SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS' AND EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES ON SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE: SUGGESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

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DECLARATION

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I hereby declare that this proposal is my original work. In cases where secondary material is used, this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the university's requirements.

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DEDICATION

I would like to show gratitude and dedicate this dissertation to my father, Mr. Phineas Maroga, my mother, Mrs. Annah Maroga, and my sister, Matildah Maroga, who have ensured that through planning I am what I am today. I am also eternally grateful for my wonderful husband Mr. Tshepo Maota, and my two girls, Zoe Maota and Anita Maota, for their support, love, and prayers.

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ABSTRACT

School-based violence (SBV) is a phenomenon that burdens many countries globally. A substantial proportion of schools and governments are still struggling to find a solution to it. There are a limited number of reports on stakeholder support for SBV within the Johannesburg East District. The study's first goal was to gain a thorough understanding of the educators' and school social workers' experiences and perceptions of SBV and, secondly, to proffer their suggestions for stakeholder support to prevent SBV.

The theoretical framework employed to anchor this study included the bio-ecological perspective and the peace education theory. The researcher employed the qualitative research approach and utilised phenomenology as the research design strategy, with a mixture of the descriptive, explorative, and contextual research designs. The purposive (judgement) and the techniques of snowball sampling were utilised.

The study revealed that the nature of SBV is verbal and physical violence, and bullying. The causes of SBV are the perpetrator and victim's personality, the use of substances, home circumstances, neighbourhood, socioeconomic conditions, and social media.

It takes a village to raise a child and therefore the cooperation of all the stakeholders is crucial in ensuring the prevention of SBV. Suggestions for stakeholder support in curbing SBV include employing school social workers and involving parents. Teachers, principals, and school governing bodies are urged to play a more prominent role.

Key concepts:

School social worker; educator; school-based violence; bullying; prevention; corporal punishment; stakeholder; school governing body; disciplinary hearing.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CCTV	Closed-circuit television
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPF	Community Policing Forum
CSVR	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-based support team
DCS	Department of Community Safety
DOA	Define, own words, and application
FOR SA	Freedom of Religion South Africa
HOD	Head of Department
IDSO	Institutional Development and Support Official
LRC	Learner Representative Council
NDP	National Development Plan 2030
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NICRO	South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders
NPO	Non-profit organisation
RCL	Representative Council for Learners
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SACSSP	South African Council for Social Service Professions
SANCA	South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
SAPS	South African Police Service
SBST	School-Based Support Team
SBV	School-based violence
SGB	School governing body
SIAS Policy	Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	Senior management team
SSW	School social worker
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE:
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

This section contains a general introduction and a discussion on school-based violence (SBV), which flows from a general concept to a particular concept. The overall introduction, problem statements, and justification of the study are all included in the discussion, which outline what the researcher planned to investigate, including the motivation and reasoning behind the study.

1.1.1   General introduction

Studies indicate that SBV is a phenomenon that burdens many countries **globally** and seemingly a great number of schools and governments are still battling to find the right solutions to deal with it (Alzyoud, Al-Ali & Bin Tareef 2016:224-225; Hlatshwayo, 2018:2; Musariwa, 2017:1; Ncontsa & Shumba 2013:13). For instance, in French schools' students and teachers[1] indicated a lack of respect in relationships, rather than physical aggression, as a prevalent form of violence in schools (Giordani, Seffner & Dell'Aglio, 2017:104) and in Brazilian schools, teachers played a role in the spread of violence in schools, whereby students are the main victims and teachers are least affected (Da Silva & Gonçalves da Silva 2018:471). In a study undertaken in Chile by Morales, López, Bilbao, Villalobos, Oyarzún, Olavarría, Ortiz, Carrasco and Ascorra (2014:217-226) it was revealed that teachers are primarily affected by school violence, as they do not know whether their own performance contributes to the generation of school violence, and they feel ill-prepared to curb it. In Poland, the lack of collaboration between teachers in dealing with school violence was found to be as a result of their lack of personal skills and a deeper level of socioeconomic changes (Kowzan, 2009:743).

Various reports globally have also documented growing concerns about school-related violence and difficulties in implementing measures to deal with this problem: Europe (Smith, 2004:137-145), United States of America (USA) (Lunenburg,

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[1]   The concepts "educator" and "teacher" were used interchangeably throughout the study.

2010:1-4), London (Watkins, Mauthner, Hewitt, Epstein & Leonard, 2007:61-74), Columbia (The Dominion Post 2019:1), United Arab Emirates (Alomosh, Alrahoomi, Alshamsi & Alani, 2019:45-56), and in Spain the study by Ferrer-Cascales, Albaladejo-Blázquez, Sánchez-SanSegundo, Portilla-Tamarit, Lordan and Ruiz-Robledillo (2019:580). Conditions leading to school violence are dynamic, complex, and far-reaching everywhere in the world (Federal Commission on School Safety, 2018:17; Rivera & Velasquez, 2019:4). Other studies associated school dropout rates, learner absenteeism, incidents of suicide, academic underperformance, and poor educational and learning environments with SBV (Castle & Diallo, 2008:7; Mengo & Black 2016:239; Mestry 2015:657). As such, other researchers and writers indicate that more and more parents are now choosing to educate their kids at home because of the perception of school violence (Brewer & Lubienski, 2017:25; Power Homeschool, 2019; Ray, c2019; Williams, 2018).

The **African continent** is no exception regarding SBV. Various African countries are battling with the phenomenon of SBV. Burton, Leoschut and Popovac (2011: xii) found that youth in Namibia, for instance, are also exposed to different types of violence "both as victims and witnesses of violence". The authors further discovered that "learners and classmates were not the only perpetrators of violence, meaning that educators were also perpetrators. Corporal punishment was reported by most learners, with an alarming 72.6% of the sample report to having ever been caned." Similarly, in 2017, the Democratic Republic of the Congo recorded 396 incidents of school violence. In addition, almost 720 million children of school age live in African nations where corporal punishment is not completely forbidden (UNICEF, 2018).

Bolton (2017:43) reports that in Kenya between 63% and 82% of pupils have experienced multiple kinds of violence in government schools in Nairobi. In a study conducted by Matsoga (2003:12), it was discovered that "violence is prevalent in Botswana schools". Equally, Musariwa (2017:1) reports that Zimbabwean authorities are battling with policy and programmatic challenges in successfully addressing the cause of SBV. Nonetheless, there seems to be contradictory views on the use of corporal punishment in schools. In nations such as Liberia, Nigeria, Swaziland, and Vanuatu most adults believe that physical punishment is a needed component for child discipline, whereas the nations in sub-Saharan Africa seem to

show the greatest level of concern for corporal punishment (UNICEF, 2014:153). In 2019, a ruling by the Constitutional Court of South Africa that it is now illegal to apply corporal punishment at home has received mixed reactions from the public at large (Citizen Reporter, 2019). Others like Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA) argued that the judgment sets the wrong precedent that the government can dictate how parents should raise their children and argued that "we are an extraordinary violent country and when we hit children we teach them the wrong message… violence begets violence" (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 2019; Zama, 2019).

The phenomenon of school violence is a main problem which the South African education system faces (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:1). The schooling environment in **South Africa** has become a territory susceptible to serious challenges, such as violent crimes. These challenges are threats to the accomplishment of education objectives, as well as economic growth. Various authors argue that school violence in South African is "deep-rooted" and has become part of daily life for some schools (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:2; Jacobs, 2014:1). It is further revealed that about 15.3% of the students in primary and high schools in South Africa have encountered some type of violence (South African Council for Educators, 2011:12). Moreover, a total of 1.8 million of these students have experienced some type of SBV. Research conducted by Burton and Leoschut (2013:22) reveals that the schools in the Mpumalanga Province have the highest levels of criminal victimisation in South African at 71.8%, followed by schools in the Free State at 62% and the Eastern Cape at 60.8%.

As highlighted above, the challenge of SBV is not a new occurrence in South Africa. However, what has emerged as a serious challenge is the increasing severity of the nature of the issues being reported (South African Council for Educators, 2011).

A study conducted during 2015 and 2016 by Musu-Gillette, Zhang, Wang, Zhang, Kemp, Dilibert and Oudekerk (2018: iii) revealed the following:

> 10% of public-school educators said a student from their school threatened them with violence, and 6% said they were physically assaulted by a learner from their school. Approximately 37% of

public schools (31,100 schools) initiated at least one major disciplinary action for offenses in the same year.

The problem of SBV in South Africa is a serious concern; daily stories of high levels of SBV, sexual and physical abuse, gang-linked incidents are reported in print and electronic media (Mncube & Harber, 2013:1). Due to this mounting challenge, schools in South Africa are regarded as the world's most dangerous (Eke & Singh, 2018:1). The following extracts are examples of ongoing concerns raised about unfortunate incidents being noted in various South African schools and the challenges in finding solutions to the phenomenon of SBV:

- In June 2019, a "Grade 8 pupil was stabbed to death… outside Forest High School in a gang related violence" (Sobuwa, 2019).

- In March 2019, it was reported that a 13-year-old learner from Mondeor High School was arrested after stabbing a fellow learner to death (Etheridge & Ngqakamba, 2019).

- A 16-year-old student at Shawbury Secondary School in Qumbu, Eastern Cape, was fatally stabbed by another student (Fisher, 2019).

An increase in media reports on South African SBV seems to indicate that schools are quickly becoming a haven for violence, not just between learners, but also between learners and teachers, and in terms of interschool rivalries and gang conflicts (Hlatshwayo 2018:124; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013:2). In as much as there are frequent reports of SBV in the media, De Wet (2016:1) argues that statistics cannot provide evidence of the escalation of school violence, as there is a lack of recordkeeping of such occurrences. Other studies also revealed that schools were previously viewed as a base to instil discipline and reinforce pro-social attitudes; however, they have become hosts of violence (Netshitangani, 2018b:161; Pileggi, 2018).

School violence is also seen economically as a possible determinant of educational objectives (Diagne, 2009:136). For instance, some authors argue that SBV also contributes to the loss of educators in schools in South Africa, as was discovered that most educators who resign and leave the education profession cited school violence as their reason for doing so (Bertram, Mthiyane & Mukeredzi, 2013:448;

Jantjies & Joy, 2015:317; Mafora, 2013:227; Ogunniyi & Rollnick, 2015:69). Moreover, high levels of absenteeism amongst teachers, a lack of safety, and ill-disciplined learners are some of the reasons that have been indicated by the educators for feeling emotionally and psychologically traumatised, and for some even becoming severely depressed. Mohapi (2014:266) mentions that there has been a significant decrease in learner's discipline in South Africa since 1995, which showed itself in the form of drug and alcohol abuse, bullying, and verbal abuse, making teaching a daunting job for educators. As such, the performance of teachers may have been affected and it may also be the main reason for the high levels of absenteeism amongst teachers (Mothibeli, 2017:101). A study undertaken in South Africa by Mestry (2015:655), which explored the forms and underlying causes of SBV, found that teachers and students feared for their own safety and that the teaching process was hindered by the need to manage disruptive behavior and stop violent and aggressive outbursts. Although school violence was alluded to by many teachers as one of the major reasons for leaving the profession, the reasons differ from one teacher to another (Pitsoe, 2013:311). A recent North Gauteng High Court ruling that a teacher could not claim damages after being attacked at the school by a learner could contribute to the anxiety of teachers who feel unsafe in the school environment (Southern African Legal Information Institute, 2019).

Literature consistently shows that SBV poses significant physical, psychological, emotional, and mental health risks to learner victims (Bonell, Fletcher, Jamal, Wells, Harden, Murphy & Thomas, 2013:242; De Wet, 2016:1; Espelage, Merrin & Hatchel, 2018:159; Mengo & Black, 2016:238). The **effects** of SBV have far-reaching consequences that influence the person long after the incident, even into adulthood. The impact of SBV shows that, in most cases, learners who have been sufferers of such violence are more likely to become offenders of the same act in the future. Moreover, the experience of SBV can negatively impact the academic and social development of learners throughout their lives (Becerra, Munoz & Riquelme 2015:157). To this effect, Diagne (2009:140) indicates that up to 70% of violent adults have experienced violence earlier in their life, either as immediate victims or as inter-parental violence witnesses.

A study conducted by Brockenbrough, Cornell and Loper (2002:273) on victims of school violence in Virginia in the USA found that these victims developed more aggressive behaviour as compared to their peers who are non-victims. As such, exposure to school violence may result in the multiplication of the phenomenon and makes school violence a very difficult and complex matter to deal with. Fatima and Malik (2015:50) reason that watching violent cartoons, television shows, and games adversely impact learners, as they start to learn to be aggressive through imitating media-based violence in real life. Hence, Jacobs (2014:13) suggests that "the mass media has a responsibility to inform society comprehensively, accurately, and impartially on violence in South African schools in order to build a positive perception and well-informed public".

Even though there is a concern about the long-term effects of SBV on young children in South Africa, little research has been undertaken on the effects of SBV on educators (Grobler, 2018:4). Other studies have discovered that the school policies and procedures, such as the code of conduct for learners, are not adequate in reducing school violence (Mohapi, 2014:269; Mestry, 2015:655). On the other hand, a study conducted in Bloemfontein, South Africa, by Jacobs (2012:59) found that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) was often indecisive about implementing or unwilling to implement consequences such as expulsion and suspension in response to school violence, as stated in the policies.

Dealing with the phenomenon of SBV needs different **stakeholders** to be held accountable and to acknowledge the difficulty, dynamics, and multiple causes of this issue. Therefore, educators, the DoE, community members, parents, and learners all have a role to play in curbing SBV (Musariwa, 2017:36). However, little has been said about the role of stakeholders, particularly social workers, in curbing violence in schools (Mohapi, 2014:264). A literature and database search about SBV in South Africa using keywords such as school social worker(s) and stakeholders showed a paucity of research on this topic. Thus, it was imperative to investigate the role those various stakeholders can play in curbing SBV and what violence reduction strategies social workers can utilise in practice. Studies have confirmed that a community-based strategy in schools can enhance efficient SBV prevention actions, and such a strategy includes partnerships at various stakeholder levels, such as parents and

relatives, educators, students, professionals, and school administrators (Langley, Santiago, Rodríguez & Zelaya, 2013:247; South African Council for Educators 2011:32). For example, Heimpel, Qian and Song (2018:2344) mention that a healthy parent-learner relationship proves that children in such relationships are able to learn regulatory abilities from their parents. A healthy student-teacher relationship is generally believed to promote proper behaviour (Fatima & Malik, 2015:49; Volungis & Goodman, 2017:2).

There are many incidents of teacher victimisation and the frequency with which they happen is underestimated due to the lack of adequate data and the fact that some incidents may not get reported, as school principals minimise these reports in order to portray their schools in a positive light (Mcmahon, Martinez, Espelage, Rose, Reddy, Lane, Anderman, Reynolds, Jones & Brown, 2014:755). Yablon (2010:1111) also posits that students are hesitant to seek help from teachers and/or report being attacked or bullied at school. Therefore, involving different stakeholders such as social workers who possess counselling and conflict resolution skills may help the school by educating both the teachers and the learners (Supasitthimethee, Waraporn, Porkaew & Charoenkitkarn, 2017:1). Teaching also involves student guidance and counselling to some extent, therefore there is a need for teachers to be capacitated and trained, and school social workers can have a substantial impact in "improving relationships between students and school personnel through teacher education and basic relational skill development" (Lai-Yeung, 2014:37; Volungis, 2016:141). For example, the studies undertaken by researchers Cortina, Fazel, Hlungwani, Kahn, Tollman, Cortina-Borja and Stein (2013), Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:57), and Venter (2012:44) found that there was little psychological support offered in South African schools.

The continuous use of counselling sessions, adequate daily communication, and micro-level interactions with learners can develop a culture of healthy relationships that encourages multi-level school violence prevention (Volungis & Goodman, 2017:2). A study undertaken by Singh and Steyn (2013:5) also suggests that stakeholders, such as the school governing bodies (SGBs) and the DoE, could play an important guiding role in schools to manage challenging and complex SBV.

Good educational performance is associated with the involvement of all stakeholders in the school education system, namely parents, educators, students, the SGB, the government, unions, community members, and the private sector (De Róiste, Kelly, Molcho, Gavin & Gabhainn, 2012:90; Gichohi, 2015:13; Mokoena 2011:121). Modisaotsile (2012:3) further argues that building mutual relations amongst all stakeholders can enhance educational quality. Therefore, seeing that SBV as well as the risk factors associated with it are a challenge, this study has investigated the role of various stakeholders in violence reduction and further recommends a framework on how public schools can deal with the phenomenon of SBV. Lastly, as Finley (2011:162) puts it, "after all, it takes a village to prevent school violence".

1.1.2   Problem statement and rationale

The problem statement is a starting point for all social reasoning and action procedures (DePoy & Gilson 2017:17). In addition, Wentz (2013:146) describes the problem statement as a "bridge between evaluation and methodologies of literature and should have insights into both". Furthermore, it summarises the primary objectives and goals of a study project. It is a declaration that describes the aim of research as a gap or vacuum in our knowledge and details how the study helps to clarify theory or practice (Salkind, 2010:1142; Suter, 2012:87).

Within South African society, the scourge of SBV has impacted all: students, educators, the school management teams, SGBs, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations, the South African Police Service (SAPS), the media, and the community at large. The Igbo[2] and Yoruba[3] proverbs state that "it takes a whole village to raise a child", implying that the parenting of a child is a collaborative effort (Healey c1998). A "cycle of blame" among multiple stakeholders has begun to surface as teachers blame learners for not being ready to learn, and learners conversely accuse teachers for not being ready to teach. Similarly, parents blame both learners and teachers for not promoting their children's education

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[2]   Igbo refers to Igboland, which is situated in Southeastern Nigeria. It refers to both the culture and language of the Nigerian people.
[3]   Yoruba refers to one of the main ethnic groups in Nigeria.

(Magau, 2001:1). Hence, there is a need for the stakeholder support model to be employed to curb SBV from the perspective of different role players.

Although multiple researchers have studied SBV, there seems to be a paucity of research that investigates school social workers' scope of practice and stakeholders (Hlatshwayo, 2018; Masinga, 2017; Musariwa, 2017). The aforementioned authors also highlight some limitations concerning educators. For example, Masinga (2017:73) reports that "the voice of educators was limited as some were not willing to participate in the study". Similarly, Hlatshwayo (2018:13) was not able to capture the views of all the learners who are perpetrators of school violence. Moreover, Bester and Du Plessis (2010:203) posit that "a deeper understanding of educator experiences is necessary in order to enhance the effectiveness of educators' support, develop and streamline educational policies and focus on further educational research".

The problem statement derives from a dearth of knowledge on SBV (Jacobs, 2012:32). While exploring various studies conducted by others on the dynamics of school violence, the researcher noted a silence in the body of knowledge in terms of stakeholder support for preventing SBV informed by both educators' and experiences of school social workers and their recommendations for stakeholder support. Researcher carefully considered theories of SBV and investigated her own point of view, concluding as follows:

- SBV is a multifaceted phenomenon that is an antagonist to the South African education system, and it further destructively affects learners' social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth, as well as their health, and these effects are long term in nature (Jacobs, 2012:292)
- There is a scarcity of research on educators' experiences with violence in the schools globally. (Pahad & Graham 2012:3; Burton 2008).

Dealing with the phenomenon of school violence needs different stakeholders to be held accountable and acknowledge the difficulty, dynamics, and multiple causes of this issue. Therefore, educators, parents, learners, community, and the DoE have a role to play in curbing SBV (Musariwa, 2017:36, 129). The researcher explored

literature concerning SBV in South Africa using key words such as 'school social workers' and 'stakeholders' but found little research on this topic. Therefore, the problem statement for this research was written as follows: **In the study of the dynamics of school-based violence, there is a silence in the body of knowledge in terms of stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence informed by both educators' and school social workers' experiences and their suggestion for stakeholder support.**

1.1.3   Rationale of the study

The rationale is the standard argument in an essay as to why a topic is important. The rationale spells out why a subject is both theoretically and practically essential, including how the research will contribute to the topic's theory and/or literature (Rojon & Saunders, 2012:55). Furthermore, developing a conceptual structure for a study requires a clear rationale. This is where the researcher justifies that the project was a monumental task, not just an exciting question or proposition (Rojon & Saunders, 2012:55-56). The rationale of the study will be explained below in three parts, namely: (a) the contribution of the study; (b) how the research will contribute towards suggestions for stakeholder support for SBV prevention; and (c) how the research is envisaged to inform practice and professional development.

(a) Contribution of the study

In the **Gauteng Province**, various stakeholders are battling with ideas on how to curb SBV. There has been an increase in school violence in Gauteng despite the SAPS, the Gauteng DoE, and the Department of Community Safety (DCS) having several safer school projects in place, as well as consulting with various stakeholders on measures to tackle the continuing scourge (Mkhonza, 2019; SAPS 2019; Sibeko 2019). These attempts have not yet yielded a beneficial outcome. However, what is evident is that many schools are wrestling with growing disciplinary matters, whilst society is battling to understand the complex elements that create this unruly behaviour (African News Agency, 2019). Some of the studies undertaken on SBV in the Gauteng Province reveal that the SBV phenomenon has been an issue over the years (Coetzee & Steyn, 2017; Pahad & Graham, 2012; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009; Magau, 2001;). Equally, Ward, Van der Merwe and

Dawes (2013:184) posit that the high levels of school violence and its negative side effects indicate that there is a need for immediate violence prevention.

The researcher is currently working as a school social worker in Noordwyk (Midrand). The researcher is exposed to cases that deal with the social ills that continue to plague the community. However, the issue of SBV is the biggest challenge in many communities. Other social ills include, and are not limited to, divorce, separation, sexual and physical abuse, depression, attempted suicide, and substance abuse related matters. These social ills continue happening and, in some cases, they are not reported, especially in situations where the children have no adult that they feel comfortable talking to.

(b) How the research will contribute towards suggestions for stakeholder support for school-based violence prevention

The study of SBV is important, as avoiding finding a solution for it has the potential to collapse the education system, as in the case of Guanajuato (Morales, et al 2014:218). Their already fragile educational system was weakened by school violence. Students may also refrain from going to school altogether because they fear being violated by other students (Vega, Herrera & Leija, 2015:60; Berkowitz, 2014:490).

This study can provide stakeholder support on SBV that can be employed within schools. It can also provide suggestions for practice for school social workers, educators, and stakeholders to curb SBV.

(c) How the research is envisaged to inform practice and professional development

The researcher envisaged gaining knowledge and informing practice on how the multiple stakeholders, such as the Representative Council of Learners, educators, principals, senior management teams (SMTs), and SGBs, within the school can work together to support the learners in order to bring about safety in schools. The researcher will inform practice on the role of school social workers since the school social worker's scope was not clearly defined.

1.1.4 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework refers to the theory that guides the knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon to be researched. It is a paradigm based on established scientific theory that is linked to and/or represents the hypothesis of a study (Adom, Hussein & Adu-Agyem, 2018:438). Similarly, a theoretical framework is the roadmap for the complete investigation of the dissertation (Grant & Osanloo, 2016:12). Furthermore, it was the lens through which the researcher looked at the study and approached it (Mertz, 2017). It represents the guide through which the researcher constructed and promoted the research, and it offered a framework to describe the approach towards the entire dissertation philosophy; methodologically and analytically. The theoretical framework is also an organised and systematic series of interconnected statements (concepts) that indicate the nature of the relationship between two or more factors for the purpose of knowing the issue or nature of things (Green, 2014:34). The researcher has employed the bio-ecological perspective and peace education theory as the theoretical framework for this study. The two frameworks are individually discussed beneath.

1.1.4.1 *Bio-ecological perspective*

The founder of the bio-ecological perspective is American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, and his theory guided this study. It is a framework of educational psychology that studies the individual's development over a period of time. Bronfenbrenner's framework for and responses to SBV are viewed as the result of intertwined factors and subsystems between the various levels of the bio-ecological perspective. The nature, causes, and impacts of the violence perpetrated in schools in the Johannesburg East District must be viewed holistically. Different stakeholders need to work together to reduce SBV. The assumptions of the bio-ecological perspective embraces that we come across various environments throughout our lifespan, which can influence our actions in various ways. The bio-ecological perspective encompasses multiple phases, such as the microsystem, mesosystem, macrosystem, chronosystem, and exosystem (Sincero, 2012). The relevance of the bio-ecological perspective in understanding SBV is that it can help to clarify positive outcomes for prospective contributors or inhibitors and describe relationships between numerous prominent factors (O'Toole, 2016:19).
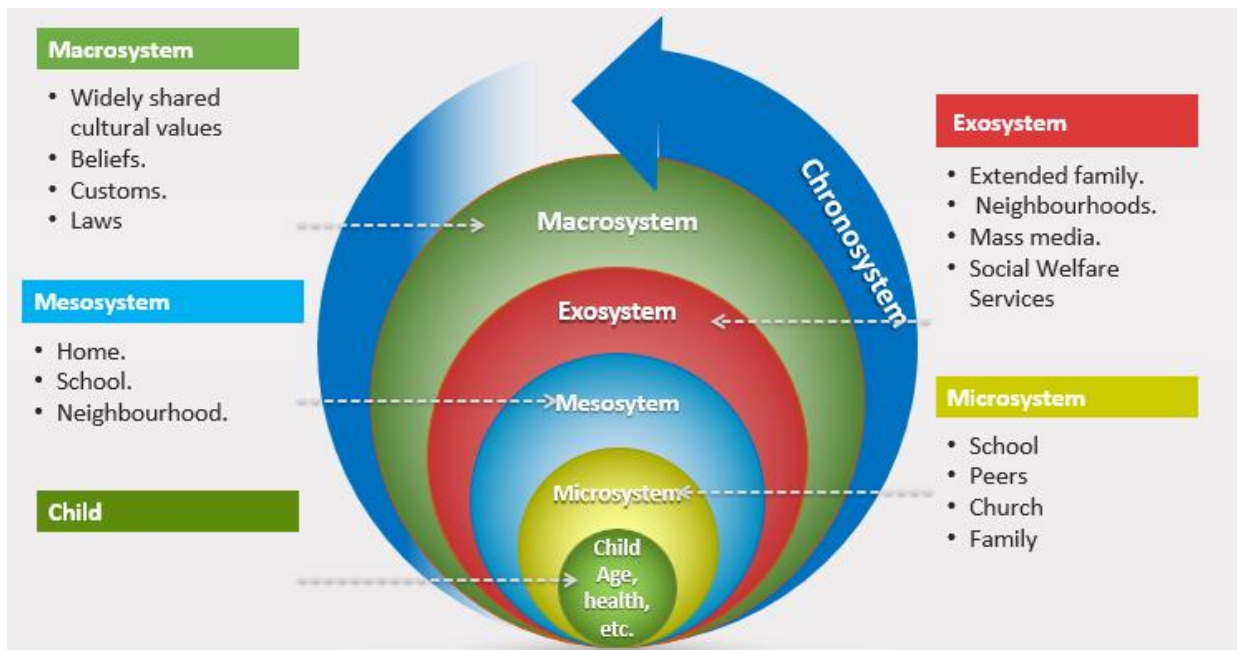
Figure 1.1:   Bio-ecological Model of Human Development

(Adapted from: Bronfenbrenner 1979)

The researcher understands that SBV is a phenomenon that has various multi-level risk factors, providing a clear reason for the prevalence of violence within schools. The bio-ecological model of human development as depicted in Figure 1.1 above highlights that a holistic approach needs to be employed in order to look at the various stakeholders, such as the child, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and chronosystem. SBV is a consequence of various factors which cannot be viewed from one side only but needs to be approached holistically. This means that when taking a look at a phenomenon like SBV, all factors, such as stakeholders within the school, family members, peers, neighbours, etc., need to be inspected.

1.1.4.2   Peace education theory

The second theory that the researcher has employed is the peace education theory. Researchers Abebe, Gbesso and Nyawalo (2006) in Teachers Without Borders state that "peace education is a unifying and comprehensive concept that seeks to promote holistic view of education. However, is extricable part of and is highly dependent of contextual specificity". On the other hand, as defined by Harris (2004:8), "originally a study of the causes of war and its prevention, peace education has since evolved into studying violence in all its manifestations and educating to counteract the war for system for the creation of a peace system".

The historical background of peace education has its origins in the academic world, including the sector of peace education. Peace education researcher Ian Harris estimates "peace education to be old as human history as beginning in the nineteenth century in Europe" (Harris, 2004:8). The founders of peace education include Maria Montessori in the mid-20th century. She associated teaching methodology with peace building, in a quest to assist the coming generation to curb the violence of autocracy (Manzo, 2018:1). Other peace educators of the time included Hebert Read, who reinvigorated making use of fine art, and Paulo Freire, who emphasised teaching the students on issues such as critical analysis and the reform of society (Yi-Huang, 2018:64). The assumption of peace education, Fountain (1999:3) posits, "is that the peaceful resolution of conflict and prevention of violence, whether interpersonal or societal, overt or structural is a positive value to be promoted on global level through education". The relevance of peace education theory in this study is that it is generally understood to provide prospects to advance the skills, knowledge, and values which are essential for the preparation of conflict resolution, communication, and collaboration concerning the matters of peace, violence, and conflict, including injustices (Harber & Sakade, 2009:174). Finally, the researcher will explore the framework of the peace education theory (see Section 3.7) which has six themes, namely: destroying the culture of war; practicing justice and compassion; fostering cultural respect, healing, and solidarity; supporting human rights and responsibilities; living in tune with the earth; and nurturing inner peace. This concept is clearly demonstrated in Addendum O.

1.2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

In this section, the researcher will focus on the research questions, as well as the study goals and objectives. These will be discussed under three different sub-headings.

1.2.1   Research questions

The research question is key in a qualitative study. It relates to a study's input and direction, defining what a study is about, and reflecting the researcher's curiosity (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013:1, 11). It further provides an inevitable and essential

starting point for all types of science understanding and growth. Despite its importance, a research question is not easily defined, and scholars do not always agree on what constitutes a research question (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010:565). The research question generally clarifies the methodological objectives and targets of the study (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti & McKinney, 2012:100). The researcher understood that the term research question refers to a detailed question(s) that directs the research process during data collection, as well as the purpose of the study, which is designed to address the research problem. For the purpose of this analysis there are two target groups and both their perceptions and experiences on SBV have been explored.

The overarching questions for this study for the two target groups were formulated as follows:

Research questions for the educators:
- What are educators' experiences of school-based violence?
- What are educators' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence?

Research questions for school social workers:
- What are school social workers' perceptions of the nature and extent of school-based violence?
- What are school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence?

1.2.2   Research goals

A research goal directs the research study and the overall results desired by the scholastic researchers (Heath, 2013:793). The aims are precise and measurable steps an individual can take to reach a target. Goals tend to be wide, insubstantial, and immaterial (Frey, 2018:740; Thomas & Hodges, 2010:38). The researcher understood the research goal to be the navigator which provides direction to the study, as well as a clear description of what the researcher envisages to attain through a particular study. In application, the research goals have been divided into

two parts: goals for the educators and goals for school social workers. Both parts are discussed below.

Research goals for the educators:
- To develop an in-depth understanding of educators' experiences of school-based violence.
- To proffer educators' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.

Research goals for the school social workers:
- To develop an in-depth understanding of school social workers' perceptions of school-based violence.
- To proffer school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.

1.2.3   Research objectives

Research objectives refer to specific statements identifying the main problems to be addressed in a study project. Generally, a research initiative has various study objectives (Thomas & Hodges, 2010:38). In addition, Polonsky and Waller (2011) posit that a research objective is a declaration of the purpose of the study; the reason why the researcher wants to conduct the research. In order to achieve the goals of the study, the objectives were broken into two parts: objectives for educators and objectives for school social workers. These objectives are discussed below.

Research objectives for educators:
- To explore and describe educators' experiences of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.
- To describe as findings educators' experiences of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.
- To draw conclusions and make recommendations about educators' experiences of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.

Research objectives for school social workers:

- To explore and describe school social workers' perceptions of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.

- To describe as findings school social workers' perceptions of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing school-based violence.

- To draw conclusions and make recommendations about school social workers' perceptions of school-based violence and their suggestions for stakeholder support to prevent school-based violence.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section, the various properties of the research approach and research design will be discussed. Research methodology is a guide to research and how it should be carried out. It is a compilation of the thorough methods applied in a research endeavour. It discusses and analyses approaches, gives insight on limitations and instruments, explains consequences and impacts, and contrasts each approach's capacity to investigate unexplored topics and phenomena (Igwenagu, 2016:5). Equally, Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013:5) seem to agree that it is a science of examining how a study is to be performed. Fundamentally, the methods with which researchers carry out their tasks of defining, clarifying, and forecasting phenomena are known as the research methodology. It is also described as the analysis of the procedures by which information is acquired (Rajasekar, et al 2015:5). The primary goal is to provide a workplan for research.

In application, research methodology is a technique to thoroughly address the research problem. It can be interpreted as the science of gaining insight into how the research was executed. The researcher has thoroughly examined both the research approach and the research design. Firstly, the researcher's understanding of the research approach and how it was applied, as well as the characteristics of the qualitative research approach, will be discussed in the sub-section below. Thereafter, the researcher will provide comprehensive details of the explorative,

descriptive, and contextual research designs, as well as discussing phenomenology.

1.3.1 Research approach

For the purpose of this research, the researcher employed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is an investigation method that relates to a wide spectrum of study traditions and studies analytical methods employed by researchers in a wide range of topic fields (Rogelberg, 2017:1288). It is an overall design that represents a study strategy or methodology (Lichtman, 2014:82). The qualitative research approach introduces different considerations than the abstract and generalised tendencies of the quantitative research approach (Dingwall & McDonnell 2015:163). Qualitative research methodology is an interpretative method that often involves studying the local, personal, and socio-political aspects of the phenomena under examination (Ponterotto, Park-Taylor & Chen, 2017:507). In addition, qualitative research includes the collection and use of non-numerical information, for example words and pictures (Blackshaw & Crawford, 2009:172).

The characteristics inherent to the qualitative research approach, as adapted from Creswell (2012:234) and Salkind (2010:400), are as follows:

- Qualitative researchers are interested in the participants' **interpretation of and meaning attached to** the phenomenon. Hence, this approach was deemed appropriate since the goal of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the meaning that the school social workers and educators attach to SBV.

- In qualitative research, the researcher is the **primary instrument** in the process of data collection. In this study, the researcher conducted interviews with both the educators and the school social workers and did not make use of other data collection methods such as questionnaires, laboratory experiments, or machines.

- Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting, not a laboratory, and involves **fieldwork.** The researcher, as the primary instrument of research, interviewed the participants in their natural setting. This refers to the fact that qualitative researchers study things as they are; they do not control the environment.

- The qualitative research approach is natural in **nature.** Qualitative research focuses on the participants' lived experiences in order to understand their behaviour and the way they talk.
- The approach to qualitative research focuses on **descriptions**. The researcher has examined SBV from the viewpoint of school social workers and educators in the Johannesburg East District, who described their experiences with SBV.
- Qualitative researchers typically collect **data from multiple sources** through interviews, observations, documents, and audio-visual information, and do not rely on a single information source.

The qualitative research approach was deemed as the most suitable for this study based on Leedy and Ormrod (2013:102), who clearly state that triangulation is about multiple data sources, all of which intersect to support a theory. Therefore, qualitative research was the most relevant theory for this specific analysis.

1.3.2   Research design

Research design is an exhaustive information collection plan for an empirical study project. It is an empirical research blueprint designed to answer study issues (Bhattacherjee 2012:35). It is also the model that gives researchers a logical framework from which to tackle and respond to the issues under study (Salkind 2010:1252; Jupp 2006:256). In addition, Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014:310) posit that a research design should indicate the original question or research problem under study, the type of information and sample required, and the strategy for assessment.

For the purpose of this study, an explorative, descriptive, and contextual designs, including phenomenology, were employed.

1.3.2.1   Explorative research design

The term explorative research design is generally defined as a provisional examination of a problem or condition to identify criteria to be further studied and, in some instances, to define the issue itself (Clow & James, 2014:27). According to Hollstein (2011:410), the explorative research design often embraces a multidisciplinary ethnographic strategy marked by the utmost transparency

regarding the subject matter and the most extensive knowledge of the phenomenon in question. This research design is usually used when there are few or no prior research studies to explain phenomena, issues, or naturally occurring processes (Godwill, 2015:16; Salkind, 2010:1254). As already indicated in the introduction, although multiple researchers have studied SBV, there seems to be a paucity of research that investigates educators' experiences and the scope of practice of school social workers (Hlatshwayo, 2018; Masinga, 2017; Musariwa, 2017).

Educators, the DoE, the parents, learners and community all have a role to play in curbing SBV (Musariwa, 2017:36, 129). However, in the study on school violence dynamics, little has been said about the role of stakeholders, particularly social workers, in curbing violence in schools (Mohapi, 2014:264). Further investigation into literature about SBV in South Africa using key words such as 'social workers' and 'stakeholders' showed little research on this topic.

1.3.2.2   *Descriptive research design*

The descriptive research design is employed to define the characteristics of a situation or phenomenon or to provide a clear description (Boudah, 2011:152). Researchers who undertake descriptive research do not seek to determine cause and effect by manipulating the subject of study. Therefore, the goal of descriptive research is to give an accurate account of a phenomenon's observations. (Godwill, 2015:17). Descriptive research enables researchers to comprehend the features of these variables among participants and to commence with examining the interactions between these variables (Tripodi & Bender, 2009:110). Descriptive research is used to interpret a group of people, a phenomenon, or an event. According to Salkind (2010:1254), It is one of the first steps in comprehending societal problems and difficulties; it specifies who is affected by the problem, how prevalent the problem is, and how old the problem has been. In application, the descriptive research design was applicable to this study since the participants' (school social workers and educators) views, perspectives, and observations were considered, and their experiences were described.

1.3.2.3   Contextual research design

Contextualising 'things' is essential to obtain a more in-depth comprehension of anything in the world (Johns, 2001:32-33). Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011:288) posit that taking the context of the research study into account leads to a better understanding of causes and relationships in order to understand how and why such behaviours occur. Rousseau and Fried (2001, in Härtel & O' Connor, 2014:419) explain that contextual research entails a strategy that incorporates the "knowledge of the study setting into the research design by linking factors, events and viewpoints". There are several types of contexts, such as the individual or community context in which the participants live and work, the research population's socio-cultural context, and the broader political, economic, or historical background that moulds the research problem. The participants are questioned through interviews and then they are observed in their working environment. In application, the contextual research design aims to explore and describe the research question within the context of suggestions for stakeholder support to address SBV from school social workers' and educators' perspectives.

A popular justification for undertaking qualitative research is to investigate the context of research problems (Hennink et al, 2011:288). The researcher examined the various contexts applicable to this study, namely, the SBV context, theoretical context, methodological context, physical context, and context of implications. The different contexts are discussed below:

● **School-based violence context**

Firstly, the violent historic legacies of apartheid have been attributed to South Africa's high prevalence of violence, it resulted in not only significant political and economic inequality, but also societal trauma caused by the forcible displacement of entire communities and the dictatorial apartheid regime and its entities' ruthless tyranny, which inevitably resulted in violent repression (Mncube & Harber, 2013:11). Secondly, there has been a resurgence of societal violence in post-apartheid South Africa, where a myriad of marches and protests concerning, amongst others, the absence of municipal service delivery and the rising cost of studying at university, often escalate into crime and violence throughout South Africa (Mothibi, Mathopo

& Mofokeng, 2017:70). Finally, Mncube and Harber (2013:12-13) in their research conclude that violence is usually seen as a needed and condoned means of resolving conflicts. Subsequently, the African upsurge of democratisation and the growth of multi-partyism resulted in the scars of the survivors of apartheid being exposed in the mid-1990s by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and many have not been healed. In addition, the reality of learners who are armed with dangerous weapons such as guns and knives entering the school premises having consumed substances such as alcohol and drugs has become part and parcel of daily school life (Mncube & Harber, 2013:1).

● **Theoretical context**

According to Shenton (2004:63), the theoretical context provides a clear and suitable description about the study. The researcher drew much from the bio-ecological perspective, which was established by the Russian-American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, and the peace education theory. The above theories were explained in Section 1.4, including the historical background, the founders, and the assumptions of each theory.

● **Physical context**

The physical context describes the physical features of the research site, such as physical layout, features, services, facilities, and closeness to facilities, cities, and highways. Photographs can also efficiently display the physical context (Shenton, 2004:73). The schools that form part of this study are located in the Johannesburg East District, which include urban, township, and suburban areas; this can be clearly seen in Addendum P. Some of the schools located in affluent areas have resources such as a neighbourhood watch, community boom gates, and area-wide surveillance cameras. The schools are in proximity to businesses and the suburbs/districts in which they are located are within the economic hub of the Gauteng Province. Most of the schools within the demarcated area of the study are located within the vicinity of clinics, police stations, and public libraries. These suburbs/districts are populated by what is known as a multi-racial population.

● **Methodological context**

The methodological context describes the environment of the interview, including where and when the interview was performed, who performed the interview, how it was performed, the language used, the time of day, and the issues or the difficulties encountered (Shenton, 2004:72). The researcher collected data through interviews and observations. The interviews were conducted in Johannesburg East District schools. The researcher interviewed and observed both the school social workers and the educators on the topic of SBV. Interviews were conducted in English, as it is the medium of instruction in most of the public schools in the Gauteng Province. The researcher interviewed the participants outside working hours utilising online platforms in order to comply with the lockdown and coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) regulations.

● **Context of implications**

Context of implications refers to the implications of the study or the value of the study, including the recommendations (Shenton, 2004:66). This study has the potential to provide suggestions for practice and professional development for school social workers, educators, as well as stakeholders within the school environment. It has the ability to strengthen the South African education system and empower the educators and school social workers with tools and strategies to curb the scourge of SBV. Various studies have been conducted on this phenomenon, however, there is dearth of knowledge on SBV with a specific focus on school social workers, educators, and stakeholders. Finally, it can contribute towards all the stakeholders working together with one common goal of curbing SBV within South African communities.

1.3.2.4   Phenomenology

The concept phenomenology aims to distinguish between the essence of the human experience and a phenomenon (Flick, 2018:94). Phenomenology is a socially constructed (meaning "value laden") instrument that offers an extra way of understanding (Slack, 2018:3). If researchers are interested in obtaining an intimate view of public policy or social interaction, phenomenology enables researchers to

experience a range of human sensations such as touch, sight, taste, smell, and sound.

Phenomenology was selected as a means of incorporating and acknowledging lived experiences, building meaning and comprehension (Pascal, Johnson, Dore & Trainor, 2011:178; Zhou, 2010:310; Simon & Goes, 2011:1). The phenomenological approach was a suitable approach since it has the ability to ensure that the researcher applies phenomenological reduction, which is a decision taken by phenomenologists to decrease their preconceptions about a certain phenomenon in the analysis of that phenomenon. In bracketing or bridling himself/herself, a researcher opens himself/herself up to the possibility of not being conflicted (Frey, 2018:1248; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:102).

Phenomenology played a vital role in assisting the researcher to bracket herself and avoid using preconceived ideas, thus allowing her to approach the study with an objective mind without taking sides. Phenomenological work relies on extracting lived experiences that contribute to a more realistic way of being in and with the environment. In that sense, phenomenology, both as a mode of philosophic research and as a research methodology, is primarily a thoughtful and concise endeavour.

1.4   RESEARCH METHODS

In this section, the researcher will discuss the research methods, namely the population, sample, sampling methods, and data collection. Each concept will be defined and explained in the researcher's own words and finally the application thereof will be provided. In the section on data collection, the researcher will also focus on the preparation and method of data collection.

