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Teachers bullied: exploring the victimisation of teachers by learners in high schools in the Johannesburg South Region

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2017
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24751
Mashile, Lemohang Ditokelo (2017) Teachers bullied: exploring the victimisation of teachers by learners in high schools in the Johannesburg South Region, Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24751

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Researchers have extensively explored and investigated the vast impact that school violence particularly has on learners. However, this is not the same when exploring the impact that it may particularly have on Educators. Over the years it has been recognised that there has been a growing phenomenon where educators have become victims within their workplace, where acts of violence are intentionally inflicted by theirlearners.

In order to explore the current trend that appears to be occurring, regarding the victimisation teachers' encounter from their learners, this research report includes chapters that seek to investigate the phenomenon. In the first chapter the background of the study, statement of the problem and rationale of the study will be discussed. This will be followed by main research questions, primary aim and secondary objectives of the study and the structure of the report.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

It has been acknowledged that violence within schools has been increasing at a vast rate. In South Africa, the issue of school violence is almost covered on a daily basis by the media (Mncube & Harber, 2012). Questions have been raised about the safety of our schools, since they are supposed to be a safe and secure learning facility for our children. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) argue how schools are now becoming unstable because learning is now taking place in a less secure and unguarded environment.

It has been expressed that teachers are losing control, for they are becoming victims of school violence. Recent research indicates that teachers, who were once known to be the only perpetrators of school violence, are now becoming victims within their own workplace (Steffgen & Ewen, 2007). Research, which in the past primarily focused on the effects of violence on learners, is now shifting its attention to the experiences of teachers exposed to violence (Kauppi & Porhola, 2012a). This indicates that school violence is a cycle that does not only involve or affect learners, but also teachers.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Due to the escalating nature of school violence, the effects and implications of the problem need to be known, especially amongst teachers. Kauppie and Porhola (2012b), have highlighted how teachers' health, safety and well – being are being affected by the stressful nature of the environment because of the issue of bullying, intimidation and physical assault they are receiving from their learners. The stressful nature of the environment has been said to also affect how less effective and productive they become in their teaching (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). The problem that has been identified has to do with how teachers perceive school violence and how they are being victimised within their workplace by their learners. The reason why such a topic is important to explore has to do with the repercussions it has for different parties involved.

It has been noted that research is primarily difficult to find regarding violence perpetrated towards teachers. Jacobs (2014) mentions that school violence in South Africa is misreported, and argues that journalists can be biased in writing. Therefore, information written in print media, may be distorting the true reality of the problem. Further on, it is mentioned in the same article of how rare media puts its focus on how vulnerable teachers are when confronted by school violence (Bester & du Plessis, 2014). This in essence highlights how violence perpetrated against teachers by learners may not be known or it may be somewhat distorted. This leads to asking the question if we truly understand its prevalence and its true consequences on learners and teachers.

Since it has been mentioned that print media plays a role in how much is reported on school violence, it may be the reason why not many people understand the victimisation teachers receive from their learners. Some perceive that the way media reports on violence, leads to how violence is normalised in the country. Generally, limited research has been done on violence against teachers; therefore information is not easily accessible. It may be presumed that such an issue is underreported because of the perception that school violence only affects learners. In addition, it is generally known that school violence has a detrimental affect predominantly on learners.

Therefore, in doing this study, it was hoped that one could get a better insight of the phenomenon, as well as explore the social factors increasing such prevalence. In addition, this study attempted to ascertain how teachers cope within the more violent working environment and explored the risks and conditions of such changes, so as to identify how the cycle of school violence continues.

The research hoped to be a meaningful addition to the limited knowledge base pertaining the understanding of the effects that school violence has on teachers, specifically in the Johannesburg south region. Insight gained from the study is likely to contribute towards Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) that is available for teachers to access when in need of help pertaining problems either experienced at work or home. Additionally, this research will be beneficial in providing the Department of Education with new information, regarding policies and procedures that can be applied in the school setting. It was hoped that existing policies could be reviewed or new ones can be created, therefore closing off the loopholes identified. This study aimed to provide additional knowledge in dealing with the challenges teachers in future may come across.

1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching research questions were:

a. How does school violence influence and affect teachers in the workplace?
b. What coping strategies do teachers use to deal with violence in the workplace?

1.5 PRIMARY AIM AND SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of the study was to explore the experiences of teachers regarding the bullying and victimisation they receive from learners in the high school setting.

The secondary objectives were to:

1.5.1 Explore teachers' perspectives on how school violence and bullying influences issues of safety in the workplace.

1.5.2 Understand the experience of teachers regarding the influence that school violence and bullying has on personal well – being.

1.5.3 Investigate the coping strategies that teachers use when personally confronted byschool violence or bullyingin the workplace.

1.5.4 Explore teachers' suggestions on how schools can prevent and minimise school violence and bullying.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY APPLIED

The research methodology that was used was the case study design. The reason is that it was identified as the most suitable design to use, in terms of exploring and gaining insight regarding a new phenomenon that is hardly research in the country. Bromlee (as cited in Maree, 2007) simply describes it as a research method that is a 'systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest" (p.75). The basis of this method is to investigate a phenomenon within its real life context, while additionally aiming to get a holistic understanding of how the respondent views their world.

In order to collect data for the research, face – to face in – depth interviews were done. So as to make sure that sufficient data would be gathered for the research, a semi – structured interview schedule was used to guide the flow of the interview. This assisted in making sure that a holistic understanding and interpretation of how the respondents conveyed themselves was clearly understood. Additionally, the interviews enlightened the researcher on the context and the reality that the participant is in.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

This section seeks to clarify and give understanding to concepts used within the research paper.

Learner: According to the South African's School Act No. 84 1996, a learner is any person who receives education. Learners in this regard are from the ages of 13 until 20 and who are in high school.

Teacher: This term will be used interchangeably with educator. According to the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, an educator is

"anyone who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institutions… and who is appointed in a post…" (p. 3).

In this study, the term teacher is based on a qualified professional who is teaching learners from the ages of 13 until 20 years in the high school environment.

School: This means a public or private school that aims to educate learners from Grade R – Grade 12. The South African's School Act No. 84 of 1996 mainly guides the business and daily running of schools. In this regard the main emphasis is high schools in the Johannesburg South Region.

School violence: As a term, school violence has been described in numerous ways by different authors, due to its complexities. With this said, the simple definition used to be described in this research report is by Mncube and Harber (2012). They simply define it as an attempt within school environment, to inflict harm or danger on any persons. The type of violence inflicted with the school area includes intentional and aggressive physical and psychological actsof violence.

Bullying: According to Olweus (1999) bullying has been described as an intentional behaviour that has been repeatedly enacted against the victim, who has not been able to defend themself. Additionally, Rigby (2002) explains it being the systematic abuse of power, which encompasses the imbalances of power. In defining bullying against teachers, it can be said that it is a physical or psychological assault inflicted on teachers by their learners.

Victim/Victimisation: The word victim has been described by the Oxford Online Dictionary (n.d.), as a person who may have been harmed, attacked, injured or killed, due to the consequences of a criminal act or from an unpleasant event.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It should be noted that the study itself cannot be generalised to a larger population. Reason being is that firstly the sample size only consisted of 5 teachers, who were coming specifically from the Johannesburg South Region. Secondly the other limitation is that the sample size does not represent the full experiences that a teacher undergoes. The views expressed in this paper, may not be same for the rest of the population. It was noted that in terms of making a difference in the education department, it would be at a small ratio, for the research consisted of a small number of respondents. However, at the end the research did not seek to

generalizeinformation but rather gain new understanding and knowledge regarding this phenomenon.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter One is the introductory chapter and provides the background for the study, statement of the problem and the rationale for the study. This is followed by the main research questions, aims and objectives relating to the research. The main concepts and the limitations of the study are highlighted.

The literature review and relevant theoretical framework that informed the research study are dealt with in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, the research methodology used in the study is explained in detail. The analysed data are presented and the findings discussed in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, the main findings, conclusion and recommendations from the study are deliberated.

CHAPTER 2

BULLYING AND VICTIMISATION OF TEACHERS IN THE WORKPLACE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive literature review was compiled by utilising different types of resources as presented in this chapter. These resources were valuable in that they contributed to the creation of a clearer understanding and insight regarding exploring the victimisation of teachers by learners in high schools in the Johannesburg South Region.

The literature review compromises of: the aetiology of violence, the prevalence of violence, the nature of school violence, the consequences of school violence and the coping strategies of both learners and teachers. In addition, relevant legislation was reviewed and discussed. The theoretical frameworks, underpinning the study was also provided.

2.2 AETIOLOGY OF VIOLENCE

Violence has largely been acknowledged to be part of the South African society, for the increasing rate of crime has been of huge concern for many citizens. As a complex concept, it can be simply defined as an intentional behaviour against a person or a group that aims to have a physical or psychological impact (Mncube & Harber, 2012). It is quite complex in nature, as it is dependent on the circumstances and context of the community, as well as the biological or genetic make – up of the person. It has been perceived that it is something that is learned as behaviour, rather than it being determined solely by genetic or biological make – up (Mncube & Harber, 2012). Additionally, Sanmartin (as cited in Estevez, Jimenez &Musitu, 2008) explains how violence may be determined by the interaction that occurs between the biology, culture and intentionality of the person. Therefore, it could be said that socialization plays a credible part as well.

In order for one to have an understanding of how it affects society as a whole, it is important to find what aspects contribute towards the cause of the problem. It has been expressed that violence in South Africa has been greatly influenced by the legacy embedded by apartheid. Ngqela and Lewis (2012) mention how township

violence stems from the racially discriminative principles of the policies that prevailed in the past that aimed at purposefully not developing infrastructure and facilities for the black population. Even though the era of apartheid has ended 22 years ago, policies of this period are still reflected in the current society. The apartheid system mainly governed on economic and political inequalities, as well as social frictions, which included violent and repressive measures of those of different colour, mainly targeting the black population (Mncube & Harber, 2012). It may be found that the practice of violence used during apartheid, are still used post the era. Morrell (2008) mentions the relevance of schools being part of the liberation struggle pre 1994 and how the youths mind set of rebellion has not changed. Instead crime and violence has been on the increase within the schooling system.

It has been largely known that inequality still prevails in the country. As a country, South Africa has the highest inequality rate according to the gini coefficient. Mncube and Harber (2012) explain that South Africa is currently going through, what they term as "structural violence", which has to do with the inequality of the social, economic and political factors. There have been some socioeconomic factors that have been recognised to influence the nature of violence within the country. These factors include poverty, chronic unemployment, income inequality, patriarchal norms, gender inequality, access to firearms and substance abuse i.e. drugs and alcohol (Mncube & Harber, 2012). These factors are constantly reinforcing each other, consequently could be perpetuating the prevalence of violence within communities, as well as in schools. In addition, it is said that countries with higher inequality tend to have higher murder and robbery rates (Bowman, Matzopoulos, Butchart & Mercy, 2008).

It has been recognised that the social conditioning within the community affects smaller communal such as schools. Ngqela and Lewis (2008) mention how schools tend to have little control over the societal factors that affect the violence that occur in the schools. They further mention how poverty, specifically in the townships, affects matters of unemployment, which influences the inability of households being able to generate an income over a certain period of time. Unemployment has been largely influenced by the inadequate and scarce availability of resources in the community, specifically those underdeveloped (Ngqela & Lewis, 2008). Further on, it is said that financial constraints or high unemployment rates, influence community members into

selling drugs and engaging in criminal behaviour, which then influences and increases the violence that occurs. The youth have been said to be the main age group affected. This would then mean that the communal issues might seep into the school environment because of the social conditioning that exists in the society.

