

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SELECTED SCHOOLS

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation “Developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools” hereby submitted for a Master's Degree in Education at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted to any other university/ faculty.

I furthermore cede copyright of the dissertation to the University of the Free State.

Signature: _____

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving family, who has been a source of inspiration through thick and thin. My loving wife, KENOSI SARAH MLANGENI, who was always a pillar of strength and a shoulder to lean on when despondency crept in, my loving sons - Kamohelo, Katleho, and Siyanda, who stood by me during sleepless nights I endured in conducting this study. Thank you very much for your constant support.

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ABSTRACT

The wide media depiction of gangsterism on school premises in South Africa indicates a constant rise in criminal activity, despite measures put in place to curb it. So rife is the scourge of the gangsterism phenomenon that it paints a bleak picture of the education system in South Africa as an apex priority. In the Free State, gangs in recent years are in full swing and a menace to many school communities. Empirical evidence shows that gangs are one of the social issues that impact negatively on the lives of many school learners. Educational studies indicate that gangsterism is a prime source of school violence on school premises. This qualitative research seeks to explore the impact of gangsterism in selected schools through relevant literature. Furthermore, the study intends to use the data thus collected, as informed by best practices worldwide, to develop a strategy that will assist to curb gangsterism in schools.

Keywords: Gangsterism, Gangs, Strategy, Curb.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS	xi
CHAPTER 1 : ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 RESEARCH INTEREST OR PROBLEM	3
1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY	4
1.4 PRIMARY QUESTION	5
1.5 THE AIM OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.6 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	7
1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	7
1.7.1 Participatory action research (PAR).....	7
1.7.2 Data collection	8
1.7.2.1 Generation of data using PAR.....	8
1.7.3 Selection of research participants.....	9
1.8 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND REPORTING	10
1.8.1 Textual analysis.....	10
1.8.2 Discursive practice	10
1.8.3 Sociological analysis.....	10
1.9 THE VALUE OF THE RESEARCH.....	11
1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.....	11
1.10.1 Confidentiality	11
1.10.2 Access.....	12
1.11 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS.....	12
1.12 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	13
CHAPTER 2 : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	14
2.2 THE ORIGIN OF SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY (SCT)	14
2.3 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF SCT.....	15

2.4	OBJECTIVES OF SCT	16
2.4.1	SCT promotes social integration	16
2.4.2	SCT as a social enhancement	17
2.4.3	SCT as a catalyst towards social cohesion	18
2.5	THE FORMATS OF SCT	19
2.5.1	An increase in autonomy of the researcher and participants.....	21
2.5.2	Self-disclosure of emotions and feelings.....	21
2.5.3	Collegial management	21
2.5.3.1	Attachment.....	23
2.5.3.2	Commitment	23
2.5.3.3	Involvement	24
2.5.3.4	Belief.....	24
2.6	EPISTEMOLOGY OF SCT	25
2.7	ONTOLOGY OF SCT	26
2.8	DEFINITION AND DISCUSSION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS	28
2.8.1	Strategy	28
2.8.2	Curb	29
2.8.3	Gangsterism	29
2.9	REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE	30
2.10	CHALLENGES AND THE NEED TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS.....	30
2.10.1	The need to develop a strategy.....	30
2.11	COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS.....	37
2.11.1	Inclusion as an intervention at an individual level.....	37
2.11.2	Parental involvement through family prevention.....	38
2.11.3	Equality at school and community levels.....	39
2.11.4	Active participation through community policing.....	39
2.11.5	Empowerment through self-confidence and parental love.....	40
2.12	CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS.....	42
2.12.1	Conditions conducive for inclusion	42
2.12.2	Conditions conducive for empowerment	43
2.12.3	Conditions conducive for active participation	44
2.12.4	Conditions conducive for equality	45

2.12.5	Conditions conducive for parental involvement	46
2.13	ENVISAGED THREATS THAT IMPEDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS.....	46
2.13.1	Threats towards inclusion	47
2.13.2	Threats towards active participation.....	48
2.13.3	Threats towards equality.....	48
2.13.4	Threats towards empowerment.....	49
2.13.5	Threats towards parental involvement	50
2.14	DETERMINING THE INDICATORS OF SUCCESS OF A STRATEGY	50
2.14.1	Best practice in California	51
2.14.2	Best practice in Malaysia	52
2.14.3	Best practice in Nigeria.....	53
2.14.4	Best practice in Malawi	54
2.14.5	Best practice in South Africa.....	54
2.15	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	56
	CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	57
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	57
3.2	PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AS A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH.....	58
3.2.1	Historical background of Participatory Action Research.....	58
3.2.2	The justification for the choice of Participatory Action Research	60
3.2.3	Objectives of Participatory Action Research	61
3.2.3.1	Problem-based	61
3.2.3.2	Equality and team work.....	62
3.2.3.3	Inclusion	63
3.2.3.4	Transformative and empowering.....	64
3.3	PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH.....	64
3.3.1	Active participation	64
3.3.2	Diffuse power relations	65
3.3.3	Transformative.....	66
3.3.4	Mutual corroboration.....	67
3.4	ONTOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH.....	67
3.5	EPISTEMOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH.....	68
3.6	RELATIONSHIP OF THE RESEARCHER AND PARTICIPANTS.....	69
3.7	SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS	70

3.8	CREDENTIALS OF PARTICIPANTS.....	72
3.8.1	The coordinator of the study	72
3.8.2	The Principal	72
3.8.3	Teachers	72
3.8.4	Learners	73
3.8.5	Parents.....	73
3.9	SWOT ANALYSIS	74
3.9.1	Strengths	74
3.9.2	Weaknesses.....	75
3.9.3	Opportunities	76
3.9.4	Threats	77
3.10	CONCEPTUALISING THE RESEARCH DESIGN	78
3.10.1	Spiral one: planning phase	79
3.10.2	Spiral two: information session phase.....	81
3.10.3	Spiral three: setting the priorities and a strategic plan phase	83
3.10.4	Reflection phase	85
3.11	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	86
3.11.1	Confidentiality	86
3.11.2	Access.....	87
3.12	DATA GENERATION PROCEDURES	87
3.13	DATA GENERATION INSTRUMENTS.....	88
3.14	DATA ANALYSIS	89
3.14.1	Origin of Critical Discourse Analysis	89
3.14.2	Levels of CDA.....	90
3.14.2.1	Textual Analysis.....	90
3.14.2.2	Discursive practice analysis	90
3.14.2.3	Sociological analysis.....	91
3.15	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	92
	CHAPTER 4 : PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	93
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	93
4.2	CHALLENGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SELECTED SCHOOLS	93
4.2.1	Teacher challenges with gangsterism.....	94
4.2.2	Learner challenges with gangsterism.....	99

4.2.3	Parents and challenges with gangsterism.....	101
4.3	COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGY	104
4.3.1	Equality.....	104
4.4	CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO A STRATEGY	109
4.4.1	Conditions favourable for equality.....	109
4.4.2	Conditions favourable for inclusion	110
4.4.3	Conditions favourable for parental involvement	112
4.5	THREATS TO OVERCOME	113
4.5.1	Threats to equality	114
4.5.2	Threats to inclusion and integration	115
4.5.3	Threats to empowerment.....	116
4.5.4	Threats to parental involvement and support.....	118
4.6	EVIDENCE OF THE FUNCTIONALITY OF A STRATEGY ON HOW GANGSTERISM CAN BE CURBED	119
4.6.1	Equality as one of the best practices	119
4.6.2	Inclusion and integration as best practices	120
4.6.3	Empowerment as a best practice.....	121
4.6.4	Parental involvement as a best practice.....	123
4.7	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	125
	CHAPTER 5 : SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND CONCLUSION.....	126
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	126
5.2	BACKGROUND AND THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	126
5.2.1	Research question.....	127
5.2.2	Aim and objectives of the study	127
5.3	FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	128
5.3.1	Findings of inclusion	128
5.3.2	Recommendations.....	129
5.3.3	Risks of inclusion.....	130
5.4	FINDINGS ABOUT EQUALITY.....	130
5.4.1	Recommendations.....	131
5.4.2	Risks of equality	131
5.5	FINDINGS ABOUT EMPOWERMENT	132
5.5.1	Recommendations.....	133

5.5.2	Risks of an empowerment	133
5.6	FINDINGS ABOUT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	134
5.6.1	Recommendations about parental involvement	134
5.6.2	Risks of exclusion of parents in curbing of gangsterism in schools.	135
5.7	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	135
5.7.1	Recommendations.....	137
5.8	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	137
5.9	CONCLUSION	138
	LIST OF REFERENCES	139

LIST OF ANNEXURES

APPENDIX A1-5:	TRANSCRIPTS
APPENDIX B1:	CONSENT LETTER – SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
APPENDIX B2:	CONSENT LETTER – SCHOOL TEACHER
APPENDIX B3:	CONSENT LETTER – PARENTS
APPENDIX B4:	CONSENT LETTER – HEAD / SUPERINTENDENT
APPENDIX B5:	CONSENT LETTER – DISTRICT DIRECTOR
APPENDIX B6:	CONSENT LETTER – LEARNERS
APPENDIX B7:	CONSENT LETTER – GENERATION OF SPECIFIC DATA
APPENDIX B8:	ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER
APPENDIX B9:	LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ALARA	Action Learning, Action Research Association
B.A.Ed.	Bachelor of Arts in Education
B.Com.Ed	Bachelor of Commerce in Education
BTK	Born To Kill
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CSCP	Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
DOCS	Department of Criminal Safety
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
NIA	National Intelligence Agency
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
PAGAD	People against Gangsterism and Drugs
PAR	Participatory Action Research
SAPS	South African Police Services
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SCT	Social Control Theory
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
STD	Secondary Teachers Diploma

TRT	Tactical Response Team
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
YES	Youth Empowerment Structure

CHAPTER 1 : ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aims to develop a strategy to assist schools to curb gangsterism. Gangsterism is a philosophy in which individuals join the prearranged gangs of criminals, with the focus on violence (Collins English dictionary, 2014 24). Strategy stands for a blueprint of action intended to accomplish a protracted tenure or whole ambition (Oxford Dictionary, 2016: 43).

What we know from research is that gangsterism negatively affects social and educational outcomes in schools. Empirical research indicates a rise in the number of gangs in the United States of America. Some learners are trapped in environments such that they cannot walk more than two or three blocks from their territory (Hamilton, 2011:1). In Malaysia, research indicates that gangsterism pollutes the school surroundings and jeopardises the educational practice (Alagappar *et al.*, 2010:1). In Botswana, one of the Sub-Saharan countries in Africa, there are gangs such as Merubise (Owls), Matsayakankane (those who grab by force) and Makgakabe (crows). These gangs wreak havoc in the communities and on school campuses (Mathala, 2015:1).

In South Africa, research indicates full-blown gang warfare rampant on the Peninsula Planes, resulting in the demise of teenagers, adolescents and aged people. Gangs such as Hard Livelihoods, The Americans, Racy Boys, Yuru Tomcats, Junky Jazzy Broods, Junction Boys and Naughty Lads are a menace to communities on the Peninsula Planes (Du Toit, 2014:1). Van der Merwe (2015:1) states that People against Gangsterism and Drugs'(PAGAD) motorcade was greeted with bottles, rocks and other dangerous items when entering the notorious Hard Livings' territory in Manenberg Avenue in the Western Cape. Police were called to defuse the situation. PAGAD's mission was to bring about a more just, social order, devoid of the evils of gangsterism and drugs (Botha, 1999:1). Chabalala (2016:1) posits that six members of the notorious Born To Kill (BTK) gang, aged between 17 and 19, were arrested by police in

Bloemfontein, in the Free State, following the murder of their member. The victim intended to leave the murky world of gangsterism. Gangsterism paints a bleak depiction of the state of education in South African institutions (Prinsloo, 2008:30). Pitso *et al.* (2014:336) report that drugs and alcohol are some of the contributing factors for the involvement of youth in gangsterism, part of a group where there is a strong pressure to conform to the group's rules.

Du Toit (2014:1) further posits that some parts of a Phahameng township, in Bultfontein town, in the Northern Free State, have been no-go zone areas due to violent clashes between warring gangsters. The fighting involving the gangs called, BTK, Colombians, and Portuguese claimed the lives of several citizens. These occurrences triggered my curiosity as a qualitative researcher to probe these gang activities with a specific reference to schools in the towns of Bultfontein, Wesselsbron, and Odendaalsrus, in the Northern Free State.

What we do not know is what draws learners from schools into gangsterism on school premises. Therefore, I will conduct some investigations with learners who are gangsters to determine how and why they are drawn into gang activities on the school campuses, and what they see as the "way out" of leaving gangs in the turbulent school environment.

Based on my twenty-five years' experience as a teacher in public schools, I realised a decline in learner discipline and escalating absenteeism of both the teachers and learners. This culminates in low morale in teachers and learners in some public schools. Some learners display acts of violence and malicious damage to school property. These violent gangsters on some days bring the entire school proceedings to an abrupt halt.

Heleta *et al.* (2009:41) indicate that schools riddled with gangsterism are regarded as undisciplined and disorganised places "where learners openly disrupt the educational process while confused and ignorant governing bodies and teachers seem unable to tackle learner misconduct and restore discipline."

From the households' perspective on gangsterism, I observed that there was a total loss of control over these delinquent learners. Some parents feel that they can no longer

exercise their authority on their children. Some cry foul as the behaviour of their children is impacting negatively on their emotions and social lives. Young *et al.* (2007:15) assert that young learners are involved in gangsterism as a result of claims of gang status to boost their credibility. Their school work is negatively affected, and they find their learning climate very unsafe and uncondusive (Myburg *et al.*, 2009:11). Their involvement subsequently leads to stress and other wellness related problems.

This proposed study seeks to review the theoretical foundation of literature on gangsterism and the strategies to curb it in schools. I will, therefore, review the literature on gangsterism from schools in Europe, USA, Western Africa, Southern Africa, and the northern Free State. In London, an introduction of mandatory custodial sentences on conviction for knife carrying, and stop-and-search laws are seen as practices to remove gangs from the streets (Couvee, 2016:1). Chebli *et al.* (2007:19) suggest that in Nigeria, various attempts ranging from financial inducements, psychological manipulation to draconian laws are viewed as having failed to curb cultism (gangsterism).

Phakela (2016:1) posits that in a small village of Maputsoe, in Lesotho, the infamous Maputsoe gang terrorises both the community and learners at schools. In showing the repercussions of gangster life, both the police and the community are screening films in schools halls, teaching the learners about the murky world of gangsters. The films teach the learners that if one tries to quit, one's life is in jeopardy because the gang feels betrayed, and its secrets would be exposed. In Kutloanong Township, near Odendaalsrus town in the northern Free State, the emergence of gang groups like the Italians, Mahanapuso and Gangster Paradise, resulted in the conviction of seven members to life imprisonment (Will, 2015:1).

1.2 RESEARCH INTEREST OR PROBLEM

Empirical research indicates the presence of the scourge of gangsterism internationally and in South Africa. The culture of criminal behaviour in communities spills into schools in the form of gangsterism. Some learners are proudly classified with leading mobs.

Schools develop productive surroundings for immoral and belligerent conduct like gangsterism (Chetty, 2016:1). Schools should reinforce teaching and learning aspects, and foster the psychological well-being of its members, preparing the learners for the challenges and demands of everyday life. Amidst growing research in an area of gangsterism, there has been little focus by researchers on remedial strategy. This study is primarily motivated to plug this gap within the context of schools in the northern Free State.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

A theoretical framework is a “frame” that frames research such that it remains within the boundaries of a frame (Henning *et al.*, 2004:25). This study is supported by Travis Hirschi’s Social Control Theory (SCT). The theory has its origins in 1969 and concentrates on controlling crime and gangsterism benevolently. It ushers new ideas of thinking about crime and crime control (Hirschi, 1968: 2).

Furthermore, it is based on the assumption that, antisocial deeds result if one’s bond or connection with society is weak or broken. This model posits that individuals form bonds with prosocial ethics, prosocial societies and prosocial organisations (Hirschi, 1969:58). Adolescents who practice a close attachment with parents and institutions will engage in acceptable levels of social control. At the school level, a learner with social control will not misbehave and disappoint fellow learners, parents, and teachers.

Hirschi (1969:58)’s four components of social control theory elucidate why some adolescents resort to misbehaviour that leads to gangsterism. The bond encompasses four fundamentals: (1) attachment, (2) commitment, (3) involvement and (4) belief. I will now discuss these four interrelated elements about my research field.

The attachment implies a fondness which an individual has for prosocial others and organisations. (Hirschi, 1969:58). If a learner has strong social and institutional bonds with parents, teachers and fellow learners, such a learner is unlikely to indulge in delinquency and gangsterism.

Commitment refers to the importance of social relationships one values with other people. These are a set of values which one would not like to jeopardize by committing

criminal or delinquent acts (Hirschi, 1969:58). Learners are considered immature, hence the expectation to commit themselves to the rules of society that nurture them. Home, with parents as primary custodians, plays a very pivotal role in shaping the learners' future. The expectation from the parents is the commitment of the learners to comply, and not to commit to delinquency. For juveniles, this discourages them to misbehave in the company of fellow apprentices, parents, and teachers.

Involvement has to do with an association of opportunities and how one spends one's time. As the old saying that "an idling mind is a devil's workshop" asserts, youths who are not engaged in legitimate school-related activities, academically or athletically, may resort to gangsterism (Hirschi, 1969:58-59). If learners are consistently engaged in school activities, either sportingly or academically, chances are very slim that they will be derailed from their school responsibilities.

Belief refers to a degree of adherence to standards linked to behaviours that obey the law (Hirschi, 1969:59). If a learner regards the rules of an institution as more valuable and binding, such a learner will not engage in deviant behaviour. Adherence to the four elements goes a long way in curbing the scourge of gangsterism on school campuses.

1.4 PRIMARY QUESTION

The overarching research question in this study is: ***How to curb gangsterism in schools?***

Flowing from this central research question are the following subsidiary questions:

- What are the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?
- What are the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?
- Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?
- What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities for using the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

- How to demonstrate the success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices.

1.5 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The **study aims** to develop a strategy to assist schools to curb gangsterism.

1.6 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of a study as informed by the investigation are the following:

- To justify the need and challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities for using the strategy that will curb gangsterism in schools.
- To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Participatory action research (PAR)

The participatory action research is a methodology to explore societies that emphasise contribution and accomplishment. The collective inquiry puts more emphasis on experimentation based on experience and social history. Participants address questions and issues of the community (Bradbury *et al.*, 2008:1). Through participation and action from PAR, I will engage my participants on gangsterism, as I value their expertise and the change they will bring in their lives (McGarvey, 2007:2).

PAR practitioners integrate involvement (the social order and social equality), achievement (knowledge and the past) and investigation (progress of knowledge) (Buckles *et al.*, 2013: 2). PAR as an organised inquiry entails an alliance of the

pretentious school communities in developing the strategy to curb the scourge of gangsterism in schools.

McIntyre (2008:3) posits that PAR focuses on the commitment of participants to bring change and improvement in their world. I will analyse the issue of gangsterism with teachers and learners of the affected schools. To gain a deeper knowledge of gangsterism in schools from my research participants, I will take into account their individuality and uniqueness (Bergon *et al.*, 2012:110).

1.7.2 Data collection

1.7.2.1 Generation of data using PAR

The proposed study generated data from the participants in the form of focus group discussions through probing questions. The probing of questions during the meetings assisted in generating information that contributed to the goal and objectives of the project (Leider, 2012:314). To ensure flexibility, the participants were allowed to respond to issues and events as they understood them. Names of the selected secondary school and participants were disguised to ensure their objectivity during data generation.

Furthermore, data generation was done together with learners, teachers and parents who volunteered during this study. The synergistic effect of focus groups assisted in exploring and soliciting data that would have remained hidden. The probing discussions during the meetings for data generation took place in a non-threatening school environment (Ho, 2006:5.2). Permission was requested from the respondents to record the interviews for further analysis.

The study's participants also included gangsters (learners still involved in gangsterism) and former gangsters of the selected secondary school as the research site. The purposive sample included learners from grades 10, 11 and 12 based on a personal context (e.g., age), as this would influence their understanding of questions during the focus group discussions and critical processes (James, 2007:66). The focus group

deliberations provided prospects for the participants to freely stake their viewpoints on gangsterism, and in contributing towards the formulation of a strategy to curb it in schools (Ho, 2006:5). Furthermore, the focus group discussion as a research method provided more information towards responses to the study's central and subsidiary investigative interrogations. Discussions were recorded, and transcription was done during data analysis.

1.7.3 Selection of research participants

This proposed study used a purposive sampling that was credible and ensured that the selected participants were likely to generate useful data (Cohran *et al.*, 2002:23-24). The purposive sample included participants from the different stakeholders, to compare and contrast the selected cases they cited during the research process (Leech, 2007:6). Participants comprised five learners, five teachers, a school principal, and three parents. This sample size is manageable in that it assisted both the learners and teachers to narrate their personal life experiences on gangsterism on school premises as their natural settings.

Since this is a qualitative study, the sample size allowed the participants to be descriptive and explorative of gangster activities as opposed to statistics or numbers. The school principal was included as an overseer of the daily proceedings at school, and also to capacitate him on the operations of gangs and the envisaged strategy to curb gang-related activities on school premises. Parental involvement was very crucial in that, as the primary caregivers, they needed to be empowered on gangsterism. Their involvement was necessary so that they could also assist in shedding some light on their life experiences from the households' point of view. Teachers' participation was beneficial in that they were in contact with the learners on a daily basis on school premises.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND REPORTING

The proposed study used critical discourse analysis (CDA) in analysing qualitative data. CDA provides solutions to questions about the associations between linguistics, culture, supremacy, uniqueness, dogma, politics and values (Rahimi, 2011:1). It explains the coherence of text and talk (van Dijk, 2001:1).

In my data analysis, I will follow the following steps:

1.8.1 Textual analysis

This is an analysis that views an object objectively. It involves both the description and transcription of the data analysis. CDA's textual analysis assisted in describing the non-verbal data of gangsterism (e.g., graffiti, dress code, emotions) in words through writing of memos. Recordings of discussions during the meetings were transcribed into texts and words (Jorge, 2009: 71).

1.8.2 Discursive practice

This phase involves the analysis of the process of production, interpretation, and consumption of data. It was concerned with how the school community interpreted, reproduced or transformed texts (Hamiti *et al.*, 2012:188). The participants narrated their life experiences on gangsterism during our meetings and interactions. Such meetings assisted in a transformation of their narratives and discussions on gangsterism into meaningful texts and interpretations that contributed towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

1.8.3 Sociological analysis

This level of analysis entails the interpretation of data. The sociological analysis considers discourse as information, belief and a shared product (Jorge, 2009:39). During this level of analysis, participants interpreted data such that it displayed social

competence on gangsterism activities on campuses of the selected schools. The objective of this type of analysis was to make sense of an attachment of gangsters to schools and home as pro-social institutions.

1.9 THE VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

The main tenor/focus of this study was to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism on campuses of selected schools. Empirical theories thus developed must adequately address moral dimension in learners on school campuses and the community in general. Schools should enhance teaching and learning aspects, and foster the psychological well-being of its members, preparing the learners for the trials of everyday life. The proposed study intends to recommend to the Department of education and schools, a strategy to curb gangsterism on school premises.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Approval for participation was attained from all the participants in writing. A memo outlining the research and a consensus form was forwarded to each participant. Participants comprised teachers, learners, the principal and parents of a secondary school in Tswelopele Municipality and Lejweleputswa Education District. Participation in this study was purely voluntary and consensual.

1.10.1 Confidentiality

All members were assured of concealment. Names of the participants and the school were not used but disguised as pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. All qualitative data in the form of transcripts, notes, and recorded versions were safeguarded in my home to prevent any form of unauthorised access.

1.10.2 Access

The researcher requested clearance and permission from the University of the Free State's Ethics Committee. Consent to conduct research was also requested from the Free State Department of Education.

1.11 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1- Orientation and background of the study

This chapter focused on the introduction and the background that necessitated this study. The aim and objectives of the study were also outlined. A brief explanation of SCT as a theoretical framework that underpins this study was provided. A synopsis of study design and methodology that guided this study was presented. PAR has used a qualitative research methodology in guiding the research project. CDA was used to evaluate qualitative data. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the value of the research and ethical considerations to confirm the anonymity of participants.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

A detailed description of SCT, definition of operational concepts and the role of a researcher and relationship with participants are presented. The review of the literature that supports the aim and objectives of this study is outlined.

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology

The study design and PAR as a research methodology, techniques, instruments of data generation and data analysis are outlined.

Chapter 4 - Data Presentation and Analysis

Data presentation, discussions and analysis that address the five objectives of the study are outlined.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion, Summary, and Recommendations

The chapter deliberates on the findings and recommendations of the objectives of the study. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are outlined.

1.12 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter began with a justification of a need for a study as entailed in the introduction and background. What we know from research is that gangsterism negatively affects social and educational outcomes in schools. The full-scale gang war in some parts of the country necessitated the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The chapter further presented the problem to be solved, wherein the criminal behaviour is gradually spilling over into schools in the form of gangsterism. The aim and objectives are the pillars that guide the course of the research.

The research design is supported by PAR that seeks collaboration from participants in solving an anti-social phenomenon like gangsterism as a research methodology. The value of the study and the ethical considerations were also presented. In the next chapter, a review of related literature and the theoretical framework that frames this study will be presented.

CHAPTER 2 : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aims to develop a strategy to assist schools to curb gangsterism. The chapter starts with the origin of the social control theory (SCT) as the study's theoretical framework. SCT of law-breaking and criminal behavior attributes law-breaking to the faintness, breakdown, or absence of societal ties or socialisation practices reputed to inspire acceptable conduct. This theory accords supremacy to interactions, commitments, ideals, standards, and beliefs that elucidate why societies do not break down the law. The chapter further looks at the objectives of SCT about the central question. The epistemological and ontological aspects and the role of both the investigator and the accomplices are also clarified. The chapter also concentrates on meaning and conversation of operational notions.

The literature review justifies the need to develop the strategy and also highlights the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. It further concentrates on the components of the strategy and the conditions conducive to the operational efficacy of the components of a strategy. The literature review further seeks to do a comparative study on a success of a strategy in countries like United States of America (USA), Malaysia, Nigeria, Malawi, and South Africa, as informed by best practices. The literature review concludes with a summary of a chapter.

2.2 THE ORIGIN OF SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY (SCT)

This study is underpinned by Travis Hirschi's Social Control Theory (SCT). The social control theory emanated from an American period, during which there was a clashing of values in societies regarding crime control strategy. Some citizens were law-abiding citizens, and others were law-breakers. The communities were sceptical about the state's ability to control crime. This theory's premise is based on a foundational belief

that global communities need to usher new ways of crime control (Thompson, 2016:1). Schubert (2015:2) states that “individuals break the law due to a breakdown with their societal bond.” Social control theory originated as a result of the crime rate surpassing its peak mark in the United States of America. During that period, a panel was constituted to look into factors that could help to eliminate crime. The belief was that knowledge gained would be used to develop an effective crime control strategy.

Ross (2007:259) further indicates that empirical research shows that the scourge of crime in America lead authorities to think about a new strategy to curb gangsterism. This is indicative of how rife youth gangsterism was in America at that time, which necessitated an invention of the SCT to assist in a strategy to remedy the situation. Anderman *et al.* (2009: 63) posit that the origin of SCT puts more emphasis on freeing a juvenile from dogmatic customs that dampen thrill-seeking as a result of fragile links to family, school and predictable societal undertakings. Chambliss and Schutt (2010:2) suggest that SCT enables the youth to understand the consequences of weakening social ties. Youth with weaker social networks seem to indulge in crime and gangsterism activities easily.