Research methods refer to one of the primary frameworks which includes various types of data collection, investigation, including the interpretation that the researcher suggested for their analysis (Creswell, 2014:45; Creswell, 2012:534). There are three research methods, namely, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014:42). The researcher understands that research methods are basic

frameworks that are inclusive of the various ways of gathering and analysing data, as well as providing feedback on the analysis. Based on the type of analysis, a researcher needs to choose research methods that are suitable for the study. In application, the researcher employed the qualitative research method since it was the most suitable for this study.

1.4.1   Population and sampling

In the context of research, the concept **population** refers to all subjects or activities of some sort about which the researcher seeks understanding or data (Lavrakas, 2008:591; Daniel, 2015:514). Similarly, Allen (2017:1285) posits that a population consists of all the objects of a certain type about which researchers seek knowledge or information. The population of this research comprised two groups, namely full-time school social workers and full-time educators, all working within the Johannesburg East District. Because of the large and infinite nature of the population, it would be somewhat impossible to study the whole population the researcher was interested in; so, a sample was chosen (Gilbert, 2008:167).

A **sample** is a group of individuals from the population that meets the inclusion criteria (Salkind, 2010:1295; Frey, 2018:1442). Furthermore, Till and Matei (2016:314) and Allen (2017:1283) posit that the "sample is usually used to make an approximation of the proportions and means within the target population". The researcher understood that in research terminology a sample is a subset of a larger population of individuals, objects, or items chosen for analysis. To ensure that the research sample's findings are generalisable to the entire population, the sample must be representative of the general population.

The term **"sampling"** refers to the process of selecting a subset of a population to participate in a study. If done correctly, sampling can save money, time, and effort while producing valid, trustworthy results (Daniel, 2015:511; Daniel, 2012:1). Equally, Mujere (2016:109) and Flick (2018:87) posit that sampling is an act, method, or technique of identifying an appropriate sample or a representative part of the population for the purpose of determining the criteria or characteristics of the overall population. The two sampling techniques which were utilised in this analysis are purposive (judgement) sampling and snowball sampling. The researcher

understood that sampling refers to the process of choosing a suitable sample which represents the whole population, with a specific purpose determining the criteria.

In order to choose participants, the researcher has followed this guideline:
- The researcher firstly approached the DoE to obtain permission to conduct the study.
- Secondly, she approached the school principal of a school she selected within the Johannesburg East District and briefed him or her about the study's criteria of inclusion and exclusion, so that one suitable person meeting these criteria could be selected.
- Thirdly, the researcher interviewed the first participant and asked whether he or she knows of a colleague who meets the criteria of inclusion, whereafter a second participant was selected.

The same procedure was followed until saturation was reached.

1.4.1.1   *Purposive (Judgement) sampling*
The term purposive sampling, also referred to as judgment sampling, is explained by Emmel (2013:46) as a theoretical or purposive sampling approach that creates and tests theoretical arguments through strategic sampling methods selected to obtain the information scientists need about a universe that they defined as the study advances. In addition, it is a nonprobability sampling method in which components are chosen from the target population based on their suitability for the purposes of the research, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria (Daniel, 2012:87).

The following criteria of **inclusion** were utilised in order to select a sample of **school social workers** for the study:
- Social workers employed by the DoE.
- Social workers must be registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP).
- School social workers must be working full-time in public schools within the Johannesburg East District on a full-time basis with at least two years' working experience.
- Both male and female social workers were included.

- English needs to be the medium of instruction at the school where the social workers work.

The following criteria of **exclusion** were utilised in order to exclude certain **school social workers** from the study:

- Social workers employed by NGOs or other departments or working within the private sector.
- Social workers with less than two years' working experience.
- Social workers employed in other districts or other provinces.

Likewise, the criteria of inclusion below were used to select a sample of **educators** for the study:

- Educators must be registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE).
- Educators must be employed in the Johannesburg East District.
- The educators need to have at least two years' working experience and must be working as educators on a full-time basis.
- Educators must possess a relevant teaching qualification, such as a Bachelor of Education degree or a postgraduate diploma in teaching.
- Both male and female educators were included.
- English needs to be the medium of instruction at the school where the educators work.

The following criteria of **exclusion** were utilised in order to exclude some **educators** from the study:

- Educators not registered by the SACE.
- Educators employed by the private sector or any other sector/department other than the DoE.
- All educators not employed in the Johannesburg East District

1.4.1.2   *Snowball sampling*

Where applicable, the researcher has employed the snowball sampling technique during the research process. **Snowball sampling** is a sampling technique used by researchers to produce a pool of participants for a research study through referrals

made by individuals who share the target population's characteristics (Allen, 2017:1614; Creswell, 2012:146; Frey, 2018:1532). When interviewing the school social workers and educators, the researcher asked the participants whether they knew of another individual, either a school social worker or educator, who meets the inclusion criteria.

1.4.1.3　Sample size

Salkind (2010:1300) defines **sample size** as the number of participants. Allen (2017:3) adds that a size of the sample should be large enough to cover individuals with all relevant features, but not so large that it causes problems with the working population's feasibility. Researchers, Fusch and Ness (2015:1408) and Creswell (2012:146) state when there is enough information to reproduce the study, and there is no new information to be gathered, and further coding is no longer viable, **data saturation** has occurred**.** In application, the concept data saturation takes place when the researcher has interviewed as many participants as possible and the information from the interviews begins to repeat. When no new information emerges, data saturation has been achieved. The researcher did not determine a specific number of school social workers and educators to interview, but rather continued interviewing participants until the point of data saturation was reached.

1.4.2　Data collection

The concept **data collection** is defined by Flick (2018:7) as "the selection and production of linguistic (or visual) material for analysing and understanding phenomena, social fields, subjective and collective experiences and the related meaning-making processes". Furthermore, "qualitative research is also used to uncover trends in thought and opinions and to dive deeper into a problem by studying an individual or a group, usually using unstructured or semi-structured techniques" (Byrne, 2017:2). According to Creswell (2009:185-188), in qualitative research information is obtained through the use of face-to-face interviews, observation, documents, and audio-visual images.

1.4.2.1　Method of data collection

There are various methods of data collection, namely interviews, focus groups, and participants' observations (Flick, 2018:231). To collect data for this study, the

researcher used semi-structured interviews with the help of open-ended questions from an interview guide. **Semi-structured interviews** are a qualitative method of data collection. They start with a set of consistent questions that are answered by various participants. This technique could also be explained as a structured conversation that is driven by updated data as the interactive dialogue unfolds (Ahlin, 2019:1; Salkind, 2010:4).

The following interview guide, consisting of questions for school social workers and educators respectively, was used for the purposes of this study:

a) School social workers' interview guide

1. What are your perceptions of the nature of school-based violence?
2. Tell me about your perceptions of the victims of school-based violence and the perpetrators.
3. Tell me about your perceptions of the causes of school-based violence.
4. How does your school manage school-based violence?
5. How does stakeholder involvement manage school-based violence?
6. What are your suggestions as a school social worker for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence?

b) Educators' interview guide

1. What are your experiences on the nature of school-based violence?
2. Tell me about your experiences with the victims of school-based violence and the perpetrators.
3. Tell me about your experiences of the causes of school-based violence.
4. How does your school manage school-based violence?
5. How does stakeholder involvement manage school-based violence?
6. What are your suggestions as an educator for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence?

1.4.2.2 Interviewing skills

Interviewing skills included an enormous number of non-verbal elements in rapport construction, process management, and power relationships. Therefore, interviewing procedures occur at several levels: **physical** and **non-verbal**, **cognitive**, **emotional**, and **intuitive** (Chrzanowska, 2002:106; Lichtman, 2014:247-252). The art of interviewing involves being transparent about the types of questions proposed and eventually as few closed-ended questions should be asked as possible. The researcher made use of both **open-ended questions** (descriptive in

nature) and **closed-ended questions** (biographical questions). The researcher also made use of **prompts** to demonstrate that she was **listening** in order to encourage the participants. Another skill was **echoing**, which was merely using a critical term or sentence that the participant had used in the form of a question. The researcher also made use of **paraphrasing** and **reflecting** in order to provide reassurance and support to the participants. She planned to utilise **summarising** in order to make the interviewee feel that their point had been made and understood, if she got stuck during the interview, but the need for this never arose. The researcher often used **clarifying** to examine the concepts that needed clarity (Lichtman, 2014:252; Creswell, 2012:220; Chrzanowska, 2002:106). Clarifying includes asking questions or occasionally summarising what the participant has said. The researcher asked for clarification in cases where she could not understand or make sense of the participants' responses.

The researcher made use the skill of **observation** during the interviews. The term observation refers to the procedure of collecting initial information through observing individuals and places at a study site. Observation has both benefits and shortcomings. The benefits of observation include recording first-hand information as it happens in the natural settings of the participants in order to study this information (Creswell, 2012:213). In addition, Flick (2018:314) states that social researchers usually employ the method of observation with the primary goal of gathering data from the participants. This involves observing these individuals in their daily lives or in their workplace. Equally, Byrne (2017:1) and Salkind (2010:953) state that observations can be structured or unstructured. They can be applied in both the qualitative and quantitative setting. In application, the researcher observed both the school social workers and the educators in their natural setting, namely the schools at which they work, and recorded the various aspects of social behaviour displayed by the participants. The researcher collected data in a systematic manner, making use of a previously tried and tested coding schedule.

1.4.2.3   *Preparation for data collection*

In order to prepare participants for data collection, the researcher ensured that the participants received consent letters days before the main interview took place through Google Forms, and not face-to-face as previously stated (see Addendum A

and B). The researcher then ensured that the participants gave their consent to participate in the study and that they understood the terms and conditions of the study.

During preparation for data collection, the researcher undertook the following steps (refer to Addendum A & B):

- The researcher explained the goals and objectives of the research study to the participants and ensured that they understood that they can refrain from participating should they wish to do so.
- An explanation was provided to the participants regarding how they were selected to be part of the study and that a colleague had suggested them as a possible participant.
- In addition, the researcher explained why she needed them to participate in this study.
- The questions in the interview guide were sent to the participants through Google Forms days before the actual interview took place.
- Information on the time of the interview and the expected duration of the interview was provided to the participants prior to the interview. The venue was no longer applicable, since the interviews were conducted online.
- The participants were made aware that the interviews were going to be recorded for the purpose of transcribing the interviews and that their consent is required to do this. They were required to complete a consent form in order to demonstrate that they are aware of the recording and that they agree to participate (Addendum C & D). Moreover, research ethics such as informed consent, management of information, confidentiality, and anonymity, was explained to the participants before they agreed to participate.

The researcher obtained **permission** from the DoE, Johannesburg East District, in order to conduct the research at schools within this district. The process involved sending an email to the DoE (see Addendum H). Over and above obtaining permission from the DoE, the researcher also approached the school **gatekeepers**, namely the SGBs and school principals, to ask for permission to interview educators and school-social workers (see Addendum I-K).

1.4.2.4 *Preparation of the researcher as the main instrument of data collection*

The researcher prepared herself as the main instrument of data collection in the following manner:

- In qualitative research, the researcher plays a crucial role. Data is collected, settings are prepared, and realities are built through the eyes and ears of the researcher. In addition, the researcher analyses the information by means of an iterative method between gathered and evaluated information. The qualitative researcher interprets the information and provides the meaning thereof (Lichtman, 2014:43). In application, the researcher took the data gathered from the online interviews she conducted with both the educators and the school social workers, evaluated it, and provided the meaning thereof.
- Reflexivity requires the researcher must be able to view things from the perspective of a participant in order to grasp what is important to the people taking part in the research study; their objectives and values, as well as their concerns and weaknesses. Researchers also need to be able to "see themselves as they might see them – as representatives of the respected organizations, as having access to knowledge and resources, and so on" (Iphofen & Tolich, 2018:267). The researcher ensured that she made use of 'reflexivity' throughout the study.
- The researcher began by reading up on qualitative interviewing and also looked for YouTube videos on how to interview participants.
- The researcher engaged in role play with her colleagues in order to prepare.
- The researcher undertook a pilot study before conducting the main study (Salkind, 2010:1033).

1.4.3   Pilot study

A **pilot study** is the 'dress rehearsal' of the study. It includes the evaluation of the interviews, administration process, and research process. It plays a very important role in highlighting the problem areas of the study and points out whether the participants are understanding the questions accurately (Ruel, Wagner & Gillespie 2016:101; Willoughby, Brickman, Niu & Liu, 2017:5; Tully & Boudewyn, 2018:9). Salkind (2010:1033) explain that pilot study is a test run for a larger research project

or a pre-test of a research equipment or process. According to Frey (2018:1254), "ideally, a pilot study should be conducted using participants who resemble the targeted study population." In addition, Creswell (2012:390) refers to an interview process as the process where a researcher makes various alterations to the instrument based on the reactions of a small number of individuals who have already finished and assessed the study tool. In this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study with one school social worker and one educator who fit the criteria of inclusion of the main study. The pilot study assisted the researcher in testing the practicality of the main study, as well as determining the feasibility thereof. It also helped the researcher to learn more about interviewing skills, which are needed in the main research study. The two individuals who participated in the pilot study were not included in the main study.

1.4.4　Method of data analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is the key phase. It is by far the most complicated and enigmatic of all stages of a qualitative project. Irrespective of the data, its assessment plays a very important role in data analysis (Flick, 2014:3). In addition, Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014:239) state that data analysis relates to the procedures connected to organising the information and the comprehension of the multiple information sets that may be gathered during the research process as a basis for further action and theory building. Similarly, Creswell (2012:21) states that data analysis occurs concurrently with other sections of the qualitative research, such as data collection and taking notes for the research findings.

In **application,** the researcher analysed the data collected from the interviews into two categories, namely themes and sub-themes, with the aid of a coding system in accordance with the **stepwise framework,** as adapted from Tesch (Creswell, 2012:21; Creswell, 2014:186).

- The researcher transcribed the interviews that she recorded. Once this process was completed, she read through them all in order to gain an understanding of them. She read through the various transcripts with care and made notes.

- One document was chosen; one which was fascinating, or brief, or readily available. The researcher went through it, while asking herself what it was about.

- When the researcher finished this work for multiple people, she generated a list of all themes, grouped related topics together, and organized them into columns labelled "main topics," "unique topics," and "leftovers".

- For each of the identified topics, the researcher found a suitable acronym.

- The researcher decided on the most relevant wording for the topics and converted them in accordance with the themes or categories.

- A final decision was made on the abbreviation for each individual theme or category and the codes were alphabetised.

- The researcher assembled the information or material that was linked to each theme or category in one place and a preliminary analysis was conducted.

- Data was assembled and categorised accordingly.

- Existing data was recoded, and the researcher reported on the research findings.

1.4.5   Method of data verification

The researcher employed strategies suggested by Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen and Kyngäs (2014:1), Gunawan (2015:10), Hadi and Closs (2016:641), and Shenton (2004:63) to ensure trustworthiness in this qualitative research study.

The concept **trustworthiness** relates to the underpinning idea used in qualitative research to express the processes used by academics to guarantee the quality, rigor, and credibility of the research when (re)establishing the consistency of the researcher's epistemological and ontological foundations with the layout, execution, and articulation of the research study (Frey, 2018:1728). Trustworthiness criteria offer a good basis for assessing the rigor, validity, and systematic quality of the techniques used and the results of qualitative studies (Lincoln, 2004:1144).

Trustworthiness is portioned into four quality criteria which will be discussed below, namely, credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Elo et al, 2014:1).

1.4.5.1   Credibility

Credibility pertains to the degree to which a research account is credible and appropriate with regard to the level of engagement between the participants and the researcher (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010:243). In addition, according to Shenton (2004:63), one of the main criteria mentioned by positivists is internal validity, which seeks to guarantee that the research paper measures what it originally intended to measure (Shenton 2004:63; Gunawan, 2015:10). In order to ensure that the phenomenon has been truthfully captured, the researcher made use of the following requirements of credibility during the study, as adapted from Shenton (2004:64-65): the development of early familiarity with the culture of the participants/organisations, triangulation, tactics to ensure honesty in participants during data collection, reflexivity, and peer scrutiny. These requirements are discussed below:

● **The development of early familiarity with the culture of the participants or organisations** before the first conversations for data collection take place can be achieved by consulting suitable papers and through preliminary visits to the institutions themselves (Shenton, 2004:65). The researcher ensured that before the initial data collection took place, she familiarised herself with both sets of participants, namely educators and school social workers, as well as the organisation, namely the DoE (Johannesburg East District). In order to ensure the credibility of this study, the researcher ensured that premature contact with the various schools was developed, including keeping prolonged engagements with the participants, the schools, and the organisation through online meetings to adhere to lockdown regulations.

● **Triangulation** can be accomplished by the participation of participants within several organisations in order to decrease the impact of specific local variables peculiar to one organisation on the research. The researcher interviewed participants from various schools in the Johannesburg East District in order to comply with the criteria of site triangulation. The researcher further interviewed various participants, such as educators and school social workers, in order to reinforce Dervin's idea of 'circling reality' (Shenton, 2004:65). This was used in sense-making as a suitable method of gaining various perspectives in order to improve them and formulate a more established perspective of reality.

- **Tactics to ensure honesty in participants during data collection.** Specifically, every individual approached was provided with the opportunity to refuse to participate in the project in order to guarantee that the information collection sessions involved only those who were truly prepared to participate (Shenton, 2004:65). This in turn ensured honesty from the participants during data collection.

- **Reflexivity** is the consciousness that the beliefs, background, and previous experience of the researcher with the phenomenon may have an impact on the research procedure (Cope, 2014:90). It played a very important role in ensuring that the criteria of the researcher were part and parcel of the study, as she was the primary instrument of data collection. Researchers must continuously be objective in the process of research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:120). Throughout the current study, the researcher exercised bracketing in order to remove what is known, avoid being biased, and approach the phenomenon with a clear mind.

- **Peer scrutiny** of the study project. Morse (2015:1220) states that possibilities for scrutiny should be appreciated by colleagues, peers and scholars, including reviews at any presentations or workshops that are held during the research phase. The researcher attended various workshops that were provided by the College of Human Sciences, the Department of Social Work, and the Department of Graduate studies in order to gain feedback and reviews from various scholars and peers.

1.4.5.2 *Dependability*

This can be accomplished when another researcher agrees with the decision-making path at each point of the study process. Through the researcher's process and descriptions, a study would be considered reliable if the findings of the study were repeated with similar participants under similar conditions and similar conclusions were reached (Cope, 2014:89; Connelly, 2016:435). Furthermore, Shenton (2004:63) asserts that dependability pertains to the cohesion of the data over time and the circumstances of the research. In order to satisfy the requirements of reliability, the researcher employed the qualitative research method for the study and the description of the path at each point. The researcher employed triangulation methods and included a detailed description of the research methodology employed in order to make provision for the research to be repeated.

1.4.5.3 Transferability

The essence of transferability is the degree to which the results are beneficial to persons in other settings. It differs from other dimensions of the research in that the reader determines how the findings are relevant to their situations (Shenton, 2004:63; Cope, 2014:89; Connelly, 2016:435). Moreover, the researcher has allowed background information to be included in order to establish the context of the research. The researcher has also provided a full description of the subject in question in order to allow comparisons to be made.

1.4.5.4 Confirmability

The concept confirmability refers to objectivity in science and includes having an audit trail, which allows any individual to follow the process step-by-step through the resolutions and the processes as described in the study (Shenton, 2004:72; Connelly, 2016:435; Flick, 2018:35). On the other hand, Cope (2014:89) posits that confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to show that the information represents the participants' point of view and not the researcher's point of view. In order to reduce the effect of researcher bias, the researcher employed triangulation. The concept triangulation included "the researcher taking different perspectives on an issue under study or more generally in answering" (Flick, 2018:532). In explaining methods of triangulation, the researcher began by interviewing school social workers (Approach 1) and thereafter the researcher interviewed the educators (Approach 2). The school social workers and the educators were both interviewed in a systematic way in the following manner:

- The researcher defined and explained the methodological setting of their experiences (school social workers and educators) of SBV.
- The researcher was not able to conduct the interviews in an office environment, which would have encouraged the school social workers and educators to express their views more freely. Instead, the interviews were conducted online, which meant that the participants and the researcher were in separate rooms.
- Triangulation allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of the way SBV shaped the experiences of the educators and the school social workers.

- The researcher admitted her beliefs and assumptions in the study. The researcher has also recognised the limitations of the study, including the impact they had on the study.

1.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The term ethics can be defined as "a practical science focused on how researchers put values in action" (Brydon-Miller, Aranda & Stevens, 2015:596). According to Iphofen and Tolich (2018:21), "there are many ethical values, but discussions of social research ethics tend to focus on a relatively small number that are judged to have central importance in the research context, in particular: minimizing harm, protecting privacy, and respecting autonomy." In addition, "ethical behaviour helps protect individuals, communities, and environments and offers the potential to increase the sum of good in the world" (Israel & Hay, 2012:501).

In conducting the research and reporting the findings in the final phase of the research interviewing process, the researcher adhered to the following ethical considerations, which are individually discussed below: informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, management of information, and debriefing of participants.

1.5.1   Informed consent

The researcher described what the study was about to participants and obtained their informed consent before they became involved in the research process (Flick, 2018:238). Informed consent is a legally binding agreement made by participants to engage in studies, having been fully warned of prospective advantages, hazards, and study involvement processes and/or activities (Allen, 2017:706; Frey, 2018:822; Iphofen & Tolich, 2018:122). In application, the researcher ensured that each participant was fully aware that they are participating in the study voluntarily and that they can terminate their involvement whenever they wish. The researcher provided them with a comprehensive consent form which detailed all the aspects related to the study (see Addendum A & B).

1.5.2   Confidentiality

According to Sieber and Tolich (2013:457), the confidentiality agreement between a researcher and subject is part of informed consent. In addition, Gubrium *et al* (2012:457) state that confidentiality means making sure that no other individual except the researcher is aware of who participated in the study. Moreover, Byrne (2017:1) states that in the field of social sciences there is a main standard that offers protection and emphasises that individuals have a right to concealment. In application, the researcher became a confidant to the participants, namely the school social workers and the educators. The researcher ensured that the identifying details of the participants do not appear in the study. The researcher also ensured that all the people who worked with her adhered to research ethics. Confidentiality was adhered to during all the stages of this study.

1.5.3   Anonymity

Anonymity refers to ethical practices intended to safeguard the privacy of human participants while gathering, analysing, and reporting information (Allen, 2017:227). Moreover, anonymity refers to safeguarding the identity of a participant in the study or the site (Mills et al, 2010:23; Carroll, 2019). In addition, Wallace (2010:23) explains that anonymity simply refers to safeguarding the participants' identifying details. In application, the researcher ensured that the participants' information was protected during the data collection process. Identifying details of the participants, their place of work, and other information that could identify them were not included in the report in order to meet the criteria of anonymity. The researcher planned to ensure that the individuals assisting her understood ethics and adhered to anonymity, should she require assistance during the research process. However, the researcher did not require assistance to complete the research study.

1.5.4   Management of information

The management of information played a very important role in the protection of the data collected. According to the researcher Schwandt (in Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013:275), management of information refers to a designated framework for systemising, classifying, and filing materials to make them effectively recoverable and duplicable. In addition, Williams (2015:110) states that an easy system of data

management may only involve establishing files that represent the project phases and the final report headings.

The researcher managed the information in the following manner:

- Materials such as video recordings, transcripts, and notes were always kept in a locked safe.
- The participants were made aware that the video recordings, transcripts, and notes will only be kept for the purpose of the research and that the material will be discarded as soon as it safe to do so.
- Identifying details of the participants, such as names, names of schools, or any other information that can identify the participants, will not be made available in the study.

1.5.5 Debriefing of participants

The term debriefing of participants refers to notifying the participants about the plans of the research study in which they participated. In the process, researchers disclose any deception, including the reasons why such deception occurred (Allen, 2017:356). Salkind (2010:334) states that debriefing is the procedure of providing the participants with supplementary information about the study in which they participated at the end of their contribution to the research. In addition, Frey (2018:467) states that debriefing refers to affording the participants the chance to acquire information about the type of research and the operations employed, as well as clearing up any misunderstandings that they might have.

The researcher arranged with a counselling psychologist to be on standby throughout the research process to conduct debriefing sessions should the need arise. This arrangement was made in writing with the concerned professional (see Addendum N. The three main functions of debriefing are **ethical**, **educational**, and **methodological** (Allen, 2017:357). In application, the researcher ensured that all the participants were debriefed after an analysis had taken place, if they so wished.

1.6   CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The salient concepts that were applicable to this study will be identified and individually defined in this section.

1.6.1   School social worker

According to the School Social Work Association of America ([sa]), school social workers:

> …are professional and/or trained mental health providers who work with a variety of students, families, and communities. They enhance strong academic and behavioural results by promoting a safe and fair school climate and culture. School social workers work with students and community resources to help them achieve their full potential.

In this study, this term was inclusive of the school social workers who are working in public schools in the Johannesburg East District (see Addendum P). The school social workers needed to have a minimum of two years' working experience. The school social workers needed to have at least a postgraduate diploma in teaching or a bachelor's degree in social work and be registered with the SACSSP.

1.6.2   Educator

The concept educator has been defined by the South African Council for Educators Act 31 of 2000 (South Africa, 2000b) as "any person referred to in section 3 and who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and educational psychological services, at an institution". An educator is also defined as "a person who educates, trains or instructs" by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (c2019: sv "educator"). The researcher was in agreement with the SACE and applied the definition as outlined by the SACE, since it included the educators and other psychological services within the school environment. This definition seemed to be inclusive of all the participants of this study. The words 'educator' and 'teacher' were used interchangeably in order to refer to any person as mentioned in the Act (South Africa, 2000b: section 3) who

teaches, educates, trains, or provides professional educational services, including psycho-social services and administrative staff working within the school.

1.6.3   School-based violence

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2014:82) defines SBV as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, (against oneself), another person, or against group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm maldevelopment or deprivation". However, the SACE (2011:6) further explains that this definition is unable to capture the complexity of the problem, since "violence in the school context can range from mental or psychological to physical forms of violence". On the other hand, researchers Gopal and Collings (2017:1) posit that school violence can be defined as violence that is experienced either at school or while the learners are travelling to or from school, and it can become an obstacle to school attendance. It was interesting to observe how various authors use the terms 'school-based violence', 'school violence', and 'violence'. In this study the various terms were used interchangeably.

1.6.4   Prevention

Researchers McCave and Rishel (2011:227) posit that the primary objective of prevention is to prevent the main problems people experience. Prevention usually happens before a problem can be noticed. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (c2019: sv "prevention") defines prevention as "the action of keeping from happening or making impossible and anticipated event or intended act". For the purpose of this research, prevention refers to the prevention strategies that all the stakeholders such as parents, the SGB, SMTs, educators, school social workers, NGOs, and the DoE can use in order to curb SBV. All of these definitions were applicable to this study, since they seem to reach a consensus about what prevention is.

1.6.5   Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment is defined as (Veriava, Thom & Hodgson, 2017:298):

> Any intentional act of punishment against a student that causes pain or bodily harm. Spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling, or smacking

a student with a hand or other object are examples of this. Forcefully denying or restraining a pupil, forcing a learner to exercise, or hurling objects such as a board duster.

Equally, corporal punishment is the deliberate use of physical force to inflict pain, but not to harm, with the purpose of modifying and regulating a child's conduct (Eckes, Russo & Osborne, 2012:109).

On 29 November 2018, the Constitutional Court heard a matter between FOR SA and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and others, and determined the following (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 2019):

> …minor – assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm – common law defense of reasonable and moderate chastisement best interest of the child was found to be inconsistent with sections 10 and 12 (1) (c) of the Constitution. Therefore, Mogoeng in Freedom of Religion South Africa v Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and others [2019] ZACC34 argues that the "history and nature of parent's legal authority to inflict reasonable and moderate corporal punishment upon their children deserves some attention". The Constitutional Court concluded and acknowledged that common law defense of sensible and moderate parental chastisement is shifting from the provisions of Sections 10 and 12 (1) (c) of the Constitution.

This historic ruling was received by South Africans with mixed feelings and has set a new precedence which can have implications on the Children's Act 38 of 2005.

1.6.6 Stakeholder

In education, the concept **stakeholder** refers to any individual who has an interest in the wellbeing and achievement of a school, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials, such as school board members, city councillors, and state representatives (*Oxford English Dictionary,* c2019, sv "stakeholder"). A stakeholder is further referred to as "a person, a group or an institution that performs a certain task. A stakeholder may be actively doing something or may have an untapped potential to perform a function" (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:21). The significance of creating partnerships in order to overcome crime and violence has been stated by many stakeholders. The recommended collaborations are different in nature but are also inclusive of the

necessity to work together with the police and the community to decrease violence and support an environment that is favourable to welfare and learning (Magau, 2001:49).

In this study, stakeholders refer to the following: educators, learners, the SGBs, SMTs, school-based support teams (SBSTs), district-based support teams (DBSTs), unions, the government, NGOs, city councillors, and the community at large. Stakeholder support can function within the national, regional, and district laws, as well as within the policies of the DBE. In conclusion, the researcher has analysed the importance of the stakeholders and how their participation has assisted in curbing SBV.

1.6.7   Experience

The concept experience refers to expertise or pragmatic wisdom derived from what someone has witnessed, encountered, or endured (*American Heritage Dictionary,* 2016, sv "experience"; *Oxford South African School Dictionary* 2010, sv "experience"). Experience is also defined as a skill or knowledge acquired out of such expertise by the *Oxford Primary Dictionary* (Rennie, 2018, sv "experience"). The researcher understood that the term experience in this analysis referred to the expertise and pragmatic wisdom of the school social workers and educators. Furthermore, the researcher drew from the pragmatic wisdom of these experts on SBV in order to develop stakeholder support for curbing SBV.

1.6.8   Suggestion

The term suggestion is defined as wanting to share the sentiments of others. It is the approval of the insights of others (*Oxford English Dictionary,* c2019, sv "suggestion"). The term suggestion is also defined as a plan or a concept that someone genuinely believes someone else has to discuss and take into account (*Oxford South African School Dictionary,* 2010, sv "suggestion"). For the intent of this study, suggestion refers to the insights of the professionals which were discussed and taken into consideration. All of the above definitions seem to capture what the term suggestion refers to and all were relevant to this study. The suggestions of school social workers and educators were taken into consideration.

1.7   STRUCTURE/FORMAT

The final report has been structured into six chapters. An outline of these chapters is provided below:

Chapter One: The first chapter has provided the general introduction, including the background of the study, with particular focus on the following: introduction and problem formulation; problem statement; rationale for the study; research question, including the goals and objectives; research approach and design; ethical considerations; clarification of key concepts; and the comprehensive plan of the research study.

Chapter Two: The second chapter will provide an overview of what stakeholder support for SBV is. The types of stakeholders within the Johannesburg East District will be listed, and SBV will be discussed as seen by school social workers and educators. In addition, the prevention strategies to curb SBV are mentioned, as well as the nature, effects, and causes of SBV.

Chapter Three: This chapter details the implementation of the qualitative research approach. The researcher also discusses the reinforcement on the usage of the qualitative research process; the implementation of the research questions, goals, and objectives; the implementation of the research methodology; the implementation of the method of data analysis, including the implementation of data verification; the implementation of the ethical considerations; and the implementation of the peace education theory.

Chapter Four: This chapter will provide the abridged research findings and the literature control for educators.

Chapter Five: This chapter will provide the abridged research findings and literature control for school social workers.

Chapter Six: The last chapter addresses the relevant results and key findings of the research study. The researcher will also focus on the recommendations and future research.

1.8   DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section the researcher will provide a brief outline of the way the results will be disseminated.

The concept **dissemination** refers to a deliberate procedure that encompasses consideration of the target audience, including the settings in which the research findings are to be established, communicating as well as interrelating with the broader policy and servicing the target audience in a manner that expedites research acceptance in the decision-making process and in practice (Wilson, Petticrew, Calnan & Nazareth, 2010:91). Furthermore, researchers and research institutions have a responsibility to disseminate scientific knowledge to a broader audience outside the research community. Another primary objective for the dissemination of results is to fulfil the intellectual inquisitiveness of the general public, since it is important for the proper functioning of a democratic society (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2019).

The research findings will mainly be presented in the form of a dissertation. The researcher plans to also publish an article in an accredited journal, as it is one of the requirements.

Stakeholder support for SBV will inform practice pertaining to school social workers and how they can curb SBV and will also inform practice for the stakeholders as to how they can contribute to better support the schools. The researcher will provide a copy of this report to the DBE, as well as to the SACSSP, with suggestions for the practice of school social workers and stakeholder support to address SBV.

In the following chapter, an overview of stakeholder support and the causes, impact, and the characteristics of SBV will be provided. From the perspective of school social workers and educators, the different kinds of stakeholders within Gauteng will

be identified and SBV will be addressed. Alternative prevention strategies for curbing SBV, including the existence, outcomes, and triggers of SBV, will be discussed.

CHAPTER TWO:
THE DEFINITION OF STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT, TYPES & PROCESSES INCLUDING THEIR ROLES IN SBV

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This segment simply focuses on the brief description of what a stakeholder is and what it entails, as well as the roles of stakeholders in school-based violence (SBV) prevention programs. The researcher will also zoom into other issues, such as the prevention strategies that can be employed to curb it.

The researcher will then, therefore, provide a synopsis of what stakeholder support is and its role in this analysis, including how it was implemented and how it can be applied by the various stakeholders within the DoE, private sector, public sector, and any other organization with an interest in stakeholder support, including a particular emphasis on the school environment.

2.2 WHAT IS STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT?

Stakeholder support from the frame of reference of the researcher refers to the various people who have an interest in the school, such as internal stakeholders, external stakeholders, governmental organisations, NGOs, state-owned organisations, and parastatals.

According to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (c2021, sv "stakeholder"), the term stakeholder refers to a person who is an important part of the organisation or of society because they have responsibilities within it and receive advantages from it. In addition, a stakeholder could be a person or group who could be affected by the decisions of the organisation or its objectives. Stakeholders include hundreds of different people, neighbourhoods, institutions, groups, and organizations, as well as environment and the society. (McGrath & Whitty, 2017:722). On the other hand, according to Benn, Abratt and O'Leary (2016:1), there is a fair amount of agreement as to who generally qualifies as potential or

actual stakeholders. To have good stakeholder support therefore means all individuals or groups who may be affected by the organisation interact with each other, exchange their views and plans, and solve challenges together to reach a common goal.

A holistic view is required when considering who qualifies as a stakeholder and determining the influence, they hold to support the prevention of SBV. For example, Karikari, Brown, Ashirifi and Storms (2020:63) mention that bus drivers and taxi drivers are rarely mentioned or included as key stakeholders when developing programmes to curb SBV. Therefore, violence perpetrated in the school busses or in taxis is often ignored. Social workers are also clustered with school staff and as such their unique experiences and knowledge are under-utilised. Therefore, involving all stakeholders and integrating different viewpoints will help to create viable solutions to prevent SBV (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Hymel & Swearer, 2015; Kim 2017). Authors of the study Karimi, Mulwa, and Kyalo (2020:14) also state that when all parties are involved, much of the information exchanged and methods used are appropriate as they were produced by the same individual persons.

Based on the above explanations, the researcher agrees with the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* that stakeholders refer to the individuals who play a very important role in the running of the organisation and who gain from the institution. Roberts and Simpson (2016:1086) explain that stakeholders are considered as giving valuable knowledge about the way education policy turns into practice. Furthermore, Kaptein and Van Tulder (2017:208) explain that having a dialogue with stakeholders encourages transparency, increases the responsiveness of an organisation to its environment, and improves the understanding of the organisation's dilemma.

Langley *et al* (2013:260) suggest that collaboration between mental health practitioners, such as social workers and educators, is important. However, knowing what factors are key to the sustainability of a well-functioning school requires engaging all stakeholders. A collaborative approach encourages involvement and psychoeducational assistance and techniques that are supported by all stakeholders, including parental figures, teachers, and the general public. For

example, school social workers may provide teachers and parents with an ongoing update of how stress and anxiety can influence the performance and learning ability of students and provide them with ways to **support** the students in the class and at home. Research by Gcelu (2019:5) shows that stakeholder collaboration enhances teamwork and assists parents with knowledge on how to guide and handle learners at home. This is now more important than ever, as the research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unusually high prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression in high school students, which is more severe in girls than in boys (Aiyer, Surani, Gill, Ratnani & Sunesara, 2020).

This study applies Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems (eco-systems) theory to establish an understanding of SBV based on critical perspectives. Bronfenbrenner's eco-systems theory suggests that the interplay of aspects across various environments creates a foundation for understanding human behaviour, namely the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem covers primary or direct experiences and relationships, such as what happens within the family of an individual. The mesosystem relates to interconnections between many microsystems, such as how a school can be related to a family.

The exosystem relates to a sphere in which the person does not have direct involvement, but the person is still deeply influenced by the activities that happen there. For example, the character of the community and school urbanisation. Another indirect or distant domain that often has a profound effect on a person is the macrosystem. The macrosystem involves aspects such as politics, socio-cultural norms, economic systems, and religion (Bronfenbrenner 1979; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016). For example, in South Africa, school violence violates the constitutional right of learners to "freedom and security of the person, which includes the right to be free from all forms of violence" (South Africa 1996b). Factors such as parent-teacher/staff relationships, school-community partnerships, legislation, and regulatory provisions, and even the socioeconomic circumstances of families are related to school violence through the lens of the eco-systems context (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Hymel & Swearer, 2015).

In application, the researcher sees stakeholder support as both the primary, secondary, internal, and external stakeholders. The level of their influence in the organisation is also considered, as it is important when classifying the stakeholders. This can be best explained through the various types of stakeholders, and this will be further elaborated on in the next section of this analysis.

2.2.1   Types of stakeholders

It is important to understand who the key stakeholders are in the school environment. A consideration to draft a stakeholder policy which will list all stakeholders and further provide guidance is important. The school should also develop a responsibility matrix which will ensure that there is a clear guiding document explaining accountability and the direction to be taken. Internal and external audiences should be identified to ensure efficient communication with all key stakeholders. Researchers Wagner Mainardes, Alves and Raposo (2012:1866) came out with a new model which proposes two types of stakeholders, each with three classification options, as demonstrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Stakeholder types

Stakeholder type	Classification options
Expectant stakeholders (have two features with more active postures)	*Dominant stakeholder* – Individuals or a group with influence over the organisation, backed by power and legitimacy. Accordingly, they demand and get a great deal of attention from the organisation. *Dangerous stakeholder* – when power and urgency occur within an organisation, but the organisation is confronted by coercive stakeholders. The coercive (and possibly aggressive) stakeholder can pose a danger to the organisation. *Dependant stakeholder* – Individuals or groups who carry the characteristics of urgency and authority, but who nonetheless rely on other stakeholders for their complaints to be accepted.
Latent stakeholders (have only one feature, and get little attention from the organisation)	*Dormant stakeholder* – individuals or groups with the power to enforce their wills on the organisation, but who have no power or urgency. Therefore, their strength falls into the hands of disuse with little or no continuous contact with the organisation. Nonetheless, the organisation management needs to be aware, maintain control of its stakeholders, and assess individuals and groups with authority but who lack the capacity to impact the organisation. *Discretionary stakeholder* – Individuals and groups with authority, but without the capacity and little need to influence the organisation.

> *Demanding stakeholder* – with no power or authenticity, and no demands, but needs monitoring as they have the potential to obtain a second attribute.

Adapted from: Wagner Mainardes et al (2012:1866)

Researchers Ma, Chan and Loke (2018:232) explain that there are four types of stakeholders, namely, the primary stakeholder, secondary stakeholder, internal stakeholder, and external stakeholder. The researcher will elaborate on each of these types of stakeholders below and provide a clear description of each stakeholder and how they apply to this study. The types of stakeholders that are within an organisation were also discussed by Wagner Mainardes et al (2012:1861) and are as follows:

- **Primary stakeholders**

   In this study, the primary stakeholders are the learners, educators, school social workers, SMTs, SGBs, and/or parents. Moreover, Benn et al (2016:5) define a primary stakeholder as someone or something that has a stake in the firm and has the ability to either affect the firm or be affected by the firm. The researcher also sees these stakeholders as dominant stakeholders.

- **Secondary stakeholders**

   Secondary stakeholders, as per Benn et al (2016:2), are stakeholders who impact the corporate entity, or are impacted or directly impacted by the corporation, but are not involved in transactions with the corporation and are not necessary for its continued existence. Secondary stakeholders in this analysis include NGOs and the private sector.

- **Internal stakeholders**

   Those persons or groups involved in the organisation itself, or within the school, including staff, volunteers, directors/owners, and key advisors. Co-producers of an organisation might be included here, such as when various organisations combine their efforts to build an organisation (Benn *et al,* 2016:2). The researcher is of the view that the term 'primary stakeholder' and 'internal stakeholder' can be used interchangeably, as they refer to one and

the same thing. Internal stakeholders include the learners, educators, school social workers, SMTs, SGBs, and parents. These are also dominant stakeholders.

- **External stakeholders**

  External stakeholders, as the name suggests, are external to the organisation or school, and include the community, suppliers, regulators, supporters and partners, lobby groups, and the public at large. The existing audience and target market segments are crucial stakeholders, as are the media, politicians, and possibly other organisations – even if they are potential competitors (Benn et al, 2016:3). These are mainly latent stakeholders.

For the purpose of this research, the stakeholder groups have been summarised by the researcher, and proposed engagement channels are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Stakeholder groups

Stakeholder groups	Engagement channels
Internal stakeholders Learners, parents/guardians, educators, Learner Representative Councils (LRCs), SMTs, school social workers/counsellors, SGBs, Institutional Development and Support Officials (IDSOs), caregivers External stakeholders Other relevant government departments, NGOs, transporters (bus/taxi drivers), municipalities, community members, neighbours, regulatory authorities (e.g., Umalusi, SACE, etc.), the police, local authorities, suppliers, contractors, examination bodies, alumni, donors, the financial community, prospective learners, security personnel, unions, education institutions (i.e., college, universities, etc.), the media, politicians, religious bodies, other schools, partners, affiliation bodies, and health professionals.	• E-mails and posters • Listening forums • Individual meetings or sessions • Parent functions and meetings • Newsletters, brochures, and magazines • Social media • D6 communicator • Continuous assessment and feedback on learner progress • Microsoft Teams sessions • Employee surveys • Awards and school functions • Telephone calls

2.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

According to Nsangi, Oxman, Oxman, Rosenbaum, Semakula, Ssenyonga, Mugisha, Chelagat, Kaseje, Nyirazinyoye, Chalmers and Sewankambo (2020:2), stakeholder engagement is:

> …an iterative process of actively soliciting the knowledge, experience, judgment and values of individuals selected to represent a broad range of direct interests in a particular issue, for the dual purposes of creating a shared understanding and making relevant, transparent and effective decisions.

Depending on the issue, the degree to which it crosses domains and the state of the current stakeholder landscape, as well as the expected level of policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, the types of stakeholders to be involved in any policy process will differ. Local stakeholder groups will be more likely to become involved if implementation plans are established at school level, than if implementation is proposed at district or provincial level. Therefore, government departments are encouraged to develop a framework for fostering stakeholder engagement at all levels to improve multidisciplinary collaboration (Pan Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health, 2010: S21).

Nsangi et al (2020:4) suggest Brun's ladder of stakeholder participation, as demonstrated in in Table 2.3, to enhance local stakeholder involvement by providing information, consultation, engagement, and cooperation in decision-making processes, whilst preserving authority in the final decision-making process.