Regarding the crime statistics that were released in 2015, there have been mixed reactions, despite crime being reported to be on the decrease. The reason being, crime levels are still viewed as being too high. The School Based Violence Report (2011), explains that the chances of children becoming victims of violence has to do with how high the violence rate is in the community and how easy it is for members to access drugs and alcohol. This therefore means that the predictability of violence is embedded in the exposure and experience one has. Interestingly, Dahlberg and Krug (2002) say that violence is largely felt in low – to – middle – income countries, due to the mortality rate that occur because of violence. It is then further mentionedthat violence does not only impact the person who experiences it, but it is also costly economically for it threatens and may cripple the country's fiscal growths and development (Bowman et al., 2008).

Smaller communities such as family and friends are influential towards the development of the child. The family is known to be the most significant in that it lays the foundation in terms of the beliefs, attitude and values they follow. Children, who grow up in dysfunctional homes where they are exposed to violent acts such as domestic violence, child abuse, emotional and substance abuse, filter through what they learn at home into the school environment (Abdulla, 2011). The thesis by Abdulla (2011) further explains that children often act violently in the school environment, as they think it is the only way to handle situations on a daily basis. This also emphasises the notion of how violence, more often than not, is a learned and socialised behaviour from the community at large, as well as from the home.

2.3 PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE

On a yearly basis, the South African Police release the latest figures about the crime rate. The statistics of 2013/2014 had mixed reactions as the murder and attempted murder rates increased (Institute for Security and Africa Check, 2014). It is argued that the murder rate is an important factor because it indicates whether the country is stable or not, for it is said that the higher the murder rate the higher the country is

unstable. Currently in South Africa, 47 people are murdered per day, which is five times higher than the global average of murders (Institute for Security and Africa Check, 2014).

Robbery with aggravated circumstances has also increased when comparing to the 2012/2013 statistics. The Institute for Security and Africa Check (2014) mentioned the different types of robbery that have been increased include street, house, business and vehicle robberies. This insinuates that safety within communities is of concern. It highlights that community members' belongings are targeted and raises issues and concern regarding how safe one would feel in the community.

Media and research have alerted communities about the increased rise of violence happening within the school environment. Burton and Leoschut (2013) in their research include a section where they break down violence according to province. It is mentioned in the paper that factors such as the accessibility to alcohol and drugs can filter from the community into the school, therefore creating a cycle of children being involved in criminal activities. It was noted in the Gauteng province between 2008 and 2012, that there has been an increase of assaults and robberies within the school setting (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). Free State is said to have the highest frequency rate across all types of crime, in categories such as assault, robbery and theft (Burton & Leoschut, 2013).

A Lifestyle Study done in 2008 identified that out of the 4 300 youth interviewed, between the ages of 12 and 22 years of age, a number of them had experienced some form of violence within the school environment (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). This emphasizes the importance of needing to create a safe learning environment. The statistics of the study are as follows: 47.2% experienced theft, 21.9% were assaulted, 7.3% were robbed and 4.2% were sexually assaulted in the school environment (Burton & Leoschut, 2013). This is alarming as it actually highlights just a small portion of youth who experienced violence, meaning that the number in reality could be much higher. Through understanding the prevalence of crime in South Africa, one can get a better understanding regarding the severity of the issue and how it impacts different layers in the society. From the statistics given above, greater clarification is given in terms of understanding how violence infiltrates from the community into the school environment.

2.4 THE NATURE OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Violence can be enacted differently within communities, specifically through physical and psychological means. The physical acts that one can experience include domestic abuse, robbery, shootings, assaults, vandalism, gang rapes and stabbings, while the psychological aspect of violence includes bullying, intimidations, derogatory languages, and belittling and emotional abuse (Mgijima, 2014).

School violence has been defined in various ways amongst writers, due to its complexity and different variables that affect its nature. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (as cited in Mncube & Harber, 2013) define school violence as "any behaviour of learners, educators, administrators or non – school persons, attempting to inflict injury on another person or to damage school property" p.3. The perpetrators in the school environment intentionally want to inflict harm on the targeted person or persons, whether it being through physical or psychological action. Estevez et al. (2008) say that school violence has characteristics of violent behaviours. They further state that violent learnersare viewed to be failing to comply with the schools rules in how one must behave in the classroom and within the entire institution.

It is known that violence has detrimental consequences on both victims or perpetrators. The effects include physical injuries that may develop physical health problems, as well as mental problems, such as posttraumatic stress disorder (Bowman et al., 2008). It is the general agreement that violence only creates turmoil in the community, instead of making a positive contribution to development.

In terms of understanding how school violence impacts the workplace, a definition will be looked at. Martin, Mackenzie and Healy (2011), include a definition by the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) in the United Kingdom, pertaining staff members and school violence. The definition is as follows: "Any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a student, pupil or member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment" (p. 125). This definition links to how Mncube and Harber (2012) define school violence, for they both emphasise on inflicting harm and danger to any persons in the school environment. The main aspect that makes school violence unique in definition is that, it is seen to inhibit children from learning in a safe and secure environment (De Wet,

2007 as cited in Abdulla, 2011). Additionally, it also affects the working condition of staff members.

Violence is a prominent topic for it has adverse effects on both perpetrators and victims. Within the school environment, it violates the mission of the school, which is firstly about learning in a safe environment that is free from drugs and behavioural disorders (Espelage et al., 2013). It also goes against the millennium development goal of achieving primary education. Bowman et al. (2008) indicates that violence does not only impact the education system but it reduces the teachers in the school environment, it reduces children's rights to access education and it removes the benefit of learning in the environment.

It is the general consensus in literature that violence within schools hinders the education need of the child. Johnson, Burke and Gielden (2010) say that violence within schools impacts the learners' psychological and social development. This would then imply that the social development of the child is affected in terms of how they interact with others i.e. the social interactions they have with their peers and adults and also in their mental state of mind i.e. the way they think and reason.

Through research, common characteristics in school violence have been mostly identified. As already acknowledged, violence can either be perpetrated physically or psychologically. The psychological components includes insulting gestures, bullying, intimidation, laughter directed at both teachers and learners, harming the individuals image, verbally assaulting the person, threatening people, calling them names and spreading rumours (Kauppi & Porhola, 2012a; Mncube & Harber, 2012). In South Africa, it has been of view that violence inflicted tends be of the psychological nature, meaning that components such as bullying are used within the school environment. With regards to the physical characteristics of school violence, this includes sexual harassment, vandalism, shootings, stabbings, corporal punishment and physical assault (Mgijima, 2014; Kauppi & Porhola, 2012a). Print media over the years has been telling stories of where physical assaults have happened within the schoolyard.

Either the teacher or learner may have experienced any of these different types of violence.They could also be the perpetrators or the victims of school violence, for it manifests itself in different ways (Mgijima, 2014). Although, this author has highlighted that teacher against learner violence and learner against learner violence is

the most common form of violence that occurs in most schools. However, the same author recognizes that learner against teacher violence is also becoming a prominent feature in schools. In a UK study, amongst the few thousands of teachers who participated, it was found that 84% had been verbally abused, 29% physically assaulted by pupils and 12% abused or assaulted by parents (Martin et al., 2011). It should be noted that the same study also identified that violence occurred more frequently between learners as compared to learners and staff.

Research has found risk factors associated with perpetrators of violence in schools. Pittaro (2007) speaks of Meadows (2007) eight comprehensive risk factors, which includes the biological characteristics, such as the neurological abnormalities and psychiatric disorders like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). It has been said that these disorders have been noted in children who are involved in criminal behaviour. Other risk factors include a child's violent temperament at a younger age, the harsh rearing and conditions that a child might grow up in, the role of the media and its exposure to indecent images of violence and the victimisation and exposure one encounters in the community as well as the home (Meadows, 2007 as cited in Pittaro, 2007).

In addition to this, the amount of bullying one experience is determined on the size of the school, the social backgrounds of learners and the attitudes of teachers in terms of how they deal with behavioural problems (Lee, Buckthorpe, Craighead & McCormack, 2008). This is statement is of importance, because it helps to understand what indicators may be needed to understand the prevalence of school violence. This could also indicate that the environment of the school may or may not be resilient to the violence that could be occurring in the community that it is surrounded by. Martin et al. (2011) speak about the importance social climate, since it determines the academic performance of a child. It alludes to the fact that the climate of the institution predicts the outcome of the learners and the effectiveness of the school. In addition, Burton (2008) mentions how schools reflect the environment they are in and how they also contribute towards the occurrence of violence.

This also leads to the need of understanding if there is a tendency if violence is prevalent in advantaged or disadvantaged schools. Johnson (2001) found that generally disadvantaged and privileged schools reported violent incidences that

occurred between teachers and learners. However it was mentioned that the reporting of such incidences depended on the external influences that the school was surrounded by. The same author further on says that violence in schools tend not be equally distributed, which may mean that social inequalities may be blamed. It was found that some teachers attributed a learner's violent behaviour in schools, due to their experience and external influences from the outside and larger community, therefore enacting such behaviours within the school environment (Martin et al., 2011). The main perception that the authors said the teachers expressed, was that it is hard to separate the child in terms of what they experience and are influences by when at home and when at school because everything is intertwined. From the study, it was noticeable that there was an acknowledgement that learners are influenced by the culture and conditioning they are surrounded by.

2.5 CONSEQUENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE ON LEARNERS

The general consensus about the impact of school violence on learners is that it prevents learners from attaining a good education. There has been a large volume of information available on the impact that school violence has on learners. According to Johnson (2009), learners who experience being bullied at school are most likely to report feeling socially isolated, depressed and frustrated. Here, it highlights the psychological effects that negatively influence the development of the child. Other consequences include absenteeism, poor academic performance, aggressive behaviour, likelihood of delinquency and difficulties at school such as concentrating when in class (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Leoschut, 2006).

As already noted, it has been said that children who have experienced violence are at risk of anti – social and behavioural issues. This implies that it impacts the way the child develops, therefore affecting their quality of life. In the study by Burton and Leoschut (2013), they mention that learners who are victimised tend to blame themselves for the incident that has occurred, which then affects the relationships they have with others. This assists in illustrating how vulnerable children are psychologically, for there are negative consequences associated with the impact violence.

Learners affected by violence psychologically, respond to it differently. What has now become the trend in the South African schools is how learners are beginning to

carry knives, guns and other weapons (Mncube & Harber, 2012). This is a concern as such measures taken by learners to protect themselves, may be acting as perpetuating forces for school violence. Instead of the cycle of violence being inhibited, this would exacerbate the problem even more.

Since it has been identified that the community impacts the school environment, much research has been done to explore and understand the impact of school violence. Leoschut (2006) alerts readers to the fact that research has illustrated how children who growing up in violent environments thriving on criminal activities, are likely to be victimised. In addition, it may be found that children exposed to such environments tend to normalise violence, which is a form of coping.

Violence may be normalised because of what they are exposed to at home. In the National Youth Victimisation Study, it was interesting to see that youth living in violent communities, view high levels of violence to be normal. Most of the respondents in the study said that they witnessed family and community violence between the ages of 11 – 15 years old (Leoschut, 2006). This is alarming for children may then start to normalise the occurrences of violence at home and in the community. It is argued by Leoschut (2006) that violence has a negative impact on children who view violence at a young age. The implication of this has to do with how children could perceive violence as being the best way to deal with conflict or problems they encounter outside of the home and the community they grow up in.

Without there being any positive role models in the community and the family, children are perceptible to following a negative path. Research highlighted that males, black and coloureds reported the highest amount of violence witnessed in the community (Leoschut, 2006). In addition, the report stated that youth also reported living approximately near to those who have criminally offended or those who have been incarcerated. This may indicate the severity of youth having a limited number of support, positive peer pressure and good role models that could actually impede the increasing rate of violence. Such factors may be assisting in continuing the cycle of violence. With this said, it is important to highlight that school violence, is largely influenced by the child's family background, the social context the learner comes from and the school environment one learns in (Enescu, 2012).

2.6 CONSEQUENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE ON TEACHERS

There is limited research that has been done on the impact of school violence on teachers. When looking at the research done, the focus regarding the impact has mainly been greatly concentrated on learners' experiences (Steffgen & Ewen, 2007). However, it may be found that researchers are now starting to explore the impact of violence teachers. Violence that is specifically directed at teachers receives little attention by media, as it has been viewed as not significant (Espelage et al., 2013). Generally, the topic may be understudied, therefore limiting the amount of information available regarding its consequences.