Janowitz (2014: 82) refers to social control theory as “the capacity of society to regulate itself according to the desired principles and values.” Castello (2016:1) states that SCT focuses on a strategy to assist learners in avoiding a crime like gangsterism on and off school campuses. It achieves this goal by showing the importance of affection to parents, the obligation to predictable actions, participation in unadventurous events and belief in ethical cogency of the decree. SCT enhances parents’ ability to effectively assist learners to socialise through Hirsch’s four interrelated forms of bonds.

2.3 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF SCT

In the context of my study, I chose SCT as a theoretical framework that guides this study in a classification of gangsterism as a crime that is increasingly manifesting itself on school campuses, and also to assist schools with the development of a strategy to curb it. I will stress the four interrelated forms of bonds which learners are expected to

form with stakeholders like families and institutions (namely attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief). Close attachment of learners with family members and institutions, inculcates a greater level of discipline and social control. Good values learned from such association ensure that learners do not get involved in gangsterism as a crime. Commitment refers to the importance of social relationships which learners strongly value. Learners would not want to jeopardise their commitment to families and institutions by indulging in gangsterism.

Involvement refers to “an opportunity associated with how people spend their time” (Criminal Justice Research, 2017:4). Learners may spend their time playing games, watching sporting events, doing homework or talking to parents. If learners spend their time in genuine school-related events, either scholastically, communally or nimbly, chances of indulgence in gang activities are very slim. Trust denotes to the gradation to which one follows the morals connected with the behaviour that conforms to the act (Springer, 2016:1). Since there is a link between attitudes and behaviour, prosocial attitudes constrain learners from committing crimes like gangsterism on and off school campuses. SCT assisted the participants to explore the processes of socialisation and social learning, thus building self-control in learners that subsequently reduces indulgence in gangsterism.

2.4 OBJECTIVES OF SCT

2.4.1 SCT promotes social integration

Social control theory promotes the notion that an individual possesses needs, desires, and aspirations that are neutral. The fulfillment of these human aspects is dependent on the legal or illegal involvement of an individual. The bonds a person has with a society assist such a person to respect the societal behaviour and norms. In dealing with gangster activities on school campuses, school authorities should reward the conforming behaviour. The practice encourages the learners’ commitment to conformity. Nonconforming behaviour is sanctioned with appropriate corrective measures (Jonga-Tas, 2015:10).

Chris (2007:695) posits that one of the objectives of SCT is a regulation of self-control as embedded in the family background. Self-control is regarded as a primary form of socialisation that a learner experiences from the family. It presumes that if a learner's social bonds from the family background lack a foundational base, such learners are easily recruited into gangsterism. According to SCT, a family setting therefore reconstructs a personality system of a learner. Families as institutions of social bonds are considered the factories of human dignity.

According to Pratt and Collen (2000:932), SCT singles out low self-control as a catalyst for some learners to indulge in gangsterism. It assists the school community in being vigilant in that learners, who commit crimes like gangsterism act impulsively, are short-sighted and non-verbal. Gangsterism provides these learners with immediate gratification.

2.4.2 SCT as a social enhancement

SCT as a theoretical framework, "frames" my study such that my research remains within the boundaries of its frame. Both the researcher and participants are made aware that societal mechanism refers to practices and tactics for modifiable social behaviour in society (Mondal, 2016:1). It is social in the sense that it involves communication between the researcher and participants in a research field. Furthermore, SCT is social as it assists with a form of control that produces modification in behaviour which results from an act of communication from the participants.

As a framework of my study, SCT guides the researcher and participants in the sense that imposition of sanctions from the research counteracts behaviour like gangsterism, to maintain social stability. Since the society's dynamics are ever-changing, SCT guides the way such that the entire social order coheres and ensures that a society's members conform to its expectations. Through the use of SCT, a society's recalcitrant (unwilling to obey orders) members are brought back into line.

SCT emphasises the point that although gangsters lack moral behaviour, in a research field they must be treated as social beings (Morris & Kempf-Leonard, 2012:1). SCT

indicates that much attention is based on the interrelation between social structure and social order. SCT signifies the importance of the maintenance of social order, and that not “every member of the society can be equally committed to the shared values and moral beliefs of the society” (Thompson, 2016:1).

2.4.3 SCT as a catalyst towards social cohesion

SCT entails the premise that gangsterism is a compelling factor for social change to occur in a community. King (2015:2) states that gangsterism strengthens social cohesion in an affected community, in that once there are gangsters in that community, the whole community joins together in outrage to combat it. SCT guides participants in understanding why societies submit to the rule and adherence to culture’s rules contrasting with other philosophies concerned with determining why breakdown in the rule occurs (Pittaro, 2007:5). According to SCT, gangsterism emerges once a person’s links or ties with public establishments like school, household, church, and community are weakened or broken.

SCT assists in explaining that to satisfy the basic human drives like shelter, sex and food, a certain kind of behaviour directive is required. This kind of behaviour directive in human beings is needed, as human beings behave differently from other creatures. Social creatures have to obey positive standards to gratify their needs. These standards act as resources of the communal mechanism. Thus, for the reciprocal well-being and welfare, certain kinds of societal control are a necessity. SCT puts emphasis on the fact that special, social and common mal-arrangements are properly stable and the skirmish between the participants to satisfy their limitless wants is removed or abridged to a controllable size. SCT stresses the point that societies cannot function if immense numbers of individuals defy ideals of proper behaviour.

SCT is a well-established theory that has been developed to explain some aspects of behaviour like gangsterism. SCT assists in extending the existing knowledge within the critical bounding assumptions of my study. The researcher and other participants use SCT to incorporate predictions, facts, policies, and laws in a strategy to curb social

injustices like gangsterism. My co-researchers and I will use SCT to guide us in interpreting school policies, codes of conduct and minutes of school management (SMT) and staff members about gangsterism. All these documents contain resolutions from various stakeholders. Subsequently, resolutions from such documents assist us in guiding schools to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism on school campuses.

SCT confines the scope of relevant data of my research on gangsterism, by focusing on specific variables and defining specific viewpoints that participants follow in analyzing data on gangster activities. Furthermore, it is a means through which new study facts can be construed for the realisation of the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. It is responsive to newly arising problems that previously have offered no solutions towards a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

2.5 THE FORMATS OF SCT

SCT seeks to conglomerate discussion and mechanism principles of nonconformity to illuminate family control on power relationships and sex variances in gangsterism as a form of crime (Bates *et al.*, 2003:1). Hagan (2009: 10) argues that parent locations in a labour force shake male-controlled attitudes in the households. Male-controlled attitudes in the end seize dissimilar ranks of control placed on teenagers in these families. Opposing ranks of control assist in understanding why some learners resort to gangsterism. Due to a superior level of control placed on girls in male-controlled families, there are greater sex modifications in misbehaviour in such homes in that boys are more antisocial than girls.

In a research field, SCT guides the researcher and participants in the sense that, in family circles, both the father and mother have comparatively related influence at work. In “balanced households,” both parents exert equal control on their children. This line of intellectual thinking advocates that stable families will practice fewer sex variances in gangsterism. In “unbalanced households,” parents have different ranks of control in labour places. In such families, SCT predicts that additional power is placed on girls than boys. Subsequently, more boys are likely to be involved in gangsterism than girls.

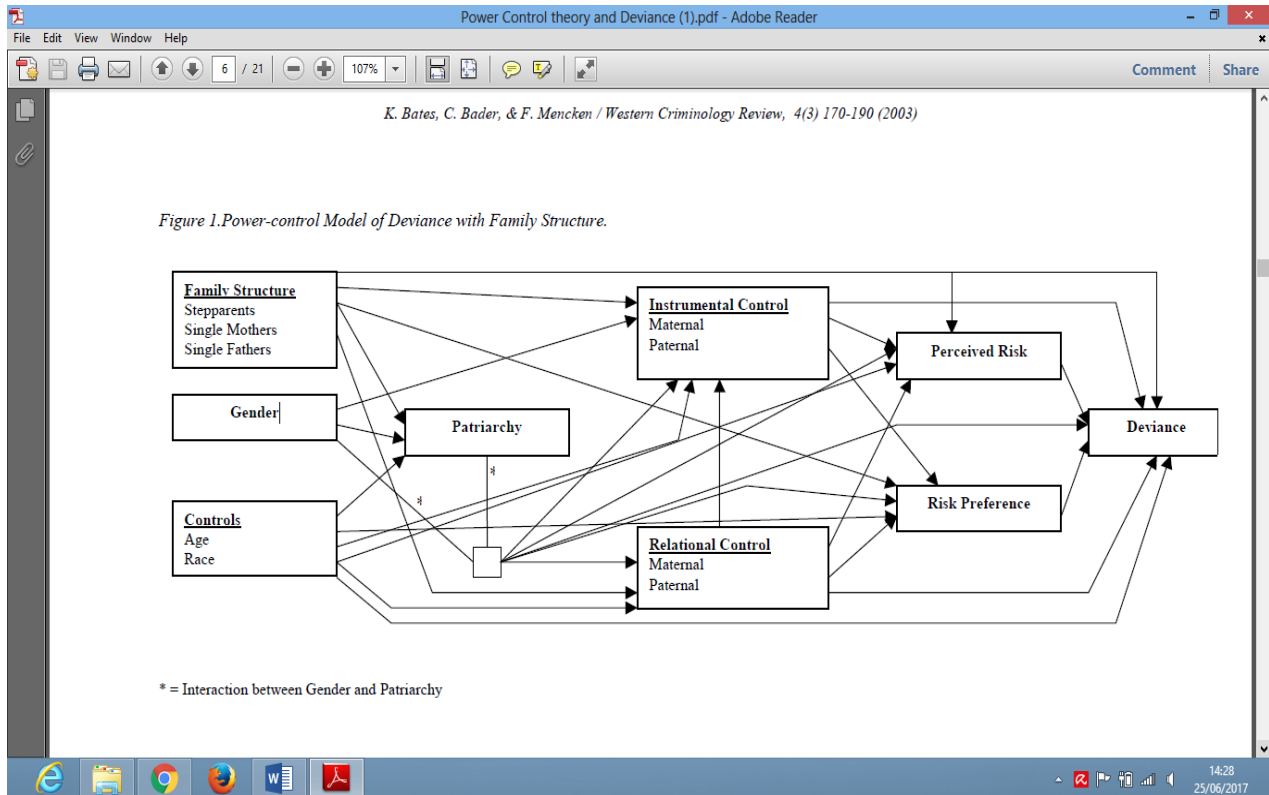


Figure 2.1: Power control and deviance (Source: Bates et al., 2003:175)

Research has shown that learners from a solitary family and stepfamily may have low stages of control imposed on them than learners from organic relatives. Subsequently, in a single-parent family, there is no partner against whom to relate stages of authority. Such learners display feeble linking to a non-custodial parent or stepparent than a supervisory or organic parent. Figure 2.1 above is indicative that, learners in schools come from multifaceted household backgrounds like parents, single mothers, single fathers, and stepparents. During a research process with learners on site, SCT points out to researcher and participants that cognizance of learner diversity from the household background is of vital importance.

Furthermore, SCT seeks to emphasise an increase in autonomy of the researcher and participants, self-disclosure of emotions and feelings and the collegial management, as the three principles of action in working through power relations.

2.5.1 An increase in autonomy of the researcher and participants.

Creation of opportunities for personal and self-determination for a researcher and participants are considered very crucial in my research study to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Power relation practices in this study are based on principles that I, as a researcher, use to guide my participants towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, and not dictate to them what to do. Eyal-Lubling and Kramel-Nevo (2016:248) state that participants are perceived as possessing abilities and authority to suggest solutions as they, and not I, as a researcher view them. The implication is that they are not inferior to me as a researcher. In this study, SCT indicates that we are equal in this qualitative research.

2.5.2 Self-disclosure of emotions and feelings

Self-disclosure ensures that both the investigator and the accomplices share their emotions and feelings about gangsterism, towards the realization of the development of a strategy to curb this problem in schools (Simon, 2012:207). In my qualitative research, self-disclosure of personal views and experiences on gangsterism, enhances the emotional or mental state of the researcher and the co-researchers, in that they open up for a suggestion of good practices towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The disclosure of emotions such as pain and frustrations on gangsterism in schools, places both the researcher and co-researchers on equal footing, even if their life experiences are different.

2.5.3 Collegial management

The English Oxford dictionary (2016:23) defines collegial management as a shared responsibility among a group of colleagues. Bush (2006:68) suggests that in collegiality, both the researcher and participants have an equal voice in a gathering of data that support the objectives of the research. Researchers are united in a common purpose and respect each other's abilities to work towards the achievement of

objectives. In my study, SCT emphasizes the fact that power and decision-making are shared between the researcher and participants. During the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, both the researcher and participants make decisions through a process of discussion leading towards a common consensus. SCT aspires to equal participation and relationship irrespective of gender. Forces of argument overcome differences of opinions during participation. Imposition of decisions on researchers is considered morally repugnant and inconsistent with the notion of consent. SCT ensures joint, open and nonhierarchical participation from all the researchers, to enable mutual criticism and mutual learning. It encourages options from any gender, and decision-making during a research process is a collective one regardless of gender. SCT discourages the notion that “I am the Boss and I will decide.”

Well (2016:8) posits that an absence of social control is a major factor in discovering why some learners offend while some do not work in schools. Such learners lack external social controls, internal self or personal controls, or both. The underlying premise of SCT is the motivation that engages learners in socially acceptable behaviour as opposed to an indulgence in gangster activities. This theory first and foremost apportions blame on some schools and parents for some learners going astray and followed by governments and legal systems that are perceived as practising ineffective strategy to deter gangsters.

Hirsch, as cited by Inouye (2014: 7) states that “connectedness to organizations promotes behaviour conformity.” This type of connectedness to organizations like schools and families results in a reduction of high – risk activities like gangsterism. Schools through policies and departmental laws, shape the behaviour of wayward learners; and subsequently, reduce the probability of engagement in gangsterism. With regard to family connectedness, respect and family values serve as a firm foundation for future parenthood. In this study, I will discuss the steps of SCT as based on four interrelated social bonds.

2.5.3.1 Attachment

Learners are considered prosocial beings from birth. Attachment to stakeholders like families, teachers in schools, peers, and churches impacts greatly on their daily lives. Chapman *et al.* (2013:3) point to the fact that early bond between a parent and child develops, which later extends to stakeholders like peers, adults, and teachers in schools. SCT emphasizes learner attachment in schools to teachers, as their secondary parents, that assists them in recovering from the scourge of gangsterism. Teachers are considered as their role models through a positive attachment that yields positive effects regarding childhood resilience. Copying of good conduct from excellent teachers imprints positive memories in the minds of learners. Such learner attachment to teachers on and off school campuses subsequently discourages them from indulging in gang activities.

Research further indicates that each learner shares the tendency to fulfill his or her basic needs, desires and interests. Keppens and Spruyt (2016:3) report that some learners may be involved in gangsterism just for the fulfillment of their freedom, status or excitement. A lack of attachment and social bonding set a learner free from considering involvement in gangsterism. SCT entails an assumption that a learner that lacks attachment to prosocial institutions like family and school is likely to deviate from societal expectations, norms, and rules.

2.5.3.2 Commitment

Cecen-Celik and Keith (2016:3) refer to commitment “as an emphasis on investment in conventional society.” SCT gives guidance to learners on the value of investing in education. The emphasis is to encourage the learners not to break the school rules and codes of conduct. Learners are made aware that once they break the laws and rules of the schools, they may endanger their future investment in education. Learners with advanced academic and career ambitions are promising to be obedient and protect their future. Herbert (2007:1) further defines commitment as “a fear of law-breaking behaviour.” SCT puts more emphasis on the rational component of the rules and laws

of societal conformity. Learners are not only expected to be committed to what they have achieved but also committed to acquire more through conventional means, to reinforce their future success.

2.5.3.3 *Involvement*

Hill and Pollock (2014:2) define involvement as an individual's participation in conventional activities. Conventional activities entail, for instance, activities like sports (e.g., Soccer, rugby, tennis, etc.), core-curricula activities like studying, doing homework or an assignment, religious activities and community services. SCT seeks to reinforce the importance of mass participation in conventional activities both on and off school campuses. A high number of learners participating in conventional activities ensures a decrease in idle minds. If learners' minds are more often than not, occupied with conventional activities, chances of indulgence in gangsterism are very slim. Through the use of SCT, both the researcher and co-researchers highlight the fact that involvement in conventional activities can bond individuals to institutions. Furthermore, SCT highlights a reinforcement of prosocial bonds through participation in social activities.

2.5.3.4 *Belief*

According to Chui and Chan (2011:2) belief means "the respect for the moral validity of the societal norms and rules." SCT ensures the legitimisation of value through an acceptance of rules and norms as fair and binding for societal members. Members of the society who hold a strong belief that conventional norms and regulations are binding, are unlikely to indulge in gangsterism. Strong belief results in a reduction of a propensity to indulge in gangster activities. The learners with a high degree of respect for the rules and laws of the school, merely comply and follow the rules. SCT suggests the involvement of learners in the formulation of school rules and regulations. Their

involvement eliminates resistance and fosters ownership. Ownership of the regulations and laws assists in their application towards the suppression of gangsterism.

2.6 EPISTEMOLOGY OF SCT

Cohen *et al.* (2017:7) define epistemology as the study of the nature, foundation, limits, and justification of social information. In this study, I will describe the importance of being unambiguous about the epistemological fundamentals of my study and its location in assisting in the framing of my research design. I pledge to the constructionist worldview and this influenced my optimal choice of the research topic, and the approach I will follow. I will also demonstrate how this epistemological view will assist in shaping my study.

Darlaston-Jose (2007:19) posits that the simple debate of constructionism is that truth is socially constructed by and among the people who practice it. Since my study is underpinned by participatory action research (PAR), knowledge construction in a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools is the responsibility of both the researchers and co-researchers. I will afford my co-researchers an opportunity to construct knowledge in the context in which they experience the scourge of gangsterism. The expectation during knowledge construction is that it is molded by social, traditional, dogmatic and societal customs of the researcher and co-researchers. Furthermore, reality towards knowledge construction is different in each participant, based on the different and unique world of individual experience. Constructionist view entails that reality is subjective and does not depend on a researcher or participants.

According to Franzen (2010:25), epistemology is concerned with how we know, and the nature of knowledge as justified by true beliefs. I will, therefore, indicate to other participants that epistemologically, various methods are used in a study procedure to warrant a belief to be true. I will similarly motivate that true beliefs do not qualify as knowledge but require true reliable scientific justification. Since my study is based on qualitative research, I will bring to their attention that knowledge claims can be justified through methods like intuition, direct observation, reliable testimony, and reflective

equilibrium. My study uses an Interpretist Epistemology, which supports a subjective view of knowledge construction.

2.7 ONTOLOGY OF SCT

Scotland (2012:9) defines ontology as the study of the nature of reality. Ontological suppositions are apprehensive with what establishes reality. I will involve the participants in the conceptualisation of their experiences with the scourge of gangsterism towards a formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The knowledge base gained from the conceptualization process must benefit the school communities towards a formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism on school campuses. The expectation is for school governing bodies and school management teams to use reliable and researched knowledge on gangsterism to subsequently document a strategy to assist schools in curbing gangsterism on school campuses.

Furthermore, schools are expected to share their knowledge as a basis of good practice to curb gangsterism. Through participation in my study, both the researcher and participants' experiences of gangster activities act as a fountain of knowledge to assist the school in solving the problem of gangsterism on their campuses. I will also emphasize to my co-researchers that since my study is underpinned by constructionism, a social phenomenon like gangsterism entails subjective perceptions. I will consistently remind them that knowledge existence on gangsterism as a social phenomenon, as cited by Dudovskiy (2016:1), is a result of subjectivism on the experiences of participants in research.

This research is underpinned by participatory action research (PAR). This type of research approach is grounded on the evidence that both the researcher and the accomplices are viewed as equal partners during the research process. Each partner is recognised for the unique strength he or she brings during the study procedure. Both the researcher and co-researchers are engaged in a research topic that aims to reconcile knowledge and action, with the sole aim of bringing the social change to improve the community (Minkler *et al.*, 2003:4).

Through an application of PAR, SCT ensures that participants can speak knowledgeably and freely about gangsterism as the problem that concerns them as well as the community. Trust between the researcher and the participant is of critical importance, ensuring that participants take responsibility to participate meaningfully. SCT ensures that participants develop knowledge skills in a strategy to curb gangsterism without being extrinsically motivated. Their participation affords them an opportunity as diverse members of the community to play a leading role in knowledge and facts about a curbing of gangsterism in schools. PAR seeks to promote a co-learning and empowering process that addresses gangsterism as one of the social inequalities.

PAR involves both the researcher and participants during an iterative process to ensure trust-building and partnership. Trust-building and partnership assist the participants to articulate risks and challenges of participation in gangsterism. Participants can contribute towards the data to be used in a strategy to curb the scourge of gangsterism on school premises. Furthermore, McGarvey (2007:10) posits that PAR assists in the distribution of results and knowledge expanded to all acquaintances in a respectful and understandable language that acknowledges participant contribution and ownership of knowledge production.

PAR entails a pronounced disposition on the part of participants to divulge their individual view of the position and proficiencies of gangsterism. In the context of my study, the participants will be afforded an opportunity to narrate their experiences on gangsterism on school campuses. PAR assists my study to solicit relevant data on gangsterism in schools, as my co-researchers are directly involved with schools as my research sites. Conflicting experiences on gangsterism can be jointly addressed, as PAR regards them as diverse locations, thus ensuring a confident level of encounter acceptance (Bergold *et al.*, 2012:13). Through the use of PAR, SCT assists my research in creating awareness among my co-researchers and the community for mobilization and action against gangsterism. Subsequently, through the creation of knowledge and community participation, the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism can be realised.

2.8 DEFINITION AND DISCUSSION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

This section presents definitions of strategy, curb, and gangsterism as operational terms in this study.

2.8.1 Strategy

The English Oxford Living Dictionary (2017:1) expresses strategy as a disposition of achievement intended to realise a long tenure or complete goal. Strategy is defined as “a plan of action designed to achieve a long term or overall aim” (English Oxford Dictionary, 2017). Strategy means a restraint on something (English Oxford Living Dictionary, 2018:1). Strategy means a restraint on unwanted forces such gangsterism (English Oxford Living Dictionary, 2018:1).

According to Encyclopedia.com (retrieved December 4, 2018) strategy means the general’s art that influences the relationship among military members towards reaching the ends of national policy. Nickols (2016:1) defines strategy as a “framework that guides the choices that determine the nature and the direction of an organisation.” The strategy is a united, inclusive, and cohesive plan intended to guarantee that the rudimentary objectives of the innovativeness are realised (Mainardes, Ferreira & Raposo, 2014:46).

The definitions above are indicative that the envisaged strategy to curb gangsterism in schools is a collaborative and inclusive research activity involving all the participants. Team members are expected to ooze confidence and desire to actively inspire one another in active participation to assist the community to curb the scourge of gangsterism on school premises. The qualitative data thus generated must inform the research in achieving the aim and objectives of this study. The researcher understands a strategy as a comprehensive plan that is inclusive of all the participant activities that support such a plan in achieving the desired aims and objectives of a research process.

2.8.2 Curb

Cambridge English Dictionary (2017:1) defines curb as a controlling or limiting of something that is not wanted. According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2018: Online), curb means a channel bay that is planned to thwart deposits from the inflowing rainstorm drain. Jah, Morrison, Dainer-Best, Part, Rostrup, and Stanley (2015:1) refer to curb as an action that is taken to prevent something undesirable. Naidoo (2012:33) defines curb as an act of successful eradication of an ant-social behaviour like gangsterism. The participants of the research process and the community, in general, engage collaboratively in the elimination of the scourge of gangsterism on and off school premises. Successful eradication of gangsterism on school premises is further dependable on the active participation of gangsters, who are willing to be integrated into the community.

2.8.3 Gangsterism

Dictionary.com (2011:1) refers to gangsterism as beliefs of fitting into organised mobs of lawbreakers involving violence. English Oxford Living Dictionary (2017: Online) defines gangsterism as the use of strategies linked with criminals, as coercion or viciousness to attain something. According to Encyclopedia.com (2019: Online), gangsterism means involvement of some youth in criminality due to a feeling of marginalisation by the public, and looking for unity with others in related circumstances.

Kinnes (2018:2) posits that gangsterism is a global phenomenon which involves millions of marginalised members of some communities. Such marginalised youth's voices of reason are not listened to in order to be rescued from gangsterism. Research studies further indicate a proliferation of gangsterism worldwide, in which in some instances show resistance to some strategies to curb it. It was against this background that this piece of research was undertaken to fill the existing gap.

2.9 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Globally, gangsterism remains a daunting problem. The repercussions of the involvement of some learners in gangsterism are a depiction of instability on campuses of some schools. The prevalence of such a scourge of gangsterism brings fear and uncertainty to the lives of learners, teachers, and parents of the affected schools. A fear of being victims of gangsters forces some learners to absent themselves from schools. Learners, and teachers are unable to carry out their classroom activities per the demands of the school curriculum. Some learners bunk classes owing to fear of being recruited to gangsterism. Gangsterism on school premises contributes to teachers falling behind with the completion of a curriculum. It is against this background that I will assist such schools to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism on their campuses.

2.10 CHALLENGES AND THE NEED TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS

2.10.1 The need to develop a strategy

The need to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools is embedded in Densley (2013:2) that gangs range from organised illicit set-ups tangled in drugs source and weapons, to intricate street-based gangs who operate with vehemence. Gangs may start as small recreational groups of friends. To gang members, space is a commodity. Gangs strive to find trustworthy, faithful and capable affiliates, under the circumstances of unlawfulness and the use of fierceness. Papachristos (2009:74) depicts gangsterism as a defence of territories, maintenance of gang rank and reactions to incitements and intimidations from other cliques.

Hallsworth (2014:35), defines gangs as “the new face of youth crime” in which gangster activities are booming and overwhelming. Gang groups are very volatile and have amorphous (shapeless or formless) properties. Alagappan *et al.* (2014:1) describe gangsterism as the use of campaigns allied with criminals, an using fear or viciousness, to accomplish something. Mncube *et al.* (2014:1) define gangsterism as “a formation of

groups with the aim of committing violence and crime, and to defend themselves physically against the violence of other groups.”

2.10.1.1 Active participation by gangsters

According to Mathe (2008:42), gangsterism is depicted by gang groups, whose distinctive language and dress identify their members. Sociologists believe that modern gangs emanate from shared settings such as joblessness, paucity, and nonexistence of self-worth. Research shows that gangsterism, as a social problem and social phenomenon, is increasingly becoming a thorn in the flesh of communities worldwide. The gangsterism phenomenon is an evolution that starts earlier in a boy’s psychosocial development (Taylor, 2013:339).

Taylor (2013: 440) further postulates that some learners perceive recruiters as friendly and encouraging towards them to join gangs. To these learners, a gang offers safety and security from other gangs. The latent gang associate views the recruiters and socialisers as very tolerant of them. Fitting into a gang is perceived as a rapid pathway to acquiring admiration from other adolescents in public, gained through fear of other communal off springs. The prospective participant senses that affiliation in the gang augments virility and status of being “tough.” Gangsterism is viewed as a possibility of making money and drawing attention from girls. Some learners see gangsterism as an opportunity for venting their anger and frustrations from family dysfunctionality.

2.10.1.2 Equality and marginalisation of gangsters

Howell (2009:1) suggests that some learners feel ostracised by the social order and seek commonality with others in related circumstances. Some gang members seek power and respect from the community. Some have networks tangled in gangs and want to be a fragment of those too. The desire to belong somewhere, once that is lacking through outdated household background forces some learners to resort to gangsterism. Gang members seek to end poverty and joblessness by resorting to

gangsterism. Some learners indulge in gangsterism through living in neighborhoods or communities in which gangsters roam their streets. Some lack confidence that is easily influenced through inspiration from other gang affiliates.

