complained about the treatment meted to the learners during search and seizure sessions:

> The police haven't done searches for this term, but last year they did it up to four times in a month and if they wanna come now they can and they don't tell us when they are coming, and for me it's almost like they just come whenever they feel. They want to come and they disturb us in our classes and also they are disrespecting the learners because when they talk to you they would use a filthy language. I mean it's not good for those who come from the environment that is not violent and now they have to come and witness the violence by the police, which is the people that should protect us and they are also disrespecting the learning during the session of the search (School C learner, Western Cape).

Interestingly, when asked about government initiated policies for dealing with violence in schools, some principals seemed to be ignorant or not aware of them. For example, responding to the question "Are you aware of other policies for addressing violence in schools?", a principal in Gauteng responded: "The other policy?" The researcher asked a guiding question: "How about the safety and security one?" Then she responded in an unconvincing manner:

> Oh, safety yah, it goes together with this one of discipline. Yah, safety …

Even when probed about the search and seizure policy, her responses were indirect. In fact, they sounded as if she did not understand the question:

> Here at Primary most of the thing that we find is benzene … Then we call the parents … Where maybe the children the learners doing misconduct we handle properly. So that if when it can blow up when the inspectors come to school we must be able to know where we have gone right and wrong.

Most of the above responses to how schools respond to violence deal with punishment or control and surveillance to catch offenders. However, in America, which also has problems with school violence, such "get tough" measures have had little success while less coercive strategies have been more successful (Noguera 1995). While policies of punishment, control and surveillance have implications for the rights of the learners, they do not focus on what can help to prevent a culture of violence in schools such as the following:

The code of conduct make the learners aware that this kind of behavior is acceptable and that is not. So it's all about educating them. Educating these learners about the wrong and rights and they must know what is going on. They must know when they are wrong and when they are right (Principal Gauteng).

The following respondent makes an interesting point in relation to the classroom:

I enjoy learning Maths and Science, because the teachers of these subjects always intervene when there is violence in the class (Learner Mpumalanga).

Or the following responses in relation to the importance of good school management:

[Violence] does not impact negatively upon the running of this school because of the way of life of this particular institution in terms of discipline, in terms of good work ethics, in terms of ethos, in terms of vision. So when [learners] come in to these premises it changes all together. We ensure that they are at school on time … and we ensure that by the time they go out of the premises at any given time they are not the same as they were in the morning (Principal KZN).

… when they [learners] come in to these premises [they] change all together. We ensure that they are at school on time, we ensure that they get their homework, we ensure that they are in class and we ensure that by the time they go out of the premises at any given time they are not the same as they were in the morning (Principal KZN).

Teachers go to their classes and our headmaster is doing his job properly and the deputy. So most of the time, during school hours, our learners are in class unless those who are moving around maybe going somewhere maybe if you have sent them somewhere to go and fetch something for you but all in all they stay in class and teachers go to classes (Teacher NWP).

We've got a code of conduct for learners and for teachers also, it is working somehow but for other learners it is not working because if there are laws there are saying no vulgar language, no late coming, no fighting but they still fight but some they know that they should abide by the code of conduct (Teacher NWP).

The positive thing about these responses to issues of violence is that schools do not just wait for the government to do something. For example, both these principals mention the existence of safety and security committees in their schools. These committees include mainly parents, with a few teachers and learners. This is because, according to principal 1:

We were told [by the department of education] that we should not venture into making this safety and security committee to be … teacher-orientated and be driven by teachers, because it might lose the buy-in from the parents. We want parents to be the driving force (Principal KZN).

Such schools go beyond just utilising parents in dealing with violence. They open channels of communication with school-based stakeholders. For example, one principal said:

… we've got a representative council of learners … So we have a very open line of communication … if a learner is bullied, is victimised in whatever way,

he has got an option of reporting that to class representatives or go direct, if he does have confidence, … go direct to the class teacher. Of course, we'll help with that and also will take it at least to Deputy Principal … or even the Headmaster … (Principal KZN).

In the same school the principal also mentions a social worker, the churches, police and Community Policing Forum as some of the structures that help schools. He states:

> We have engaged the services of the social workers … this social worker deals with all these issues [of violence] because she is qualified … she comes to school four times a week. It's Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, so that these matters can be taken care of in a very professional way … Sometimes sporadically we just invite the SAPS to come and do the search without informing them prior to the officers coming because we enjoy a very healthy relationship with police … when we invite people from outside like the CPF and they [learners] know these guys and they know how aggressive they can be … Now they toe the line. They change completely (Principal KZN).

In addition, some schools even go to the extent of paying private security companies to help them with violence:

> … we have also engaged the services of the security company CHUBB and put in an alarm system here so that should anything beyond our control happen, we've got access to the security company … (Principal KZN).

Or even providing some simple security can help.

> No … Because we don't like bullying at this school. Because we have got guards that always watch us do things (Learner Focus Group Gauteng).

Other, more positive and humane responses that try to get at violence prevention were as follows:

> Here in our school we've got different values like respect, we teach our learners to respect each other, also we teach them always to be honest and to be reliable and also to be responsible so they can become better citizens (Teacher NWP).

> … we call the parent, the parent comes here and intervene and if the incidents is too much for us to handle we call the police or we phone our 'adopt a cop' and the police will come, and also if I recognise a learner who's also violent and disruptive as a LO teacher and a guidance counsellor I used to call them and maybe try to find out what the problem is because sometimes you find out that there is a lying somewhere. Maybe at home or maybe here at school and then we know learners who are maybe abused at home or who have low self-esteem are going to use something to be recognised. So I`m trying to find out what is really happening, the family background and so on (Teacher NWP).

However, what none of the respondents mention is the need to actually teach about violence and discuss it with learners as part of the curriculum:

> Teachers must talk about violence, they much recognize it, examine it, dissect it and let children see and understand its secrets and its sources. Without

this examination it remains an ugly secret that society cannot understand or control (Furlong & Morison 2000:4).

Overall though, there is still insufficient recognition in these responses that the culture and organisation of the school itself play a part in facilitating violence. There is a danger that following this path will lead to the semi-"militarisation" of schools in South Africa as described by John Devine. In his book *Maximum Security: The Culture of Violence in Inner-City Schools* in which he discusses a situation in schools in New York, America, where traditional forms of school authoritarianism have broken down, but instead of being replaced with more constructive forms of democratic discipline and order, it has have given way to a culture of violence. Educational staff have abdicated their responsibility for safety and security to an ineffective array of armed security guards who patrol the school and a technology of metal detectors, walkie-talkies, and emergency security telephone systems in classrooms. Teachers focus purely on academic skills as defined by state-dictated curricular requirements and are not concerned with the whole learner – behaviour, social skills and values. There is little insistence on personal responsibility and learners conclude that teachers just do not care. As a result the schools he describes are a mixture of the trappings of repressive security technology masking a fundamentally laissez-faire culture in which half the learners carry guns or knives and frequently use them. In this situation schooling, despite the obvious security presence, is failing to protect its learners from violence.