Table 2:3: Stakeholder engagement levels

	Information	Consultation	Involvement	Collaboration	Delegation
Objective of stakeholder engagement	To give stakeholders information to make them understand the need for support	To gather particular types of stakeholder input, such as support, feedback, design input, assessment, or the distribution of resources	Working directly with stakeholders in developing the support, making sure that their inputs are understood and considered, or engaging them in challenges and solution development discussions	Collaborating with stakeholders during the whole process of developing, assessing, and providing support	Giving control over development aspects and assessment, and providing support
What stakeholders can expect	To be kept informed	To be heard and supplied with details, including how their contribution has affected decisions afterwards	Working in partnership in the development, assessment, and distribution of support	To work together through problems and suggested solutions which will be incorporated to the necessary degree	To address the final decision and engage in decisions in a cooperative manner
Ways of achieving the objective	One-way information distribution, such as: - website page - tailored info - presentations/seminars	Two-way communication, which includes gathering input, listening, and exchanging views. This could be undertaken by way of: - comments in writing - focus groups - interviews - surveys	- Interactive dialogue and discussions - Workshops - Working groups	Stakeholder representatives at the table, and active as team members in the design, evaluation, and dissemination of the resources.	A decision by an organisation or group with unique power to be part of decision-making in the process of the development, assessment, or distribution of support

Adapted from: Nsangi et al (2020:4)

The stakeholder impact identification matrix is presented in Table 2.4 below. This is to show how the stakeholder should be engaged by the schools. It is important to provide a clear picture of the responsibilities and accountability of stakeholders within the schools. This should provide the schools with the opportunity to identify the gaps in their actual and expected level of attention with stakeholders. Furthermore, the matrix is intended to help managers design organisational strategies that will be most appropriate in tackling the expectations of stakeholders.

Table 2.4: Stakeholder responsibility matrix

Stakeholder group	Responsibility
Government	IDSO
	School principal
	SGB
Learners	Educators
	Social workers/counsellors
Parents	School principal
	SGB
	Educators
	Social workers
Employees	School principal
	SMT
	SGB
Suppliers	SMT
	SGB
	School principal
Banks	SGB
	School principal
Communities	SGB
	School principal

To gain greater value and benefit from the stakeholder engagement process, depending upon the nature of the matter, the collaboration should involve all key stakeholders who may also take an interest or play a role in the issue. The research by Humphrey, Koppich, Lavadenz, Marsh, O'Day, Plank, Stokes and Hall (2018:4) shows that an intensive engagement of stakeholders by the district office seems to have contributed to a consistent understanding of the district's vision by the different role players. So, in order to achieve the government's objective to create safe schools and "an active community life free of fear", as per the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) (National Planning Commission, 2012:73), the intensive engagement of all stakeholders must be pursued.

Lessons gained from the engagement with the stakeholders should be used to create the school policies and guide operations to ensure that the solutions suggested are implemented. Researchers Bartz, Rice and Karnes (2018:1) indicate that successful stakeholder engagement would lead to SGBs getting the appropriate information to make their decisions and local stakeholders' inputs being taken seriously by the board to improve access to education for the children of the community.

In the next segment the role of stakeholders in SBV, and that of school social workers will be discussed in detail. The researcher will conclude the chapter by providing prevention strategies for SBV.

2.4 ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN SCHOOL BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Long and Alexander (2010:31) recommend that strategies such as including all stakeholders, developing clear goals, missions, policies, and repercussions should be outlined to address school-based violence. To accomplish this, the researchers advise getting the help of several stakeholders. Crimp (2017:20) agrees that involving multiple stakeholders in policy creation and implementation is necessary to promote stakeholder understanding and acceptability of policies. This view is also echoed by Ibrahim, Arshad, and Salleh (2017:251) who state that stakeholder involvement can influence policy implementation and the achievement of favourable educational results. Researchers, Karikari, Brown, Ashirifi, and Storms (2020:61) states that SBV is an ecological and complex phenomenon that happens in multiple contexts with a variety of actors, and therefore it is important to address the perspectives of various stakeholders and their relations with each other regarding SBV prevention initiatives in schools.

Stakeholders in education should be wholly involved to ensure efficient decisions and successful implementation of educational policy; the government should also be aware of educational challenges. To put it differently, educational policy should not be changed haphazardly, and changes should not be driven by political sentiments; the communication gap between both the government and the public

regarding the government's educational intentions and programs should also be bridged; and disparities among various stakeholders, particularly between teachers and parents, should be addressed (Yaro, Arshad & Salleh, 2016:9).

Lessons gained from the engagement with the stakeholders should be used to create the school policies and guide operations to ensure that the solutions suggested are implemented. Researchers Bartz, Rice, and Karnes (2018:1) indicate that successful stakeholder engagement would lead to SGBs getting the appropriate information to make their decisions and local stakeholders' inputs being taken seriously by the board to improve access to education for the children of the community.

Stakeholders in education should be permitted to get together and work with the government to identify or decide on the type of education that is appropriate for the country, or community. For example, the Nigerian National Education Policy encourages the involvement of all stakeholders to eliminate overlaps and maintain and establish synergy across various stakeholder groups (Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education, 2013:x). In the South African context, the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) (National Planning Commission, 2012:73) provides that, to achieve the government's objective to create safe schools and "an active community life free of fear", the intensive engagement of all stakeholders must be pursued.

As the rate of SBV is increasing, as shown in the literature consulted, society still expects schools to provide a safe learning environment. As a result, all stakeholders in education should collaborate in the identification and prevention of violence, as well as the implementation of school violence prevention programs, to keep a safer school environment (Aluede, 2011:138). According to Konko (2018:1), more structured schools promote a safer learning environment as well as fewer SBV challenges.

2.4.1 School social workers as change agents

Given that different stakeholders may hold opposing views on how to address school violence challenges, school social workers must use their skills to arrange and

encourage collaboration, resolve group differences, actively support marginalised groups/individuals, and assess community issues that learners face (Kim, 2017:89). Researchers, Karikari *et al.,* (2020:73) are also of the view that a more collaborative effort among stakeholders could provide a healthier means of tackling school-based violence.

Previously, research by Dake, Price, Telljohann, and Funk (2003) and Dake, Price, Telljohann, and Funk (2004) reveal that educators lacked training as the key obstacle to their intervention in SBV prevention activities. Subsequently, Ahtola, Kärnä, Poskiparta, and Salmivalli (2013:378), also state that SBV initiatives led by teachers have deteriorated in quality over time or haven't been implemented in any way. Recently the study by Konko (2018:28) found that teacher time restrictions, followed by competing responsibilities, are now the key barriers to school stakeholder engagement in SBV initiatives.

Midgett, Doumas, Sears, Lundquist, and Hausheer (2015:487) argue that, given the responsibilities already placed on educators, school social workers should be recruited to help develop SBV programs because they are change agents. Even though different stakeholders, policy documents, and court rulings directly or indirectly allude to a need for social services for learners in schools, social workers are not generally employed in South African schools (Reyneke, 2018:79). Social workers are valuable professionals to assist in the implementation of SBV policies and initiatives in the school. In light of this, Masilo (2018:2) argues that SBV is a societal issue that should be addressed mainly by social workers. Schools can look to social workers for support in creating safety measures as they fight to avoid acts of SBV.

2.5   HOW CAN SCHOOLS MANAGE SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE?

In this segment, the following will be discussed for the scope of this analysis: preventive measures, policies and guidelines, prevention and awareness programmes, and security measures.

(a)   Preventive measures

Preventive measures include any appropriate measures taken by anybody in reaction to an occurrence to avoid, limit, or alleviate damage or injury, or to curb SBV within the schools (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2020; *Oxford English Dictionary* c2021, sv "preventive measures"). Social workers can help prevent SBV by assisting teachers in identifying learners who require counselling and then providing the necessary support (Reyneke, 2018:91). In summary, prevention refers to measures taken by the stakeholders within a particular environment to ensure that a particular issue of concern is avoided through using various intervention methods.

(b)   Policies and guidelines

A policy is a governmental or other institution's legislation, rule, procedural, disciplinary measures, or volunteer practice. Resources typically reflect policy decisions (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). In summary, policy refers to a framework that provides guidelines within an organisation such as the government and NGOs, as well as other institutions.

Guidelines refer to a tool that advises school administrators and education personnel on how schools may include violence prevention into their daily operations and at all areas of contact with students and families, as well as other members of the public and stakeholders (WHO, 2019a:i). Long and Alexander (2010:33) state that policies and guidelines should cover the involvement of school social workers, enhance the school's discipline environment, and how to train educators to recognise and use specific strategies to prevent and/or minimise SBV. Guidelines on the prevention of SBV serve as a compass that provides direction to all the primary and secondary stakeholders within the school environment. Furthermore, the guidelines provide clarity in terms of daily prevention strategies for SBV.

(c)   Prevention and awareness programmes

Universal SBV reduction programmes are meant to teach all students in a particular school or grade about the prevalence of violence and its prevention, as well as one

or more of the following subjects or skills (social abilities) aimed at reducing violent or threatening conduct: personal abilities, emotional regulation, self-esteem, positive social skills, social issue solving, resolving conflict, and teamwork (Newlands & Donohue, 2016:14). School social workers should make it a priority to promote life skills to avoid violence against children in schools, and they should hold frequent violence prevention seminars and educate students and teachers on acceptable nonviolent behavior (Aluede, 2011:143-144). Prevention and awareness programmes play a critical role in behaviour and attitude modifications.

(d)   Security measures

Security measures refer to preventative steps used to fend off potential crises, harm, or injury (Vocabulary.com, c2021: sv "security measures"). In addition, it also refers to precautions taken to deter criminals, spies, or destruction (Definitions.net, c2021: sv "security measures"). However, for the purposes of this study, security measures refer to the first definition.

(e)   Collaborations

Researchers, Netshitangani (2014:1401) and Shriberg, Burns, Desai, Grunewald, and Pitt (2015:158) recommend that learners, families, teachers, and the general public collaborate to develop solutions with the help of school administrators to combat SBV. Educators and school administrators cannot fight and win the battle against SBV on their own. The study by Shriberg, Burns, Desai, Grunewald, and Pitt (2015:158) discovered that, while educators were confident in their personal and school administrators' abilities to deal with SBV, there was no reduction in SBV.

Literature consulted posits that according to experts there is not just one source of violence in South Africa. Instead, violence depends on various factors that interact in numerous ways to promote violence. For instance, socioeconomic imbalance, unfulfilled manhood, a lack of social cohesiveness, and alcoholism and weapons are also the most important risk factors (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2019:1). SBV is a complex societal problem with serious effects for both perpetrators and victims (Aluede, 2011:139). Therefore, understanding the complexity of SBV and implementing prevention measures requires multiple

stakeholders and the integration of multiple viewpoints, which can help in the creation of effective solutions (Karikari, Brown, Ashirifi, & Storms, 2020:62).

A Setswana proverb reads, "ngwana sejo o a tlhakanelwa," which translates as "it takes a village to raise a child." Having this in mind, Setlalentoa's (2009:38) states that "every problem that affects an individual member of the family system also impacts others in the social context". However, in Makwinja's (2017:49) study on the discipline in Botswana schools, she mentions that the concept of the entire community joining together to share the responsibility of caring for children has diminished. Families have split apart, and extended family kinship has been lost.

It has been observed that families, both globally and in South Africa, are under pressure in the new 24/7 economy of global competitiveness, which continues to exert massive pressure on families as they seek to fulfil their varied roles in society. Furthermore, research show that many parents are exhausted from working long hours, that breadwinners, notably mothers, have lost jobs because of Covid-19, and that all these factors are contributing to parents being unable to provide the necessary support to their children (Department of Social Development, Republic of South Africa, 2021:198-199; Dex, 2003:72). In addition to this viewpoint, Makwinja (2017:42) state that the twenty-first century has brought about developments that have weakened community-based child upbringing in favour of more individualistic family values. Family structures have disintegrated, leaving everyone to fend for themselves.

To implement effective prevention strategies, schools should embrace the idea that "it takes a village to raise a child". Therefore, since families may be disintegrated, the schools may look up to social workers for intervention. They are trained and are aware that family dysfunction can serve as a road map for appropriate preventative and intervention programs. As a results, social workers are well-positioned to lead the school–family–community partnership, which aims to make the most of both school and community resources to meet the needs of students and their families (Moore-Thomas, & Day-Vines, 2010:54; Finigan-Carr & Shaia, 2018:26). In support of this view, Soliman (2017:13) mention that school social workers are the most suitable professionals for facilitating safe school environments, motivate learners

and lead the school toward an ecological framework that tackles both internal and external factors that affect school safety.

In the study examining the bullying prevention in schools and stakeholders' perceptions in Midwest (USA), Karikari *et al.,* (2020:77) recommend that, although social work practice frequently involves multiple systems, social workers should place greater importance on systems thinking in social work practice and education, as well as further develop their advocacy skills to develop open systems of discussions not only for themselves but also for the benefit of other stakeholders. Greene (2008:199) defines the ecological paradigm as a social work practice approach that tackles the complex interactions between individuals and their environment. Midgett, Doumas, Sears, Lundquist, and Hausheer (2015:489) assert that as the role of the school social worker has evolved into one of the leaders as a systemic change agent, they are now in a better position to prevent SBV on a school-wide scale.

To accomplish the SBV prevention objectives and ensure the effectiveness of the safe school program, priority should be placed not only on the tripartite alliance of learners, educators, and parents but also on a strategic alliance that will involve school social workers and community members. Collaboration among teachers and parents, as well as the involvement of the public and other stakeholders such as social workers, would help to improve the situation. The below graph depicts the strategic alliance which should be considered for effective SBV prevention.

Parents

In the study by Elsaesser, Russell, Ohannessian, and Patton (2017:62) parental warmth is found to be significantly related with lower levels of SBV, both as perpetrators and victims.

Learners

Literature shows that the school should involve students in the development of school policies, such as the code of conduct (Obadire, & Sinthmule, 2021:3).

Educators

In order to curb SBV, researchers propose that teachers develop positive relationships with their students. (Konko, 2018:1).

Other stakeholders

Wang, Berry, and Swearer (2013:300) mention that educators should seek help from professionals such as social workers for learners who are involved in SBV. In agreement, Thakore, Apfeld, Johnson, Sathiyakumar, Jahangir, and Sethi (2015:50) suggests the necessity of partnering with professionals in violence prevention as well as knowledgeable stakeholders who are well-versed in the target community's primary issues.

Figure 2.1: Strategic alliance for SBV prevention

Source: Author's compilation

After having discussed the management of SBV and the preventative measures, the researcher will now provide a conclusion for the entire chapter in the next segment.

2.6   SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter provided a literature review that was inclusive of stakeholder support. Secondly, the chapter discussed the definition of a stakeholder, as well as the different types of stakeholders, and the stakeholder engagement process. The researcher elaborated on the role of stakeholders in school-based violence prevention programs. The school social workers as change agents were also discussed. In the third segment, the researcher discussed the management and preventive measures that can be utilised within the schools to curb violence.

In this chapter, the literature shows that, in comparison to other stakeholders, social workers are rarely acknowledged or prioritised in most conversations about SBV prevention strategies (Karikari *et al.*, 2020:72). School social workers have an increasingly important role in these complex and collaborative initiatives, thanks to their education and training in systems changes, relationship building, and resource acquisition (Mendenhall, Iachini, & Anderson-Butcher, 2013:9).

CHAPTER THREE:
IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH IN THE ANALYSIS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This section is inclusive of the general introduction, research questions, goals and objectives, research methodology, method of data collection, method of data analysis and verification, ethical considerations, the limitations of the study, and the summary of the chapter. The researcher will highlight the implementation of the entire qualitative research approach and how it was applied for the purpose of this analysis.

The presented analysis is based primarily on school social workers' and educators' experiences on SBV, including their suggestions for stakeholder support. In this study the researcher gives an account of how she implemented the qualitative research approach in this analysis.

3.2   REINFORCEMENT ON THE USAGE OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS

In general, qualitative research may help foster an awareness of the experiences of people as they find expression in their emotions, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and actions by helping researchers to make meaning of the occurrences in their everyday life (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15). The researcher has explained the motivation of using qualitative research in the various steps outlined below.

Qualitative analysis techniques and methodologies have several advantages. Firstly, the qualitative approach is a method that provides a thick (comprehensive) overview of the thoughts, views, and perceptions of the participants, and analyses the implications of their actions (Elo et al, 2014:1). During the research process the researcher was able to collect the thoughts, experiences, and views of the school

social worker and educator participants on the issue of SBV. The researcher further analysed the outcomes of their interviews through the method of data analysis.

Secondly, according to the Canadian Center of Science and Education (2014:104), the qualitative approach (interpretivism) critically considers unique environments as well as people's lived experiences. There seems to be a consensus in the literature, since Kalu and Bwalya (2017:43) add that the broader understanding gained from informal contact is one of the main advantages of qualitative research. When a researcher is making use of open-ended questions, participants are given an expanded outlet to communicate their views and opinions. The researcher was able to capture both the lived experiences of the school social workers and educators, which assisted her in gathering data on SBV as well as suggestions for stakeholder support.

Thirdly, in this technique, the basis of information is the meaning of multiple activities. The qualitative data analysis method examines applicant actions, interviewer behaviour, and interlocutor behaviour in language testing (Queirós, Faria & Almeida, 2017:370). In application, the researcher was able to find meaning from the perspectives of the school social workers and educators on SBV. Other issues such as the participants' behaviour and verbal and non-verbal cues, including facial expressions, were among the aspects which brought meaning to the study.

The implementation of the qualitative research process will be provided in the sections that follow below and the researcher will specifically pay attention to the research questions, research goals, and objectives of the analysis.

3.3   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research problem was clearly defined and applied in Chapter One, Section 1.1, which provided the researcher with clear research questions to guide this study. The researcher understands the term research question to refer to a detailed question(s) that directs the research process during data collection, as well as the purpose of the study, which is designed to address the research problem (Maree, 2017:81; Leavy, 2017:128). For the purpose of this analysis there are two target groups and

their perceptions and experiences on SBV were explored. The central questions for the two specific groups for this analysis were stated as follows:

Research questions for the educators:
- What are educators' experiences of SBV?
- What are educators' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV?

Research questions for school social workers:
- What are school social workers' perceptions of the nature and extent of SBV?
- What are school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV?

3.4   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Research objectives refer to the goals which the researcher has clearly outlined that he/she will attain in the study. These research objectives make the reader aware of what the researcher wishes to achieve in the analysis. When the researcher clearly stipulates what the objectives are, it helps to avoid any confusion within the analysis (Maree, 2017:81; Kumar, 2011:62). As clearly stated in the first chapter, the first research goal for educators was to develop an in-depth understanding of the educators' experiences of SBV. Secondly, the goal was to proffer the educators' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV. The research goal for school social workers was, firstly, to develop an in-depth understanding of school social workers' perceptions of SBV and, secondly, to proffer school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV.

3.5   IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of research is a way to resolve the research problem consistently. Research methodology is a science that provides scientific knowledge on how the study needs to be conducted. In it, we consider the different steps that a researcher normally takes to study his/her research problem along with the reasoning behind it. The researcher needs to be informed not only about the research methods/techniques, but also about the approach (Goundar, 2012:12).

Research methodology means studying the numerous techniques that can be used in the research process in the pursuit of studies, experiments, interviews, and critical studies (Goundar,2012:2; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Similarly, Leavy (2017:263) agrees that it is a plan for how research will proceed or how the researcher will combine the different elements of research into a plan that indicates, step-by-step, how the specific research project will be carried out.

Figure 3.1: Steps in social science research

(Adapted from: Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:1)

The researcher employed the funnel approach, which entailed moving from a general idea, namely the problem statement of this research, to a specific idea, which entails writing or producing a report. The first step was described in Chapter One (see sub-section 1.1.2), including the above parts. The execution of the second step to the fourth step will be addressed in this chapter, whereas the results and assumptions will be discussed in the third, fourth and fifth chapter.

A comprehensive description of the research approach will be discussed in the next sub-section.

3.5.1 Implementation of the research approach

The research approach focuses on the research process and activities that vary from general assumptions to comprehensive data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods. Implementation of the research approach includes tools which must be used in researching a subject (Creswell, 2014:3; Grover, 2015:1; Mohajan, 2017:59 Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A research approach is defined as a plan of action that gives direction to conduct research systematically and efficiently (Mohajan, 2017:60). In addition, Creswell and Creswell (2018:50) further suggest that there are three research approaches, which are: (a) the qualitative approach; (b) the quantitative approach; and (c) the mixed methods approach. A clear description of the usage, application, and practices of the research approaches are discussed below.

Table 3.1: Comparison of the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches

TYPE OF APPROACH	PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS	TYPICAL STRATEGIES OF INQUIRY	METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION	RESEARCHER USES THESE PRACTICES
Qualitative approach	Constructivist/ transformative knowledge.	Phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case studies, and narrative.	Open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text, or image data.	● Positions himself/herself within the organisation being interviewed. ● Collects participants' meanings. ● Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon. ● Brings personal values into the study. ● Studies the context or setting of participation. ● Validates the accuracy of findings. ● Interprets the data. ● Creates an agenda for change or reform. ● Collaborates with the participants. ● Employs text analysis procedures.
Quantitative approach	Positivist knowledge claims.	Surveys and experiments.	Closed-ended questions, predetermined approaches, numeric data (may include some open-ended questions).	● Tests or verifies theories or explanations. ● Identifies variables in the study. ● Relates variables to questions and hypothesis. ● Uses standards of validity and reliability. ● Observes and measures information numerically. ● Uses unbiased approaches. ● Employs statistical procedures.
Mixed methods approach	Pragmatic knowledge claims.	Sequential, convergent, and transformative.	Both open- and closed-ended questions, both emerging and predetermined approaches, and both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.	● Collects both quantitative and qualitative data. ● Develops a rationale for mixing. ● Integrates the data at different stages of inquiry. ● Presents visual pictures of the procedure in the study. ● Employs the practices of both qualitative and quantitative research.

Adapted from: Creswell and Creswell (2018:67) and Creswell (2014:18)

At the beginning of this study (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.3.1), the researcher paid attention to the definitions of the research approach, including the characteristics thereof. However, in this chapter the researcher gives an account of how she practically applied each characteristic of the qualitative research method while conducting the study.

The researcher made use of the qualitative research approach as a point of departure for this study, as the researcher found its defining characteristics useful and beneficial. Below the researcher will discuss each of these characteristics, as well as giving an account of how the features were practically applied during the process of the study (Salkind, 2010:400; Creswell, 2012:234; Creswell, 2014:18; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:294; Creswell & Poth, 2018:95):

a. **Interpretation and meaning attached**

Philosophers who embrace a constructivist worldview, including ethnographic design and the observation of human behaviour, believe that people converse with their social environment and this where meaning is developed (Creswell, 2014:18; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:294). The researcher interacted with the participants, namely the school social workers and educators, with a view to understand the meaning they create from their daily lived experiences, as well as interpret the participants' lived experiences.

b. **The researcher as the main instrument of data collection**

The researcher was the main instrument of data collection, since she collected data on her own (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:320). In qualitative research, researchers influence both the research method and the study process. The legitimacy of the researcher as a tool for data collection is among the key problems in qualitative research. The researcher's findings cannot be used if there is no validity (Bahrami, Sleimani, Yaghoobzadeh & Ranjabar, 2016:27; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:323; Creswell & Poth, 2018:95). In order to ensure the validity and credibility of the study, the researcher had to ensure that trustworthiness was adhered to.

c. Natural in nature

Qualitative researchers aim to gather data in the field where the problem or issue under analysis is encountered by participants. Researchers need to interview participants (built environment), as well as visit their place of work (in order to understand their lived experiences). Generally, they interview people to execute their data collection process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:295).

d. Data from multiple sources

Usually, qualitative researchers collect data from many sources of information, such as interviews, observations, and records, rather than relying on a single source of information. Then they analyse all the details to make sense of it, organising it into groups or themes that cut through all forms of knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2018:96). The researcher collected data from various sources by interviewing both educator and school social worker participants. The researcher also gathered records, such as policy documents and different schools' code of conduct.

3.5.2 The implementation of the research design

The research design may be considered as a guideline for creating the research report, including defining the relevant key concepts (Leavy, 2017:100). In the first chapter, the researcher provided the definitions, her own understanding of the research design, and the application of the research design. This provided a foundation upon which the researcher could build. Below the researcher provides the steps taken in implementing the research design:

- In a quantitative study, scientists use line of reasoning to elaborate or prognosticate about the partnership between variables in the research. Therefore, the aspect and use of different factors must be grounded as the researcher constructs research questions and hypotheses (Creswell, 2014:5; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:139; Creswell & Poth, 2018:506).
- In a qualitative study, researchers use theory as a general explanation, much like ethnography is used in quantitative research. It can also be a theoretical lens or viewpoint that presents matters regarding gender, class, race, or any mixture of these (Creswell, 2014:5 ; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:139).

- In a mixed methods study, researchers consider theory as a mechanism that informs several methods of design as they gather, evaluate, and analyse quantitative and qualitative data. This system occurs in two ways: (a) an approach for social science; or (b) a paradigm for social science (Creswell, 2014:5; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:139).

After having considered all the research designs as described above, the researcher selected the qualitative research approach as a point of departure for this study.

The researcher does not just have to choose one of the three approaches, but also has to choose the type of study and the process thereof (Creswell, 2014:11-12; Maree, 2017:80). The relevant designs for this study are the explorative, descriptive, and contextual research designs, which will be individually discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

3.5.2.1   *Explorative research design*

The purpose of the explorative research design, as the name suggests, is to investigate the problem in various ways in order to gain understanding through rigorous evaluation. It emphasises the concepts and thoughts being uncovered. The design of exploratory experiments is appropriate for studies that are versatile enough to establish many facets of the issue to be considered (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014:77; Surbhi, 2017). Similarly, Bhattacherjee (2012:5) adds that explorative research is often conducted in new areas of inquiry, where the goals of the research are to scope out the magnitude or extent of a particular phenomenon, problem, or behaviour and to generate some initial ideas (or "hunches") about that phenomenon.

In application, the researcher interviewed school social workers and educators from various schools within the Johannesburg East District, as set out in the initial plan. However, due to the lockdown which was imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher did not have access to all the schools she initially planned to reach out to. She then increased the pool of participants in order to have as many participants as possible. The researcher applied flexibility and she increased the

population of study to include the entire Gauteng Province, since there were social workers available in other parts of the province.

3.5.2.2 Descriptive research design

The descriptive research design is a study that examines a person, community, or circumstance and then describes it (Surbhi, 2017). In the first chapter of this analysis, the researcher paid attention to the descriptive research design and zoomed in on the definitions of the key concepts and her own understanding of those concepts, as well as their application.

However, for the purpose of this analysis the researcher will focus on how the descriptive research design was applied during the research process. The descriptive research design has made it possible to provide explanations of the lived experiences of participants in discussing the problem of SBV.

3.5.2.3 Contextual research design

In the previous chapter the researcher defined the contextual research design, including her own understanding of the concept and the application thereof (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.3.2.3). In this current segment the researcher will focus on how the contextual research design was applied during the process of this analysis.

In order to apply the contextual research design, the researcher made sense of the lived experiences of the school social workers and educators in order to gain insight into their daily lives within the school environment (Johns, 2001:32; Surbhi, 2017). The researcher further explored the contextual research design and gave a description of the problem statement in order to provide suggestions for stakeholder support concerning SBV.

3.5.3 The implementation of the research methods

According to the constructivist authors (Creswell, 2012:534-535; Goundar, 2012:39 Creswell, 2014:45; Leavy, 2017:94-95; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:381), the research method encompasses the processes of data collection, study, and interpretation that researchers suggest for their analyses, including the research

methodology. In this sub-section the researcher will give a full account of how she chose the population of the study and selected a sample, as well as defining the sampling method she used. The researcher will also discuss how the data was collected during the process of this analysis. In the previous chapter, the researcher focused on the research methods (see Chapter One, Section 1.4) in detail.

3.5.3.1   *Population selection and implementation of sampling method*

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:134), sampling is defined by the people or objects that are included in the analysis and are referred to as elements of the sample. In this study the researcher was able to follow the guideline of choosing the research participants as proposed in Chapter One (see sub-section 1.4.1). The researcher approached the DoE in order to obtain permission to conduct interviews with the educators and school social workers and make them aware of the criteria of inclusion and exclusion. The researcher then interviewed the first participant and asked the participant if she knew of any other individuals who met the criteria of inclusion and then contacted those individuals. The researcher repeated this process with all other participants identified to recruit more participants for the study until data saturation was reached.

The researcher initially intended to only select school social workers and educators from within the Johannesburg East District as the research population. However, due to a limited number of school social workers working within this area, the researcher expanded the population to include school social workers and educators from the entire Gauteng Province in order to increase the pool of participants and to ensure that data saturation could be reached.

a. **Implementation of selecting the research participants guideline**

The researcher approached the DoE to obtain permission as initially planned. The DoE gave permission for the study to be conducted, however, due to the lockdown that was imposed in South Africa the DoE explained that all the interviews had to be conducted online, and no interviews could take place within the schools. The researcher then approached the school principals in the chosen schools within Gauteng. The third phase occurred exactly as planned (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.4.1).

b. Purposive (Judgement) Sampling

During the sampling process, the researcher followed all that she proposed to do as set out (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.4.1.1), however, a few changes were made to the criteria of inclusion which are noted below.

School social workers' amended criterion of inclusion:

- School social workers must be working in public schools within the Gauteng Province on a full-time basis and have at least two years' working experience.

Educators' amended sample of inclusion

- Educators must be employed within the Gauteng Province.

c. Snowball sampling

The researcher focused on the key concepts of snowball sampling, including applying the define, own words, and application (DOA) principle (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.4.1). In order to implement snowball sampling, the researcher interviewed the school social worker and educator participants using an online platform. After each interview the researcher inquired whether the participant knew of a colleague who meets the criteria of inclusion.

d. Sample size

The researcher was able to reach data saturation with a total of 21 participants. When the researcher began to realise that no new information was emerging and that the participants were saying the same things in the interviews, it confirmed that she had reached data saturation.

3.5.3.2 *Implementation of data collection*

In his handbook Flick (2018:33) posits that the gathering of qualitative data works in close collaboration with participants, bringing with it the intricacies of cultural norms, perceptions, and behavioural patterns. According to the proposed guidelines of data collection as found in Chapter One (see sub-section 1.4.2).

In order to conduct the online face-to-face semi-structured interviews, the researcher made use of an interview guide, as found in Addendum F, which contains the research questions she formulated for the purposes of this analysis.

a. Troy Primary School[4]

The above-mentioned school is located between the two cities of Pretoria and Johannesburg. The school has a rich cultural heritage connected to being one of the pioneering schools in Midrand. The school has learners from Grade 1 to 7, with a total of 1634 learners and 84 teachers. The school was established in 1923.

The researcher was introduced to the school and the school principal through her husband, who then secured an online appointment for her in order to adhere to the lockdown and COVID-19 regulations. The researcher then scheduled a Microsoft Teams online appointment and made arrangements with the principal to be the first participant in this study. After having satisfied herself that he met the criteria of inclusion, the researcher sent the consent form link (Addendum A and B) and the interview guide (Addendum F) to the principal.

The researcher's first school social worker applicant is employed at this school and met the criteria of inclusion, as she was referred by the school principal. The researcher asked the participant if she knew of any other individuals that met the criteria of inclusion.

b. King Cross Primary School[5]

The final participant from Troy Primary School referred the next participant, who became the second participant for this analysis. King Cross Primary School is situated in Ivory Park, in the heart of Midrand. The school has a total of 1872 learners, 68 teachers, and one social worker, and the school is still growing at a rapid rate. Three participants were recruited from this school. The researcher was able to obtain permission to conduct interviews from the principal and the SGB of this school once she was certain that the participants met the criteria of inclusion.

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[4] This is a pseudonym given to this school to conceal its real name.
[5] This is a pseudonym given to this school to conceal its real name.

c. Tebatso High School[6]

Tebatso High School was established in January 1951, and currently has a total of 556 learners and 12 teachers. The school is a Section 21 school which aims to provide the pupils with the best possible academic, cultural, sport, and social conditions to ensure that the pupils develop to their maximum potential.

While attending workshops for her normal CPD points, the researcher met a school social worker from this school and asked if she was interested in becoming a participant in the study. The researcher shared with this social worker, who was in a WhatsApp group with the researcher, the criteria of inclusion and guidelines for the study, and also discussed the issue of informed consent. She was very keen on participating in this analysis.

d. Lebote High School[7]

Lebote High School is one of the oldest schools within the Gauteng Province, since it was established in 1895. In the year 2010, the school became a racially diverse parallel medium school. The school had been an Afrikaans medium school before 2010. Currently there are between 1450-1500 learners and the staff consists of 70 teachers, 2 social workers, 8 administrative assistants, 2 terrain managers, and 13 general assistants.

The researcher contacted one of the school social workers and made her aware of the reason she called. The school social worker was keen on participating in this analysis. The researcher provided her with more information about the analysis, such as the link to the consent form (see Addendum A and B) and the data collection instrument (as found in Addendum F). The researcher made an appointment with the school social worker and it was arranged that the interview would take place at the end of the week after she had taken a look at the interview guide.

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[6] This is a pseudonym given to this school to conceal its real name.
[7] This is a pseudonym given to this school to conceal its real name.

Having dealt with the topic of the research method, the researcher will now provide an overview of the method of data analysis in the next sub-section.

3.5.4   The implementation of method of data analysis

Qualitative data analysis refers to a framework for qualitative study, although a broad variety of qualitative data analysis methods and techniques have been established that operate side by side (Flick, 2018:3). The concept data analysis refers to the procedure where the researcher decreases the information collected and converts it into a storyline which can then be interpreted. In application, the researcher made use of the interviews of both the school social workers and educators to formulate a storyline and then interpreted those storylines. The researcher conducted data analysis as soon as it was possible to analyse the data. Firstly, the researcher transcribed the data word-for-word and then ATLAS.ti was used to code the data. The researcher also sent the interviews to an independent coder in order to have the themes and sub-themes verified independently.

An overview as to how the information was authenticated is discussed in the following sub-section.

3.5.5   The implementation of the method of data verification

The method of data verification thus encourages the utilisation, rather than quantitative equivalents, of alternative terminologies such as reliability, integrity, conformability, transferability, reliability, internal validity, objectivity, and predictive validity to characterise rigor (trustworthiness) in qualitative research. Methodological approaches were utilised (clarified in detail below), such as the audit trail, participant inspection, negative case analysis, triangulation, and extended involvement of participants and peers (Hadi & Closs 2016:641-642; Maree 2017:114).

The issue of the method of data verification was dealt with in the previous chapter (see sub-section 1.4.5), however, the researcher wishes to capture how she applied data verification during the process of this analysis. The researcher will now discuss the four data verification criteria that she applied in this study, which are credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Elo et al, 2014:1; Surbhi, 2017):

● **Implementing and maintaining trustworthiness and credibility**

Mills et al (2010:243-244) state that in terms of the interactions between the participants and researcher, credibility refers to the extent to which the researcher's description is reliable and suitable, as previously explained. In addition, the editor of *'First Steps in Research'* (Maree, 2017:144) posits that credibility deals with the questions "how compatible are the results with fact?" and "how do I guarantee that my results are accepted by the audience?" A variety of methods are investigated in the literature to guarantee the integrity of the research. The researcher was able given an account of the research methodology process, methods, and design implemented in this analysis.

●**Implementing and maintaining dependability**

According to Maree (2017:145), dependability is often used in qualitative research in order to ensure reliability and the author emphasises the strong relationship between credibility and maintaining dependability, claiming that credibility is verified by the research design and its execution. The researcher implemented this step through having a journal where she wrote down her experiences in order not to forget even the most minor details of this process. The researcher also kept articles, documents, and newspapers which were relevant to this study, as well as important documents, in order to ensure an audit trail. The researcher also kept photos, video files, and any other information that assisted her in keeping track of the study.

●**Implementing and maintaining transferability**

In the beginning of this analysis the researcher was able to pay attention to the issue of transferability in terms of applying the DOA principle. The researcher provided the definition of the concept transferability, provided her own understanding thereof, and finally applied the concept of transferability (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.4.5.3).

●**Transferability** is defined as a method executed by research audiences. Readers acknowledge and equate the details of the research environment to the specificity of an area or situation they are acquainted with. If there are enough parallels between the two cases, readers will be able to conclude that, in their own case, the findings of the study can be repeated by someone else. In other words, the findings of the research are "transferable" to the next setting (Maree, 2017:145). In order to implement transferability, the researcher has provided background information which is relevant or applicable to this analysis (Guba, 1985).

●**Implementing and maintaining confirmability**

Confirmability is defined as the very last trustworthiness requirement that a qualitative researcher should establish. This requirement is about the degree of trust that the outcome of the research analysis is focused on, such as the analysis and interpretation of the participants' transcripts and not the ideas, thoughts, and beliefs of the researcher (Maree, 2017:145; *Collins English Dictionary,* c2020: sv "confirmability"; Trochim, c2020). The researcher applied confirmability as the final step of trustworthiness in qualitative research. The researcher was able to prove that this analysis represents the researcher's point of view through applying the method of triangulation, as can be seen in the first chapter of this analysis (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.4.5.4) under Approach 1 and Approach 2.

In order to implement confirmability, the researcher interviewed the participants in a systematic way. In the beginning the researcher provided a full explanation of the school social workers' and educators' methodological environment as experienced by them. Secondly, due to the COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown regulations, as stipulated, the researcher was not able to conduct physical interviews as initially planned, but she was able to conduct online interviews via Microsoft Teams.

The researcher was able to implement triangulation through both the educators (Approach 1) and school social workers (Approach 2) with a view of providing evidence that this research is based on the participants' frame of reference and not

that of the researcher. The researcher accepted her theories and values in this analysis where she explained the theoretical framework (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.1.4).

An overview of the implementation of the ethical considerations, namely informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, the management of information, and debriefing of participants, will be discussed in the next section.

3.6 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In his handbook, Flick (2018:35) posits that various theories play a very important role from historical and practical perspectives in informing our way of thinking pertaining to the interrelationships of constructs. For the purposes of conducting this analysis process as well as to provide a report of the findings, which is the final phase of the interviewing procedure, the following ethical considerations were adopted as mentioned in Chapter One (see Section 1.5):

●**Implementation of informed consent**

The researcher described what the study is about to participants and obtained their informed consent before they became involved in the research process (Flick 2018:238). Informed consent is a legally binding agreement made by participants to engage in a study, having been fully warned of prospective advantages, hazards, and study involvement processes and/or activities (Allen 2017:706; Frey 2018:822; Iphofen & Tolich, 2018:122). In application, the researcher ensured that each participant was fully aware that they are participating in the study voluntarily and that they can terminate their involvement whenever they wish. The researcher provided them with a comprehensive consent form which detailed all the aspects related to the study.

●**Implementation of confidentiality**

According to Sieber and Tolich (2013:457), the confidentiality agreement between a researcher and the subjects is part of informed consent. In addition, Gubrium et al

(2012:457) state that confidentiality means making sure that no other individual except the researcher is aware of who participated in the study. Moreover, Byrne (2017:1) states that in the field of social sciences there is a main standard that offers protection and emphasises that individuals have a right to concealment. In application, the researcher became a confidant to the participants, namely the school social workers and educators. The researcher ensured that the identifying details of the participants do not appear in the study. The researcher also ensured that all the people working with the researcher adhered to research ethics. Confidentiality has been adhered to during all the stages of this study.

●Implementation of anonymity

Anonymity refers to ethical practices intended to safeguard the privacy of human participants while gathering, analysing, and reporting information (Allen 2017:227). Moreover, anonymity refers to safeguarding the identity of a participant in the study or the site (Mills et al, 2010:23; Carroll, 2019). In addition, Wallace (2010:23) explains that anonymity simply refers to safeguarding the participants' identifying details. In application, the researcher ensured that the participants' information was protected during the data collection process. Personal details of the participants, their place of work, and other information that could identify them were not included in the report to meet the criteria of anonymity. Where the researcher required assistance during the research process, she ensured that the individuals assisting her understood ethics and adhered to anonymity. During the coding process the independent coder (see Addendum M) converted the names of the participants to pseudonyms in order to protect the participants' identities and to ensure their anonymity.

●Implementation of management of information

The management of information played a very important role in the protection of the data collected. According to the researcher Schwandt (in Guest et al, 2013:275), management of information refers to a designated framework for systemising, classifying, and filing materials to make them effectively recoverable and duplicable. In addition, Williams (2015:110) states that an easy system of data management

may only involve establishing files that represent the project phases and the final report headings.

The researcher managed the information in the following manner:

- o Materials such as recording tapes, transcripts, and notes were always kept in a locked safe.
- o The participants were made aware that the video recordings, transcripts, and notes will merely be kept for the purpose of the research and that the material will be discarded as soon as it safe to do so.
- o Identifying details of the participants, such as their names, the names of their schools, or any other information that can identify the participants, were not made available in the study.

●**Debriefing of participants**

The term debriefing refers to notifying the participants about the plans of the research study in which they participated, and, in the process, researchers will disclose any deception, including the reasons why such deception occurred (Allen, 2017:356). Salkind (2010:334) states that debriefing is the procedure of providing the participants with supplementary information about the study in which they participated at the end of their contribution to the research. In addition, Frey (2018:467) states that debriefing refers to affording the participants the chance to acquire information about the type of the research and the operations employed, and entails amending any misunderstanding that they might have.

The researcher arranged with a counselling psychologist to be on standby throughout the research process to conduct debriefing sessions should the need arise. This arrangement was made in writing with the concerned professional (Addendum N). The three main functions of debriefing are ethical, educational, and methodological (Allen, 2017:357). In application, the researcher ensured that all the participants were debriefed after an analysis had taken place, if they so wished.

3.7 IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE EDUCATION THEORY

Peace education theory has already been discussed at length in Chapter One (sub-section 1.1.4.2), where the researcher provided a general introduction to and definition of the theory. Peace education is currently recognised as a separate area of discussion in education. However, for the purposes of this chapter the researcher will provide a clear account of how peace education theory was implemented in this study using the six themes of peace education, as clearly described in Addendum O:

● **Implementation of dismantling the culture of war**

The first petal is **dismantling the culture of war**. South-Africa has a background of violence, dating back to the apartheid era, which needs to be dismantled and a new culture of peace needs to be taught in South African schools and communities. According to Hiebert and Ley (2003:16), apartheid refers to the manner in which South African races were living in separation from each other. Post-1994, South Africa was marred with violent xenophobic attacks where foreigners were attacked, and their businesses looted. Assaults on immigrants in most local communities were motivated by despair brought on by South Africa's widespread poverty and unemployment (Mamabolo, 2015). Recently, huge numbers of people participated in acts of public violence (hereafter referred to as 'rioting') and widespread theft (hereafter referred to as 'looting') in the KwaZulu-Natal Province and the Gauteng Province, primarily between 10 and 14 July 2020, after the announcement of former President Jacob Zuma's jail sentences. These alleged crimes caused damage and destruction to lorries, retail centres, storage facilities, industrial facilities, distribution hubs, animal and food markets, and key infrastructure. Protests and riots also impacted rural areas and farmlands (Tatsvarei, Mwale-Manjoro, Mapiye, Marufu, Singh, Letty, Naidoo, Wright & Aremu, 2021:1).

In summary, in order to dismantle the culture of war all the stakeholders, including the learners, should be provided with preventative workshops with specific focus on learners and parents, such as anger and conflict management workshops. The researcher also believes that restorative justice programmes can be implemented

within the SGBs instead of using a zero-tolerance policy. This can ensure that learners are not removed from the school as a disciplinary measure (whether through suspension or expulsion), but instead kept within the school. Other interventions that can help to dismantle the culture include workshops at schools to educate learners on the prevention of SBV.

