

SCHOOL VIOLENCE: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEMESIS

by

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
EXCO	Executive Committee
HRC	Human Rights Commission
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MEC	Member of the Executive Council (Provincial minister)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SAPS	South African Police Services
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SV	School violence
WHO	World Health Organisation

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis, that is submitted for the degree Philosophiae Doctor at the University of the Free State, is my own independent work, the result of my own attempt, done with the assistance and guidance of my promoter and co-promoter. It has not been submitted by me for any qualification at any other faculty or university.

I hereby cede copyright of the thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.

Lynette Jacobs

Date

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Dei Gratia

ABSTRACT

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa affirms the right to freedom and security for the people of South Africa, as well as the right to education. However, these rights are violated in schools by occurrences of violence. The media regularly report incidences of school violence that take place in some schools across the country. Even in schools that never attract the attention of the media, school violence is ever-present. In many schools school violence is normalised and stakeholders feel powerless to deal with the problem. However, because school violence has a detrimental effect on teaching and learning at schools and violates the learners' right to education in a safe environment, role-players have to face school violence and take steps to deal with it. This can only be done if school violence is fully understood. The aim of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of school violence in South Africa.

I worked from the assumption that school-violence role-players are not passive conduits, but that they have certain inner capabilities, which give them individual judgement and decision-making autonomy. I did three independent studies to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of school violence in the South African context in a triangulation mixed-method design. Burke's dramatism theory was used as a framework for analysis.

Firstly, I did a media analysis of articles on school violence that appeared in South African newspapers during the course of one year. The objective of this study was to understand the perceptions that are created, and the sense that is made of school violence through media reporting. The second study is a literature study to understand how school violence is reported on in research publications. I limited my literature study to mainly publications that focused on the South African context in peer-reviewed journals. The third study is a survey that was conducted in 11 secondary schools from 3 provinces. The aim of this study was to understand school violence through the experiences of learners as victims and onlookers. An international questionnaire, adapted for the South African demographical context, was administered to a non-probability sample of 690 learners.

School violence is complex and it has many faces, some of which are hard to notice. Consequently newspaper reports on school violence are very limited and they fail to sensitise the public. Scientific knowledge on the topic is also limited. Although the kinds of acts vary in various school contexts, school violence is a common occurrence in South African schools. Results from the survey refute stereotypical thinking about so-called vulnerable schools, but confirm findings based on the literature study that large schools, in particular, are susceptible to school violence. The results from the three studies suggest that, while outsiders in various capacities are sometimes involved in school violence dramas, most actors are those that spend their days at school. An examination of the three studies in juxtaposition clearly revealed that learners and staff members are all alike guilty of school violence, although they are also the victims and the onlookers. Sexual school violence is a constant menace, and so is corporal punishment. Weapons and other instruments are brought to school and used on others, and this phenomenon is not limited to certain categories of schools. Although there are many reasons for school violence, there is no single explanation for the ever-present threat of school violence at schools. Most acts of school violence seem to happen randomly, often in instant retaliation.

Based on my research, I recommend that schools should sensitise role-players to the many faces of school violence, and regularly explore the state of affairs at their own schools so that they can make informed decisions. All schools should take steps to prevent any armed person from entering the school premises, and they should also be aware of how everyday objects are used to victimise others. Furthermore, schools should realise that acts of school violence can happen at any time and in any place; therefore, they have to ensure that there is adequate supervision in all possible areas. Every school should take steps to strengthen support for all individuals in the school so as to make role-players feel accepted and respected.

Key words:

School violence, Burke's dramatism, media analysis, framing analysis, literature study, survey

OPSOMMING

Die Grondwet van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika onderskryf die reg tot vryheid en sekuriteit vir die mense van Suid-Afrika, asook die reg tot onderwys. Hierdie regte word egter deur die voorkoms van geweld in skole geskend. Die media rapporteer gereeld oor voorvalle van skoolgeweld wat landswyd by sommige skole voorkom. Selfs by skole wat nooit die aandag van die media trek nie, is skoolgeweld immer teenwoordig. Skoolgeweld word by talle skole as normaal beskou en belanghebbers is magteloos om die probleem aan te spreek. Omdat skoolgeweld egter 'n skadelike uitwerking op leer en onderrig by skole het, en dit die leerders se reg tot onderwys in 'n veilige omgewing skend, sal rolspelers die realiteit van skoolgeweld moet begin aanvaar en stappe doen om dit aan te spreek. Dit kan alleenlik gedoen word indien skoolgeweld ten volle verstaan word. Die doel van hierdie studie is om 'n bydrae te lewer tot 'n begrip vir die verskynsel van skoolgeweld in Suid-Afrika.