Rather than increased technical control and surveillance via searches and punishment, schools need to examine more closely what it is about their own practices that actually *creates* a situation which allows for violence to take place and even escalate. Learners need a safe, consistent, well-organised environment where they are encouraged to learn in a meaningful way, treated with respect, and where their voices are heard. They do not need schools where teachers do not turn up or are regularly late, ignore their needs or treat them in violent and disrespectful ways. The more schools provide well-organised learning environments as mentioned above the less violence will occur and the less will be the demand for police and other forms of control and punishment.

Case study 1

The following is a case study of violence in one particular school, which first sets out a description of the school, based on participant observation and then provides a critical discussion of the possible causes of violence in the school based on the ideas set out above in the report. In the case study children are described as behaving badly in a number of ways but, as stressed in the report, they often behave badly for a reason and it is important not to automatically blame learners who are often the victims of the social and educational circumstances in which they find themselves.

Situation

The school is situated in a black residential township less than 10 kilometers from Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal. The school is situated in a predominantly low-income residential area. It is a big township made up of ± 8 000 houses with ± 40 000 residents.

- Close to 40% residents are unemployed.
- Up to 10% residents are semi-employed.

- Up to 5% are self-employed.
- Only about 25% have permanent employment.
- Up to 30% receive grants from the government for (i) disability, (ii) elderly, (iii) HIV grants, (iv) children's social grants.

The school is located at the cross section of the two main roads. Around the school there are many informal businesses like tuck shops, street vendors, salons and liquor outlets.

There is also a minibus terminal, where the minibuses are stationed during the day when there are few commuters to transport. The minibuses will gather at the terminal in numbers of ± 15 playing music (at high volume) at the same time, while they are being cleaned. Most of the minibus drivers are ex-learners. Some of them had left school prematurely because of various factors such as:

- lack of interest
- inability to cope with the academic challenges of high school
- hooliganism, including high substance abuse
- expulsion (anti-social behaviour)
- poor background (lack of financial resource to pursue education)

School buildings

The school is composed of old and new buildings. There are 42 classrooms of which only 22 are actually used as classrooms, 10 classrooms are used for storing old furniture, 5 are used by teachers as their centre/offices, and 7 are empty. The empty rooms are always locked, but learners find their way into them and display bad behaviour like smoking, bunking classes, sexual harassment, fighting, and hiding bags and other valuables that have been stolen from others.

Physical appearance

The school looks very old with worn-out paintworks on the walls. Walls are extremely dirty with graffiti composed of insults – some teachers names are written with swearing and threatening words. Most classes have broken windows; some do not have doors, exposing learners to the cold during the cold season. The appearance of the school building is not very good. The structural layout of a buildings are also cause for concern from the security point of view and for health reasons. Buildings are so enclosed that only two narrow passages are used for entrance and exits to the classes, despite the fact that the school has an enrolment of about 1 200 learners. During break times and at the end of the school day when learners leave the class buildings, there is always pandemonium as learners and teachers make their way through those narrow passages. This is another flash point for criminal activities like pickpocketing and revenge attacks.

Fencing

The school is surrounded by old, corrugated iron fencing with many openings, some of which are large enough to just walk through, and this compromises the security of the school in a variety of ways:

- Unwelcome outsiders come in during the day.

- Learners move out (sneak out) any time unnoticed.

- Controlling late coming for learners is impossible.

- At night security personnel can't protect the property since they can't monitor all the openings around the school.

- At night the school is burgled on a regular basis and valuables such as computers, TVs, radios, and some educational materials and documents including reports, school stamps, and examination papers are stolen daily.

Security personnel

There is only one security person during the day and there is one at night (private).

The day Security Officer performs a lot of tasks:

- Gate keeping

- General Factotum

- Gardener

- Messenger

- Caretaker

There is no house for the security guard at the gate. He is exposed to all forms of weather – rain, cold, hot and windy weather conditions. Also:

- He is unarmed.

- Has no walkie-talkie.

- No whistle.

- No phone.

The gate is closed manually. It is very old and is used both for vehicles and pedestrians. It is locked by an ordinary lock and chain. When open, somebody must lift it up and hold it; it cannot stand on its own. One of the duties of the security guard is to report if there are learners arriving late at the school (he has to keep them at the gate until a teacher comes and record them). This exposes him to many forms of violence:

- Psychological (learners outsmart him to get inside the school)
    - Emotional – receives threats and insults
    - Social isolation/antagonism (learners)

- Physical – some learners throw stones at him

Learners

Most learners come from very poor socioeconomic backgrounds:

- Orphans (20%); single parents (20%)

- Unemployed (40%)

- Most live in informal settlement (with no proper sanitation, water and electricity)

Many come to school without a meal – teachers have to organise food with money from their own pockets since the school does not qualify for the feeding schemes from the government. It is mostly these learners who display emotional instability problems – fighting, swearing, stealing (mostly food from other learner's provisions), irritability, sickness (starvation, hunger-related). One learner was caught spreading human faeces in the classroom.

Late coming

The provincial Department of Education has issued a ruling that states that any learner that comes after the stipulated time should be sent home. The problem is when they are sent home:

- They are exposed to all sorts of temptations because some do not have anybody at home.

- There are less people on the streets during mid-morning from 9–11 am (so learners are exposed to all forms of criminal activities).

- It is emotionally distressing for learners, especially those who use public transport because it is very much unreliable.

- Some see it as an advantage to try new adventures (sex, drinking liquor, drugs and truancy).

Toilets

Location – learners toilets for girls and boys close to each other (sometimes you find boys in girls toilets). Toilets are located very close to the classroom; one who goes to the toilet is seen in and out from some classrooms. Toilets are frequently dysfunctional and learners are forced to relieve themselves outside the toilets. During the day there is a stench coming from the toilets, which is emotionally very discomforting for learners and staff.

Most teachers who use classes near the toilets usually miss their teaching periods and as a result learners are seldom in these classes, so that they are often in trouble for playing truancy, absenteeism and loitering during teaching time.

Water stoppages

The frequent water stoppages at the school are another source of stress to all the learners at the school. At times the school operates without water for the whole day. The frequent water stoppages at school is a major worrying factor, causing emotional stress and is a big health hazard. Very often water will stop without any warning and yet the school continues to operate because sometimes water returns before the school time is over.

Sometimes the school will be without water for half a day, the whole day, two days or three days in succession and at times it might take the whole week before the water

returns. Water is an essential commodity since the school has an enrolment of 1 200 learners and a staff complement of 40 teachers and non-teaching staff. Keeping such a number of people without water for drinking, washing, cleaning, and sanitation is a big health hazard. Teachers and learners complain of sickness related to dehydration like stomachache, headache, and depression.

The school principal seems to be powerless about this. When asked to dismiss the school because of water stoppages, he argues that the school is not the only one that has such a problem. If the other schools continue to operate, his school will also operate otherwise it can cause him a lot of problems with the DOE.

Another point he puts across is that (1) if he releases learners from school, they won't be able to get water elsewhere in any case, because if there is no water at school, there is no water in the whole township. Also, since there are so many days without water it means if the school releases learners from school every time there is a water stoppage, it means there would be far less time for learning and the pass rate will be adversely affected, which is something the Department of Education won't tolerate. His job will be very much at stake. The lack of water and the bad odour from the toilets mean that both teachers and learners sometimes use empty classrooms to relieve themselves.