Recently, articles have been written about the victimisation teachers experience from their learners. One of the most recent and well – known incidents is when a video went viral, showing a high school teacher being physically attacked by their grade 8 learner, while the rest of the learners were encouraging him to continue to attack the teacher (Mtshali, 2013). The incident sent shock waves across the country, as many South Africans were in disbelief about what was occurring in the video. Many people praised the teacher for keeping calm during the traumatic attack (Mtshali, 2013).

A popular television programme had an episode in late 2013, where they did a report on teachers being abused in schools (Phirippides & Bingwa, 2013). Firstly, it was noted in the video that teachers are becoming victims in their workplaces and secondly not much is done in terms of protecting them. The consensus in the video was that teachers felt that nothing was being done regarding the bullying and abuse they encountered despite that they are traumatised by these experiences. Notably, teachers interviewed, echoed the same sentiment as learners victimised, about feeling powerless and afraid after experiencing the traumatic incident.

Research has identified that the most prevalent form of victimisation that teachers receive from their learners is bullying. The types of bullying that have been found to be common include, name calling, verbal threats, intimidations and obscene remarks (McMahon et al., n.d.). Physical violence may not be as common as psychological violence, however it cannot be denied that it may be enacted against teachers.

Teachers victimised may be affected in the following ways: withdrawal, anxiety, depression and a decrease in social functioning and coping mechanism (Steffgen &

Ewen, 2007). The workplace they considered to be safe becomes a constant reminder of the events that make them feel powerless. Teachers also become less effective in their teaching as their energy and time is spent on the behavioural issues they have to deal with (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). In the long run, teachers are likely to experience burn out. Furthermore, it should be noted that absenteeism is high, due to teachers wanting to avoid the stressful environment (De Wet, 2003).

There seems to be a pattern of teachers feeling that there is a lack of support from the school itself and the educational department as well when confronted with school violence. In a case study done regarding educators' experiences in a secondary high school by Bester and du Plessis (2014) the educator expressed a lack of support from the educational system. The respondent specifically said that there is a lack of support from the provincial government, for there are issues regarding the inconsistency of the disciplinary system towards learners who incite violence against teachers and learners. The lack of support affects the effectiveness of teaching and disciplinary practices in the classroom.

The victimisation received may also change the beliefs and attitudes teachers may have towards their learners and workplace. Nconsta and Shumba (2013) say that teachers' morale dwindles down, for they become demotivated to do their work. Other consequences of school violence directed at teachers include fear, powerlessness, depression and anxiety, which may lead teachers to become less satisfied in their workplace (Espelage et al., 2013). Physically symptoms may also appear and it is evident that school violence has a detrimental effect towards their health and quality of work performance (De Wet, 2010 as cited in Kauppi & Porhola, 2012a, Fisher & Kettle, 2003).

Generally teachers confronted with acts of violence have expressed a range of feelings surrounding the discomforts that they have encountered. Pik (1981) mentions how confrontation with a learner makes teachers to feel quite anxious because of the fact that the next day they have to face the learner or the class that the confrontation occurred in. Depending on the intensity of the event, teachers may be replaying the incident in their minds, therefore affecting how they handle the aftermath of the event. It had been mentioned by Pik (1981) that teachers, would be absent due to flu,

however when investigating the absenteeism in depth the absenteeism was a way to deal with the misbehaving learners, especially after a distressing issue had occurred.

Pik (1981) brings attention to how teachers who are victims tend to question their own expertise as a teacher. It is further explained that teachers feel exposed and vulnerable when they have been challenged as an authority figure. Additionally, Pik (1981) mentions how teachers within the classroom fear losing the respect of their learners, as well as losing their self – control in becoming aggressive towards their learners. Another common theme identified is the embarrassment that teachers have to deal with. Teachers expressed that they would worry that such incidences would show learners their personal weakness and failings as an authoritarian figure in the classroom (Pik, 1981). This would imply that their self – esteem begins to dwindle down.

Martin et al. (2011)mention other consequences that may arise. They firstly explain how the repetition of small incidents exposed to teachers can lead to serious effects, which includes teachers feeling insecure about their work environment. They further include that teacherswere worried about if these incidences would impact their status as a professional. It is further expressed that the emotions of a teacher depended on the frequency of the incidents that they have experienced. This would then imply that the way the teacher experiences school violence would dictate how they respond to it and the impact that it has on them. In addition to this information, Martin et al. (2011) mention how gender mayinfluence the emotional reaction to school violence, how different gender teachers respond to the situation and their ability to deal with it. The gender of the child enacting the bullying may also determine how problems are dealt with (Martin et al., 2001).

How the school deals with discipline is another crucial factor identified in the literature review. The educator in the case study by Bester & du Plessis (2010) mentions how poor conflict management strategies may contribute towards the violence occurring within the school. It was also mentioned by the respondent that there is an element of how teachers feel inadequate in dealing with the issue of school violence, because of the lack of skills development.

Although some research has statistical evidence regarding the prevalence of violence directed at teachers by their learners, the full extent is not known. Abdulla (2011)

highlights how statistics may not show the true reality of the problem due to underreporting of violence by teachers. Furthermore, it is explained that underreporting by teachers may be due to the perception that they may feel that others may criticise them in saying that they do not know how to discipline their learners. De Wet (2009), as cited in Abdulla (2011) argues that teachers who are victimised tend not to report incidents due to how they define the school violence and victimisation.

2.7 LEARNERS COPING STRATEGIES

In terms of the coping strategies used where school violence is evident, the general consensus has been that learners have been taught the importance of speaking up about any injustices they may face in the school environment. This type of coping strategy has been encouraged from teachers, parents, significant role models and the media. Media in particular, with regards to the social issues that children may be surrounded by, have been instrumental to the resiliency children may have fostered when growing up. Organisations and programmes such as LoveLife, Soul City, Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention and Childline have been quite influential amongst the youth and they still are considered to be very relevant.

Resilience has always been an aspect that has been considered. Reason being, questions have been asked how only some people make it through unstable environments while others do not. It has been found that generally people have different strengths and weaknesses, which determines how they would overcome certain situations. King (2014) says that some learners usually respond to violence with violence as a coping or problem solving mechanism, by affiliating themselves with gangs as to be protected. Research from the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention have noted that children often get into delinquent activities because of the socialisation that happen from home and the community. The school environment may perpetuate the issue as well.

In section 28 of the Bill of Rights, it specifically lists the rights that children are entitled to, such as the right to be protected from maltreatment. The Children's Act largely looks at the best interest of the child and includes important aspects of protecting the child, the parental responsibilities and rights and caring for those orphaned and vulnerable. The Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act No. 33 of 1997 will be looked at greater depth in the latter part chapter.

2.8 TEACHERS COPING STRATEGIES

In an environment where violence is faced daily, it is pertinent to actually know what strategies teachers use to combat the problem. Since corporal punishment has been prohibited, some teachers perceive that learners cannot be disciplined without it (Naong, 2007).The perception amongst some teachers is that without corporal punishment learners will firstly not respect their teachers and they would secondly not work hard (Kubeka, 2004).Despite corporal punishment being prohibited, teachers still use such measures to deal with behavioural issues they come across. It has been expressed that teachers may still be using corporal punishment, due to the perception that it is the only method that is effective in dealing with behavioural problems. In addition, it has been said that teachers feel limited in terms of the strategies they use in the classroom and there appears to be a consensus that corporal punishment is viewed as the most effective in dealing with unruly learners.

Media has also reported that some teachers believe that corporal punishment is the best way to deal with behavioural issues. It is claimed by Morrell (2001) that there are perceptions that there are no other solutions or alternatives to disciplining learners. This may be due to the fact that teachers are limited in terms of skills and strategies in dealing with misbehaviour. In addition, teachers in a study by Naong (2007) confirmed that discipline within schools have deteriorated, due to corporal punishment being prohibited.

A teacher's resilience to deal with school violence is a factor that can be considered as a coping mechanism. It has been described as the ability to bounce back from difficulties that may arise in ones upbringing, depending on the context. Reason being is that the attitudes of the teachers, form part of the personality (Lee et al., 2008). In other words, the characteristic of the person determines the amount of resilience they have in dealing with an issue. Abdullah (2011) mentions that some teachers leave the profession, or leave the public school setting to go to private schools. This indicates that some teachers depending on the resiliency and the characteristics they have decide to either stay within the school environment or change according to their capacity.

The skills a teacher displays within the classroom setting, could determine the susceptibility of them being victims in the workplace. Espelage, et al. (2013) mentions that some teachers play a role in setting up social and behavioural programmes in their classroom, to deal with the misbehaviour of learners. Research has highlighted that when schools work collaboratively with regards to discipline, it increases the likelihood of them dealing effectively with the school violence (Mgijima, 2014). It may be found that teachers, who may not feel fully supported by management in the school but have similar experiences, may create opportunities for themselves in uniting and dealing with the issues. Through creating a support network in the school, coping within the environment would be more effective.

The role of the leader i.e. the principal plays an important role in the culture and climate that is upheld in the institution. Reynolds and Sullivan (1981) explained that teachers in higher achieving schools reported that they received the needed support from the principal, so as to achieve the mission of the school. The writers expand on the essential leadership role, staff expectations and the ethics that the school has and which influence the perception of how well supported teachers are within the school setting. This leads to how strong and essential leadership that values and treats staff with respect helps in creating a positive atmosphere.

Interestingly though, research has found that some teachers feel that learners' behaviours are over exaggerated. The reason behind this has to do with the feeling that learners behaviours are used, so as to actually cover up the issues of poor management, low staff moral and pressures that contribute towards the chaotic functioning of the school (Martin et al., 2011). However it is not known how true this may be in today's time in South Africa. Galloway (1981) mentioned that problem behaviours were often preserved by the shortfalls or weaknesses discovered in the school's staff or the organisation itself. This could imply that the multiple issues affecting the schools do not necessarily start from the learners but rather the leadership structure that plays a vital role in governing the institution and school's staff.

Acceptance of the job and expectation that certain situations would arise has also been identified as a coping mechanism amongst teachers. Martin et al. (2011) say that some teachers in terms of coping would deal with incidents by holding on to the belief that

the situations that they are confronted by are part of the job and they need to accept that they would need to deal with the misbehaviour of learners. However not everyone holds on to this belief, as some teachers find it hard to overcome the experiences they are exposed to in the workplace. The inability to cope over time may impact the depletion of the needed resources. The coping mechanism chosen would again depend on the resiliency and the protective factors the individual has.

It has been known that disciplinary and security measures have been put in place with regards to curbing the rates of learners bringing prohibited items such as drugs and knives. One of the methods that have been used at a global level includes the searching of the learners for illegal and harmful items in the school premises. It has been identified that such measures are supposed to make both learners and teachers feel safer in their environments (Martin et al., 2011). One would also think that it helps in reintroducing the issue of powerand discipline between staff and learner. Currently in South Africa, it is legal under legislation for teachers with the assistance of the South African Police to do random searches within the school. Such measures, if used effectively could assist with reducing incident rates of violent events in the institution and it could assist teachers in coping better.

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) and/or Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP) are "services offered by employers to help employees overcome problems that may negatively affect job satisfaction or productivity" (Mugari, Mtapuri & Rangongo, 2014, p. 258). Furthermore EAP's were designed to "enhance the employee's workplace performances through prevention, identification and resolutions and productivity issues" (EAPA, 2003).The type of services offered include crisis intervention, short – term counselling, assessment, referrals and wellness awareness campaigns.

Within the Department of Education on a national, provincial and district level, Employee Assistance Programmes are available for employees. If utilised, they add a beneficiary component in helping teachers cope with school violence. However, it is not clear how readily accessible and available these services are and whether teachers are aware of and informed about these services and if such services are utilised. It is hoped that this research highlights this.