Information provided by Skpd 1033- English for Social Science (2010: online) suggests that, in Malaysia, negative influences from the peer group put pressure on school learners to seek solace in gangster activities. Most learners share their problems with their peers. They regard their peers as the ones that understand their life challenges and problems more than their families. For them, only contacts can comprehend their moods. Absence of parental affection from parents who, forever are pre-occupied with work schedule for monetary gain, open up a gap for gangsters to recruit their children. Broken family environments that result in divorces hamper the progress of learners on school campuses. Ultimately their low morale makes them vulnerable to recruitment towards gangsterism.

Some learners are keen to involve themselves in a bunch of criminal activities such as to extract money from others, fighting and obtaining reimbursement for intimidating others, although they know that it is a deleterious activity. Besides, youngsters may also be prejudiced by the mass media to become a mobster. Currently, multimedia such as internet, television, and radio are very prevalent and common among the juveniles. Nonetheless, many productions and cinemas reflect mob activities, and some even shape the character of the gangster as a champion. Juveniles that are still immature think that gangsters in those extracts are very calm and thus they also develop into gangsters. Sometimes, youths join a gang just because they are not virtuous in societal activities and want to entice others' courtesy (Miin, 2011: 1).

2.10.1.3 Inclusion and involvement in gangsterism

Some juveniles suggest that they resort to gangsterism because their parents are constantly scolding and blaming them for their wrongdoings. This results in their performance at school taking a nosedive. Some indicate that the majority of their friends are involved in gangsterism, and feel alienated if they reject the invitation to join the

gangs. Some are involved in gangsterism just to gain popularity and presence at school (*UK Essays*, 2013:12). Studies also indicate that some learners who resort to gangsterism in Malaysia are generally from low-income families, families without work and marginalised due to ethnic identity, and as such, lack hope for the future. Gangs give a sense of identity to these learners who are viewed as invisible by their society. During the secondary school period, learners begin to experience an identity crisis before reaching adulthood. Some learners, who do not fit into the academic environment, turn to gangsterism to actualise their identity. Some from dysfunctional families regard the gangsters in their areas as role models (*FMT news*, 2013:1).

Research further indicates that youth in Malaysia join gangs due to situational factors like money, confidence, recognition or even if they are looking for a relationship with girls (*UK Essays*, 2015:7). Studies in Malaysia further suggest that impatience amongst adolescents who aspire to familiar to substantial securities of a prosperous society, monotony, inquisitiveness and a craving to fit a communal grid like a household or gang, are specifically contributing factors to indulge in gangsterism (Lee, 2016:1). According to Elyn (2016:5), factors like a noble burden, domestic features, the absence of parental affection or vocations and minor attainment in school are some of the factors contributing to learners becoming involved in gangsterism in secondary schools in Malaysia.

Oruwari (2006:15) articulates that, in some Nigerian schools, some learners are recruited into gangs by their friends. Such learners are lured into gangs through a provision of food and clothes by the existing members. Some join the gangs due to the continual absence of a father figure, in which mothers are overcome by the errands of raising them unaided. Matusitz and Repass (2009:497) posit that to some learners, self-identity can only be achieved through gang group identity. Some learners with a frail character use a gang as a technique to shape self-identity.

According to Idowu (2014:124), learners in Nigerian schools join gangs because they seek identity, are impressed by the gang language, dress code, colours, and symbols. In Nigeria, some learners who join gangs visualize themselves as warriors who protect their neighbourhood against the outside world. The lack of tight family structure

prompts such learners to consider joining gangs as the right option. Gang activities offer that closeness that is lacking in the family environment. Some new followers involuntarily join through ferocious thrashings, and this introduces them to gang affiliation. Some learners join because of the excitement of gang activities, a need to belong, attention-seeking, peer pressure and those with poor self-esteem, join to increase their self-esteem (Naira land Forum, 2015: 1 of 1).

2.10.1.4 The desire for an empowerment

Information provided by Victor (2015: online) indicates that learners in Nigeria join cults (gangs) from a longing to institute a philosophy less prosperous in schools as contrary to the annoying, folks who fail to meet their speculative requirements. Those wielding influence completely are reluctant to give it up, for protection against other cult members, for the erosion of traditional academic culture and intimidation of teachers and other learners on school campuses. Nwachuku (2015: online) indicates that learners in secondary schools join secret cults (gangs) due to the failure of making the right choice of friends. Such learners are always in the company of bad friends that subsequently recruit them into their gangs. Some learners are deceived into joining gangs because of feelings of insecurity and fear, the desire to look and sound tough and the ignorance of what is involved in cultism. The gangsters promise some learners accessibility to the most fashionable clothes in town.

Swingler (2014:1) suggests that gangsterism in the Cape Peninsula is very rife. Initiates young as fourteen years are arrested for gang-related murders. Gangs are molded by beginners looking for physical security from intimidation in their societies. Bouwers Du Toit (2014:1) suggests that gangsterism is a product of forced removal of families in the Cape Flats by the then Group Areas Act, as promulgated by the Apartheid era. This heartless practice promoted the forms of moral deficiency and discrimination on Cape Flats.

Gangsterism initiates a productive background inside the socio-economic issues generated by Apartheid in Cape Flats. The socio-economic upbringing is viewed as one of the contributory factors which prompt joining the ranks of gangsterism among the youth. In communities wherein the majority of the parents are not employed, youth resorts to gangsterism. The community consists of single parents. Some learners depend on teachers for survival and their daily meal. (Mncedisi & Mabunda, 2014:65).

Learners, as young as ten to sixteen are recruited by the gangsters. The poverty-stricken circumstances of the learners force them to join gangs. Gangsters use money, power, and glamour to lure them to gangsterism. Despite the schools teaching the

learners values like respect, accountability, and responsibility, some learners are still attracted by these materialistic appeals. (Mncedisi & Mabunda, 2014:6).

2.10.1.5 Lack of parental involvement

According to Monareng (2016:1), learners join gangs because of paucity, inattentive dads, household fellows that were former gang affiliates or are still gang members and the absence of opportunities. Wagner *et al.* (2016:56) posit that learners who join gangs regard it as a lifestyle that is prestigious, and further turns boys into men. Poverty and broken homes are also contributing factors in the joining of gangs. Participation in gangs gives participants identity, social and financial fulfilment. To some learners, gang life is like a religion in their families, as their siblings spend time in jails (Matshiqi, 2016 online).

Information provided by Charlton (2017: Online) indicates that gangs emerge from origins like socio-economic circumstances that entail joblessness, low-income occupation and deprived living surroundings. Paucity, despair, fierceness, and lack of control of families lead to the development of voluminous gangs. Many adolescent gangs today reflect instabilities of many dysfunctional families. In such families, there is a lack of parental control, as both parents are required to work. Families are known for very high delinquency rates.

Charlton (2017: Online) further characterises a dysfunctional family as the one with domestic violence, substance abuse, poor bonding between parents and children and youth delinquency. Other factors that can cause dysfunction include poor educational levels of parents, low income, unwanted pregnancies and a history of parental violence. All these factors may lead the children to a state of social exclusion.

Research further indicates that in Bloemfontein, in the Free State, youth join gangs due to youth unemployment, poverty, social isolation, negative peer pressure and lack of school attachment. Some researchers suggest the presence of some politically motivated sinister forces to encourage learners to join gangs, to further their agenda (Du Toit, 2015:1). In the small township of Wesselsbron, in the Northern Free State, some learners suggest that domestic violence between parents prompted them to turn

to gangsterism, as the constant conflict between parents resulted in their neglecting their responsibilities to look after them (Magidi, 2016:1).

The above discussions illustrate that some learners resort to joining gangs if they do not experience warmth, tender care and attention from their families. Lack of attachment to families as pro-social institutions, has a negative influence during their youth lives. Paton (2008:1) postulates that family breakdown and the absence of father figures compel some learners to join gangs.

2.11 COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS

This section discusses the components of a strategy as solutions to challenges as discussed above. The solutions, which contribute towards a social change, entail an intervention at an individual level; family prevention; school and community level prevention; community policing and self-confidence and parental love.

2.11.1 Inclusion as an intervention at an individual level

According to Farrington and Welsch, as cited by Howell (2010:11) research suggests distinctive strategies to deal with gangs and delinquents in Columbia in the United States of America. Intervention at an individual level is a component of a social change that deals with learners who are at risk and are very disruptive at school. According to the Gang Resistance Education and Training (2011:5) a school based-program that teaches youth about avoidance of gang membership and violence, assisting in the development of positive relationships with other stakeholders has been introduced in schools.

Regarding the curriculum at school, since the programme is a cognitive-based one, it further assists in the enactment of lifetime services such as conflict resolutions, accountability, appreciation cultural activity and goal setting. This is law enforcement and prosecution that target this group of learners because of their disruptive behaviour on school campuses. Law enforcement officers as participants view this group as very

small, and the probability is that other strategies would not reduce gang involvement (Development Services Group, 2014:5).

Lindberg (2011:7) posits that intervention programmes at an individual level assist in the development of pro-social attitudes. Pro-social attitudes subsequently invoke an attachment to pro-social institutions like schools and families, as supported by SCT's interrelated elements (see section 2.5.3.1). According to Ward (2009:3), a detached worker programme provides gang members with individual counseling, educational and recreational opportunities. Individual counseling is beneficial to learners in the treatment of their emotions. Educational opportunities take care of future needs in the corporate world. Recreational opportunities are vital in the unearthing of their God-given talents. They further help the learners to be absorbed in the job market.

2.11.2 Parental involvement through family prevention

The family prevention strategy deals with intensive treatment and supervision. Parents need to talk to their children regarding the consequences of being a gang member. Advice from religious leaders is very important in stamping out gangsterism (Mesa, 2018:1). The components of this strategy are cluster psychotherapy, domestic psychoanalysis, mentoring and cognitive-behavioral therapy. Group therapy assists in an enhancement of family cohesiveness. Socially isolated learners are counseled back to their families from their alienated positions of being in the wilderness. There are direct contact sessions with victims over a certain period (Evidence In-sight, 2012:7).

Family therapy entails communication of positive messages to children by family members. Family members' display of belief and acceptance of children in their homesteads instill a sense of confidence and encouragement. All these subsequently assist in the identification and improvement of their strengths and talents (Behneke, 2008:2). According to Medina, Ralphs and Aldridge (2010:2), mentoring forges a strong relationship between gangsters and their mentors. Mentoring programmes further result in an improvement of school attendance and participation in community activities in gangs and learners exposed to gangsterism. Fisher, Garner, and Montgomery (2008:7)

report that cognitive-behavioral programmes address the gangsters' cognitive shortcomings so that they can be integrated into the community.

2.11.3 Equality at school and community levels

Welsh and Farrington (2007:875) posit that this strategy entails school and discipline management, classroom or instructional management, reorganisation of grades or classes and increasing self-control as components to curb gangsterism. Their empirical research further indicates that after-school programs provide learners with prosocial opportunities that prevent involvement in gangsterism. Community-based mentoring programs, with an involvement of non-professional adult volunteers, afford learners time to spend with adults. This plays a pivotal role in discouraging them from joining gangs. Mentors are viewed as non-judgemental, and as role models.

Rudinski (2012:1) states that in the city of Prince George's County, outside Washington D.C, school police officers and staff members as participants, use the banning of anything related to gang membership such as weapons, clothes, insignias, and gestures, as their strategy to curb gangsterism on school campuses. They further implement an outfit program intended to eradicate gang colours and apparel. Youthful gang adherents are presented with distinct outreach and after-school platforms as a substitute for gang attachment. Community gang intervention programs that benefit schools in a curbing of gangsterism are implemented. Leadership classes are conducted to assist learners in abandoning gangsterism. Learners, parents, educators and communal leaders as participants are involved in the safe-school planning process.

2.11.4 Active participation through community policing

According to September (2016:1), the Chicago police engage the use of community policing and visible policing as components of the strategy to curb gangsterism. The strategy is used due to the lack of cooperation from Ceasefire Chicago to yield results in curbing gangsterism in that area. Police identify the so-called hot spot territories for

gangsterism. A use of hot-spot policing is implemented to check the scourge of gangsterism. The hot-spot policing is thus decentralised to involve community members as participants in the curbing of gangsterism in the area. The district intelligence analysts use data generated by the community policing officers and the command staff to formulate a strategy to curb gangsterism on and off the school premises.

Skogan and Hartnett (2000:45) indicate that the organisational decentralisation and reorientation of patrols in Chicago culminate in community satisfaction. Police are seen on horseback and riding bicycles to curb gangsterism in schools. Furthermore, police and the community members open neighbourhood substations that engage one another in meetings, seminars, and formation of neighbourhood watch groups, to deal with gangsterism.

In South Africa, the organisational model of community policing places more emphasis on team concepts, networking and multi-agency lines of communication. Teams are built in which the initially voiceless community members are collaboratively involved in sharing information with police under the auspices of trust. Networking and multi-agency lines of communication are crucial in that participants can expeditiously inform one another about gangsterism in their area irrespective of their status and location (Mengusti, Pindur & Leibold, 2000:22).

2.11.5 Empowerment through self-confidence and parental love

Aku (2009: 45) indicates that, in Malaysia, self-confidence and parental love are some of the ingredients used to prevent learners from joining gangs. Studies show that learners that possess a high degree of confidence are unlikely to be involved in gangs. Parental love from the beginning is very vital in the shaping of a learner's future. If it is inadequate, it will be sought elsewhere. Retnanathan (2013:1) suggests that Youth and Sports Ministry organise a special forum that comprises community members, non-governmental organisations, political parties, and government agencies as participants to fight the scourge of gangsterism. The intention is to solicit information from the stakeholders that get involved with gang-led activities. The police also have a special

operation called Ops Cantas, the aim of which is to work together with community members to curb gangsterism. The mechanism used from that special operation is that the gangsters who would like to come forward and mend their ways would be recommended for a rehabilitation process.

Honj (2014:62) asserts that, further research studies on this component of a strategy to curb gangsterism in Malaysia, suggests, amongst others, the following; motivational sessions by school authorities; campaigns through parental involvement; issuing of pamphlets and leaflets about gangsterism; involvement of learners in reactional and weekend activities organised by the school and counseling sessions. Motivational talks from experts encourage the learners to think positively, and also deter them from getting involved even on a small scale. For instance, police and prison departments send their representatives to schools to make learners aware of the consequences of indulgence in gangsterism. Parental involvement accounts for reasons why learners are not supposed to join gangs. Pamphlets and leaflets about gangsterism inform the learners about gangsterism and its negative effects. Recreational and weekend activities kept learners busy and occupied, as such, they do not sit idle and get involved in gangsterism. Counseling sessions assist with emotional therapy for those learners who are already gangsters.

Furthermore, some researchers in Malaysia suggest that each secondary school enforces a rule that dictates that, it is compulsory for each learner to join at least a minimum of one co-curriculum activity. The decision prevents learners from idling and subsequently joining gangs. Some researchers indicate that the implementation of Police Cadets also assist in the curbing of gangsterism in both the primary and secondary schools in Malaysia. Police Cadet is a force that reduces learner disciplinary cases and social ills in schools. Parenting skills are considered to play a vital role in that they enhance communication between parents and learners, as parents are trained as counselors (*UK Essays*, 2015:1).

Alaggapar *et al.* (2015:4) articulate that the concentration of parents on learners' emotions rather than the satisfaction of material needs assists in curbing of gangsterism in schools. The police are advised to send a spy in schools, and prompt intelligence

informs a person on the state of gangsterism. An increase in penalties on offenders strikes fear in gangsters, and they refrain from breaching the laws and policies of the schools. Some gangsters are engaged in civic labour and charity toil rather than just being penalised.

According to Alam (2017: 1), Federal Police use the intelligence's Special Branch to crack down on gangsters. The Special Branch engages the society members to mingle with societies, to solicit information from the society that is pertinent to the operations of gangs. The intention is to make more arrests on secret societies that recruit school learners into gangs. Mohd (2016:1) suggests that schools must be transparent and work together with the police when dealing with gangsterism on their campuses. Schools encourage their learners to report and notify the authorities of any acts of gangsterism on school campuses. The identity of the learners taking part in reporting is concealed through the use of complaint boxes. Learners put their suggestions into such boxes for further scrutiny.

There is a need, on and off, of school campuses to ensure a total support for learners drawn into gangsterism. Both the school and families have an obligation to ensure that learners see gangs as less glamorous. Positive support from all stakeholders prevents degeneration of good morals.

2.12 CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS

2.12.1 Conditions conducive for inclusion

Villaraigosa (2007:10) reports that an inclusion of gangsters into the community in Los Angeles, in the United States of America, is used as a comprehensive-wide strategy towards gang reduction. Availability of excellent public schools for all children to attend is considered one of the conducive conditions for inclusion to thrive. If learners attend schools that give them skills, confidence, and hope, chances of joining gangs are very slim. Schools and community-based organisations offer services like intensive case management, mentoring, gang awareness training for parents, teachers and the

community. All these services contribute towards gang prevention and also address the integration of gangsters into the community. Skill attainment from such services exposes gangsters to job training, job placement, educational and vocational training.

The publication of the Western Cape Schools Education Portfolio Committee (2002:1) on safety and security in schools, suggests that the idea of Safe Schools Programme is to advance schools into midpoints of brilliance. The programme further elaborates that this is achievable through the linking of schools with the community, provision of quality teaching and learning and effective management and governance — the strategy of Safe Schools centers on the security of teachers, learners, and the backing staff. As part of conducive conditions for the success of the strategy, the physical structures of schools are expected to be secured by a safety fence, razor wire as well as alarms interconnected to an equipped response.

An introduction of programmes like conflict management, ordeal therapy, peer therapy, and social moralities instruction assist in a modification of gangster behaviour. Furthermore, sport and social events, as well as commercial teaching, deter gangsters from gangsterism. Schools form partnership with other government departments, Non-Governmental and Community Based Organizations in a pursuit to ensure conditions conducive for enhancement of inclusion of gangsters into the community.

2.12.2 Conditions conducive for empowerment

Motivational sessions with motivational speakers are of great value in cultivating conducive conditions for a strategy to work. Such talks ensure that learners do not mix with bad hats. Moreover, such talks instill a sense of positivity in learners and deter them from even thinking of any indulgence in gangsterism. Experts from police department motivate learners and discourage them from joining gangs. They inform learners of the challenges and hardships of being imprisoned as gangsters. The National Policy document (2016:19) states that an increase in neighbourhood agencies ensures trustworthiness in people living together. Neighbours can disseminate

information on gangster activities. The alertness of gangsters in the neighbourhood encourages neighbours to develop neighbourhood watch organisations.

Furthermore, neighbours and police subsequently form a community policing forum (CPF). Community policing forum and the community can obtain information on gangsterism and immediately alert the police. This ensures better policing in that police are able to act swiftly to stop an escalation of gangsterism.

Skill training for gangsters to mend their behaviour thrives in a condition in which their voices, as the previously voiceless, are heard. Gangsters, who are not mentally gifted in academic performance, may undergo manual training to hone their skills and be integrated into the community. Further engagement in mentorship programmes contributes towards conducive conditions for their empowerment. Engagement of communities, parents, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social; workers, health workers, teachers, learners, police and former gangsters in mentorship programmes ensure a buy-in into the strategy.

2.12.3 Conditions conducive for active participation

Mohammed (2013:22) states that, as part of a strategy to prevent gangsterism in Cape Town, the Ceasefire programme includes the path level interventions, the customer outreach graft, the civic instruction involvement, and the public mobilisation involvement. The street-level intervention consists of two to three members that patrol the gang hotspot areas. The aim is to persuade gangsters to join the programme with the intention to modify their gang behaviour. The client outreach work activities house gangsters in rehabilitation centers, for dealing with gangster modification activities.

Skogan *et al.* (2009:29) posit that during a public education intervention, educational brochures, fliers, posters, booklets, and stickers are distributed to community members, including the gangsters. These pamphlets enclose spot-on memos that deliver the public associates an all-purpose memorandum that gangsterism is not a typical or suitable conduct and that it must be eliminated from the public. The conduction of concerts during community mobilisation engages famous musicians. The purpose of

such concerts is to discourage learners and the community about joining gangs and gangsterism.

2.12.4 Conditions conducive for equality

In schools and households, equality of gangsters depends on conditions that favour total tolerance of this youth group. Since they are human beings, they must be exposed to conditions where they would be treated fairly and with respect. Such conditions should not consider gangsters' backgrounds as a source of their classification, but rather enhance their freedom and social mobility (Community & Local Government, 2012:3).

This study underpins the principle that gangsters are also people that deserve equal treatment and equal opportunities. Conditions on school premises must foster positive equality relations among all the school community members. All learners on the school premises must be exposed to equal opportunities, irrespective of their cultural background and origin. Equality further puts emphasis on the fact that it is not fair to discriminate against individuals on the basis of who they are and what they believe in. The conditions in schools must devolve power so that they enact behavioural change in gangsters. Such conditions break down barriers that hold youth back in chains of gangsterism (May, 2010:6).

Boyle (2017:3) claims that gangsters' equality status flourishes in school conditions that embrace and embed equality as an aspect of their daily lives. School conditions should ensure that all learners have equal access to an environment that is conducive and supportive of their diversity. According to Merton (2017:1), conducive conditions in schools eliminate any discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of learners, but give equalities considerations a central role in decision-making. Such conditions further promote a fair, balanced and equal society.

2.12.5 Conditions conducive for parental involvement

Clearly defined goals and parental objectives as one of the most important participants in this study reveal the conditions conducive for the sustainability of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. This is supported by Magidi, Schenk, and Erasmus (2016:14), maintaining that parents should ensure good standards of parenting at home. Parents should teach their children respect and accountability from home. Parents should know the friends of their children very well and encourage their learners to report any suspicious acts of gangsterism as soon as they rear their ugly heads.

Magidi *et al.* (2016:14) further posit that parents should collectively address issues like improved family life, youth development, and employment. Research studies indicate that if gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism are correctly rescued, some proved to be assets to their communities. Some are not gifted academically, and TVET colleges come in handy to improve their lives. If parents ensure strong attachment and commitment to school, as one of the conducive conditions to sustain the strategy, their children would be saved from the scourge of gangsterism (Hautala, Sittner- Hartshorn & Whitbeck, 2016:7) (See section 2.5.3.1).

Research studies show that teaching learners social and emotional skills breed conditions that are conducive for parental involvement. Such learners can control their feelings and emotions on and off school premises, even to the slightest provocation from gangsters. The teaching of social and emotional skills through parental involvement develops affluent learners who connect better with and can recognise peers who might be troubled by gangsterism (Englander, 2018:1).

2.13 ENVISAGED THREATS THAT IMPEDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS

This section of the study deliberates on the aspects that may pose a negative picture of the implementation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools and ways and means of avoiding them for an effective implementation. According to Furgison (2018:2), an envisaged strategy to curb gangsterism in schools might be impacted negatively by

some participants' external factors like anxiety, low self-respect, and non-disclosure of information regarded as a betrayal of a secrecy agreement. Non-disclosure and holding back of experiences and views on gangsterism in schools produce an undesirable impression of the formulation and implementation of an envisaged strategy.

2.13.1 Threats towards inclusion

Dos Reis (2007:15) posits that a strategy is impacted negatively by gangsters' anti-social way of life that pitches their loyalty to gangs, instead of institutions of civilised society like schools, families, churches and justice systems. This is supported by Swingler (2014:1) research findings that gangs are designed by teenagers looking for physical shelter from intimidations in their communities. Youth gangs are involved in illegal activities, even though eradication of gangsterism is becoming a much published and highly politicised subject in many communities.

Horst (2012:1) reports that gang members meet together on a regular basis to strengthen and consolidate their membership. Such meetings pose a threat to an envisaged inclusion and integration into communities as they serve as a renewal of commitment to gangsterism. According to Brotherton *et al.* (2011:6), gang members, comprise mostly of young boys from dysfunctional homes and in some instances from child-headed families. Group members are violent, very protective of their territories, and do not trust any intruder near their location.

Gang members earn money through indulgence in crimes like drug abuse and alcohol. Members subscribed their membership to gang principles through the imposition of an authoritarian gang leader (Cameron, 2011:6). Furthermore, White (2013:1) suggests that notions of aggression, viciousness, and chains of brotherhood forged in combat and codes of obedience used to discipline members to the group's norms and values, pose a threat to members accepting inclusion into the community.

2.13.2 Threats towards active participation

Research studies indicate that active gang participation emanates from organised criminal networks. The gang networks are involved in drug stock and fire-arms. Street grounded gangs are entangled in fierceness and individual mugging. Gangs may start as small recreational groups of friends. To gang members, space is a commodity. Gang members pose a threat towards the implementation of a strategy in that their invasion of school premises strikes fear in school community members. Gangs strive to bargain for dependable, trustworthy and proficient affiliates, who can actively participate in the circumstances of unlawfulness and the use of forcefulness (Densely, 2013:2).

Papachristos (2009:74) depicts active gang participation as a defense of territories, maintenance of gang prestige and reactions to incitements and intimidations from other gangs. According to Hallsworth (2014:35), gang participation and activities on school premises recently manifest as the new face of youth crime, in which they display volatility and formless properties. This is supported by Alagapper *et al.* (2014:1) and Mncube *et al.* (2014:1)'s assertions that gangs use tactics associated with intimidation, violence, and crime in posing a threat to the active participation of other stakeholders in the formulation of a credible strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

2.13.3 Threats towards equality

An invasion of academic space on school premises by gang members culminates in a monopoly of human rights. Gang superiority on an academic turf on school campuses compromises the democratic human rights of other learners to educational rights. By monopolizing the academic space on school premises, gangs pose a threat to the emancipation of other learners to achieve their educational outcomes in a free and conducive environment (Deacon, 2000:34). Research further supports the notion that learners are entitled to learn in a conducive environment that supports the societal impartiality and high ranks of the shared endowment of human rights (Standing, 2017:38). This study argues for social justice and opposes all forms of discrimination.

Furthermore, the leading idea of equality is deeply entrenched in the formation of moralities rather than discrimination (Cock, 2003:41).

Since gangsters infringe on the human rights of individual learners, their prevalence prohibits the protection and promotion of their individual identity and as such pose as a threat towards the development of a strategy (Henrard, 2002:7). This study further illuminates and reports all human rights violations. According to Shaw (2012:1), as is treasured in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all people matter. All people deserve equal human dignity. The basic premise supports the principle that gangsters also deserve respect and human dignity simply because they are human beings who need societal pardon for their indulgence in gangsterism. If discriminated against and not pardoned, their resistance to being rehabilitated poses a threat towards the attainment of a strategy.

2.13.4 Threats towards empowerment

It is extremely challenging to contain gangs if gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism are not treated on a personal level. The exclusion of factors such as human dignity, respect, openness, and awareness of influences pose a threat towards a strategy because gangsters are also social beings (Monareng, 2016:2). Sylvester-Rose (2008:20) posits that a lack of exposure of learners to employment enhancement programmes and opportunities on school premises pose a threat towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism. Some learners might not be academically gifted, resulting in such an environment impeding their social growth.

According to Ahmad, Dougherty, Kleinfeld, and Ponce (2013:10), inequality, social exclusion and low income in marginalised communities pose a great threat towards the strategy. This emanates from an angle that those learners from such socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds easily turn to gangsterism, and become violent. Sullivan (2008:1) states that in North and Central America, as well as in Mexico, gangsters' lack of educational and economic opportunities, marginalisation, intra-familial

violence, and family disintegration, pose a threat towards a strategy to eliminate gangsterism on school campuses.