As a result, some teachers stay absent from school and this creates another problem because many classes will not be taught and will be without teachers to monitor or supervise them. Consequently, a lot of chaos ensues in the classrooms as learners get involved in various kinds of mischief such as making noise, fighting, playing, disturbing others who are studying, and so on. This situation is conducive to violence as learners are let loose to fend for themselves. The few teachers who are present are unable to control the situation because they are outnumbered and the problem of water is insurmountable at school.

Teachers complain that some of them and learners are taking pills/medication; they are forced to take it without water. Some say before they go to class every period they have to have a glass of water but under the circumstances (when there is no water) they are forced to go without water and they feel very disillusioned.

Cell phones

The school code of conduct for learners specifies that learners are not supposed to carry cell phones to school. But the carrying of cell phones is uncontrollable. Cases related to cell phones supersede all the other cases at school. These cases include, fighting over possessions, pickpocketing, stealing, and robbing at knife/gunpoint. The cases sometimes escalate to the extent that it requires the involvement of learner's parents, community members, gangsters, and the police.

Other cases related to cell phone

1. Pornography

Several cases have been recorded whereby learners were caught watching explicit sex videos on their cell phones in the class and sometimes while the lesson was in progress.

2. Music

Many learners are caught listening to the music from their cell phones through their ear phones while the teacher is teaching.

3. SMS & twitting

Some learners are caught twitting while the lesson is on.

Discussion of case study 1

Why is there violence and violence-related behaviour in this school? Let us examine what is reported based on the participant observer in the order it is reported:

1. In respect of the immediate social context, there is high unemployment and poverty. It may therefore be difficult for learners (and perhaps staff as well) to see a purpose to formal schooling – for many at the school, will hard work at school really provide future employment and income?

2. Certainly, those who now drive minibuses and left school early seem to have thought this was a better option, partly because they didn't have the financial resources to pursue education further anyway. However, there are also problems with the school itself – they say they were not interested in school and that they couldn't cope with the academic challenges of the school. Is it not the responsibility of the school to interest and engage learners and to work with them at a level that makes progress meaningful for them? Were their early dropout from school and their "hooliganism" and expulsion a result of not being educated appropriately by the school?

3. The school knows it has a problem with the empty classrooms – why are these not shut off properly so that unauthorised entrance becomes much more difficult?

4. With regard to the poor state of the school buildings, the failure to remove insulting graffiti and to paint the school (both relatively easy things to fix) indicate to learners that the authorities are indifferent to their education. The school is not a welcoming or healthy place; learners will not feel valued or cared for as a result and will tend to behave accordingly.

5. Built in to the design and operation of the buildings is the danger of forcing large numbers of people through two narrow passages when learners and teachers are either leaving classes or at the end of the school day. Moreover, the ensuing chaos provides an ideal context for theft and violence.

6. The school is not properly protected by a fence, there is no proper housing for the security guard and the gate doesn't work properly. All these again suggest to learners (and teachers) that the authorities do not care about their safety and security. School buildings, fencing, etc. are not the responsibilities of the learners, and it is the negligence of the education authorities and school management that facilitates the possibility of more violence in the school.

7. If learners feel that they go to a school where they do not feel particularly welcome and where their security is not genuinely an important concern, this will develop and aggravate an "us and them" relationship between staff and learners, some of which seems to be being taken out on the security guard who is perceived, as much as a policeman, as somebody protecting their security.

8. Children who are hungry or starving will be irritable, not be able to concentrate, and be tempted to steal from others. Being hungry is not the fault of the learners.

9. Often late coming may be to do with transport or home problems rather than the laziness of the learners. As the case study suggests, sending learners home automatically can cause more problems than it solves, and schools need to

recognise this in order to find ways of accommodating learners with genuinely difficult transport problems, and should refrain from treating learners on a "one size fits all" basis.

10. Exposing learners (and teachers) to the insanitary water and toilet conditions of the school could be regarded as an act of violence against learners in itself. The provision of proper toilets and a reliable water supply could be seen as a basic human right and the fact that such basic needs are not met again makes learners feel unwanted and unwelcome but also very uncomfortable at school. This, it must be stressed again, is a problem that the political and educational authorities should address, not the learners. In this case, it is their negligence or incompetence that is both causing an act of violence against the health of those concerned and facilitating violence through teacher absenteeism.

11. Would the code of conduct for cellphones be better revised to control the use of cell phones in school rather than their actual possession as this seems to be not working? If learners were taught well, engaged in learning and felt more of a community that cared about their progress and wellbeing, would this be such a problem?

(In relation to the ex-learner taxi drivers who play loud music near the school, it is also interesting to note a point made by Thompson who uses spatial theory to problematise the notion of seeing schooling as occurring within a fixed, contained and static environment that cannot do anything but exclude the misbehaving learners – those who fail to fit into the school space-time arrangements. In Thompson's frame of reference such learners are sent out of learning time-spaces to punitive/therapeutic ones, which are perceived to be appropriate in addressing the problems of misbehaviour (e.g. detention for a fixed period, provision with alternative programmes and exclusion) that lead to them leaving the remainder of the learner body to get on with the mandated work. As a result, the learners experience themselves as visible to the school, but also paradoxically feel that they are unrecognised. Consequently, they do things that will make them get a "reputation". It is this reputation that sometimes places them in situations where they become obvious targets for disciplinary action. They feel "highly" visible but also, at the same time, as if they are actually not seen and/or heard. Does this apply to the situations that led to those taxi drivers leaving school and opting to take positions that would make them more visible, and probably more audible, not only to their former class mates and teachers, but also to the larger communities where they work?

Case study 2

General appearance

The school in KZN is not very old – it was built in 1982 with face bricks. But due to poor maintenance, the buildings are in a state of dilapidation with broken windows and doors, falling ceiling on the verandas, and classrooms with dirty floors that are uncovered – no carpets or mats or tiles – just bare concrete floors with many holes.

The gate

There is only one big gate used both by cars and people on foot. It is always locked during the day while teaching is in progress. There is one guard during the day; he has a small gate house made out of wood. He hardly stays inside the gate house; he

claims it is too small for his comfort. He just uses the gate house to change or keep some of his belongings like food and some documents. The gate is manually closed and opened.

The guard complains about the problem encountered at the gate – learners shouting at him when he closes the gate and tries to stop them from entering as per the principal's instructions. Some of them try to bribe him with money in order for him to open the gate when they come in late – he is sometimes tempted to let them in but when the principal finds out he threatens him with the SGB. The gate is very close to the main road (about 915 metres away) and the road is very busy and as a result every year an accident happens involving learners and a passing car.

The administration block

It is a front building of the school. It is built separately from the other school blocks.

Nothing shows that this is an administration building:

- The building is not labelled.

- The entrance is very small (just an ordinary small door).

- There is no holding room.

- The reception room is right behind other offices.

- The principal's office is also concealed amongst other offices. There is nothing distinguishing it from other offices.

The distance between the administration block and the classrooms is cause of concern because it is a bit far away from the classrooms. For instance, the distance between the principal's office and the classroom at the rear end of the school might take a good five minutes at a brisk walk. As a result some teachers are reluctant to teach in those classes and they are flash points for scenes of criminal and other forms of antisocial behaviour.