2.9 LEGISLATION WITHIN THE SA CONTEXT

Legislation forms an important role in understanding violence against teachers, for they illustrate what governs an educator in the workplace and the classroom and how one is to protect learners as well. The following acts will be discussed: South African School's Act No. 84 of 1996, Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act No. 33 of 1997, Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 and the Examplar School Safety Policy.

With regards to law, children are protected according to legislations such as the Constitution of 1996, the Children's Act 38 of 2005, The South African School's Act No. 84 of 1997 and the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act No. 33 of 1997. In the Constitution, there is the Bill of Rights that speaks to the rights of the citizens of the country.

2.9.1 SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL'S ACT NO. 84 OF 1996

The South African School Act is an important element in the research for it helps with understanding how schools are governed in the country. This act seeks to "provide a uniform system for the organization, governance and funding of the school" (South African School's Act 1996, p.1). This includes readdressing the injustices that were in existence during apartheid, to develop people's capabilities and mainly set uniform norms and standards that need to be followed by all the schools within the country (South African Schools Act 1996).

The Act includes the issue of expelling learners and the prohibition of corporal punishment in the school. With regards to expelling a learner, they specifically say that the misconduct needs to be serious in its nature (South African Schools Act 1996). It is unclear regarding what is said to be a serious misconduct that a learner can commit to be expelled, but it can be said that issues of causing physical harm onto teachers and learners can constitute as one depending on how long the problem has been and who has been affected. Generally, the Head of Department is the one to decide whether or not the learner gets expelled from the school (South African Schools Act 1996, 2014).

2.9.2 ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ACT NO.33 OF 1997

Corporal punishment has been a hotly debated issue in South Africa. There has been a division between those who support it and those who do not believe that it should be part of the education system, as there have been arguments that it is not effective in the classroom while others disagree with this notion (Morrell, 2001). It was also stated that despite the Act being created, corporal punishment is still used to maintain discipline within schools. This is said to be truein the township schools (Morrell, 2001).

2.9.3 EMPLOYMENT OF EDUCATORS ACT NO. 76 OF 1998

This act speaks to the employment of educators. In chapter 5 of the Act, it informs the reader about what constitutes as a serious misconduct by the teacher within the school setting (Employment of Educators Act 1998). An educator may be dismissed when they are found guilty in committing a crime, such as assaulting either the learner or another teacher (Employment of Educators Act 1998, 2014). Other misconducts include having sexual relationships with a learner in the same school, intimidating learners and educators and intentionally causing bodily harm to both the learner and the educator (Employment of Educators Act 1998). This act is useful in understanding the learner and teacher boundary, which is to be established in the classroom.

2.9.4 EXAMPLAR SCHOOL SAFETY POLICY OF 2011

The policy was created with the purpose of ensuring safety in schools for both staff members and learners. It seeks to find effective measures in addressing pressing issues such as violence, bullying, assault, discipline and drugs (Examplar School Safety Policy, 2011). The policy indicates clearly the roles and responsibility by management of the school and the roles of teachers in the process. It clearly indicates that no bullying should occur either from teachers to learners, learner to learners or learner to teachers. It also clearly indicates that those found guilty of inciting violence within the school environment, steps would be taken to deal with them.

2.9.5 OTHER POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Gauteng Department of Education, on their website also provide parents with a document called the Parents Guideline Booklet and also a Stop Bullying Document. The Parents Guideline Booklet speaks to giving parents the necessary information. It

also includes issues of disciplining learners. The Stop Bullying document helps learners with understanding what it is and how one can deal with it. It is informative for it helps with highlighting the different types of bullying and how one can address the problem.

The next section will be looking at the theoretical frameworks pertinent in the study.

2.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The theories discussed below help with exploring and contextualising school violence. The two theoretical frameworks that will be mainly discussed are the Brofenbrenner Model of Child Development (1968) and Eriksons Psychosocial Stages (1986).

2.10.1 SYSTEMS THEORY AND BRONFENBRENNER'S MODEL OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Systems theory is based on how systems interact with each other on multiple levels. As a model, it assists in looking at how individuals interact with others, such as the family and community within a larger social environment (Payne, 2005). This theory is helpful in assessing how the individual is influenced by many factors. It is helpful in identifying patterns of violent behaviour, how relationships and interactions between teachers and learners occur and how the interaction of these systems may create problems within individual's life (Payne, 2005). As a theory it highlights how everything is connected and it helps with identifying factors that influence teachers' responses to violence – related events that happen throughout the school cycle. This theory was useful in assessing the different types of factors that influence the perceptions and behaviours teachers portray in the changing workplace.

Bronfenbrenner's model looks at the social context, which influences the development of the learner. In the model, there are four systems that interact with each other while the child develops. These are: microsystems, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. Chronosystem speaks to how time affects the interaction and influences development. Microsystems has to do with how children are influenced by those close to them and who they interact with daily i.e. the family. Mesosystems is "the set of micro systems that continuously interact with one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1977 as cited in Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). This basically refers to the local community and its micro systems. The exosystem refers to the

systems that indirectly affect the child and involve people in their microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977 as cited in Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). The macrosystems involves social and economic systems that influence all social systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977 as cited in Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010)

The Bronfenbrenner (1977 as cited in Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010) model is helpful in understanding the different factors that could be influencing violence, as well as help with establishing who could be at risk as a perpetrator or a victim. As an example, it may be found that the child may be at higher risk if their closest relationships are toxic in nature i.e. the parent – child relationship may not exist because the father is abusive and may not be supportive. In the mesosystem, the community the family lives in could be very poor where poverty and unemployment is a serious issue affecting how the community functions. With regards to the exosystem, the mother may have been retrenched form her workplace therefore affecting her capacity to support her children at home. In the macrosystem, it has been noted that there have been economic inequalities that have been hard to readdress. You may find that the community relies heavily on social grants system, for there are issues of unemployment therefore perpetuating the circle of poverty.

2.10.2 ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

Erikson (1968) proposes eight stages of psychosocial development from infancy to adulthood (Zastrow & Kirst – Ashman, 2010). In each developmental stage, the individual needs to master the psychosocial crises they are challenged with (Erikson, 1968 as cited in Zastrow & Kirst – Ashman, 2010). If they do not master it, the challenges may reappear in the future within the person's life. The stage most relevant in understanding behavioural issues in learners' is stage 5.

In stage five of the eight stages of psychosocial development, the adolescent goes through an identity versus role confusion phase (Erikson, 1968 as cited in Zastrow & Kirst – Ashman, 2010). It is regarded as an important time since the individual is trying to find his or her own identity. It is also a period when teenagers place importance on their peer relationships (Zastrow & Kirst – Ashman, 2010). In addition, the adolescent is about being rebellious and chooses to question conformity (Zastrow & Kirst – Ashman, 2010). You may find that in schools setting, where rules need to be adhered to, learners could challenge them as they start making choices regarding what society says. Teachers, who are about enforcing discipline and work ethics, may

struggle to do so, as they are in a stage where they question many aspects in their lives.

2.11 SUMMARY

The literature review looked at the aetiology of violence, the prevalence of violence, nature of school violence, consequences of school violence on learners and teachers and the coping strategies used by learners and teachers. The legislation that was discussed included: the South African School's Act No. 84 of 1998, Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act No.33 of 1997, Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 and the Examplar of School Safety Policy. The theoretical frameworks that underpinned the study were the Systems Theory, Brofenbrenners Model of Child Development and Erikson's Psychosocial Stages.

The next chapter will be looking at the research methodology informing the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be looking at the research strategy and methodology used to conduct the study. As already indicated in the first chapter of the report, the study is qualitative in nature. Since it has been established that a qualitative research strategy is used, the methodology of the study is to be followed. Methodology to be discussed includes discussions on method of data collection, technique of sampling, data collections and analysis of data. In addition to this trustworthiness of the research, pre – testing of the research instrument and ethical considerations will be discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

A qualitative approach had been identified to best approach in researching the topic at hand. The reason being is that this study aims to explore and understand the participants' experience from their perspective. This approach according to Creswell (2014, p.4.) helps the researcher in exploring and understanding "the meanings individuals or groups scribe to in social and human problem". The purpose of the study was exploratory and descriptive in nature, for the researcher seek to firstly get a greater insight in the phenomenon and secondly understand the participants' experience at a deeper level that is meaningful and significant. It primarily aimed to be rich in descriptions (Rubin & Babbie, 2010).

The case study design was used to get a fuller insight into the victimisation of teachers. This design involves "intensive investigation of a single unit" (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). However, the other units that may be used in case studies include the family and community. Case studies use multiple perspectives, so as to begin to attempt and understand the different social systems that influence the participant's perceptions on certain topics (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). It has been said to be a useful tool in qualitative research, for it helps with investigating a phenomenon in its environment (Baxter & Jack, 2008). As a design, it assists the researcher in holistically understanding the individual in its setting. It has been described as having an advantage in allowing the participant to describe and tell their story, such as

teachers who have been victimised by their learners, therefore enabling the researcher to understand their world, as well as their experiences (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

3.2.1 POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The population group for this study consisted of High school teachers, from the public school sector in the Johannesburg South Region of the Department of Education. The sample size that was chosen consisted of five teachers, who have personally experienced or witnessed bullying and/or school violence. In order to have the required sample, snowballing, a type of non – probability sampling was used. According to Babbie (2010), snowballing is a technique where researchers work on referrals that are received from the target population. This technique assisted in finding the most appropriate sample for the study.

3.2.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A semi – structured interview schedule, that had predetermined and mostly open – ended question was used. This type of research instrument allowed the researcher to probe and explore the particular topic in greater detail. Greeff (2011) indicates that the main purpose of the research instrument is to gather much detailed information concerning the beliefs and perceptions that the participant has. In addition to this, Greeff (2011) indicates that the semi – structured interview schedule is suitable for the qualitative approach, due to being able to deviate from the main questions listed, so as to probe for more information when appropriate and in need of better understanding or clarification. By deviation, this means that the researcher may not follow the questions on the schedule concretely and that participants have the freedom to answer questions in a manner they would want to respond (Bryman, 2004).

3.2.3 PRE – TESTING OF THE RESEARCH TOOL

The pre – testing of the semi – structured research tool was done, so as to make sure that the questions asked were appropriate. This contributed significantly towards making sure that participants could answer the questions asked appropriately, in order for sufficient gathering of data to occur. Additionally, this assisted with establishing if questions are understood and if they deem relevant towards the topic at hand (Greeff, 2011). The research tool was pre – tested in an individual face – to – face interview with two people who were not part of the research sample. It is said that by piloting

the research tool, the researcher begins to assess their own interview skills, which is pertinent in the gathering of the rich data (Greeff, 2011). Additionally, this also assisted in the researcher to be familiarised with the questions to be asked and how the interview is to be conducted. From the pre – testing of the tool, it was determined if the questions asked were appropriate, so as to make sure that the objectives of the study were being met.

3.2.4 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The method of data collection is an important component of research methodology, since it is the process of collecting the appropriate data for analysis. In this study, the face – to – face qualitative interview also known as an in – depth interview method, was used to collect the information. The interviews were guided by the semi – structured interview schedule, as described in section 3.2.2. This method assisted the researcher in gathering information from the interviewee's point of view and insight, while obtaining rich details of the participants understanding of the topic (Bryman, 2004). It is most helpful in understanding the totality of the opinions, ideas and insight that the teacher has in a greater depth. During the interviews information that was insightful and vital to exploring the victimisation of teachers was gathered.

In order to make sure that everything the participants' had said in the interviews was noted, a recording tape was used. The recording tape was used with the consent of the participants. It was a useful apparatus to use, for it gave the researcher the allowance to not only to record the verbatim of the respondent but also focus their full attention on the respondent (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). In addition to the recording of the interview, note taking was done. The reason being is that the field notes were of assistance when analysing the data collected, for it was identified that tape recorders could not capture the processes (i.e. observations) that took place during the interview (Rubin & Babbie, 2010).