2.13.5 Threats towards parental involvement

Stigmatisation associated with gangs and gangsterism on some learners in schools inhibits parental involvement from the affected parents. Gangsterism stigma bestowed on their children is accompanied by social negativity that is supported by a myth that an apple does not fall far from the tree (Phillips & Gates, 2010:288). Parents of stigmatised learners experience devaluation and discrimination from some community members and even from some teachers. Such parents are ascribed a lower status in the community and on school premises and subsequently, are subjected to social distancing. The afore-mentioned facts on such parents pose a threat to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

Research studies further reveal that some teachers do not invite parental involvement because they are frustrated with low-achieving gangsters in their school work. Some teachers view the family as the contributors to their learners' low achievement problems due to their indulgence in gangsterism. This research evidence on non-invitation of parents based on the belief of teachers poses as a threat to a strategy formulation (Murray, Finigan-Carr, Jones, Copeland-Linder, Haynie & Cheng, 2014:5). Research further suggests that the personal contexts of parents whose learners are viewed as gangsters present a plethora of barriers to a strategy. Personal contexts entail parents' skills, knowledge, time and the energy they expend to curb gangsterism in schools (Murray *et al.*, 2014 6).

2.14 DETERMINING THE INDICATORS OF SUCCESS OF A STRATEGY

The preceding discourse revealed the threats that may act as an impediment to the development of an envisaged strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. This section of

the study highlights the success of a strategy as informed by best practices in other countries.

2.14.1 Best practice in California

Calhoun (2017:1) suggests that the city of California regards gangsters' activities as one of its priorities. The city ensures that a share of its budget addresses learner gangsterism. The city further constituted a thirteen-participating cities network called, California Cities Gang Prevention Network. The network aims to furnish and constitute a complete municipal-community partnership that tackles the issues of learner gangsterism on and off school campuses. The creation of a peer-learning network in the city assists peers in the production of anti-gang strategy. To stop gang proliferation, social control theory (SCT), puts the interest of society or community first. According to this theory, gangsterism in schools is a societal issue. The city of California, through the California Cities Gang Prevention Network, assists learners from dysfunctional families and underperforming school, with funds to prevent them from joining gangs.

Research studies in California further indicate that stakeholders discovered that drug use and dangerous weapons at early stages of some learners lives, are indicators of gang involvement. Concerned community stakeholders like police, parents, and teachers convene summit, seminars and meetings to discuss their commitment and responsibilities to curb the scourge of gangsterism on and off the school premises (Estrada, Gilreath, Asto & Benbenishty, 2013:628). A plethora of research also reveals an introduction of gang injunctions in the city of California, as well as on school premises.

An introduction of gang injunctions was necessitated by the fact that city prosecutors and police viewed the gang activities as a nuisance to schools and community members (Muniz, 2014:216). A gang directive is a restrictive order against a crowd. It is a public ensemble that pursues a court command to pronounce gang conduct as an annoyance and anti-social, and hence worthy of an application of punitive measures. McDaniel, Logan, and Schneiderman (2016:7) posit that in collaboration with other stakeholders

like police, teachers, and parents, the city uses the Social Determinates of Health Model to curb gangsterism in schools. The model addresses issues like inequality, social and quality of schools in the community. The elements of this model assist in shaping a gangster's social and community networks. The shaping of community networks subsequently results in behavioural and attitude changes.

2.14.2 Best practice in Malaysia

Alagappan *et al.* (2014:10) state that, in Malaysia, in secondary schools as prosocial institutions, and accordance with SCT (social control theory), it is compulsory to all learners to join at least one co-curriculum activity. This is viewed as a strategy to discourage learners from joining the gangs. A Police Cadet Corp (adopt-a-corp) is tasked to work with secondary, primary schools and Police forces in combating the scourge of gangsterism. Schools' disciplinary departments, in collaboration with the Crime Prevention Foundation, provide information sessions on gangsterism to learners on a regular basis.

Furthermore, schools identify problematic learners and call related organizations to assist them with quitting gangsterism. Community empowerment projects such as parent workshop assist with parenting skills. Parents are trained as counselors to learners towards eradication of gangsterism.

According to Kaldus, Hashim and Ismail (2015:39), some learners exposed to the scourge of gangsterism in schools in Malaysia, prefer to discuss their gangsterism anxiety and experiences with teachers, parents, counselors, siblings, preachers, and peers. These learners believe in such discourses and view them as a strategy to debrief and hence one of the best practices to eliminate gangsterism. A research study by Ghani (2017:27) suggests the implementation of National Key Results Area as a strategy and a practice in curbing of gangsterism in schools. This showed remarkable success. The practice was designed to identify the implementable strategies to curb gangsterism on and off school premises. There was a tremendous decline in the gangsterism rate on school campuses.

2.14.3 Best practice in Nigeria

Idowu (2014: 126) posits that, in Nigeria, parents are considered very crucial towards discouraging their learners against joining gangs. Parents as guardians assist in the growth and development of their children by spending more time with them and giving them attention, as children want to be loved. Research studies further indicate that, as one of the best practices to curb gangsterism in schools, parents teach their learners to handle peer pressure. Some learners do not join the gangs on their free volition but act in order to please their peers. An introduction of recreational opportunities and rehabilitation centres fortifies their stance against gangsterism.

According to Oluwatubi and Babatunde (2010:63), some school premises are equipped with modern and sophisticated security gadgets, including patrol cars, walkie-talkies, and metal detectors. Some schools' guidance and counseling units on gang activities are headed by competent personnel. Oti (2018:3) observes that the use of musical concerts target youth involved in gangsterism. Most of the artists who graced the concerts are youth. This practice is used in that the majority of youth look up to the artists as their celebrities, and hence relate to them easily.

A research study by Reuben, Chinonye, and Obaji (2016:35) reveals that the Nigerian Government has intensified the fight against gangsterism by ordering political office holders and government officials to denounce the school gangs that some of them patronise for political thuggery. Any alliance with such gangs is considered a criminal offence. The study further suggests that to motivate gangsters and other learners to avoid gangsterism, school curriculum incorporates job creation knowledge that benefits learners after leaving school. One of the best practices is the development of a policy that equips gangsters with vocational training and capacity building. This practice is considered as empowerment to this marginalised group of learners.

2.14.4 Best practice in Malawi

Higginson *et al.* (2016:45) report that, in Malawi, one of the SADC countries, for the strategy to be effectively executed, it must appeal to the adolescents. The community designs alternative programs such as art, dance, and drama. Such programs engage the learners and exclude them from activities associated with gangsterism. The programs offer an opportunity to bring together the youth across gang lines, and this assists in the formation of inter-group ties. Inter-group ties forge the interpersonal relationships between the gangsters in an attempt to discourage them from joining the gangs.

Sumphi (2015:2) states that an NGO, Humane Consortium on Nature for Mankind supplies youth with alternative programmes to eradicate joblessness. In one of the best practices in Malawi, programmes like small businesses, computer lessons, sporting activities and religious interventions are introduced, to curb gangsterism in schools. Small business offers gangsters and other learners opportunities to learn about the finer points of business for their future endeavours. Computer lessons hone their technical skills. Sporting activities foster good social relations and their competitive and winning mentality. Religious interventions enhance their spiritual being.

2.14.5 Best practice in South Africa

Research by Nngcela (2010:48) shows that a conducive school environment and quality of classroom management overcome the adverse influences that children absorb in their families and localities and inculcate pro-social nationality. This can be achieved through a redefinition of norms and communication of appropriate behaviour to learners, using newsletters, posters, and ceremonies. Empowerment of educators as effective managers and role models assists in a modification of learner behaviour, and a fostering of positive bond with schools. An introduction of recreational, enrichment and life skills programmes assist with empowerment of gangsters and the building of resilience.

Mguzulu (2014:84) asserts that the City of Cape Town uses the High Flyer Project, Chrysalis Academy, and Bambanani against Crime Community Mobilisation as its strategic intervention in gang violence reduction. The High Flyer project is a collaboration between the South African Police Services (SAPS), National Prosecution Authority (NPA), South African Revenue Services (SARS), Department of Community Safety (DOCS) and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) (Department of Community Safety, 2008). Chrysalis Youth Project entails the involvement of a family in the creation of free safety environment when a culprit has completed attendance of such a programme. An academy deals with youth employment and parenting skills. Bambanani programme ensures a mobilisation of community, civil society and other government sectors towards their coordination of programmes dealing with an integrated strategy to reduce gangs.

A research study by Mncube and Madikezela-Madiya (2014:48) indicates development of school gang policies that correlate with the district policies, one of the best practices to curb gangsterism on school campuses. Furthermore, as a policy education, such policies are reflected in learner handbooks in some of the schools in six provinces of South Africa. Schools further display gang policies in campus offices and learner classrooms. Magidi *et al.* (2016:14) contend that good parenting, youth development, social work, and civil society are some of the ingredients to curb gangsterism on school premises. Social workers assist with referrals for gangsters to rehabilitation centers for re-integration into the broader society. A civil society with keen interest on the well-being of learners and gangsters organise seminars, meetings and conferences on how best gangsterism can best be rooted out from school premises.

The City of Bloemfontein, in the Free State, uses a joint police operation comprising Tactical Response Team (TRT), Crime Intelligence and the HAWKS, as its strategy to curb gangsterism on and off school campuses (September, 2017:1). According to Semenkoane (2015:1), parents and the community joined forces to ensure the protection of their children from an eruption of gang violence in Bloemfontein.

The literature revealed that, for schools and communities to achieve a meaningful inclusion and integration of gangsters into their communities, acceptance and

demarginalisation are key ingredients. If such learners feel the sense of belonging and their voices being heard, their confidence and humanity are positively enhanced.

2.15 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the social control theory as a theoretical framework, and the related literature. This chapter presented the social control theory (SCT) as the study's framework, which indicated that without social bonds, learners are likely to break the law. The chapter began with the presentation of the origin of SCT, justification of SCT, objectives of SCT, steps of SCT, ontological and epistemological aspects of SCT. The chapter also discussed the role of the researcher and the relationship with co-researchers, as well as a definition of operational concepts.

The latter part of this chapter presented a review of the related literature. Challenges to a strategy, components of a strategy, conditions conducive to a strategy and envisaged threats to a strategy were outlined. The reviewed literature entailed a need to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, drawing from good practices from countries like California, Malaysia, Nigeria, Malawi, and South Africa as sources.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools in the northern Free State. The chapter commences with a discussion of research design and methodology to be followed by the execution of this qualitative research. A research design entails evidence needed to answer a research question. Creswell and Poth (2018:7) explain qualitative research as a “research that studies things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them” Kothari (2004:8) refers to research methodology as “a way to systematically solve the research problem. It is a means of studying how research is scientifically done”. The study uses Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a methodological approach, which is a means of operationalising the social control theory (SCT). The study adopts critical discourse analysis (CDA) towards data analysis.

The chapter further reveals and studies the methods to be used in collecting data from schools as research sites. Clough and Nutbrown (2011: 13) explain a method as a research tool that assists in a data collection (e.g., focus group discussions). The selection of appropriate methods or techniques assists in the determination of population size from the sites. Polit and Hungler, as cited by Mbokane (2009:85) refer to the population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. Furthermore, the chapter looks at the definitions and the historical origin of participatory action research. Principles, steps, the ontological and epistemological assumption of PAR are also presented. Data verification, the value of the proposed research and the ethical considerations are also clarified in this chapter. The research design and methodology discussion conclude with a summary of a chapter.

3.2 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AS A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a research method that seeks to understand the world by trying to change it, collaboratively and reflectively. Through adoption of PAR, communities of inquiry and action evolve and address questions and issues that are significant for the participants (Reason & Bradbury, 2008:1). A concerted effort is made through integration of three basic aspects that entails participation (life in society and democracy), action (engagement with history and experience) and research (soundness in thought and growth of knowledge) (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013: 10). As a methodological approach, a process of change sits at the heart of this approach, in that PAR seeks to recognise a problem to be solved among the community members. PAR engages both the researcher and the participants in the interrogatory process that becomes part of the solution and points to the avenues for change (McGarvey, 2007:3).

Since participatory action research entails an active involvement of both the researcher and participants, the art of doing research contributes towards the development of new capacities and forms of empowerment. Participatory action researchers and co-researchers seek social change across the community members. Such a social change ensures the development of solutions, in collaboration with the community members that are sensitive to their needs and desires (Andreasen, 2002:3). The notion of Ozanne and Saatcioglu (2008:3) that participatory action research involves the researcher and co-researchers as equal partners across problem identification, research design, data collection, data analysis and an application of research findings, are the cornerstones of this study.

3.2.1 Historical background of Participatory Action Research

Kurt Lewin, one of the proponents of participatory action research, developed this concept in the early 20th Century in the United Kingdom. His intention was to indicate that knowledge production of the topic of interest to community members can best be achieved through democratic participation, communication, and co-operation (Adelman,

1993:2). Altrichter and Gstettner (1997:45) stated that there were pioneers of action research like Moreno, towards community development. PAR has its roots in liberation theology and neo-Marxist approaches in that it is geared towards community development, community-based analysis of social problems and an orientation towards community action (Stephens & McTaggart, 2000 271).

MacDonald (2012:37) posits that involvement of people in decision-making towards workplace matters results in a highly motivated workforce. The motivation further triggers the collaboration in community members to confidently tackle their social problems. Solutions are based on bringing social change to the community. According to Freire (1970:1) there is a need for the liberation of man from dehumanisation. This liberation must not only focus on a person, but on the social order. In this study, the dehumanisation of learners owing to the presence of gangsterism in selected schools takes place as a product of an unjust and exploitative social order. Both the researcher and the participants have a shared need to assist the schools in developing a strategy to curb gangsterism on their campuses. Having roots also in Brazil and Colombia, PAR is regarded as one of the most powerful methodologies in a knowledge transfer sphere (Breda: 2015:1). Since the researcher and the co-researchers are equal in the research process, knowledge production and transfer have equal input from the participants, for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

According to National Institutes of Health (2006:3), PAR was developed in Latin America as a reaction to colonisation, and functions from an assumed power structure, in which communities have to push against powerful outside influences with positivist science perspectives. PAR is useful when interacting with entrenched power hierarchies that historically concentrated power outside of communities. In this study, genuine collaboration means that people have the power and possibility to share the value of their experiences on gangsterism, and how best to develop a strategy to curb it on school premises.

3.2.2 The justification for the choice of Participatory Action Research

I choose participatory action research as a methodological approach because it is a quest for life and an understanding of life through the creation of living knowledge. The constructed, subjective knowledge assists the participants and the community towards the development of a strategy to curb the injustices of gangsterism on school premises (Reason, 2003:5). According to Reason and Bradbury (2008:1), PAR seeks to bring together action and reflection, in participation with co-researchers, in pursuit of practical solutions for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, as an issue of pressing concern to the community.

Furthermore, PAR has the potential to recast roles of a researcher and co-researchers, thus empowering them as agents of change in a research. Their roles of joining social analysis and social action, ensure knowledge production towards the curbing of gangsterism on school campuses as a practical problem-solving process in communities (Lawson, Caringi, Pyles, Jurkowski & Bozlak, 2015:3). Khan (2010:35) posits that PAR is dedicated to ensuring that both the researcher and participants remain partners during research, with equal status. Authentic and collaborative involvement in research ensures a collection of quality evidence on which to base group reflection and planning change. Collaboratively, PAR contributes towards the researcher and participants' learning and utilisation of interpersonal skills such as communication, trust, decision making and conflict resolution on gangsterism in schools, and towards achieving common goals. Through the utilisation of democratic, participatory processes, PAR produces emancipatory knowledge for social transformation. PAR seeks to liberate the human body, mind, and spirit in a search for a better and freer world. Liberated minds of co-researchers assist in their empowerment towards development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (Cooper, 2009:37).

Horner (2016:13) states that PAR encompasses Freire's conscientisation, that participants in research are active in their learning about their societal conditions. PAR draws from the notion that participants promote active involvement of community members on production of practical knowledge in an investigation of their social reality.

This methodological approach affords both the participants and community members an opportunity to use schools as research sites, to study gangster activities in their natural settings. In this regard, PAR assists them in corroborating gangster experiences that contribute to common goals for inclusion in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.2.3 Objectives of Participatory Action Research

3.2.3.1 *Problem-based*

Participatory action research involves problem posing. It is not a research done for other people, but rather involves the participants in a social problem that hinders them. PAR seeks to understand the negative impact of the scourge of gangsterism in schools and communities. Its collaborative nature enhances the competencies of the participants in finding out the solutions that can best assist in developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (Abhiyan, 2013:14). According to Raelin (1999:116), PAR is concerned with knowledge and power. It seeks collaboration between the researcher and participants on knowledge production and the pressing need for social change in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The researcher does not marginalise the participants in a research process, in that they work together in gathering data on the problem of gangsterism in schools.

Mills (2003:8) posits that power relations among the participants are equal. Each participant contributes and has a stake in a research. Participants are involved in the cyclical process of sharing, giving and taking in a research. The ideas, experiences, and suggestions of all participants on gangster activities in schools should be listened to, reflected on and respected. PAR strengthens the sense of ownership, especially in cases like gangsterism, as a sensitive social issue. It emphasises the fact that research begins with a problem demanding a solution from the participants (Kobeissi, Nakkash, Ghantous, Saad & Yassin, 2011:5).

Research, when is conducted as part of a development or empowerment process, has to deal with the production of knowledge that is a product of science engaging with society over uncertainties. PAR as research methodology gives priority to the realities and analysis of the gangsterism problem by the people themselves. When this happens, a whole new range of experiences and working methodology opens up. This subsequently assists the researcher and participants in assisting the schools in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools through mutual participation (Caister, Green & Worth, 2011:25). James (2005:4) indicates that through the use of PAR researchers and participants gather evidence on the impact of gangsterism on school campuses. The gathering of evidence assists in reflecting on the quality of feedback gained from the learning experience.

3.2.3.2 *Equality and team work*

Hergenrather, Geishecker, McGuire-Kuletz, Gitlin, and Rhodes (2010:1) state that PAR emphasizes co-learning, reciprocal transfer of knowledge, and the sharing of decision-making power. PAR introduces the researcher and participants to the most appropriate way of planning and implementation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. This they achieve through an open approach from the onset by sharing knowledge production on the scourge of gangsterism in schools as a point of departure. According to Carrington (2007:4), PAR is participatory in that it involves learners, teachers and the community members in the process of knowledge production and knowledge application towards developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. PAR is social in that it posits gangsterism as a social challenge that needs all the participants to engage collaboratively in finding the solution.

Burgess (2008:73) postulates that PAR fosters an iterative process of social investigation and action, in which the participants strengthen their relations and shared knowledge in research, thus engaging in a collective visioning towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. PAR as a collective dynamic process encourages a high degree of participation, as community members become

participants, co-learners, and co-activists for a common concern. In the context of this study, all these participants have a common goal of gathering quality, rich data that will assist schools in developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.2.3.3 Inclusion

The inclusion of stakeholders like teachers, learners, and parents as members of the community in this research is of paramount importance. Specifically, PAR begins with the practical problems of a community. In the context of this study, such stakeholders are included to assist in the provisioning of workable solutions that lead to the development of local human capabilities. In this way, the co-researchers feel confident in participating as their voices have a primary role to play in the research process (Ozanne and Saatcioghi, 2008:430). According to Kanloa (2005:201), PAR is inclusive in that it “ensures mutual sharing of knowledge, skills, and experiences among the researchers and the participants.” The inclusion of participants further ensures knowledge production and experiences that benefit the community towards development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

Mackenzie, Tan, Hoverman, and Baldwin (2012:14) are of the opinion that effective inclusion of participants in developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, leads to improved decision-making. Opportunities for an inclusion in the research further enhance co-learning and reflection to build capacity that informs the participants on how to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools currently and in future. Mackenzie *et al.* (2012:15) further suggest that “a researcher engages with participants as collaborators who inform project design, propose methods, facilitate some activities, review and evaluate the process as whole” This ensures that PAR uses established research techniques that are selected on the basis of best-fit for the curbing of gangsterism prevalent on school campuses.

Bergold and Thomas (2012:196) state that PAR places more emphasis on participants to disclose their personal views and experiences on how a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools can best be developed. PAR ensures that inclusion of participants and their differences in opinion assists in an informed process of knowledge production. This

ensures that a certain level of conflict tolerance is achieved, in which conflicts arise, and may be jointly resolved.

3.2.3.4 *Transformative and empowering*

Berg and Schensul (2004:85) state that PAR offers an explicit approach that links a transformative research methodology which contributes to a social change in a participatory democracy. Participants are equally empowered and create knowledge together, for the common purpose of addressing the inequalities in society. Both the researcher and the participants are of equal status in the research process, towards a gathering of rich data to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Labonte (2006:6) explains “empowerment as shifting or dynamic quality of power relations between two or more people.” Such relationships ensure equity that reduces inequalities and power differences among the researcher and other participants.

According to Pain (2004:656) power and empowerment as central elements in PAR, assist in the elimination of the “us and them”, between the academic researcher and participants in a research process. Ayesha, Shams, and Khan (2011:305) posit that empowerment in a research process ensures that participants have equal authority regarding opportunities and resources. Such empowerment results in participants having an equal partnership with the researcher, in knowledge construction that ultimately assists in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.3 PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

3.3.1 Active participation

Active participation means that both the researcher and participants share in the way a research process is conceptualised, practiced and brought to bear on the life-world of the community (McTaggart, 1991:171). In PAR participation is a joint venture during which both the researcher and participants take full responsibility in decision-making

and planning of a research process (van der Velde, Williamson & Ogilvie, 2009:1296). In this study, since the research proceeds with the participation of participants, the research is done with them and not on them. PAR ensures that a research process involves the participants from the initial design of the research, through data gathering and analysis, to the conclusions (Whyte, 2018:1). According to MacDonald (2012:39) participants are not the subjects of a research, but active role players in a production of knowledge towards a development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.3.2 Diffuse power relations

PAR confronts the power differentials between the researcher and participants through an elevation of the importance of involvement of all participants in shared knowledge. Such power in defusing assists in a building of trust and confidence in marginalised community members to engage in a transformation of their lives (Dover 2008:2). Kristian and Bloch-Poulsen (2014:28) state that power should be understood as a democratic relation in which both the researcher and the participants share control over the decision-making and the interpretation of data in a research process.

The de-romance of power relations in a research process leads to a creation of free spaces in which both the researcher and participants can voice the views on the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools without fear or favour. Langhout and Doworski-Riggs (2010:2) regard power boundaries as democratic once all the participants increase control over the conditions that affect their lives in the research process. This subsequently leads to the community members having control over the resources that affect their lives.

Dillon (2014:115) posits that both the researcher and participants enter into a research process with pre-existing power relations. In the context of this study, PAR seeks to integrate their power relations such that they are equal and collaborative on the generation of data, wherein the researcher does not use the participants as a “means to an end” in a research process. According to Grant, Nelson and Mitchell (2011:6), power is a ‘potential which is created within the interaction of relationships, which can be used

over others as domination". As one of its central tenets, PAR emphasises that the research participants are not powerless in a research relationship. Both the researcher and participants have equal power towards the generation of credible knowledge on the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.3.3 Transformative

PAR embodies a transformation in a community in that it provides opportunities to study social problems affecting their lives, and then determines the actions to rectify these problems. Community members, the researcher, and participants' critical inquiries assist in the re-visioning and denaturalisation of the realities of the community's social world. This further assists the community to collectively gather knowledge that contributes towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (Camarota & Fine, 2008:2). Robinson (2007:1) reports that through engagement with PAR, communities and participants open up to bring about transformative shifts in the world of gangsterism in schools. This motivation from the stakeholders is an acknowledgment that they can no longer live with a sense of the pain of the prevalence of gangsterism on school campuses.

Lykes and Hershberg (2007:348) state that PAR aspires to foster knowledge about the research sites and participants' experiences with regards to gangsterism in schools. Transformative theories of knowledge construction and change assist in the selection of research sites and strategies as well as the participants with which the research is conducted. Reason and Bradbury (2006:330) articulate that transformation calls for both the researcher and participants to create research spaces that assist them in overcoming barriers and hurdles that prohibit participants from voicing their experiences on gangsterism in schools. The transformative element then calls for new ideas or experiences to be included in new data.

3.3.4 Mutual corroboration

The researcher chose PAR as a research methodology in this study to indicate its positive change and life-enhancing results for the community. Through dialogue, the community members nominate a challenging issue that is significant to them. The critical communication and dialogue between the researcher and participants assist in knowledge production that brings about the solutions to the community (O'Connor, Smith, Crane, Brough, Shaw, Franz & Larkin, 2013:125). Mutual corroboration assists the community members and participants in problem-solving skills and enhancement of competence in a gathering of rich data towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (DeLuca & Kock, 2007:184). PAR further emphasises the fact that decision-making in a research process is a shared vision of participants, and that people may not be excluded from research that describes and affects their lives (Cook, 2012:2).

3.4 ONTOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Andrew (2016:1) defines ontology as the study of the nature of reality. From an ontological point of view, the reality is complex and exists in a social world. PAR seeks to indicate that reality, as depicted by qualitative research, through social interactions, is subjective and free from the opinions of a researcher in a research process. In developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, the researcher and participants are concerned with the subjectivity of reality as gathered through rich data. According to Tuli (2010:101) ontological assumptions, as embedded in PAR, the researcher and participants are interpretive researchers that investigate, interpret and describe social reality. They can use their senses to gather data and freely express their views on the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

Creswell (2007:20) states that participants in a research process seek to understand the existence of the reality of the world in which they live. Since PAR encompasses community challenges and solutions, its goal is to rely on the participants to view the impact of gangsterism in schools. The researcher and participants convene subjectively

orientated meetings which focus on their experiences of the prevalence of gangsterism, during which complexity of views are tabled towards the realisation of development of a strategy to curb the scourge of gangsterism in schools. Griffin (2017:8) posits that reality is constructed through discourse and co-creation.

Through PAR, which promotes a democratic involvement of community members in issues like gangsterism that challenge them, solutions can be reached if the essence of reality is collaboratively discussed. According to Markula and Silk (2011:25), PAR is judged on its ability to emancipate the community members through the use of participative, co-created and subjective reality. In the context of this study, PAR is a methodological process that incorporates community members in challenges like gangsterism, such that they become participants in different phases and moments of the research towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.5 EPISTEMOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Thaxon (2014:2) defines epistemology as the study of knowledge acquisition. It seeks to discover what is known and how it is known. According to Genat (2009:102), PAR regards a researcher as a research agent that collaboratively engages participants in knowledge construction of the research problem that affects their daily lives. PAR concentrates on the facilitation of knowledge construction with participants whose voices are marginalised from the discourse of gangsterism that affects their social lives. In this way PAR positions the participants as the advocates of new ways of understanding their social world. Denzin and Lincoln (2007:281) suggest that PAR affords the participants an opportunity to examine their knowledge of gangsterism in schools. The knowledge production on gangsterism assists with an identity and shaping up of this scourge of gangsterism on school premises. Through PAR, the researcher and participants can critically reflect on how the knowledge and experiences from the participants assist with the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

Lagae (2012:4) posits that PAR seeks to emphasise that subjectivity and meaning of knowledge are central to this intellectual piece of a research process in that, they are inclusive of participants as the representatives of the greater community. De Laat, Boyer, Hudon, Goulet and Loignon (2014:60) state that “every person possesses the knowledge and has the potential to understand and interpret their situation.” Luyts (2016:15) recommends the need to include the knowledge of the oppressed and marginalised participants in a research process that encompasses their daily challenges like gangsterism. PAR emphasises such knowledge as unique, indispensable, and autonomous and complements the data collected during a research process. In the context of this study, both the researcher and participants co-create the knowledge on the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

3.6 RELATIONSHIP OF THE RESEARCHER AND PARTICIPANTS

Kindon, Pain, and Kesby (2007:1) state that PAR encompasses both the researcher and co-researchers collaboratively working together to research a problematic situation or action, to assist the community with solutions for their betterment. The democratic collaboration between the researcher and the co-researchers must benefit and empower the ordinary community members. Kemmis *et al.* (2014:19) suggest that PAR seeks to support the notion that the critical issue of research is socially embedded, and addresses human coexistence. This notion is further supported by Willumsen, Hugaas and Studsrod (2014:333) that PAR involves the researcher and participants in emancipatory and democratic research processes that lead to social change.