Fencing

The school is surrounded by a concrete wall, but at the back of the wall a fence has been removed by criminals and has never been repaired. This provides access for criminals, latecomers and those learners who are absconding from classes. By entering the school through this opening, outsiders are able to access the school to sell drugs to the learners; intimidate them; and take their valuables like cell phones, money and school bags. Learners and teachers are very uncomfortable about this opening in the school fence. The fencing has not been repaired for a long time now. The main outcry from both the SGB and the district officials is the lack of funds for school maintenance.

Through this opening a lot has been illegally removed/stolen from the school, for example, computers, typewrites, chairs including office chairs, fridge/microwave, toilet seats, electrical connectors including plugs, electric bulbs, electric wires and fuse

boxes, and phone receivers. These are stolen by the community members in order to build their dwellings/homes.

The criminals are doing this despite numerous community meetings where the principal and School Governing Body as well as ward councillors make earnest appeals to the community to refrain from looting the school. The department of education officials have threatened a number of times to close down the school but all these attempts have had very little or no effect. Instead, parents have responded by removing their learners from this school to enrol them in the neighbouring school. As such the enrolment of the school has dropped drastically and many teachers have been redeployed to other schools.

Surrounding community

Most of the people around the school are unemployed and during the day, you may find people, especially young men and woman, roaming around the tuck shops whilst others are in the sheebens (informal pubs). Learners in their uniforms always find themselves passing and meeting such people on a daily basis and some learners are seen hanging out with these people. Other learners claim that these people force them to do bad things and some say they do it willingly, which increases the high crime rate in the area. The high unemployment rate in the community is blamed for the high degree of criminality, which eventually affects the schools in the area.

Learners

Almost 90% of the learners in this school come from poor backgrounds.

- Orphans (no parents), child-headed family

- Orphans but raised by relatives (usually grandmothers)

- Live with boyfriends/girlfriends

- Live in the orphanage home

- Live with mother who is not working

Very few have both parents living together and working.

Drugs and alcohol

This is one of the greatest problems prevailing among learners in this school. There have been many incidents that are drug related and these include fighting, shooting, and stabbing resulting in death inside the school premises. Dagga smoking is very fashionable amongst boys and girls. Some bake them in cakes and sell it, calling it dagga muffins. Most of the learners who are drug addicts cause trouble for other learners, stealing their possessions, and threatening them with their gangster friends because most of them belong to gangs. They (gangsters) usually visit the school when the last bell rings; they hang around the gate and terrorise learners, taking their money, cell phones, and sometimes they abduct the girls.

There have been a number of anti-drug campaigns at this school. Some community leaders have been in and out of the school addressing learners and warning them

about the harmful effects of drugs. Convicts, health workers, nurses, and community role models have been summoned to spread the gospel of fighting the war against drugs, but the impact of all these has been minimal. Very few learners have come forward for help. Those who come forward for help are referred to the relevant agencies but after a short while they go back to their old habits.

Bullying

The wide age gap between learners seems to be the main cause of this behaviour. Most learners at Grade 8 level are between 12 and 14 years (while they should be 13 years old) and in Grade 9 they are between 14 and 18 (while they should be 14 years), in Grade 10 they are between 15 and 20 (while they should be 15 years old), and in Grades 11 (16–17) and 12 (18) they are 15 and 22 in short:

Grade (8)   =   12–14 yrs   =   2 years

Grade (9)   =   14–18 yrs   =   4 years

Grade (10) =   14–20 yrs   =   6 years

Grade (11) =   15–22 yrs   =   7 years

The above age gap analyses depicts a very startling age gap in the school. It creates a condition whereby young learners become subservient to the older ones. Young learners are the ones commonly found in possession of dangerous weapons and they always claim that they are forced by the older learners to carry drugs, while they are carrying weapons in order to protect themselves from being bullied by the older ones. They join gangs to defend themselves against the older bullies.

Cell phones

Cell phones are a source of many problems at this school, mainly stealing. Many cases have been recorded whereby cell phones belonging to learners and sometimes to teachers have been stolen by learners. Answering phones during the lessons and disturbing teachers while teaching is also a problem. Some cases have been recorded whereby learners insult each other through facebook – a social network that led to the loss of lives to some of those who used it – whereas in the past learners were insulting each other by writing graffiti on toilet walls.

Violence based on gender stereotypes

There are many cases in the school involving male learners fighting against female learners. Teachers and learners report that in most cases verbal arguments between male and female learners usually lead to physical fighting; male learners in most cases are found to be the ones that start physical fights. Male learners, even the young ones, seem to have patriarchal tendencies. They seem to have a low opinion of female learners and to be prejudiced against them.

On the other hand, most of the female learners do not want to be undermined by male learners – most of them are quite assertive. They believe in themselves and they want to be treated as equals by their male counterparts to the extent that they are even prepared to defend themselves by fighting back physically.

Parental involvement

Teachers at this school believe that another source of problems in the school is the lack of parental involvement. Parents do not come to school when called during parental or School Governing Body meetings because their working hours coincide with School Governing Body meetings but, contrary to what they say, almost all of them claim to be unemployed when asked to pay for school fees. A few parents do come when asked to come and interview teachers regarding learner performance. They also do come or send representatives when learners are threatened with expulsion or when a child's cell phone has been taken by the teacher. They will come just to plead that the cell phone be returned to them. The lack of parental involvement is a very disturbing phenomenon because teachers can't discipline learners effectively without their support. Teachers also believe that learners whose parents are involved at school are much more disciplined and they perform far better than those whose parents don't come to school.

Teenage pregnancy

This is one of our biggest outcries in the school. There are too many young girls who got pregnant as young as 13 years of age. The situation is so bad that by the time most girls reach Grade 12, most of them have children of their own. Some teachers and learners blame the government for this. They believe that by allowing pregnant learners to continue to learn after falling pregnant until they are due to give birth has no deterrent effect on other young girls, but it encourages them as they see that they don't lose anything by getting pregnant. One teacher remarked that at one stage 15 girls in a class of 24 learners got pregnant; and in another year a total of 18 girls in Grade 10 got pregnant. He said it was very difficult to teach the class. The girls behaved in a very disturbing manner:

- Always half asleep during lessons

- Frequently asking to go to the toilet

- Display moody, arrogant tendencies

- High absenteeism

- Lazy and lethargic

At one stage the teacher's car was used to ferry one who was about to give birth in the classroom.

Staff

At the present moment the school has a staff complement of 14 teachers, six male and eight female teachers. Teachers complain about instability and uncertainty as a result of frequent redeployment of teachers and the possibility of the closing down of the school. They complain that it is very difficult for them to plan their future as they live in a state of transit. Some young teachers have left the school at short notice and the problem is left to the teachers who feel they are too old to start their lives elsewhere. Some were doing critical subjects and the school had to change its curriculum because it cannot get suitable teachers to teach those subjects.

Teachers who are left are now overloaded with some having to teach subjects they have never been trained to teach during their in-service years. These teachers are demoralised, dispirited and always complain about the years left before they take their pensions. Teacher absenteeism from school is high; they also come late at school and always miss their due date for submission. There is always chaos in the school as most classes are unoccupied by the teachers. The quality and standard of education is very poor. The education department took some measures in a bid to improve the situation in the school by removing the principal. He was redeployed to a local primary school and the current principal was brought to this school – since then there is a slight improvement in terms of work ethics from the teachers but there is still a long way to go.