Ek gaan uit van die standpunt dat rolspelers by skoolgeweld nie bloot passiewe geleiers is nie, maar dat hulle oor die innerlike vaardighede beskik wat aan hulle individuele oordeel en besluitnemende outonomie bied. Ek het drie onafhanklike studies onderneem ten einde 'n beter begrip van die verskynsel van skoolgeweld in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks te bekom deur middel van 'n trianguleerende gemengdemetode-ontwerp. Burke se dramatisme-teorie is as raamwerk vir analise gebruik.

Ek het eerstens 'n media-analise gedoen van artikels oor skoolgeweld wat oor 'n tydperk van 'n jaar in Suid-Afrikaanse koerante verskyn het. Die oogmerk met hierdie studie was om 'n begrip te kry van die persepsies wat geskep word, asook die sin wat deur middel van mediaberiggewing van skoolgeweld gemaak word. Die tweede studie is 'n literatuurstudie om te bepaal hoe skoolgeweld in navorsingspublikasies gerapporteer word. Ek het my literatuurstudie hoofsaaklik beperk tot publikasies wat op die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks in ewekniebeoordeelde vaktydskrifte gefokus het. Die derde studie het 'n ondersoek behels wat in 11 sekondêre skole in 3 provinsies gedoen is. Die doel met hierdie studie was om skoolgeweld vanuit die ervarings van leerders as slagoffers en omstanders te verstaan. 'n Internasionale vraelys, wat vir die Suid-Afrikaanse demografiese konteks aangepas is, is gedurende 'n nie-waarskynlikheidsteekproef by 690 leerders afgeneem.

Skoolgeweld is kompleks en het talle aangesigte, waarvan sommige moeilik waarneembaar is. Gevolglik is koerantberigte oor skoolgeweld baie beperk en slaag hulle nie daarin om die publiek genoegsaam bewus te maak van die verskynsel nie. Vakkundige kennis oor die onderwerp is ook beperk. Alhoewel die tipes skoolgeweld varieer in verskillende skoolkontekste, kom skoolgeweld algemeen in Suid-Afrikaanse skole voor. Die resultate van die meningsopname weerlê die stereotipiese denke rakende sogenaamde kwesbare skole, maar bevestig die bevindings gebaseer op die literatuurstudie dat veral groot skole ontvanklik vir skoolgeweld is. Die resultate van die drie studies dui daarop dat, terwyl buitestaanders in verskeie hoedanighede soms by dramas rondom skoolgeweld betrokke is, die oorwegende groep rolspelers diegene is wat hulle dae by die skool deurbbring. 'n Ondersoek waarin die drie studies teenoor mekaar gestel is, het duidelik uitgewys dat leerders en personeellede ewe aandadig aan skoolgeweld is, alhoewel hulle ook die slagoffers en toeskouers is. Seksuele skoolgeweld sowel as lyfstraf is 'n konstante bedreiging. Wapens en ander instrumente word skool toe gebring en in geweld teenoor ander persone gebruik, en hierdie verskynsel is nie slegs tot sekere kategorieë skole beperk nie. Alhoewel daar baie oorsake vir skoolgeweld is, bestaan daar nie 'n enkele verduideliking vir die immer-teenwoordige bedreiging van skoolgeweld by skole nie. Die meeste voorvalle van skoolgeweld skyn toevallig te gebeur, dikwels as onmiddellike weerwraak.

Op grond van die navorsing beveel ek aan dat skole rolspelers bewus behoort te maak van die talle gesigte van skoolgeweld, en gereeld die stand van sake by hulle eie skole te ondersoek sodat hulle ingeligte besluite kan neem. Alle skole behoort stappe te doen om te verhoed dat enige gewapende persoon die skoolterrein betree, en hulle behoort bewus daarvan te wees hoe alledaagse voorwerpe gebruik kan word om ander te viktimiseer. Verder behoort skole te besef dat voorvalle van skoolgeweld ter enige tyd en op enige plek kan voorkom, en daarom moet hulle verseker dat daar toereikende toesig in alle moontlike plekke is. Elke skool behoort stappe te doen om ondersteuning vir alle individuele in die skool te verseker, ten einde rolspelers aanvaar en gerespekteer te laat voel.

Sleutelwoorde:

Skoolgeweld, Burke se dramatisme, media-analise, "framing analysis", literatuurstudie, meningsopname.

FROM 'WHAT I BELIEVE'

by EM FORSTER (1938)¹

... Tolerance, good temper and sympathy are no longer enough in a world which is rent by religious and racial persecution, in a world where ignorance rules, and Science, who ought to have ruled, plays the subservient pimp. Tolerance, good temper and sympathy - they are what matter really, and if the human race is not to collapse they must come to the front before long ...

¹ Forster, EM. 1965. What I believe. In *Two cheers for democracy*. Harmondsworth : Penguin

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

On 15 March 1995 the ideals for education in the post-apartheid South Africa were published in the *White Paper on Education and Training*. This document directs education policy development by the Government of South Africa after 1994 (RSA, 1995:2). Chapter four of this document describes the values and principles of education and training. It documents the Government's vision of education and training as part of "basic human rights" (section 2), with the "realisation of democracy, freedom, equality, fairness and peace as prerequisites for learning" (section 13) and an education system that counteracts "the legacy of violence" by promoting values that support the democratic process and fundamental human rights (section 16).