The researcher works collaboratively with the participants in each phase of the research process. The participants are allowed to share their opinions and experiences in phases like problem definition, developing methods of data collection, carrying out data analysis and writing up of findings (Tyson McCrea, 2012:15). International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR) (2013:10) posits that both the researcher and participants own the leadership role of shared decision-making for developing, implementing, analysing and disseminating the research. Lennart, Per-Erik

and Goran (2001:244) articulate that the relationship should inspire confidence and create trust among the researcher and participants; to ensure that a harmonious and democratic environment prevails.

3.7 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The study includes one principal, five teachers, five learners (gangsters) and three parents as a purposive sample, from one school in which the research will be conducted. Since this study is a qualitative one, the choice of sampling the participants from one school is to contextualise the gangsterism problems and to generate rich data that inform the best strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Furthermore, the selection of these participants seeks to bring a change in an affected community, as the participants are closer to the situation of gangsterism. I believe that this research will assist the community to come up with solutions to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, as the research is done with them, and not for them.

The school principal is challenged by deteriorating school functionality. The principal is challenged with a delegated function entrusted on him/her by Schools Act like a father of a school family. His/her status and position dictates that he/ she acts in place of parents (*“loco parentis”*). The principal oversees the safety and security of the teachers and learners on the school premises (Chukwu, 2008:6). The choice of the school principal is further embedded in a notion that he/ she must be kept abreast of the latest researched inferences from the co-researchers on how best to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The principal is an important determinant of learner achievement in a school. High learner achievement can be realised in an environment free of violence and gangsterism. Furthermore, the presence and contribution of the school principal serve as insurance that suggested ideas from the research will be implemented in the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

Hine (2013:1) articulates PAR “as a systemic inquiry that seeks to improve the social issues that affect the lives of people.” Its collaborative nature also places emphasis on teachers as one of the most important stakeholders in this study, as teachers interact

daily with learners. Teachers are sampled in this research as they are the ones who are better placed in noticing the behavioural changes of learners, through their daily interaction with learners during the lessons. Furthermore, the empirically validated research results from other stakeholders and the experientially-based teacher knowledge on gangsterism assist in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

According to Sonn, Santes and Ravau (2011:94) learners are often the marginalised group of people and the voiceless in societal discussions that affect their lives. Learner choice in this research is based on the fact that they are directly affected by the scourge of gangsterism on and off school premises. Learner participation in this research is important in that they are in development as future citizens of both the school and community. Furthermore, the majority of the learners are in a period of making crucial life choices, in which the challenges of facing gangsterism may derail them from their tracks. Some learners attend the same classes as gangsters, as such they are better placed to share their experiences with them. Learners can also assist in solutions to the challenges of gangsterism in schools.

Parents are the primary care givers of their children. Parents possess parental skills to nurture children from their birth. Their choice in this study is crucial in that they interact with the learners daily as the primary care givers (Alagappar, Len, George, Lee & Wong, 2012:9). Aldridge, Shute, Ralphs and Medina (2009:2) report that the empirical evidence points to parental supervision and monitoring as highly significant in this study. High parental supervision reinforces the quality of the caregiver-child relationship. It presses on a child's willingness to disclose information on gangsterism that subsequently assists in development towards a strategy for curbing gangsterism in schools.

3.8 CREDENTIALS OF PARTICIPANTS

3.8.1 The coordinator of the study

The study's researcher is regarded as a coordinator. The coordinator is currently engaged in a study towards a Master's Degree. The study uses pseudonyms to conceal the real names of participants, and to adhere to the ethical requirements.

3.8.2 The Principal

Mr. **Phakoe** has been the principal at this school since 2016. His principalship dates back from 2001 from his previous school. He has been the principal for seventeen years. He holds a Master's Degree (M.Ed) in School Management and Leadership.

3.8.3 Teachers

Mr. **Pheko** holds a Bachelor of Science in Education (B. Sc.Ed) with Mathematics and Chemistry as his major subjects. He obtained his bachelor's degree from North West University. He started teaching at this school in 2003 after obtaining his degree, and with his fifteen years' experience, teaches grades 11 and 12 Mathematics, and grade 10 Physical Sciences.

Ms. **Morwe** holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education (B.A. Ed) degree from the Central University of Technology. She majored in English, Sesotho and Life Orientation. She has ten years of teaching experience at this school. She teaches all three subjects in a further education and training band (FET band, grades 10-12). She is also an SBST convenor.

Mr. Letsatsi holds a Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD) from Tshiya College of Education, majoring in History and Geography, and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in History teaching from the Free State University. He has twenty-five years of teaching experience in this school. He teaches History in grades 10 and 12,

and Social Sciences in grades 8 to 9. As a teacher component, he also serves in an SGB.

Mr. Monaheng obtained a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Education (B.Com.Ed) from the Free State University, majoring in Accounting and Economics. He has been teaching in this school since 2010. He teaches grades 11 and 12 Accounting, grade 10 Economics and grades 8 Economic Management and Sciences (EMS).

Ms. Dinokaneng, who majored in English and Setswana, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education (B.A.Ed.) from the Central University of Technology. She joined the staff of this school in 2016, teaching English in grade 8 and Setswana in grade 9. She is also a netball coach in this school.

3.8.4 Learners

The study's participants in this category comprised five learners from one secondary school from Lejweleputswa district in the Northern Free State. **Moshe**, a former gangster, is a sixteen-year-old boy in grade 10. **Sipho**, a confessed gangster, is a seventeen-year-old boy in grade 11. **Thabang**, also a former gangster, is an eighteen-year-old boy in grade 12. **Dibakiso** is an eighteen-year-old girl in grade 11. There was an attempt to lure her into gangsterism. **Dipolelo** is also a sixteen-year-old girl in grade 10. She was never involved in gangsterism. This is a reflection of purposive sampling, in which the participants were selected by knowledge and experience of gangsterism (Tongco, 2007:1).

3.8.5 Parents

Mr. Mphulenyane is an SGB chairperson and a respected member of Community Police Forum (CPF) in the vicinity of the school as a research site. He presided over numerous cases of gangsterism in the school's disciplinary committee as a chairperson. **Mr. Diphoko** is a parent component in an SGB. His son (not included as a participant in this study) who was since rehabilitated, was a former gangster. **Mrs. Makhasane**, is

a parent and heads Youth Empowerment Structure (YES), an organisation that is based in a local municipality. She conducts motivational sessions in schools in the area and also attends to challenges facing the youth.

3.9 SWOT ANALYSIS

The research team deemed it fit to perform the SWOT analysis as a yardstick guiding the activities of the team. SWOT analysis assisted the team of participants to level the playing fields regarding the challenges that were anticipated during the research process. Since SWOT analysis is a precursor to strategic planning, as Gretzky (2010:92) puts it, it was beneficial to the co-researchers in that they could make the necessary adjustments as the research situation demanded at any stage.

3.9.1 Strengths

The team displayed a variety of strengths entrenched in the member expertise. As per PAR prescripts, the team showed collaboration in working together towards a common goal. All the members were tolerant of one another's ideas and respected the experiences and the drawing of inferences from rich data. The team comprised the principal, teachers, learners, and parents, who brought a wealth of experience and expertise from different angles. As indicated in the profiling of members, the principal possessed a wealth of experience in the teaching fraternity, as well in his post as a headmaster of that school. His humility afforded the participants a caring environment in which the research was conducted. His provision of the school as a research site tremendously contributed to the success of the research project in that the participants felt much welcomed and appreciated.

Furthermore, since an overarching question is how to curb gangsterism in selected schools, the principal also shared some valuable information on how he tackled cases of gangsterism in his school. The experiences of teachers was also key in this study as they interacted with different learners in their classes as well as on the school premises

daily. According to Bogdan and Beklin (2007:234) teachers considered the adoption of PAR in this study as an experiential or hands-on process that could be used to generate change in their school as well as the community. They also found the research project collaboratively negotiated and co-constructed through addressing the social injustices like gangsterism in selected schools. The challenges of behavioural change in learners once involved in gangsterism, assisted the teachers to collectively suggest brilliant strategies that could be implemented in curbing gangsterism in selected schools.

The participation of learners in this study added another impetus in that some of them were once gangsters. Their invaluable experience from the gangster point of view provided rich data that stimulated the research environment in the study's research site. Their inferences made it easier for other participants to open up and hence provided the study with an environment in which the participants contributed and achieved valid information, making free and informed choices, and creating a commitment to the study.

Minkler (2000:192) suggested that the participation of parents as underpinned by PAR ensured that the research centered on community strength and an issue like gangsterism that directly affected their lives. Parents indicated active involvement in every phase of the research in order to bring about social change. The equal sharing of power status in a research project between the researcher and parents as participants contributed to a wealth of knowledge production on possible strategies to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

3.9.2 Weaknesses

Dictionary.com (2018:1) defines weakness as "an inadequate or defective quality in a person's character." Since the study aimed to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, some participants were at some stages of the research process not free to divulge what they considered secrets of gangsters. This happened even though they were assured of anonymity before the study's interactions with them, and of their right to withdraw at any stage of the research project. Furthermore, some participants had the first experience with Participatory Action Research. Some indicated that they

were used to research methods like surveys, which they considered less time-consuming than PAR. That created an uneasiness in their participation during an application of PAR as a research method. Parents indicated that it was also their first exposure to a research project during their lifetime. As a result, they had some anxiety.

Some teachers also cited lack of time on their side as one of the study's weaknesses. Even though the study was conducted after school hours and during the weekends, some teachers indicated that it infringed on their pre-planned extra classes programmes, as they had to adjust them. Some parents, although they considered the study to be very beneficial in collaboratively addressing gangsterism as a social challenge in their community, also had to adjust their household chores, to ensure meaningful participation. Learners also indicated that they needed more time to complete their homework on days during which meetings and interactions were scheduled for a research project.

3.9.3 Opportunities

The principal, as well as teachers, were satisfied with their contribution to the study in that they felt that they brought a social change in their community through active participation. Kindon and Elwood (2009:22) posit that their collaboration with other participants in this study contributed to an achievement of a social change outcome like the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. They further indicated that they benefitted from such an engagement in that PAR as a collaborative research method afforded them an opportunity to have a voice in the prevalence of gangsterism as manifested on their school premises. Their active participation paved a meaningful way in contributing towards the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Balakrishnan and Claiborne (2017:188) stated that as members of participants, the principal and teachers considered PAR to have empowered them in that they shared power with the oppressed people towards decision-making in the research project.

Learners also regarded PAR as a research method that involved them as participants throughout the research process in order to take collective action on knowledge production (Schuch, 2018:54:). They further benefitted from the research process in that, as the marginalised members of the school community, the research was conducted with them and not for them. This further cited the benefit that PAR assisted in a rebalancing of power in all the participants during the research process, as there was an equitable sharing of power amongst the team members. Elliott (2011:1) posited that PAR has assisted in building levels of trust and engagement amongst the research team members, for example learners that revealed local knowledge on gangsterism that might otherwise be hidden. Learners regarded the intellectual basis of PAR as a democratisation of knowledge creation in which the research's success is collaboratively valued.

Parents felt empowered by their participation in the research process through an application of PAR. As the marginalised and oppressed community members, they were able to contribute to the transformation of their environment by their praxis. They further felt empowered in that the research process through PAR actively involved them in a dialogic research planning of a pressing issue like gangsterism in selected schools. To strengthen their confidence in participating in the research project, they believed that the research question and approaches were openly debated. Their participation in the research process energised other research team members around the devising of collective solutions to the research question.

3.9.4 Threats

The use of probe in the form of focus groups as a technique to generate data and PAR as a research method was a challenge or threat to some participants. As indicated in the learner credentials, some participants were former gangsters and they were still living with that stigma. Despite being assured of confidentiality and anonymity as ethical requirements before the actual research process, one could observe uneasiness in their participation during the research project. It was possible that in their minds they thought that they were disclosing secrets of their involvement in gangsterism. To other participants, their disclosure and experiences were very useful and were incorporated in

the themes to assist in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

Parents, on the other hand, considered themselves as not knowledgeable and competent enough to participate in the research project. Some of them wanted to rely on the researcher as a driving force behind the research process. They were also sceptical about the fact that the interviews were to be recorded for further analysis. That happened even though they were assured of safeguarding the data thus generated in a secret hideout.

3.10 CONCEPTUALISING THE RESEARCH DESIGN

PAR's underlying philosophies are embedded in its potential to include the marginalised and voiceless participants in a research project, where all participants, irrespective of their status, share power equally and have active production of useful knowledge (Northway, 2017:443). Participants are actively involved in all the stages of the research, and thus ensure full commitment towards the action and the dissemination of useful knowledge. Heron and Reason (2004: 48) posit that PAR ensures that research is done "with people rather than on people." Participants are considered as active participants in the decision-making of the research. According to Selener (1997:8), PAR seeks to avail solutions to the oppressed and marginalised participants on a strategy to curb practical community challenges like the scourge of gangsterism in selected schools.

Data were generated by the spirals of PAR. All the spirals are vital as they overlap and flow well into each other, indicating that certain processes are in progress when the next spiral evolves. Details on how data was generated flowing from spirals as depicted by Gaffney (2008:10). PAR seeks to involve self-reflective spirals as follows:

- Planning a change
- Acting and observing the process and consequence of the change
- Reflecting on the process and consequences

- Re-planning
- Acting and observing again
- Reflecting again

This study is guided by the steps as outlined above towards attainment of set goals by the steps outlined above.

3.10.1 Spiral one: planning phase

The planning phase of the study entailed a visit to a school as a research site and discussions. Before a visit to a school, I telephonically made an appointment with the principal to brief him about the envisaged research. Furthermore, I intended to obtain permission to conduct a study on his school campus as a research site. According to Alibali and Nathan (2010:402), a school visit enables the researcher to request the participation of the participants, discusses the research question and the educational relevance of the proposed research. The school visit afforded me an opportunity to explain my research topic and the aim of conducting such research to the school principal. The other benefit of such a visit was an introduction and explanation of PAR as a methodology to conduct my research project with the collaboration of participants.

Initially, the principal was anxious about the use of PAR as a method in this study. I alleviated his fear by further explaining that with PAR, research is done with the research participants and not done for the participants in developing a strategy to curb social injustices like gangsterism in selected schools. Action learning, Action Research Association (ALARA) (2018:1) states that PAR ensures a space in which the researcher and participants build useful knowledge amongst themselves through meaningful engagement, discussion, and reflection. The participative sessions further allow the researcher and participants to collaboratively learn with and from each other. The principal was happy with the explanation on PAR and promised to study the notes that I availed him on PAR, to familiarise himself with it. I also left the consent letters requesting permission from the participants in the envisaged research with the principal.

In our second meeting with the principal, he indicated that he took time off from his tight schedule to peruse the contents of PAR as a research method, and was looking forward to actively participate in the study. The letters of consent to participate in a research project indicated that one school principal, five teachers, five learners, and five parents were to be selected as a purposive sample from the school. This type of sample was applicable in this study because as Crossman (2018:1) puts it, it was a maximum variation or heterogeneous purposive sample that provided a diverse range of cases relevant to assist in developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Furthermore, this type of a sample assisted in providing as much insight as possible into the scourge of gangsterism on the school campus, as it concentrated on teachers from different grades, age, gender and teaching experiences, learners from different grades, age and gender, and parents of different gender and age.

The principal convened a meeting with the teachers as the first set of participants. As the school comprised grades eight to twelve, each grade from grade 10 to 12 had a representative in a composition of participants. In that briefing session, teachers were introduced to the study's research topic and the rationale behind the conduction of such a study. Participatory Action Research (PAR) was also explained as posited by (Krumer-Nevo, 2009:281) that by including the participants' knowledge in research, the discourse is enriched and becomes more relevant as solutions to the social challenges like gangsterism. The meeting also resolved that teachers would select the learners whose parents consented that they would participate in this study. The purposive sample in this case comprised grades ten to twelve learners based on gender and age. The same protocol similar to that of teachers was followed regarding a briefing session. The researcher further explained PAR to the learners, as Chapman and Dold (2011:1) put it, that it sought to engage them as participants in research so that their voices were heard and respected as was their openness to diversity and tolerance of differences.

The parents were also in attendance at the last meeting of that day. Both the principal and teachers, with the help of the learners played a pivotal role in ensuring that parents were brought on board in this research. After informing them about the aim and objectives of the study, parents also aired their willingness to participate in this study.

PAR was also introduced by Gill, Purru and Lin (2012:1) as a method that attempts to restructure power relations in a research process, and the honoring of knowledge and strengths of parents as participants in this study. Emphasis was also placed on the fact that PAR challenges the dynamics of inequalities by enhancing the struggle for social justice. In all the meetings with different participants, they were reminded of their rights to withdraw from the research at any given time.

3.10.2 Spiral two: information session phase

This session was conducted as a meeting in which all the participants who consented to participate in the study were invited to inform them about the details and procedure of the subsequent meetings. The principal was requested to chair the meeting. The consent forms for all the participants were re-issued. Once again the emphasis was on what the study entailed and the dates and time of meetings with different research participants. The resolution of the meeting was that meetings would take place on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays until the generation of data would have reached a saturation point. The choice of the days was based on the availability of the participants. The meeting resolved that all the sessions would take place outside school hours as per the prescription of the education department so as not to disrupt teaching and learning activities on the research site. Participants were reminded that all the meeting sessions would be voice recorded for further analysis and that they could withdraw their participation from the research project at any time.

The researcher once again introduced the research topic as *A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools*. After explaining the aim and the objectives of the research, the principal as the chairperson of that day briefly explained to other participants how PAR would be implanted as a research method. As Ramasamy (2016:1) puts it, PAR “provides with a socially engaged approach fitting with the values of empowerment and democratic practice”. Moreover its usage in the research project ensured that a collaborative research process reviewed and changed the communal challenge like gangsterism through a cyclical and iterative approach. PAR method

sought to engender support between the participants as participants of useful knowledge creation that were affected by the scourge of gangsterism, to effect a change through collective inquiry and reflection.

The principal provided a classroom as a research space for convening all the meetings. The meeting session further emphasised equality amongst all the team in participation during a research project. Walters, Comeau, and Restall (2010:5) suggest that the benefit of equal participants in a research process is that the focus and the results of the research are relevant and useful to the community whose sample assisted in achieving solutions towards social change. The other purpose of such meetings was a creation of a research-friendly environment in which all the participants were regarded as equals in term of knowledge production and experiences on gangsterism issues.

The setting of a classroom environment allowed the participants to air their views and personal experiences regarding a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, freely, without fear and dominance of other team members. Complete tolerance existed between the team members when any member suggested his or her point relating to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism. Furthermore, there was an agreement to reflect on the envisaged meetings, and once a plan needed adaption, the team would reconvene a meeting and would re-strategise.

The participants agreed to meet on the first Tuesday to develop the team rules that would guide them during the meetings and the research process. The team agreed that the chairperson and the scribe roles would be rotated amongst the participants. The decision was taken because all the participants had equal status as participants, and furthermore were trained before their participation in the research process. Training on probing discussions addressed, among others, participants' anxiety and the possible power dynamics in order for them to enjoy the focus group discussions. According to Roller (2009:1), an interpretation of qualitative data is a joint venture between the participants from which the research project can draw useful facts and interpretations. As the overarching question is: *How to curb gangsterism in selected schools*, I encouraged the participants to participate actively and freely, without holding back on qualitative data on gangsterism that would make the research project a success.

The meeting further resolved that as part of the rules, an attendance register for all the subsequent meetings would be kept. Any team member with an apology for non-attendance was expected to report timeously to the principal, who in turn would inform other participants. An agreement was reached that all cell phones would be switched off for the duration of the discussions, to avoid disruptions and allowed team members to concentrate. The researcher resumed the role of facilitator during the discussions. The scribe noted important facts that contributed to the main themes of the discussions.

Team members were also encouraged to take notes during the discussions for later consolidation. The participants preferred to use mother tongue for all the discussions. The discussions were later transcribed into English. For the purpose of fairness and compliance with ethical standards, members were reminded that data generated from the research project would remain confidential. Participants and research site's names would remain anonymous.

3.10.3 Spiral three: setting the priorities and a strategic plan phase

Strategic planning is a “deliberative, disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation (or other entity) is, what it does, and why” (Bryson, Edwards & van Slyke, 2018:1). Strategic planning is a purpose-driven organisational collaboration that is designed to fulfill a specific function. Mineo and Chapman (2018:3) define the strategic planning as “the process organizations go through in order to determine what they want to achieve, how they will achieve it, and how they will measure their success” According to Wolf and Floyd (2017:1757), a strategic planning is a series of logical steps that includes the definition of a mission statement, long-term goals, environmental analyses, strategy formulation, implementation, and control”.

The participants met to focus on the resolutions and priorities agreed upon in the previous meeting. English Collins Dictionary (2017:2) defines prioritisation as “an arrangement of items in order of their relative importance.” The meeting further resolved that participants be grouped into five groups of three members per group.

Each group interrogated with a set of probing questions relevant to the given objective of the study. As the participants' intention was to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, the priority was to understand was gangsterism exists, and what challenges were involved in the development of such a strategy. The participants were allowed probing challenges towards a formulation of a strategy in their group.

The second priority was for the second group to demonstrate the components of a strategy towards curbing gangsterism in selected schools. The third group probed the conditions that were conducive to an effective application of an envisaged strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. The fourth group's priority was the brainstorming of strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats of using the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The fifth priority was for the group to probe how successful the strategy would be by referring to best practices from other schools. The sixth priority was based on the reflection of the implemented strategies as per the study's cyclical process.

The meeting further intended to draw up a strategic plan that would operationalise the envisaged activities of each of the priorities. Through a collaborative engagement, the participants were granted an opportunity to contribute towards the development of a strategic plan that assisted in a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Their involvement was sought to ensure ownership of the plan thus formulated. The deliberations centred on the strategic plan that aligned itself with the five objectives of the study. An implementation outline of a strategic plan was also designed to ensure compliance with such a plan. Each group conducted a probe discussion on one objective of the study's five objectives allocated to it in a relaxed and conducive research environment. All the groups were given four days after which they had to report back in another meeting.

In a follow-up meeting, all the groups gave feedback on the envisaged strategies of the constructs per an objective allocated to each. Strategies such as, among others, a safe environment, use of adopting a cop, elimination of substance on or off school premises, improved parental involvement and care, a change of mind set, involvement in different

sporting codes and use of former gangsters from prison to address the learners during motivational sessions were tabled. Similarly, the use of the code of conduct for learners to strengthen discipline and the restoration of pastoral engagement during school assemblies were also cited as strategies to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

Scrutiny of all the identified strategies lead to the agreement amongst the participants that an assessment of their application was vital. According to Brydon-Miller and Maguire (2009:79), PAR seeks to include “a range of stakeholders who collaboratively engage in all phases of the action-reflection cycle.” Teacher involvement was beneficial in that subject, and grade meetings were convened with parents to engage them on any behavioural change in some learners, as a test of such a strategy. Both teachers and parents in the school’s disciplinary committee used a code of conduct for learners, for some learners who were guilty of truancy on school premises during this research process, to test an application of the envisaged strategy.

An adopt-a-cop and his team did a random search in a school to minimise substance abuse. After the search, both the parents and their identified children were summoned to a disciplinary hearing, as a test of the school’s code of conduct for learners. To ensure a safe environment around the school premises, an adopt-a-cop and his team made some patrolling turns at certain time intervals. A former gangster from prison, from the same locality of the school as a research site, was invited during a school assembly to address the learners on gangsterism. Games involving the community members, learners and teachers were organized to foster and forge good working relations. An implementation of each suggested strategy culminated in a recording of positive results to assist in a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

3.10.4 Reflection phase

During this stage of the research process, the participants convened another meeting to analyse the observations from the previous meetings. The meeting afforded the research team an opportunity to identify themes from their constructs relevant to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. The review of the

suggested activities assisted the participants in arriving at a shared conclusion that was supported by evidence from the implementation stage. According to Crane (2011:16), once the participants have observed and implemented the activities, they should reflect on what worked and did not work for the project, to do things differently, and to have insights and answers to the research question.

During the reflection stage, the responses from the research process were reflected on by participants using a holistic lens (Bachkirova, Jackson & Clutterbuck, 2008:122). The holistic lens approach was pivotal in that participants were able to realise the emerging themes from the different constructs, to eliminate the irrelevant responses and consolidate the relevant ones. The approach assisted the participants in following the cyclical process of the on-going spirals of action and reflection.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To comply with ethical considerations, the researcher requested the clearance and permission from the University of the Free State's Ethics Committee. The researcher informed the participants about the ethical considerations and rights with regard to the research project during the meetings. Consent for participation in the study was obtained from all the participants in writing. A letter outlining the research and a consent form was forwarded to each participant. Participation in the study was purely voluntary and consensual. According to Fritz (2008:5), the researcher must ensure that the participants understand the benefit that may accrue to them due to their participation during a research process.

3.11.1 Confidentiality

All the participants were assured of confidentiality, to alleviate their fears about participating in this study. Names of schools and participants were disguised to ensure anonymity. Qualitative data in the form of transcripts, notes and recorded versions, would be safeguarded in my home as a hideout from any accessibility.

3.11.2 Access

Permission was sought from the principal of a sampled school to conduct the research at his school. Once the principal consented, another written permission was forwarded to the Free State Department of Education.

3.12 DATA GENERATION PROCEDURES

This study puts more emphasis on the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. To solicit rich data, the proposed study intends to use probing discussions in the form of Focus Group Discussions (FGD). According to Whiting (2013:36) focus group discussions are discussions that are organised around a set of predetermined questions. Such discussions around a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, further allow for the emergence of questions as a dialogue amongst the participants develops. The study uses the probing discussions in the form of Focus Group Discussions as they assist in a provision of a complete response that entails in-depth information required in research (Harrell & Bradley, 2009:10). The researcher will also use one-on-one meetings with a school principal, where the information is deemed sensitive.

According to Queensland Government (2016:1), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) afford the participants a safe and open space to express their views and opinions on a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Participants can put forward their diverse ideas and experiences on gangsterism, subsequently generating data with solutions towards developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Black (2013:6) defines FGDs as a series of planned discussions that assist participants in obtaining perceptions on how best to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Since an overarching research question is how to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, in line with PAR, such discussions take place in an agreeable and non-threatening environment.

To fulfill the objectives of this study, meetings with various participants will be scheduled. On presentation of the research questions, participants are encouraged to give their opinions and ideas in free-form style. The meetings will be organised such that they assist to reach the objectives of the research through active participation of participants (Thibodeaux, 2018:1). Two members will be assigned to note important information on flip charts during meetings with different participants. The points raised and discussed in these meetings, as well as themes identified, which form part of the generated data, will be used to respond to the objectives and the research question of this study. Since this study is underpinned by PAR, it affirms that experiences, collective views, and beliefs of participants form the basis of knowing, and such experiential learning leads to knowledge that is part of data thus generated (Baum, MacDougall & Smith, 2006:854). As part of all meeting protocols with participants, the posing of questions from the probing discussions directed the course of each meeting.

3.13 DATA GENERATION INSTRUMENTS

Since this study is a qualitative one and underpinned by PAR, data sources encapsulate participants, who interact amongst themselves and the researcher. Such an interaction ensures that the researcher and participants remain within the confines of the study (Garnham, 2012:193). The use of probing in the form of Focus Group Discussions ensured that the participants share their beliefs, values, and experiences on how to curb gangsterism in schools freely through interactivity.

Adhering to the ethical demands, I will request for permission from the participants to audio tape our engagements for further analysis. According to Bryman (2017:87), participants' non-verbal communication during focus group discussions and audio recordings should be taken into account as well, since they display their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences in this research, and enhance the understanding of audio-taped data. Canals (2017:390) posits that audio recordings of participants' responses regarding a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools are beneficial in that they can be transcribed and analysed later.