- **Implementation of living with justice and compassion**

The second petal, **'living with justice and compassion',** emphasises the underlying determinants of systemic violence or local/global injustices that are at the core of the impoverished majority's economic marginalisation and the growing inequalities between both the countries of the north and the countries of the South (Swee-Hinn, 2010:170).

In summary, this petal can be implemented through teaching learners practical ways of living with justice and compassion through making the learners visit orphanages and encouraging them to volunteer to help the less-fortunate, for example cleaning at orphanages and retirement homes or other associated non-profit organisations (NPO). Secondly, the learners can also visit a correctional services centre where they can learn about the lived experiences of the inmates.

- **Implementation of building cultural respect, reconciliation and solidarity**

The third petal is '**building cultural respect, reconciliation and solidarity'.** An individual can only achieve rigorous subject learning once that individual has established respect, connections, and relevance. The educators' attention should be on creating meaningful relationships with students, promoting a culture of respect for and with students, and recreating relevancy for academic learning during this stressful period (Kidwell, 2019).

In the case where the learners were involved in SBV, both the victim and the perpetrator can be put in a programme of forgiveness and reconciliation through the Restorative Justice system. This can also assist in the retention rate of learners and lowering the dropout rate of the learners. The victim and the perpetrator can have a meaningful conversation about their experiences and be guided by an experienced mental health practitioner, such as a school social worker.

In summary, the culture of respect can be implemented within the curriculum, as well as during the assembly. The learners can implement values during a specific month where all their programmes are focused on building the culture of respect. Other activities can include rewarding learners and teachers who best modelled the values of respect.

- **Implementation of promoting human rights and responsibilities**

The fourth petal is **'promoting human rights and responsibilities'**. According to Currie and De Waal (2013), human rights are fundamental privileges and liberties that every individual of the population has from birth to death. The Bill of Rights (South Africa, 1996b) is the basis of South African democracy; it supports constitutional institutions such as basic humanity, justice, and independence, while also essentially protecting human rights (Winter, 2020:9).

In summary, school social workers and educators can play a role in promoting programmes that highlight the importance of both human rights and the responsibilities of South African citizens. Secondly, in a subject such as Life Orientation, discussions can be held between learners and teachers regarding these rights and responsibilities.

- **Implementation of living in harmony with the earth**

The second-to-last petal is '**living in harmony with the earth'**. The learners can be taught on the values of harmony by utilising methods such as team building exercises, which can assist in fostering cohesion. Other interventions could include extramural activities that teach breathing exercises, which can come in handy when they are faced with strong emotions such as anger and conflict.

- **Implementation of cultivating inner peace**

The last petal is '**cultivating inner peace'**. The learners can be taken to NPOs to care for someone. They can also be taught by a role model who understands peace education theory that whenever there is conflict, there are better ways of dealing

with a situation than resorting to violence. The role model can show the learners how to cultivate peace over various sessions.

In the next section the implementation of the bio-ecological perspective will be discussed.

3.8 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIO-ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The bio-ecological perspective is used to offer clarification in terms of the causes of SBV, which are covered in this section. The researcher will pay attention to the individual factors relevant to this study, which are personality, school performance, and educator's behaviour:

● Personality

Some researchers discovered correlations between personality and SBV. The personality characteristics of the victim included that the victim seemed fragile, terrified, friendly, or well-mannered (Chan & Beauregard, 2016:2260).

● School performance

Research has revealed a detrimental relationship between violent academic achievement (Pérez-Fuentes, Álvarez-Bermejo, Molero, Gázquez & López Vicente, 2011). In addition, researchers posit that in high schools with a high incidence of pupils harassing and mocking other pupils, all of the perpetrators had inferior academic performance (grade point average, standardised test scores, graduation rates) and decreased engagement in school activities (Cornell, Gregory, Huang & Fan 2013; Juvonen, Wang & Espinoza, 2011). In application, a learner who harasses and bullies is likely to be challenged academically and they do not participate in extramural activities.

● Educator's behaviour

Literature confirms that when a teacher reprimands or scolds his/her students by using harsh words, negative nicknames, or threats, or cursing and yelling, the learner may become more violent (Muzir, Sinar, Setia & Saragih, 2020:154). The

way educators handle conflict within the classroom can either lead to a peaceful environment or perpetuate violence within the classroom.

The behaviour of the learners cannot be considered in isolation; it must be observed holistically. Therefore, the researcher will also discuss the microsystem and mesosystem in the next sub-sections.

3.8.1   Microsystem (home circumstances and neighbourhood)

Community characteristics, such as hunger and disarray in the neighbourhood; family factors, such as poor family management and negative parenting modelling; and school factors, such as a study of student participation and lowered standards for achievement, are all a part of the microsystem (Morrison, Furlong & Morrison, 1994:242). There seems to be a strong link between the home circumstances and/or neighbourhood and violence within the school environment. In application, the home, family, and neighbourhood that the learner comes from all play a significant role in the way the learner turns out in future.

3.8.2   Mesosystem (socioeconomic conditions and the social media)

According to research, familial and socioeconomic circumstances differ. If administrations and educators are cooperative and destructive tendencies are lower, the perception of violence lowers dramatically (Mertoglu, 2014:697). In application, the type of family an individual is born into and their socioeconomic status both play a role in whether the child will become violent or not. The poorer the family, the greater the chance that the child will become a perpetrator of SBV.

Individuals utilise social media to communicate with others online. Individuals can use social media to identify others with whom they can connect and build online communities. Though most of the time the consequences are favourable, numerous researchers have discovered that extreme and hate organisations are exploiting this new technology to organise (Young, 2019:3). In application, social media provides a space for individuals to bully others without them being identified and this creates a safe space for perpetrators of violence, since they cannot be seen.

Finally, an overview of this chapter in the form of a summary will be discussed in the next section.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter identified essential components such as the research questions, goals, and objectives. This also included the research methodology, research methods, and data collection method which were employed during this study, as well as the ethical considerations that were adhered to.

In the next chapter the researcher will discuss the results and findings of this study with specific focus on the educators. The researcher will also provide the demographic details of the educators and present the results and findings according to the themes, sub-themes, and categories of the educators.

CHAPTER FOUR:

RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES OF SBV: SUGGESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

The research findings have been divided into two chapters. Chapter Four will focus only on the results and findings for the educators. Chapter Five will focus on the results and findings of the school social workers.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains an introduction, summary, and the interpretation of the participants' biographical profiles; the questions that were asked in the interviews with the participants; a literature control; and an overview of the seven themes, sub-themes, and their corresponding categories.

Pseudonyms were used instead of the participants' real names. The following pseudonyms were used for the educator participants who took part in this study: Unathi, Wandile, Bongani, Zanele, Tumisho, Fisani, Rose, Joyce, Hlompho, Katlego, Shona, and Lerato.

The demographic data plays a vital role in the product the study has, and this is a criterion that includes or excludes a certain group of people. A detailed explanation of participants enables the audience and researchers to ascertain who the study findings apply to and enables inferences to be made in order to replicate the study (Fontanella, 2019; Hammer, 2011:261). When demographics are used correctly, the researcher is able to learn more about the participants in the analysis.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILING OF PARTICIPANTS

In the table below, the demographic particulars of the educators who participated in the study are presented.

Table 4.1: The educator participants' demographic profiles

No.	Pseudonyms	Age	Gender	Race	Position	Years of experience	Qualification
P1[8]	Unathi	60	F	White	Principal	40 years	Honours degree in Education
P2	Wandile	50	M	White	Principal	30 years	Honours degree in Education
P3	Bongani	50	M	Black	Principal	30 years	Honours degree in Education
P4	Zanele	50	F	Black	Principal	30 years	Honours degree in Education
P5	Tumisho	45	M	Black	HOD[9]	15 years	Honours degree in Education
P6	Fisani	34	F	Black	Teacher	12 years	Honours degree in Education
P7	Rose	29	F	Black	Teacher	5 years	Honours degree in Education
P8	Joyce	43	F	Black	HOD	15 years	Honours degree in Education
P9	Hlompho	45	M	Black	HOD	15 years	Honours degree in Education
P10	Katlego	46	M	Black	HOD	20 years	Honours degree in Education
P11	Shona	47	F	Black	HOD	20 years	Honours degree in Education
P12	Lerato	43	F	Black	Teacher	5 years	Honours degree in Education

A total of 12 educators were found to be relevant for this analysis, seven of whom are female and five of whom are male, all between the age of 29 and 60. These educators were endorsed and applicable for the purposes of providing insight into their experiences pertaining to SBV, including their suggestions for stakeholder support. The educators' years of experience in teaching ranged between a minimum of five years' experience to a maximum of 40. Based on the information provided by the educator participants, the majority of them have more than 10 years of experience and all were working within the Gauteng Province at the time of the study. All the educators are registered with SACE and are employed as educators on a full-time basis. They all possess relevant teaching qualifications, with the lowest qualification being a bachelor's degree in education and the highest qualification being a Master's in Social Work.

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[8] Each participant code starts with "P". The codes are then numbered consecutively to identify the participants without revealing their real identities.

[9] Head of Department (HOD).

According to the ethnic classification system that divides people into groups, the educator participants comprised one White male and one White female, while the other six females and four males are Black.

4.3 THEMES, SUB-THEMES, AND CATEGORIES FOR EDUCATOR PARTICIPANTS

Under this segment the researcher will present the findings related to the educator participants, including a literature control based on the researcher's perspective. The researcher also made use of tables and discussions.

This section encapsulates the themes, sub-themes, and categories that emerged from the interviews with the educators.

Table 4.2: Themes, sub-themes, and categories for educator participants

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	CAT
Theme 1: Educators' experiences of the nature of school-based violence	1.1 Verbal and physical abuse 1.2 Bullying	
Theme 2: Educators' experiences of the victims of school-based violence	2.1 Victims are timid, weak, or different 2.2 Victims can become perpetrators	
Theme 3: Educators' experiences of the perpetrators of school-based violence	3.1 Perpetrators do not do well at school 3.2 Perpetrators have more than one victim and do not want to take responsibility 3.3 Perpetrators bring the violence from home to the school environment 3.4 Educators are also perpetrators	
Theme 4: Educators' experiences related to the causes of school-based violence	4.1 Peer pressure and the desire to belong 4.2 Home circumstances 4.3 The neighbourhood	
Theme 5: Educators' accounts of how the school manages school-based violence	5.1 Preventive measures 5.2 Talk to learners and/or involve parents/social workers 5.3 Intervention programmes at school and in the community 5.4 Disciplinary measures	5.1 5.1
Theme 6: Educators' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing school-based violence	6.1 The role of educators and social workers 6.2 The role of parents and learners 6.3 The role of the school governing body 6.4 The role of departments and organisations	
Theme 7: Educators' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence	7.1 Employ social workers and/or psychologists and involve other departments and organisations 7.2 Involve parents 7.3 SGBs, teachers, and principals must play a more prominent role	

In the next section of this discussion, each one of the main themes and accompanying sub-themes and categories (where applicable) will be presented and confirmed or endorsed by direct quotes from the transcripts of the interviews. The identified themes and sub-themes, with their supporting storylines from the transcripts, will be compared with the body of knowledge.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Educators' experiences of the nature of school-based violence

This theme emerged from the responses of educators to the first question they were asked, namely, to describe their experiences of the nature of SBV. Their responses are divided into three sub-themes, namely: (i) verbal and physical abuse; and (ii) bullying.

4.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Verbal and physical abuse

The majority of the educators indicated that SBV takes the form of verbal and/or physical abuse.

Unathi explained the nature of SBV she had experienced as follows: "*What I have experienced is the type of fighting… they push each other around, the verbal abuse… And I have seen that not only in primary schools, but also in high school"* **[Unathi, P1].**

On the other hand, the term physical abuse denotes a situation when another person engages in physical contact with an individual with the intent of causing physical discomfort, disability, or other physical suffering or bodily harm (Lukasse, Schroll, Ryding, Campbell, Karro, Kristjánsdóttir, Laanpere, Steingrimsdottir, Tabor, Temmerman, Van Parys, Wangel & Schei, 2014:671).

In addition, literature seems to support this, since these authors Ferrara, Franceschini, Villani and Corsello (2019:3) argue that physical problems, psychological trauma, permanent physical impairment, and long-term physical or mental ill-health are all common outcomes of violence towards children

Bongani also referred to both verbal and physical abuse: "*Our experience is in dealing with the children on a one-on-one or on a group basis as well. When this occurs, it can be either on the physical or verbal side of violence"* **[Bongani, P3]**. He added that SBV may also be in the form of destruction of infrastructure: "*…the physical violence that takes place or the destruction of infrastructure and things like that"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Literature confirms that verbal and physical abuse can also take the form of destruction of property, as mentioned by Bongani. Jan and Husain (2015:44) further add that property destruction is recognised as a form of aggression which can affect the school's infrastructure and resources.

Zanele highlighted how the experiences of educators regarding the nature of SBV depended on where the school is based. When she was in a township school, the violence she experienced in the school resulted in the death of a learner. She explained as follows: "*It depends on where you are based… In the township schools you find that there are lots of problems, but they are socio* [socially] *based. Speaking of… the experience, it has been a boy who had to die on the school premises from a pair of scissors*" **[Zanele, P4]***.*

A review of the existing literature seems to contradict Zanele's view that where the school is based plays a role in how the school will experience violence. The findings show that school violence is not just a problem in cities. All schools and learners in all grade levels are affected by various types of violence, with most learners in townships having to deal with various kinds of violence (Flynn, McDonald, D'Alonzo, Tam & Wiebe, 2018:263).

4.3.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Bullying

Bullying in school is a significant violation of children's human rights, as well as a serious public health concern. The phenomenon has piqued the interest of researchers in industrialised countries, and it has been demonstrated to have severe short- and long-term repercussions for individuals, families, and society (Cornell & Limber 2015:339; Smith, Kilpatrick, Mauerhan, Andrews, Margutti, Fong, Graham, Zheng, Kelly, Filippenko & Fox, 2017:3021; Nickerson, 2019:15).

Bullying is a widespread issue that affects learners, either as perpetrators, victims, or bystanders (Nickerson, 2019:15). Bullying research began over four decades ago, when the phenomenon was defined as "confrontational, malicious actions carried out repetitively and over period by a particular person or group against such a victim who would easily defend himself or herself" (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). To describe aggressive behaviour as bullying, the behaviour must be: (1) recurring, (2) deliberate, (3) and involve and unequal distribution of power (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017:240).

Wandile spoke of bullying as follows: *"…if perhaps there is a disagreement, they resort to violence in solving disagreements… sometimes it happens that one learner*

would pick a victim and that victim would be subjected to bullying, which would subsequently become a violence towards that victim. That has been my experience" **[Wandile, P2]**.

Literature posits that conflicts are normal, natural, and necessary in human relationships. However, the problem is not necessarily the existence of conflict, but how it is managed by the individuals involved (Bourne, Clarke-Christian, Sharpe-Pryce, Hudson-Davis & Francis, 2015:1). Similarly, disagreements indicate that opposing viewpoints exist. Conflicts arise when one party insists that the other party share their point of view, or when individuals demand that others think about things in the same way they do (Johnson, 2020:1).

Tumisho emphasised that bullying is the nature of SBV: *"My experience is on the nature of the school-based violence… a lot of what we call bullying. Bullying is the type of violence that is there and again the violence that is against the teachers, because in some of the institutions you will find that there is still the issue of corporal punishment and that may lead to teachers and learners fighting"* **[Tumisho, P5]**.

The findings above indicate that whenever there is a conflict, learners engage in violence to resolve it and, as Göksoy and Argon (2016:202) corroborate with findings from their study, it can be considered an indicator that the parties involved in the conflict resolution process are inefficient in problem-solving and making use of dialogue that occurs during the conflict process. Some authors add that once individuals fail to communicate effectively, it means that the process of communication is incomplete, because understanding has not been achieved (Bourne et al, 2015:10). Misunderstood messages can cause disagreements and increase the likelihood of conflict.

Zanele identified bullying as a form of SBV and added that bullying could be directed towards both learners and teachers: *"…it's difficult to teach a class where there is one child who bullies almost everybody – the teacher and the learners"* **[Zanele, P4]**.

The extract portrays how bullying can take place in various forms, such as a learner who bullies both the learners and the teachers. Similarly, in the study *"From learner to teacher: personal experiences, beliefs and attitudes about bullying victimisation"*, Moosa (2020:1) posits that if they observe bullying in schools while working as teachers, they may choose to follow a similar path if they are not sufficiently prepared. Nonetheless, they are eager to use their bullying experiences to become assertive teachers and break the cycle of bullying.

The issue of bullying or violence is classified as either physical or psychological violence. The resurgence of body shaming or remarking on a person's physical looks or body is a current phenomenon. This is because teenagers are in a period of self-discovery, so values or standards from the outside, namely the social system, are easily absorbed (Gani & Jalal, 2020:449; Nur' aini, Hermanto & Rohman, 2020:82). The above extracts from literature correspond to Joyce's views: *"It's only the bullying like in terms of maybe body shaming one another and maybe teasing one another because of their family background. Like body shaming, it will be like maybe they call the children sdudla* [the fat one] *or all that. And sometimes maybe boys fighting over girls at their age, young as they are and girls fighting over boys… maybe you would find that there is one punch thrown or whatever, but there has not been a serious case whereby maybe a child threw a stone over or onto another one and whatever"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

Stealing or badmouthing can also be another form of bullying (Mischel & Kitsantas, 2020:51; Van der Ploeg, Steglich & Veenstra, 2020:71). This sentiment was also shared by one participant as follows: *"…they are stealing from each other or talking badly about each other. That is most of the things that we experience at school"* **[Shona, P11]**.

A consensus was reached between literature and Shona's sentiments, since they agree that bullying can also be in the form of learners stealing from each other (Jambi, 2020:38). It is further confirmed that stealing among learners has also been identified as a prevalent concern in studies on misbehaviour in schools (Shabalala, 2016:86).

4.3.2   Theme 2: Educators' experiences of the victims of school-based violence

After describing their experiences of SBV, the educators were asked about their perceptions of the victims of SBV. The responses are discussed under two sub-themes, namely: (i) victims are timid, weak, or different; and (ii) victims can become perpetrators.

4.3.2.1   Sub-theme 2.1: Victims are timid, weak, or different

Personality traits reflect a person's distinctive thought patterns, emotions, and behaviours (Diener & Lucas, 2021). Moreover, personality characteristics differentiate inherent distinctive tendencies that may affect behaviour and experiences (Kulig, Cullen, Wilcox & Chouhy, 2019:180).

The victims of SBV seem to possess certain characteristics which make them prone to being victimised by the perpetrators. The participants suggest that it easier for the perpetrators to spot their targets due to them having such characteristics. Some of the participants described the victims of SBV as being learners who are timid, weak, or different.

According to the findings of the study, there is a relationship between the characteristics of the victims of SBV and their personality traits. Some of the characteristics, such as appearing to be weak, timid, or different, make one susceptible to becoming a victim of SBV. Wandile articulated this as follows: *"The victims in most cases… become withdrawn, you know, because of the intimidation. They normally don't come up to report the violence, because of the intimidation by the perpetrator…"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

Researchers similarly posit that victimisation can contribute to low self-esteem, social alienation from fellow students, and symptoms of depression, including withdrawal (Choe, Srisarajivakul & Davis, 2021:1; Chou, Wang, Hsiao, Hu & Yen, 2020:9). Moreover, Gordon (2020:1) argues that according to another study, 64% of students who were abused never notified anybody about it. Even when injuries happened, 40% of bullied students failed to report the altercation due to them fearing intimidation from the perpetrator.

Some of the signs of SBV in the victims include feelings of being dissatisfied and unhappy. They want to protect the perpetrator, because they fear intimidation from them. These feelings are a theme that emerged while interviewing the educators. Unathi also referred to some victims feeling intimidated and not wanting anything to happen to the perpetrator: *"The victims feel aggrieved, they are not happy. Some of them come and they will talk immediately; some of them do not. Some of them go home and they will hold for a while. They would talk to the parents or to their siblings and the school gets notified via that route. But a lot of the children when they feel aggrieved, they do not want something to happen to the perpetrator"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Shona said: *"Others they are so shy that they can't retaliate, they also have developed a low self-esteem… If the learner is the shy learner, he won't even come to you as a teacher and report"* **[Shona, P11].**

According to the School-Based Violence Report (SACE, 2011:12), it appears that the difficulty experienced when trying to report stems from the stigmatisation of the problem, where the victim may believe that the case was not sufficient to justify reporting it; experience a sense of shame, guilt, or secrecy in relation to the violent act; fear retaliatory attacks; be hindered by unsuccessful reporting procedures and systems; and have no one to turn to for support due to the possible absence of caregivers.

With regard to the personality traits of the victims of SBV, one participant had this to share: *"Mostly the victims you will find that they are those learners who are introverts… They lack the self-confidence; you know they can't fight for themselves. It is like they are just scared, or they are not used to being assertive, standing up for themselves. So, then that is how they normally fall victims, and you find that they keep quiet for a long time. Like it would have been going on and on before they could speak about it"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

Tumisho identified how some learners are extroverts and others are introverts, and this can determine how they react in class. He said: *"It may be amongst the learners, the learners themselves… there are those that are introverts and those that are*

extroverts. In a class some of the learners you would find that they are comedians in nature. When you make a comment maybe or you make a joke with someone with the problem, you don't know how they feel, and they might erupt and cause some sort of a scene and violence erupts that way. So, there are so many ways in which I think violence starts because of that lack of communication skills…" **[Tumisho, P5]**.

Literature attests that amongst learners there are extroverts who are comedians and improvisation is defined as when individuals are doing something unexpected and imaginative to adjust themselves under pressure in order to accomplish specific aims. The fundamental goal of improvisational comedy is, after all, to make the audience giggle (Hodge & Ratten, 2015). Furthermore, extroverts are more prone than introverts to engage in violent or immoral conduct (Dossey, 2016:151). Communication and social skills are lacking in some learners. As a result, they are unable to converse calmly with teachers and colleagues, as confirmed by literature (Alzyoud et al, 2016:231).

Rose had this to say: *"And now there are extroverts that… would be constantly bullying introvert learners and that will lead to violence, because at the end of the day… the introvert now fights with the extrovert"* **[Rose, P7]**.

According to Diener and Lucas (2021:278), personal characteristics, such as being an introvert and lacking confidence, makes a child prone to becoming a victim of SBV. This further links in with the perspective or input as provided by Joyce. The educators were asked about their experiences of the victims of SBV. They provided accounts of their daily experiences working within the school setting. The educators' seemed to support the notion that victims of SBV can be easily identified through certain characteristics, such as being withdrawn and being absent from school often, which highlights their dissatisfaction.

Hlompho responded in this way: *"Let me start with the victims. You know it makes them to be withdrawn and you will see it through absenteeism, they don't like coming to school…"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Similarly, literature confirms that there is a link between absenteeism and violence in learners (Sahin, Arseven & Kiliç, 2016:196). Chronic absenteeism is associated with several risky behaviours, including substance abuse, violence, physical injury, suicide, displaying sexually explicit behaviour at a young age, childbearing, and subsequent dropout (Wilda 2013:1; Sahin et al, 2016:196). Another study found that many students do not feel safe or supported at school and are bullied, which might also contribute to high absenteeism (Pampati, Andrzejewski, Sheremenko, Johns, Lesesne & Rasberry 2020:302).

4.3.2.2   Sub-theme 2.2: Victims can become perpetrators

The participants reported that there seems to be a thin line where victims move from being victims to being perpetrators. This was explained by others as the cycle of violence, where young victims grow and develop to become perpetrators in the future. Learners learn from the behaviour of others and they emulate what they see; the acts they imitate can be bad or good. Educators also spoke of how victims of SBV can become perpetrators of violence.

Wandile spoke of how victims can become perpetrators: *"…school-based violence creates a vicious cycle in a sense that the victim also becomes a perpetrator subsequently, because they would also think this is the bad thing to do or let me also pick up a victim, so it becomes a vicious cycle"* **[Wandile, P2]***.*

In an Australian study, which is titled *'Why do Victims become Perpetrators of Peer Bullying? Moral Disengagement in the Cycle of Violence'*, the findings reveal that there is congruence between victimisation and bullying perpetration, and social and motivating factors are acknowledged to moderate this correlation (Falla, Ortega-Ruiz, Runions & Romera 2020). Data from a study by Averdijk, Malti, Eisner, Ribeaud and Farrington (2016:177) supports the existence of a "vicious cycle of peer victimization," in which victimisation can lead to perpetration, owing in part to the effect victimisation has on children's coping methods, especially internalising symptoms and aggressiveness.

Hlompho echoed the same perception: *"…and at times they* [the victims] *become bullies as well, because if they are not protected by the system which is school*

policies and the enforcing of the school policies… let me give you a practical example of what we once experienced. There is… this shocking torch [an electroshock weapon]*… that you put on the neck of a person and then the person gets shocked… at one time we confiscated it from the child and when the child was interviewed, because that thing exploded at the assembly, the child said no, so-and-so is bullying me and I saw my father using this thing on a cow and I was going to use it to protect myself. So, if you do not protect the victim earlier on, you are running a risk of having a very, very serious incident that might lead to death, because at times victims resort to protecting themselves"* **[Hlompho, P9]***.*

It is generally recognised that victims of bullying may eventually become bullies themselves (Choi & Park, 2018:2414). However, addressing violence with violence just encourages more aggression, and the cycle becomes difficult to break (Lee 2018). Additionally, authors argue that a child who is victimised at such a young age is more likely to become involved in the cycle of violence, becoming a victim and/or perpetrator of violence on a regular basis (SACE, 2011:30; Plummer & Cossins 2018:286; Belyh, 2019).

Consequently, some learners feel safe by aligning with gangs: *"…and they* [victims] *can also at times form gangs so that they can help one another to fight against the perpetrator"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Consistent with the findings above, Hoosen (2020:21) argues that learners who have experienced SBV are more likely to become gang members and engage in gangsterism. Moreover, Parker (2018:115) adds that marginalised young persons find the acknowledgement they seek by joining gangs.

4.3.3   Theme 3: Educators' experiences of the perpetrators of SBV
In an interview with the educators, they expressed that the perpetrators of SBV can be viewed in four ways: (i) perpetrators do not do well at school; (ii) perpetrators have more than one victim and do not want to take responsibility; (iii) perpetrators bring the violence from home to the school environment; and (iv) educators are also perpetrators.

4.3.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Perpetrators do not do well at school

Bullying was found to be substantially related to low academic performance (AlBuhairan et al 2017:63). For instance, learners may miss lessons and, in some cases, leave school to escape retaliation and/or because of scholastic difficulties (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017:28; Burton & Leoschut, 2013:40).

Literature posits that those who were subjected to physical abuse had a greater chance of performing poorly in school (AlBuhairan et al, 2017:61; Hecker, Dumke, Neuner & Masath, 2021:3). Additionally, researchers Wang, Zhang, Hui, Bai, Terry, Ma, Li, Cheng, Gu & Wang (2018:1) argue that school bullying is related to lower self-esteem, although the psychosocial mediators of bullying remain unclear on this matter. The body of knowledge seems to endorse that most perpetrators are challenged academically and are frustrated with their academic performance.

It was the view of some of the participants that perpetrators of SBV do not perform well at school. One participant, Unathi, had this to say: *"…they* [perpetrators] *don't understand academic work and they actually feel they are behind; they are not that clever as compared to other kids. That could also spark violence – the whole thing of not being understood"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Another participant, Rose, also identified poor school performance as a cause: "*My experiences with kids that are often bullies often don't want to come to school and they often perform very poorly, because they are emotionally affected by the abuse… most of the perpetrators are also not doing well academically. So, the reason why some other kids bully the victims could be that they are not doing well so they are frustrated with their academics and then they end up bullying other kids and that makes them feel good about themselves. And when this thing goes on, they end up just dropping out of school, same as the victims"* **[Rose, P7].**

Similarly, literature attests to the challenges encountered by the educators, emphasising that most of the perpetrators of SBV struggle to understand their academic work (Devries, Child, Allen, Walakira, Parkes & Naker 2014:129; AlBuhairan et al 2017:63). These authors also contend that perpetrators who missed

school through violent behaviour or who have become violent tend to struggle academically.

There seems to be a certain characteristic that perpetrators of SBV are likely to exhibit. According to the researchers of *'Students' Perceptions of Characteristics of Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying in Public Schools in Jordan'* (Al Ali, Gharaibeh & Masadeh, 2017:48), a bully is often "a pathetic loser on the inside (78.9%), lacking respect for others (70%), wanting to show authority (67.5%), wanting to impress others (60.8%), and wanting to feel superior (59.6%)."

Another participant, Joyce, gave an account of her experiences with these perpetrators as follows: *"…in class they are quiet. They are those quiet children but… like academically, they are not performing well, but when it comes to these things, like the naughty part of it that is when they come out. It is like a way of them saying that since I can't do this, this one I will do it better. So, they will also want to be recognised, but the only problem is that they are doing it in a wrong way"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

The extract seems to be consistent with the assertion that perpetrators are all looking for fame or attention, and most of them have been significantly affected by previous attackers (Lankford & Silver, 2020:49). It is evident from the interviews with the educators that the perpetrators seem to have challenges with their studies; however, they seem to find their voice where there is no adult supervision in places such as toilets, playgrounds, or any other place where an adult is not visible. In the classroom they struggle to make sense of their work and they receive little or no recognition at all. Perpetrators need recognition and affirmation from their educators. Since they are not successful within the classroom, they get attention through doing things that are not good, such as through violence and bullying other learners. Violence, particularly physical violence among students and physical violence perpetrated by teachers and other staff, can occur in public places, such as fields or classrooms, or in the context of school athletics (Ferrara et al, 2019:1).

Shona said: "*Some of the things will also be about the performance, maybe I* [the learner] *performed very poorly and then they will tease me, because I performed*

very poorly and then I become the perpetrator. So, I will retaliate like if maybe the learner is an older learner, that learner will also retaliate in almost all the cases" **[Shona, P11]**.

The finding seems to suggest that underachievers are more likely to be aggressive than students who do well in school and are considered "top achievers". Violence in adolescence is often linked to low levels of educational ambition (Ncontsa & Shumba 2013:12; WHO 2019b:41).

4.3.3.2   Sub-theme 3.2: Perpetrators have more than one victim and do not want to take responsibility

Based on the interviews with the participants, it became apparent that the perpetrators are not just satisfied with one victim and they are likely not to accept the responsibility for their behaviour. There seems to be an unending cycle between the victim and the perpetrator. Various participants weighed in on this matter, as presented below.

Wandile explained: *"…and the perpetrator would not have one victim. If they see that they have been successful with one victim, they will obviously go and pick on other victims as well"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

Katlego shared his perception of the perpetrators as follows: "*They are so defensive; you know they can defend themselves. You know learners they have… lying to everybody denying everything that I was not involved. Even when you find them with the evidence, they would tell you they were not part of that, they were not involved"* **[Katlego, P10]**.

Perpetrator responsibility, coupled with victim protection, is now frequently acknowledged as a major aim of preventing SBV (Camp, 2018:1707).

4.3.3.3   Sub-theme 3.3: Perpetrators bring the violence from home to the school environment

Most of the learners learn violence from their homes and they bring their learnt behaviour into the school environment. This can be simply explained as "Monkey

See, Monkey Do", meaning individuals copy certain behaviours that they see without understanding what these behaviours mean (Fieldman, 2021).

Hlompho said: *"…the perpetrators… you find that they are doing what they are doing maybe because of their upbringing, their socioeconomic background. If children come from violent families, they are likely to bring violence to school"* **[Hlompho, P9]***.*

Shona added: *"…children see when the father is drunk, came home, fight with the mother, the children they also develop a fighting spirit. When they come to school, these learners mostly if they are boys, they will fight with the girls, they will tease girls, they will violate the girls, they will talk nastily about them"* **[Shona, P11]**.

Similarly, the findings seem to suggest that the families and home environments in which many children grow up play a role in the involvement of learners in SBV (Burton & Leoschut, 2013:60). In addition, there are various authors that seem to agree that many parents who lack order or have inconsistent rules, who use aggressive and/or contradictory crosslinked structures, and who lack adequate parenting abilities keep raising hostile children (Singh & Steyn 2013:3 ; Al-Sharfi, 2017:1; Lamb, Jarmolinska, Michel, Menéndez-Hurtado, Sulkowska & Elofsson, 2019:2442). Furthermore, excessive doses of hostility and strife, as well as insufficient amounts of stability, are more likely to produce aggressive adolescents.

Joyce said: *"You will find that at home there are those social problems, maybe this learner is experiencing these problems especially with the perpetrators. They are experiencing that at home. It's a way of them saying, you know I want help. You will find that at home maybe the father is abusing the mother, or the child is abused themselves. They are being beaten, you know, anytime they make a mistake the parents are hitting them, they don't negotiate with them, they don't speak with them like, you know sit them down to try and find out what is actually happening. For every mistake, they get the corporal punishment"* **[Joyce, P8].**

Shona had this to say: *"…children who cause violence, they are mostly angry learners. They are angry maybe because they are not well cared for especially by*

the parents. The child comes to school already with anger issues. Others it's because maybe they come from a very disadvantaged family background and then such children they will dress poorly, they will eat food from the feeding scheme. If you eat food from the feeding scheme, they… give those foods nasty names and the other one that is the perpetrator will also get angry and they will fight" **[Shona, P11]***.*

Similarly, authors identify the causes of SBV as emotions of anger, frustration, and aggressiveness, as well as isolation from others (Mthimkhulu, 2015:21). In addition, school feeding programmes may also cause discrimination and social isolation when students (poor children or orphans) receive meals, since it is connected to poverty (Devereux, Hochfeld, Karriem, Mensah, Morahanye, Msimango, Mukubonda, Naicker, Nkomo, Sanders & Sanousi, 2018:6).

4.3.3.4 Sub-theme 3.4: Educators are also perpetrators

The participants' responses indicated that perpetrators of SBV are not only children or learners, but that educators can also be perpetrators.

Tumisho explained this: *"…in terms of learners, you will find that the learners who are actually punished, some of them refuse the instructions of the teachers and sometimes you find that the teacher becomes violent"* **[Tumisho, P5]***.*

In their investigation titled *'Children's Problem Behaviour and Their Effect on Class Activities in Early Childhood Centres of Effutu Municipality'*, Frimpong and Gyapong (2021:1) found that the most common types of negative behaviour teachers encountered with children were violence, non-compliance, destructive nature, reluctance to take instruction, and purposeful destruction of property. Similarly, teachers are in danger of violence because of their frequent encounters with students regarding learning methods and outcomes, as well as student indiscipline. These interactions produce tensions that lead to educators being verbally and physically victimised, especially at the secondary school level (Kgosimore, 2018:17).

Rose also highlighted how teachers' behaviour can impact learners when they have favourites (preferred students) as this can lead, in turn, to SBV. She explained:

"…kids that are [teachers'] *favourites tend to be bullies, because they are made to feel like they are more important to the other ones and that often leads to violence, because now there are those kids that* [are] *introverts and they are just quiet, they are just sitting there doing their own work"* **[Rose, P7].**

Due to teachers having their preferred learners, this is most likely why children who have unfavourable connections with their educators and parents are more prone to being victims (Novikova & Rean, 2019:83). Hence, some authors advise that teachers should strive to be polite to their students, to chat with them, to respect each learner, and to discover something special to adore about each student in their class (Biney 2015:88; Grimova & Van Schalkwyk, 2016:343).

4.3.4 Theme 4: Educators' experiences related to the causes of school-based violence

The educators were also invited to describe their perceptions of the causes of SBV and their responses are discussed under three sub-themes: (i) peer pressure and the desire to belong; (ii) home circumstances; and (iii) the neighbourhood.

4.3.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Peer pressure and the desire to belong

The intrinsic need to belong and be accepted by others makes the learners behave poorly in the quest to gain acceptance and affirmation from their peers. Some of the issues that happened over the weekend spill over into the week. Another perception expressed by some educators was that peer pressure, the desire to belong, and the need to be accepted can be the cause of SBV.

"You know children want to be cool. They want to be cool or want to be part of the group… to be part of the group is very important to children" **[Bongani, P3]**.

Similarly, literature posits that affiliation with a group, described as a sense of belonging and incorporation of collective efficacy into self-identity, encourages followers to provide material and psychological resources to the group, as well as generating a preference for fellow group members over outsiders (Littman & Paluck, 2015:89). A sense of belonging plays a crucial role within children and, as a result, belonging to a group is a lucrative opportunity which provides security for them.

According to Howell (2015:178), gangs garner a huge amount of attention. Peer influence is seen as one factor contributing to children joining gangs and they also perform dares to become part of the gangs, as explained by the participants below.

"Normally the causes [are] *the peer pressure, you know because they also have gangs… they would bet to say if you can do this and this and that and then you will be part of us. And then that shows that you are man enough, especially with the boys… most of them they do it because of peer pressure"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

Hlompho said: *"Peer pressure, you would find that some people do that to impress friends… when it's gangsterism, you would find that this other person belongs to this group and the other person belongs to that group. You might find that they even bring the fights that started over the weekend, outside the schoolyard, within the school premises… we used to have children called Skhothane… they dance, and they burn clothes… so whatever they shall have done over the weekend, on Monday they come and start that in class. And similarly, even girls are bullies, and you find that they are fighting over boys at school and then they are doing that in groups. And girls as well, especially issues of boys, gossip is where you come across girls' violence from"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

In an article titled '*Pressure to be cool and look good is detrimental to many children',* Hakner (2015) states that having 'cool stuff' and looking good are frequently cited as the best ways to become much more widely known among a peer group. Research by Costello and Hope (2016:113), in their book *'Peer pressure, peer prevention: The role of friends in crime and conformity',* supports the views of Joyce and Hlompho that the cause of crime is normally peer pressure. They emphasise that most learners participate in violence to impress their peers. Furthermore, peer pressure and the level of students' attachment to school were considered to have a significant negative relationship. Peer pressure and the quality of school life are important justifications for the point of bonding to school (Toraman & Aycicek 2019:76). In her book *'Bullies and Mean Girls in Popular Culture',* Oppliger (2013:19) agrees with Hlompho that girls are also bullies. Due to societal norms that view girls as "nice" and not as violent, and discourage them from expressing their opinions,

girls may apply strategies that are more sophisticated and less observable to adults and their peers. This resonates with the inputs of the participants that even though society views girls as non-violent, they have developed strategies to hide their behaviour when they are being violent.

4.3.4.2   Sub-theme 4.2: Home circumstances

It is important to note that as children may be involved in more than one community or microsystem (at school, at home, and in the community), they are subject to the influences of these different ecosystems (Botha & Kourkoutas, 2016:788). The home circumstances of learners were cited by educators as a causative factor in SBV. Below the participants gave their view in terms of the role of the home.

The situation of a child being bullied at home by parents and copying this behaviour by bullying other children at school was identified as a cause of SBV by Unathi: *"Sometimes we have home situations that are really bad. You know parents who expect a lot and who are bullies, so they bully the kid. The kid then bullies other kids"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Literature confirms that the causes of school bullying may be traced to the circumstances in the family (Mampane 2018:183; Wolhuter & Van der Walt, 2020:2; Obilor & Miwari 2021:138). Authors argue that exposure to violence in the family is a major predictor of a child's aggressive behaviour (Kithonga & Mbogo, 2018:546). Children who witness violence are more likely to normalise violence and regard it as acceptable. For example, when children who have companions who engage in violence observe their aggressive behaviour, it may inspire those young people to embrace violence as well (Maphosa, 2018:60).

Bongani shared some insights as to how violence begins in the following manner: *"…how they* [learners] *deal with violence can start at the house. You know, the gender-based violence and all of those things that they have experienced how to deal with conflict inside the house as well"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Tumisho supported Bongani's perception by stating: *"…you find that they* [perpetrators] *are from families that are actually broken, and you know when the*

family is broken it becomes a problem, because the kid sees the violence that is actually happening at home. Some of the kids you find that when the learners are violent, we invite the parents, and we realise that the problem starts at home. So that is how the problems in terms of the perpetrators are happening" **[Tumisho, P5]**.

Fisani mentioned learners involved in SBV may have anger issues that emanate from their home circumstances: *"Maybe you might find that there are some anger issues which come from home, and you should do an investigation regarding that to get to the bottom of the anger issues… if it's quite severe… we have a meeting with the parents. You might find that the mother of, or the parents are divorced, or they are separating, or the learner grew up without knowing the father"* **[Fisani, P6]**.

The extracts seem to be consistent with the assertion that anger and violent behaviours amongst learners can also stem from home (Akan, 2021:514). Literature confirms that broken families present numerous life problems to children, such as deficiencies in mental development by making them afraid or depressed, which can persist for a few years after their parents have divorced (Adu-Okoree, Sedegah & Parku, 2020:16). Similarly, home tension, family strife, or parental conflict all contribute to an emotionally uncomfortable atmosphere in the home. If the connection between the husband and wife, between parents and children, or between siblings is not friendly, it can lead to problems, particularly between the husband and wife, including violence (Chike 2020:88; Okafor & Egenti 2021:145; Alaku, Bodang & Ogundele 2021:32).

Some participants have shared the same sentiments that the type of household that the child grows up in plays a vital role in who the child becomes. It can be simply explained as violence begets violence. The participants listed various factors, such as strong emotions, that contribute towards SBV from their perspective.

Rose shared her sentiments as follows: *"My experience is that it always starts with the kind of family that a child is exposed to. Very often a child that comes from a family that is exposed to a lot of violence will probably be a bully or would probably be angry. But it also has a lot of factors that have to do with emotions, anger, and such things"* **[Rose, P7]**.

Authors contend that some of the family members are the reason for the violent behaviour, since they encourage this violent behaviour, and it results in dysfunctional families that do not develop the child's empathy. Due to family members' lack of commitment, a sense of inferiority and resentment can occur (Seif El-Nasr, 2017:43). In addition, children who grow up around armed conflict usually become violent in future (Garbarino, Governale & Nesi, 2020:2).

Disciplinary action might be beneficial or bad (Kubeka, 2018:93). Negative discipline includes punishing the offender, whereas positive discipline attempts to influence the person to act differently. Discipline is essential for effective teaching and learning, because the learning environment must be free of disruptive behaviour from learners (Kubeka, 2018:93). One participant shared the following in this regard:

"…it could be the social issues from home, the background at home. How they are raised, how are problems solved at home… are they shouted at, are they beaten?" **[Joyce, P8]**.

In a South African study which focused on gaining an understanding of the change in a parenting programme, caregivers identified that they did not know how to communicate effectively with their teenagers without shouting (Doubt, Bray, Loening-Voysey, Cluver, Byrne, Nzima, King, Shenderovich, Steinert & Medley, 2017:776). Similarly, a Kazakhstan study, which highlighted measures that can be employed to curb violence at schools, found that most adults preferred corporal punishment as a form of discipline (Balpeisova, Maydangalieva, Summers & Utemissova, 2019:16).

Hlompho identified lack of parental guidance as one of the factors that causes SBV: *"If you find that… the child is an orphan and then he is raised by male figures who are brothers who are on alcohol or on something or child- headed families, you will find that those children fend for themselves. They believe that everything that they want to achieve, they themselves must sort it. If it's about food, at times they might not know what to go and eat. You find that they are doing, they are working in car washes and those, so they are working. So even if they have got any problems,*

social problems that they come across, they think they will sort it themselves, they do not rely on the other person to help them" **[Hlompho, P9].**

Katlego described his feelings and experiences in this way: *"Because remember I said that some of the things they came from home because lack of parenting, because majority of parents are working hard, they don't have time to supervise their kids, so they end up considering others as their role models. Because you know that those are young, those are children, because whatever or anything that they learn from others. So, some of them they end up coming to school without taking their breakfast and when they arrive there, they start harassing everyone, they start stealing the breakfast from other learners"* **[Katlego, P10]**.