The pass rate of the school is shown below

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
60%	56%	33%	10%	12%	8%	43%
102	112	64	52	54	42	38

Camps

The redeployment of teachers has left the staff divided into many camps because some feel that the procedures to determine the number of teachers in excess were not correctly followed and they were quite aggrieved when they lost their close companions through redeployment. This has led to factions among teachers at the school. The situation is so serious that some have turned into becoming real enemies who do not see eye to eye and who do not even talk to one another. This has affected teaching adversely and the new principal is having a hard time trying to create an acceptable atmosphere for teaching and learning.

Discussion of case study 2

Why is there violence and violence-related behaviour in this school? Let us again examine what is reported based on the participant observer in the order it is reported:

1. Due to poor maintenance, the school buildings are reported as being in a state of dilapidation: broken windows and doors, falling ceilings on the verandas and classrooms with dirty floors that are uncovered. There are no carpets or mats or tiles – just bare concrete floors with many holes. This is hardly a welcoming or conducive environment for learners or teachers and is unlikely to help in making them feel welcome or cared for and therefore protective of the school.

2. Is shutting learners out for being late a good school management policy? Could it do more harm than good, especially in the light of what is suggested in case study one and the proximity of a busy road where there are regular accidents? Are there other ways of dealing with learner lateness than shutting them out?

3. The lack of proper fencing and security provides a risk of violence to learners, staff and property – and this, in fact, happens. Learners and teachers do not feel safe and properly protected and parents withdraw their children from the school. This is the responsibility of the educational authority.

4. The school is in an area of high unemployment and poverty, with many children being orphans. Many learners (and teachers) will wonder what opportunities education can really provide in such a context, and crime and violence may seemingly offer more immediate possibilities. In such a context drugs may seem like an attractive and exciting (if temporary) escape but this needs funding and so some learners resort to crime and violence. But does the school provide a meaningful and good quality experience that might provide alternatives to drugs – from the description in the case study, the answer is no.

5. There is clearly a problem with bullying in the school, at least partly facilitated by the large age gaps. Does the school have an anti-bullying policy? Is it implemented? Do staff take action when bullying is reported? This seems very unlikely given the comments in the case study about low staff motivation and morale which are discussed below.

6. If learners were taught well, engaged in learning and felt more of a community that cared about their progress and wellbeing, would cell phones be such a problem?

7. All the problems of the school are exacerbated by the reported low parental involvement. It is hard for teachers and schools to perform at their best when they are not supported by (and in return help to support) parents. This must also provide a message to both learners and teachers that parents do not care about what they do; this is hardly any encouragement to work hard and perform well. The inability, or unwillingness, of parents to pay fees also hampers the possibility of providing greater security and a better learning experience.

8. The male learners seem to have patriarchal attitudes towards female learners which cause conflict and violence. This is an issue of a certain interpretation of masculinity – what has the school done to educate the boys about nonviolent forms of masculinity which accept gender equality?

9. Is the high pregnancy rate a result of a sense of male entitlement amongst boys in and outside the school? Is it fair to blame the girls who get pregnant simply because they can still come back to school and continue their education? Who gets the girls pregnant? If girls who are pregnant were to be excluded would boys who got girls pregnant be excluded as well? Is pregnancy exacerbated by the drug culture?

10. At the heart of many of the problems is the low teacher morale and motivation and the divided nature of the staff – this has been a poorly managed school with an attendant problem of low teacher professionalism. The lack of teacher commitment and enthusiasm contributes to a laissez-faire and chaotic environment where violent and potentially violent behaviour can proliferate given the problems and issues of the surrounding social context. The declining pass rate until 2010 reflects this as does the possibility for improvement due to changed leadership from 2011.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Violence is a serious problem in many South African schools – perhaps in the majority. This study based on a range of different educational personnel and using a variety of research methods has found different types of violence in schools in six

out nine South African provinces. It has also found evidence of the consequences of violence for learners.

Some types of violence affecting schools, for example gangsterism, clearly originate outside the school as do the use of illegal drugs which facilitates violence. Some forms of violent behaviour such as bullying and male learners' sexually harassing female learners may well be learned in families and communities beyond the school. However, this is not to say either that there is nothing that schools can do about such external violence or that such violence is completely external anyway.

Firstly, a well-organised, inclusive and well-run school can do much to reduce the incidents and impact of external violence because learners and teachers are part of an community with a sense of purpose – there is something that people feel they belong to and that is worth protecting. Such a well-organised school may well have a safety and security committee that makes sure that there are proper fences, locks, etc. but its main strength is that loyalty and commitment to the school will reduce internal collaboration with potentially violent external individuals and groups. As opposed to a dysfunctional or laissez-faire school, such external threats will be more readily noticed and acted upon in a cohesive way.

Secondly, as this report shows, some "external" threats are also partly internal. Some learner respondents report that the failure of the school to recognise them as individuals or to boost their self-esteem promotes their use of drugs. More obviously, schools are failing to deal with cases of bullying or sexual harassment even when they are reported to teachers. This is a case of violence by omission where schools knows there is a problem of violence, which the evidence in this study clearly suggests they do, and does little or nothing to try to prevent it. One teacher even noted that the broader education system itself was partly to blame as many bullies were those who the system has failed. As the report shows, these forms of violence in schools could have serious educational, medical, social, and economic consequences for learners.

However, the most disturbing part of the report is the evidence of direct forms of violence that originate within the school itself. From this study it is clear that a proportion of teachers are verbally, physically and psychologically violent towards learners, including using corporal punishment which is illegal.

Such direct forms of violent behaviour by teachers demonstrate a serious problem with regard to a lack of professionalism, compounded by evidence in this report of teacher behaviour that also indirectly contributes to violence – teacher absenteeism and lateness. There is also some evidence in the report of the schools' failure to take into account the individual needs of young people in an attempt to control them in a "one size fits all" manner, which in itself can result in violent rebelliousness. However, ultimately it is the school management – the principal and SGB – that is responsible for the day to day prevention of violence in schools, and there is considerable evidence in this report that schools are not being managed well and in an appropriate manner to reduce violence.

The study also suggests that the role of the police in helping with violence in schools can be positive but is also haphazard and inconsistent – and in some cases nonexistent. It is also an interesting question of what role model some police provide in relation to violence. However, a key question stemming from this study that

policymakers and educationalists will have to ask themselves in relation to reducing violence in South African schools is whether they want to continue down a path that emphasises punishment, control, and surveillance of learners (and staff) or a path that emphasises increasing the effectiveness of school organisation and culture?

6. Recommendations

1. Current efforts aimed at increasing basic levels of good management, school effectiveness and teacher professionalism in South African schools need to be supported and enhanced as this will also have a beneficial effect on reducing school violence. A well-ordered school is also a less violent school.

2. However, efforts must also increasingly be made to realise this within the post-apartheid educational framework of education for democracy and peaceful conflict resolution – an effective school must also be a more democratic school; good management is more democratic management and a professional teacher operates in a more democratic manner. The more learners, parents and staff are involved in school policy and decisionmaking, the more there is a genuine community, the more the school can resist violence.