3.2.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of the collected data is one of the most important components of research. In doing the analysis, the data was taken apart so as to then focus on what is relevant (Creswell, 2014).

In analysing the data collected, the model developed by Tesch, which proposes eight steps in analysing specific categories and themes, was used. As explained by Creswell (2014), the researcher firstly read through all five transcripts while making side notes. The second step required the researcher to reread all the transcripts so as to grasp the underlying meaning of what had been read, while writing down thoughts and ideas on the margin. Thirdly, a list of all topics found were then clustered according to major themes, unique themes and left over themes.

Once this was done, themes labelled were abbreviated into codes and written in the suitable part of the text. Creswell (2014) makes mention that it's possible that new categories and codes may occur during this step. In the fifth step, the topics were changed into categories and grouped according to similarity or relation to each other. Afterwards, the abbreviation for each category was finalised. The data was then compiled together so that a preliminary analysis could occur. The writing up of analysis took place once all the steps had been completed.

3.3 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

In order for the study to be valid and reliable, trustworthiness needed to be considered. Lincoln and Guba (1985) as cited in Babbie and Mouton (2001), have created four keystrategies, which are to be considered when doing qualitative research. These four keyconstructs are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.3.1 CREDIBILITY

Credibility is considered to be an important aspect in the trustworthiness of the research study. Credibility, which is the alternative of internal validity, deals with guaranteeing that the views of the participant was truthfully identified and described by the researcher (Schurink, Fouche & De Vos, 2011). The strategies used to make sure that the views of the participants and the way they are represented by the researcher are objective include using peer debriefing, triangulations and member checking. A method that was useful in this study was referential adequacy. Referential adequacy entails the use of resources available to document the findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It was observed that the audio tape recordingand note

taking during the interviews were ways to document what had been foundduring the study objectively.

3.3.2 TRANSFERABILITY

Transferability is the secondconstruct that forms part of trustworthiness. Here, the researcher assesses whether the findings can be transferred from one case to another or in another setting (Schurink, Fouche & De Vos, 2011). Strategies used here include using thick descriptions and purposive sampling. Pertaining this study, the strategy found to be most beneficial to use were thick descriptions. Thick descriptions speak to the researcher having detailed description of the data in the context. This means that the transcriptions and field notes assisted in assuring thick descriptions.

3.3.3 DEPENDABILITY

Dependability, as the third component to trustworthiness, deals with the making sure that complete records are kept throughout the process of the research (Bryman, 2004). By ensuring that complete records are kept up to date, it allows for auditing of the research. In this research study, auditing was done in terms of the selection of participants, the data collected and also the findings. This assisted in seeing if there were any loopholes found.

3.3.4 CONFIRMABILITY

Confirmability, as a fourth component, has to do with the researcher not having any influence or biases towards the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985 as cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2001) say that in confirmability having an audit tail is helpful with assisting the auditor to determine if the conclusions of the study can be traced back. A method of doing this, which is applicable to this study, was the use of raw data. In this study, raw data basically consists of the methods used to collect information such as audio tape recording and field note taking. Another strategy that was useful in this study, was the method used to analyse the data. In analysis it was important to see how themes and concepts were created.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When doing any type of research, it is imperative that ethics are considered and are abided by. According to Babbie and Mouton, 2001), ethics “[are] typically associated

with morality as [they] deals with matters of right and wrong" (p. 250). This therefore means that ethical issues may occur during any part of the research process, meaning that the researcher should anticipate them. This study took the following ethics into consideration.

3.4.1 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Firstly, voluntary participation in research is essential. It has been recognized that research has an intrusive nature to it, for it requires people to share personal information about themselves (Babbie, 2010). Prior to this study, it was imperative that participants know what they are involving themselves in. This would then mean that the purpose of the study needed to be explained on the participation information sheet. The participation sheet included information regarding the duration of the study, the possible advantages and disadvantages of the study, the credibility of the researcher and the fact that participants are given the opportunity to withdraw at any time.

3.4.2 INFORMED CONSENT

This then leads to the next important ethical issue, the informed consent. The informed consent form is part of the participation information sheet. When the participant decides to sign the consent form, it means that they are aware of the risks associated with the study (Babbie, 2010). Participants choose to volunteer in the study being aware of the risks. In the study, consent needed to be given regarding the use of the tape recording in the study. This is attached in Appendix B.

3.4.3 AVOIDANCE OF HARM

Avoidance of harm is another important ethical issue that needed to be addressed. As previously mentioned, the participant information sheet needed to include the purpose of the study, so as to create awareness about what to expect. The reason behind this was to assure that they were not being misled and that no information was being misrepresented (Strydom, 2011). Furthermore, throughout the research process, it was important that it was being avoided.

3.4.4 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Due to participants sharing personal information, confidentiality was an important aspect, which needed to be considered in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Confidentiality is the state and act of strict privacy, which aims to protect participants in a study. Anonymity on the other hand is about no – one knowing the identity of the participants after the study has been conducted (Strydom, 2011). Confidentiality in this study was important in this research for it places emphasis on protecting the participants, especially regarding sensitive information. In the writing up of the study, pseudonyms were used to conceal the participants' identity. Privacy matters were also addressed in ensuring that the room used allowed for no interruptions, so that participants could freely talk.

3.4.5 DEBRIEFING

The debriefing of participants was important in the study. This study involved participants having to share their traumatic experiences or witnessing of school violence and bullying. Due to the nature and sensitivity of the subject, it was vital that the problems that may be generated from the study are rectified (Strydom, 2011). This meant that participants were given the opportunity to work through their experiences, while the researcher would minimise the harm that may have been done. The participation information sheet, did mention that should participants need assistance after the research, relevant resources would be allocated to them.

3.4.6 ETHICS CLEARANCE

The research proposal needed to be approved by the ethics board of the university. This process largely entailed making sure that the ethical values, are abided by, when the research is conducted. Before the board of ethics approved the study, authorization was requested and granted by the Gauteng Department of Education (see Appendix E). Once an official letter had been forwarded to the ethics board of the university, the clearance certificate (Appendix F) was provided, so that the study could commence.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter mainly discussed the research strategy and methodology used to conduct the study. The methodology discussed in this chapter included discussions on data collection, technique of sampling, data collections and analysis of data.Additionally trustworthiness of the research, pre – testing of the research instrument and ethical considerations was discussed.

Chapter four will be discussing the findings of the study, followed by chapter five which discusses the conclusion.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS ON FINDINGS

4.1.INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be discussing the findings of the research conducted. The different sections that will be discussed include: the profile of participants, framework of discussion, discussion of findings and the summary of the chapter.

4.2. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The table belowrepresents the profile of the participants in the study. Pseudonyms were used to protect their identity. The participants in this study are employed by the Gauteng Department of Education and were interviewed, so as understand victimisation in the workplace.

4.2.1 *TABLE: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS*

PARTICIPANTS	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER	YEARS OF EXPERIECE IN EDUCATION
1	Thabisile	39	F	2
2	Thabo	31	M	7
3	Mpho	28	F	2
4	Michael	67	M	25
5	Zungu	45	M	16

In total there were five participants interviewed in this study. Out of the five, two were female and three were male. Their ages range from 28 – 67 years old. Additionally, their amount of years in education range between 2 – 25 years.

4.3.THEMES AND SUB – THEMES: THE FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSION

When the collected data was analysed, specific themes, subthemes and categories emerged.This is presented in the table below:

4.3.1 ***TABLE: THEMES AND SUB – THEMES IDENTIFIED***

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CATEGORIES
1. The influences of violence on teachers in the workplace	1.1 Infiltration of community violence into schools	a. Experience of violence in the workplace b. Perception of safety in the workplace
	1.2 Influence of health and well – being	a. Insight on well – being post incidents
2. Coping strategies that teacher	2.1 Support and coping strategies	a. Reporting structures and professional support b. Personal coping strategies
	2.2 Recommendations to increase coping mechanisms	a. School Culture b. Unity c. Workshop

The model of analysis that was used in this study was developed by Tesch (1990) as cited in Creswell (2014). During the analysis of the data, the objectives of the study were kept in mind so as to develop an appropriate framework. The notes written on the margin of the transcripts were then grouped appropriately to create categories, which then lead to the development of the main themes of the study. The framework above will be used to present and discuss the findings from the study and it will be supported or contrasted by direct quotations from the participants and relevant literature.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.4.1 THE INFLUENCE OF VIOLENCE ON TEACHERS IN THE WORKPLACE

This theme largely centres on understanding the affect that school violence has particularly on teachers who have been previously victimised by learners. This section seeks for greater understanding and insight in the experiences they have faced. In order to delve deeply in this subject, the following subthemes and categories will be discussed.

The first subtheme is influence of violence on teachers in the workplace. Under this subtheme the categories discussed are: the experience of violence in the workplace and the perception of safety in the workplace. The second subtheme to be discussed is the influence of health and well – being on teachers. The categories are as follows: the insight on well – being post incidents.

4.4.1.1 Infiltration of community violence into schools

Violence has been simply defined as “an intentional behaviour against a person or a group that aims to have physical or psychological impact (Mncube & Harber, 2012). Violence experienced in communities may directly affect safety of both learners and teachers in schools. Safety in the workplace is affected by violence in the community and the school and refers to specifically the security and health and well – being of educators and learners. The next two sections seek to firstly gain insight in teachers' experience of violence in the workplace and their perception of safety.

a. Experience of violence in the workplace

School violence is complex to define in nature. In its complexities it’s been described as “any behaviour of learners, educators, administrators, or non – school persons, attempting to inflict

injury on another person or to damage school property." (Van den Aarwdeg & Van den Aardweg, 1998 as cited in Mncube & Harber, 2013, p.3).

The study findings show the different types of victimisations that teachers have either seen or encountered while being in the workplace.

Mpho shares her experience of being punched on the body by a grade 8 male learner.

> *Mpho: "The second incident was when I was actually a victim myself when a boy actually hit me, which was something that I did not expect at all especially since the boy was a grade 8 boy... That incident was a shock of my life."*

Thabisile shares her story about of being insulted by learners continually when she was a new teacher.

> *Thabisile: "They'll just say bad things to you. They didn't, they don't even know how to differentiate between an adult or they will take you as you are equal or sometimes ... they just being rude to you. They don't know how to respect... It was very difficult to deal with these learners.*

Additionally she shares her experiences of a learner who was abusing drugs in and outside of the school, whom also threatened her life.

> *Thabisile:"Yes with weapons or sometimes they come… they would be drunk or smoke something that we don't know. It was difficult. And last year we had one learner, I think he was smoking nyaope and when we tried to control that learner he threatened me and then he said he'll get me."*

Michael explains his story about being held at gun point with another female teacher by two learners (who were not wearing school uniform).

> *Michael: "So we were two in the office, then two boys walked into the office with a gun. So they told us, they ordered us to lie flat on the floor then they demanded the car keys and the wallet. So I gave them the car keys and the wallet. Then they took the car."*

Besides teachers being victims, other teachers share their experience of witnessing or being involved in matters dealing with learners victimising teachers.

Thabo: "Recently we had a case of a learner who swore at a very elderly teacher, you know, and the teacher who happens to be a lady."

Michael also shares a story of a colleague who was attacked by a learner while teaching in class.

Michael: "One of my teachers, a lady was assaulted by a learner... It's an Indian woman and she was busy teaching and was assaulted."

Zungu shares a teacher being threatened by a learner carrying a knife.

Zungu: "Even in this one [school], it's not safe because last year [we had an] incident of a learner [who] had a knife [and was] fighting with other learners. When some teacher tried to intervene, they were also threatened by the learner... [Until] I grabbed that learner and I disarmed him of the knives that he had."

Mpho also speaks about other teachers in her school being victimised.

Mpho: "I've known of my other colleagues who have also gone through that, where learners have victimised them, where learners have actually hit them or wanted to pick a fight with them."