The findings seem to resonate with those of a study on family variables that influence adolescent violence, which found that parental supervision and performance affect adolescent socialisation and behavioural development (Ramezankhani, Vedahir, Alhani & Mohammadkhah, 2021). Collaboration with parents is characterised as one of the main criteria for excellent teaching through the development of parent-teacher relationships and school ties (Berčnik & Devjak, 2017:212).

4.3.4.3   Sub-theme 4.3: The neighbourhood

The neighbourhood was viewed as one of the contributing factors of SBV. The role models within the community have the ability influence the learners either positively or negatively. In some communities the learners learn behaviours such as aggression, which is not good for the learners to emulate. The educators referred to the fact that the learners are living in neighbourhoods where violence is prevalent as one of the causes of SBV.

Wandile's perceptions of the causes of SBV focused on what is happening in the learners' neighbourhood and the lack of good role models: *"The causes of the school-based violence* [silence and thinking] …*learners assimilate what they see from the community. If a community don't role model how to solve problems or indicate to learners that a bullying and violence is not a way of solving problems, we are unable as communities to teach our learners what is called restorative justice if there is any disagreement between two people. There must be an amicable way of*

solving the problems, so the thing is the values that a school approaches is not a value that any community would absorb… look up to or raise this formally announced processes with the school. So, there is a clash between, there is no synergy between a school and a community" **[Wandile, P2]**.

Hlompho alluded to the fact that the neighbourhood should look deeper and pay attention to other factors, such as the type of the neighbourhood in which the school is based: *"…given the environment where our school is situated. Remember, our school is quintile one situated in… underprivileged communities"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Bongani mentioned the socioeconomic circumstances of the children as being a cause of SBV: *"School-based violence can stem from the social economic circumstances of some children… sometimes children take things that* [don't] *belong to them, and people get angry. So, violence does occur if when students have taken things doesn't belong to people"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Zanele identified poverty as one of the causes of SBV: *"I think mostly it's poverty, because some of them they will be fighting, like the case that I have indicated earlier on, they were fighting over a school bag, a Nike school bag. So, all learners wish to have that school bag which is branded, but not all of them will be able to attain it, and if they can't attain what they do is they steal. And if they don't steal, they end up selling drugs in the school premises, they become peddlers and when they are peddlers there are challenges around that, because the one who is the kingpin will be receiving money from them. If in case someone in the school takes the goods without payment then that starts the violence in the school"* **[Zanele, P4]**.

Poverty has been connected to criminal conduct in both theory and research studies (Savage, Ellis & Woznaik, 2019:384). When adults and children at the bottom of society are left out in the cold for themselves, they will turn to violence as a reasonable response.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Educators' accounts of how the school manages school-based violence

The participating educators were asked to explain how the school manages SBV. Their accounts of how the school manages SBV are discussed under five sub-themes, namely: (i) preventive measures; (ii) talk to learners and/or involve parents/social workers; (iii) intervention programmes at school and in the community; and (iv) disciplinary measures.

4.3.5.1 Sub-theme 5.1: Preventive measures

According to Crawford and Burns (2015:644), preventive measures implemented within the school setting in various districts involve numerous procedures, ranging from the typical practice of secured access to extreme measures of having armed personnel. Moreover, prevention efforts should eventually reduce risk factors while promoting prevention strategies at these various levels of influence (Mncube & Steinmann, 2014:209). Participants explained how their school implements several preventive measures to prevent and curtail SBV. These are divided into three categories, namely: (a) policies and guidelines; and (b) security measures.

(a) Category 5.1.1: Policies and guidelines

A code of conduct sets out a framework for what is regarded as proper learner behaviour when engaging in academic and non-academic activities, explains Mlalazi, Rembe and Shumba (2016:444). In addition, Kyriakides, Creemers, Antoniou, Demetriou and Charalambous (2015:113) argue that school policy is also represented in different papers produced on a continuous basis by the school administration team, such as the minutes of teaching staff meetings and announcements, or instructions given to teachers and/or parents by normal mail or via the website. Moreover, policy processes investigate the many steps of the policy-making mechanism. One participant explained that the school has a code of conduct with which learners are expected to comply.

Bongani said: *"…we have a code of conduct at school that shifts out to different levels of violence"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Tumisho emphasised the importance of the code of conduct and how it is used: *"But the first thing that happens is the school has a code of conduct, and the code of conduct should actually be drawn up with the contribution of the parents, the learners, the teachers, all the stakeholders. So that at the end of the day it binds everyone so that when there is something that happens, there are steps that are supposed to be taken. So, I think our school manages it very well because of that, because we refer them to the code of conduct and at the beginning of each year, each class teacher reads the code of conduct to the learners just to remind them as it will be timeously amended to remind them about what are the expectations from them as learners and what are the expectations from all the stakeholders. So that when you do something that is wrong you know exactly that what I am doing is wrong, then when you act out committing violence, you will be committing it knowing exactly that what you are doing is wrong and when the due processes of discipline are taken, they will be taken with the knowledge that you have read and understood the code of conduct"* **[Tumisho, P5]**.

Literature affirms that the code of conduct or standards should consider the overall benefit of the stakeholders, while also protecting the interests of individuals (Tourani, Adams & Serebrenik, 2017:25). Radebe (2019) advises that SGBs should consider including learner representatives in the development and execution of the code of conduct for learners. This might help to reduce indiscipline in schools. Secondly, the school's code of conduct is a legally binding document that all students are obligated to adhere to. This means that the students are constantly being informed of the school's regulations, with the aim to influence their behaviour at school. Therefore, educators should engage in a variety of ways of implementing the code of conduct to maintain good discipline in schools, including reminding students about the code of conduct at registration and every day before lessons begin (Mlalazi et al, 2016).

Wandile emphasised the importance of constantly reminding students about the code of conduct: "*We also talk to them* [learners] *about violence in terms of our learners' code of conduct. We also inform them in assemblies that violence is not permitted at school. We do not allow learners to violate the rights of other learners and each term we usually have a pep talk where we speak and impress on learners that violence is not allowed in school"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

Hlompho also reiterated that learners are reminded about the importance of adhering to the code of conduct: *"…every time when we do new admission of learners, we call what we call parent assembly. At the parent assembly we request them to bring along the kids, we take them through* [the] *school code of conduct, explain to them and encourage parents to read it with learners at home. But in the first week when we re-open, we do the same exercise. You remember first day at school the teacher would be doing registers and all that stuff, and we provide an hour or two hours. Sometimes we block from 08h00 to 10h00 for a class teacher to spend time with learners to explain to them the school code of conduct, how it works, and then also deal with children's acts that explain issues around activities that would then lead to bullying…"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Literature confirms that school assemblies would aid in engendering and updating school-wide awareness of the requirements of the school's code of conduct (Esliger, 2017:71). In addition, a study conducted in Ghana also recommends that talks and discussions about the code of conduct should be organised regularly by instructors, educators, and counsellors (Agu, Brown, Adamu-Issah & Duncan, 2018:135).

Another participant also alluded to the school policies to curb bullying within the school environment: *"We have the school policy; we have the school code of conduct that addresses all the things depending on the thing, because this one is a serious one in terms of bullying. It's a zero tolerance to bullying…"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

A study conducted in the United States of America (USA) affirms the point of view of Joyce that the Zero Tolerance Policy was adopted and designed to exclude students who pose a risk to a learning institution. The goal of developing this policy was to aid schools in developing effective techniques to police student behaviour by utilising harsh punitive proceedings, resulting in a secure learning environment (Alnaim 2018:1). On the other hand, other researchers contend that zero tolerance policies are inherently discriminatory, resulting in the expulsion of troubled individuals from school for a variety of offenses (Bleakley & Bleakley, 2018:254).

(b)   Category 5.1.2: Security measures

The goal of implementing security measures is to improve safety and keep schools from becoming susceptible to internal and external threats. Thus, a safe school is just a guarded school. A secure school will encourage free intellectual exercise while readily mitigating both simple and powerful potential threats (Alimba, 2018:47). Moreover, schools are progressively adopting a variety of security measures to guarantee student safety, including security guards, weapons screening, ingress and evacuation procedures, fire alarms, emergency lights, and school disciplinary rules (Garibaldi & Josias, 2015:1592). School security measures are functional techniques that are implemented in schools to safeguard and manage crime. Participants described how schools prevent SBV by implementing certain security measures, such as undertaking random searches, limiting access to the school, employing security guards, and installing cameras.

The involvement of police officers in schools is a popular way to safeguard school safety (Homer & Fisher, 2020:193). The police generally believe that school violence is a social issue that needs all stakeholders to work together to build a healthy learning and teaching atmosphere (Basic Education Assembly Committee, 2019).

Hlompho referred to police searches: *"In a term, we do what we call random search, we invite police, sniffer dogs, we invite police, they come to school to search"* **[Hlompho, P9]***.* He also referred to a police van that patrols the neighbourhood: *"…in the neighbourhood where we live there would be a police van that would be assigned that would passed by in the neighbourhood maybe every three hours for visibility. So, at schools we have got like that. We have got a SAPS member who works with us, we have got a SAPS policing van that comes around the school"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Bongani referred to the specific role of the police within the school environment: *"At the moment we do have a very big relationship with the South African Police Services. They also take instruction that they give to schools and so when there's any danger, school-violence problems or violence, it's getting out of hand, we call* [the police]*"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Zanele also mentioned the role of police: *"We do have the policing forum that is involved, there is Adopt-a-Cop and… whenever there are issues, we call them in…* [and take them for a visit to] *to the prison. But some parents don't want their kids to go there because they will be saying 'why are you taking my child there?'. But then that one is a precautionary measure so that they can see that fighting or doing any other thing is not good for them. But unfortunately, some parents don't see it that way. They don't want their kids to go there, and they don't have the experience of what is happening and if you carry on fighting and bullying other people"* **[Zanele, P4]**.

Community policing is a comprehensive, individualised police concept in which the same officer patrols and operates in the same area on a continuous basis, from a localised location, in collaboration with residents in order to assess and monitor problems (Aliyu, 2018:36). In addition, Katlego shared the following: *"…the Department of Education deployed the CPF* [Community Policing Forum] *and the CPF they are assisting us when it comes to that kind of violence at schools because, firstly, they search learners at the gate to check whether they have come with illegal things such as daggas and other dangerous weapons such as knives…"* **[Katlego, P10]**.

Consistent with the findings above, a study conducted in Fort Gale and Southernwood (two communities in Mthatha, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa) found that the CPF is an effective strategy for crime prevention, and its efficacy is fairly clear. Moreover, the data shows that the public in both locations is better educated about community policing (Noma, 2019:v). Similarly, another South African study conducted in the Limpopo Province revealed that the community and the police continue to work together to combat crime in their region, since the Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 200 of 1993) required that a CPF be created in each and every police station so that they may solve crimes cooperatively (Malatji, 2016:iv).

4.3.5.2 Sub-theme 5.2: Talk to learners and/or involve parents/social workers

It is advised that parents, authorities, and partners from the social, educational, and healthcare sectors work closely together to prevent SBV (Schulte- Körne, 2016:183). Educators spoke of how they talk to the victim and perpetrator and involve the parents and the social worker in cases where the school employs a social worker.

The findings of the analysis conducted in a South African study reveal that educators advocate the employment of professional support, such as school social workers and counsellors, as an essential and feasible strategy to instil discipline in the classroom (Masingi, 2017:80).

Unathi alluded to the role of social workers within the school environment: *"…when I notice that something is happening, the first thing that I do is I take the kid out and I set up a meeting and I ask our counsellor* [social worker] *to do an initial enquiry into the situation to get what is it what is going on here… we are their teachers; we would like to be aware of their* [learners'] *issues; however, we are not equipped in assisting learners professionally... And obviously we set up sessions with the counsellor* [social worker]*"* **[Unathi, P1]***.*

Bongani added: "*Sometimes it's easier for children to speak to somebody else like a social worker than basically speaking to the teachers"* **[Bongani, P3]***.*

Joyce provided clarity in terms of the procedures and guidelines followed: *"…there is the disciplinary committee from the teachers' side together with the parents. We do have a disciplinary committee that deals with issues such as SBV… we have the school counsellor* [social worker] *who is involved with perpetrators to make them aware that this is a school. We need to make it a conducive environment for everyone… From the teacher side, we will have the disciplinary committee and then as I said we also involve the counsellor"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

A study conducted in Minnesota highlighted that schools should permit school social workers to use their knowledge, expertise, and skills to aid the school in preventive and intervention strategies for SBV (Staples, 2016:8). In addition, an analysis in Botswana argues that every one of the teachers who took part in the survey (100%) agreed that there is an essential necessity for social workers in the educational system.

Bongani expressed the inclusive approach of dealing with victims, perpetrators, and bystanders: *"We try and deal with these situations over one-on-one with the learners involved and any witnesses around. Also dealing with the witnesses on the emotional front. We sit them down and have meetings with perpetrators, with the victims…"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

Fisani said: "*We have got a counsellor* [social worker]. *We have got a team of teachers teaching and a grade head, who is responsible for a learner who is involved in violence, whether it was a fight or starting violence or whatever… the grade head must first investigate… whether the learner will be referred to the school counsellor and the deputy principal and they work together. They have got some systems in place which was developed last year, late last year, to deal with those learners who have some anger issues or who is always fighting*" **[Fisani, P6]***.*

Another South African study seems to support the assertion that school counsellors or school social workers are qualified professionals who should assume their due roles and be used to the best of their abilities to meet the needs of students (Daniels, 2013:7).

After an incident of violence, most participants explained that the children's parents are then contacted and involved: *"And then from there on we involve the parents"* **[Bongani, P3]**. Unathi supported this: *"Once she* [the social worker] *has done the initial enquiry, we usually contact parents…"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

When a violent incident occurs, there are certain procedures and protocols that are undertaken by educators, as explained by the participants. The participants further highlighted some of the frustrations that the educators endure due to uncooperative

parents and policies that expect educators to behave in a certain manner despite parents not showing up.

Zanele said: *"If it's a fight in the classroom, we usually call the parents, both parents to come and discuss it. But you find that in calling the parents some parents do not even turn up and according to the South African Schools Act* [84 of 1996] *you are not able to be… questioning when the parent is not there. So, you end up not knowing what to do at the end of the day. But usually we try to make them aware of that they are not supposed to be fighting guided by the code of conduct. But you know the parents will look at the loophole in the code of conduct and they will use it against the school just to avoid taking initiative"* **[Zanele, P4]**.

4.3.5.3 Sub-theme 5.3: Intervention programmes at school and in the community

Programmes that aim to prevent direct physical or verbal bullying, rehabilitate basic social skills like empathy or perspective-taking, and employ direct teaching or skills reinforcement may be beneficial for younger elementary school learners (Yeager, Fong, Lee & Espelage, 2015:7). Researchers argue that teachers, administrators, and experts should work together to create and organise programmes that address numerous environmental factors. This safe space indirectly influences educators and students to create a favourable learning culture, which has a good impact on their mood state while at school. In other words, educators who are very fulfilled and happy at school provide their support and teaching dedication as well, and it results in the improvement of learners' academic progress (Khun-inkeeree, Yaakob, WanHanafi, Yusof & Omar-Fauzee, 2021:568). The educators mentioned and explained that their school runs a variety of programmes to assist learners and educators, in order to manage SBV.

Unathi had this to say in terms of the committee and programmes provided: *"…we have a programme to curb bullying. Because you have got to try, you can't just let things lie. So, we are very proactive, and from the other side we notified our wellness committee, which has just started, and there we bring in our wellness committee to work with the perpetrators as well as the victims"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Another participant also referred to support programmes for victims and perpetrators: *"Learners that have psycho-social related issues are usually referred to the school social worker who through the SBST provides learners with support, such as counselling or referring them to outside organisation specialising with a particular challenge of the learner"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

SBSTs refers to teams formed by public schools with the primary aim of putting in place coordinated school, learner, and teacher assistance. The school principal provides leadership for the SBST to ensure that the school becomes an integrated source of learning, care, and support (DBE, 2014:x). Furthermore, SBSTs include, but are not limited to, educators with specialised knowledge and abilities in areas such as guidance, counselling, or learning support, as well as other personnel such as administrators and students (Hess 2020:26).

Open communication and collaboration seem to be crucial for behaviour modification and would assist to emphasise the support and guidance provided to the students and stakeholders by the school (Lingenfelter & Hartung, 2015:272). Unathi shared similar sentiments: *"Open communication channels and through our programmes that we run on awareness. And making sure that the children are able to change their habits and let them know that if you feel like abused, you could do X, Y and Z. There are ways in which you deal with anger and… the last resort is violence, that is a NO-NO. We don't solve anything through violence and that is what we focus on"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Rose spoke of a programme she runs with learners: *"In my school I am running a group called Sober Leads. I meet with different age groups, different classes, different grades on different days every day of the week. So, for instance, Monday is the day for Grade 4s and the Wednesday it's a day for Grade 5s… And then we talk about issues like self-love, self-worth, because we have realised that these kids are not sometimes only angry, but sometimes they are exposed to these things and they don't know how to, they have never been loved. And maybe if we start from an early age, especially in primary school where we teach a child to value themselves and to love themselves, they will have more respect for the next person. For instance, if you truly say that you love yourself and you respect yourself, you*

wouldn't go to, you wouldn't violate somebody else, because when you violate somebody else you also violating and disrespecting yourself to a certain extent" **[Rose, P7]**.

Similarly, literature affirms that there are factors that can help to curb SBV, namely: self-esteem, which is based on achievement in desired areas such as beauty or social acceptability; and self-compassion, which entails treating oneself with kindness in the face of hardship. When either a victim or a perpetrator is comfortable with who they are and they treat themselves with compassion and kindness, this affects how they view themselves and others (Stapleton, Crighton, Carter & Pidgeon, 2017:240). Although self-esteem is conditional, self-love is absolute. Self-love is defined as placing worth on oneself despite one's shortcomings, limits, or defects, but self-esteem can change depending on one's positive or negative judgments of oneself. Authentically loving oneself and others is bestowing value and worth on the individual simply for being and human being (Underwood, 2020:24).

Hlompho pointed out collaboration with NGOs and other community structures: *"…we also have a very good relationship with the organisation called SANCA* [South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence] *that deals with drugs and other activities… we call them to school to come and conduct lessons… we give them* [an] *opportunity to spend time in classes and educate children about social life and anti-violence… those are all activities that we are doing on continuous basis to make sure that we minimise the level of violence in school. And at times we involve even the community in the neighbourhood to discuss other issues, like I mentioned some issues that come into schools, they come from the neighbourhood… you can't divorce the school from its immediate environment… you would find that they are pushing drugs into school. So, you can't combat that thing if you don't combat it from outside the school premises, because then they have people outside the school including law enforcement agencies to make sure that they protect children in that regard"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

4.3.5.4 Sub-theme 5.4: Disciplinary measures

Disciplinary methods highlight the seriousness of SBV and show that public schools do not function in isolation from the communities in which they are located

(Shabazian, 2015:275). The disciplinary measures employed by the various educators will be discussed in this sub-theme and how they assist in the prevention of SBV will be considered.

The four participants gave more details in terms of their experiences with the disciplinary measures that are employed at their respective schools. The educators highlighted the role of discipline, disciplinary hearings, their policies, and their procedures in the extracts below.

Wandile said in this regard: *"And you know obviously there are those who would go on and push boundaries making sure that they run at other learners. In such cases we subject those learners to disciplinary hearing and try and organise counselling for both learners* [perpetrator and victim] *also, because the victim might mimic… remember we are talking about children who are growing up. We organise counselling for both of them"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

Studies have found that the use of disciplinary measures do not always translate into better student conduct or school safety (Skiba & Losen, 2016:6). A study by Verhoef, Weenink, Winters, Robben, Westert and Kool (2015:1) confirms that the effect felt by learners after the disciplinary process may impede proper recovery thereafter. As a result, organising emotional support should be addressed both throughout the disciplinary procedure and after the judgement.

Zanele highlighted some challenges regarding the extent to which schools are allowed to discipline learners: *"Because remember as the school, the only thing that you can do is to suspend – you can't expel. So, if you cannot expel a child then it becomes a problem. Or if they expel the child, they move a child from one school to another school. It does not solve anything, because that child knows that 'I can be moved from one school'. It can't be within 10 km radius from another school so they still can do whatever they want to do, because the child has a right to education whether* [or not] *there are infringes on you as learners and teachers, because some of them even attack teachers, so it's a challenge"* **[Zanele, P4]**.

When correctly implemented, the code of conduct can be a useful instrument for managing learner behaviour, even though its impact on major misbehaviour is limited (Sebisha, 2015:iv). Joyce explained how some students are given community work as part of the disciplinary measures: *"The disciplinary hearing would take place… and then the child will be suspended or will be given a penalty… depending on how severe that is. So, you find that the child will be given the community work. They would choose a community facility of their choice… they would do community work for certain hours, but we would want to have proof that they went there… We do follow the disciplinary processes as per the code of conduct… it's like for this type of misdemeanour this is what happens after that"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

Hlompho highlights the distinction between suspension and expulsion: *"…if it's very, very serious, we would constitute what we call disciplinary hearing… the governing body members will adjudicate on the basis of the learner code of conduct and the terms of reference that we get from the Department of Education and we will* [make] *a recommendation to the Head of Department. We may recommend suspension or expulsion, but as a principal you have got a responsibility to administer… precautionary suspension, which means if you feel that having that child within the schoolyard can threaten the security of the other child, you will suspend the child for seven days or for five days and then in seven days constitute the disciplinary hearing. If you were unable to conclude the process you will have an extra seven days to conclude the process. And besides that, let's say a child stabbed another one with a knife… you immediately call police and open a case, report to the parents of that child so that they would meet the child at the police station. Then you start the process, but you would also have to administer first aid on the one who is injured"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

Both suspensions and expulsions relate to the removal of pupils from school as a disciplinary action. The distinction is that a suspension is only for a short period of time (up to 10 days), but an expulsion might continue probably longer (Ksinan, Vazsonyi, Jiskrova & Peugh, 2019:116).

4.3.6 Theme 6: Educators' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing school-based violence

In response to the question on how stakeholder involvement assists in managing SBV, the participating educators identified various stakeholders and explained how they assist. From the educators' responses, four sub-themes emerged in respect of the various identified stakeholders: (i) the role of educators and social workers; (ii) the role of parents and learners; (iii) the role of the SGB; and (iv) the role of departments and organisations.

4.3.6.1 Sub-theme 6.1: The role of educators and social workers

The participants are of the view that both the social workers and the educators can play a vital role in curbing SBV. Both the above-mentioned professionals can work together to come up with creative ways to address the scourge. Educator participants identified educators and social workers as stakeholders who assist in managing violence at schools.

Some of the points outlined by Unathi and Joyce regarding educators being stakeholders in the prevention of SBV are noted below.

Unathi said in this regard: *"…there are teachers, they like to be aware of our contacts, they have got to know about it. And obviously we set up sessions with the teachers and the counsellor* [social worker] *and we let them know exactly this is what we are doing, this is what is their involvement and anything that is not treated immediately so that we can defuse the situation, we can be proactive"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Literature supports the participant's point of view, since Williams (2017) confirms the role of the teacher in creating a nurturing environment for their students as a preventive measure against violence, teaching peaceful conflict resolution techniques and/or abilities, pro-social behaviour, effective communication. Educators must also be good role models for pupils in establishing peaceful behavioural patterns and the manner in which they deal with conflict within the school environment (Williams, 2017:70). In addition, community psychology researchers emphasise that cooperation among students, teachers, parents, and administrators contributes to a healthy school atmosphere (McMahon, Reaves,

McConnell, Peist, Ruiz & APA Task Force on Classroom Violence Directed Against Teachers, 2017:503). The teacher's role in creating an inclusive environment is crucial. A conceptual understanding of inclusion and the diverse needs of learners, including those with disabilities, is required (DBE, 2014:33).

Joyce had this to say about the disciplinary committee: *"…there is the disciplinary committee like from the teachers' side together with the parents. We do have a disciplinary committee that deals with issues such as SBV… we have the school counsellor* [social worker] *who is involved with perpetrators to make them aware that this is a school. We need to make it a conducive environment for everyone… From the teacher side, we will have the disciplinary committee and then as I said we also involve the counsellor"* **[Joyce, P8]**.

In this sense, the function of school disciplinary bodies is critical (Mathebula, Runhare & Marishane, 2021:170). In addition, a Tanzanian study supports that disciplinary committee referrals are chances to teach learners essential skills that will help them succeed in both future work and education (Mussa, 2015:24). Moreover, in an analysis conducted in a South African study, the findings of the study reveal that educators advocate the employment of professional support, such as school social workers and counsellors, as an essential feasible strategy to instilling discipline in the classroom (Masingi, 2017:80).

4.3.6.2   Sub-theme 6.2: The role of parents and learners

The participants revealed that both the parents and the learners are some of the stakeholders that can assist in managing SBV. If the parents and learners are sold on the idea of managing SBV and they start at home, the matter can be resolved.

The participants shared their views on the procedures they follow once there is an incident of violence or just a normal incident in the classroom.

Unathi said: *"…we get the parents to come in on board as well; usually the child who has problems at school. Those parents are brought in and they see the programme that we follow, we share the programme with them. And once they are done with the programme, we call the parents back so that they get a report back. We have done*

this and this and this [giving feedback] *and… also the victim, we also obviously don't leave them out… We bring them into the programme as well, because usually the person who is being bullied or being a victim, they could resort to the same type of tactic and that is what we do not want to see happen and that is also a big NO as well. We need to make sure that they are okay, they are fine, and that things are happening, and we try to fix the problem…"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Literature also attests that parental engagement is essential in ensuring that students have great learning experiences at school (Mogale, 2013). Parents are viewed as natural or home educators who really should collaborate with and supplement the commitment of educators; therefore, their engagement in their children's academic tasks has various good consequences on learner behaviour (Masingi, 2017). Moreover, learner violence can also be caused by a lack of parental participation in the school, as well as lack of parental monitoring (Duma, 2013:25).

Hlompho explains the role of parents as follows: *"But remember* [the] *primary stakeholders of the school, as far as schooling, would be the biological parents. So, we have parent meetings to discuss the matter with them. We invite the department* [Department of Basic Education] *to come in to do workshops both with parents and learners to address the issue…"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

The participants seem to confirm that parents and families should work together to inspire their children to take a stand against bullying by teaching them how to properly respond to events and praising them for their contributions (Ross, Lund, Sabey & Charlton, 2017:43). The parents play a critical role in terms of decisions, since the children are underaged, and they are relevant stakeholders in curbing the SBV phenomenon. Parents are the primary stakeholders that can assist in terms of curbing the behaviour of their children.

4.3.6.3   Sub-theme 6.3: The role of the SGB

The term "school governing body" refers to an elected body mandated with the duty and power to develop and implement school policies at the national and provincial levels, thereby expressing the purpose and strategy for education embodied in the

South African Schools, Act 84 of 1996, hereafter referred to as "the Schools Act" (Malatji 2018:19). In addition, the Schools Act requires SGBs to guarantee that students get a high-quality education through implementing efficient and productive governance (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019:4).

Some of the participants explained that the SGB is one of the stakeholders which was identified within the school. The statements in the upcoming paragraphs were taken from information gathered during the interviews with the participants. They discussed the role of the SGB within the school as stakeholders.

Unathi identified the SGB as a stakeholder: *"The SGB are involved in disciplinary actions… we will deal with the child first of all so that we give support and then if the child just continues* [with disruptive behaviour]*, then obviously it becomes the disciplinary hearing and that is where our SGB becomes involved in that. And by the time it gets to that stage, we have already done so much to try and neutralise the problem. So that is what we are doing at the moment. It's the programme, coaching… we want to be proactive, and we want to get to the nitty gritty of things and that is how we sort it"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

Wandile explained how the SGB assists with disciplinary issues: *"Stakeholders are part of the disciplinary committee; we have one person from the SGB who would become chairperson of the disciplinary committee. So, the chairperson, not necessarily the chairperson of the SGB,* [but] *any member of the SGB that has been elected to serve in the disciplinary committee as a chairperson… The principal will inform the parents that there is a disciplinary hearing and also inform the chairperson that there will be a disciplinary hearing that will be held on such a date and on that date… learners will be given a fair chance of representation and also of expressing themselves how come that we are having a disciplinary hearing…"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

The Schools Act (South Africa, 1996a: section 29) strengthens the role of parents by stating that only a parent member who is not working at the school may become the chairperson of the governing board (Selamolela, 2019:29). In addition, the procedure for doing so should be clearly spelled out in the school policy on disciplinary measures. To this end, the school disciplinary committee, a sub-

committee of the SGB, must therefore ensure that the code of conduct is consistently and fairly enforced (Mestry & Khumalo, 2012:98).

Disciplinary actions should encourage students to accept responsibility for their conduct and assist them in resolving the underlying causes of their socially unacceptable behaviour (Reyneke, 2018:86).

Tumisho also expatiated on the supportive role of the SGB: *"But at the end of the day, a person who has committed some sort of violence needs to be brought to book with the aim mostly of correcting, not necessarily chasing that particular person away. That is how they do, but in terms of the charging it lies in the hands of the SGB, because we have what we call the reasons of the SGB and those that are actually tracking the rule on behalf of the parents or on behalf of all the stakeholders, because in the SGB we have all the stakeholders"* **[Tumisho, P5]**.

Fisani emphasised the various roles of the SGB and the disciplinary committee as follows: *"We have the SGB, we have a discipline committee and… if a learner was referred or if the transgression was severe to an extent where it needs a disciplinary hearing, we would have this SGB. The chairperson of the disciplinary committee will be informed and a date is set for a disciplinary hearing* [disciplinary action]*, whereby the child will come with his or her parents to a hearing and after that they normally have an outcome… mostly if it's quite bad the learner will be suspended. There were case scenarios where a learner is suspended for five days, but that only comes from the SGB. Only they can take or make that decision"* **[Fisani, P6]**.

The SGBs have a crucial role to play in curbing SBV, as they are the primary stakeholders within the school environment. Majola (2013:6) states that everyone is concerned about conflict, particularly those involved in education, such as SGBs, teachers, students, and parents. Both stakeholders must be empowered in terms of dispute resolution abilities (Majola, 2013:6). This resonates with Wandile's point of view above. The DBE (c2021:1) adds that the SGBs' main roles include the following: decision making, planning, conflict management, team building, and negotiation of school finances. This confirms that the SGBs have a powerful position which can be utilised to curb SBV.

4.3.6.4   Sub-theme 6.4: The role of departments and organisations

It was explained by educators that various government departments and NGOs are stakeholders and that the school has developed relationships with them to assist the school to manage SBV.

Bongani and Zanele provided clear accounts of some of the difficulties they have experienced under this sub-theme.

Bongani referred specifically to the police: *"At the moment we do have a very big relationship with the South African Police Services. They also take instruction that they give to schools and so when there's any danger, school-violence problems, or violence, it's getting out of hand, we call* [the police]*. There is also a system… at certain times… to good limits… if they see me with dangerous objects or intoxicating substances and things like that around the school. And then also we have appearance and supporting systems when we had influencers, like they're there. And then also they have a school governing body that is also involved in the measures which have been taken by getting involved in the measures to see that our school has a safe environment for our learners"* **[Bongani, P3]**.

The relationship between schools and police communication is an equitable and sustainable one, as supported by literature (Mazerolle, Bennett, Antrobus, Cardwell, Eggins & Piquero, 2019:663). In addition, more and more schools are including the police as one of the ways to improve school safety (Homer & Fisher 2019:192). Moreover, in terms of controlling school violence, the School Management Teams and the SGBs are in charge of developing disciplinary actions to decrease violence and minimise its impact on the school environment (Steullet, Cabungcal, Coyle, Didriksen, Gill, Grace, Hensch, LaMantia, Lindemann, Maynard, Meyer, Morishta, O'Donnell, Puhl, Cuenod & Do, 2017:902). Finally, according to the SAPS, school violence is a social issue that needs all stakeholders to work together to build a healthy learning and teaching atmosphere (Basic Education Assembly Committee, 2019). Despite the SAPS's willingness to curb SBV, without the support of the members of the community there is no way they can accomplish it, since the

community members are witnesses to this violence. A holistic approach requires all the stakeholders to address SBV.

Zanele also mentioned the role of the police in the prevention of SBV: *"We do have the policing forum that is involved, there is Adopt-a-Cop and… whenever there are issues, we call them in…* [and take them for a visit to] *to the prison. But some parents don't want their kids to go there because they will be saying 'why are you taking my child there?'. But then that one is a precautionary measure so that they can see that fighting or doing any other thing is not good for them. But unfortunately, some parents don't see it that way. They don't want their kids to go there, and they don't have the experience of what is happening and if you carry on fighting and bullying other people"* **(Zanele, P4)**.

CPFs are responsible for facilitating community–police partnerships within a certain police station precinct (police station border). The CPF also serves as the community's liaison with the police, and vice versa, regarding policing concerns and other pertinent safety issues (Steullet et al, 2017:902). One study further supported that connecting schools with local police stations and specialised operations targeting hotspots at schools, such as visible patrolling and inspections, are some of the methods that assist in reducing school violence (Krefels & Warton, 2018:34, cited in Lekalakala, 2019:115).

Fisani included the DBE as a stakeholder: *"…the other stakeholders would be the Department* [of Education]*, if the parents decide the punishment was too severe and they lodge a grievance with the department…"* **[Fisani, P6]**. Rose spoke of the workshops run by the DBE: *"Firstly, the Department* [of Education] …*provides workshops for kids and teachers to learn more about… topics that they can tackle in schools, and they can teach the leaders of the kids that are leading the Soul Buddies so that they can take that knowledge… back to the school"* **[Rose, P7]**.

Literature supports both Fisani and Rose's point of view that the stakeholders, such as the DBE, play a very important role in the prevention of SBV. Fisani's sentiments are shared by the CSVR (2010:1), which states that the issue of police reform is rooted in the public's distrust of the police. Without the involvement of the Black

community, the police fail to prosecute offenders and deter violent crime and political instability. On the other hand, the SAPS stated that it will continue to take steps to address the ongoing problem of SBV until it is resolved.

4.3.7 Theme 7: Educators' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence

The educators' suggestions for stakeholder support are discussed under five sub-themes, namely: (i) employ social workers and/or psychologists and involve other departments and organisations; (ii) involve parents; and (iii) SGBs, teachers, and principals must play a more prominent role.

4.3.7.1 Sub-theme 7.1: Employ social workers and/or psychologists and involve other departments and organisations

The participants outlined the challenges that they experience in adequately dealing with SBV. They indicated that specialists such as school social worker workers can play a vital role in providing psycho-social support to the staff, educators, and learners. The school should employ school social workers and/or psychologists and involve other NGOs and various state departments specialising in SBV.

This is exemplified by Katlego when he said: *"I think the Department of Education at national level should deploy social workers or psychologists to come and advise learners and also to counsel them, because what I have seen and what I have experienced, those learners they are going through a hell… they are experiencing a lot of things. These things start from home…* [silence] *this is a high school, most of them are doing Grade 8 and 9, they are in the adolescent phases… they lack advice. So, I suggest that the Department* [of Education] *should deploy psychologists and social workers to come, maybe once a month or weekly, on a weekly basis they deploy one or two to come and counsel those learners… we are trying our best, but we do not have time because… we have got a lot of learners. Some of us do not have time to sit with them and then counsel them. The time that we have is just to impart knowledge"* **[Katlego, P10]**.

Katlego also suggested that the police should be enlisted to assist with the SBV: *"I think that the police department should also deploy police to conduct* [a] *search*

randomly, because you know some of those learners. Because what they did was to deploy CPF and some of those they do not even have experience of dealing with those kinds of things you know, they can rob them. So, I suggest that the Department [of Education] *sometimes should deploy the police to come to the school and also to assist the CPF"* **[Katlego, P10]**.

Similarly, a study conducted by Tran (2018) in Texas, USA, found that occasional patrols on school grounds allow the police to minimise the occurrences of misbehaviour in schools. These interventions are quick and effective, with minimal disturbance on academic activities (Tran, 2018:4). On the other hand, Weisburst (2019:152) argues that while there is a rising public discussion on the repercussions of police presence in schools, there is no evidence that officers have an impact on student behaviour and academic results. Far too few studies have been conducted to evaluate how police presence affects schools.

Hlompho suggested the involvement of external stakeholders such as NPOs and NGOs, as well as political parties: *"You will involve NPOs, NGOs in the neighbourhood to discuss with those issues* [SBV]. *To some extent even political parties, we do invite them. So, at school we have got what we call school improvement plan* [SIP]*, which is a system that involves different stakeholders in the neighbourhood who will then come in and deal with issues of schooling in general, but specifically on issues that are related to violence, we have got a focus area that we call school safety and discipline. So, under that particular area, you would then do what we call school fence evaluation. There are criteria that are there. You will ask all stakeholders, including learners. I am in* [a] *high school and our learners in high school are represented by* [a] *representative council of learners which we call RCL* [Representative Council for Learners]*, so you give them time to talk about the strength of the school as far as safety is concerned, the weaknesses, the threats and the opportunities and on the basis of that you develop an implementation plan to turn around things with all those stakeholders and people will play different roles"* **[Hlompho, P9]**.

The reasons provided by Hlompho to involve NGOs correspond with literature, since NGOs fill the void created by the national government and local governments

(Jóźwiak, Sánchez-Domínguez & Sorando, 2018:54). Studies support the SIP, since its goal is to build a mix of in-school and after-school groups that allow kids to explore their interests, while also improving their academic studies in a distinctive manner (Biery 2020:2; Heard 2021:3). Furthermore, if the SIP approach is to enhance teacher instructional methods; it cannot simply engage a few people or be visible for only just few days each year. It must be inclusive, continuous, and integrated into the daily work of school personnel (Bigner, 2017:40).

4.3.7.2   Sub-theme 7.2: Involve parents

A common suggestion from educators was that parents must be involved in the daily activities of the learners to provide them with support. They view the parent as the most important figure to assist in giving the learner direction and guidance, which they sometimes desperately need from a significant other. Parents are seen as the missing link within the school with the potential to make a difference in the learners, especially with regard to behaviour-related matters. Some of the participants weighed in on this matter, as presented below.

Unathi expressed the need for parents to come on board: *"We want our parents and our stakeholders to support us… And parents, the problem is never solved in a minute, it is something that one works on. And you work on it continuously it's an on-going thing. There are problems that are easy, and you can solve those problems quickly. But there are problems that are deep rooted, and you have got to be patient… We need to be tolerant, and we need everybody to be on board, because if one part lets you down the whole programme can fall flat"* **[Unathi, P1]**.

The finding seems to resonate with the assertion that, the "home is where behavior is formed" and it is, therefore, the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the children enter school already infused with a set of morals (Aute, 2019:127). A study conducted in Vietnam also attests that parents must work with children to plan and implement programmes intended to prevent and manage social ills in the school itself (Phuong, 2019:55). In addition, a discussion with parents and teachers, as well as a quick consultation with the SMT and SGB, and continuously working on the problem with the children can assist in the resolution of the SBV situation (Afzal, Munir, Khan & Ali, 2021:381).

Parents are their children's most powerful role models and influences. Children always absorb their parents' morals and patterns of conduct (Kasapi, 2013). Rose emphasised how important parents and good role models are: *"…the most important stakeholders that can assist the country at large and the kids is to be aware of the kind of environment that we expose our kids to. So, if us as parents, well even us as teachers we are also parents in the school, when we are at school. So, if we could model more of child love to these kids, self-respect, and self-worth… and affirm to these kids that they are good human beings… they are not just as bad as we always make them to be. Sometimes when a child is acting out, they are acting out because they are crying for help. So, we must look for the good more than the bad from those kids and also the parents must try to take their kids away from toxic environment, and model also positive things to their kids"* **[Rose, P7]***.*

The extract emphasises that building significant positive partnerships between schools and parents will aid in the prevention of violence and the improvement of academic achievement (Schargel, 2013:1; Hsiao, Higgins, Pierce, Schaefer Whitby & Tandy, 2017:152; National Association of School Psychologists, 2021). Positive reinforcement encourages pupils to continue "good" activities, with the objective of instilling a habit of these positive behaviours. Positive reinforcement boosts a student's self-esteem, since it reveals the student's abilities, allowing them to concentrate on these characteristics (Morin, 2017:6).

4.3.7.3 Sub-theme 7.3: SGBs, teachers, and principals must play a more prominent role

Educators suggested that SGBs, teachers, and principals should play a more prominent role in preventing SBV by communicating more with the learners. Two participants provided their suggestions on how SBV can be prevented.

Wandile shared on some of the roles of the SGB as follows: *"…because the SGB or the stakeholders are members of communities. In the parents' meetings they must talk about* [the] *learners' code of conduct. They must also talk to parents and make them aware that violence at school is not allowed. Also, in their communities they must also talk to the communities, because I get there are community meetings*

where they also attend such meetings. They must also talk to the communities that let us be good role models to our learners… And make sure that the parents [and] *learners* [are] *aware about the learners' code of conduct"* **[Wandile, P2]**.

Fisani also emphasised the significant role of the parents within the SGB structure: *"The other persons it might be the Department* [of Education], *because at the end of the day you can't do anything without the Department* [of Education] *not knowing… so it should be the parents, it should be the SGB, it should be the teacher, the principal, and the department"* **[Fisani, P6]**.

The findings seem to emphasise that members of SGBs, parents, and the DoE should all work together to instil discipline in schools by talking to learners (South Africa, 1996b). In addition, partnerships should aim at addressing challenging school and community problems, such as SBV, while various school ideas can contribute to the larger picture of school reform (Blitz, Anderson & Saastamoinen, 2016:524). Concentrating on children and youth as students, as well as addressing important educational and health outcomes, coordinating collaborative activities and projects that assist students, and heavily using community resources can all play a crucial role in preventing SBV (Lewallen, Hunt, Potts-Datema, Zaza & Giles, 2015:729).

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter gave an account of the educators' experiences of SBV. In their interviews seven themes emerged, which included the educators' experiences related to the nature, the victims, the perpetrators, the causes, and the management of SBV, as well as how stakeholders are involved and what support they can offer. The primary objective of this chapter was to confirm the outcomes and the findings through making use of existing literature.

CHAPTER FIVE:
RESEARCH FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS' EXPERIENCES ON SBV

In the previous chapter the researcher provided research findings that focused on the educators' experiences of SBV. The chapter was discussed under seven themes, as well as their respective sub-themes and categories. In this chapter, the findings from the research into school social workers' perceptions of SBV are given. The discussion of the findings will also be divided into seven themes.

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This segment is inclusive of the introduction and synopsis, as well as a demographical analysis of the participants' information.

The researcher made use of pseudonyms to protect the identities of the participants. A detailed description of participants allows audiences and researchers to decide to whom research findings apply and permits comparison and analysis across study replications (Hammer, 2011:261).

5.2   DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILING OF PARTICIPANTS

In the Table 5.1, the demographic particulars of the school social workers who participated in the study are presented.