3.14 DATA ANALYSIS

This study uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in data analysis. According to Fairclough (1993:135), CDA entails social relations of the community members between events and texts, ideology, power relations as they manifest in social structures. Fairclough (2013:3) further states that discourse refers to "relations of communication between people who talk and write." Discourse primarily, therefore, refers to spoken or written language use.

3.14.1 Origin of Critical Discourse Analysis

According to Wodak and Matouschek (2015:227), CDA's origin dates back to a discourse on neo-racism towards foreigners in Austria. It entails official discourse recorded during the Walgheim campaign and Viennese municipal elections. CDA assists in expressing the values of a society that disclose inequality, injustice and relations of power in their natural settings. CDA further assists in an investigation of socially relevant language behaviour. Wodak and Myer (2008:3) report that the foundational theory of CDA is entrenched in the work of proponents such as van Dijk, Fairclough, Kress and van Leeuwen. CDA considers discourses on language as the structuring of social life.

In developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, CDA is central in that it emphasises the correct exercising of power that is achieved through a persuasive potential discourse and not through the exploitation of participants (Tenorio, 2011:6). CDA as an approach that studies text and talk is further problem-orientated in that it assists in a curbing of gangsterism as a social problem in schools (van Dijk, 1995:1). Whetherell, Taylor and Yates (2001:49) state that CDA 's key assumption is that language is a social action that is indicative of participants' communicative competencies when narrating their experiences and views that subsequently assist during data analysis.

3.14.2 Levels of CDA

3.14.2.1 *Textual Analysis*

This level uses linguistic analysis to give meaning to text and talk in transmission of knowledge in a society. Texts are used to make sense of the world. At this level texts and talk ascribe meaning to ideas and versions of data generated during a research process (van Dijk, 2006:105). This level of data analysis assists the participants in understanding the meanings of words spoken and written in a research study. CDA at this level unpacks the hidden meanings of ideological assumptions in written words and discussions during the focus group meetings (McGregor, 2010:3). Interpretation of hidden meanings further assists in interrogation and negotiation of power and authority in a research study.

CDA takes cognisance of the relation between language and society. The linguistic nature of CDA assists the research participants in an interpretation of non-verbal data, by attaching meaning to them during an analysis of a research process. CDA is further beneficial in that data generated as emerging themes during focus group interactions are written as texts during the textual analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2001:15).

3.14.2.2 *Discursive practice analysis*

This level of analysis is concerned with how text is related to its context regarding speech acts, coherence and intertextuality (Yamaguchi, 2004:20). Since there is a link between everyday language use and social structures, the discourse was used to shape the social practices through the use of written and spoken languages. The discursive analysis of the generated data addressed the texts (both written and spoken language) on important points and themes as suggested by participants during the stakeholder consultative meetings. Wodak and Meyer (2008:2) suggest that the discursive practice of CDA ensured that non-verbal aspects of interaction and communication of participants (e.g., gestures) was also analysed. The data thus generated from the

probing and analysis contributed towards the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

CDA in corroboration with PAR emphasizes the involvement of participants in data analysis. According to van Dijk (2013:497), data analysis from a discursive practice lead to ways in which knowledge is interactively managed during text and communication processes. Through interactive participation, participants were able to contextualise and ascribed truth to their beliefs and experiences during data analysis. An attachment of meaning to the beliefs and experiences of participants through use of spoken and written language signifies the pivotal role of CDA during data analysis in this study.

Fairclough (2011:5) indicates that through CDA, discursive practices should ideologically shape the relations of power and hegemony (dominance of one social group over another). Since data analysis was done with participants, the results were also expected to address the power imbalance in the community, particularly from the marginalised community members. Texts involve beliefs or ideologies of participants as discussed during the communication processes. Czerwinska (2015: 74) depicts an ideology as language use, text, talk, and communication among the participants. When participants analyse their experiences, beliefs, and opinions during data analysis, they are socially attached. Attachment and beliefs (values to the community) are two salient elements of Social Control Theory (SCT), which forms the theoretical framework of this study.

3.14.2.3 Sociological analysis

Sociological analysis entails discourse by information and ideologies of the participants emerging in a research process towards a presentation of such information as a social product. An informative discourse in this regard ensures that participants are knowledgeable about gangsterism on and off school premises. The ideological component of discourse is concerned with how the participants perceive the social information on gangsterism from their viewpoints in an unbiased manner. The social

product is inclusive of the analysed themes as they emerge from the deliberations to support an envisaged strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (Ruiz, 2009:3).

According to van Dijk (2014:84), as a social component, sociological analysis integrates a societal discourse of participants on their views and experiences on gangsterism as a societal phenomenon. Such discourses entail interpretation on socially shared knowledge, attitude, and ideologies of participants. Qasemireza and Dowlatabadi (2014:1431) posit that this level of data analysis regards participant ideologies as basic frameworks for supporting social reality emerging from interactions and meetings. The social reality is subsequently shared by community members and institutions like schools in curbing social ills like gangsterism on their campuses.

3.15 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter focused on the design structure of the study. Furthermore, Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a methodological approach was presented. Historical background and the relevance of PAR as a methodological approach in this study were also discussed. The chapter further entailed the discussion on objectives, principles, ontological and epistemological aspects of PAR, as well as the relationship of the researcher and participants. How the participants have selected; their credentials; SWOT analysis guiding activities of the participants; spiral set-up of PAR and how data is analysed, are also presented.

CHAPTER 4 : PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to develop a strategy to assist schools to curb gangsterism. The chapter presents and analyses the generated data in terms of the objectives of the study. The study's objectives relate to a justification of challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools; demonstration of components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The chapter further includes a discussion of conducive conditions under which the strategy to curb gangsterism in schools will work; anticipation of threats of using this strategy to curb gangsterism in schools and a demonstration of success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices.

The study used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to present the meaning of generated data on how to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. According to van Dijk, as cited by (Tannen, Hamilton & Schiffrin, 2018:467) the meaning of data thus generated assisted in an understanding of a depiction of gangsterism as a social problem in schools. This meaning of generated data indicated a link between text and society through the use of textual and discursive levels of analysis. The sociological level afforded the participants the opportunity to suggest best practices that could dispel gangsterism in schools through their interactions and meetings.

4.2 CHALLENGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO CURB GANGSTERISM IN SELECTED SCHOOLS

Strategy refers to a war declared by all stakeholders on curbing of gangsterism on school premises, towards the achievement of quality education. The role of such a strategy to be sustained and prosperous is taken by all stakeholders, who have day by

day to reinvent themselves to find new solutions to keep gangsterism at bay from school campuses (Giurgiu & Borza, 2015:1110).

4.2.1 Teacher challenges with gangsterism

Following the steady growth in the size of gangs in recent years in schools, this study provides the necessary enhancements towards the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools (Hall 2010:2). Teachers as custodians of curriculum implementation in schools are better placed to guide the learners through their journey. Teachers are equipped with skills to impart knowledge content to their learners from the institutions of higher learning. Teachers, on their admittance, are not trained to manage disruptive learners and gangsters. To teachers, these types of learners pose a challenge in that their wayward behaviour is in contrast to the expectations of a day-to-day running of the school.

Teachers cited child-headed families as one of the challenges that hindered the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Pillay (2016:3) reported that such learners display increased absenteeism and total withdrawal from school work and activities. Furthermore, they show poor school performance and social disempowerment. In Malaysia, senior teachers with a good track record are empowered to deal with disciplinary action on errant learners in schools, as a strategy to curb gangsterism (*The Star* 26 September, 2018:2). This is indicative of the schools being pro-active as opposed to re-active towards the curbing of gangsterism in schools.

Mr. Pheko (pseudonym) indicated that:

Some of our learners are left alone by parents who work on farms as labourers. Their families are child-headed households. Due to lack of good parenting, they resorted to gangsterism to satisfy their needs.

Ms. Morwe corroborated his view:

Some of them are also involved in drug abuse. They are always absent from school, and their performance has declined. When present, I struggle with their ill-disciplined behaviour.

Mr. Letsatsi added that:

I was trained as a curriculum implementer to assist the learners to achieve their goals in life. This gangsterism thing is beyond my comprehension and ability. We need an external intervention to deal with it.

Mr. Monaheng suggested that:

Some of our learners are from the poverty-stricken rural settlements next to our township. Due to lack of sports facilities, and being exposed to idleness, they decide to indulge in gangsterism.

Ms. Dinokaneng retorted:

Some indulge in gangsterism because of peer pressure and being under the impression that they are safe if they belong to a certain group of gangsters. They need help to get out of gangs and gangsterism.

Mr. Phakoe, as an overseer and headmaster of the school, postulated that:

The scourge of gangsterism on school premises compromises the safety of the school community. It also reduces their quality of life, as it increases the crime rate.

The inferences above are indicative of teachers in need of help to curb gangsterism experienced on their school campus. This statement from Mr. Pheko “*due to lack of good parenting, they resorted to gangsterism*” has a connotation that the learners deemed it fit to become gangsters, because of lack of proper guidance from absent parents in their upbringing. The statement further depicts a situation in which due to the ever absent parents, these learners decided to fill the void left by parents by indulging in gangsterism. Their indulgence in gangsterism poses a challenge to teachers, who, in this situation were found wanting on how to deal with gangsterism. The phrase “*some of our learners are left alone by parents who work on farms*” is understood to acknowledge that only a few learners in their school are gangsters, and as such, they are in need of a strategy to assist them to quit gangsterism.

The response from Ms. Morwe “*some of them involved in drug abuse have ill-discipline behaviour*” indicates that drug abuse contributes to learners becoming gangsters if they

are not properly brought up eventually. The statement further indicates that once such learners have a discipline problem, they are difficult to control and work with teachers in a learning-teaching environment. The assertion that “*I struggle with their ill-discipline*” is an indication that Mr. Morwe, like all other teachers, has not been trained as specialists in dealing with gangsterism, and as such he is in need of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. The expression “...and their performance has declined” is understood as an acknowledgment from Ms. Morwe that once learners are involved in gangsterism, their school work is negatively affected. The expression further indicates that teachers need a strategy to rescue these learners from a scourge of gangsterism in selected schools for them to perform to their optimal level.

Inherent in the text “*I was trained as a curriculum implementer...*” from Mr. Letsatsi is a clear indication that as a teacher he is trained to impart skills, values, and knowledge to the learners, and is proud of it. His excerpt that “*This gangsterism thing is beyond...*” is understood to mean that he always faces a challenge in dealing with gangsterism on a school campus. In his response “*We need an external intervention to deal with it*” Mr. Letsatsi went further in illuminating the need for teachers to be equipped with a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Again in confirming Mr. Letsatsi’s assertions, Guilfoyle (2013:2) posits that once gangs have invaded the school premises, the school safety and social equity are comprised in that the gangsters will have a territorial advantage. After claiming the territorial space, gangs normally strike intimidation and fear in teachers and other innocent learners on a school campus.

Reflecting on Mr Monaheng’s responses that “*some of our learners are from poverty-stricken rural settlements...*” and “*due to a lack of sports facilities and exposure to idleness...*” it is evident that he is considering poverty, a lack of sporting facilities and boredom as some of the contributory factors for learners who indulge in gangsterism. It is understood that he is suggesting that a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools is expected to encompass such factors. Ms. Dinokaneng’s responses “*...because of peer pressure...*” and “*...they are safe...*” further complete Mr. Monaheng’s assertions as causes of gangsterism on school campuses, and in formulating a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, participants need to take

them into cognisance. As Houchhaus and Sousa (2018:75) put it, such a strategy is also expected to address what triggers peer pressure and protection to lure learners into gangsterism.

The response from Mr. Phakoe that gangsterism “....*compromises the safety of the school community...*” is understood as meaning that one of the challenges to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, is a capacity of gangsterism that is putting the lives of learners, teachers and non-teaching staff at risk. All the stakeholders are no longer feeling safe on school premises due to the presence of gangsterism. Furthermore, the citations “...*it increases the crime rate*” and *reduces the quality of life...*” are understood to mean that challenges to the strategy are evident in that, because of an escalating crime in the proximity of the headmaster’s school as a research site, the school community as human beings are no longer enjoying their freedom of movement.

The afore-mentioned responses from teachers as some of the participants in this study are indicative of a scourge of gangsterism posing a serious challenge on school premises. Teachers in this school felt not well equipped with the necessary skills to deal with gangsterism prevalent on their school campus. Teachers as custodians of curriculum implementation were longing for a sound strategy that would assist them and other stakeholders in curbing gangsterism in selected schools. As per PAR mandate, Mr. Letsatsi’s response “*we need an external intervention to deal with it*” showed a willingness from the teachers to collaboratively work with other participants towards the development of a strategy that could eliminate gangsterism on the school premises. According to Mitchell, Reilly, and Logue (2008:346), working collaboratively with other participants in formulating a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, teachers’ levels of self-efficacy and empowerment were increased. Thus the power of their voices was heard during this research project.

Furthermore, during an engagement with teachers in this project, they felt empowered in that the study assisted them in not discriminating against the learners as “delinquents” (gangsters), rather them as learners in need of help. According to the study ‘social control theory (SCT), an attachment of teachers to the learners or vice

versa reinforces equality and social justice. In a just society, diverse people have the right to equal treatment. An abolition of such discrimination assisted in the elimination of stigma such learners would have lived with on a daily basis (see section 1.3).

4.2.2 Learner challenges with gangsterism

The presence of gang violence in some schools in recent years amongst the learners in certain schools is gradually escalating. So prevalent are gangs that they compromise the learner safety on and off the school premises (Magidi, Schenk & Erasmus, 2016:1). According to Estrada, Gilreath, Astror, and Benbenishty (2016:723), gang presence on secondary schools premises has increased because these schools are considered fertile territories for gang recruitment and drug distribution. Queally (2018:1) elaborated that in California, the police use injunction gang control tactics to curb gangsterism on and off the school premises. An injunction gang control tactic refers to a judicial order restraining a gangster from the beginning or continuing an action threatening or invading the legal right of another person.

This theme is reflected in my research as Moshe (pseudonym) articulated:

“Bana ba bang ka lebaka la kगतello ya metswalle, ba sebedisa dithetefatsi ho kenela maqulwana a dikenke”(Some learners due to peer pressure, are involved in drugs and substance abuse to join gangs).

Sipho (pseudonym) testified that...

“Ba bang ka lebaka la kgalefo le ho hloka tshetso ya batswadi, ba qetella ba bona dikenke e le tharollo ya ho ntsha kगतello ya maikutlo” (Some learners due to anger and lack of support from their parents, end up joining gangs in order to release their stress).

Dibakiso indicated that...

“Some learners join gangs due to lack of recreational facilities. Ka lebaka la metswalle e fosahetseng ba tswa sekolo le ho tlatlala le lekeishene, ba sa tsebe seo ba se etsang” (Due to be in a company of wrong friends, they leave school and end up gallivanting in the township, and not knowing what to do).

The scenario depicted by Moshe that “...*kgatello ya metswalle*” (due to peer pressure) further corroborated what Ms. Dinokaneng had already alluded to as a challenge towards a formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools (see section 4.2.1). The statement is understood to emphasise that by being in the company of bad friends, some learners would be misled into gangsterism. This response is further indicative of one of the causes and origins of gangsterism, which the strategy thus developed, would have to take into consideration for elimination of gangsterism on school campuses.

The assertion by Siphon that...“ *due to anger and lack of support from parents...*” is interpreted as meaning that, some learners, if not getting support from parents as primary caregivers in their homesteads, develop anger that subsequently lures them into gangsterism. It is also understood to be a cause of a stressful situation that subjected these types of learners to gangsterism. The citation by Dibakiso that “...*due to lack of recreational facilities...*” which corroborated Mr. Monaheng’s response that...“ *due to lack of sports facilities...*”, is understood to mean that some learners in this school, due to boredom, decided to wind up time by joining gangs. This further indicated that it posed a challenge to a strategy the participants were formulating to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This response is further complemented by this statement “...*in a company of wrong friends...*”, and is understood to mean that, if obedient learners are lured into the territory of disreputable friends, there is a great likelihood that they would be recruited into gangsterism.

In one of our meetings as participants, the two other learners put forward the responses they viewed as challenges in a formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools:

Thabang stated that...

“Ba bang ba tlohela sekolo ho kenela dikenke, mme ha ba jele dithetefatsi, ba etsa thobalano e sa tshireletsehang” (Some become school drop-outs, once involved in substance abuse, are engaged in high risk sexual experience behaviour).

Dipolelo highlighted that:

“Ho kenela dikenke ho ba le kgahlamelo maphelong a bona le tshebetsong ya sekolo”
(*In joining gangs, it affects their health and academic performance*).

The statement by Thabang that “...become school dropouts...” is understood to mean that gangs and gangsterism ultimately result in some learners leaving school and forfeiting their constitutional right to get a decent education. Furthermore, the assertions...*involved in substance abuse...and ...are engaged in high-risk sexual experience...are* understood to denote that substance abuse is a cause of some learners engaging in unprotected and high-risk sexual habits. These types of habits pose a challenge to a strategy to curb gangsterism on campuses of selected schools, in that once addicted; some learners find it difficult to quit due to emotional and physical abuse, as well as constant bullying by other gangsters on school premises (*Health24*, 2014:1).

Similarly, the citation by Dipolelo that “...it affects their health and academic performance” is interpreted as meaning that after some learners’ involvement in gangs; they are subjected to poor health and academic performance due to a lifestyle they acquired through gangsterism. This is in line with the study’s involvement, as one of the four elements of the bond of social control theory (SCT), indicating that, if a learner does not spend his or her spare time wisely, such a learner may be recruited into gangsterism (see section 1.3). Furthermore, the citation is understood as a consolidation of Thabang’s response that learners leaving schools due to drug abuse and sexual pleasures are likely to be recruited to gangsterism.

4.2.3 Parents and challenges with gangsterism

An Indonesian term for a school gang fight is “Tawuran.” An increase in Tuwaran fights between secondary school learners in recent years has spiraled out of control. During these anarchical gang fights, school learners bring along an assortment of weapons on school premises from their homes and the nearby surroundings (Rakhmat, 2017:1). According to Reuben, Chinonye and Obaji (2016:20) parents and the community in

Calabar, in Southern Nigeria, are faced with some learners who indulge in gangsterism due to a high rate of youth unemployment, school dropout, and poverty. Studies further reveal that the Nigerian government was advised to curb gangsterism in schools by the adoption of a youth policy that would empower youth with vocational skills and job creation.

In Botswana, as one of the strategies to curb gangsterism in selected schools, parents were advised to form a crime prevention committee. The committee's main task was to shape the learners against gangsterism as an antisocial vice from their homes as primary infrastructures (*Botswana Daily News*, 07 October 2018:1). Bowers Du Toit (2014:6) posited that the Cape Flats community resorted to religion in churches as one of their strategies to reform gangsters from the school premises and integrated them into the community. In one of our interactions with participants, parents cited their challenges with regards to gangsterism as follows:

Mr. Mphulenyane attested that:

Bagaeso, ditaverne tse dintse ho potologa sekwele sa rona ho re bileditse dikengsta. Ho bonolo kgompieno ho fumana license ha tlhomamisa tavern. Bana ba rena ba fumana dinotai ha bonolo. (Guys, due to numerous taverns surrounding our school that lead to the formation of gangs. Nowadays it is easy to access a license to open a tavern. Our kids can easily access alcohol).

Mr Diphoko indicated that:

Bana bana ha ba se ba tsubile nyaope ba ya hlahafala, ebe ba phunya fence ya sekolo masoba ho ya lekeisheneng. Ba dotjha diclass. Ka nnete matitjhere a tshwere bothata. (These learners, once indulged in Nyaope, they become violent, and punch holes through the school fence to the township. They bunk classes. Really, teachers are faced with challenges).

Mrs. Makhasane argued that:

Ba bang ba bona ha ba tswile sekolo, ba ipata matlong a kgale a baahi. Baahi ba tshaba, e be ba ya falla hobane sena se di ya theko ya matlo a bona. Sena se di ya kgwebo le lekeno la matsete sebakeng sa rona. (Some of them, once left the school,

hide in the nearby dilapidated buildings, and the community fears for this, as it results in losses in their property values and local businesses).

The assertions by Mr. Mphulenyane that “...it is easy to access a license to open a tavern” and “...numerous taverns surrounding our school lead to the formation of gangs” are revelations that if one wants to open a tavern in that community, it is simple to obtain a license from the authorities. The easiness of obtaining a tavern license leads to an increase in taverns around the school. The response is further consolidated by “Our kids can easily access alcohol,” which is a clear indication that due to many taverns surrounding the school, some learners quit the school, and abuse alcohol in the surrounding taverns to join gangs.

The reference of Mr. Diphoko that “...once indulged in nyaope, they become violent and punch holes in school fence...” is understood to mean that some learners abuse nyaope as one of the common substances obtainable in some township streets. An abuse of nyaope leads to their violent behaviour and the tendency to open holes in the school fence. Furthermore, the response by Mr. Diphoko that “they bunk classes” is understood to mean that after digging holes in the school fence they stay in the township and do not attend classes. This poses a challenge to teachers, parents and the school.

The citation by Mrs. Makhasane that “...once left the school, hide in the nearby dilapidated buildings” is understood to reveal that some learners use the old and dilapidated buildings as their hideout to advance their gang activities. The response that “...as it results in losses of property values and local businesses” is a clear depiction of gangsterism as a serious indictment in that it spirals beyond the school premises, forces some community members to sell their properties due to value depreciation — this results in a loss to local businesses, tax revenue and subsequently scarcity of job creation.

4.3 COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGY

This section outlines the strategy's components that were identified as pivotal in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. As per PAR, equality, inclusion, empowerment and parental involvement are the components of the strategy that are vital for an enhancement of the strategy in the following aspects.

4.3.1 Equality

The concept of equality is an indicative that, in a school set up, all learners need to be viewed and treated equally. This concept, as per PAR prescript, encourages the stakeholders, and hence the participants to abolish the marginalisation of learners in this study. Learners considered as gangsters are not to be discriminated against but need the support of the participants and the community in general for abandonment of gangsterism. As Oosterom and Villiers (201:161) put it, equality as incorporated in PAR promotes democracy of gangsters by challenging their inequality as viewed by the school community and neighbourhood.

4.3.1.1 Justification for equality as a component.

The concept of inequality as demonstrated by communities towards gangsters provides a lens through which a full range of how a social disadvantage is enacted in this group of learners. Studies show that this type of learner yearns for respect, recognition, power, care, and love. According to Healy (201:94), it is embedded in a PAR tradition that by engaging gangsters in this research, participants were committed to the concept of equality to work with people who were at a grassroots level to promote a fundamental social transformation. The implication was to assist this type of learners, who are historically oppressed and marginalised because of their status in their community. Participants established that some learners were forced by conditions beyond their control to indulge in gangsterism.

In one of our meetings with the participants, the theme of equality emerged as follows:

Mr. Pheko insinuated that:

The private sector must also come on board to assist our school with the erection of different sports fields.

Dibakiso suggested that:

We as learners do not have any problem if police do random searches for substance abuse and dangerous weapons, as long as they do not infringe on our rights.

Mrs. Makhasane retorted that:

I think that both the social development and social workers must focus on child-headed families.

At the discursive level of CDA, Mr. Pheko's citation is interpreted as meaning that if there are sports fields on the premises of their school, their presence can foster harmonious relationships between the school community and the gangsters, in that they will participate together in different sporting codes. A further transformation of this rich data is understood to mean that sports can be used as a component of a strategy to unite all the stakeholders, and as an indication to gangsters that they are appreciated and equal before the public eye.

In an analysis of the responses of Dibakiso, the learner, the words "*...as long as they do not infringe on our rights*" at the textual level of discourse, are understood to mean that the learners and gangsters as participants support a random search as one of the components of a strategy, as long as their human status is equally observed as is that of other community members. The description of data further reveals that no oppression and marginalisation of learners is entrenched in the Bill of Rights. The citation by Mrs Makhasane that "*...both the social development and social workers must focus on child-headed families*" is further understood to mean that since according to a technical literature, some child-headed families are a challenge to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, such learners from such backgrounds cannot be discriminated against, on the basis of their position. These words further form the crux of the need that the strategy thus formulated must not be equality blind to learners lured into gangsterism, but should encourage complete support for their rescue.

4.3.1.2 Justification for inclusion as a component.

Inclusion refers to the active involvement of participants in an investigation of a societal reality that affects their lives, to effect a change that benefits the society. Such inclusion affords participants an opportunity to have active voices in the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools in their society (Costa, Duperoy and Sabella, 2016:7). The inclusion of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism in this project highlighted the observation of their rights as people and also as participants in a production of valuable knowledge that concerned them.

Ollerton and Kelshaw (2011:268) posit that the active inclusion of these learners was positive in that it assisted in elevating them to a participant status, and further embraced their contributions in improving their situation. The responses by Moshe that *“the sporting codes, like soccer and netball games that we played together with community members the previous week, brought a sigh of relief”* and Thabang that *“those games really brought our confidence back, and we need to thank the organisers”* clearly indicated that these learners, labeled the gangsters, were happy to be integrated into the community through sports and their active participation in those games signaled inclusion as a component of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. The words by Dipolelo that *“we need more of these games”* are understood to mean that sports through active participation and collaboration with other co-researchers were used to enhance inclusion of these marginalised learners based on gangsterism stigma as a component of a strategy. “The responses further indicated that the learners were thankful to the community members for their patience during their rehabilitation process that subsequently lead to their warm reception into their community.

Similarly, the citations by Mr Morwe, a teacher, that *“we are encouraged and motivated to see their participation in these games”* and Mrs Makhasane, a parent, that *“maybe these games will assist to dispel the misfortune and bad luck they are associated with”* confirmed Constantinescu and Samuels (2016:1) view that for an inclusion and integration of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism into the community, such

learners must be educated to the “maximum extent appropriate” to be on par with their peers who are not involved in gangsterism. This further indicated that the organisers of the games and the participants’ intention were to work on the minds of these learners, to lure them back meaningfully into the community set-up.

A plethora of studies suggests that, in Singapore, to ensure a successful inclusion and integration of gangsters into communities, a state implements a master plan that, among other things, focuses on increased funding of support services like sports groups and volunteer organisations. Such engagements ensure that such learners are not forever ostracised from their communities (Walker & Musti-Rao, 2016:33).

4.3.1.3 Justification for empowerment as a component.

Empowerment refers to the managerial style where personnel in positions of authority at institutions, share their influence in decision-making with their downlines (Banutu-Gometz, 2015:344). Empirically validated data support empowerment as a component of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools in that, it assists in the creation and enhancement of critical awareness of the participants that subsequently enable them to tackle the boundaries they feel to be unjust (Dworski-Riggs& Langhout, 2010:216). Flowing from the paragraph above, in one of our interactions with participants, Dibakiso retorted that *“we learners found this experience rewarding”*. In analysing these words textually, the learner indicated that their inclusion as learners in the project as well as in addressing the components of the strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools was both informative and empowering to them. These words emanated from the fact that, more often than not, learners are marginalised in decision-making.

In the same vein, in the same meeting, Mr Diphoko corroborated Dibakiso’s words that *“le rona re le batsadi, re le bogela tshono ena tota”* (even we parents, are very thankful about this opportunity). The citation from Mr. Diphoko was a clear confirmation that parents felt empowered by their involvement in the research project towards the formulation of a strategy, as that would assist in curbing gangsterism on their school

campus. Furthermore, the response is indicative of parents' feelings on active participation and empowerment in the curbing of gangsterism as an anti-social phenomenon.

4.3.1.4 Justification of parental involvement as a component.

Parental involvement ensures an honouring of knowledge and strength of members of diverse communities through a furthering of a struggle for social justice (Gill, Purru & Lin, 2012:1). Rooi (2014:18) defines parental involvement as an activity in which a parent is an active partner in solving the social challenges in his or her community. In the context of this study, the parents were considered as vital participants in that they were active partners in co-creation of knowledge on curbing of gangsterism on the school's campuses. The active parental involvement in this project further signaled the parents' willingness to emancipate the learners from gangsterism as anti-social behaviour.