On 18 December 1996 the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996* (hereafter *Constitution*) (RSA, 1996a) was accepted, based on freedom, equality and human dignity (section 7(1)). The Bill of Rights (chapter 2) protects the rights of all people in the country, *inter alia* the right to "human dignity" (section 10), the right to life (section 11), and the right to "freedom and security of person" (section 12), which includes the right to be "free from all forms of violence" (section 12(1)(c)), and not to be treated or punished in a "cruel, inhuman or degrading way" (section 12(1)(e)). This *Constitution* is of a fundamental nature and applies to all laws, policies and actions by organs of the state, juridical and natural persons (section 8(1) & (2)). Freedom from violence is thus *mutatis mutandis* applicable to the school as place of education within the social structure of the South African society.

The reality in South African schools, as portrayed in the media is, however, not congruent with the education ideal of promoting democracy and the protection of fundamental human rights, which is spelled out in various South African policies and legislations. Articles regularly appear in newspapers under headings such as the following:

BusinessDay, 12 May 2005: **No hiding away from plague of violence in SA's schools** (Blaine, 2005a:1).

Sunday Times, 4 June 2006: **Pupil violence makes war zones of schools** (Govender, 2006a:5).

Sunday Times, 23 July 2006: **Friends' teenage rage leaves boy dead** (Mthethwa, 2006:5).

The Times, 23 September 2007: **Schoolboy stabbed as he bows to pray** (Naidoo, 2007:1).

Sunday Times, 10 November 2007: **Our children are raping each other** (Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1).

Daily Dispatch, 10 October 2008: **Schoolboy stabbed after 'bad joke'** (Fuzile, 2008:7).

Diamond Fields Advertiser, 21 October 2009: **Racial violence shuts NC school** (Hoo, 2009:3).

The Herald, 23 October 2009: **Two pupils hurt in gang violence** (Ndabeni, 2009:1).

The printed media inform the public about incidences of school violence (hereafter SV) such as the following: Learners being kicked, stabbed and beaten up (Carstens, 2006:6; Mkhize, 2006:5; Rademeyer, 2006:5), bullied (Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1; Mkhize, 2006:5), harassed (Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1), raped (Blaine, 2005b:1; Davids & Makwabe, 2007:1) and killed (Seale, 2008:2; Mthethwa, 2006:5). Scissors, knives and firearms are, *inter alia*, being used as weapons (Business Day, 2006:1; Carstens, 2006:6; Carstens & Fourie, 2006:6; Seale, 2008:2), educators are being assaulted by learners (Balt in Fitzpatrick, 2006:13), learners are being assaulted by educators (Govender, 2009:1), school staff are attacking each other violently (Govender, 2006b:1) and teenage suicide occurs (Du Toit in Van Niekerk, 2006:12; Tau, 2009:6). Vandalism and theft in schools are prevalent (Govender, 2006a:1).

Although media reporters are powerful socializing agents that help construct the public's perception of issues (Carlyle, Slater & Chakroff, 2008:169; Snyman, 2007:115), De Wet (2003a:36), points out that media reports are not necessarily unbiased. Often the media give a twisted interpretation of a situation. The desolation as a result of SV has, however, been confirmed by a number of research projects conducted with a variety of foci. Research projects may be approached from various perspectives such as: a legal perspective (e.g. De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2007; Joubert & Wentzel, 2009; Rossouw & Stewart, 2008) a comparative education perspective (e.g. De Wet, 2009; De Wet & Jacobs, 2007), an anthropological perspective (e.g. Burnett, 1998), an educational psychology perspective (e.g. Breet, Myburg & Poggenpoel, 2010), and from a criminological perspective (e.g. Nesor, 2006; Prinsloo & Nesor, 2007a; Prinsloo & Nesor, 2007b). Kollapen (2006:2) states that although role-players and researchers agree that SV has an adverse effect on the education system, there is an "absence of reliable quantification of the extent of SV". He expresses his concern in the following statement:

[T]he environment for effective teaching and learning, for the development of mutual trust and support between learner and teacher – all so critical in the effective delivery of education is severely compromised in an atmosphere where violence reigns (Kollapen, 2006:2).