Table 5.1: The school social worker participants' demographic profiles

No.	Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Race	Position	Years of experience	Qualification
P13	Cindy	36	F	Black	SSW[10]	10 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P14	Daisy	31	F	Black	SSW	5 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P15	Mpho	33	F	Black	SSW	5 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P16	Agnes	43	F	Black	SSW	18 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P17	Gertie	33	F	Black	SSW	7 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P18	Palesa	34	F	Black	SSW	12 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P19	Sue	32	F	White	SSW	8 years	Bachelor of Social Work
P20	Khosi	33	M	Black	SSW	9 years	Master of Social Work (Studying towards PhD)

A total of eight school social workers were interviewed. Their work experience as social workers range between 5 and 18 years. Their ages are between 31 and 43 and the minimum qualification of the participants is a bachelor's degree in social work, with one member busy pursuing a doctorate. The participants in this study were mostly females with only one male participant, highlighting the fact that social work is a female-dominated profession.

5.3 THEMES, SUB-THEMES, AND CATEGORIES FOR SOCIAL WORKER PARTICIPANTS

This overview encapsulates the themes, sub-themes, and categories that emerged from the interviews with the school social workers, as well as the questions that the participants were asked.

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[10] The acronym SSW stands for school social worker.

Table 5.2: Themes, sub-themes and categories for school social worker participants

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES
Theme 1: School social workers' perceptions of the nature of school-based violence	1.1 Verbal and physical abuse 1.2 Bullying	
Theme 2: School social workers' perceptions of the victims of school-based violence	2.1 Victims are timid, weak, or different 2.2 Victims sometimes do not perform well academically	
Theme 3: School social workers' perceptions of the perpetrators of school-based violence	3.1 Perpetrators do not do well at school 3.2 Perpetrators have low self-esteem and seek peer acceptance 3.3 Educators are also perpetrators	
Theme 4: School social workers' perceptions about the causes of school-based violence	4.1 The behavioural problems of the child 4.2 The microsystem 4.3 The mesosystem	4.1.1 Personality and characteristics of the child 4.1.2 School performance and educators' behaviour 4.1.3 Peer pressure/ desire to belong 4.1.4 The use of substances 4.2.1 Home circumstances 4.2.2 The neighbourhood 4.3.1 Families' unfavourable socioeconomic conditions 4.3.2 The media and social media
Theme 5: School social workers' accounts of how the school manages school-based violence	5.1 Preventive measures 5.2 Talk to children and involve parents and/or social workers 5.3 Run programmes at school 5.4 Disciplinary measures	5.1.1 Policies and guidelines 5.1.2 Prevention and awareness programmes 5.1.3 Security measures
Theme 6: School social workers' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing school-based violence		

Theme 7: School social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence	7.1 Employ social workers, equip teachers, and involve other organisations and departments 7.2 Involve parents 7.3 Run educational programmes at school and in the community 7.4 Extramural activities	

Each of the themes and supporting sub-themes and categories (where appropriate) will be given in the next portion of this discussion and confirmed or reinforced by direct quotes from the interview transcripts. The chosen themes and sub-themes from the transcripts, together with their supporting narratives, will be compared with the existing body of knowledge.

5.3.1 Theme 1: School social workers' perceptions on the nature of school-based violence

Similar to the educators, the school social workers provided their perceptions of SBV and determined that SBV takes the form of (i) verbal and physical abuse; and (ii) bullying.

5.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Verbal and physical abuse

Physical abuse is described as the intentional use of physical force against a child, which includes striking, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, scorching, burning, poisoning, and smothering, and is frequently done in the name of discipline or punishment (Vlahovicova, Melendez-Torres, Leijten, Knerr & Gardner, 2017:351; Berkowitz 2017:1660). It also involves pulling hair, shoving, beating, kicking, and slapping, while verbal abuse can include intimidation, insults, and slanderous remarks (Cheung, Tsoi, Wong & Chung, 2018:121).

The school social workers were asked to recount their experiences regarding the nature of SBV. Many responded that SBV can take the form of verbal and/or physical abuse.

Palesa shared her perception of SBV as follows: *"…my perceptions about it are that it* [SBV] *can occur as any form of violence, whether it is verbal, physical, emotional,* [or] *sexual violence act that can easily be between learners or between staff members, or even between staff and learners. So that is how I perceive school violence to be"* **[Palesa, P18]***.*

Similarly, literature on this topic states that verbal abuse, bullying/mobbing, harassment, and threats are all examples of psychological violence. The great majority of research in the literature revealed that psychological violence was the

most prevalent type of violence, with verbal abuse being the most common (Al-Shamlan, Jayaseeli, Al-Shawi & Al-Joudi, 2017:173).

Daisy said: *"Learners can be violent towards each other… and it can be starting from just… a shoving and pushing during change of class or during break, which can then lead to fighting and the fighting can escalate to involving other learners, groups, friends of the two people that are fighting or that are quarrelling. It could end up in killing each other. That is how far it can go. Violence can also start from a simple joke, you know how children like joking about each other's hairlines, dress codes, and then the learner who is joked about might feel humiliated or embarrassed. And then it could end up in a fight as well"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Literature confirms the above extract that pushing, thrusting, grabbing, and hurling things to intimidate is another form of violence (Patra, Prakash, Patra & Khanna,, 2018:494). It is further confirmed that sometimes a joke does not appear to be amusing and this may lead to horrific calamities (death, mutilation, or rape) for the unlucky individuals who walk into these violent situations (Perego 2018:197). Similarly, a Switzerland study titled *"Rumbling and Tumbling in School: Jokes, Masculinity and Homosocial Relations"* adds that joking and boyish behaviours can also be some of the factors that lead to violence in schools, and some male learners openly express their opposition to such behaviour and show concern about the gravity of violent acts (Johansson & Odenbring, 2021:59).

Daisy explained how SBV can also occur between learners and educators: *"School-based violence can also be between a learner and an educator. Sometimes children experience very challenging and difficult situations and they might find it hard to do homework or participate in class… their home circumstances… or their personal challenges… depression is very high amongst learners and if a teacher is not aware or continues to pressurise the child, 'where is your homework?', 'why have you not done this?', 'sit up straight!', all those kinds of things might irritate and push them to a point of violence. The irritated learner would react violently towards the teacher. Some of them might just walk out… but some of them might start pushing teachers, throwing things around or even attacking the teacher… And when educators*

become frustrated by the lack of work ethics and discipline and respect they tend to be violent towards the learners" **[Daisy, P14]**.

A study by Chauke (2021) exploring learner's violence in South Africa supports the above quote that SBV can take place between learners and educators and this is another form of SBV. According to the findings of this study, 27.5% of all pupils experienced moderate depression, while 9.7% experienced severe depression. Rahman (2018) also discovered that pupils in the older age group had a greater rate of depression. Another analysis attests that students' lack of discipline, including physical attacks on educators, might be related to the ongoing decline in moral instruction (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018:1).

Agnes explained her perception of the nature of SBV as being demonstrated by a range of behaviours: *"My perception regarding school-based violence is… it varies from the minor act of slapping each other to demanding one's lunch, up until to the highest level of damaging one's books, stationery, and taking* [the] *form of fights. But the fights are not that intense in our school. Learners do not use extreme dangerous objects like knives, screwdrivers. They use their bare hands to fight as well as their feet or maybe have dangerous objects like ruler or pen… So, our school is a primary school and learners are not that wild in terms of bringing weapons to school, which would lead to the lower level of school-based violence"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Cross-sectional research was conducted in India to determine the extent of physical violence among married females (Pundkar, 2020). The study concludes that physical violence varies from mild to severe; the far more prevalent types of physical violence observed were slapping, throwing something, and kicking/hitting/biting. In addition, the study also found that students are bullied because of their stationery and food (Pundkar, 2020). The fights that erupted because of stationery and food were the most upsetting (Shakespeare, Perterkin & Bourne, 2018:90). Another study also concluded that fighting, peer-to-peer honour challenges, ostracising, and bullying are examples of in-school violence (Malette, 2017:5).

Mpho described the physical nature of SBV: *"…this nature of activities includes violence among these learners, mostly it involves physical attacks and weapons*

where you find that learners often, they walk around with weapons as part of their protective measures…" **[Mpho, P15]**.

Another study found that students arrive to school with hazardous weapons and narcotics (Chauke, 2021:17804). Other researchers also confirm that SBV rates were higher in schools where students were reportedly carrying weapons to school (Astor & Benbenisthty, 2018).

5.3.1.2   Sub-theme 1.2: Bullying

School social workers described bullying as a form of SBV in their experience. Bullying is primarily defined as the use of extortion, abuse, force, or forceful threats, which results in mental, physical, or emotional harm for the individual being bullied. Bullying occurs when one person is chosen as the focus of repeated aggression by one or more people (Chandran, Namboodiripad & Madhavan, 2018:589).

Agnes said the following in terms of bullying and the different forms it takes: *"…it also takes a form of bullying, such as the verbal bullying – social as well as emotional bullying. For an example of verbal bullying, one learner might tend to spread rumours, or they can choose to ostracise others, or name call others, or show negative attitude towards others and spread rumours… And they can also show negative attitude through the non-verbal communication"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Verbal bullying occurs frequently in schools since it is not generally regarded as a kind of bullying that can result in significant consequences (Çalışkan, Evgin, Bayat, Caner, Kaplan, Öztürk & Keklik,, 2019:175). In the school environment it refers to the way learners communicate (negatively with a negative attitude) with educators, classmates, or their parents (Stamatis, 2017:161).

Gertie defined how SBV can take almost any form and then explained bullying as a form of SBV: *"…I believe that school-based violence can be in any form, it can be anything that causes disruption to be learning or teaching. It's anything that has a negative impact on learning and teaching. It doesn't always have to be physical; school-based violence can also be verbal. Mainly when I speak about it being verbal, I speak about bullying. Bullying is a growing phenomenon in the school environment.*

It's a phenomenon that is growing across the country, across the world, because it's not just physical bullying anymore. We now have cyberbullying, which is when people use social media. They use phones, they use internet, e-mail, any kind of electronics to bully other people. And I find that in [the] *school environment learners experience peer pressure to be involved in what we call defined behaviours. So, kids are pressured to do the wrong things so that they can fit in and mostly that occurs within a form of bullying"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

Kavuk-Kalender and Keser (2018:26) contend that for many years cyberbullying, which is the use of computers to purposefully hurt or torment others, has been expanding quickly among adolescents, and educators and researchers are justifiably concerned that this phenomenon is increasing more rapidly than educators' and parents' capacity to react. For example, literature acknowledges that some of these dangers are exacerbated when sexting is supported by peer or romantic partner pressures to participate in sexting (Brem, Stuart, Cornelius & Shorey, 2021:19).

Cindy spoke of bullying as a way that SBV can display itself, but the bullying she referred to was from teachers towards learners: *"It's not every child that is good in each subject. We get other children that are not good in mathematics, but the teacher will always say bad things about that child instead of encouraging that child to do better. They would say bad things, 'you are nothing', 'you are good for nothing', 'you can't even write', 'you can't even do this'. It's, like you are bullying a child… that is violence to a child instead of making a child understand. You are pressurising a child and that child will never develop in your class. So, we have students amongst themselves that actually bring about this violence and we also have the teacher-student violence"* **[Cindy, P13]**.

Similarly, another South African analysis confirms that researchers defined three main kinds of teacher-on-learner violence based on the literature and statistics, namely physical, sexual, and emotional violence (De Wet, 2020). Research has shown that motivation is one of the most significant things educators can focus on to improve learning. Literature furthermore attests that schools should be motivated to include all students and should be assessed not only on how well they do

academically, but also on how effectively they include students with special needs (Sharma, Aiello, Pace, Round & Subban, 2018).

Palesa spoke of how bullying is common in schools and can lead to more serious forms of violence: *"I think that bullying is one of the biggest ones that I can think of, because I think it is something that happens in every single school, and I think that is one of the biggest forms of school violence… it doesn't have to be something so severe like school shootings and things like that. But I think what happens is you have got situations… the minor incidences of school violence like bullying and… if it is left untreated, it exacerbates to become situations like where the perpetrators might then be inclined to partake in school shootings or severe violent acts like that"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

Literature also confirms and emphasises the significance of school social workers and counsellors cooperating with other stakeholders and family members in efforts to support adolescents suffering from mental illnesses so that they can receive the support they require (Lee, 2013). The implications of the results of a study by Paolini (2015:4) assist to raise awareness of the repercussions of mass shootings and highlight the critical role that educators, and particularly school social workers, have in building healthy, diverse, and safe school settings.

5.2.2   Theme 2: School social workers' perceptions of the victims of school-based violence

In support of this theme, it is reported that the global rate of violence against children is alarmingly high. More than half of children report having been subjected to physical, sexual, or emotional child maltreatment in 2016 (Devries, Knight, Petzold, Merrill, Maxwell, Williams, Cappa, Chan, Garcia-Moreno, Hollis, Kress, Peterman, Walsh, Kishor, Guedes, Bott, Butron Riveros, Watts & Abrahams, 2018). A Hong Kong study also supports victims who had suffered verbal abuse were more likely not to take action and were less likely to stop or report future incidents of abuse (Cheung, Ching, Cheng & Ho, 2019).

After describing their experiences of SBV, the school social workers were asked about their perceptions of the victims of SBV. The responses are given under one

sub-theme, namely: victims of SBV are timid, weak, or different; and victims sometimes do not perform well academically.

5.3.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Victims are timid, weak, or different

According to Grigoryan (2021:35), victims are labelled as weak and timid by the perpetrators of SBV. Another study also indicates that victims of SBV often express different feelings and emotions about violence (Weon, Byun & Lim, 2021:570). Similarly, school social workers also described how they perceive victims as being timid, weak, or different than others.

Palesa described her perception of victims as follows: *"For me, when I look at victims of school-based violence, I think about how they perceive themselves and the other things that play. Like for example, feelings of anxiety or low self-esteem, things like that… maybe make them susceptible to school-based violence or you know make the effects so much worse. And I wonder as well if the way that they are treated if their treatment becomes part of the perceptions of themselves. So, they make them to see themselves to be vulnerable or victims and, like I say, the most susceptible to school-based violence… I don't necessarily like the term 'victim mentality', but I really do think that the experiences of school-based violence become, to some extent, a part of their identity, because their experiences shape their view of themselves"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

Becoming a victim of abuse as a child has long-term consequences on education, health, and wellbeing. It can cause academic underperformance due to cognitive, emotional, and social issues (WHO, 2019b:i). For instance, authors have also showed the link between violence and low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety (Duru, Balkis & Turkdoğan, 2019:2405; Šincek et al, 2017:99).

Agnes described her perceptions of the victims as timid learners in the following excerpt: *"Most of the learners who are victims are obedient, responsible learners and sometimes they are targeted because they lack social friends. For example, if a child is not an extrovert, if the child cannot make friends easily, and she or he plays alone during breaks, he gets targeted. The timid learners are the ones who are bullied at school…"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

The above difficulty is also highlighted by Smith (2009:422), who notes that becoming a victim may be caused by a lack of confidence, a lack of physical strength, a lack of friends for support, or being outnumbered. It is further confirmed and also noted that individuals who lack friends have a higher risk of being bullied, since they have no friends who might stop it from happening (Strindberg, Horton & Thornberg, 2020:948).

Agnes added that victims are the weaker learners: *"Male learners are more highly involved in fighting in school-based violence. And the weak ones, yes, they become the victims. Some of the victims internalise violence experienced which end up into a much too severe problem. For example, they end up withdrawn… Yes, some of the victims they do internalise these issues, they don't open, they don't talk about them, and it ends up affecting them and affecting their schoolwork, as well as their emotional health… The victims firstly are mostly the introverts, those who lack social skills… it's not a factor of a family that makes them victims, it's the factor of a child and her personality and character traits"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

In support of the above extract, a Malaysian study on the effects of teenage bullying and depression levels discovered that bullying causes the victim to become fearful and introverted, while the perpetrator has emotions of remorse and regret because of the bullying (Hidayati, Nihayatuzzulfah, Mubin & Abdullah, 2021:49). Literature further notes that because of the perpetrators' lack of social skills, violence has been a part of their personality and strategies for coping with others and difficult situations (Alzyoud et al, 2016:236). Finally, another study supports that violent victims are more prone to concealing issues if they are exposed to negative peer relationship experiences (Ettekal & Ladd, 2020:272).

Gertie described how she perceived victims of SBV as being the weaker or younger learners and being bullied by older and stronger learners: *"Victims in school are most often younger in age and in the lower grade than the perpetrators. So you find that the perpetrator is in Grade 10, 11 or 12 and the victim is in grade 8 or 9. So because those kids are young in age, they become vulnerable because they can't defend themselves against older learners and also as a small kid coming into high*

school, you want the big kid to accept you so you will let them victimise you, you will let them bully, you will let them pick on you… you are so scared to report it, because you don't want to be seen as a snitch as what they would say today. You don't want to… tell, you don't want to be seen [as] *uncool by reporting it. So, these kids are targeted because they are young, they are targeted because they are most likely not to report it"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

There seems to be a consensus between literature and the quote above, since it is noted that some pupils purposefully attack and injure others who are unable to defend themselves, and this is not limited to bullying and variables that predict and guard against SBV (Zych, Farrington, Llorent & Ttofi, 2017:5). Literature further confirms that younger pupils are more likely to be bullied (Huitsing, Lodder, Oldenburg, Schater, Salmivalli, Juvonen & Veenstra, 2019).

To support what she had said about the boys victimising younger learners, Gertie spoke of how girls are victimised, as they are regarded as weaker than boys: *"…The girls are targeted in school-based violence because boys believe girls won't retaliate. Girls are seen to be weaker than boys, so the boys think girls won't retaliate. That is why you find such things as sexual assault in schools; you find teenage pregnancy often, rape in township schools. All of this because other learners believe that females are weak physically and won't retaliate or defend themselves"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

Literature confirms that stereotyped gender characteristics depict boys as tough and girls as frail. A study by Ramaiya, Choiriyyah, Heise, Pulerwitz, Blum, Levtov, Lundgren, Richardson and Moreau (2021:S61) emphasises the complex character of gender norm perceptions, which are not always constant across domains and have diverse ramifications in different areas of life. In addition, in an Ethiopian study which focused on sexual assault and peace education, teacher testimonies from an Ethiopian secondary school noted that boys perceived girls to be passive victims and saw females as too "weak" to halt abusive behaviour, simply accepting it as the "standard" since "it happens frequently" (Altinyelken & Le Mat, 2018:657).

Daisy spoke of how learners who are perceived as being different may be the victims of SBV: *"Learners that are obese or skinny, or light skinned or even dark skinned, or dark in complexion I would say are often bullied, especially among the girls you find it. These learners can be violent towards themselves and engage in self-destruction behaviours like they cut… they get involved in substance abuse or they drop out of school… Foreign learners, learners from financial disadvantaged families, mostly are marginalised and excluded"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

In support of the above literature notes, Rupp and McCoy (2019:323) contend that adolescents who are obese are more prone to being bullied than their classmates who have a healthy body weight. Another study concurs that being White, Black with a dark complexion, or Black with light skin, or having yellow skin, or being indigenous leads to SBV (Veloso, Costa, Marques, Andrade, Miranda & Araújo, 2020). In addition, victimisation is linked to attempted suicides and competition in both boys and girls, as well as overall mental health issues, stress, sadness, and self-harm (Downes & Cefai, 2016:63). An Italian study confirms that there is separation between the immigrants and the locals, created by policies and the manner in which people interact (Ambrosini, 2021:24).

5.3.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Victims sometimes do not perform well academically

This ties in with literature, since it is noted that bullied students' academic performance has also been found to be low or hindered (Puhl & King, 2013:117). Being a victim of bullying has been related to greater rates of depression, sleeplessness, feelings of hopelessness, loneliness, low self-esteem, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts. Similarly, bully victims are more likely to have suicidal thoughts and attempt suicide (AlBuhairan et al, 2017:62).

Cindy's perception of victims is that learners who are doing well at school are seen as a threat by the perpetrators: *"When we are talking of the victims, these could be students that are doing well in school and the perpetrators which are the other students they might take it as a threat. So they would start bullying them for their grades to be low so that they will all be on the same level… the intimidation of good students and… that brings the threat to the perpetrators, but they are getting*

presence all the time, they are number one, they are going well in school, they are the nerds at school and then the perpetrators are not happy about it. 'Why is it you are always doing well? Now I am getting pressure from my parents… 'why is it that you are always number one and I am supposed to be number one?'… that threat will make their grades for the good students go lower" **[Cindy, P13]**.

In their study conducted at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln which highlighted the issue of bullying, Brank, Hoetger and Hazen (2012) state that victims' academic performance is low and that they avoid attending school sessions to prevent victimisation. This further confirms that victimisation can result in low academic achievement, as well as absenteeism (Al-Raqqad, Al-Bourini, Al Talahin & Aranki, 2017:46). Academic stressors, such as academic performance, is one of the leading factors of school violence. Academic scholars concur that displacement, grief, separation, and engagement in hostilities are among the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder displayed by children exposed to pressure from home. Male and female students exposed to pressure and violence at home performed differently academically (Onyachom & Otalu, 2021:121).

5.3.3 Theme 3: School social workers' perceptions of the perpetrators of school-based violence

The responses of school social workers regarding their perceptions of the perpetrators of SBV are given in three sub-themes: (i) perpetrators do not do well at school; (ii) perpetrators have low self-esteem and seek peer acceptance; and (iii) educators are also perpetrators.

5.3.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Perpetrators do not do well at school

In terms of academic achievement, numerous researchers have revealed a detrimental relationship between violent behaviour and academic success. It was stated by some of the social workers that perpetrators do not do well at school. Agnes and Daisy (school social worker participants) also explained that perpetrators do not perform well academically.

Agnes put this as follows: *"My perception regarding the perpetrators firstly is the learners who are perpetrators have serious learning difficulties. They cannot cope*

with the pressure of their schoolwork. They show power in the classroom. Sometimes they feel they are not awarded equal opportunities like other children. They tend to have or develop a sense of not belonging to the classroom and they also develop a mentality that teachers hate them. And for them to regain power – it's during break or when they line up for the next class or after school – and they regain this power by bullying other learners or making fun of them or making them feel bad about themselves. So, in summary, it's learners who have a learning difficulty in classrooms are the ones who tend to be the perpetrators" **[Agnes, P16]**.

Based on a report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017), school violence, bullying, and victimisation have a negative influence on children's education in a variety of ways, including causing the victim to be too scared to attend school, have trouble focusing in class, and perform poorly in academics, especially mathematics. Similarly, Espelage, Hong, Rao, and Low (2013) found that bullying and peer victimisation are associated with low academic achievement in school. Moreover, demonstrative violence is also a type of directed communication that seeks to attract attention to inequality, disseminate fear and terror, or organise others to fight for the same reason (Böckler, Leuschner, Zick & Scheithauer, 2018:8).

Daisy spoke in a similar vein: *"We have learners who are struggling academically; they are also prone to act violently. They are humiliated and they often cause fights and stuff like that"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Literature attests that the most engaged students seemed to display more disruptive behaviour in the classroom, but low performing students with poor academic achievements preferred to participate in violent situations (López-Castedo, Alvarez García, Domínguez Alonso & Alvarez Roales, 2018:395). Moreover, the authors also found that students involved in bullying tend to have low or hindered academic performance. Bullying has been connected to increased rates of sadness, sleeplessness, feelings of hopelessness, and loneliness in terms of mental health (AlBuhairan et al, 2017:62).

5.3.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Perpetrators have low self-esteem and seek peer acceptance

A substantial amount of literature and research on bullying demonstrates the links between self-esteem and the bullying phenomenon, claiming that both behaviours, bullying and being bullied, are to some extent connected to poor self-esteem (Darjan, Negru & Ilie, 2020:19). In addition, Hornstein defines five categories of self-esteem based on the stability analysis: strong and sustainable self-esteem, high and unstable self-esteem, stable and low self-esteem, unsteady and low self-esteem, and overinflated ego (Darian et al, 2020:21).

Perpetrators were perceived by the school social workers as having low self-esteem and wanting to be accepted by their peers. Four of the school social worker participants provided their perspectives on this sub-theme.

Agnes referred to victims' low self-esteem: *"…most of the boys in Grade 7, they have reached their psycho-social development stage and formation and identity confusion and they… end up developing negative affirmations, such as nobody understands me, I am all alone, and nobody listens to me at home and as well as at school. And as a result, they develop anger which can be easily triggered by an innocent touch or a light joke from a classmate. So, the developmental stage also plays a role as well as the family background in terms of the perpetrators"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

From a literature perspective, low self-esteem is one of the biggest predictors of emotional and behavioural difficulties, and it has been linked to a wide range of juvenile issues, including the development of antisocial behaviour (Wells, Hunnikin, Ash & Van Goozen, 2020:693). Furthermore, a study confirms that children and teenagers frequently want validation and acceptance from their classmates (Oser, Oser, Parascando, Hessler-Jones, Sciamanna, Sparling, Nease & Litchman, 2020). Adolescents are among humanity's biggest vulnerable groups. They are confronted with not only physiological processes in the body, but with consciousness and identification throughout this period of development (Ledina & Lice-Zikmane, 2020:303).

Gertie highlighted the need to be accepted by their peers as a characteristic of perpetrators of SBV: *"Perpetrators I believe are more often learners who are influenced by peer pressure. These learners are normally, you know, the naughty kids in schools, the kids that you find that are uncontrollable, there is no discipline; they have no respect for rules. They are the kids who bunk* [skip school]*, the kids who are always in trouble at school. So, for me those kids are normally what we call bullies in the school, and for bullying they will try in any form involving the result of an imbalance in power whereby the bully has power over the victim. So, learners who want to be accepted by their peer group are the perpetrators. They bully other kids so that, even their peer group or grade will accept them for being cool"* **[Gertie, P17]***.*

There seems to be a consensus between literature and the participant above that peer pressure has indeed been associated with a wide range of teenage behaviours, especially misbehaviour and violence (Bond & Bushman, 2017:288). In addition, the analysis discovered that students skip classes for the following reasons: they are ignorant of the value of education and students also misbehave because they are experiencing an identity crisis, which causes them to violate school rules and regulations (Jinot, 2018:43). Numerous scholars believe that bullying requires the desire to injure as well as create a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim, and it occurs on a regular basis (Menesinia & Salmivalli, 2017:241).

Palesa said: *"…perpetrators, I think sometimes they have like a need to control or to maintain things like the validation. And when I speak of validation what I mean is, you know, you have someone for example that is bullying someone, and I think the bullying is also in a sense be validated by their peers. You know they are like those bystanders. So, I think that happens during the break and… I think it's also a sense of belonging"* **[Palesa, P18]***.*

According to a study by Guo, Zhou and Feng (2018:187), experts say that as children grow older their peers become more significant, while familial relationships become less important. Moreover, a "need to belong" motivates an individual to follow the norms of the group (Gorjy, Fielding & Falkmer, 2017:1489). Finally, a study conducted in England argues that many educational experts believe that

cultivating a sense of belonging and a personal connection is critical, regardless of the learning setting (Peacock, Cowan, Irvine & Williams, 2020:18).

Daisy had the same perception: *"The pain of not belonging often creates anger which can lead to violence. Among the teenagers we find that belonging into a little group or a plan is very important for them and when they are excluded from being a friend of somebody or a friend of a certain group, they become very angry and that often leads to violence"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

Literature confirms that anger has also been connected to criminal behaviour and repeat offending by researchers (Joyce, Dillane & Vasquez, 2013:247). It is further confirmed that it is important to experience a feeling of belonging and community in both the bigger and smaller groups, regardless of ethnicity, social rank, or educational backgrounds (Peacock et al, 2020:29).

5.3.3.3   Sub-theme 3.3: Educators are also perpetrators

A South African study argues that teachers contribute to the continuous violence in South African schools by making disparaging remarks, bullying, and being verbally abusive. This type of behaviour by educators demonstrates a lack of professionalism and ethics, which contributes to the perpetuation of school violence (Ramorola & Taole, 2014). It was also pointed out by the school social workers that educators can also be perpetrators of SBV.

Daisy said: *"…when educators become frustrated by the lack of work ethics, and discipline and respect they tend to be violent towards the learners"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

Teachers should always have a strategy or specific tactics in place to deal with a disruptive pupil. It is critical to recognise that each circumstance will be unique. An approach that works well for one student may irritate another. Teachers should individualise the circumstances and base their judgments on what they believe will be the fastest way to reduce distraction for that specific learner (Meador 2019). In addition, due to misunderstandings about their rights, educators are finding it difficult to deal with issues of discipline, compliance, and authority, resulting in problems when educators seek to exercise control over learners (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:55).

Cindy explained how teachers are sometimes the perpetrators of SBV and their victims are learners who do not do so well at school: *"And also we get it* [school-based violence] *from teachers. The teachers themselves are the ones that can be the perpetrators to the students. It's not every child that is good in each subject. We get other children that are not good in mathematics, but the teacher will always say bad things about that child instead of encouraging that child to do better. They would say bad things, 'you are nothing', 'you are good for nothing', 'you can't even write', 'you can't even do this'. It's, it's like you are bullying a child… that is violence to a child instead of making a child understand. You are pressurising a child and that child will never develop in your class. So, we have students amongst themselves that actually bring about this violence and we also have the teacher-student violence"* **[Cindy, P13]**.

Literature confirms that the minority of South African instructors engage in physical, sexual, and emotional teacher-on-learner violence (De Wet, 2020:164). In addition, Mncube and Harber (2013) discovered evidence of direct forms of violence that start within the school, such as how educators occasionally participate in verbal, physical, and psychological abuse. The major findings of another South African study (Grobler, 2018:25) confirms the following: 12.2% of the 5393 students polled had been threatened with violence by someone at school; 6.3% had been attacked; 4.7% had been abused or raped; and 4.5% had been robbed at school.

5.3.4   Theme 4: School social workers' perceptions about the causes of school-based violence

The school social workers were asked to describe their perceptions of the causes of SBV. Their responses are given under three sub-themes, namely: (i) the behavioural problems of the child; (ii) the microsystem; and (iii) the mesosystem.

5.3.4.1   Sub-theme 4.1: Behavioural problems of the child

The first sub-theme is the behavioural problems of the child, which is divided into four categories, namely: (a) personality and characteristics of the child; (b) school performance and educators' behaviour; (c) peer pressure/desire to belong; and (d) the use of substances.

(a) Category 4.1.1: Personality and characteristics of the child

Learners can also be characterised in terms of personality traits: distinct values, emotions, and behaviours (Soto & Tackett, 2015:358). Similarly, a child's particular personality and characteristics are seen as causes of SBV.

Learners who lack the ability to communicate and who are plagued by depression, dissatisfaction, and a lack of respect are more likely to participate in violence (Alzyoud et al 2016:236). Agnes identified a learner's character and personality as being the cause of SBV: *"…individual character and personality. Learners who have character traits like lack of respect, or being irresponsible, or being unable to regulate their emotions to control their emotions are the ones who are involved in violent behaviour"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Many educators in mainstream education lack the requisite training to cope with students who are suffering emotional and behavioural hurdles; as a result, opposition to inclusive classrooms is obvious (Potgieter-Groot, Visser & Lubbe-de Beer, 2012:1). The emotional and behavioural instability of these students drives them to be explosive, aggressive, and uncooperative (Valdivia-Salas, Jiménez, Lombas & López-Crespo, 2021). Palesa spoke of some children having emotional difficulties: *"…children with behavioural difficulties who need the ability to go to an emotional regulation… maybe they are experiencing difficulties, etc. They aren't as able or equipped with skills to regulate themselves to better manage their frustrations or their angers"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

Gertie highlighted that younger female learners were viewed by older learners as not being in a position to report if they become victims of SBV. She said: *"You find that the perpetrator is in Grade 10, 11 and 12 and the victim is in Grade 8 and 9. So because those kids are young in age, they become vulnerable because they can't defend themselves against older learners and also as a small kid coming into high school, you want the big kid to accept you so you will let them victimise you, you will let them bully, you will let them pick on you… you are so scared to report it, because you don't want to be seen as a snitch… you don't want to be seen [as] uncool by reporting it. So, these kids are targeted because they are young, they are targeted*

because they are new to the school, they are targeted because they are most likely not to report it" **[Gertie, P17]**.

There is a discrepancy between literature and the participant's assertion above, as in a London study entitled *'Who victimizes whom and who defends whom? A multivariate social network analysis of victimization, aggression, and defending in early childhood'*, Huitsing and Monks (2018) argue that the observed data supports the hypothesis that victimisation in infancy is a brief experience for many children and that aggressors do not intentionally target the most vulnerable victims. In contrast, perpetrators may choose to target youngsters who are dominating and forceful. In addition, the findings of a USA study, entitled *'Preadolescents' Daily Peer Victimization and Perceived Social Competence: Moderating Effects of Classroom Aggression'*, support the idea that different forms of peer victimisation are linked to distinct elements of psychological functioning (Morrow, Hubbard & Sharp, 2019).

(b) Category 4.1.2: School performance and educators' behaviour

When schools make concerted attempts to enhance academic performance, they may incorporate concerns of environment and harassment as part of the academic reform effort (Benbenishty, Astor, Roziner & Wrabel, 2016:197). School social workers identified that teachers do not treat some learners in the classroom with the necessary sensitivity, which can result in SBV. As demonstrated by the extracts below, two participants explained that the learners' school performance and educators' behaviour play a vital role in SBV.

Mpho shared her experiences with learners in the classroom: *"…an example as well with teachers. Let's say in class teachers also tend to be violent, but verbally, when a teacher asks a learner to let's say read something loudly to the class whereas knowing that that learner is someone that is shy and… and is not verbally active… the learners tend to laugh at this learner… it becomes very difficult for that learner… they become fearful, skipping classes and all that, because it tends to be embarrassing and all that whereas the teacher knows very well that that learner is this kind of learner…"* **[Mpho, P15]**.

The findings of Ocak, Ocak and Baysal's (2017:332) study seem to suggest that truancy is not simply a sign of children's bad attitudes about school; it may be caused by a variety of factors. Another South African study on the experiences of dyslexic students and their relationship with their classmates and teachers in the North West Province's specialised and normal primary schools indicates that teachers in public schools are not compassionate towards dyslexic students, do not offer them more priority, and that some teachers used harsh remarks that humiliated them (Leseyane, Mandende, Makgatho & Cekiso, 2018).

Previous research has found that teachers' uncivil behaviour manifests itself in the form of cancelling classes without notification, showing up to class ill-prepared to teach, not allowing free discussion in the classroom, acting cold and indifferent, embarrassing and reprimanding the students, sprinting through the topics, humiliating students, trying to impose their own will, being disinterested in the students, and being unavailable (Masoumpoor, Borhani, Abbaszadeh & Rassouli, 2017:2).

Cindy also referred to the behaviour of some teachers: *"The second thing is when teachers tend to have favourite students in class, it brings hatred amongst the students that they tend to be violent at each other, use ugly words and all that"* **[Cindy, P13]***.

Similarly, authors contend that teachers responded harshly to disruptions caused by ill-mannered students, but they overlooked disruptions caused by nice pupils (Muhammad & Zaka, 2021:39).

(c) Category 4.1.3: Peer pressure and the desire to belong

Peer pressure is a modern concept in which citizens of a society and a social group place pressure on a person and this impacts that person's behaviour, either positively or negatively (Gulati, 2017:280). Moreover, adolescents' willingness to join in groups is evaluated by determining their need to belong. They would go to any lengths to be a part of a group they want to be a part of (Sarita & Suleeman, 2017:1).

Peer pressure and children's desire to belong contribute to SBV according to the school social workers. Two participants shared their experiences in this regard.

When bullying is looked at from the perspective of a need to belong, this might potentially be highly beneficial to developmental theorists and researchers. This viewpoint humanises people who participate in bullying behaviour, serving as a reminder that the bad conduct may be motivated in part by a basic, developmental need, and requires us all to remember that bullying is a type of behaviour, not a type of person (Underwood & Ehrenreich, 2014:270).

Gertie highlighted how peer pressure and sense of belonging may contribute towards SBV: *"And then for others… they take part in school violence for the sake of conforming, they want to be accepted. It's that same need I spoke about of wanting to belong and to be accepted; it's peer pressure, it's literally peer pressure. Whether you are in primary school, high school, all kids, all a child wants is to be accepted, they want to belong, they want to be part of something even if that something is wrong"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

Similarly, Palesa also shared how a sense of belonging was important to learners: *"I think the one is a strong need for being a sense of belonging. I think that to feel that they belong… they are maybe more willing to be seen as engaging in acts of school violence and bullying and things like that or name calling. I think that it is to fit in with the people that are like them"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

An analysis conducted in Dallas, USA, attests that adolescents and youngster may be especially prone to urgent demands for belonging. Viewing bullying as driven by a need to belong has far-reaching consequences for bullying prevention and intervention initiatives (Underwood & Ehrenreich, 2014:265).

(d) Category 4.1.4: The use of substances

This segment focuses on the use of substances and how it contributes to SBV. Agnes cited substance abuse as one of the causes of SBV: *"Learners who are experimenting with substances like dagga, or who have tested positive within the*

school premises, or who sometimes you find them in possession of dagga, they are the ones who sometimes are involved in violent behaviour" **[Agnes, P16].**

Previous research also highlights that learners' drug use, such as marijuana usage, may also raise the likelihood of SBV (Skalisky, 2021:5). In support, a study conducted in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality to explore students' behaviour to find a solution to the students' violence in South Africa adds that drugs were discovered to be linked to a variety of behaviours that pose a health risk amongst learners. Dagga was also the most commonly used drug in this study (Chauke, 2021:17807).

Daisy identified the use of substances as one of the factors of SBV: *"The other thing that causes violence is a usage of substance, drugs, alcohol. That leads to violence that they themselves do not understand. They act erratically and obviously when they are called out of class, or they are disciplined, they tend to become violent towards the teacher or towards other learners"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Adolescence is seen as a time of experimenting and this increases the danger of participating in hazardous behaviours. The most prevalent risk behaviours currently include the use of alcohol and other drugs (Francis, Myers, Nkosi, Petersen Williams, Carney, Lombard, Nel & Morojele, 2019:1). Literature confirms that cannabis, cigarettes, amphetamines, cocaine, sedatives, and hallucinogens are all linked to mood disorders (Walters, Bulmer, Troiano, Obiaka & Bonhomme, 2018:104).

5.3.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: The microsystem

The essential relationship between the individual and his/her environment is the focus of the microsystem (Ertem, 2020:299). Individual students in the schooling environment are impacted by the circumstances in their home environments and this also affects their academics (Jegatheesan, Enders-Slegers, Ormerod & Boyden, 2020:3116). School social workers referred to children's home circumstances and the neighbourhood in which they live as being factors in the microsystem causing SBV, and these two factors will now be discussed as categories.

(a) Category 4.2.1: **Home circumstances**

The home circumstances of learners were cited by educators as a causal factor in SBV.

Daisy referred to home circumstances and changes contributing towards SBV: *"We often have learners who are going through very difficult times in their personal lives, be it a home situation, be it some personal conflict that they are going through. And if their friends are not aware of what is happening and they continue teasing them… whatever they pick on, that learner might end up being violent. When learners are depressed… frustrated, when they don't feel safe, they are humiliated, they are embarrassed, they tend to act violently. We do find that especially now with the lockdown and learners having lost a lot of work, school time, their economic circumstances at home have changed; there are lot of changes that they are not able to handle. They are overwhelmed by the changes they must go through during this time. So, they go through a lot of confused emotions that they do not know how to deal with, and so we find that they snap quickly and the just want to hit somebody or turn around and pin somebody to the ground"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

Palesa said: *"Sometimes I think there are circumstances within the learners' homes that contribute to them feeling pressured, whether they have a lack of control at home. If I can say for example there is some violence and then I think sometimes what might happen is that they feel like at school is the opportunity to regain that control"* **[Palesa, P18]***.*

One study highlighted family violence as one of the challenges learners are subjected to (Usher, Bhullar, Durkin, Gyamfi, & Jackson, 2020:549). Furthermore, participants indicated that stigmatisation makes learners worry and appear vulnerable, and that being humiliated or being embarrassed by their peers are some of the triggers of SBV (Grinshteyn & Yang, 2017:142). A study by Altinyelken and Le Mat (2018:660) supports that the absence of counselling opportunities for students who have been victims of violence remains a source of worry. Furthermore, these perspectives suggest that there aren't enough supporting structures in many schools. School counsellors, school social workers, more supportive services,

resources from the DBE and Safe Schools, assistance for teachers who are dealing with the disruptive behaviour of learners with substance abuse problems, and individualised learning support are some of the support structures that are not readily available (Jacobs & Slabbert, 2019:231).

(b) Category 4.2.2: The neighbourhood

Agnes identified how learners imitate what they see happening in their neighbourhoods and identified specific neighbourhoods where violence occurs: *"I have experienced and I have learned that there are multiple causes of the school-based violence. Firstly, I think the problem is the community violence, meaning learners who are from the township areas. They tend to imitate the behaviour that they learn from community. As compared to the learners who are from… nearby areas and the learners who are from the families who have or who instil the great morals within them. They don't imitate that behaviour; they tend to control themselves when they are exposed to any other environment that triggers anger. Community plays a role. The things that are happening within the community, when children observe them, they can imitate them. So, with my experience children from Orange River [11] and Liberty Block,[12] they are the ones who are fighting a lot at school. They will fight over smaller thing… they're used to do wrong things…"* **[Agnes, P16]***.*

Based on the literature considered, a study by Lunneblad, Johansson and Odenbring (2019:64) also demonstrated how neighbourhood situational factors impact students' likelihood of experiencing criminality or their tendency to perpetrate crime. The relationship between the experience of communal violence and personal moral cognitions throughout time is critical in predicting bullying perpetration (Dragone, Esposito, De Angelis, Affuso & Bacchini, 2020:188).

Palesa shares the view that violence in the learners' neighbourhood can also be one of the main things contributing towards SBV: *"And another reason is that the learners' exposure to violence within the community, whether there is domestic*

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[11] Orange River is a pseudonym given to an area to protect the real name of that area.
[12] Liberty Block is a pseudonym given to an area to protect the real name of that area.

violence, or violent acts, or aggressive acts that they see within the community. I think that contributes to maybe people being more inclined or wanting to become perpetrators…" **[Palesa, P18]***.*

Similarly, literature contends that exposure to violence in the learners' neighbourhood increases the likelihood of SBV (Farrell & Zimmerman, 2017:25). It is further confirmed that being exposed to violence in the community, such as domestic abuse, violent actions, or hostile behaviours, leads to learners being perpetrators of SBV (Siegel, Estrada, Crockett & Baskin-Sommers, 2019:1).

Gertie's statement echoed what Agnes said: *"…I feel that a cause of school-based violence is because the learners are exposed to environments that are filled with potential advertising, such as crime, drugs, and substance addiction, physical violence, poverty. Specifically in our society violence has been normalised by situations like apartheid and xenophobic attacks. We have seen many people being attacked based on their race and ethnicity. So, I feel that a cause for school-based violence it's because it's a learned behaviour. They see it in their communities every single day… even now during the lockdown, they think police… I don't want to say they are killing people, but they are using excessive force to ensure that people are staying home and adhering to the lockdown. But some people have died. So, people are seeing it in the community. It becomes a learned behaviour, because it's sort of normalised. It's just normal to be violent towards others"* **[Gertie, P17]***.*

Upon analysing the available literature, the researcher confirmed that social conditioning and exposure to drug-related marketing activities are variables that predispose teenagers to begin using drugs (Somani & Meghani, 2016:2). Furthermore, violence has become the normal way of life and continues to be a part of life in many communities from generation to generation (Wilson, 2016:32)*.*

5.3.4.3   Sub-theme 4.3: The mesosystem

The mesosystem is made up of connections between the various microsystems in each situation. In other words, the interaction between school and home generates a mesosystem (Crawford, 2020:2). Each mesosystem impacts growth by exposing an individual to new activities and community structures (Vélez-Agosto, Soto-

Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, Vega-Molina & Coll, 2017:900). The third sub-theme that emerged from the responses of school social workers is the mesosystem, which is divided into two categories: (a) families' unfavourable socioeconomic conditions; and (b) the media and social media.