3. Initial teacher education needs to be more rigorous in producing professional teachers.

4. Schools that experience problems of violence need an active safety and security committee that monitors violence; recommends violence prevention measures; and oversees its implementation. This committee would need to advise on the necessity for, appropriateness and consequences of, any searches for drugs and weapons among learners.

5. Many teachers still need training on why corporal punishment is ineffective educationally and has negative consequences, as well as what are constructive alternatives to corporal punishment.

6. Bullying must be recognised as a problem and acted upon in schools by staff. Each school should have clear anti-bullying policy.

7. The nature and causes of violence in society and in schools need to be examined and discussed in schools and teacher education.

8. The social nature of masculinity, and alternatives to aggressive and violent masculinity, needs to be examined and discussed in schools and in teacher education.

9. Race and racism also need to be examined and discussed in schools and teacher education.

10. In the light of 7–9 above, there is a need to reconsider the place, nature, and content of teaching about society in South African schools. Does Guidance and Counselling provide a suitable vehicle? Is a new approach required? Are teachers equipped to teach controversial issues in the classroom?

7. Acknowledgements

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9. Appendices

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

28 June 2011

Dr. VS Mncube (1628)
School of Education Studies

Dear Dr. Mncube

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0182/011
PROJECT TITLE: Dynamics of Violence in Schools

FULL APPROVAL NOTIFICATION – COMMITTEE REVIEWED PROTOCOL
This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above was reviewed by the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on 22 June 2011, has now been granted full approval following your responses to queries previously raised:

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation.   Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

PROF. STEVEN COLLINGS (CHAIR)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood   ■ Howard College   Medical School   ■ Pietermaritzburg   ■ Westville

kzn education
Department:
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL

VUSUMUZI SITHEMBISO MNCUBE	Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDIES	
FACULTY OF EDUCATION	Date: 01 June 2011
EDGEWOOD CAMPUS	
PRIVATE BAG X 03	Reference: 2/4/8/4
ASHWOOD	

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

PROPOSED RESEARCH TITLE: Dynamics of Violence in Schools

Your application to conduct research in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1.   The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.

2.   The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.

3.   Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.

4.   Learners, educators, schools and institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.

5.   ... copy of ... ...
     where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted. •   ... Head of Institutions

6.   The period of investigation is limited to the period: From 01 June 2011 to 31 June 2012.

7.   Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Superintendent General. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.

8.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s) contact Mr Alwar at the contact numbers below.

9.   Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Address ... The Director: Resource Planning, Private Bag X9137; Pietermaritzburg; 3200

The Department of Education in KwaZulu Natal fully supports your commitment toward research and wishes you well in your endeavours. It is hoped that you will find the above in order.

Nkosinathi SP Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education

3|6|2011
Date

..dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.

kzn education
Department:
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL
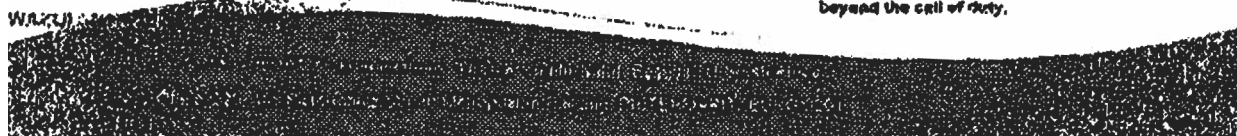
	Enquiries:	Sibusiso Alwar
VUSUMUZI SITHEMBISO MNCUBE		
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDIES	Date:	01 June 2011
ASHWOOD		
3605		

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

PROPOSED RESEARCH TITLE: Dynamics of Violence in Schools

Your application to conduct research in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The research and interviews will be limited to the following Schools and Institutions:

1. Mbelebele Secondary
2. Ndukwenhle Secondary
3. Spark Estate Secondary
4. Wybank Secondary
5. Fairvale Secondary
6. Umbilo Secondary
7. Hlamvana High School
8. Khula High School
?u. Westone Primary
11. Buhlebemvundo High
12. Langa High

Regards,

Nkosinathi SP Sishi, PhD
Head of Department : Education

3|6|2011
Date

...dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.

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Navrae		
Enquiries	Dr A.T Wyngaard	
IMibuzo		
Telefoon		
Telephone	021 467 9272	
IFoni		
Faks		
Fax		
IFeksi		

Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Verwysing	
Reference	20110412-0061
ISalathiso	

Dr Vusi Mncube
Office CS 110 2nd Floor Wing 5
School of Education Studies
University of KwaZulu-Natal
P Bag X 03 Ashwood
3605

Dear Dr Vusi Mncube

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

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 **1 April 2011 till 30 September 2011**
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 A.T Wyngaard 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.
Signed: Audrey T Wyngaard
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 12 April 2011

**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

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Education

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MPUMALANGA

Private Bag x4021
KwaMhlanga
1022
Building No.5
Government Complex
Mpumalanga Province
Republic of South Africa

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Litiko leTemfundvo   Umnyango weFundo   Departement van Onderwys   Umnyango wezeMfundo

Enq : **S.M Kabini**
Tel : **013 947 1745**

TO : **DR S.J MOHAPI**
UNISA

RE : RESEARCH ON DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

1. We hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter – dated 04 August 2011 on the above matter.

2. Permission is hereby granted to conduct the research and the following should be observed

   = Appointment with schools be made in time.

   = No disruption of contact sessions.

3. Hope the research will assist the Department and schools in minimizing use of drugs and violence.

4. Attached, please find a list of schools to be visited.

_____
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

01 · 09 · 2011
_____
DATE

SCHOOLS THAT ARE CHARACTERIZED BY VIOLENCE

CIRCUIT	SCHOOL
1. Middelburg 1	• Ekwazini
2. Mmametlhake	• Ratlhahana
3. Waterval Boven	• Khayalami
4. Siyabuswa	• Vezilwazi
5. Weltevrede	• Mayisha
	• Sivumele

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	18 August 2011
Name of Researcher:	Prof. VS Mncube
Address of Researcher:	17 Summerplace
	Summerfields Estate
	Centurion
Telephone Number:	012 429 2139 / 076 562 5104
Fax Number:	012- 429 4919
Email address:	mncubvs@unisa.ac.za
Research Topic:	The Dynamics of Violence in Schools
Number and type of schools:	ONE HUNDRED Primary Schools and TWO HUNDRED Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	All Districts

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

1

4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

Makhado

Dr David Makhado   2011/08/19

Director: Knowledge Management and Research

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education

Lefapha la Thuto
Onderwys Departement
Department of Education
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

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Mmabatho 2735
Tel. (018) 387-3639
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18 August 2011

To: Prof. Vusumuzi S.Mncube
        University of South Africa
        School of Education

From: Dr M.A. Seakamela
        Acting Head of Department

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE PROVINCE:
DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS**

Following receipt of your request in respect of the above, please be informed that permission has been granted for the University team to conduct research in the North West Department of Education for a period of five years i.e. (2011,2012,2013, 2014 and 2015) Approval is therefore granted under the following conditions:

* That consultation with the School Principals be done
* That any publication of information pertaining to the Department should be done with the permission from the department
* That learning and teaching process is not compromised
* Service delivery is not compromised
* That the department be furnished with the outcomes of the research

Thanking you in advance

Regards

p.p. of [signature]

Dr M.A. Seakamela
Acting Head of Department
Date: 18/08/2011

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Questionnaire learners – adapted

The following set of questions is intended to complement those already included in school violence surveys, rather than being a complete survey. The questions would be used to collect data that would generate more complete information about direct costs of school violence in cross sectional datasets. It is advisable to work with a professional researcher to design the questionnaire, so that these and the rest of the questions are context relevant. The complete survey would need to be field tested (piloted) in the specific context where it will be applied, and then refined.