Although much is reported and published on SV in South Africa, SV remains a menace in the everyday lives of those involved in South African schools.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Violence is by no means a simple phenomenon and numerous definitions exist. Violence is often seen as the intentional use of brute force or power with the aim of harming another (Henry, 2000:17; Odendal, Schoonees, Swanepoel, Du Toit & Booysen, 1994:278). This description can include intimidation or coercion by using the possibility of force as a threat. There are, however, other harmful acts that can also be classified as violence such as emotional or psychological pain (Henry, 2000:17; Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg & Zwi, 2002:1084), manipulation (Henry, 2000:18) and deprivation (Krug *et al.*, 2002:1084). Violence can be self-inflicted, interpersonal or collective (Henry, 2000:17; Krug *et al.*, 2002:1084). Krug *et al.*,

(2002:1084) provide the following framework to classify the various types of violence (Figure 1):

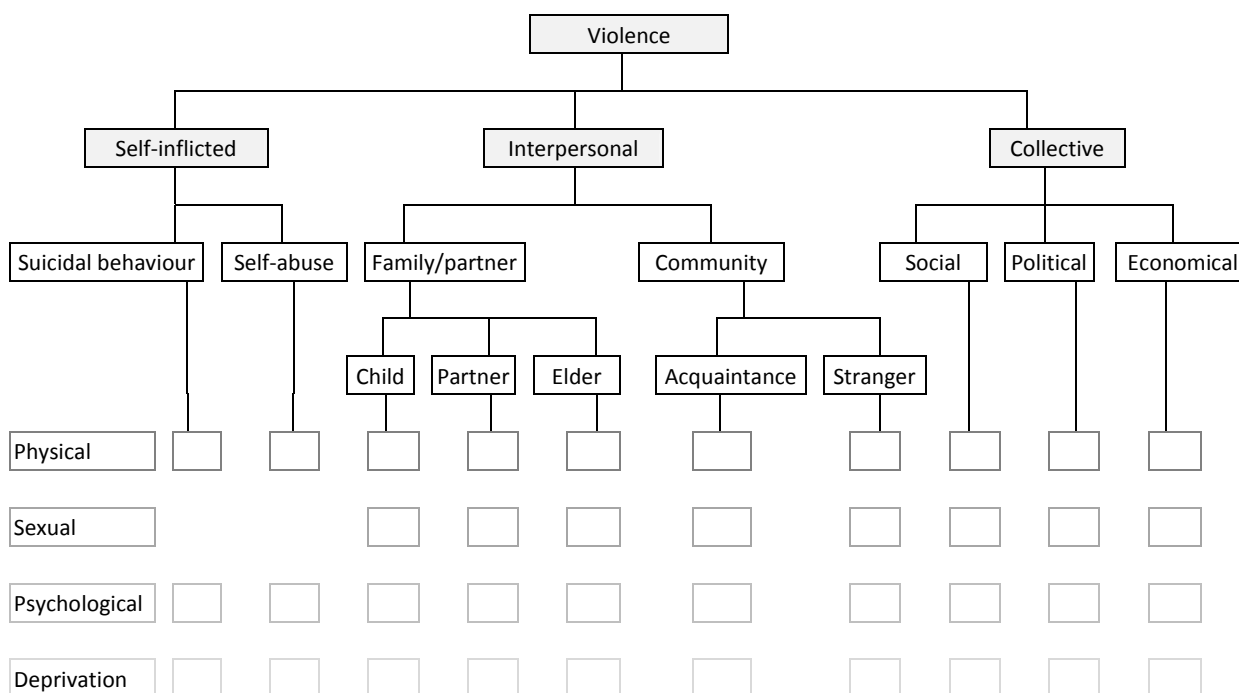


Figure 1: Diagrammatical display of the various types of violence (Krug et al., 2002:1084)

In line with the above, and admitting that it is fallible, the definition of violence, provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO) will be used as a as a point of departure to define [school] violence:

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person , or against a group or community, that either results in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation [constitutes violence] (Krug et al., 2002:1084).

In the context of this study, any of the above actions can take place before, during or outside school hours, during class times and breaks, at school-related events (sport, cultural and social), as well as while commuting to and from school.

In South African schools certain measures are taken to prevent violence, such as safety committees (Pandor, 2006:3), metal detectors (Merton, 2006:1), security guards at schools

(Merton, 2006:1), incidence registers (Pandor, 2006:11) and closed circuit television (CEM, 2006:2). Although mechanisms like these are likely to curb violence in schools to a certain extent, I believe that they merely address the symptoms and not the underlying reasons for violence in schools.

Various perceptions on the reasons for violence in schools exist. According to Barbanel (2005:ix) many of the reasons given for SV are, despite being informative, merely speculative. Teenager years are characterised by fluctuating emotions, impulsiveness, idealisms and extremisms as well as possessing the means to compensate for frustrations. Possibilities that researchers have considered are an over-emphasis of human rights in schools (Labuschagne in Carstens, 2006:6), the inability of youngsters to solve conflict in a constructive manner (Smith in Blaine, 2005a:2), stereotyping and prejudices based on differences (Barbanel, 2005:ix) and strong competitiveness in sport (Stevens in Blaine, 2005a:2). Other dynamics, that Barbanel (2005:ix) describes as “stage-specific”, such as the exposure to violence (in the family or the community), substance abuse, the accessibility of weapons, and a lack of conflict handling skills increase the volatility of the situation. De Villiers in Rademeyer (2008:2) argues that the world-wide phenomenon of violence in schools can be related to the characteristics and spirit of the post-modern child. Although popular opinion blames certain types of music, like heavy metal, for violent incidents at school, this opinion is rejected by Fast and Marchetti-Mercer (2009:5) who argue that such music merely provides a “background soundtrack to their actions”. Based on the work of Newman, Szabo, as well as Potterton, Fast and Marchetti-Mercer (2009:5) emphasise that marginalised learners are often those who engage in violent acts in “order to be someone”.