(a) Category 4.3.1: Families' unfavourable socioeconomic conditions

Families in poor socioeconomic circumstances or who live in congested regions are particularly prone to violence (Marques, Moraes, Hasselman, Deslandes & Reichenheim, 2020:1). The general socioeconomic conditions under which children live can cause SBV. Two participants shared on the topic of how socioeconomic conditions can contribute to SBV. They also explained the role of poverty, the background of the learner, and gangsterism. Their accounts are provided below.

Gertie drew a comparison between private schools, which are usually found in affluent areas, and public schools, which are mostly found in impoverished areas: *"…I have not worked in private schools… but you don't find school-based violence in private schools… those kids are well-off, they don't have the same social economic problems as the kids that attend government schools… kids that come from townships, kids that come from poverty-stricken backgrounds, kids that come from households* [where] *their income is very low… are kids who are mostly the perpetrators. They are growing up in a world where violence is normal"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

There is a discrepancy between literature and the participant's assertion above, as it is not as easy as saying that poverty generates violence. It is class discrimination to claim that poverty alone promotes violence (Roschelle, 2017). Many rich families endure domestic violence, while many families survive economic hardship without causing harm to anybody (Henson, 2020:5).

Mpho referred to coming from disadvantaged families or broken homes as one of the disadvantages emanating from poor socioeconomic communities, and included gangsterism: *"…there are a lot of reasons behind this behaviour of violence in schools, because it makes an individual to be like very violent, because for example let us take perpetrators maybe from a family that is, what can I say, they have a*

value disadvantage, they come from very disadvantaged families. It can also include communities where they come from with the involvement of gangs around them" **[Mpho, P15]***.*

According to educational studies, gangsterism is a significant source of school violence on school grounds (Mlangeni, 2018:iv). A South African study entitled *'The nature, causes and effects of school violence in South African high schools'* also found that gangsterism was prevalent and 30 (37.5%) of the participants confirmed that gangs still operated in their schools (Ncontsa, 2013:1).

(b) Category 4.3.2: The media and social media

People use social media to engage with each other online. Individuals can use social media to connect with others and establish an online platform (Young, 2019:3). The influence of what children see via the media and social media was identified as a cause of SBV, and the participants' opinions about this are provided below.

Agnes expressed the role of media as follows: *"Most of the programmes in the media nowadays they portray violent behaviour and then children watch those episodes, and they think okay, this is the norm –* [this is] *acceptable behaviour that we can use to solve any other problem"* **[Agnes, P16]***.*

Similarly, some researchers attributed the increase in adolescent misbehaviour to the quantity of violence in the media and entertainment. It is important to mention that teenagers are prone to changing their beliefs and behaviours because of the media, social pressure, or the influence of peers, both positively and negatively (Francis et al, 2019:2). A Kenyan study reveals that students' agitation in secondary schools was influenced by their consumption of television (Kamaku, 2021:xix).

Cindy focused on the influence of social media: *"…it's the social media, which is the highest thing, because with students, let's say they see each other kissing. They take pictures, they send it around the school, people laugh about it, or if somebody's clothes are torn or it's a girl child* [that] *spoil their uniform, they take pictures. So, cell phones, gadgets are the ones of the biggest causes of violence in school. You are*

violating the girl child's rights, you are bringing fights, because there are teen lovers' things, so the news is just spreading so fast that people tend to fight" **[Cindy, P13]**.

According to the literature consulted, violence is perpetuated by social media (Stuart 2020:192). In just over a century, social media has evolved into a corridor for teenage violence, significantly altering the terrain for violent conduct (Petersen, Fallou, Reilly & Serafinelli, 2017:554). Recent studies from this approach investigated the continuity between physical aggression at school and aggressive behaviours in the virtual world. Many of the perpetrators who participate in conventional bullying play a similar role in the virtual world (Ortega-Barón, Buelga, Cava & Torralba, 2017:25).

5.3.5   Theme 5: School social workers' accounts of how the school manages school-based violence

The school social workers' accounts of how the school manages SBV are presented under four sub-themes, namely: (i) preventive measures; (ii) talk to children and involve parents and/or social workers; (iii) run programmes at school; and (iv) disciplinary measures.

5.3.5.1   Sub-theme 5.1: Preventive measures

Most of the school social workers explained how their school implements several preventive measures to prevent and curtail SBV. These are divided into three categories and discussed below: (a) policies and guidelines; (b) prevention and awareness programmes; and (c) security measures.

(a) Category 5.1.1: Policies and guidelines

Examining the DoE's strategy on creating safe schools is very important. It is also vital to give perspectives on challenges confronting the education system while evaluating the critical role of policymaking in ensuring school safety (Ancho & Park, 2013:27). The state legislature reflects the statutory body. However, some provinces have gone above and beyond, issuing circulars and policies to lessen violent school behaviour (Power, 2017:305). The school social workers recounted how policies and guidelines are in place to assist in the management of SBV.

Daisy explained how policies are actively made known to all: *"…obviously we have policies in place, which are communicated clearly to the parents, to the learners when they enrol. We do an orientation of all the policies that are in place that the children need to know, and they need to adhere to. So, the school has a zero-tolerance policy towards fighting and bullying on school premises. When you are in school uniform, in any of that, learners know they should not ever put the school's name in disarray, it will get them in trouble"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

The literature consulted supports that clearly and well-defined assessment policies are crucial and some would argue that they are necessary or a prerequisite for teachers to effectively teach and students to acquire these abilities (SACE, 2011). Policies need to be made obvious to both the students and educators, since the findings of the report by SACE (2011:34) reveal that many students and teachers are unsure of policy.

Agnes spoke of the code of conduct as well and added how her school has developed numerous policies and guidelines that go beyond a learner's code of conduct: *"In our school we are trying our level best to manage the school-based violence and we are winning. We have formulated policies and guidelines. For an example, we have the anti-bullying policy and guidelines that help implement the programmes within the school and how to deal with bullying activity. And it also has the definition of what is bullying and what causes bullying. The second one is the guideline that we have in the learner code of conduct guideline that we use. It talks to the misconduct and the disciplinary measure that will be taken by the school when the child is found guilty of an offence. The third one is the staff professional code that helps us with the staff member – how to conduct our staff professionally, how to handle children, how to behave in front of learners, how to deal with the aggressive learners. And the staff professional code of conduct is also guided by our professional body's code of ethics… So learners and the teachers would be the same guideline. So, learners and staff members are encouraged to adhere to the school* [rules, polices, and guidelines], *as well as the code of conduct"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Similar to the extract above, literature confirms that employees are required to be willing to contribute to the establishment of a high level of professional behaviour.

They should be able to provide a good example in terms of the school's greatest values. Schools can't teach one thing while doing another (Schools, 2015:1). The creation of a professional organisation for teachers was another attempt to enhance teacher professionalisation (South Africa, 2000a). The SACE certifies educators and supports ongoing training and development programmes (Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018:3).

(b) Category 5.1.2: Prevention and awareness programmes

School social workers narrated how their schools run prevention and awareness programmes to combat SBV and to develop their learners.

Agnes spoke of such programmes being run not only with learners, but also with the community: *"…we are highly involved in education and prevention programmes. These programmes raise our awareness and prevention of violence at the classroom level or at the community level. When I say at the community level, I mean at the school-community level, which are weekly. And programmes are facilitated by either educators or me as the school social worker or sometimes we do invite external NGOs as well as government departments, such as South African Police Service, South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Johannesburg Metro Police Department, the Department of Health, as well as the Department of Social Development. And the topics that are covered here include the prevention of substance abuse, anger management, good and effective communication skills, respect, as well as diversity programmes. Because I learnt that most of the children fight because of them being different and being unable to tolerate each other… So it is based on that, the level of difference, the ethnic, the skin colour, the language that they are speaking, the family that they come from. So, we need to sensitise them regarding that, and we are doing that"* **[Agnes, P16]***.*

Literature confirms that organisations that encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion across several dimensions, including race and gender, may achieve better levels of excellence and creativity in research (Henningfield, Fields, Anthony, Brown, Bolaños-Guzmán, Comer, De La Garza, Furr-Holden, Garcia-Romeu, Hatsukami, Raznahan & Zarate, 2021). Another study argues that the numerous advantages of

diversity training programmes have been recognised in terms of affective, cognitive, and skill-based outcomes; yet, the programmes have also received significant criticism for their inadequacies, notably in terms of not creating genuine behavioural changes in the workplace (Fujimoto & Härtel, 2017:1122).

Daisy added: *"We also do school talks about violence, about bullying and abuse to alert the learners. We inform them and we discuss sensitive matters, and we also help them to learn to develop acceptable social behaviour. So, these talks are done often by the school social workers, by the principal, by the South African Police Services, Child Protection Units that we involve, and other community members who are interested in the school and the wellbeing of the children"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

A USA study supports that half-day or full-day professional development workshops for administrators, educators, and student support personnel can assist them to identify the distinct characteristics and impact of bullying, improve study skills for equipping students to respond efficiently and successfully, and foster a safety culture among youth (Hart Barnett, Fisher, O'Connell & Franco, 2019:10).

Palesa elaborated about her school's programme to deal with bullying, which includes all learners in the school: *"We have a programme… it's a HUGA form that… all the children… fill in. So HUGA means Help Ugliness Go Away and with this form what happened originally was the children were able to fill in these forms to say whether they were victims of bullying. And then they would give the details of the incidences and then the school management team and the school-based support team helped handle the situation… when I started here, the HUGA forms were then allocated to me. So, as the social worker at the school, the principal relied on me to try and attend to situations of bullying by… helping the person who is doing the bullying and the person who is the victim. I would then try to see how to support them… and then what happens now is the principal primarily deals with the HUGA forms to determine bullying and if children… if they are continuously engaging in bullying behaviour then they would be referred for counselling"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

The SBSTs must take the lead in recognising and eliminating learning obstacles in their surrounding context (Nong, 2020:1246). The SBST is in charge of determining

the school's, teachers', and students' support requirements and coordinating support provision within the context of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) Policy. To fulfil these duties, the team should convene on a regular basis (DBE, 2014).

(c) Category 5.1.3: Security measures

The school social workers described how schools prevent SBV by implementing certain security measures, such as undertaking random searches, limiting access to the school, employing security guards, and installing cameras.

Three participants mentioned that making use of security measures such as random searches, security cameras, controlled access, and security guards can play a vital role in the prevention of SBV.

Gertie described her experience at two of the schools where she had worked: *"…they try to limit the amount of violence by not allowing dangerous items such as weapons or substance onto school property and that is done by having random like bag searches during the school day… you are allowed to pull a learner out of class and to say, can I conduct a search?... searches on learners cannot be done without the presence of a school social worker should you have one. And where the school don't have one normally, they get the police-based social workers…"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

A Miami study titled *'The impact of random metal detector searches on contraband possession and feelings of safety at school'* states that weapons on school grounds endanger both students and educators (Bhatt & Davis, 2018). Random searches for weapons in schools have been implemented by educational authorities to minimise incidents. The findings of the above-mentioned study suggest that the searches lowered the chance of pupils bringing weapons to school and decreased the likelihood of pupils being in possession of banned substances at school (Bhatt & Davis 2018; cf. Goel, Rao & Schroff, 2016:365).

Agnes spoke of random searches in these words: *"…we also do the school search, once per six months… we do not inform teachers, we do not inform learners, because we want to establish the involvement of learners in school crime or any*

other illegal activities. From our searches, the involvement of learners in violent behaviour is at the lowest level. We realised that they didn't bring in sharp objects, they don't bring serious objects that can be used during the school violence activities… The other thing that we do is we test learners for substance abuse in our school. If we suspect that this learner… seems to be intoxicated, we do test them. But through the… permission of parents and we also do give feedback to the parents regarding the results and the programmes that we could offer to the learner if he tested positive. But for this year, none of them tested positive, it was only last year" **[Agnes, P16]**.

The Schools Act (South Africa, 1996a) recognises that random drug searches, seizures, and testing can violate basic human rights. However, the Act believes that drug testing can be helpful when carried out in accordance with the prescribed criteria. The Act empowers school administrators to act in the best interests of students and school personnel to ensure a drug-free environment. As a result, while drug testing in schools is legal, it should always be the last option considered (DoE, 2013; Da Costa, Thobane & Jansen van Rensburg, 2018:48).

Gertie explained how and why access to the school is controlled as well: *"…access to the school for… any member of the community who tries to get into school is controlled by means of the security guard. You must sign in, you have to sign out, you have to say where you are going. You get a receipt for someone to sign because school-based violence isn't only done by learners inside of the school. Anyone can randomly walk into school and do something. Remember school-based violence also isn't just physical or verbal; it also includes stuff like vandalism. Vandalising school property is school-based violence, because you are destroying someone else's property and whilst amid destroying the school property it affects learning and teaching… So also, at the school where I am now, we have CCTV* [closed-circuit television] *cameras on every corridor, staircase, and play area. We are able to rewind, fast forward, pause the video and checking exactly who hit who, who did what… it makes it quite easier to manage what is going on in the school"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

Cindy described the security measures employed at her school: *"…security guards that roam around the school, they have got cameras around the school, and they have got weapon detectors right at the entrance. There is only one entrance that they use so that is how they try to reduce students going in with weapons in the school"* **[Cindy, P13]**.

Similar to the above extract, it is confirmed that throughout all high-risk zones, at least three to four armed officers (including one female guard) should be on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week (Sadhya & Singh, 2017:59). Information technology has made it easier to oversee schools. The usage of CCTV cameras is currently reducing crime rates all around the globe (Abubakar & Kwashabawa, 2021:39).

5.3.5.2   *Sub-theme 5.2: Talk to children and involve parents and/or social workers*

After an incidence of violence, the school social workers explained that educators will talk to the specific children and contact their parents, as well as involving the school social worker.

Under this sub-theme the school social workers highlighted the importance of both the parents and the school social workers talking to the adolescent, as this can play a vital role in preventing SBV. Two school social workers elaborated about this sub-theme.

Daisy expressed her views on involving parents and said: *"We involve parents always in cases of violence"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Dealing with SBV is not only the responsibility of school social workers, disciplinary committee members, or class/form instructors; it is everyone's responsibility, including parents. In the event of an incident, the parents of both the bully and the victim should be part of the conversation (Ngcobo, 2015).

Agnes highlighted the importance of involving parents: *"…our school employed a school social worker who supports all the victims and perpetrators and I support victims to cope with the trauma that has been caused by the perpetrator. And I also*

help them to develop the positive self-talk about themselves, to think good about themselves… I also bring back hope in their lives and to help them understand… perpetrators… have their issues. They are unable to cope with the demands and pressures of schoolwork and of the school environment and they are making jokes of her [a SBV victim]. *I also help perpetrators to deal with unresolved issues that they have, as well as anger management… self-knowledge skills, conflict management skills and ability for them to communicate their emotional needs… they tend to internalise their emotional needs, they tend to not attract anyone and as a result they bottle up their issues"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

In their study which focused on the treatment of perpetrators of intimate partner violence, Karakurt, Koc, Çetinsaya, Ayluçtarhan and Bolen (2019) argue that utilising low-cost and versatile anger management in addressing a wide variety of psycho-educational components, such as problem-solving and coping skills, can curb SBV. With violence being the most severe national problem in Jamaica and data indicating that acts of violence reduce the quality of education in schools, conflict resolution is critical in settling many disagreements before they escalate to the level of serious crimes (Bourne et al, 2015).

5.3.5.3   Sub-theme 5.3: Run programmes at school

Good civic programmes that encourage autonomy and real involvement can help young people prevent SBV, while also developing strategic planning and a better sense of civic responsibility (Jain, Cohen, Kawashima-Ginsberg, Duarte & Pope, 2019:34). The school social workers mentioned and explained that their school runs a variety of programmes to assist learners and educators, and to manage SBV. Three participants gave an account of how an intervention such as community programmes can play a role in preventing SBV.

Sue said: *"The school runs various committees, such as wellness teams which ensures the wellness of the learners, teachers, and the management within the school. These committee follows up on the wellbeing of everyone at the school through their individualised, group and community programs"* **[Sue, P19]**.

Literature attests that the wellness committee will act as an advisory panel to the board, offering counsel on student health and social concerns, as well as proposed changes, enhancements, supervision, and execution of the Wellness Policy. The wellness committee will meet on a regular basis (Wang, Riley, Wood, Greene, Horton, Williams, Violano, Brase, Brinkley-Rubinstein, Papachristos & Roy, 2020:6).

Daisy also referred to support programmes for victims and perpetrators: *"The SBST which is the School Based Support* [Team] *put measures in place to support victims and perpetrators. Support is in the form of counselling for both the perpetrator and the victim. We do group work, and we refer to external service providers"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Framework and policy resonate with Daisy's views that all student, teacher, curriculum, and school social programmes in the school are coordinated. This involves connecting the SBST to other school-based management structures and practices, or even merging them, to improve activity collaboration and enhance efficiency (DBE, 2014:29). This means that the SBST focuses on enabling teachers to design preventative and promotional methods, as well as on developing abilities to manage individual learner challenges (Maphumulo, 2019:8).

Sue added more details: *"…awareness programmes are very important to provide a conducive platform for open communication for both the learners and educators"* **[Sue, P19]**.

Research emphasises the importance of encouraging open communication (Ahmad, Lenarduzzi, Oivo & Taibi, 2018:933). One other way of curbing violence within the school is through running awareness programmes that encourage wellbeing and higher academic performance (Astor & Benbenishty, 2018:16). In addition, participating in preventive education and awareness boosting in schools can enhance young people's disclosure of domestic abuse. Research by Lloyd (2018:2094) indicates greater disclosure following some educational programmes.

Khosi mentioned the following: *"Normally we would try and call experts to come and address learners for starters. Address them; teach them how to resolve problems"* **[Khosi, P20]**.

The participant's words further confirmed that bullying prevention programmes are being introduced in primary and secondary schools across the USA through experts in the field, in order to minimise the prevalence of behaviour problems (Ostrander, Mellville, Bryan & Letendre, 2018:367). Moreover, learners can benefit from the use of a systematic approach to dispute resolution which stresses professionalism and relationship maintenance (Wolfe, Hoang & Denniston, 2018:1).

Khosi spoke of the programmes they run in his school as follows: *"In the school we have plenty of programmes that we run to promote self-esteem of learners and promoting respect and self-love"* **[Khosi, P20].**

Literature confirms Khosi's perspective that educational films, interactive games, role playing, and creative expression via art and poetry are examples of group work meant to help students in a range of learning experiences. Group therapy facilitators, in accordance with best practices in the use of psychoeducational therapies, work freely and constructively with the curriculum, allowing time and space for dealing with crises, individual issues, and social dynamics (Reidy, Holland, Cortina, Ball & Rosenbluth, 2017:237). Moreover, bullying and harassment are causing a loss of self-worth or self-esteem, which gradually leads to a loss of confidence in one's talents and capacities. Loss of willingness to complete tasks and a rise in self-doubt occur because of the pressure created by bullying, impacting both the health and wellbeing of the victim (Suggala, Thomas & Kureshi, 2020:15). For starters, having a high self-esteem boosts initiative, or the ability to act on one's own. People with high self-esteem are confident in their own opinions and abilities to do what is right and acceptable (Baumeister & Vohs, 2018:138).

Khosi went on to say the following: *"The school works in partnerships with one particular* [organisation] *which specialises in substance abuses and drugs* [SANCA]. *We usually invited them to come and speak to our learners and make awareness programs within the school and the community"* **[Khosi, P20].**

According to South African researchers Burnett and Hollander (2016, cited by Khosa, Dube & Nkomo, 2017), SANCA launched the substance usage prevention initiative "Ke Moja I'm OK without drugs" with the support of the South African Government in 2003. The "Ke Moja" initiative has since been implemented in all five areas of South Africa's Gauteng Province. Moreover, these coaches are primarily young individuals who have graduated, but were unable to continue their education in tertiary schools or find work. As a result, the initiative is also one approach for increasing youth employment (Khosa et al, 2017:72).

5.3.5.4   Sub-theme 5.4: Disciplinary measures

The Schools Act (South Africa, 1996a: section 8) requires the governing body of a public school to adopt a code of conduct for the school's learners. The code of conduct establishes the disciplinary standards for students and is thus essential to school discipline in order to implement disciplinary measures, particularly in serious cases, according to the school social workers.

Two school social workers gave their accounts of how they experienced disciplinary measures as a means of curbing violence.

Gertie gave account on how disciplinary measures are applied and said: *"And learners who are found to be engaging in any form of violence are then subjected to a disciplinary measure. That disciplinary measure can be anything from getting community service, which can be volunteering your time to be either picking up litter around the school, or having to volunteer your time to give to whatever they choose, or reading books to children in children's home. It also can range to suspension, so it's all just depending on the severity of the action. The punishment must basically fit the crime"* **[Gertie, P17]***.*

A study conducted in South Africa by Smith, Beckmann and Mampane (2015:2366) confirms that school disciplinary hearings are comparable to court proceedings and the punishment should fit the crime. Literature further attests that suspension refers to the SGBs' refusal to allow the student to attend classes for a duration of more than one week, but no more than 14 days (South Africa, 1996a). Moreover, even

though many schools have abandoned zero tolerance practices, directors continue to remove minority children from school at disproportionately high rates through suspension and expulsion, and these students are more likely to be sent to Children's Court by schools (Curran, 2019:320).

Daisy explained as follows regarding disciplinary measures: *"We have a very strong disciplinary team that is very active, and they are hands-on where they take precise disciplinary action against learners who are bullying others and learners who act violently… For extreme actions, the South African police is involved and at times learners are suspended and external disciplinary hearings* [are held] *where the SGB is involved. When a learner pose* [a] *continuous threat to other learners and educators, the school can ask for the expulsion of the learners from the Department of Education"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Literature attests that the school should include the students in the process of school regulations, such as the school's code of conduct (Obadire & Sinthumule, 2021:3). Furthermore, for unruly students, suspension or expulsion is recommended (Obadire & Sinthumule, 2021:3). Literature confirms that serious cases such as dangerous weapons are promptly handed over to the police in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 (South Africa, 1977: section 31).

5.3.6 Theme 6: School social workers' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing school-based violence

In response to the question on how stakeholder involvement assists in managing SBV, the participating school social workers identified various stakeholders and explained how they assist. In their responses they focused on other departments and NGOs with which they had networked and developed relationships, and subsequently enlisted to be involved as stakeholders in the school to assist in managing SBV.

In terms of the stakeholder involvement in the management of SBV, four participants listed various governmental organisations and NGOs that they considered as stakeholders.

Daisy explained how the police and NGOs are stakeholders and assist the school: *"…as a school, we have been adopted by the police... the one in* [Phateng[13]]… *We have been adopted to create school safety. So, the police are encouraged to come into the school and to do talks and to develop a programme for school safety… they call it a task team that is assigned to the school to come in and do school patrols, to come in and… do random search for illegal substances. They come in to make sure that learners are safe as well from violence from outside, because lately we have had homeless people attacking our children* [and] *taking their phones, so we asked the task team to be present, especially in the mornings when the children are being dropped off to come into the school premises and in the afternoon when they go back home… We also involve Child Protection Unit like Child Welfare Tshwane, Rata NCNR* [social services] *in cases where minors are involved in violent activities. NICRO* [the South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders] *and SAPS conduct programmes for learners in conflict with the law. We involve religious groups who come and offer moral talks and encourage acceptable social behaviour. The Department of Education removes learners that are posing a threat and not willing to change"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

Putting police officers in schools is a popular method for improving school safety through various school safety programmes such as Adopt-a-Cop and Community Policing Forums (Homer & Fisher, 2019:192). In addition, efforts to eliminate alcohol and illicit substance usage in schools has led to the adoption of various preventative methods targeted at lowering real crime and victimisation though the use of random searches (Makgoke & Mofokeng, 2020:91). Furthermore, a study in the Philippines supports the participants' view that governmental and non-governmental social institutions have been creating strategies to offer the required interventions that deal with children in conflict with the law and provide psycho-social support (Peralta & Dominguez, 2020).

Agnes included how her school has formed relationships with NGOs: *"…we successfully managed to develop a good stakeholder relationship with the local organisations… including the Child Welfare, SANCA… and we hold meetings to*

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[13] Phateng is a pseudonym given to an area to protect the real name of that area.

discuss programmes, these social illnesses, as well as the school formation and its working. And with the stakeholders the others are involved, for example, the scholar transport association…" **[Agnes, P16]**.

The next stakeholder mentioned is civil society, which is defined as all non-governmental groups that are not affiliated with the state and promote the interests of members of the public in matters such as democracy, development, good governance, human security, and the advancement of human rights (United Nations Development Programme 2016). Literature adds that organisations such as child welfare provide emotional support (Carradine, Milne, Fallon, Black & King, 2017:42). It was shown that educators seek advice and emotional support both before and after contacting child protection agencies.

Gertie spoke not only of the police, but also about health services: *"…both schools are affiliated with the nearest police station and health services, such as the government clinic. The police normally render services such as drug raids and their house care services provide educational youth programmes, such as life skills training. So, learners with the life skills training are taught how to behave and not necessarily engage in* [violent behaviour], *they are taught about peer pressure… they are taught how that will have an adverse effect on their school career, not just the school career, but the likes and how you must try to not follow what other people are doing. We always try to teach kids the difference between wrong and right, but we know peer pressure plays a big part in it, so we try get as much of the community involved in managing what is going on in the school"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

Health services, such as school-based health centres, are also stakeholders and fulfil various responsibilities by offering medical, mental/behavioural, dental, and vision care directly in schools, where young people spend the bulk of their hours, increasing their chance to learn and thrive (Arenson, Hudson, Lee & Lai, 2019:1). The police service is another stakeholder and can observe students' activities in order to provide protection from the risks of substances (Sumpena, Suryadi, Hakam, Budimansyah & Dahliyana, 2020:124). In general, industrialised nations use systematic life skills education programmes that encourage good behaviour, with research demonstrating results on individual children. In contrast, the bulk of life

skills programmes in poor nations lack systematic implementation, assessment, and monitoring (Nasheeda, Abdullah, Krauss & Ahmed, 2019:362).

Cindy explained how recreational facilities and programmes are run for learners: *"…with* [Easthood[14]] *side, they sponsor different schools in terms of they have got recreational places like the swimming pools where students get to go and swim. So, with them having extra curriculum and other things it helps students to be occupied and be constructive… they sponsor most things like sporting activities, those extra curriculums. So at least students after school they have other things to do other than snooping around, making trouble"* **[Cindy, P13]***.*

A study carried out in Illinois, USA, validates that a recreational environment provides an ideal opportunity for individuals to interact, engage, and learn new skills in a stress-free and realistic atmosphere (Berdychevsky, Stodolska & Shinew, 2019:11). Another South African study reveals that an increasing body of research identifies extracurricular involvement as additional support that increases learner development, with the added benefit of enhanced retention for at-risk students (Van der Merwe, 2014:195). Similarly, extracurricular activities have been found to have a good influence on pupils (Ginosyan, Tuzlukova & Ahmed, 2020:1528).

5.3.7 Theme 7: School social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence

Bullying is a major problem that affects all fields and persons of all levels of expertise. To establish a truly secure, productive, and thriving environment in academia, a range of stakeholders, including academic communities, funding agencies, and institutions, must work together to increase their ability to curb SBV (Mahmoudi & Keashley, 2021:3338).

The school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support are discussed under four sub-themes, namely: (i) employ social workers, equip teachers, and involve other organisations and departments; (ii) involve parents; (iii) run educational programmes at school and in the community; and (iv) extramural activities.

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[14] Easthood is a pseudonym given to an area to protect the real name of that area.

5.3.7.1 Sub-theme 7.1: Employ social workers, equip teachers, and involve other organisations and departments

Firstly, the theme mentions employing school social workers. Some provinces exclusively hire social workers at the provincial level, whilst others hire them at the district/circuit level and in special and/or mainstream schools. It should also be mentioned that while most school social workers are hired by provincial education departments, individual school governing bodies do have the authority to hire and compensate for school social workers out of their own budget (Vergottini, 2019:34). Secondly, to achieve a spirit of cooperation in schools, teacher training should begin with compassionate education, training, and practical solutions (Kwon, Walker & Kristjánsson 2018:26). Thirdly, the more NGOs and government departments perform, the more important it is to include them as policy partners (Potluka, 2021:91).

The school social workers suggested that social workers should be employed and other organisations and departments should be involved as stakeholders. The quotations below illustrate this.

Palesa suggested that social work services should be available in schools: *"I definitely think having social workers in school… there is a lot of value for social workers to be involved in school. Even the social workers that the Department of Education employs, so they seem to be involved in these programmes in the schools, I think that could be extremely valuable…"* **[Palesa, P18]**.

Pack (2013:72) supports the quotation above, since she adds that professionals such as counsellors or school social workers should be employed. Another South African study reveals that even though school social work has been practiced in South Africa since the 1980s, recruitment rates have remained relatively small until presently. The study determined that there is a substantial and rising need for school social workers in the South African education system. However, the amount to which this requirement is satisfied varies significantly among regions (Vergottini, 2019:v, 70).

Mpho focused particularly on the counselling services offered by social workers: *"…lack of counselling services at the school, as it is also the causes of this thing* [school-based violence], *so if that one can also be arranged that schools have counsellors…"* **[Mpho, P15]**.

Literature confirms Mpho's point of view that the scarcity of counselling options for students who were victims, perpetrators, or bystanders remain a source of worry (Altinyelken & Le Mat, 2018:660). Moreover, because of the lack of professional school counsellors, such as school social workers, and effective counselling services in secondary schools there has been no decrease in students' behavioural problems, such as drug abuse, early sexual engagement, truancy, aggressiveness, and disrespect. Another issue is the scarcity of counselling resources, especially counselling rooms (Minga 2018:2; Sima, 2018:1373).

Palesa suggested that outside organisations should be involved to assist learners: *"…organisations that focus on bullying and the requirements I think should have more knowledgeable people on board. It should make people aware of standing up for themselves and seeking help when they need support… if those stakeholders are involved in a sense of… promoting consideration and care… it might support learners and teachers…"* **[Palesa, P18]***.*

Another suggestion for curbing SBV which was pointed out by Palesa and literature is that it is important that all stakeholders, including NPOs, the scientific community, scientific policy makers, ranking organisations, funding agencies, and the public, need to act intentionally in a collaborative manner to address this long-neglected issue (Venter, 2013:241).

Palesa emphasised the support that social workers can provide: *"I think the other thing is* [if] *educators and principals and all the staff members in school are supported, they will be able to be better equipped to manage their own stresses and I believe it would be the school-based violence in amongst the staff members. And I believe that if you support the staff, they would be more equipped to support the learners and I think with that the leaners might* [stop]… *to engage in bullying or engage in school-based violence, because I think they would feel heard and they*

would feel supported. I think that would be something that would be extremely valuable to have people that can come out and whether they team up with the social workers or supportive structures that really make the teachers and the principal feel that they matter" **[Palesa, P18]***.*

Maintaining school staff and assisting educators who have work-related stress can assist them to better manage their day-to-day tasks (Elyashiv, 2019:160). Furthermore, in Worth, Lynch, Hilary, Rennie and Andrade's (2018:53) study, they emphasised the importance of professional school leaders in supporting and safeguarding employees from workload stress. The act of providing in-service support through modelled practical application has a greater effect on teacher practice than the attendance of conference style professional development (Hunter, 2019:26).

Daisy put forward the suggestion that if schools do not have a social worker, teachers should be better equipped with more understanding of children's behaviour: *"Educators sometimes feel that they are there just to teach, to impart knowledge about a subject. So they focus on subject content, which is right yes, but I think if they also get taught how to… pick up emotional situations in children and… in a school where there is no social workers, no psychologist, no therapist, the teacher should be taught how to handle a child who is maybe sleeping in class, maybe not working in class, and not just judge them harshly and want to punish them harshly or scream at them at times"* **[Daisy, P14]***.*

The school environment may give children relationships with peers and teachers that can serve as essential support systems and improve their fellow humans (Varela, Zimmerman, Ryan, Stoddard, Heinze & Alfaro, 2018:488). This is further confirmed through peace education theory classes that can assess the usefulness of peace through a strengths-based approach to conflict resolution (Harris, 2004:16). On the other hand, a Nigerian study discovered that instructors were not sufficiently equipped to teach guidance and that school principals did not monitor guidance due to a lack of knowledge and abilities on the topic (Suleiman, Bosede, Lasisi & Ishola, 2019:63).

Agnes suggested that the police should be involved on a regular basis: *"…the law enforcement officials, like Metro Police Department and the SAPS, they should continue to visit our schools. Like in our school we have Adopt-a-Cop person. They have allocated us Constable Slower, who is highly active in terms of if anything happens. We call her and she will attend to our queries immediately. So, people like her they need to visit schools more regularly,* [be] *more visible to talk to these children's souls and motivate them. Also, with the help of yes, myself as a social worker and other external service providers"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Mpho supported the involvement of the police: *"…the principal and the SGB inviting police so that they can talk about these things and, you know, and they should have constant contact with the local police station to address this crime and violence in schools"* **[Mpho, P15]**.

The available literature agrees with the two participants that the Metro Police should be combatting any crimes that are within their authority to address, including SBV (Khumalo & Obioha, 2016:105). The police's peculiar role is likely to successfully contain criminal violence (Di Salvatore,2019:840). In addition, Netshitangani (2018a:96) states that in accordance with the Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000, the Safer Schools Campaign includes activities such as the piloting of Firearm Free Zones for Schools and School Safety Committees; Adopt-a-Cop; participation of the school governing body/parents; Bambanani volunteers; and usage of SAPS reservists.

5.3.7.2   Sub-theme 7.2: Involve parents

Increasing the involvement of parents was suggested by the school social workers in terms of stakeholder support in preventing SBV. The involvement of parents, as well as the employment of disciplinary procedures with bullies, appears to increase academic performance. It is also critical for teachers to properly express their anti-bullying views to kids (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017:249).

Three participants identified parents as the main stakeholders and stated that their involvement is vital in the prevention of SBV.

Daisy urged for more parental involvement: *"My suggestion would be to have more parental involvement. I think gone are the days where the parents throw the children to the teachers and the school and say 'raise my kid'. We need to bring in the parents a lot more to play a more significant role in developing children's social behaviour"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

It has further been confirmed that children who have parents who are actively interested in their education benefit more than children who have parents who are moderately engaged (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017:144). In addition, parents' support is critical for education, not just because children require assistance, but also because student instructors require parental assistance in preparing materials to incorporate more hands-on activities into the educational sessions (Li, Wang & Kim, 2020).

Mpho also felt that parents should be more involved: *"Again, I can say that also ensuring parents to be more involved in their child's schoolwork, it's also an important one. Involving parents, a lot… will also help…"* **[Mpho, P15].**

There seems to be a consensus between literature and the participants, since Ettah and Daru (2019:319) noted in their study that the staff members also frequently notified parents of their children's development as part of their intervention, and they continued to interview educators and arrange brief "booster" performance reviews for the pupils every two weeks for a year following the intervention. Similarly, parents in particular can encourage either prosocial or negative behaviours in their adolescent children (Lu, Pettigrew, Shin, Castillo & Allsup, 2020:1268).

Gertie highlighted the importance of involving parents: *"I feel parents are the first point of stakeholder involvement… A child's upbringing says a lot about how a child turns out to be. So, it's vital to involve parents in… the curriculum, what is going on in school, and keeping them up to date with their child's behaviour. Because the behaviour is often a result of how he or she is being treated within the home or a result or what he or she observes within the home. So, I think it's imperative for parents to realise that their actions spill over to the child… in communities where people are living under very terrible circumstances. People are living in like a one-*

room shack and dad will abuse mom in front of the kids… there is no separation… there is a bedroom, there is a lounge so everything is just under one roof… it's easy for kids to observe what a man does to a woman… [if] *a child goes to school and disrespects women and treats* [them] *the same way, it is because he believes that's the okay way to treat* [women]*… If parents can curb how they behave, how they respond to things, the words they use, the actions they use, kids will learn to do better, because if a parent can sit the child down and say, 'my child what you did is wrong', 'this is not acceptable', 'this is not how you act in society' or whatever, a child will think about it and say okay. But if you as a member of staff* [do it] *and it's at school the child turns and says that 'you are not my parent', 'you are not my mom', 'you are not my dad', then you have no power to change their behaviour, because they think what their parents are doing is the right thing. So, really, I always say involving parents in teaching kids is one way to artfully manage anything within a school setting, whether it's violence, it's behaviour, it's academics, you need parents involved. If there is no parent buy-in, you are not really going to succeed much, because kids really look up to their parents. Or if… kids don't really like their parents, they will sort of retaliate and be badly behaved on purpose. So, you really need the buy-in of the parents. For me the biggest stakeholder to manage school violence, because as I said school violence isn't just kicking and stabbing, it's not physical all the time. You need parents to be on board to be successful in curbing all kinds of school violence"* **[Gertie, P17]**.

In their study in the Netherlands, Kaufman, Kretschmer, Huitsing and Veenstra (2018:831) determined that spillover effects may not just occur at short intervals, but may also evolve over time. Indeed, characteristics of negative parent-child interactions, such as abuse, neglect, or poor parenting, predict peer victimisation years later. Furthermore, a Nigerian study emphasises that when parents have little or no time for their children while concentrating all of their attention on their profession in order to satisfy the family's financial obligations, it has to be addressed (Ezemenaka, 2021:1).

5.3.7.3   Sub-theme 7.3: Run educational programmes at school and in the community

The school social workers suggested that educational and skills programmes should be run at the school and in the community. Some of the interventions that were identified at the school by the participants are educational, skills, and community programmes. The school social worker participants' suggestions are given below.

Daisy said: *"We do programmes at school, we talk about social behaviour at school, we involve stakeholders, but I feel if these programmes can be done in communities where the children come from… our children at* [Keithburg[15]] *come from all around… as a school social worker, I cannot service all the communities, but if the children's support teams, the police stations, the child protection units can have these programmes, even the schools in those areas can have programmes where they talk about anger management… conflict resolution, communication, I think a whole lot of families would be assisted. Children mostly would be assisted to deal with conflict, internal conflict, conflict with other people"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Kaufman et al (2018) support that given the efficacy of multimedia-based education on anger management skills and conflict resolution, this technique may be utilised to teach students about other important issues, such as life skills. It is also proposed that, like educational courses, students participate in life skills training seminars. The literature reviewed confirms that conflict resolution skills improvement (Penny 2015; Schumacher 2015) and better educational success (Armour 2014; Jain, Bassey, Brown & Kalra, 2014), including socioemotional learning (Jain et al 2014; Schumacher, 2015), play a very important role in curbing SBV.

Agnes also suggested the importance of special educational programmes for learners: *"…and more funding should be made available for more promotional educational material. For example, the pamphlets, the video shows, the discussion on anti-violent campaigns. And here especially the videos… because I have realised children, they enjoy mainly from watching videos that have the anti-violent education*

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[15] Keithburg is a pseudonym given to an area to protect the real name of that area.

information" **[Agnes, P16]***.* She also stated the following*: "…there should be continuous support, implementation of education programmes, because you know learners when they reach the stage of adolescence, above 12 years, 13, 14, 15, they tend to rely too much on their peers because of information, education, support, any other thing about life, they tend to rely a lot on advice from peers. So, if we come with… reliable information, information that is from the professionals, it will help the learners to make informed decisions. So, we must continue with the implementation of educational programmes…"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Literature posits that educational material or resources on violence can assist in curbing SBV (WHO, 2019a:8). In a study conducted in Guinea, the majority of the participants felt that awareness training should dive further into the core causes of violence and this can assist in dealing with violence (Mago-King, 2019:59). In addition, a United Kingdom (UK) study confirms that previous attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-bullying programmes have shown that interventions have proven to be effective thus far (Gaffney, Ttofi & Farrington, 2019:114).

Daisy added: *"…if we can encourage children who come from financially well stabilised homes not to stigmatise those that come from financially low… The children should know that it doesn't matter what I am wearing, my label, or what my background is, I have a right to belong, I have a right to be here"* **[Daisy, P14]**.

Guo, Li, Wang, Ma and Ma (2020:1) supports the notion that teachers, school social workers, and parents can help all kids feel secure and protected at school by teaching them about bullying behaviours. Learners from low-income households (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014) and whose parents are uneducated (Alvarez, Ong & Abocejo, 2017) are more likely to be bullied. In addition, 14% of learners claimed to have had someone at school threaten to say something about them that was intended to stigmatise them (Power, 2017:300).

Cindy echoed the need for parenting programmes: *"As a social worker at the school, I would start programmes with parents because I believe charity begins at home, and then we do the anti-bullying programmes to help parents understand their kids, because I have realised that most children, they suffer from* [a lack of] *parents'*

support or poverty. Parent support in terms of, if the parents are illiterate… they don't have time to sit down with their kids and help them do their homework. So, when the kids go to school and with their homework half done or not even done, there is that lack of support from parents. So, I would start basically with the parents and maybe develop some programmes to help parents understand their kids better" **[Cindy,P13]**. Cindy added that she would also like to start programmes for the learners: *"…looking at poverty and it plays a role in cultivating of violence to gain power. So, most kids what they do is, they tend to bully other kids so that they have power or control. So, I would start the anti-bullying programmes for the students at school after dealing with the parents. Then at least I would have good sessions with parents and the children, especially those I would see as victims and perpetrators at school"* **[Cindy, P13]**.

An analysis conducted in the UK revealed that there has been an increase in parenting programmes in recent years focused on assisting parents and caregivers in poor and middle-income nations to develop favourable parenting skills and this has assisted in reducing violence (Marcus, Rivett & Kruja, 2021:820). To ensure their children's healthy growth, parents must have adequate parenting skills (Barnová, Tamášová & Krásna, 2019:94).

5.3.7.3   Sub-theme 7.4: Extramural activities

Extramural activities have long been woven into the fabric of South African classrooms. Learners in South African schools were able to grow and develop their skills through extramural activities (Rooyakkers & Du Plessis, 2021:1). Extracurricular activities, sporting activities, wellbeing courses, and optimistic citizenship courses are important and major factors in reprocessing and adjusting students' personalities in various aspects. When students participate in such activities or courses, it contributes significantly to establishing skills and abilities and assist them in dealing with the issues they are facing (Aljbour, 2021:197).

The availability of extramural activities was emphasised by the participants as a suggestion to prevent SBV, and this also requires stakeholder involvement. Two school social worker participants spoke about the role of extramural activities and the various stakeholders that can participate in making this a success.

Agnes suggested as follows: *"…the Department of Sports, Culture and Recreation should fund more programmes at primary and secondary school level. The more children are involved in sport activities, the less chance they have of doing the wrong things, of involving themselves in school violence or in school crime… we need to expand in terms of sport, because for now children at school it will be attractive. It will be soccer, it will be netball, it would be also chess, but what about those children who did not make it through the trials? If the school has more activities, it has got the drum majorettes… we do have needlework, we need again more and more school activities and more sporting codes so that children should be involved. We need more cricket, we need more rugby, we need cycling… and our children will be preoccupied, and I also think the dance groups or dance lessons, artwork for those who are talented in drawing, and we can win them… I still remember… we had a wellness programme where… one of these boys would be listening and concentrating and he will draw. His drawing will reflect the content of the discussion as well as the person who was presenting, how was the hair or his attitude towards the learners, how was the learners, how was the action… we need these kinds of activities to include all of them, because if we practise these, they are even going to win them, we are not going to lose some of these boys"* **[Agnes, P16]**.