It is necessary to carry out surveys both for school-based and for out-of-school children to get a full view of potential impacts, especially to collect more information on school dropouts who are in some way linked to school violence and who in many cases do not return to school.

In addition to questions on the more common cross-sectional quantitative surveys, it is important to include questions on prevalence of school violence in surveys for longitudinal studies, ensuring that questions about type of school violence, frequency, severity and consequences are included. Over time, this information will allow for useful analysis in relation to the medium and long term impacts of school violence.

1. Prevalence and severity of school violence by types

This section includes some general questions as well as some related to the "economic impact" dimensions of the phenomenon. Questions need to be asked in a very sensitive manner, explaining the types of violence (from verbal to physical abuse). They are included here as guidance to ensure these issues are covered in the broader questionnaires on school violence that are typically included in questionnaires on school violence. If not, these type of questions would need to be included in those questionnaires. However, they would have to be structured and phrased to be in line with the broader questionnaire under consideration.

1.1 Have you been victim of any form of violence in schools, for example bullying, corporal punishment or abuse by teachers?*

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

1.2 If yes, what form of violence have you experienced? (you can give more than one option)

a)Bullying	☐	c)Sexual abuse	☐
b)Corporal punishment	☐	d)Other(Please specify)	☐

1.3 Who did this to you (the above)?

a) Male schoolmate	☐	d) Female teacher	☐
b) Female schoolmate	☐	e) Other school staff (male/female)	☐
c) Male teacher	☐	f) Non-school staff (male/female)	

1.4 How often did these incidents occur?

a) On a daily basis	☐	d) Once every few months (two or three times in the school year)	☐
b) On a weekly basis	☐	e) Only once in the school year	☐
c) Once a month	☐	f) Other(Please specify)	

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Education

2.1   As a result of violence have you:

a) Missed days of school?	Yes	No	c) Felt like you were unable to learn?	Yes	No
b) Failed Learning areas/Subjects?	Yes	No	d) Dropped out of school?	Yes	No

2.2   If you miss classes, how often do you miss classes?

a) At least once a month	☐	c) Rarely (once or twice in the school year)	☐
b) Once every two to three months	☐		☐

2.3   If at least once a month, how many days of school have you missed in one month:

a) One day	☐	c) More than 10 days	☐
b) Two to five days	☐	d) I do not miss classes every month, only once in a while	☐

2.4   If you have missed courses, how many have you failed?

a) One course	☐	b) More than one course	☐

2.5 During how many years of school have you failed Learning \Areas/Subjects?

a) One year	☐	b) More than one year	☐

2.6   If you have dropped out of school, which of the following applies?

a) Being the victim of violence was the only reason you dropped out	☐	c) There were other reasons for your decision to drop out (cost of school, need to work, distance) and violence was one of those several causes	☐
b) You were expelled because you were violent to other students/teachers	☐	d) Violence was not a cause	☐

2.7   Would you go back to school if you were sure not to experience episodes of violence again?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

Physical health

2.8   If you were a victim of **bullying**, was this abuse mainly verbal or physical (e.g. fighting, beaten up)?

a) Verbal	☐	b) Physical	☐

2.9   If physical, were you injured?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.10 If you were injured, was the injury moderate (e.g. no major consequences) or were you severely injured (so that you couldn't go to school, had to seek medical attention)?

a) Moderate	☐	b) Severe	☐

2.11 If severe, what were the consequences?

a) I missed days of school (how many days?)	___days	c) I had to go to the clinic/hospital to get medical attention	☐
b) I had to stop working276 (for how many days?)	___days		

2.12 If you were the victim of **corporal punishment**, were you injured?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.13 If you were injured, was the injury moderate (e.g. no major consequences) or were you severely injured (so that you couldnt go to school, had to seek medical attention)?

a) Moderate	☐	b) Severe	☐

2.14 If severe, what were the consequences?

a) I missed days of school (how many days?)	___days	c) I had to go to the clinic/hospital to get medical attention	☐
b) I had to stop doing schoolwork (for how many days?)	___days		

2.15 If you experienced **sexual abuse**, was it mainly verbal or physical?

a) Verbal	☐	b) Physical	☐

2.16 If physical, were you physically injured? (e.g. forced intercourse/rape)

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.17 If physical, did you seek medical attention?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.18 If you were the victim of rape, did you become pregnant as a result?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.19 If raped, are you aware of having contracted any STI (HIV/AIDS, Chlamydia, etc) as a result?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.20 If yes, have you sought treatment and/or needed to purchase medicines to cure it?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

2.21   If yes, do you know which STI you were diagnosed with?

a) Yes	☐		b) No	☐

Psychological and emotional well-being
2.22   Did you feel emotional distress as a result of the episode of violence?

a) Yes	☐		b) No	☐

2.23   If yes, did you seek counselling, psychological support?

a) Yes	☐		b) No	☐

2.24   If no, why not?

a) I did not need it	☐	c) It was too expensive	☐
b) Service was unavailable	☐		☐

2.25   If yes, who provided the service?

a) The school	☐	c) Government service	☐
b) Community/local organization	☐	d) Other(Please specify)	☐

Social
2.26   As a result of school violence, has any of the following taken place?

a) Lost friends	☐	c) Lost trust in teachers	☐
b) Lost trust in school	☐	d) The community feels more unsafe	☐

3. Direct economic impact of violence

Out-of-pocket expenditure/lost revenue
Do you know how much your father/mother (the main income earner in the household) earns in one week? (*Depending on the context, the response can be a figure, or a multiple choice response can be included, with a range of probable earnings).

3.1   If you had to go to the clinic/hospital to get medical attention, how much did you spend?

R_____

3.2   Who paid for these expenses?

a) Me	☐	c) We had to borrow money/sell assets to pay	☐
b) My family	☐	d) The services were free	☐

3.3   Did you stop receiving payment for the days you missed work?

a) Yes	☐		b) No	☐

3.4   If yes, how much did you lose?

R_____

3.5   How much do you normally earn in a week?

R_____

*(*These next questions should be asked only if the girl replied she had been raped in the question on sexual abuse)*

3.6   If you became pregnant as a result of rape, approximately how much money did you have to spend on pre/postnatal care and cost to give birth?