The above description illustrates the complexity of stimuli causing SV. Henry (2000:17) warns that when only a single factor is analysed at a time during a study of the phenomenon of SV, a distortion of the concept takes place. Even when researchers acknowledge that several factors play consequential parts in SV, they can still fail to understand the problem when these factors are analysed independently. Thus the cumulative and interactive influence that the various factors have on SV must be taken into account.

Role-players must be aware of their responsibilities when dealing with violence in schools. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2001:95-98) parents and guardians have a legal duty to protect their children from physical and psychological harm. When children go to school, this duty is transferred to the school and specifically to the educators in whose care the children are placed and, because of this delegated authority, educators act *in loco parentis*. Furthermore, based on their profession as educationalists, educators have an original authority (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001:97) and as such are responsible for learners who are placed in their care to receive tuition. Educators are duty bound to ensure the safety of learners. The liability, however, in the case of a learner being harmed owing to SV, also lies with the Department of Education (DoE), as the highest education authority. Therefore, clearly parents, educators, school managers, governors as well as the DoE are responsible for the safety of learners. All these role-players must take reasonable steps to protect learners from harm and, therefore, schools should receive directions in the form of policies. Kollapen (2006:2-3) expresses his concern about the lack of directives: "...there is no clear national policy in place to deal with school violence", therefore, the education policy provides an inadequate framework for schools on how to prevent SV and how to deal with SV.

In order to decide on meaningful steps to effectively protect learners, the phenomenon of SV, and the forces that drive it must be profoundly and critically studied and understood. The preceding reasoned exposition of the problem can be summarised in the following question: **How can school violence in the South African context be understood?**

Researchers from various study fields, in various contexts, and for various reasons have studied violence and SV. Thus, a vast body of knowledge exists and several theoretical models have been developed to direct such research. However, in the field of Education in South Africa, the studies have, to a large extent, been divorced from such theoretical models. Fast and Marchetti-Mercer (2009:5) argue that, although many theories on violence exist, there is still a need for a comprehensive theory:

[T]o get anywhere in our understanding of violence in its myriad forms, we need a general theory of violence, or at least an agreement about a paradigm in which to study it.

Although I argue that studies from *various* paradigmatic and theoretical perspectives can enhance our understanding of this evil in our schools, the above view of Fast and Marchetti-Mercer persuaded me to look critically at existing theories of violence.

1.3 ASSUMPTIONS

Before considering the dearth of theories on violence, I examined my own perspectives and formulated the following statements and assumptions:

1. SV is a complex issue and anyone who endeavours to explain this phenomenon must take the cumulative and interactive influence of the various factors into account (*vide* Fast & Marchetti-Mercer; 2009:5; Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:21; Henry 2000:17; Muro-Ruiz, 2002:116).
2. As such, SV can only be explained in terms of multiple interacting factors, role-players, events, and processes by using a wide variety of methods (*vide* Henning *et al.*, 2004:21; Muro-Ruiz, 2002:116; Onwuegbuzie, 2002:521).
3. However, although I make the above two statements, I do not claim that the complexity of SV is fully addressed in this study. Neither do I suggest that there is only one “truth” about SV.
4. While knowledge about SV may be obtained by looking at multiple observable phenomena, the way in which people make sense of SV and what meaning they construct, must also be understood in an attempt to understand the phenomenon of SV (*vide* Henning *et al.*, 2004:20).
5. Victims, onlookers and perpetrators during SV are not passive conduits but have certain inner capabilities which allow for individual judgment, perceptions and decision-making autonomy (*vide* Burke, 1966:16; Henning *et al.*, 2004:21; Muro-Ruiz, 2002:114).
6. The aim of this study is not to infer findings or to formulate universal laws. It does not claim to supply solutions to the problem of SV. It rather aims at contributing to the

understanding of the realities of SV in order to make certain recommendations on how to deal with violent situations in schools.

1.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Guided by the above assumptions, I read widely on theories of violence. Certain trends emerged:

1.4.1 *BIOLOGY AND VIOLENCE*

Many of the models and theories that I studied were based on the views that genetic, biological and/or neuro-psychological attributes in individuals are at the heart of violence (e.g. Barash, 2002 and Niehoff, 1999, amongst others). Although I realise that I lack the necessary knowledge and theoretical background to evaluate these theories, I do not dispute that certain characteristics in individuals make them more prone to aggression. However, I reject notions of people as passive conduits, the product of mere genetics, who are unable to make decisions and choices about their behaviour (*vide* 1.3(5)).