These quotes presented characteristics common in victimisation of those in the workplace, which have been identified by authors Kauppi and Porhola (2012a), Mncube and Harber, 2012 and Mgijima (2014). The common characteristics that were identified between literature and this study include bullying, physical assault, intimidation and threats, calling people names and harassment.

b. Perception of safety in the workplace

It is of importance to understand how teachers translate their experiences, especially in the regard of safety in the workplace. It is of belief that teachers victimised changed their attitudes towards the workplace depending on how they respond post the incidents. Below respondents describe their own thoughts on safety in the workplace.

Mpho describes not wanting to jeopardise her own and learners safety in class when dealing with difficult learners.

Mpho: "Like I'm at a point where I'm like my safety comes. Like I don't wantto jeopardise my safety. I don't want to jeopardise the safety of all the other learners."

Mpho in the above statement highlights how safety has become a priority to her; this perception may be due to fear post the assault. This could link to what Pik (1981) states on how fear becomes the triggered emotion that teachers have within the classroom.

Thabisile expressed feelings of being unsafe within the workplace, due to perception that there is little or no protection for teachers.

> *Thabisile: "I think we are not that safe because every time the government is protecting the learners mostly. It doesn't protect us as teachers... We don't feel [protected], I don't feel like that. I think that it is too risky because most of the learners they will come with knives."*

She further on went to describe how she feels unsafe outside the school vicinity because of the learner living in the school community.

> *Thabisile: "He's not here anymore. But every time I have to look behind my shoulder every day because he is around, from Soweto and I use to like the Jabulani Shopping Centre around Soweto… I was afraid of him… Because he threatened my life. He said he would get me."*

Zungu speaks about the safety within his workplace and the inconsistency that sometimes occurs from security personnel on duty.

> *Zungu: "You know safety at this school is a priority. As you can see there are surveillance cameras.... But now the problem is one, thesecurity and the safety of the people inside the school is being compromised by the... security personnel... Others they search learners when they leave, others they don't search learners. So now learners take advantage... knowing they are not going to be searched."*

The above statements indicate the perceptions of safety felt amongst participants regarding in the workplace regarding the knives, weapons and aggressive behaviours enacted by learners. This relates to what Martin et al. (2011) explains about how therepetition of incidents within the schools effects how the teacher feels secure and safe about their work environment.

Zungu provides his understanding into why learners feel the need to bring weapons within the school vicinity.

Zungu: "The learner will tell you with this weapon I'm protecting myself, yesterday I was mugged while I was crossing Thokoza Park going to Freedom Park…But at the same time what if a teacher makes the child angry?... The child can easily grab that knife and then stab the teacher or yet stab another learner... So that is why it is important to [do bag] search[es] no matter what the reason is."

This is links to what Mncube and Harber (2012) highlight on the trend of learners in South African schools carrying knives, guns and other weapons. This introspect implies thatthe carrying of weapons and behaviourwould effect and compromise the perception of safety within the workplace.

Michael shares his belief how the workplace should be like.

Michael: "Teachers and their safety [are] very much important. Teachers have got to feel at home. They should enjoy their work."

A common theme with these experiences regarding the perception of safety in the workplace is how they highlight some of the social issues happening in the community and also how social ills from the community infiltrate into the school environment. This would imply that the functioning of the school is the affected. This relates to Burton and Leoshcut's (2013) claim about how the accessibility of alcohol and drugs can infiltrate from the community to the school.

In understanding why violent behavioursoccur in schools, the community that learners are raised in may be a factor in why it occurs. Leoshcut (2006) mentions that most respondent had said that they had witnessed family and community violence between the ages of 11 – 15. Therefore implying that children who view violence at a young age are negatively impacted either, physically or psychologically.

Zungu gives an example of how a dysfunctional upbringing can cause problems in the school.

Zungu: "Some of the learners drink alcohol and hit girls because; he saw the same thing happening at home. He comes here [at school] practising that thing because he sees it as something that is right … [and thinks] this is the best way to talk to a woman… Then the child starts to adapt those habits little bylittle…"

Additionally he speaks of the social ills affecting the people in it.

Zungu:"As I've said that the school is around the township and our learners are easily exposed to the lifestyle in the township like drinking, smoking, disrespecting elders because they see this thing happening."

Mpho describes how learners have related to her as a teacher on the uncertainty ofbeing safe in their community.

Mpho: "So some of them have those weapons, they say to protect themselves against gang members and some have actually said that some of the learners in the school are part of those gangs."

Michael describes the social background of one of the learners who was involved in the high jacking of his car.

Michael: "It was not good [the background of the learner]. I understand that the granny or the parent they were dealing dagga in that house. So it wasn't right."

Thabo shares his insighton what may cause violence in schools. He describes the difference in environment between South African and Zimbabwe.

Thabo: "The environments are very different especially with regards to family structure... You find that here, I don't know ifit's a nationwide thing or just a Soweto wide trend that you know that families tend to be broken… families tend to be a lot more broken..."

Systems theory as a theoretical framework, in this instance helps in understanding how everything is connected as it helps in identifying the factors that influence how a person responds to violent related incidences. As indicated above, learners who come from violent upbringing may have a likelihood of inflicting harm on learners and teachers in the school environment.

4.1.1.2 Influence of health and well – being

It has been identified that violence that largely targets teacher does not receive much reporting in the media, due to it being viewed as insignificant (Espelage et al., 2013). The impact that school violence has particularly on teachers is limited, for a great amount of research has largely focused on learners and their well – being. Teachers who are victims or have seen violence that occur in schools are said to be effected in their changes regarding beliefs and the attitudes they have towards the school environment, specifically learners and the workplace.

According to Du Plessis (1990) it is of essence to look at the environment i.e. the workplace factors that may create or enhance personal problems. The first category seeks to gain insight on teachers well – being post incidents.

a. Insight on well – being post incidents

Participants below describe their own insight on how they felt after post a traumatic event.

Mpho explains how she felt once physically punched by a learner.

> *Mpho: "It was shocking as that fist came out of nowhere. It was unexpected; it was a shock for me. I remembered when it happened I could not even sleep. I had to even go to the doctor… I don't know what happened to me. I was dumbstruck... I felt numb, I felt like, I felt powerless. I really can't explain it but I just felt like is this me or am I dreaming, what's happening. I was confused.You know I was still finephysically but emotionally I was not fine. I remember I cried a lot about it."*

Thabisile described being unable to sleep, due to what she was experiencing in her workplace when she still had to adjust as a new teacher.

> *Thabisile: "I had stress, I would dream about these learners every, everyday… when I'd wake up at night and my body would [pause] ey (expression), my body would get tired."*

De Wet (2003) highlights that absenteeism amongst teachers was present amongst those who wanted to avoid the stressful environment. Thabisile illustrates this.

> *Thabisile: "Even if I wanted to come to school, I didn't want to come to school because of these learners. But at the end, I just developed my strategy that we have to deal with the difficult ones, the difficult learners first."*

Mpho described herself as becoming afraid post the traumatic event.

> *Mpho: "You are afraid, you really are afraid like after the incident I've become afraid, I've become like you know what 'let it be, let it be'."*

The participants' experiences correspond with what Steffgen and Ewen (2007) say about the symptoms that are displayed by teachers that are victimised, which include withdrawal, anxiety, depression and a decrease in social functioning and coping mechanisms. This is then

said to lead in a decrease of work satisfaction. Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) state that teachers become less effective in their environments especially when the have to spend their time and energy on behavioural issues.

Michael shares an incident of a female teacher who was physically assaulted by a learner. He shares the means they tried to help the teacher; however at the end the victimised teacher was unsatisfied with how the school supported her.

> *Michael: "Nobody was arrested. I don't know why no one was arrested but the case was opened… The child returned to the school… We had a disciplinary committee and we tried to solve that thing and we called parents to sort it out but the teacher was not satisfied...There was nothing we could do."*

This participant highlights that even though an assault case was opened, with regards to the well – being of the teacher being met, unfortunately the outcome was unsatisfactory.

4.4.2 COPING STRATEGIES TEACHERS USE

This theme largely centres on understanding the coping mechanisms that teachers use to deal in the aftermath of an incidents and the daily functioning in the workplace. This section also largely aims to see what support is given and what can also be recommended for greater functioning in the workplace. The following subthemes and categories will be discussed.

The first subtheme is the support and coping strategies used in the workplace, which is inclusive of the reporting structures in the school, professional support one received and the personal coping strategies. The second subtheme is: recommendations to increase coping mechanisms. The categories listed include school culture, unity and workshops.

4.4.2.1 Support and Coping Strategies

Coping strategies often occur when people are under stress (Carver & Scheier, 1989). It has been said that there are two types of coping; one termed as problem – focused coping and the second termed emotion – focused coping. Folkman and Lazarus (1980 as cited in Carver & Scheier, 1989) describe problem focusing to resolving a problem, while emotion – focused coping is based on reducing or managing emotional distress. This section concentrates on the reporting structures and the professional support and the personal coping strategies that are used.

a. Reporting structures and professional support

Professional support largely entails the support one received from the school. Participants share their experiences of how it is they were assisted in terms of the support structure they received from the school. There is an expectation for teachers to come across behavioural issues or learners who are disruptive in class. Additionally, it is expected for them to act professionally as according to acts that govern their movements when engaging with learners, staff and the community they serve.

The reporting structures within a school are quite important in determining the happiness with how issues are managed within the environment, for it indicates the amount of support that is given by the school itself. Reynolds and Sullivan (1981) explain that teachers who are satisfied in the workplace, express that they receive support from the leadership.

Thabo helps to explain how important his reporting structure is in terms of dealing with difficult learners.

> *Thabo: "Yes, especially from my HOD's because they're the people I look to. They are immediate superiors, so anything I can't handle or that is out of line[and] I know that I feel [that] this is a bit much, they have been able to support."*

Zungu speaks about favouritism regarding support some teachers receive from their HODs'.

> *Zungu: "Some HOD's have their favourite teachers in the group. Some of them will jump if they hear you are encountering a problem at the school. So most of the time, I'm going to tell you the truth that there is no support from HOD to teachers who are victimised by learners. Even if you report it, they sometimes make a joke about it."*

Mpho relays her story about how unhappy she was in terms of how her matter was handled by the school. She speaks about the outcome of the disciplinary hearing.

> *Mpho: "There was that one thing that was said that I think I won't forget. I was told that they were thinking about the boys future [and] since it's his first time that he must come back to the school and that he must just go for anger management for the first week after schools have just re – opened, that's what was done."*

She continued to explain how dismayed about how professional she needs to act at the disciplinary matter concerning the learner who punched her.

Mpho: "And then they told me I'm a professional, I'm supposed to be able to know how to handle or deal with such incidents and that I'm supposed to be able to teach that very same learner."

Bester and du Plessis (2014) mentioned that it had been identified that there at times there appears to be a lack of support from the educational system. Mpho's experience resonates in truth regarding this. Thabisile shares her experience of initially not having a support structure when she was still new in the workplace.

Thabisilie: "I was very stressed because I didn't know; I didn't trust anyone because I was new at school. I didn't trust anyone to talk to about my difficulties or my problems. So I did develop stress."

Mpho defines the general support she receives in her workplace. In this quote she simply expresses the feeling of not being fully supported by the school in teaching and supporting learners at best.

Mpho: "It's stressful, it's depressing. You feel like some things are beyond your reach. You see so many things and yet you don't have control over any of them."

Espelage et al. (2013) said thatnot much attention is given by the media regarding the impact violence in schools has on teachers, meaning that in terms of how stressful such an environment is, it is not fully understood by the public at large. This could therefore limit the amount of support teachers receive professionally from the education department to their own schools in matters affecting effective teaching and disciplining of learners.

Post the assault, Mpho describes the lack of support and empathy that she received from her colleagues.

Mpho: "Like another thing that people don't see is because if you don't have a bruise, it's like people don't take whatever you went through seriously… People were like 'why would you want to go to the doctor?'. They do not understand the trauma I went through, you know."