R_____

3.7   Who paid for these expenses?

a) Me	☐	c) We had to borrow money/sell assets to pay	☐
b) My family	☐	d) The services were free	☐

3.8   If you sought counselling, how much did it cost?

R_____

3.9   Who paid for these expenses?

a) Me	☐	c) We had to borrow money/sell assets to pay	☐
b) My family	☐	d) The services were free	☐

3.10   If you were working prior to the pregnancy/birth, have you had to stop working as a result?

    a) Yes   ☐   b) No   ☐

3.11   If yes, how much did you lose?

R_____

*(*If the baby is already born)*
3.12   Do you have to pay for child care costs?

    a) Yes   ☐   b) No   ☐

3.13   If yes, how much do you have to pay?

R_____

3.14   What other costs have you needed to pay for related to the care of your child? (State the 3 most important costs):

1)	R_____
2)	R_____
3)	R_____

3.15   How much do you estimate that you spend on your baby each month, including for the items you mentioned in the question below? *(Response can be a figure or a range or possible costs can be provided in a multiple choice format)*

	☐		☐
	☐		☐

3.16   If no, why not?

I did not need it	☐	It was too expensive	☐
Service was unavailable	☐		☐

3.17   If yes, who provided the service?

a) The school	☐	d) Government service	☐
b) Community/local organisation	☐	e) Other(Please specify) _____	☐
c) Private practitioner			

Social

3.18   As a result of school violence, has any of the following taken place?

a) Lost friends	☐	c) Lost trust in teachers	☐
b) Lost trust in school	☐	d) The community feels more unsafe	☐

Education

3.19   As a result of violence, have you:

a) Missed days of school?	☐	c) Felt like you were unable to learn?	☐
b) Failed courses?	☐	d) Dropped out of school?	☐

3.20   If you miss classes, how often do you miss classes?

a) At least once a month	☐	c) Rarely (once or twice in the school year)	☐
b) Once every two to three months	☐		☐

3.21   If at least once a month, how many days of school have you missed in one month:

a) One day	☐	d) Five to 10 days	☐
b) Two to five days	☐	e) More than 10 days	☐
c) I don' t miss classes every month, only once in a while	☐		☐

3.22   If you have missed courses, how many have you failed?

a) One course	☐	b) More than one course	☐

3.23   During how many years of school have you failed courses?

a) One year	☐	b) More than one year	☐

3.24   If you have dropped out of school, which of the following applies?

a) Being the victim of violence was the only reason you dropped out	☐	c) There were other reasons for your decision to drop out (cost of school, need to work, distance) and violence was one of those several causes	☐
b) You were expelled because you were violent to other students/teachers	☐	c) Violence was not a cause	☐

3.25   Would you go back to school if you were sure not to experience episodes of violence again?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

Physical health

3.26   If you were a victim of **bullying**, was this abuse mainly verbal or physical (e.g. fighting, beaten up)?

a) Verbal	☐	b) Physical	☐

3.27   If physical, were you injured?

a) Yes	☐	b) No	☐

Interview Schedule for principal, Life orientation teachers, school governors and support staff

Name of School _____

Name of participants: _____

Gender: _____

Designation _____

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is our private study so we do not come here in the capacity as Department Education officials but as researchers. I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and chance to learn from you. You could also benefit from this study in the sense that your knowledge of the topic will increase.

These individual interviews are tape recorded and then transcribed. I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous (Van Heerden, 2000:276). I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Interviews with principal, LO teacher and Governors are aimed at obtaining general information on the school's background inclusive of violence, ethos and organisational 'culture' and day-to-day life at school.

Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible, as your responses will assist this study in obtaining information on school violence and can assist to improve school management and support.

Questions

1. Tell me about the background of the school (Population/group dynamics in terms of race/number of learners and teachers/any history of violence in your school). (Principals)

2. How would you describe the values/ principles/ethos of the school (Values/School climate-warn and caring or violent in nature)? (All except support staff)

3. What are the types of violence that occurs in the school? (Theft/rape/sodomy/physical attack/carrying of dangerous weapons and drugs/robbery etc). Which type is the most common? (All)

4. In what places does violent behaviour normally take place at this school?

5. Does violence also occur in classrooms? When does it normally occur in classrooms?

6. How do you think violence affect the learners in the school?

7. How do you think violence affect the teachers in the school?

8. Could you regard violence as a barrier to learning?

9. What strategies does the school use to cope with school violence?

10. Does the school have the code of conduct for learners? How effective is it?

11. Are you aware of any policies in place for curbing violence in school? Please name them.

12. In what ways does your school implement the policy of search and seizure of illegal drugs and dangerous weapons? (ELAA 31, 2007)

Interview Schedule for Individual Learners-Perpetrators

Name of School   _____

Name of Learner   _____

Gender   _____

Age   _____

Grade   _____

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is my private study and I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and chance to learn from you. You know that you are selected because of the violent experience you had and the way in which you coped in these situations.

This is an individual interview to gather information to find out how you cope when you are exposed to school violence. I want to ask you to some questions for me. The aim of these questions is to find out how school violence affects you as an individual and how you deal with school violence. I will also ask you questions on how to help learners to cope better and how to make schools safer.

These individual interviews are tape recorded and then transcribed. I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the question as honestly as possible as, your answers will assist this study to get more information on the effects associated with school violence and can assist to improve school management and support.

Questions for interviews: Learner B – Perpetrator

1. Tell me about anything that you like about your school? Why do you like that?

2. Tell me about anything you dislike about your school? Why do you dislike that?

3. Do you think violence is a problem at this school? Why do you think so?

4. In what places does violent behaviour normally take place at this school?

5. Does violence also occur in classrooms? When does it normally occur in classrooms?

6. How safe do you think learners feel at this school? Please explain?

7. Were you ever a victim of violence in school? What happened?

8. I understand that you have been recently involved in violence. Tell me what happened.

9. How was the matter handled?

10. Were you satisfied about the manner in which it was handled?

11. How would you have handled the matter if you were the school principal?

12. What programs/measures are used by the school to reduce/prevent violence?

13. What programs/measures have been put in place by the state to reduce/prevent violence?

Interview Schedule for Individual Learners-Victims

Name of School   _____

Name of Learner   _____

Gender   _____

Age   _____

Grade   _____

Thank you that you have agreed to participate in this research. This is my private study and I appreciate the fact that you are prepared to give me some of your valuable time and chance to learn from you. You know that you are selected because of the violent experience you had and the way in which you coped in these situations.

This is an individual interview to gather information to find out how you cope when you are exposed to school violence. I want to ask you to some questions for me. The aim of these questions is to find out how school violence affects you as an individual and how you deal with school violence. I will also ask you questions on how to help learners to cope better and how to make schools safer.

These individual interviews are tape recorded and then transcribed. I give you my assurance that the information you give me is confidential and anonymous. I cannot tell other people about the personal detail of our discussion and I cannot mention your name. I can however use your information and those of others in a way that is not recognized as information of one particular person.

Kindly answer the question as honestly as possible as, your answers will assist this study to get more information on the effects associated with school violence and can assist to improve school management and support.

Questions for interviews: Learner A – Victim

1. Tell me about anything that you like about your school? Why do you like that?
2. Tell me about anything you dislike about your school? Why do you dislike that?
3. Do you think violence is a problem at this school? Why do you think so?
4. What are the common violent incidents at the school?
5. In what places does violent behaviour normally take place at this school?
6. Does violence also occur in classrooms? When does it normally occur in classrooms?
7. How safe do you feel at this school? Please explain?
8. Have you ever perpetrated violence? Please explain.
9. I understand that you have been recently involved in violence. Tell me what happened.
10. How was the matter handled?
11. Were you satisfied about the manner in which it was handled?
12. How would you have handled the matter if you were the school principal?
13. What programs/measures are used by the school to reduce/prevent violence?
14. What programs/measures have been put in place by the state to reduce/prevent violence?