Research reveals that in Canadian schools, parents view education as the most important phenomenon such that they assist all the learners irrespective of their backgrounds (McIntosh, 2008:1). In line with McIntosh's view, Mr. Mphulenyane articulated that "*lekgotla la sekolo le tshwanela ho tiisa melao ya boitshwaro ba bana*" (School Governing Body must tighten the code of conduct for learners). The response by Mr. Mphulenyane is a clear indication that parents, through involvement of the school governing body, can assist the learners through the application of corrective punitive measures from a code of conduct for learners. The response further indicated that the current code of conduct for learners has some loopholes as suggested by this utterance "*ho tiisa melao,*" textually meaning to tighten the rules and regulations in a code of conduct for learners. These words also emphasized the fact that if the code of conduct for learners could be revisited and revised, eventually the discipline factor could be improved, thus curbing gangsterism on school premises.

In support of Mr. Mphulenyane's words, Mr. Diphoko remarked that "*re tshwanela le ko ho mema dikere di tlo rapela mo sekolong*" (We also need to seek church and religious

engagements here in our school). From this statement, one can deduce that the parent component had a strong belief that the prayer sessions on school premises could also assist in the curbing of gangsterism. The statement by Mrs. Makhasane that "*re ka mema le batho ba ka tlo kgothatsang bana ba rona mona skolong*"(We can also invite motivational speakers to address our learners here at schools), corroborates the assertions by Mr. Mphulenyane and Mr. Diphoko. One further deduces that Mrs. Makhasane implied that motivational speakers could be the role models and other respected leaders from their communities and afar. In this context, these and other points put forward serve as a basis for parental involvement as one of the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

4.4 CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO A STRATEGY

This section of the study looks at the various aspects that ensure conditions favourable for a strategy to operate.

4.4.1 Conditions favourable for equality

Section 2.14 of literature review reveals that if learners view schools as centres of excellence, wherein they are equally treated by their teachers and peers in acquisition of skills, confidence, and hope, the chances of indulging in gangsterism are very slim. The statement further indicates that there is a need to develop and equip teachers with skills and tactics to handle gangsters equally in their classrooms. In section 4.2.1 Mr. Letsatsi, the teacher, by stating that "*we need an external intervention*" is also understood to mean that external intervention in the form of mentoring programmes could assist with skills and confidence to ensure equality as fertile soil for a strategy to work efficiently. Once the teachers have been equipped with the necessary skills, this would assist them in treating the gangsters and other learners lured to gangsterism with respect to foster social cohesion on and off school premises with a view to nation building.

Similarly, other responses which endorsed equality as a favourable factor towards an effective strategy emanated from one of our meetings with participants:

Mr. Mphulenyane stated that

“To alleviate their fear and shyness, we can rope in an adopt-a-cop to address them on gangsterism.”

Thabang affirmed that

“This can foster their confidence and communication with community members.”

The assertion by Mr. Mphulenyane, an SGB chairperson and member of Community Police Forum, that“...*to alleviate their fear and shyness...*” is a clear indication that having indulged in gangsterism, some learners are afraid to declare it publicly. The assertion further indicates that care must be taken not to discriminate against them, but to practice equality when dealing with them. In analysing the response at the textual level, their fear and shyness emanate from the stigma they are associated with within the community. To this group of learners, the mere mention of adopt-a-cop signals an arrest and prison, whereas Mr. Mphulenyane cited it as motivation from the police on the danger of gangsterism. The citation by Thabang that “...*foster...*” is understood to mean that if the community engages and listens to their aspirations, they can be assisted in correcting their wayward behaviour.

4.4.2 Conditions favourable for inclusion

Section 2.14 of the literature review highlights the inclusion of gangsters as a form of re-entry and re-integration into the community. It further regards job training, job placement and vocational training as pillars of conditions favourable to ensure proper inclusion of gangsters in their community.

The scenarios below depict the responses from the participants during one of our interactions:

Mr. Phakoe suggested that:

We need to work on their mindset to bring them back.

Mr. Morwe retorted that:

Motivational sessions with former prisoners may contribute tremendously.

Ms. Diphoko was of the view that:

Ke tla hlahisa ho Lekgotla la sekolo hore mengolo e maboteng e tloswe ka pente (I shall suggest to the SGB that the writings on the school walls be removed using a paint).

Dibakiso articulated that:

Le rena bana ba skwele re tla thusa go re ba ne le perekisano mmoho (Even we school learners we shall assist them to co-operate).

The response from Mr. Phakoe, as a headmaster, that “... *work on their mindset...*” is understood to mean that for their inclusion and integration into the community, there was a need to improve on their thinking about their status. An improvement of this nature could be achieved by rehabilitation and acceptance by their peers and the community. Furthermore, the words “...*to bring them back...*” on a macro level are understood to mean to set them free from the bondage of gangsterism, so that their inclusion and integration were socially acceptable. Their successful acceptance into the community would serve as a favourable condition of inclusion. Mr. Morwe’s mention of “*motivational sessions*” in his utterance is a clear indication that the inclusion of gangsters into their community can be enhanced by the motivation to quit gangsterism. In the same vein, the words “...*with former prisoners...*” are understood to mean that participants were encouraged to invite former prisoners to narrate their experiences in prison, owing to gangsterism, as a means of discouraging further indulgence in gangsterism.

Ms. Diphoko’s excerpt that “...*writings on the school walls be removed...*” is understood to mean that the removal of graffiti on the school walls creates conditions favourable for the strategy to work, in that their environment would be appealing to them, and to encourage them to attend school regularly. According to PAR’s prescript, Dibakiso’s response that “...*we school learners shall assist...*” confirms their willingness as

participants to collaboratively ensure creation of conditions favourable for successful emancipation and inclusion of gangsters into their community.

4.4.3 Conditions favourable for parental involvement

Studies indicate that the creation of WhatsApp group chats is one of the modern technologies in which concerned parents, neighbours, area security companies, ward counselors and police collaboratively engage one another in the curbing of gangsterism (Mobieg, 2018:1). This technique assists in the community mobilisation once an incidence of gang violence erupts. Parents, as participants can alert one another and the school community about the prevalence of gangsterism on and off the school premises. Sumarsono, Imron, Wiyono, and Arifin (2016:1) argue that in a family set up, the learners feel the responsibility and trust of their parents, and subsequently, this forms the basis of imitation and identification which modifies behaviour. The aforementioned sentence is supported by the following connotations of the participants from one of our meetings:

Mr. Letsatsi denoted that:

The school's QLTC (Quality of Learning and Teaching Campaign) must convene a summit on gangsterism. All stakeholders must take part in that summit.

Sipho argued that:

Our RCL members, after adoption of a code of conduct for learners, must educate our fellow learners about it.

Mr. Mphulenyane agitated that:

Sectional meetings, like grade meetings, parents meetings and meetings with other stakeholders on school policies on gangsterism can help a lot.

Mr. Letsatsi's citation that "*the school's QLTC...*" is a clear indication that this structure is a very important one in ensuring that quality education is rendered on a school campus. Since an overarching question is how to curb gangsterism, the response by

Mr. Letsatsi that “*a summit on gangsterism be convened...*” further indicates that parents as both the participants and the important structure in a school set up, play a part in decision making and amendment of school policies on gangsterism. Such a summit on gangsterism endorses power relations in parents and other participants through meaningful collaborations.

The response by Siphos that “*...after an adoption of a code of conduct for learners...*” is understood to mean that at the beginning of every academic year, parents are actively involved in the drawing up of a code of conduct for learners, that also addresses how gangsterism can be curbed on school premises. In agreeing to the contents of this important document, parents are expected to sign it. The words “*RCL members must educate our fellow learners about it*”, on a textual level have a connotation that after an endorsement by parents, as participants in the study, RCL on behalf of other stakeholders familiarises the learners with its contents, among other things, on how to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

Mr. Mphulenyane ‘s reference to “*Sectional meetings, grade meetings, parents meetings...*” further supports the importance of active involvement of parents in creating conditions that are conducive for a strategy to work. The words “*meetings with other stakeholders on policies on gangsterism...*” by Mr. Mphulenyane are understood to mean that such meetings offer platforms for parents to contribute to policies that are eventually used to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

4.5 THREATS TO OVERCOME

Gangsterism in some South African townships is escalating and spreading like fire onto the premises of some schools. Research further indicates that poverty, inequality, and unemployment are some of the contributing factors towards the scourge of gangsterism. These factors pose as threats to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2017:1).

Some studies depict anxiety and stress on educators as some factors that pose as threats to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools (News24 4 November, 2018).

4.5.1 Threats to equality

The following inferences from participants cropped up during one of our interactions:

Mr. Monaheng, one of the teachers, pointed out that:

Most studies focus on gangsterism affecting learners. Less is said about teachers.

Mr. Morwe, another teacher, corroborated that:

A thought out plan for holistically dealing with gangsterism in schools is needed.

Mrs. Makhasane, a parent and community developer, stated that:

Ha mapolisa a berekisa le dikensta, ha ho no re tswela mosola (If the police are in collusion with the gangsters, that would not assist us).

Thabang, a grade 11 learner, asserted that:

Ke nagana fo re mapolisa a hetse drugs le didiribatsi mo skweleng sa rena (I think police should deal with drugs and substance abuse on our school premises).

The response by Mr. Monaheng that “*Most studies focus on gangsterism affecting learners*” is an indication that the authorities and the community are doing their level best to curb gangsterism in schools. This is confirmed by the review of the related literature (see-section 2.12.1.4). The words “*Less is said about the teachers*” are understood to mean that teachers are not granted equal treatment that is meted out to learners regarding the effects of gangsterism in schools. Teachers, like learners and parents, are affected by anxiety and stress caused by gangsterism, and this leads to their not discharging their duties efficiently in such an environment. Inequality, in this case, poses as a threat to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

Mr. Morwe's citation that "*a thought out plan*" is understood to mean a plan that is equally inclusive of all stakeholders, irrespective of their status in the community to assisting in the curbing of gangsterism in selected schools. The response by Mrs. Makhasane that "*If the police are in collusion with the gangsters*" is understood to mean that some police members are working together with the gangsters and treating them with kid gloves, and as such, they are in conflict with the equality ethics, and this poses a threat to a strategy. Thabang's excerpt that "*...police should deal with drugs and substance abuse...*" textually is understood to mean that police are not violating the equality ethics when investigating drugs and substance abuse on school premises. The response is further understood to mean that the police should leave no stone unturned when dealing with drugs and substance abuse, and the culprits, irrespective of their status should be brought to book.

4.5.2 Threats to inclusion and integration

Research indicates that a scourge of gangsterism is a breeding ground for an unsafe school environment. Since the overarching question is how to curb gangsterism in schools, inclusion, and integration of gangsters into the community forge a social cohesion that results in meaningful identity, humanity and belonging as ingredients of Ubuntu (Poverty and Inequality Initiative, 2014:1).

The following themes emerged from participants during one of our deliberations:

Dibakiso suggested that:

Bana ba bang ba hantle ka hara jarete ya sekolo. Kantle ba hantelwa ke metswalle. (Some learners behave well on the school premises, but indulge in gangsterism because of peer pressure).

Sipho was of the view that:

I think that a lack of role models from the community has a negative influence on some learners.

Mr. Diphoko, an SGB member, asserted that:

Bang ba iphihlile fo re ba tsene mo selong se sa kenstareism (Some learners are shy to reveal their involvement in gangsterism).

The excerpt from Dibakiso that “*Some learners behave well on the school premises...*” is understood to mean that inclusion and integration of gangsters happen best if the learners are attached to their institution and family as per social control theory(SCT) prescript (See-section 2.2.2). The words “*...because of peer pressure*” are understood to mean that a misguided choice and involvement of friends result in bad decisions. The words further indicate that to ensure successful inclusion and integration into a community, the participants and the community are to deal first with the pressure exerted by some of their fellow learners. In this instance, peer pressure is considered as a threat to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

The snippet from Siphho that “*...lack of role models...*” is understood to mean that if some learners do not have people to look up to a community as their icons, they tend to be easily dispirited and indulge in anti-social activities like gangsterism. Textually, the words “*role models*” are understood to mean people with good manners that can successfully assist in integrating gangsters into the community. The citation by Mr. Diphoko that “*Some learners are shy...*” is understood to mean that as long as some learners do not reveal their gangster status, their shyness would forever be a threat to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

4.5.3 Threats to empowerment

According to Dlamini (2015:5), empowerment is an approach that engages gangsters in activities that affect their social lives. Such empowerment strengthens gangsters’ voices so that they can be heard and listened to on matters of gangsterism. According to Whaley (2018:1), empowerment ensures integration of gangsters into their community through a shift of power. Shifting and power balance ensure that gangsters, who are the voiceless in their community, are assisted to live an ordinary and acceptable life that results in an association with other learners and community members. Non-empowerment of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism was

seriously considered to be a serious threat to a strategy by participants if left unresolved.

Ms. Dinokaneng suggested that:

I think that some of these learners join gangs because they are over age.

Ms. Morwe corroborated that:

If our school-based support team (SBST) could be assisted with referral forms that can assist us a lot.

Sipho proposed that:

Such learners can be discouraged to be in the company of disloyal friends, but rather focus on their studies.

Ms. Dinokaneng's excerpt that "...*they are over age*" is understood to mean that some learners who are involved in gangsterism use age cohorts as their license for gangsterism entry. Her snippet further indicates that due to their age it would not be easy to empower them so that they quit it for good. In this context, overage is a threat to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Ms. Morwe's response that "*If our SBST could be assisted with referral forms...*" on a macro level of contextual analysis, implies that, if an early identification of learner behavioural change on and off school premises can be spotted, such learners can be discouraged from joining gangs. Furthermore, the words "...*referral forms...*" are understood to indicate that such learners could be assisted with the filling in of forms that would seek a rehabilitation center for correcting their gangsterism behaviour. In this context, rehabilitation is considered as a weapon towards learner empowerment.

Sipho's comment about being "...*in the company of disloyal friends...*" is understood to mean that disloyal friends are a breeding ground for gangster activities to blossom. Such learners may mislead other learners with good manners into gangsterism on and off the school campus. The words "...*rather focus on their studies*" is in line with the social control theory (SCT) and has a connotation that once learners concentrate on their studies, and are not allowed to idle; they can be discouraged to join gangs. In this

context, a focus on studies encapsulates learner empowerment over and above gangster activities (*vide* section 2.6.3).

4.5.4 Threats to parental involvement and support

According to Hill and Taylor (2004:161), parental school involvement refers to the development of active collaborations between households and institutions towards an assurance of successful learner academic achievement. Jeynes (2012:707) posits that parental involvement has to do with the active participation of parents that is underpinned by two-way regular communication with schools. The aforementioned definitions are in agreement with responses echoed by some of the participants during one of our meetings:

Mr. Letsatsi, a teacher, asserted that:

In some cases, police visibility is poor, and this does not assist us.

Mr. Mphulenyane, an SGB chairperson, indicated that:

If some teachers do not implement decisions taken during learner disciplinary hearings, then we are in big trouble.

Moshe, learner suggested that:

The SGB needs to eradicate laxity in school policies and parents' attendance of school meetings.

The response by Mr. Letsatsi that “...*police visibility is poor...*” is understood to mean that the police patrols around the school premises are not up to scratch. In this case, poor police visibility is seen as a threat to a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. The words “...*this does not assist us*” affirm the fact that, from the teachers point of view it would be challenging to ensure active parental involvement and support if police do not play their part.

Mr. Mphulenyane’s citation that “...*teachers do not implement decisions taken...*” is understood to mean that lack of implementation of decisions taken by the SGB on

behalf of the majority of parents at school is a threat to a strategy. This lack of implementation of decisions impacts negatively on further parental involvement and support. Furthermore, the words “...we are in big trouble” is an indication that the SGB has reached a *cul-de-sac* situation with regards to a way forward to ensure an active parental involvement if there is no adequate support from some teachers. Moshe’s snippet that “*the SGB needs to eradicate the laxity on school policies...*” is understood to mean that parental involvement to tighten the school policies on curbing of gangsterism on school premises must be ensured by the SGB as the custodians of policymakers. This further suggests that parents are expected to make valuable inputs towards credible policies on the curbing of gangsterism on school campuses. The phrase “...parents’ attendance of school meetings” further affirms the fact that school meetings provide an official platform where parents can be actively involved in credible decision making.

4.6 EVIDENCE OF THE FUNCTIONALITY OF A STRATEGY ON HOW GANGSTERISM CAN BE CURBED

4.6.1 Equality as one of the best practices

Research studies indicate that in Scotland, some youth classified as gangsters are confined in territorial gangs, which by nature expose these learners to hardships of restricted mobility. Learners labeled as gangsters are marginalised in the sense that they are not equally treated like their counterparts, nor do they attend school without any provocation (Banister & Fraser, 2008:102). Cureton (2009:352) posits that, in Chicago, marginalised gangsters show their frustrations from exclusion from mainstream and societal opportunities by engaging in gangster activities like hustling of drugs, guns and stolen goods. In the effort to assist in the rehabilitation of such learners, during one of our interactions themes emerged as follows:

Mr. Monaheng postulated that:

Re le sekwele ke nagana re tlhopho motshameko wa poelagano le sepolesa (As a school, I think we need to arrange a rehabilitative game with the police).

Ms. Dinokaneng contended that:

We should never underestimate advice from these learners. We know very well they do have experience in gangsterism.

Mr Monaheng's assertion that "*as a school we need to...*" is understood to mean that the school community supports viewing gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism as equal and free to associate with all stakeholders. The words "*...we need to arrange a rehabilitative game with the police*" are understood to mean that a collaborative game with the police will foster a good relationship between these learners and the police. Such a game is indicative of the emphasis on equality as human beings. Their acceptance by their community serves as an emancipation from gangsterism and acquisition of their equality status.

Ms. Dinokaneng's citation that "*...never underestimate advice from these learners*" is understood to mean that whenever the gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism are engaged in critical discourse on gangsterism, their advice is to be taken seriously as equal co-researchers on a social matter affecting their lives. The words "*...do have experience...*" are understood to mean that their inputs on gangsterism matters are equally as important as the views of other participants.

4.6.2 Inclusion and integration as best practices

Chong (2018:507) defines inclusion as a cohesive state of oneness. In the context of this study, inclusion assisted in bringing together the gangsters and other learners who were exposed to gangsterism under one umbrella of changing their mindset for the purpose of social adherence. The impetus of such an inclusion ensures that the social ills of an association with gangsterism by these learners is totally erased. One of the good practices from an inclusion point of view in Brussels, Belgium, is to promote self-esteem and mutual respect in gangsters and other learners on and off school premises, through increased interaction and collaboration (Includ-Ed, 2012:23). Some of the good practices that support inclusion and integration were suggested by participants as follows:

Ms. Morwe pointed out that:

These learners must admit to their problem and do self-introspection.

Mr. Letsatsi reported that:

As charity begins at home, parents must be in the forefront to lead them.

In analysing Ms. Morwe's citation textually, the words "...*learners must admit to their problem...*" are understood to mean that the learners must not hide the fact that they have a problem like an involvement in gangsterism that derails them from a productive life course. Any denial of such a problem would complicate any envisaged assistance from the school community and their parents. The phrase "...*self-introspection*" is understood to mean that for inclusion to be a good practice in eradicating gangster activities in these learners, a point of departure is for them to study the inner person and reveal every piece of information towards their rehabilitation.

The response from Mr. Letsatsi that "...*charity begins at home...*" is understood to mean that home is a sanctuary where learners are taught good manners. Parents are expected to be in conversation with their children to ascertain what troubles them on a daily basis for prompt intervention. The phrase "... *parents must be in the forefront to lead them*" on a macro-level of CDA's textual analysis, is understood to mean that parents are exemplary to their children in whatever they are doing. As fore-front runners in their lives, they have a responsibility to inform the schools timeously on any behavioural change in their children.

4.6.3 Empowerment as a best practice

According to Zairi and Jarrar (2010:5), empowerment means the granting of power decision and action to the employees towards the achievement of a job and customer satisfaction. In collaboratively capacitating gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism to quit gangsterism, participants patiently and cautiously allowed them to make their own decision to own up to their gangster associations. The emphasis was

on the benefit such collaboration would yield in the end towards their rehabilitation from gangsterism.

Banfield Agency (2016:1) refers to empowerment as a process that entails a high level of employee engagement that results in an organisation that is more adaptable to change. Through a meaningful collaboration, the study offered the different participants an opportunity to debate and research an anti-social phenomenon like gangsterism that affected their social lives. All the participants were able to adapt to a research process that contributed to knowledge acquisition that would benefit their community from emancipation from gangsterism.

Dipolelo, a learner asserted that:

Ke nahana ho re ha re ka ntsha tjehelete ya letlole la sekolo, e ka re thusa ho fedisa kenstaresm (I think if we can pay school fees, that can help in curbing gangsterism).

Thabang was of the view that:

Learners are struggling with their academic work, be allowed to attend Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges.

Dibakiso corroborated that:

Our school should be an arena of liberty.

Dipolelo's assertion that "...we can pay school fees..." textually implies that an introduction of a payment of a school fund would put pressure on some learners to take their studies seriously and forget about indulging in gangsterism. Fear of squandering their parents' money, discipline and commitment to studies are considered ingredients of empowerment as one of the best practices. These learners would not like to disappoint their parents, teachers, and peers by letting go of an opportunity to be successful in education (*vide* section 2.6.3).

The snippet from Thabang that "*Learners are struggling with academic work...*" is understood to mean that some learners that are academically deficient might get frustrated and resort to gangsterism due to failure in proper schooling. Furthermore, the words "...be allowed to attend Technical and Vocation Education and Training colleges"

are understood to mean that these institutions can empower them with the necessary skills and values to fend for themselves in life, rather than indulging in gangsterism.

Dibakiso's response that *"Our school should be an arena of liberty"* is understood to mean that the school premises are to allow learners to air their views freely on matters which socially affect their lives. Such premises would expeditiously assist participants to design intervention strategies to curb gangsterism.

4.6.4 Parental involvement as a best practice

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) (2012:6) defines parental involvement as collaboration between the parents and school staff in holistically supporting and developing the learners towards achieving their citizenry. According to Hirsto (2010:99), existence of communication between the parents and the gangsters assists in easing the tension that is encapsulated in them due to their gangster activities. When lines of communication between the participants are open and such learners' diversity is taken into cognisance, parents were viewed as collaborators that granted a democratic space for them air their grievances.

In Malaysia, research studies indicate that in the creation of caring educational environments, free from gangsterism contamination on school campuses, parental involvement ensures support of gangsters' emotions and also for improved behaviour (Hashim, Hassan, Mansur and Badzis, 2015:52). One can draw from the research studies the conclusion that the active collaboration of parents with other stakeholders in emancipation of gangsters and other learners exposed to the scourge of gangsterism, is a morale and behaviour booster for them to mend their ways. In South Africa, a sharing of information on gangsterism and gang movements by clustering schools is considered one of the best practices that entail parental involvement. Such clusters can warn other schools on imminent gang activities envisaged by any group in the school's vicinity (Griggs, 2002:38). This statement supports the research proposal in selecting parents from different walks of life as participants in this project (see section 3.4.5). The

following responses from one of the participants' meetings support the importance of parental involvement:

Mr. Diphoko stated that:

SGB can distribute pamphlets and newsletters on gangs and gangsterism from house to house.

Moshe, a learner, was of the opinion that:

Our RCL will definitely assist the SGB to distribute them.

Ms. Morwe, a teacher, pointed out that:

We suggest that the safety committee and SGB must review and update safety and security policy of our school.

The citation of Mr. Diphoko that *“SGB can distribute pamphlets and newsletters on gangs and gangsterism...”* is understood to mean that parental involvement as a good practice could be enhanced through distribution of pamphlets and newsletters on gangsterism. The distribution of pamphlets and newsletters was considered to be a form of awareness of the school community on the prevalence of the scourge of gangsterism. If other participants and the community know in advance about the pending gangster activities, they would be in a position to advise the school and other stakeholders, like the police, about them. In that context, pamphlets and newsletters on gangs and gangsterism are ingredients of parental involvement as a good practice.

Moshe's corroboration that *“Our RCL will assist SGB to distribute them”* was a clear indication that even the learners fully supported the participants' intention to identify gangsters and gangsterism earlier, and to stop them in their tracks. The word *“them”* is understood to mean the pamphlets and newsletters on gangs and gangsterism from the SGB to conscientise the school community about them.

The response of Ms Morwe that *“...the safety committee and the SGB must review and update the safety and security policy of our school”* is understood to mean that since the research's overarching question is how to curb gangsterism, the two most important structures were expected to seek inputs from the majority of parents towards reviewing

and updating of safety and security policy. By beefing up the safety policy, the two structures are ensuring a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for learners, teachers and non-teaching staff. This would further assist in the identification and elimination of gangsters on the premises of the school.

4.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter focussed on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of empirical data generated during interactions and meetings with participants, on how to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Analysis and interpretation of the generated data were supported by the facts drawn from the related literature. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) of data centered on the study's objectives and components like equality, inclusion, empowerment and parental involvement. Three levels of critical discourse analysis were also used to analyse and interpret data on the challenges experienced by participants and the SWOT of the research.

CHAPTER 5 : SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings of analysed data, recommendations, discussions, and conclusions on a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools are presented. The chapter commences with discussions on the background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, and the aims and objectives of the study. The findings are related to information drawn from the theoretical framework and the related literature. The discussions, findings, and recommendations support the objectives of the study.

5.2 BACKGROUND AND THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to develop a strategy to assist schools to curb gangsterism. Gangsterism is a culture of belonging to organised gangs of criminals, especially involving the element of violence (Collins English dictionary, 2014:2). What we know from research is that gangsterism negatively affects social and educational outcomes in schools. Empirical research indicates a steady growth in the number of gangs in schools. Research further indicates that gangsterism contaminates the school environment and jeopardises the educational process (Alagappar, 2010:1).

It is evident that the learners drawn into gangsterism have multi-faceted social challenges in the secondary school under study. Their social challenges induce stress in their lives. Their indulgence in gangsterism subsequently results in some school and community members disowning them. In order to address the social challenges manifesting as a social exclusion of gangsters, the study upholds the findings of Curcic (2014:257), that a total and non-discriminatory integration of these learners into school and community premises be expeditiously implemented.

5.2.1 Research question

How to curb gangsterism in schools?

5.2.2 Aim and objectives of the study

This research study aims at assisting schools develop a strategy to curb gangsterism. The study's objectives centred on the justification of a need to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools; demonstration of components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools; discussion of conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools; to highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities for the usage of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools and a demonstration of the success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices.

Participants volunteered in the research discourses with the sole purpose of contributing to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, as a social concern. The development of collaborative discussions of participants fuelled impetus to discard the marginalisation of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism for a strategy to be successful. Their collaborative discourses looked at the best possible ways to rescue the gangsters from the scourge of gangsterism as opposed to condemning them to oblivion.

Involvement of gangsters and other participants during interactions and meetings assisted greatly in the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The views and experiences put forward by former gangsters during such meetings paved a way forward for all the research participants to develop an inclusive strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, in that they were discussing issues from the perspective of lived experience.

With regards to the objectives of the study, all have been achieved. The first aim of justifying the need to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools is supported by empirical data and the technical literature that gangsterism is prevalent on selected

schools' premises. The presence of gangsterism compromises the safety of learners, teaching and non-teaching staff. It further surfaced during the meetings with participants that the majority of learners and teachers see gangsterism as a threat to their lives on and off school premises. The second objective of demonstrating components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools was realised through participants' discourses on encouraging gangsters to achieve total integration into the community, empowerment of participants for meaningfully and collectively participating in the research project and the emphasis on equality of all participants irrespective of their status in the community.