1.4.2 *ECOLOGICAL MODEL*

There is substantial support for the ecological model of violence (*vide* Bender & Emslie, 2010; Krug *et al.*, 2002 amongst others) in which researchers investigate the relationships between a variety of attributes such as biological factors as well as social structures. The model is based on the Russian doll-model of Brønfenbrenner (1979), dating back to the 1935 work of Kurt Lewin, where an individual is seen to develop within a context of nested ecological structures. The direct environment that the child comprehends is seen to be embedded within a larger environment such as the home or the school classroom, which, in turn, is embedded within a larger environment such as the neighbourhood or school. The structures and situations within this hierarchy are interrelated. Violence is thus seen as the result of the intricate interaction of individual, human relations, societal, cultural and environmental factors (Krauss, 2005:25-26; Krug *et al.*, 2002:1083; Schonfeld, 2006:181-184).

Based on the description of Krauss (2005:26) of the WHO (cf. p. 5) the model can be illustrated as follows:

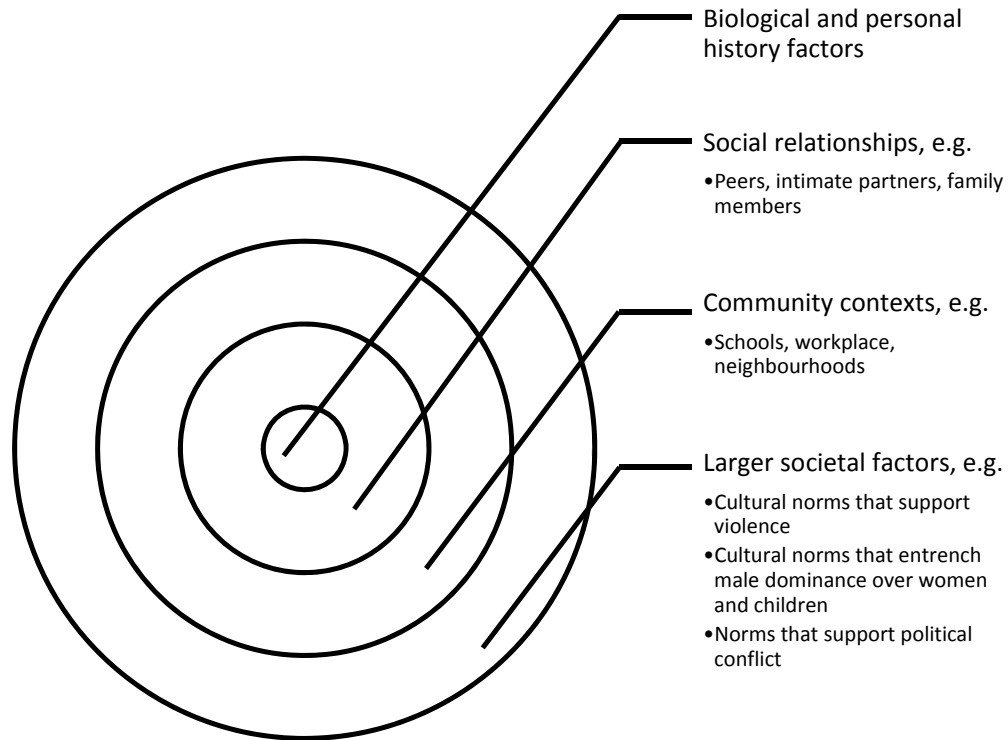


Figure 2: A schematic representation of the WHO ecological model of violence

Benbenishty and Astor (2005:5) adapted this model for their analysis of SV in Israel and moved SV to the centre. In their adaptation of the model the school nests within the context of several subsystems such as the student (e.g. age), the school type (e.g. size), the family (e.g. socio-economic status), the neighbourhood (e.g. availability of drugs), and the culture (e.g. Arab-Jew).

There are decided advantages when using a model such as this because: it is in line with international research; therefore, it can produce data that can be used in comparative studies; and, furthermore, it serves to give a summative overview and measures relationships that exist between variables. However, this model fails to explore the way in which people make sense of (school) violence, and the meaning they construct about it (*vide* 1.3(4)). Thus, I did not consider that this model was the right one for this study.

1.4.3 BURKE'S DRAMATISM

When using Kenneth Burke's framework, a researcher is enabled to write an exposition about human relationships (and *inter alia* the motives for violence) in such a way that it is devoid of fundamental, inherent constructs (Burke, 1969:xvii; Krauss, 2005:29).