Mpho echoed what Agnes said: *"…extra activities at school for learners not to be… too much on the schoolwork. They should also get activities so that they can be able to have some fun and stuff like that to avoid… this violence…"* **[Mpho, P15]**.

Literature concurs with the above participants that sports have been found to minimise delinquent behaviour by occupying kids' time, as well as promoting self-esteem and discipline (Zamanian, Forouzandeh & Hagigi, 2012, in Ogunsemore, 2018:35). Furthermore, in their study, Rono, Kimengi and Githinji (2019:99) found that involvement in extracurricular activities was critical in reducing the threat of SBV in schools. Sports may enhance physical wellbeing, battle prejudice, and instil confidence and a sense of security in persons impacted by crises, racism, and exclusion, while also playing an important part in the reparation and rehabilitative process (Lopes 2015:5).

5.4   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This section outlined the research findings of this study from the school social workers' perspectives. Firstly, in Theme 1 the researcher gave an account of the school social workers' perceptions of the nature of SBV. The school social workers' perception is that SBV is caused by verbal and physical abuse, as well as bullying. Secondly, in Theme 2 the school social workers highlighted their perceptions of the victims of SBV. Under this theme, two sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme focused on the characteristics of the victims, namely that they are timid, weak, or different. In the second sub-theme, the researcher discussed the social workers' opinions that victims sometimes do not perform well academically. Theme 3 focused on the school social workers' perceptions of the perpetrators of SBV, and this theme was divided into three sub-themes. The three sub-themes were: perpetrators do not do well in school; perpetrators have low self-esteem and seek peer acceptance; and educators are also perpetrators.

Theme 4 provided the participants' perceptions on the causes of SBV. The perceived causes were discussed under three sub-themes, namely the behavioural problems of the child, the microsystem, and the mesosystem. Each sub-theme was further divided into categories for a more detailed discussion. Theme 5 highlighted the school social workers' accounts of how the school manages SBV. Four sub-themes emerged. The discussion of the first sub-theme, namely preventive measures, also lead to three specific categories: policies and guidelines; prevention and awareness programmes; and security measures. The last three sub-themes under this theme were: talk to children and involve parents and/or social workers; run programmes at school; and disciplinary measures. Theme 6 focused on the school social workers' accounts of how the stakeholders' involvement assists in curbing SBV. Finally, Theme 7 emphasised school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support in curbing SBV. There were four sub-themes that came up, which are as follows: employ social workers, equip teachers, and involve other organisations and departments; involve parents; run educational programmes at school and in the community; and extramural activities.

In the next chapter the researcher will provide a summary of the research questions, goals, objectives, approach, and design, as well as the ethical considerations of this study.

CHAPTER SIX:
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous two chapters focused on the research findings. The researcher discussed the demographic profiles of the school social worker and educator participants. An overview of the identified themes, sub-themes, and categories was provided for both groups, along with a literature control. In this chapter, the researcher will provide a summary of all the chapters as contained in this analysis.

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Firstly, as highlighted in the first chapter of this analysis particularly, the present research centred on exploring and describing both the school social workers' and educators' experiences and/or perceptions of SBV, including their suggestions for stakeholder support for curbing SBV. Secondly, this study paid attention to describing the findings of both groups of participants. Thirdly, the study focused on drawing conclusions on the experiences and perceptions of school social workers and educators and then making recommendations.

6.2   SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter One presented a basic introduction to and the general background of SBV, as well as a formulation of the research problem, the motivation for this research endeavour, the research technique selected to study the stated research problem, and the ethical considerations applied during this research project.

Chapter Two centred around the concept of stakeholder support. The chapter discussed what stakeholder support is, the types of stakeholders, and the stakeholder engagement process.

Chapter Three discussed how the qualitative research approach was implemented. The researcher also focused on the implementation of the research questions,

goals, and objectives, as well as the implementation of the research methods, approach, and design of this analysis.

In **Chapter Four**, the researcher provided the research findings for the educators, as well as the educators' socio-demographic profiles. The findings were presented along with a literature control, as well as a full description of the themes, sub-themes, and categories.

Chapter Five offers the research findings for the school social workers. The researcher also discussed the school social workers' socio-demographic profiles. The findings were presented along with a literature control, including a full description of the themes, sub-themes, and categories.

6.3   CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In this section the researcher will provide a conclusion and a brief account of the qualitative research process that was undertaken in this analysis. The researcher provides conclusions for the research questions, goals, and objectives, as well as discussing the application of the research approach and the ethical considerations.

6.3.1   Research questions

The research questions for the two target groups were thoroughly discussed in the first chapter and were given as follows:

Research questions for the educators:
- What are educators' experiences of SBV?
- What are educators' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV?

Research questions for school social workers:
- What are school social workers' perceptions of the nature and extent of SBV?
- What are school social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV?

The research objectives were developed in response to the study questions and were split into two parts, namely, objectives for educators and objectives for school social workers. In the next sub-section, the researcher will discuss the research objectives as previously discussed in the first chapter (see sub-section 1.2.3).

6.3.2   Research objectives

This study consists of two data sets as result the objectives of both the educators and the school social workers has been addressed in the next section as follows:

6.3.2.1   Achievement of the objectives for the educators' data set

- **Objective one for the educators' data set**
  The first objective was to explore and describe educators' experiences of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV. This was objective was achieved in Chapter Four.

- **Objective two for the educators' data set**
  Objective two was to describe as findings educators' experiences of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV.

  The researcher has attained the above-mentioned objective in this analysis through Chapter Four by clearly providing the findings based on the results of the data analysis. In Chapter Four the researcher also gave an account of the educators' experiences of SBV. The empirical results of the study revealed that the causes of SBV can be divided into the microsystem (individual factors), the microsystem, and the mesosystem.

Table 6.1: The nature and characteristics of victims and perpetrators of SBV

Nature of SBV	Characteristics of victims	Characteristics of perpetrators of SBV
● Verbal abuse	● Victims are timid	● Perpetrators do not perform well academically
● Physical abuse	● Victims appear to be weak	● Perpetrators have more than one victim

● Bullying	● Some victims perform well academically	● Perpetrators bring violence from home to school
	● Victims can become perpetrators	● Educators are also perpetrators

● **Objective three for the educators' data set**

The third objective was to draw conclusions and make recommendations about educators' experiences of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support to prevent SBV.

The suggestions for stakeholder support were provided in Chapter Two of this study where the researcher investigated stakeholder support.

6.3.2.2 *Achievement of the objectives for the school social workers' data set*

● **Objective one for the school social workers' data set**

The first objective was to explore and describe school social workers' perceptions of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV. This was objective was achieved in Chapter Four.

The researcher has attained the above-mentioned objective of this analysis through Chapter Five by clearly providing the themes, sub-themes, and categories of the findings based on the school social workers' data set. In Chapter Five the researcher also gave an account of the school social workers' perceptions of SBV. The empirical results of the study revealed that the causes of SBV can be divided into the microsystem (individual factors), the microsystem, and the mesosystem.

● **Objective two: School social workers' data set**

The second objective was to describe as findings school social workers' perceptions of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support for preventing SBV.

The above-mentioned objective of this analysis was attained through Chapter Two of this study. In the second chapter the researcher was able to provide the definitions of stakeholder support, as well as discuss the nature, characteristics, and effects of SBV.

- **Objective three: School social workers' data set**
  The final objective was to draw conclusions and make recommendations about school social workers' perceptions of SBV and their suggestions for stakeholder support to prevent SBV.

  The above objective was achieved by providing recommendations for future studies and policy review, as well as recommendations for the education stakeholder, as seen in this chapter (see Section 6.6).

6.3.3 Research approach

The researcher utilised qualitative research approach for this study. The paradigm was found to be the most suitable for this analysis, as noted in the Chapter One (see sub-section 1.3.1) where the research approach was thoroughly explained and addressed. The above approach was applied in conducting interviews with the participants (two data sets) and triangulation was accomplished by using multiple data sources. Further application and implementation of the research approach was implemented in Chapter Three (see sub-section 3.5.1) of this study.

6.3.4 Research design

In this study, the descriptive, explorative, and contextual research designs were implemented and applied. The researcher was able to provide a description and definition of the research design (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.3.2). Secondly, the researcher paid attention to the contextual research design, with specific focus on the SBV context; theoretical, physical, and methodological contexts; and the context of implications. Thirdly, the explorative research design embraces multidisciplinary ethnographic experiences (see Chapter One, sub-section 1.3.2.1).

6.3.5   Ethical considerations

The researcher adhered to ethical considerations in this study (see Chapter One, Section 1.5 and Chapter Three, Section 3.6). The researcher ensured that throughout the research process she obtained informed consent and maintained the principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and management of information.

6.4   RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE DATA FROM THE EDUCATOR PARTICIPANTS (GROUP A)

This section provides the research findings of the data obtained from the educator participants. The discussion will be divided into two sections, namely, biographical information and the seven themes as presented in the Chapter Four of this study.

6.4.1   Biographical information

Data was obtained from a total of 12 educator participants. The profiles of the participants indicate that 7 females and 5 male educator participants were interviewed. Their age ranged between 29 and 60 years old. There was a total of 10 African participants and two White participants.

6.4.2   Findings from the educators' themes, sub-themes, and categories

6.4.2.1   Theme 1: Educators' experiences of the nature of SBV

- Based on the point of view of educators, SBV can take the form of verbal and physical abuse. The nature of violence includes pushing, fighting, and having the intent to cause bodily harm. The participants also explained that SBV can manifest in the form of destruction of property.

- Bullying was identified as another form of SBV. The participants explained that whenever there is conflict, the perpetrator would resort to bullying the victim. There are cases where one learner would bully everybody in the classroom, including the educator.

6.4.2.2   Theme 2: Educators' experiences of the victims of SBV

- Victims tend to be timid, weak, and different. It was also noted that the majority of the victims of SBV resort to not telling anybody about an incident. Even when

they have injuries, the victims fail to report an incident. However, there are some victims who have the courage to report SBV.

- There seems to be a cycle of violence that occurs when victims are not provided with the necessary help; the victims become perpetrators themselves at a later stage. It is also noted that learners who have experienced violence tend to join gangs in pursuit of security and safety.

6.4.2.3   Theme 3: Educators' experiences of the perpetrators of SBV

- Participants seems to concur that most perpetrators of SBV are challenged academically. The perpetrators are usually very quiet within the classroom but seem to find their voices where teachers are not present, such as in the bathrooms, corridors, and playgrounds.

- The participants explained that perpetrators usually have more than one victim and it was noted that they do not want to take responsibility for their own actions.

- The perpetrators of violence usually bring violence from home. In homes where there are social problems, such as domestic violence, the learners then mimic this behaviour they observed at home and practice it at school.

- Educators were also identified as perpetrators of SBV. The participants explained that sometimes when educators gave instructions to learners and the learners did not follow the instructions, it angered the educators, and they became violent.

6.4.2.4   Theme 4: Educators experiences related to the causes of SBV

- The participants explained that the causes of violence are peer pressure and the desire to belong. Adolescents have deep desire to belong. Being perceived as 'cool' is very important to them and this leads to them joining gangs.

- Home circumstances and/or family circumstances were pointed out by the participants as causes of SBV. Gender-based violence seems to be a predictor and accelerator of SBV.

- Another cause of SBV that was pointed out by the participants was the neighbourhood. They explained that the neighbourhood that the learner comes from plays a role in whether the learner will become a perpetrator or not.

6.4.2.5 Theme 5: Educators' accounts of how the school manages SBV

- The participating educators mentioned prevention measures, talking to learners, involving parents and school social workers, intervention programmes within the schools and the communities, and disciplinary measures as ways in which the schools manage SBV.

6.4.2.6 Theme 6: Educators' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing SBV

- Educators and school social workers were mentioned as some of the stakeholders that play a crucial role in managing SBV. Educators must be role models of good behaviour for pupils to demonstrate peaceful conflict resolution. These techniques should also be taught by school social workers within the school.
- Both parents and learners play a role in the management of SBV. Participants explained that in cases where an incidence of SBV has occurred, they involve parents and they need their approval to be able to assist the learners with various programmes.
- The SGBs play an active role in the governance and disciplinary actions within the schools, including matters such as the suspension and expulsion of leaners.
- Departments and organisations can assist the schools with their resources, knowledge, and expertise.

6.4.2.7 Theme 7: Educators' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing SBV

- The participants concur that school social workers and/or psychologists must be employed, and more departments and organisations must be involved. Organisations such as SAPS, NPOs, political parties, and NGOs must be included in the prevention of SBV.
- Participants are of the view that parents should play a more prominent role and be involved within the school, since the children see them as role models. Parents should model self-worth and self-respect and love the children.
- It is further suggested that all the internal stakeholders, namely, SGBs, teachers and principals, should also be involved in the prevention of SBV.

During parent-teacher meetings, the learner's code of conduct can be one of the topics of discussion.

6.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE DATA FROM THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER PARTICIPANTS (GROUP B)

This section provides the research findings of the data obtained from the school social worker participants, discussed under the seven themes presented in Chapter Five of this study, as well as their biographical information.

6.5.1 Biographical information

A total of eight school social workers were included in the study. As indicated in Table 5.1, seven females and one male school social worker participated. Their age ranges between 31 and 43 years old.

6.5.2 Findings from the school social workers' themes, sub-themes, and categories

6.5.2.1 Theme 1: School social workers' perceptions of the nature of SBV

- The participants' perceptions about SBV are that it can occur as any form of violence, whether it is verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual violence. In addition, these acts may occur between learners or between staff members, or even between staff and learners.

- SBV also takes the form of bullying, such as verbal, social, and emotional bullying. It can also take the form of cyberbullying. Learners who struggle academically need to be encouraged and supported in order for them to develop academically.

6.5.2.2 Theme 2: School social workers' perceptions of the victims of SBV

- Victims of SBV appear to be timid, weak, and different from others. Victims of SBV usually present with anxiety and low self-esteem.

- Victims of SBV usually do not perform well academically. However, according to one participant, victims are usually students that are doing well in school and the perpetrators see their academic performance as a threat.

6.5.2.3   Theme 3: School social workers' perceptions of the perpetrators of SBV

● The perpetrators are usually the learners who have serious learning difficulties. They cannot cope with the pressure of their schoolwork. They use violence to show their power in the classroom. Sometimes they feel they are not awarded the same opportunities as the other children. They tend to feel that they do not belong in the classroom and they also develop a mentality that the teachers hate them.

● Some of the characteristics of the perpetrators include that they have low self-esteem and seek peer acceptance. The pain of not belonging often creates anger, which can lead to violence.

● Educators have also been identified as perpetrators of SBV.

6.5.2.4 Theme 4: School social workers' perceptions about the causes of SBV

● The behavioural problems of certain students were seen as the underlying cause of SBV.

● School social workers discovered that teachers do not treat some students with the proper sensitivity in the classroom, which can lead to SBV. The participants noted that learners' school achievements and educators' behaviour are critical components of SBV.

● Thus, according to school social workers, peer influences and children's need to belong lead to SBV.

● Difficult home circumstances is one of the factors leading to SBV.

● The type of neighbourhood that a learner comes from determines whether a learner will become violent or not. Learners from impoverished backgrounds have a higher chance of becoming perpetrators of violence.

● Another factor that contributes to aggression is the use of substances, such as drugs and alcohol. The aggression in turn leads to violence. When they are called out of class or penalised, they act erratically and visibly upset, and they are likely to get violent towards the instructor or other students.

● The family's socioeconomic conditions play a crucial role in whether the learner will become a perpetrator of violence or not. Learners who are exposed to violence at home will bring that behaviour to the school.

- Social media in the form of cyberbullying was identified as one of the causes of SBV. Violence and aggression displayed on social media teaches them to become violent when they are at school.

6.5.2.5 Theme 5: School social workers' accounts of how the school manages SBV

- The majority of the school social workers described how their schools conduct a variety of preventative tactics to prevent and reduce SBV. These were separated into three areas: policies and guidelines; preventative and awareness programmes; and security measures.
- Talking to children and involving parents and/or school social workers was pointed out as one of the ways to manage SBV.
- Running educational programmes at the school and in the community can assist in the awareness and prevention of SBV.
- Disciplinary measures, such as disciplinary hearings, school code of conduct, suspension, and expulsion, were pointed out as means schools can use manage SBV.

6.5.2.6 Theme 6: School social workers' accounts of how stakeholder involvement assists in managing SBV

- Successful and healthy stakeholder connections with local organisations, such as Child Welfare and SANCA, are needed, as well as meetings to discuss programmes, SBV, and the school's development and operation.
- Schools are linked to the local police station, as well as health facilities such as school-based health centres. The police often conduct services such as narcotics raids, and their house care services include educational youth programmes such as life skills training.

6.5.2.7 Theme 7: School social workers' suggestions for stakeholder support in preventing SBV

- The suggestions for stakeholder support made by school social workers are divided into four parts: (i) hire social workers, equip teachers, and incorporate other organisations and departments; (ii) involve parents; (iii) run educational

programmes at school and in the community; and (iv) offer extracurricular activities**.**

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section the researcher will provide recommendations to inform practice, the basic education sector and its stakeholders, as well as future study.

6.6.1 Recommendations for practice

The following are the recommendations for practice:

- School social workers should assist in the disciplinary action processes which are conducted by the SGB and facilitate dialogues between the victims and the perpetrators.
- School social workers can assist the school in the implementation of the peace education theory through facilitating workshops for parents, learners, and educators. They can also assist in taking a more prominent role during disciplinary action, with specific focus on the learner, and provide recommendations for the disciplinary action committee within the SGBs.

6.6.2 Recommendations for policy review

- There seems to be a consensus that school social workers need to be hired within the school environment. The SACSSP needs to review policies and guidelines in order to make school social work a specialised field with clear roles and responsibilities.
- SBV is an issue of importance and of global concern. The National DBE needs to formalise the role of school social workers within the schools.
- It was observed that most schools have not included learners (RCL) in the SGB even though it is prescribed by the guidelines. The National DBE should ensure that all the RCLs are included in the SGBs and allowed to participate in decision making, such as drawing up the learner's code of conduct.

6.6.3   Recommendations for stakeholders in education

It is of interest that both the primary and secondary stakeholders work together to curb the surge in SBV. The stakeholders in education can benefit from the following recommendations, which were gained through undertaking this analysis:

- Each school should consider employing the services of one or more social workers within their school to provide psycho-social support to learners, as well as to break the cycle of violence and thereby prevent the victims from becoming perpetrators in future.

- Based on the literature review conducted, it was revealed that although the learners and school social workers are key stakeholders within the basic education sector, they are often excluded and some SGBs do not even have a LRC at the SGB level.

- Considering and including all the stakeholders within the basic education sector can assist in curbing SBV, since each stakeholder has a specific role to play in making the school violence free.

- The schools, DoE, SGBs, SMTs, SBSTs, DBSTs, LRCs, principals, educators, school social workers, parents, NGOs, FBOs, and government departments should work together to curb the phenomenon of SBV.

- The Restorative Justice System should be considered during disciplinary actions which are conducted by the SGBs instead of suspension, expulsion, or the zero tolerance policy, since many learners are lost through these processes.

- The schools should consider letting school social workers assist in spearheading the process of restorative justice and teaching both the learners and the educators about the peace education theory, including the six petals of the peace education theory (see Chapter Three, Section 3.7).

6.6.4   Recommendations for future study

After having conducted this research study and having learned about SBV over the years, the researcher recommends the following for those wishing to pursue this topic:

- A study is needed to investigate why some of the schools are excluding the LRCs from SGBs meetings. In addition, the LRC should be a part of the

discussion when disciplinary committee rules and regulations and the code of conduct for learners are being drafted.

- In future studies, SBV programmes can also be investigated with a specific focus on restorative justice and how this reduces the dropout rate of learners.
- There is a paucity of studies which specifically focus on the parents of learners who are either victims or perpetrators of SBV in order to gain insight from their perspectives. Other studies can also focus on the SGBs' perspective of SBV.

6.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitation of this study is that this analysis was conducted during the very difficult time of COVID-19, which has impacted the manner in which data collection was done. Instead of being able to conduct face-to-face interviews as originally planned, the researcher had to conduct online interviews, which posed some challenges. Due to restrictions on the movement of persons and goods which have been put in place to address, prevent, and combat the spread of COVID-19, the interviews were conducted online, and no physical contact was made with any participants in order to comply with the regulations.

6.6   SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter the researcher gave a synopsis of the entire research study. The researcher also looked at the findings of the study and compared them to the research questions, goals, and objectives, which were in turn weighed against the literature review and empirical findings to determine whether they were achieved. The researcher also examined the limitations which were experienced in this analysis and made recommendations for practice, stakeholders, and future studies.

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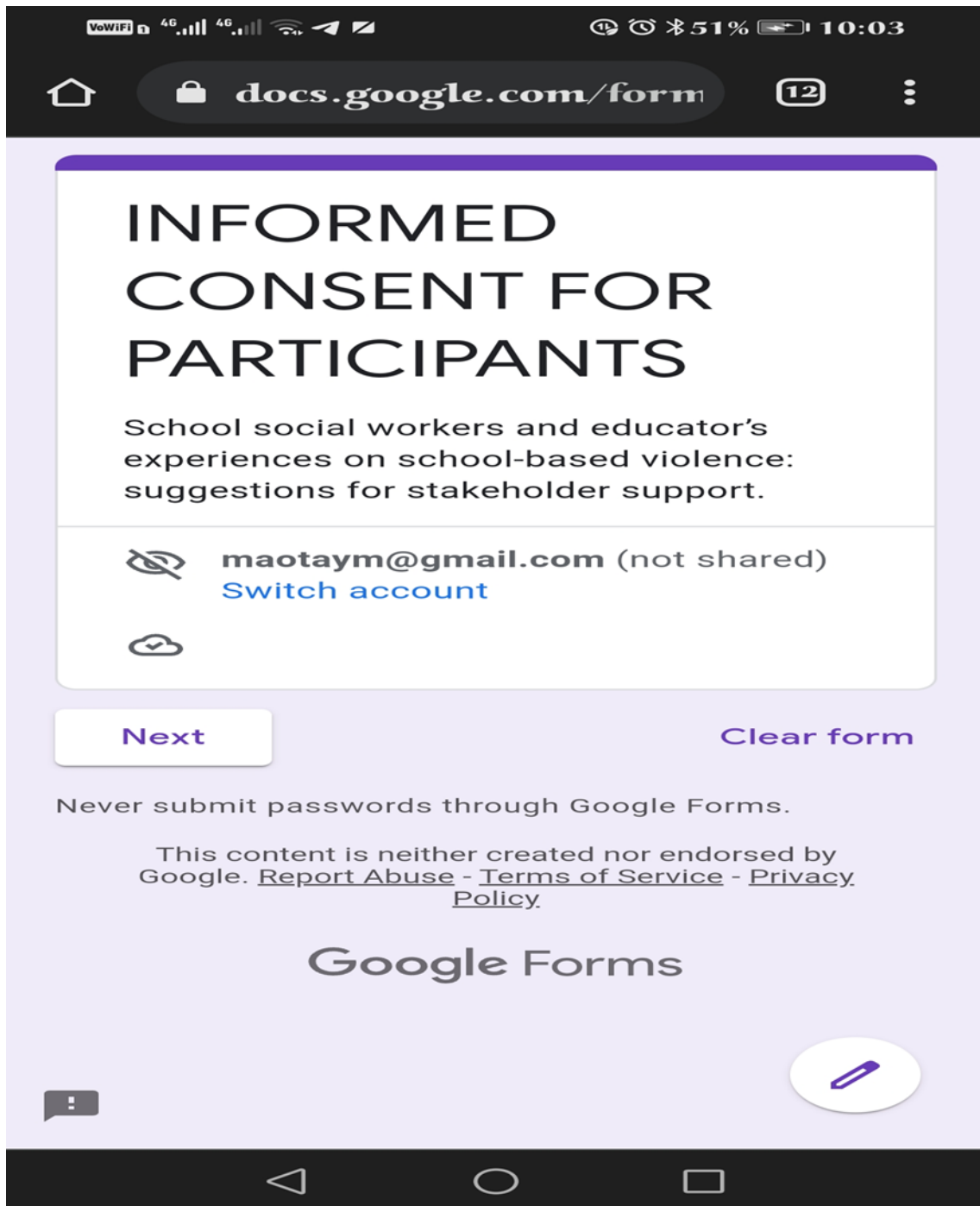
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ADDENDUM A: INFORMED CONSENT FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND EDUCATORS (ELECTRONIC GOOGLE FORM)

Full Google form available here: https://forms.gle/Jm1jS9gw2Doqpdt47

ADDENDUM B: INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM DOCUMENT (SENT AND RECEIVED VIA EMAIL)

ADDENDUM C: CONSENT FORM REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PUBLISH AUDIOTAPES AND/OR VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW RECORDINGS (SENT AND RECEIVED VIA EMAIL)

CONSENT FORM REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PUBLISH PHOTOGRAPHS, AUDIOTAPES AND /OR VIDEOTAPES OR VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OF AUDIOTAPES/ VIDEOTAPE RECORDINGS	
As part of this project, I have made a photographic, audio and /or video recording of you. I would like you to indicate (with ticks in the appropriate blocks next to each statement below) what uses these records only in ways that you agree to. In any of these records, names will be identified.	
1. The records can be studied by the research team and photographs/ quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings can be used in the research report.	
2. The records (i.e. Photographs / quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings) can be used for scientific publications and/or meetings.	
3. The written transcripts and/or records can be used by other researchers.	
4. The records (i.e. photographs/ quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings) can be shown/ used by other researchers.	
5. The records can be used on television or radio.	
_____ Signature of participant	_____ Date

STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATORS	
STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S) I, _____ (name of the investigator), declare that: ● I have explained the information given in this document to _____ (name of participant) and/or his/her representative _____ (name of representative); ● He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions; ● This conversation was conducted in Afrikaans/ English/Sotho/Xhosa/ Zulu/ Other_____ (indicate other language) and no translator was used/ this conversation was translated into _____(language) by _____ (name) Signed at _____ on_____2019	

(place) (date) _____ _____ Signature of investigator/ representative Signature of witness	

DECLARATION BY TRANSLATOR
I, _____(name), confirm that I
  ● Translated the content of this document of English into
  _____ (indicated the relevant language) to the
  participant / participant's representative:
  ● Explained the content of this document to the participant/
  participant's representative;
  ● Also translated the questions posed by
  _____
(name), as well as the answers given by the investigator/
representative, and
  ● Conveyed a faculty correct version of what was related to me.
 	
Signed at _____ on _____2019
  (Place) (date)
 	
_____ _____
Signature of translator Signature of witness	

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANT / REPRESENTATIVE OF PARTICIPANT	

Dear Participant / Representative of participant
 	
Thank you for your participant in this study. Should at any time
during the study.
  ● An emergency arises as a result of the research, or
  ● You require any further information regarding the study, or
  ● The following occur:
(indicate any circumstance which should be reported to the
investigator to the investigator), kindly contact
_____
(name) at telephone number
_____	

ADDENDUM D: STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS (SENT AND RECEIVED VIA EMAIL)

UNISA | university of south africa

Unit 23, Melody Complex

38 Mozart Lane

Sagewood

1687

Deputy Chief Education Specialist: Research

Ms Nomvula Ubisi

Dept of Education

Gauteng Province

re. Request for permission to conduct research

I am a Masters' Students in Social Work in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. As part of my studies, I have to conduct research on "informing a stakeholder support model on school-based violence: school-social workers and educators' perspective".

I hereby request permission to conduct semi-structured interviews with school-social workers and educators in Johannesburg. The goal of this study is to develop an in-depth understanding of school social workers' and educators' perspectives to inform a stakeholder support model for school-based violence. The date and time will be arranged with each school and staff member and each interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

The study will be guided by the following principles:

● Once I have received permission from you, the study will be submitted to the University of South-Africa's Research Ethical Committee for final approval.

● Participants will participate in the interviews on an anonymous and voluntary basis and will not receive any incentives to encourage their participation.

- I will schedule appointments with each of the staff members at a time convenient to them.

- The name of your organisation and the names of the interviewees will not be mentioned in the research report.

- I will provide you with a copy of the final research report on request.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information about the study. You are also welcome to contact my supervisor, Dr.N.P. Kgadima, on tel. (012) 429-6515 (e-mail: kgadinp@unisa.ac.za), to confirm that this is a legitimate research project.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Kind regards

Mrs Yvonne-Yvette Maota

Cell:061 902 5323

E-mail: maotaym@gmail.com

ADDENDUM E: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT A SCHOOL (SENT AND RECEIVED VIA EMAIL)

UNISA

Faculties of Human Science
Department of Social Work
Pretoria
0002

Our Ref: Mrs YM Maota
Cell: 061 902 5323
E-Mail: maotaym@gmail.com

Attention: Mr. L Botha
Halfway-House Primary School
291 Van Heerden Rd.
Halfway Gardens
Midrand
1685

Dear Mr. L Botha

Re: Request for permission to conduct research among staff members of Halfway-House Primary School

I am a master's student in Social Work in the Department of Social work at the University of South-Africa as part of my studies, I need to conduct research on "school social workers and educator's experiences on school-based violence: Suggestions for stakeholder support".

This research project originated because of the high reports of violence within our schools in South-Africa. As a school social worker, the researcher needed to explore on strategies that can curb the school violence. This study plays a very important role in curbing school-based, to inform practice and professional development of school social workers and the goal of this study is to develop an in-depth understanding of school social workers and educators' perspectives in informing a stakeholder support model for school-based violence.

I hereby would like to request permission with some of your staff members. The research will be done online, and no contact will be made with the school social worker or the educators. The researcher will also not enter the premises of the school. Obeying the rule and regulations of Covid-19 and lockdown is very important to the researcher and will not be compromised in any way by the researcher.

Please note that this study has been approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social work at Unisa. Without the approval of the committee, the study cannot be conducted. Should you have any questions and queries not sufficiently addressed by me the researcher, you are more than welcome to contact the Chairperson of the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. His contact details are as follows: DR. A.H Nicky Alpaslan, telephone number: 012 429 6739, or email alpasah@unisa.ac.za.

If after you have consulted the researcher and the Research and Ethics Committee in the department of Social Work at Unisa, and their answers have not satisfied you, you might direct your questions/ concerns / queries to the Chairperson, Human Ethics Committee, College of Human Sciences, P O Box 392, Unisa, 0003.

Thank you in advance for your participation

Kind regards
Yvonne-Yvette Maota

061 902 5323

ADDENDUM F: INTERVIEW GUIDE

a)   School social workers' interview guide

1.   What are your perceptions of the nature school-based violence?

2.   Tell me about your perceptions of the victims of school-based violence and the perpetrators.

3   Tell me about your perceptions of the causes of school-based violence.

4.   How does your school manage school-based violence?

5.   How does stakeholder involvement manage school-based violence?

6.   What are your suggestions as a school social worker for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence?

b)   Educators' interview guide

1.   What are your experiences on the nature of school-based violence?

2.   Tell me about your experiences with the victims of school-based violence and the perpetrators.

3.   Tell me about your experiences of the causes of school-based violence.

4.   How does your school manage school-based violence?

5.   How does stakeholders' involvement assist in managing school-based violence?

6.   What are your suggestions as an educator for stakeholder support in preventing school-based violence?

ADDENDUM G: PROOF OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNISA

SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SWREC)

Date: 06 April 2020

Dear Ms Y.M. Maota

DECISION: Ethics approval from 06 April 2020 to 06 April 2021	**SWREC Reference #: 2020-SWREC-36218650** **Name: Ms Y.M. Maota** **Student #: 36218650** **Staff #: N/A**

Researcher(s): Name: Ms Y.M. Maota
Contact details: 36218650@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Supervisor(s): Name: Dr N.P. Kgadima
Contact details: kgadinp@unisa.ac.za, 012 429 6515

Title of research:
School social workers and educator's experiences on school-based violence suggestions for stakeholder support.

Qualification: Master of Social Work (MSW)

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Social Work Research Ethics Committee (SWREC) for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval has been granted effective from **06 April 2020.**

The following are standards requirements attached to all approval of all studies:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve months from of the date of issue of the certificate. At the end of this period, if the study has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not completed for any reason you are required to submit a report on the project. If you complete the work earlier that you had planned, you must submit a report as soon as the work is completed. Reporting template can be requested from the SWREC administrator on radebn1@unisa.ac.za
2. However, at the **end of twelve months' period** if the study is still current, you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval.
3. Please remember that you must notify the committee in writing regarding any amendments to the study.
4. You must notify the committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or any unforeseen event that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the study.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the SWREC standard operating procedures, terms of references, National Health Research Council (NHREC) and university guidelines.

Yours sincerely

....
Dr KJ Malesa: Chairperson of SWREC
Email: maleskj@unisa.ac.za

ADDENDUM H: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

| 8/4/4/1/2 |

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	01 June 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2020 – 30 September 2020 2019/4 41
Name of Researcher:	Maota Y.Y.M
Address of Researcher:	Unit 23,Melody
	Morzat Lane,Sagewood
	Midrand
Telephone Number:	0619025323
Email address:	maotaym@gmail.com
Research Topic:	School Social Workers and Educator's experience on school based violence: suggestions for stakeholders support
Type of qualification	MSW-Master of Social Work
Number and type of schools:	5 Secondary School,7 Primary School, 2 Head Office
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

01 06 2020

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1

Making education a societal priority

2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.

3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

4. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.

5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.

7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.

8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.

13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

....
Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: .... 01 June 2020...

2

Making education a societal priority

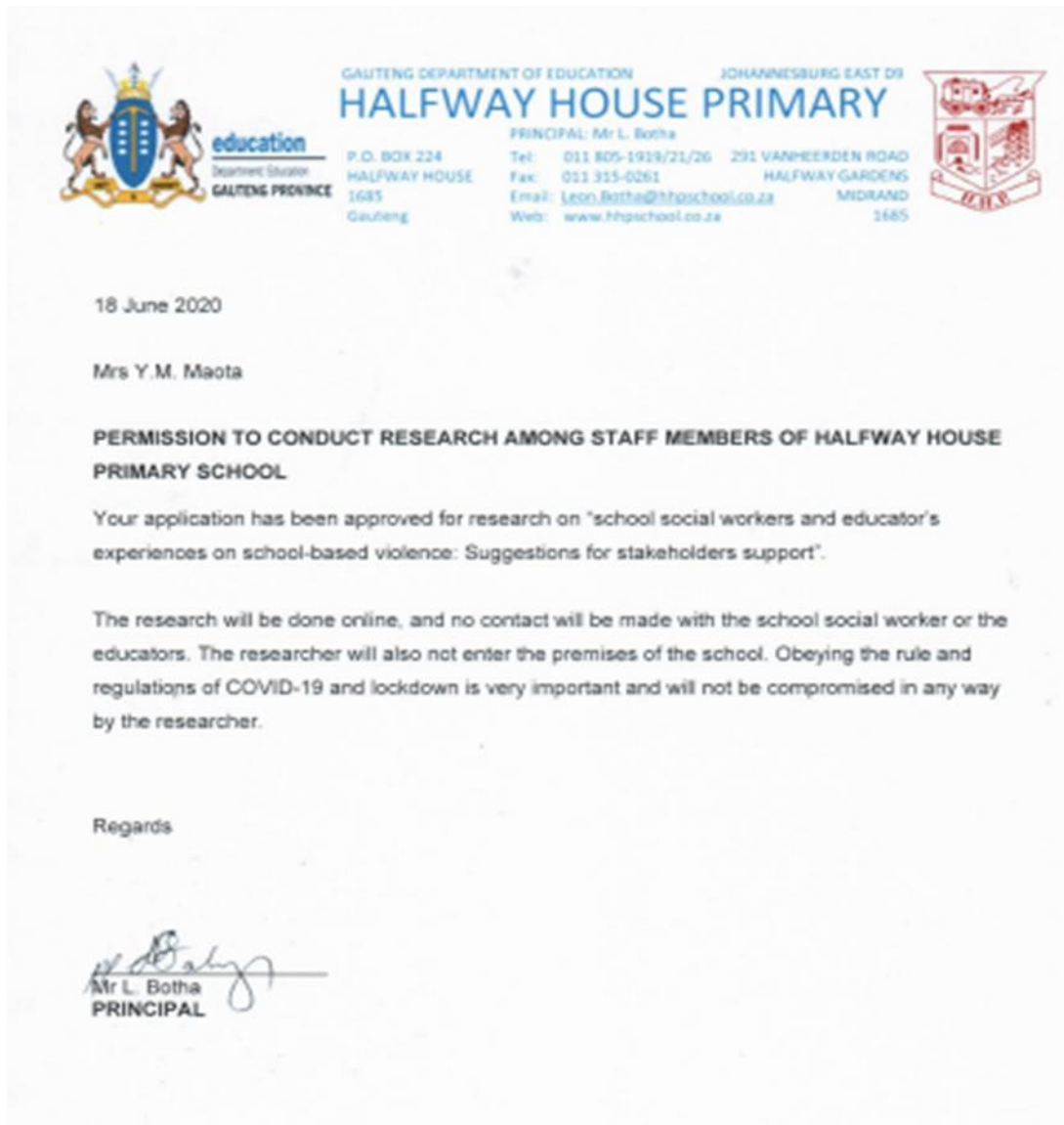**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ADDENDUM I: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOL 1

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION   JOHANNESBURG EAST D9

HALFWAY HOUSE PRIMARY

PRINCIPAL: Mr L. Botha

education

Department Education

GAUTENG PROVINCE

P.O. BOX 224   Tel: 011 805-1919/21/26   291 VANHEERDEN ROAD
HALFWAY HOUSE   Fax: 011 315-0261   HALFWAY GARDENS
1685   Email: Leon.Botha@hhpschool.co.za   MIDRAND
Gauteng   Web: www.hhpschool.co.za   1685

18 June 2020

Mrs Y.M. Maota

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AMONG STAFF MEMBERS OF HALFWAY HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your application has been approved for research on "school social workers and educator's experiences on school-based violence: Suggestions for stakeholders support".

The research will be done online, and no contact will be made with the school social worker or the educators. The researcher will also not enter the premises of the school. Obeying the rule and regulations of COVID-19 and lockdown is very important and will not be compromised in any way by the researcher.

Regards

Mr L. Botha
PRINCIPAL

ADDENDUM J: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOL 2

MIKATEKA PRIMARY SCHOOL

|		
GAUTENG	PO Box 479 Olifantsfontein 1665	**Tel: 011 026 9644** **Email: mikatekaprimary@yahoo.com** **Web: www.Mikatekaprimary.co.z:** **PRINCIPAL: MR. M SIBANYONI**	8551 Ngobese Str Ivory Park Ext 9 Midrand 1685

04/08/2020

Dear Ms Maota

Your request to perform research has been approved.

Please do note that due to Covid19 regulations we cannot do a face to face meeting. As suggested in your request letter we will accept the online interview through phone or Microsoft teams.

Kind regards

Mr M Sibanyoni
Principal

MIKATEKA PRIMARY SCHOOL
8551 Ngobese Ivory Park Ext.9
Midrand, 1685

0 4 AUG 2020

Tel: (011) 026 9644 / 079 691 1377
Email: mikatekaprimary@yahoo.com
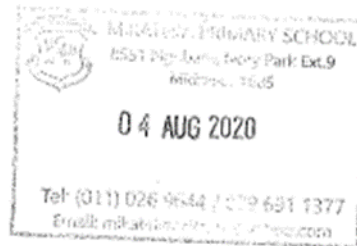
ADDENDUM K: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOL 3

SANDTONVIEW SCHOOL

TEL: 011 786 3068/9; FAX: 011 885 2316; E-mail: schoolsandtonview@gmail.com
MAREE STR, BRAMLEY PARK, JOHANNESBURG;
PO BOX 39771, BRAMLEY, JOHANNESBURG, 2018

education
Department Education
GAUTENG PROVINCE

19 June 2020

Dear Ms Y. Maota

Your request to conduct research has been approved.

In complying with COVID-19 health regulations, no face to face meeting/ interview shall be conducted.
All your interviews shall be conducted online or via telephone or Microsoft Teams.
A list of required staff will be provided upon your request and please do make necessary arrangement for
that.

Kind regards

N. Phahlane
Principal
Cell: 079 772 6034

ADDENDUM L: LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

EDITOR'S STATEMENT

23 December 2021

I hereby declare that I have edited this dissertation entitled *School Social Workers' and Educators' Experiences on School-Based Violence: Suggestions for Stakeholder Support* by Yvonne M. Maota (student number 36218650). The edit entailed correcting spelling and grammar where necessary, and checking for consistencies in style and reference method used, according to guidelines provided by the student. I have not helped to write this document or altered the student's work in any significant way. I will not be held accountable for bad spelling or grammar or incorrect referencing where the student has rejected my editing, ignored my suggestions, or made changes after I had completed my edit.

It was not my responsibility to check for any instances of plagiarism and I will not be held accountable should the student commit plagiarism. I did not check the validity or factual accuracy of the student's statements/research/arguments. Lastly, I was not tasked to check/edit the student's addenda/annexures.

Lindi De Beer

Contact Details:
☎ 083 456 4358
📧 lindi@grammarsmith.co.za

GRAMMAR
SMITH

ADDENDUM M: LETTER FROM INDEPENDENT CODER

Margaret Grobbelaar
11 Die Opstal 589 Opstal Street
The Willows Pretoria 0041
Tel: (012) 807 1249
E Mail: mwmarg@iafrica.com

30 January 2021

CONFIRMATION OF INDEPENDENT CODING

This is to confirm that I, Margaret Grobbelaar acted as the independent coder in respect of Yvonne Maota's MSW research project entitled *School social workers' and educators' experiences of school-based violence: suggestions for stakeholder support.*

My independent coding included formatting and coding the transcripts; analysing the transcripts; compiling a table of the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged; holding a consensus discussion with Ms Maota and her Supervisor; compiling a report; and then revising the report after further deliberations.

The final report was then sent to Ms Maota for her to add the interpretation and literature control as she saw fit.

Yours sincerely

M Grobbelaar

ADDENDUM N: DEBRIEFER'S ACCEPTANCE LETTER

Marilyn C. Saunders
Counselling Psychologist
Pr No: 032 3667
HPCSA: PS 0104981

P.O. Box 3145
Halfway House
1685

(011) 468 5004
082 793 7983
mcsaunders@vodamail.co.za

15th September 2019

UNISA
College of Human Sciences
Pretoria

Dear Yvonne Maota

RE: REQUEST TO PROVIDE DEBRIEFING TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Regarding your research." *Informing a stakeholder support model in school-based violence: school-social workers and educator's perspective"*

I am honoured to assist you with debriefing, to participants who may need the service during your research process.

Kind regards

Marilyn Saunders
Counselling Psychologist

ADDENDUM O: FLOWER PETAL MODEL OF THE PEACE EDUCATION THEORY

_____

Figure: Flower Petal Model of Peace

As adapted from Kester, Kevin. (2019). Developing Peace Education programs: Beyond ethnocentrisms and violence.

As adapted from:
https://www.academia.edu/29866317/Developing_Peace_Education_Beyond_Ethncentrism_and_Violence

ADDENDUM P: MAP OF GAUTENG(JOHANNESBURG EAST DISTRICT)

Source: Interactive maps of South-Africa

The purple part clearly highlights the Johannesburg East District and the surrounding areas.

Available at: https://www.south-africa-tours-and-travel.com/images/map-municipalities-gauteng-mapofjohannesburgsouthafrica.jpg