The third objective regarding conditions conducive to a strategy was achieved through responses that revealed that if learners exposed to gangsterism are equipped with skills for job creation, job placement, and vocational training, then gangsterism on school premises would be curbed. The fourth objective of examining threats to the strategy was achieved by indicating the power relations. If gangsters are marginalised from the community, they will develop anger that results in a power imbalance in the community. Such learners would consider themselves as failures in life and decide to terrorise community members in many ways. The fifth objective was realised after engaging the teachers and parents to indicate that when working as team members in this research project, the strategy could bring a cohesive state of oneness, which does not discriminate against other community members.

5.3 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Findings of inclusion

Literature has indicated that the first step to curb gangsterism in schools is to establish interventions at an individual level with disruptive learners on school premises. The learners displaying this type of anti-social behaviour are considered to be at risk of joining gangs. The literature further indicated that the family prevention that encapsulates family therapy mentoring and cognitive-behavioral therapy are some of the best strategies to curb gangsterism on and off school premises (see section 2.13).

The study found that an inclusion ensures an active involvement of co-researchers in an investigation of a societal reality, like gangsterism that negatively affects their lives.

Active involvement of co-researchers ensures the implementation of a reliable change that benefits the entire community (Costa, Duperoy and Sabella, 2016:7). The study also found that inclusion of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism, assisted the research process in that their active voices on how to curb gangsterism in schools were heard, as they shot from the hip as far as their experiences and opinions on gangsterism were concerned. Their experiences indicated gangster life as a very aloof and lonely life that has no prospects.

The study further found that inclusion of gangsters in this research project took into consideration their rights as human beings in a production of valuable knowledge on how to curb gangsterism in schools. Through their inclusion in different sporting codes with their community members the stigma of being gangsters was eliminated, and their rehabilitation process was expeditiously enhanced.

5.3.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that to stop gangsterism early in schools, schools through their school governing bodies as guardians of governance, are expected to strengthen the code of conduct for learners. The code of conduct for learners must stipulate the corrective measures to be meted out to an individual culprit. Once a learner has already indulged in gangsterism, the code of conduct for learners is expected to clarify further the roles of the family and the community in rehabilitating the learner, rather than isolating him or her.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that gangsters are not to be marginalised from their communities, nor be regarded as the voiceless in social discourses about gangsterism issues. Since they had run the race as far as their experiences are concerned with gangsterism, they are better resourced to advise the schools as well as the community, on how best to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The study further recommends that integration of gangsters in the community can be enhanced through active participation in different sporting codes. Active participation in sports is considered a component of a strategy that presents a

platform whereon the community members and the gangsters meet on an informal basis. Such meetings consolidate strong attachment to each other as supported by social control theory (SCT), the lens through which this study is viewed (see section 2.6.2).

5.3.3 Risks of inclusion

Based on the findings of this study, teachers and parents can also pose as a threat to inclusion of gangsters into the community. These participants are not trained on the issues of inclusion and integration of gangsters; as such they lack the technique and expertise of assisting the gangsters to transform from gangsterism to law abiding citizens. According to Reis (2007:94), teachers are not trained as counsellors to deal with social trauma of gangsters. Their training is mainly focused on academic content and didactics.

Some learners may not fully disclose their experiences and secrets of being gangsters for fear of intimidation from the community and former gang members. Some revealed that the presence of substance abuse and alcohol from the neighbouring taverns pose a threat to social inclusion. Some learners revert to gangsterism after a successful spell in rehabilitation centers, due to easy access to these intoxicating substances.

5.4 FINDINGS ABOUT EQUALITY

The labeling of learners indulging in gangsterism as gangsters by the school, and community members, leave a stigma that deprives them of their democratic rights. Gangsters, like all other learners, have democratic rights as entrenched in the Bill of Rights in the country. The study found that the school and community members showed signs of marginalisation, oppression, and discrimination against gangsters. They are labeled as gangsters because other community members condemned them as failures in life. This was evident in some of the participants' responses during our meetings.

The study also found that an indulgence of some learners in substance abuse and the use of dangerous weapons compromise their status as human beings. Once these learners have indulged in substance abuse, they are uncontrollable and become resistant to advice. The study also revealed that their democratic rights as learners are eroded by the responsibility of being heads of child-headed families. This type of responsibility comes with a huge challenge of fending for their families even if they are not yet equal to the task (see section 4.3.1).

5.4.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that both the school and community members must regard the gangsters as human beings with equal rights like all other learners in schools. Gangsters should also have full and equal enjoyment of human rights and democratic freedom (Bill of Rights of South Africa, 1996:22). It is recommended that the school, through SGB and SMT, carries the responsibility of educating the learners about the contents of the Bill of Rights of South Africa 1996, Chapter 2, and section 9: Right to Equality. Education on the right to equality can be undertaken during a school assembly for learners, teachers, and non-teachers, and parents meetings.

As corrective measures for gangsters, it is recommended that they are referred for rehabilitation to assist them to quit substance abuse. The school should enlist the services of social workers to assist with child-headed families. In addressing the issue of dangerous weapons on school premises, it is recommended that the police should introduce unannounced random searches. Random checks as one of the components of a strategy discourage learners from carrying dangerous weapons onto school premises.

5.4.2 Risks of equality

A learner granted equality status is at risk of enduring a negative influence on his or her life due to the demands of such a position. The negative influence on life more often

than not results in limited attachment to community, school, and church as prosocial bonds (see section 2.6.2). In the context of this study, some learners granted this status showed some disrespect to some community members in addressing certain gangster issues during this research project. In some instances, our participant meetings were emotional when some specific were raised.

The study found that equality status in some instances culminates in poor parental supervision, as a gangster in a child-headed family is always alone. Such a learner lacks the expertise to head a family and may experience an over-reliance on anti-social peers. According to Community Solutions to Gang Violence (CSGV) (2007:2), equality has a risk when a gangster seeks a group reward such as status. This was evident in this study when some learners accused some teachers of negative labeling if their status as equal participants was not recognised.

5.5 FINDINGS ABOUT EMPOWERMENT

The study found that empowered participants were beneficial to the construction of valuable knowledge that assisted the entire community and the school in the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Empowerment of researchers assisted in addressing the power relations in that all the participants enjoyed equal status in the research process. The participants felt that the research was done with them and not for them (see section 3.2.3.4).

The study further found that participants felt empowered by their participation in the research process as they were able to tackle the curbing of gangsterism in their community, which they felt was unjust and anti-social. Since the overarching question is how to curb gangsterism in schools, the co-researchers were empowered in decision-making that affects the community on how to curb gangsterism on school campuses. The learners, who are in most cases marginalised when decisions in households and schools are taken, felt empowered by their participation in this study and viewed it as an active collaboration of participants.

5.5.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that schools be turned into centers of excellence that advance the acquisition of learner skills, confidence, and hope. Skills, confidence, and hope motivate learners to achieve their educational outcomes and subsequently bar them from joining gangs. Validated data from the literature indicate that school safety should be a prerogative of all stakeholders in all the schools (see section 2.14).

It is expedient that the school implements gang training programmes to capacitate teachers, learners, and the school governing body, with an emphasis on how to curb gangsterism on school premises for the creation of a conducive teaching-learning environment. The programmes should be supported by the mentoring of the stakeholders to ascertain any progress recorded. Mentoring should also focus on the reflection process and the reintroduction of new intervention strategies to address any threats to the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

To empower learners further, the study recommends that programmes like trauma counseling, peer counseling and human rights education be introduced. Counseling programmes assist in the relieving of stress from the affected learners and the gangsters. Human rights education capacitates them on their constitutional rights as human beings. It is also recommended that empowerment of learners should focus on the invitation of motivational speakers. Motivational speakers from a police department can motivate learners and indicate to them the hardships of being imprisoned as a gangster. Such motivational sessions serve as a deterrent to discourage learners from joining gangs.

5.5.2 Risks of an empowerment

Some learners in schools do not meet the age cohort as outlined by the department of education. These learners are referred to as overage learners. The risk associated with such learners is that, due to their age, some learners consider themselves as equals to teachers on school premises. The age cohort is used as an excuse to disrespect teachers and the school authorities. If not managed properly from home and on school

campuses, this type of empowerment allows some learners to go berserk, and seek to take control of school proceedings on a daily basis. This further results in a decline in school discipline, and subsequently an indulgence in gangsterism (see section 4.5.3).

5.6 FINDINGS ABOUT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The study found out that parents are considered as vital as participants in this research. This is evident in that they were actively involved in the co-creation of valuable knowledge on how to curb gangsterism in schools. The study further found out that to emancipate learners from gangsterism, parents advised SGB to tighten up the code of conduct for learners to close the existing gaps. Parents found out that some learners indulge in gangsterism due to substance abuse, high rate of youth unemployment, poverty and dropping out of school amongst others.

The study also found out that parents realised the need to revive the community policing forum. To them, this is a very important structure in patrolling the community and school premises. The technical literature supports this notion by suggesting the patrol of hot spots by two or three people per group in assisting to curb this scourge of gangsterism (see section 2.14). The study found that parents should be actively involved in decision-making as far as school policies on gangsterism are concerned. Based on the findings of this study it is clear that there is laxity in the security infrastructure.

5.6.1 Recommendations about parental involvement

It is recommended that parents as collaborators in this research and one of the most important stakeholders in education, be granted a platform to add value to a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. The study also recommends active participation of parents in the creation of value that assists in curbing gangsterism in schools as a social concern. Their involvement and experiences come in handy to respond to the concerns of the community members in stamping out the scourge of gangsterism on and off the school premises.

The study further recommends that the SGB should do a regular review of the code of conduct for learners and other school policies on safety and security so that these documents can keep abreast with the ever-evolving gang operations. The recommendation emanates from the fact that *modus operandi* of gangs evolves with the passage of time. According to Chetty (2015:54), parental involvement engages specifically with learner misconduct and its nexus with gangsterism, engendering social conditions of schools, homes and communities in which the learners are living. In dealing with substance abuse, the study recommends that schools should engage the services of social workers to refer the learners to rehabilitation centers. To curb youth unemployment and poverty that result in indulgence in gangsterism, the study recommends that youth be encouraged to approach NGO's that will assist with job creation skills. To curb learner drop outs from the school, the study recommends that learners who are not coping academically be encouraged to enroll at TVET colleges.

5.6.2 Risks of exclusion of parents in curbing of gangsterism in schools.

The exclusion of parents results in breeding learners that break the school rules without fear of the known consequences. The exclusion of parents results in some learners dropping out of school and engaging in social ills like gangsterism (Gaik, 2016:1). Parents are considered as primary caregivers of their children from their households. Without parental involvement, learners would not acquire the necessary life skills that nurture them holistically as human beings. According to the social control theory as a lens through which this study was conducted, a lack of attachment of learners to parents results in delinquent behaviour. Parental exclusion further results in learners losing an opportunity to acquire values, attitudes, and habits from parents that would enhance their positive adjustment in the wider society.

5.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has established that gangsterism has contaminated the premises of some selected schools. The scourge of gangsterism on premises of some selected schools is

so prevalent that it interferes with the vision and mission of such schools to render quality education to the learners. The study has found that teachers, against all the odds, are trying their level best to assist the learners in achieving their educational outcomes. It is necessary for the DoE to seek external interventions to equip teachers with the skills to handle the wrangle brought by gangsterism on school premises. It should be emphasised that teachers have been academically trained to impart knowledge to learners, as opposed to dealing with gangsters on school premises.

Furthermore, the study found that the existence of gangsterism on school premises compromises the safety of teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and learners. The prevalence of the scourge of gangsterism induces a stressful and fearful atmosphere that is accompanied by an uncertain future.

Some parents further confirmed the behavioural changes of some learners as a result of indulgence in gangsterism, without their knowledge and consent. Such learners posed a threat to the school community and their families, due to their wayward behaviour. Parents, like teachers, lacked the skills to handle them. Their aggressive and violent behaviour caused trauma among their family members. Some learners in some selected schools riddled with gangsterism fear for their lives when attending such schools. They do not wish to be associated with such learners.

The strategy thus developed, focusing on inclusion, equality, empowerment and parental involvement, triggered some hope in the school community, which could apply the strategy effectively and efficiently to empower gangsters to leave gangsterism for good and to relieve learners exposed to gangsterism from stress. SCT has assisted in consolidating an attachment of gangsters and learners exposed to gangsterism to schools and community in general, proving that such an attachment involves the development of affection towards pro-social others and institutions, as embedded in four social bonds.

5.7.1 Recommendations

The study helped in collaboratively developing a strategy that could assist in curbing the scourge of gangsterism on the premises of a school in the township of Tswelopele municipality. The strategy thus formulated encompasses inclusion and integration of gangsters, empowerment, equality and parental involvement as supportive components. In keeping gangsterism at bay from the school premises through future discourses like meetings, summits, and conferences, it is recommended that all stakeholders engage one another through use of these fundamentals as educational praxis of this study. They proved to be the missing link in the chain of corrective measures regarding gangs and gangsterism.

The study did not dig deep into the impact which policies to curb gangsterism could have on a strategy. This, therefore, suggests that research is limited in this regard. It is thus recommended that further research is conducted on the formulation, implementation, and effectiveness of comprehensive policies on how gangsterism could be curbed in schools.

5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to only one secondary school as a research site. The study focused on the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools. Since this is a qualitative study that occurs within the natural setting of a study phenomenon, findings cannot be replicated and generalised to include the circumstances of other schools (Wiersma, 2009:20). This is indicative of the fact that school contexts differ from school to school. Furthermore, the findings of this research can be taken as a reflection of the real experiences shared by the participants about gangs in their community.

As some of the participants were commuting daily from schools to their households, for cost minimisation and effective utilisation of time, a research sample from only one secondary school was used during data generation. Therefore, the findings are not generalizable to the population at large. A use of CDA in this research study ensured that diversity of beliefs, narratives and opinions from participants, which may differ from

researcher to researcher, were subjectively analysed by the researcher in reaching conclusions (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:105).

5.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the findings and recommendations of the study. Since the aim of the study was to formulate a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools, the study found that learners who are glorified as gangsters, and who are also exposed to gangsterism are in dire need of assistance to quit the practice. It emerged during the research process that participants worked collaboratively to render their assistance towards the betterment of the future of these learners. This was evident when engaging these learners, who also constituted the research team, through inclusion, equality, empowerment and parental involvement as the vital components of a strategy.

It became evident during the research process that inclusion and integration of gangsters into the community could be enhanced, by referrals to rehabilitation centers and through engagement with organised sporting codes by their community. Equality appealed to their community to further enhance their status as human beings. On the other hand, empowerment assisted the formulation of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools in addressing the power relations among the participants towards engaging one another harmoniously and refraining from fear and favour. Parental involvement, in collaboration with teachers, was a vital cog in ensuring a smooth transition from gangsterism to the adoption of community values and beliefs. The afore-mentioned components are the pillars on which a strategy was formulated to curb gangsterism in schools. The collaborative strategy discussed in this research both relied on, and benefitted the learners.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPTS

A 1

APPENDIX A 1 TRANSCRIPT 1 INTRODUCTORY MEETING

As a principal researcher, it is expected of me to introduce myself to the participants in our first meeting. The participants are also expected to introduce themselves. The meeting is further convened to outline the research topic: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, and the five objectives of the study:

- To justify the need and/or challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.
- To highlight possible threats, weakness, strengths and opportunities of using the strategy that will curb gangsterism in schools.
- To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism in schools informed by best practices.

The study uses a probing in a form of focus groups. The discussions in groups will be directed by the study's objectives. The meeting further seeks to explain why Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a methodology is adopted for this study. PAR is a methodology used in research, where as participants collaborate in justifying a need to develop a strategy to curb a scourge of gangsterism in our schools. Having identified a need, according to PAR, is then followed by a series of actions that are aimed at solving that need, which could also be called a problem. Those actions are undertaken by all of us as participants. Your ideas, opinions and shared experiences in this study will be recorded for further analysis. Your inferences will be confidential and your names, as well those of your institutions be disguised for the purpose of your safety and this study. All qualitative data in the form of transcripts, notes and recorded versions will be safeguarded in my home as a hideout from any accessibility. Remember, you are obliged to pull off from this research at any stage if you feel your life is threatened. Go well until we meet in our next meeting as per the study's five objectives. The meeting is adjourned.

PROBING PROTOCOL WITH A PRINCIPAL: ONE-ON- ONE

I. Opening

- A. **(Establish Rapport) [Shake hands]** My name is Samuel Mlangeni and a registered Master's Degree in Education student at the University of The Free State. I would like to conduct a probing with you on my research topic.
- B. **(Purpose)** The aim of my research is: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adopted as a methodology for this research (**A description of PAR is outlined by a researcher to participants**)
- C. I hope to use the data (information) collected from this participants to assist schools with the curbing of gangsterism for an improvement of learner outcomes through effective teaching and learning.
- D. **(Time Line)** The probing will last for 90 minutes (1H30).
- E. **(Ethical considerations)** Your names and those of your institutions will be disguised for the purpose of this research and your safety. This probing will be recorded with your consent. You are at liberty to withdraw at any stage of this research if you feel uncomfortable.

Transition: Our interactions and discussions will be directed by the study's five objectives:

II Body

- A. **Objective 1: To justify the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.**

1.1 What are the challenges for a development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

- B. **Objective 2: To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

2.1 What are the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

- C. **Objective 3: To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

gangsterism in schools.

3.1 Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

A. Objective 4: To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

4.1 What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. Objective 5: To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism as informed by best practices.

5.1 How can we demonstrate a success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices?

III Closing

A. **(Summarize)** Let me briefly summarise the information that I have recorded during our probing.

B. **(Main Rapport)** Well it has been a pleasure to conduct this probing with you. I appreciate the time you took for this discussion. Do you think is there anything else that would be helpful for us to know before we close?

C. **(Action to be taken)** Would it be alright to call you any time if I have any more questions? Thanks again. I am looking forward to meet you again.

Appendix A 3: TRANSCRIPT 3

A 3

PROBING PROTOCOL WITH TEACHERS: FOCUS GROUPS

I. Opening

A. **(Establish Rapport) [Shake hands]** My name is Samuel Mlangeni and a registered Master's Degree in Education student at the University of The Free State. I would like to conduct a probing with you on my research topic.

B. **(Purpose)** The aim of my research is: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adopted as a methodology for this research (**A description of PAR is outlined by a researcher to participants**)

- C. I hope to use the data (information) collected from this probing to assist schools with the curbing of gangsterism for an improvement of learner outcomes through effective teaching and learning.
- D. **(Time Line)** The discussions will last for 120 minutes (2Hrs).
- E. **(Ethical considerations)** Your names and those of your institutions will be disguised for the purpose of this research and your safety. This probing will be recorded with your consent. You are at liberty to withdraw at any stage of this research if you feel uncomfortable.

Transition: Our interactions and discussions will be directed by the study's five objectives:

II Body

A. Objective 1: To justify the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.

- 1.1 What are the challenges for a development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. Objective 2: To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

- 2.1 What are the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

A. Objective 3: To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

- 3.1 Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. Objective 4: To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

- 4.1 What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

C. Objective 5: To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism as informed by best practices.

- 5.1 How can we demonstrate a success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices?

III Closing

A. **(Summarise)** Let me briefly summarise the information that I have recorded during our probing.

B. **(Main Rapport)** Well it has been a pleasure to conduct a probing with you. I appreciate the time you took for this probing. Do you think is there anything else that would be helpful for us to know before we close?

C. **(Action to be taken)** Would it be alright to call you any time if I have any more questions? Thanks again. I am looking forward to meet you again.
3.1 Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

A. **Objective 4: To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

4.1 What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. **Objective 5: To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism as informed by best practices.**

5.1 How can we demonstrate a success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices?

III Closing

A. **(Summarize)** Let me briefly summarise the information that I have recorded during our probing.

B. **(Main Rapport)** Well it has been a pleasure to conduct this probing with you. I appreciate the time you took for this discussion. Do you think is there anything else that would be helpful for us to know before we close?

C. **(Action to be taken)** Would it be alright to call you any time if I have any more questions? Thanks again. I am looking forward to meet you again.

Appendix A 4: TRANSCRIPT 4

A 4

PROBING PROTOCOL WITH LEARNERS: FOCUS GROUPS

I. Opening

A. **(Establish Rapport) [Shake hands]** My name is Samuel Mlangeni and a registered Master's Degree in Education student at the University of The Free State. I would like to conduct a probing with you on my research topic.

B. **(Purpose)** The aim of my research is: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adopted as a methodology for this research (**A description of PAR is outlined by a researcher to participants**)

C. I hope to use the data (information) collected from this probing to assist schools with the curbing of gangsterism for an improvement of learner outcomes through effective teaching and learning.

D. **(Time Line)** The probing will last for 120 minutes (2Hrs).

E. **(Ethical considerations)** Your names and those of your institutions will be disguised for the purpose of this research and your safety. This probing will be recorded with your consent. You are at liberty to withdraw at any stage of this research if you feel uncomfortable.

Transition: Our interactions and discussions will be directed by the study's five objectives:

II Body

A. **Objective 1: To justify the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.**

1.1 What are the challenges for a development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. **Objective 2: To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

2.1 What are the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

C. **Objective 3: To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

3.1 Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

D. **Objective 4: To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

4.1 What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

E. Objective 5: To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism as informed by best practices.

5.1 How can we demonstrate a success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices?

III Closing

A. **(Summarise)** Let me briefly summarize the information that I have recorded during our discussions.

B. **(Main Rapport)** Well it has been a pleasure to conduct this probing with you. I appreciate the time you took for this probing. Do you think is there anything else that would be helpful for us to know before we close?

C. **(Action to be taken)** Would it be alright to call you any time if I have any more questions? Thanks again. I am looking forward to meet you again.

PROBING PROTOCOL WITH PARENTS: FOCUS GROUPS

I. Opening

A. **(Establish Rapport) [Shake hands]** My name is Samuel Mlangeni and a registered Master's Degree in Education student at the University of The Free State. I would like to conduct a probing with you on my research topic.

B. **(Purpose)** The aim of my research is: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adopted as a methodology for this research **(A description of PAR is outlined by a researcher to participants)**

C. I hope to use the data (information) collected from this probing to assist schools with the curbing of gangsterism for an improvement of learner outcomes through effective teaching and learning.

D. **(Time Line)** The probing will last for 90 minutes (1H30).

E. **(Ethical considerations)** Your names and those of your institutions will be disguised for the purpose of this research and your safety. This probing will be recorded with your consent. You are at liberty to withdraw at any stage of this research if you feel uncomfortable.

Transition: Our interactions and discussions will be directed by the study's five objectives:

II Body

A. **Objective 1: To justify the challenges for the development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools.**

1.1 What are the challenges for a development of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. **Objective 2: To demonstrate the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

2.1 What are the components of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

C. **Objective 3: To discuss the conditions which are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.**

Which conditions are conducive for a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

A. Objective 4: To highlight possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools.

4.1 What are the possible threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of using a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools?

Transition to the next objective.

B. Objective 5: To demonstrate the success of a strategy for curbing gangsterism as informed by best practices.

5.1 How can we demonstrate a success of a strategy to curb gangsterism in schools as informed by best practices?

III Closing

A. (Summarise) Let me briefly summarize the information that I have recorded during our interview.

B. (Main Rapport) Well it has been a pleasure to interview you. I appreciate the time you took for this discussion. Do you think is there anything else that would be helpful for us to know before we close?

C. (Action to be taken) Would it be alright to call you any time if I have any more questions? Thanks again. I am looking forward to meet you again.

ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

DEAREST PRINCIPAL

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Department of Education. I intend to conduct this research project from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018. The research will be conducted outside teaching-learning time.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your consent, you will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and discussions. You are assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- Your participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if you feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect you from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one you gave will be treated with confidentiality

Your knowledge and experience will come in handy in this study.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement

Date

Mlangeni L.S. (Mr)

Approving Participating Member



ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR TEACHERS

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

DEAREST TEACHER

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Department of Education. I intend to conduct this research project from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018. The research will be conducted outside teaching-learning time.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your consent, you will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and probing. You are assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- Your participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if you feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect you from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one you gave will be treated with confidentiality

Your knowledge and experience will come in handy in this study.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement

Date

Mlangeni L.S. (Mr)

Approving Participating Member



ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR PARENTS

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

DEAREST PARENT

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and Free State Provincial Department of Education. I intend to conduct this research project from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018. The research will be conducted outside teaching-learning time.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your consent, you will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and discussions. You are assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- Your participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if you feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect you from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one you gave will be treated with confidentiality

Your knowledge and experience will come in handy in this study.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement

Date

Mlangeni L.S. (Mr)

Approving Participating Member



ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR HEAD/ SUPERINTEDEDENT

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
FREE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BLOEMFONTEIN
9300**

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

I intend to conduct this research project from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018. I have identified one secondary school in Bultfontein, one in Wesselsbron and one in Odendaalsrus to serve as case studies and will request some teachers, learners and parents of the three schools to participate. The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university

's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Department of Education. The research will be conducted outside teaching-learning time.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your and their consent, they will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and discussions. They will be assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- That their participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and they are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if they feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect them from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one they gave shall be treated with confidentiality

Your approval will be appreciated.

Regards.



ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR
LEJWELEPUTSWA DISTRICT
WELKOM
9460**

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Education Department. I intend to conduct this research project from 25 July 2018 to 31 October 2018. I have identified one secondary school in Bultfontein, one in Wesselsbron and one in Odendaalsrus to serve as case studies and will request some teachers, learners and parents of the three schools to participate.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your and their consent, they will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and discussions. They will be assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- That their participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and they are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if they feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect them from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one they gave shall be treated with confidentiality

Your approval will be appreciated.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement

Date



ENQ: MLANGENI L.S.

CELL: 082 742 1199

35 PRINSLO STREET

FAUNA

BLOEMFONTEIN

9301

CONSENT LETTER FOR LEARNERS

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

DEAREST LEARNER

I have enrolled for a Master's Degree in Education with the University of the Free State. Prof. Molebatsi Milton Nkoane is my promoter.

The study's commencement is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Department of Education. I intend to conduct this research project from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018. The research will be conducted outside teaching-learning time.

The research project seeks to develop a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools. This will assist in a creation and provision of sustainable quality education.

Participatory Action Research is used as a methodology, which means upon your consent, you will form part of the participants and be expected to participate in interactions that will form meetings and discussions. You are assured of the following prescripts that the research will abide with:

- Your participation will be anonymous
- Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if you feel any discomfort
- Measures will be taken to protect you from harm or any risk for the duration of the project
- Collected data including the one you gave will be treated with confidentiality

Your knowledge and experience will come in handy in this study.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement

Date

Mlangeni L.S. (Mr)

Approving Participating Member



CONSENT LETTER FOR RECORDING OF SPECIFIC DATA GENERATION METHOD

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

The research will be conducted from 25 September 2018 to 31 October 2018, and outside teaching-learning time. The commencement of a research is subjected to an approval from the university's Ethical Committee and the Free State Provincial Department of Education.

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the *insert specific data collection method*.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX B8



Faculty of Education

16-Oct-2018

Dear Mr Lehlohonolo Mlangeni

Ethics Clearance: A strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools

Principal Investigator: Mr Lehlohonolo Mlangeni

Department: School of Education Studies Department (Bloemfontein Campus)

APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Education, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2018/0611**

This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours faithfully

Prof. MM Mokhele Makgalwa
Chairperson: Ethics Committee

Education Ethics Committee
Office of the Dean: Education
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APPENDIX B9

29 January 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that I, Manuela Lovisa, retired lecturer in the Department of English and Cultural Studies, University of the Free State, have proofread and edited an M.Ed thesis submitted to the Education Faculty, University of the Free State, titled:

Developing a strategy to curb gangsterism in selected schools, by Mr Lehlohonolo Samuel Mlangeni.

Language and stylistic errors have been corrected to the best of my ability, and I am satisfied that Mr Mlangeni's thesis meets the required standard regarding language clarity, grammatical accuracy, cohesion and coherence.



MANUELA LOVISA

Lecturer (retired)
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