Thabisile touches on the issue of being unsupported by her manager, which resorted her to seek assistance from others regarding issues experienced in the workplace.

Thabisile: "If I got a problem I'd go outside, I'd consult another manager to help me and I'd go straight to my boss [principal]. Yes because we don't have a working relationship, we don't have a good working relationship with my manager. So that's the problem I'm facing."

However, Thabo shares a completely different story concerning the dynamic shared between him and his manager.

Thabo: "I have experienced many situations like that where you know a learner is refusing to, to be disciplined or to be under instruction or to listen to what the teacher is saying or… participating in what's taking place in class. You know they are just disruptive in which case I then had to take it up with the H.O.D. Very rarely have I had to go to the principal, usually at H.O.D level its resolved."

Here, Thabo illustrates that by having a good and supportive structure in the school, can increase the satisfaction one feels in resolving issues. This relates to what Reynolds and Sullivan (1981) mention, which is that achieving teachers usually perform well if they are well supported by their principal.

Mpho expresses her view on being supported ultimately as a young teacher in the workplace.

Mpho: "For myself I feel like what we go through it's really a lot and there isn't any support. If there was support in place I would continue but I really sometimes feel like I'm on my own."

The lack of parental support has been much of an echoed theme in the study. It is of believe that their support determines the behaviour of the learners and prevalence of violence infiltrating in the schools. The lack of support seems to influence how teachers cope professionally at work.

Michael shares his opinion about teachers' safety and lack of the parents support in resolving matters concerning children in high risk.

Michael: "Children do actually attack teachers to the point where the teacher is helpless. There's nothing they can do. You call the parents, some will come and some will not come to school. So it's just a problem. The teacher should feel free to teach the children."

Michaels further on speaks about his view of receiving minimal support from teachers within the same environment.

> *Michael: "The support was just that most teachers were shocked and some children, that's all."*

Akabas (as cited in Du Plessis, 1990) writes the importance of the workplace being a developmental institution that fosters and encourages personal and social growth. Additionally it should be a functional community that aims to assist and support employees in times of stress.With regards to the professional help that teachers can receive. Michael makes mention of the fact that not many utilise resources for their own reasons.

> *Michael: "We are aware of it [Employee Assistance and Wellness Centre] but you know teachers are aware of that but they do nothing. It's just there theoretically but practically it's non – existent."*

Mpho specifically describes her encounter with someone at the district who had heard about the incident but could not refer her to a place to seek assistance in coping.

> *Mpho: "Well with my situation I remember someone from the district came once and then they spoke to me and gave me their card. That was it… I opted to get my own counselling."*

Michael explains the importance of the department being more supportive towards teachers.

> *Michael: "The department have got to be more supportive towards the school and the teachers as well."*

Generally the participants above point to the importance of having a good communicative system between management and teachers. It has been indicated that their support increases the likelihood of being able to deal with ill – discipline and behavioural issues they may encounter. Bester & Du Plessis (2014) explain that schools that have poor conflict management styles influence and contribute towards the violence that occurs in the school. This would mean that the structures within the school may largely influence the control over certain matters affecting the school.

Corporal punishment was a theme that seemed to be repeated by participants. According to Noang (2007), it is perceived by some teachers that without corporal punishment learners cannot be disciplined. Participants share their opinion below.

Michael shares his belief in that learners are uncontrollable due to the lack of disciplinary measures being in place. He implies schools are unsafe due to the lack of discipline.

> *Michael: "When I started teaching you could control these children, so you could discipline them... there was order in schools... teachers didn't have problems as they were able to discipline these children."*

Thabisile shares her own point of view concerning corporal punishment.

> *Thabisile: "When we were learners, before there was corporal punishment. And now there is no corporal punishment, the learners' don't want to do homework. They know you won't do anything to them."*

In this section it has been highlighted that in terms of professional support, there appears to be a need in having a stronger support structure in place. The professional support structures include having a supportive manager and colleagues who are able to assist regarding learners with sever behavioural issues. However, it was also said that some schools try to support their employees as much as they can. Additionally, it was also of view that without corporal punishment learners are less controllable, hence teachers being victimised in the school environment. Morrell (2001) does state that despite the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act No. 33 of 1997 being created, some schools still maintain it as a form of disciplining learners.

b. Personal coping strategies

Outside of the workplace, most teachers seek assistance, comfort and support from close family and friends. Since it has been generally identified that family and friends support makes a difference, this section will be looking at the personal support teachers receive outside of the environment.

Mpho shares about how she talks to her family when in need of support.

Mpho: "But when it comes to home, I do talk to them about how was my day and all of those things. Like I do talk, tell them my frustrations…I talk to family, I talk to friends."

Thabisile shares her experience of not having family members around to support her during her difficulty at work as a new teacher but rather how her friends were her main support structure during her difficult time.

Thabisile: "When I'm here I don't have anyone. I'm not... from Joburg, I'm from KZN. It was difficult for me… but I'd talk to my friends. They would advise me the way that they … could."

Additionally she describes the need to be resilient to cope in the workplace.

Thabisile: "It's like at work some people will like you and others don't. Some they may go a different way, a different direction but you have to be strong."

Other participants felt that teachers need to be resilient by having a thick skin in order to cope in the workplace or the unruly and ill – disciplined behaviour of some learners.Thabo speaks about the importance of having a thick skin, so as to cope in the workplace.

Thabo: "As an educator like I said before you need to have a thick skin. You can't let it get to you otherwise then you are in the wrong profession. If you allow it to get to you then you're not going to last very long or you are going to have a migraine headache on a daily basis."

Thabisile explained what has been her motivation to cope within the workplace.

Thabisile: "My motivation is that I love this work; I love what I'm doing. Like I've said I love what I do. That was the motivation and I love these kids also, too much."

The participants above have highlighted their own personal coping mechanisms within the school environment. The strategies identified included the support of family and friends. Furthermore they also contributed their coping to personal attributes. Lee et al. (2008) mentions that the attitude that the teacher has in the classroom, forms part of the personality they have. This means that the ability to cope is depended on the traits that they have.

4.4.2.2 Recommendations to increase coping mechanisms

It is important that solutions are created, so as to combat or decrease the amount of violence occurring within the school's, in order for safety to exist. This section will discuss school culture, unity and workshops.

a. School culture

Thabo shares his belief in what school culture is.

> *Thabo: "School culture is simply a way in which we behave as a school… It's things like greeting your teachers for example, greeting each other, you know the school rules, areas that are out of bounds, you know what to do if you want to go outside of the school yard if you are a boarder."*

He additionally speaks on the importance of forming a triad between the teacher, parent and child.

> *Thabo: The parent is a major link in the triangle. It's the teacher, learner and the parent. That triangle shouldn't be broken at one point because... teaching becomes very difficult, once the learner is not involved [and] once the parent is not involved that heavily undermines the learning and the teaching process.*

Zungu speaks about having a strategy and culture on checking learners' bags and latecomers.

> *Zungu: "Here [the school], we all are here to guard these children and we are shaping them to be better person. So everybody must get involved. If the security was concerned [he'd] ask the child 'why are you late?','let me check your bag','why is yourshirt is outside your trouser?', why your shoes are not polished.'"*

He additionally speaks about strategically motivating learners can improve the environment.

> *Zungu: "I think we must have a pep talk with our boys and girls all thetime. And everybody must get involved because really there are teachers who really don't care..."*

It has been indicated in research that schools that work collaboratively in disciplining learners, increase the likelihood of them being able to deal effectively with issues of misbehaviour and violence (Mgijima, 2014). Here, participants overall have highlighted the

need to work collaboratively in having a school culture that promotes good relations and having good strategies in dealing with problems effectively.

b. Unity

The importance of staff unity was another recommendation suggested by the participants.

Thabo shares his point of view.

> *Thabo: "Staff absolutely needs to play a role in school culture but only if it's there. If it doesn't exist then if I try to enforce my own thing it won't work because other teachers are not enforcing the same thing."*

He continues in emphasising his point of being united in the workplace for it may have positive outcomes.

> *Thabo:" If learners realise that as a staff body you are, you… stick with each other, you stand by each other and you say the same thing then learners tend to be more disciplined."*

Mpho shares her opinion on unity.

> *Mpho: "I feel like as teachers we should be working with unity... And I feel that nothing ever works in isolation. As teachers we are supposed to work together, so until we work together and come together we form as our own support structures as well.*

With regards to Mpho's point of nothing working in isolation, systems theory is relevant in this aspect for it looks at how the individual to connected in the larger social environment.

Zungu speaks about how safety in the environment can change based on changing the attitude of how learners are addressed.

> *Zungu:" But if everybody can be involved in the safety of the environment… teachers can improve this... And the respect [from] learners [and] their behaviour can improve. Everybody must be involved…The reason is… the way you approached the child."*

Furthermore, he emphasizes the need to be united as teachers.

Zungu: "You know if we can really work together with the children, we can solve some of these problems. Because most of the issues are from social problems."

Under this section of the paper, it was identified by participants that there is a need for unity to address problems in the workplace. It has also been identified that the problems occurring do not only occur in isolation but rather reactions are caused due to what had happened previously.

c. Workshops

Some respondents mentioned the importance of having workshops which deal with the unruly behaviour of learners. They share their views below.

Michael speaks to the need of having proper and informative training for teachers, which could then help in matters occurring in the classroom.

Michael: "Now this one you only attend crash courses. That's what happening now, it's just a crash courses. After school they go to a workshop for one to two hours and then they go home. And that's not proper training."

Thabisile shares the importance of orientation in the workplace.

Thabisile: "I just think that they should introduce workshops... I think workshops needs to be introduced."

Zungu shares the same sentiment of teachers being trained.

Zungu: "People must get training [on] how to control, manage behaviour of a child… If there's a committee that deals with troublesome learners those people must be trained how to control learners, how to talk to them."

Thabo speaks about the importance of being proactive in the workplace.

Thabo: "Absolutely. So yeah it's up to us really to impact, to influence not just these learners but even ourselves positively because we spend a lot of our time here at work… There are too many negatives out there, so we need to be positive, we need to be proactive."

Ideally, should workshops be well utilized, they should be making a difference in the school environment. The Examplar School Safety Policy of 2011, was created for the purpose of

ensuring safety in addressing matters such as violence, bullying and assault. However it may be found that not much has been done in terms of teachers attending workshops to deal with such pressing matters.

4.5 SUMMARY

The findings presented and discussed provided a better understanding and insight on the views and experiences of teachers who have been victimised or who have witnessed teachers being victimised by their learners. It was identified that what had been experienced by the teachers could be influenced by the community that the school is surrounded by. The discussion also allowed for the understanding regarding the affect that is associated with being victimised within the workplace. It was insightful in that it provided clarification on the effects on their well – being, the support one receives and the way a teacher may choose to cope within the workplace.

The key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the study will be presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the main findings will be presented in relation to the objectives of the study. Relevant conclusions regarding the victimisation teachers have encounter by learners will be provided and specific recommendations in terms of practice and future research will be made.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The main findings will be discussed in relation to the four main objectives of the research study.

The first objective of the study was to *explore teachers' perspective on how school violence and bullying influences issuesof safety in the workplace.*

From research it was identified that there were issues of safety for teachers within the workplace. It was evident that learners, who are exposed to violent crimes in the community and at home, were likely to enact similar behaviour within the school environment. This therefore contributes to the amount of violence in the school. Other social ills in communities like alcohol and drug use also influence the level of violence within the school. It was reported that learners who use drugs, might bring weapons to school, which would put teachers and learners at risk. This insight similarly goes in line with how teachers in a study by Martin, Mackenzie and Healy (2001) perceived that violent behaviour in schools were largely attributed to the environment the school is surrounded by.

Burton (2008) explains that the school is a reflection of the community. The schools in this study appeared to have echoed what Burton (2008) had stated, for it was mentioned that the socioeconomic factors such as poverty and unemployment influence the nature of violence in the schools. Learners who have been searched on school premises have been found with pocketknives, as well as abusing drugs, which additionally affect the issues of safety in the workplace. Safety was alsocompromised in that there were learners who want to either assault/physical fight teachers. It was also identified that learners who come from backgrounds where discipline is little or lack of involvement from parents, tend to be problematic in the school environment.