Burke (1969:xv) asked the following question: "What is involved when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it?" He attempts to describe the answers by using his pentad of terms (in bold below). He believed that these key elements are essential to any full reconstruction of an individual's motive and behaviour (Burke, 1969:xv):

- ▶ What was done? (**Act**)
- ▶ Where and when was it done? (**Scene**)
- ▶ Who did it? (**Agent** or Actors)
- ▶ How did he or she do it? (**Agency** or Props)
- ▶ Why? (**Purpose** or Motive)

The five elements constituting the basis of Burke's Dramatism are: firstly the act, secondly the place where the action occurred, thirdly the people who were part of the action, fourthly the item which was used to carry out the act, and fifthly, the reason for the act.

The dramatism² model relies, *inter alia*, on meaningful, convincing, useful and truthful narratives of the life histories of those who commit violent acts and those who are victimised by them so that researchers can understand and explain violence. Krauss (2005:29) explains that:

Burke's frame makes it possible to view harmful acts as their perpetrators and victims see them and to recognise and allow for the "eventness" of events. ... [He] does not aim to explain all of human behaviour in terms of causal, reductionist, materialistic or genetic constructs, true for all time and in all places.

Although this model seemed to be simple initially, while reading the works of Burke I realised that it allows for complexity because the terms used in the pentad can be

² Burke's dramatism model must not be confused with Hans Urs von Balthasar's dramatology philosophy that is used in the theological perspectives of Goosen (2007) against violence and in the search for an "ontological alternative to modernism".

subdivided, and do not exclude any of the above-mentioned theories. For instance, Burke's pentad allows for the biological characteristics of perpetrators (agents) without excluding their ability to make choices, or allowing agents to have their acts modified by friends (co-agents) or rivals (counter-agents) (*vide* Burke, 1969:xix-xx).

When exploring the *acts*, researchers can study various types of violence, and the *scenes* allow for various contexts in schools and communities. This model adds an important dimension because researchers are able to consider the *motives* of actors. The interrelationships between act, scene, agent, agency and purpose allow for the study of the interactive influence of variables (as proposed by the ecological structure) without reducing a situation to mere variables. The model also allows for the study of multiple interacting factors, role-players, events and processes, and allows the focus to move from one actor to another, and to the interactions between various actors, which allows for the thoughts, views, perceptions, experiences and motives of victims, onlookers and perpetrators. The model also allows for ambiguity and inconsistencies (Burke, 1969:xviii) and acknowledges that no two things or situations are alike (Burke, 1969:xix).

Fox (2002:370) emphasises that Burke's pentad should not simply be seen as a "heuristic for invention" and that the elements of the pentad are not meant to be understood as individual principles. She points out that Burke has argued that the pentad is not a "method for helping writers invent new ideas". It is rather a method for critically analysing texts, and I add, in line with Fox's interpretation, that it is also a method for critically analysing episodes of violence which are acted on the stages of South African schools.

Burke (1969:3-20) explains in depth that each of the individual five elements must not be viewed in isolation. Researchers should strive to understand each element of the pentad in conjunction with the others in what he calls "ratios" such as the "scene-act" ratio, or the "agent-scene" ratio. This opens up the possibilities of uncovering "multiple truths" (Fox, 2002:371) and a variety of perspectives. Fox (2002:370-371) has captured ten differing "terministic screens" through which to view incidences in life, in the following diagram:

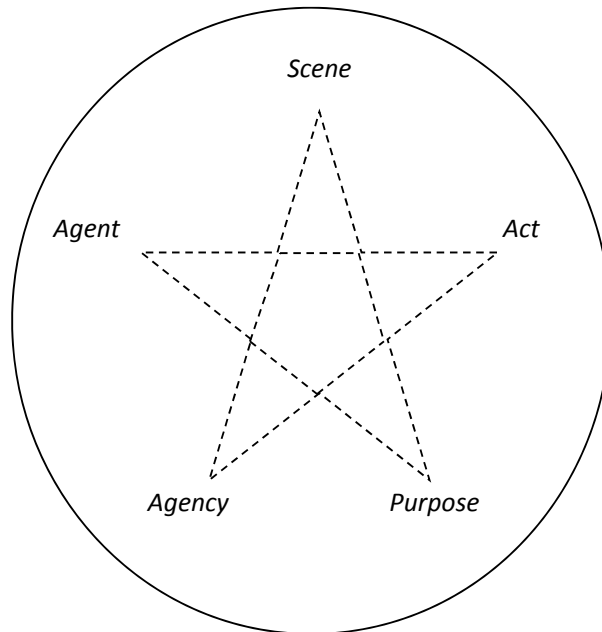


Figure 3: The pentad (Fox, 2002:370)

Dramatism provides us with a means to see the school grounds, classrooms, sport fields, etc. as a stage, complete with actors (antagonists, protagonists and minor actors), setting, purpose and plot. The ratios make it possible for us to become aware of the ways in which various elements influence and intensify each other during the acts of SV (*vide* Fox, 2002:371).