It was indicated that teachers feel that their safety gets compromised when it comes to addressing severe behavioural problems. It was expressed that it is hard to expel learners who are severely problematic and that since corporal punishment is done away with, it's hard to discipline learners. Additionally, it was expressed that the management team in the school and the department lacks in sufficiently supporting teachers regarding issues with difficult learners. Bester and du Plessis (2014) highlighted that teachers felt as if the educational department lacked in sufficiently supporting them, especially in matters concerning discipline against learners who provoked violence. Another important factor included in the research is the security a school has. Participant did mention how inconsistency of guarding learners and what they bring in the school premise, may cause issues of endangerment to learners and teachers.

The second objective was to explore and gain better insight into the experiences of teacher regarding the influence that school violence and bullying has on their personal well – being.

In the study it was seen that managers lack in showing support towards teachers, which would then influences the amount of respect the teacher receives from the learner. Teachers who have been victimised have indicated feelings of shock, fear and anxiousness. Espelage et al. (2013) mentioned that feelings of fear and powerlessness lead to being dissatisfied in the workplace. It was also indicated that once they have been threatened there were feelings of being unsafe in the classroom and in the school premises. The workplace has been described to being stressful in nature because of the nature of work and the lack of support received. This in essence can affect the quality of work produced (Kauppi & Porhola, 2012a).

It was also highlighted that once it had been identified that certain learners are problematic, teachers feel the need not to jeopardise their own safety as well as the learners, which adds on to the element of fear. Pik (1981) explains that fear and absenteeism of teachers can be associated with the teacher wanting to avoid or deal with the misbehaving learner. The community that the school is located in also tends to add to ones fear and worry about their personal safety, which would then lead to the person feeling anxious. Others have described the feeling of being afraid of being victimised again, which then leads their actions of being cautious, so as to minimise any assault.

Due to the lack of support, teachers are said to be less productive, for they are frustrated in the workplace. There is an element of teachers saying that they feel helpless in disciplining learners who are severely problematic. Participants also did reflect being unhappy in the workplace because of the need to deal with certain issues alone instead of being supported by their

managers. In addition, learners are problematic in the sense that they at times do not differentiate the difference between the adult and the child, which is why they at times would throw out insults directed at teachers.

The lack of sympathy and supports from colleagues affects the personal well – being of employees. It was described that once incidents are reported, very little to nothing is done to deal with the problems that need to be addressed. Pik (1981) explains that teachers worry about appearing weak in the classroom setting. This could therefore imply that teachers additionally would not want to appear weak to their fellow colleagues hence the lack of reporting concerning the victimisation they receive from learners. Abdulla (2011) furthermore explains that underreporting of incidents largely has to do with the teacher perceived as being unable to discipline learners in the classroom. This in essence creates the perception that the workplace is stressful in nature and depressing due to the lack of support one receives from the higher structures or fear of being seen as weak or incompetent.

Objective three aimed to investigate the coping strategies that teachers use when personally confronted by school violence or bullying in the workplace.

With regards to the coping strategies that teachers use when stressors are experienced, one of the methods found to be used in limiting the effect of being victimised is having a good and supportive manager. It was seen that by having a supportive manager, it helps teachers get the satisfaction that their problems will be solved in the workplace. Furthermore, having a supportive colleague, who has experienced and encountered similar problems is another coping strategy identified. For it helps the victimised individual in being able to share and somewhat debrief with what one goes through. Reynolds and Sullivan (1981) say that high achieving schools usually are effective in supporting their teachers.

Family acts as an important stress reliever for the challenges that victims face post assault. Family offers the possibility of being able to share the hardships one endures. It was identified that one participant found it hard to cope initially when she was a victim to the insults she encountered from learners, due to family residing in another province. In terms of coping much emphasis was relied on colleagues and friends within the workplace. This indicates that methods of coping are largely influenced by the situation that the teachers find themselves in and also the type of support that have around them, which may include friends or colleagues.

Participants saw the need to be strong and resilient with regards to the pressures and traumas experienced. A method that was recognized is acting passive towards learners who have either assaulted or who have insulted teachers, for it said to help in not giving the wanted attention to the perpetrator. Others seek to how passionate they are and how they love children, so as to stay in the profession despite the negatives sometimes outweighing the positives in the workplace. It was highlighted that it is important to have a thick skin in order to cope regarding learners who misbehave. Martin et al. (2011) mention that teachers cope in the workplace by accepting that the misbehaviour of learners is part of the job.

Community at times can be supportive towards the school in trying to combat or buffer the influence and infiltration of problems such as drug in order to minimise the effect it might have within the environment. Additionally, the police station is another coping strategy that teachers and the school use as well. It was expressed that in severe cases they assist schools in dealing with learners who may have assaulted or who endanger others in bringing drugs and weapons in school premises.

The fourth objective seeks to *explore the suggestions on how schools can prevent and minimise school violence and bullying.*

One of the most common suggestions to minimise and prevent school violence is having parents involved in most, if not all matters of the school. It was identified that in terms of communication and issues of learners, a triad needs to be formed between the parent, child and teacher. This assists in having a good support system for the learner as well as the teacher. Having a good reporting system in the school was acknowledged as a necessity in the school. A good reporting system includes having open communication and solving of problems concerning the workplace.

The creation of school culture was seen as a necessity. Reason being is that it was recognized that a school that encourages a culture of learners behaving and acting according to good set of standards, helps in dealing with the most severe behavioural problems in the environment. Moreover, this also helps in showing interest in the teachers and investing in being more disciplined towards learners. In essence, this can also motivate learners and push them towards a positive reinforcement. Reynolds and Sullivan (1981) say that the ethics of a school influence the perception of creating a positive atmosphere.

Unity was another common theme found in the research. It was expressed that the principal, teachers and staff as a whole needs to enforce the same attitude towards the problems that are faced. This would help with showing learners that staff is united in minimising and dealing with violence that may have infiltrated in the school. The School Based Team (SBST) was seen as an important body within the school, which can assist teachers in dealing with problematic learners. If they are active as a body, they can assist in creating a safe working place where solving problems occurs, for one is not isolated in solving problems of learners.

The need of education and training in school was identified as another measure that can be used more effectively. They can assist in combating matters of curriculum problems and the management of learners. It was also highlighted that in schools, teachers need to be orientated, as this may assist with knowing how to deal with learners. Essentially at the end, it was seen that being proactive in the workplace should occur. With one being positive, it can lead to dealing with the issues that occur in the workplace

5.3 CONCLUSION

Since it has been realised that school violence impacts the prevalence of learner to teacher violence, this explorative study aimed in understanding the influence it has in the workplace. The study assisted with getting a better insight in the experiences teachers have and also how it affect their functioning within the workplace. Additionally, it helped in understanding the detrimental effects that it has on their personal health and well – being. The study also particularly indicated the factors that contribute towards how they cope within the workplace, which includes personal and professional elements. At the end recommendations were included as well, so as to start sufficiently dealing the problem which is becoming a phenomenon in the country.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored the victimisation teachers encountered by learners in the High school setting in the Johannesburg Region. The data analysed highlighted certain changes or aspects that could be improved upon, so as to create a healthier working environment.

5.3.1 GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

One of the main recommendations that have been highlighted is that the Gauteng Department of Education is to have a proactive role in supporting teachers who have been victimised. Even

though policies have been put in place to support teachers and safeguard learners, the administration of such policies seems to have a little positive effect towards teachers victimised.

The study helped in highlighting how there is an Employee Assistance and Wellness Programme that is suggested for teachers to use. However it appears not to be active as suggested. Teachers appear to be less supported due to the main emphasis of mainly protecting learners. It is often forgotten that the right support directed could be motivating. This implies thatsuch services need to become accessible in assisting teachers. It could mean that they need to emphasise their necessity when matters of bullying and assaults have been reported to the district.

Furthermore, due to the stressful environment of the teacher, it seems as if the district at times may not necessarily have the right resources or they possibly may be limited in resources. It may be found that despite policies being set in place, they may be hard to follow through due to misinformation andlack of care by some officials. With this being said it only means a better communicative and support channels needs to be created to ensure quality of work

5.3.2 SCHOOLS

It was mainly said that schools' need to become more supportive towards teachers and the issues they come across in the classroom. Although it is a necessity for one to be proactive in solving their own problems, in instances where emotional or physical assault is severe, the school needs to step in to support teachers in the issues they face. Teachers appear to need genuine and professional help in matters where they have been victimised, for that influences the job satisfaction and productivity.

Besides that, a supportive school can lead to creating a safer environment for both learners and teachers. Even though schools may rely on the district to act as a supportive measure to what goes on in the school, the school that aims to make sure that most teachers are assisted in making sure that problems are resolved as efficiently and effectively as possible. The structures, starting from junior to senior staff needs to be effective in the conflict management style they use, so as to hinder how violence occurs in the workplace. By having efficient and effective systems in place, school violence can be less. Identifying and assisting learners with social problems is one of the measures one can use to combat problems. By assisting teachers with social problems this can lead to ensuring there's productivity in the workplace.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Participant

My name is Lemohang Mashile and I am currently doing my Masters in Occupational Social Work at the University of Witwatersrand. As a part time student, in my second year, I am required to do research. I am currently conducting research in understanding the bullying and victimization teachers receive from their learners. The aim of this study is to gain a greater insight into this phenomenon that is happening within the High School setting. The research also aims to see what can be recommended, so as to help teachers cope in their workplaces.

I would like to formally ask for your participation in the study, which is based on a voluntary basis, as you are not inclined to participate if you wish not to. If you do decide to participate, I will be doing an interview with you for roughly an hour according to your availability. Should you wish to withdraw from the study at a later stage, you will be allowed to. If there are questions that make you feel uncomfortable, you are allowed to decline and not answer them.

The interview will be tape – recorded and notes will be taken, once you have consented to them being used during the interaction. My supervisor and I will be the only people with access to tapes so as to make sure that we do not breach any ethical issues and so as to make sure that the information received is kept confidential. The tapes will be locked and kept in a safe place, two years after any publications or six years if there is no publication. Your identity information will not appear in the final research report.

It has been recognised that the interview is based on a sensitive topic. Should you experience any distress and need counselling session after the interview, you may be referred to the Employee Health and Wellness Programme, based in Soweto, Pimville.

If you have any questions regarding my study, please feel free to contact me on 076 848 4498. I will answer them to the best of my ability. If you would like to know the results pertaining the research, an abstract can be made available.

Thanking You In Advance

Lemohang Mashile

Appendix B

Consent Form

I, _____ (participant's name), consent to participate in the study. The purpose as well as the procedure of the study has been explained. It has been explained that participation is voluntary and that should I wish not to answer certain questions, I am allowed to do so. I understand that I am allowed to withdraw myself from the study if I cannot continue. It was explained to me that my response would be kept confidentially.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C

Consent Form for Audio – Taping

I, _____(participant's name) consent to the interview being audio – taped. I understand that the tapes will be destroyed after two years, should there be any publications or six years after the completion of the study and no publication.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix D

Study – Teachers Bullied: Understanding the Victimization of Teachers by their Learners in High School in the Johannesburg South Region

Questions

1. Could you tell me a bit more about why you chose to be a teacher?
2. How long have you been in the profession?
3. During the time you have been in the profession, how has the work environment changed over the past few years?
4. What are your views on all the changes within the educational system?
5. Today, violence in schools is a common phenomenon, what are your perceptions about it?
6. What are your views about protection and safety in the workplace?
7. You have been a victim of bullying/violence; could you share with me how it has affected your well – being?
8. What reporting and support structures are in place for teachers who have been victimised?
9. In which way have you been coping with matters of learner bully?
10. Could you share with me your thoughts on how schools should deal with violence in schools?

Thank you so much for participating in the study!!