Although one may assume that Burke's dramatism model could serve as a grand theory of violence (*vide* Krauss, 2006), I do not intend to pursue or reject such a claim in this study. However, I have found that this theory is aligned with the assumptions that support this study and, therefore, I will use it as a framework for analyses (*vide* Forrester, 1993:1) to achieve the objectives of this research project.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

I formulated the following broad objectives to provide an extensive explanation of SV in the context of South African schools:

1. To explore how South African newspapers portray SV.

2. To describe how SV research publications portray SV in South Africa.
3. To portray secondary³ school learners' perceptions and experiences of SV in South Africa.
4. To use the above findings to offer a wide-ranging explanation of SV in order to make recommendations to policy makers and education planners about the fate that threatens to engulf our schools.

The stated objectives will be explored using a mixed method research design, in line with pragmatic perspectives on research methodology.

1.6 PRAGMATISM

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003:713) describe pragmatism as follows:

This is a deconstructive paradigm that debunks concepts such as “truth” and “reality” and focuses instead on “what works” as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation. Pragmatism rejects the either/or choices associated with the paradigm wars, advocates for the use of mixed methods in research, and acknowledges that the values of the researcher play a large role in interpretation of results.

- ▶ The “either/or” that is referred to in the citation above, refers to the so-called dichotomy or tension that exists between the distinct quantitative and qualitative approaches to science and research, and their underlying ontologies and epistemologies. From a pragmatic point of view researchers argue that there is no such a thing as absolute truth, neither is there a specific way to access the “truth”. Richer modes of enquiry, which use the widest possible range of techniques, propagate a clearer understanding of complex social issues, and stress the importance of common sense (Maxcy, 2003:53-54, 78-80; Mertens, 2005:26-18; Onwuegbuzie, 2002:521; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003:20-21).

I specifically designed this research project based on my agreement with the views of Baert (2005:146-169):

³ In this study *secondary* denotes all schools offering grades 8 to 12. These include comprehensive schools and ordinary secondary schools.

- ▶ Science is characterised by methodological diversity (Baert, 2005:147-150);
- ▶ Social sciences [including Education] benefit from what he calls “methodological pluralism” (Baert, 2005:150-151);
- ▶ The “spectator theory of knowledge” is not appropriate for research in the social [education] sciences, and thus our purpose in research should not be to describe the social [educational] world accurately and completely (Baert, 2005:151-152);
- ▶ Social [and educational] research should be a discourse and not an attempt to “defend or refine a particular system” (Baert, 2005:153-154);
- ▶ Knowledge is dynamic (Baert, 2005:154-155);
- ▶ Alternative scenarios open up through self-understanding (Baert, 2005:155-157)

In my attempt to understand the difficult situation of violence in current South African schools and, while acknowledging my own limitations as an individual researcher, I was convinced that the mixed method research design that I planned, within a pragmatic paradigm could best serve to elucidate the research question. Fox (2002:369) places Burke’s pentad within the pragmatic paradigm when she states that:

At the core of dramatism is Burke’s pragmatic intent to offer a logical method for understanding human motives ... the theory of dramatism does not offer a special revelation of the “Truth”; rather, it is Burke’s appeal to praxis – to understand why people do what they do ...

In view of the above, I designed my research as follows:

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a “strategic framework for action” that connects the research questions with the actual performance of the research (Durrheim, 2006a:34). We make sense out of

the world *inter alia* through observation⁴. During the research process observations are done in a planned, systematic way, and are driven by the problem being researched.

In this study a mixed method design is used. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003:15) point out that one of the strengths of a mixed method design is that it provides an “opportunity for presenting a greater diversity of diverging views”. Based on my conviction that SV cannot be fully understood using either solely qualitative or solely quantitative methods, and that I need to consult a range of data sources to develop an understanding of the complexity of violence in South African schools (*vide* Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003:16), I planned a “triangulation mixed method design” (*vide* Ivankova, Creswell & Clark, 2007:266). This method, also referred to as “parallel” or “concurrent”, is suitable when the intention is to collect various sets of data about a single phenomenon, and then compare and contrast the findings in order to best understand the phenomenon (*vide* Ivankova *et al.*, 2007:266-267; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:687-688).

Ivankova *et al.*, (2007:266-267) explains a simple triangulation mixed method design as follows: “[The] researchers choose to address their research questions by collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data at one time.” The triangulation mixed method differs from the popular sequential mixed method design where the qualitative part of the study informs the quantitative part, or *vice versa*. They point out that the triangulation mixed method design must not be confused with the “process of triangulation or crystallisation”, and that is used to identify themes in qualitative studies. In this study three sets of data will be collected concurrently, the findings of each will be made independently, but will then finally be juxtaposed to address the overarching research question.

The design can be illustrated as follows:

⁴ The term *observation* here refers to observation in the broader sense and not to the typical use of observation as a method of data collection in qualitative research.

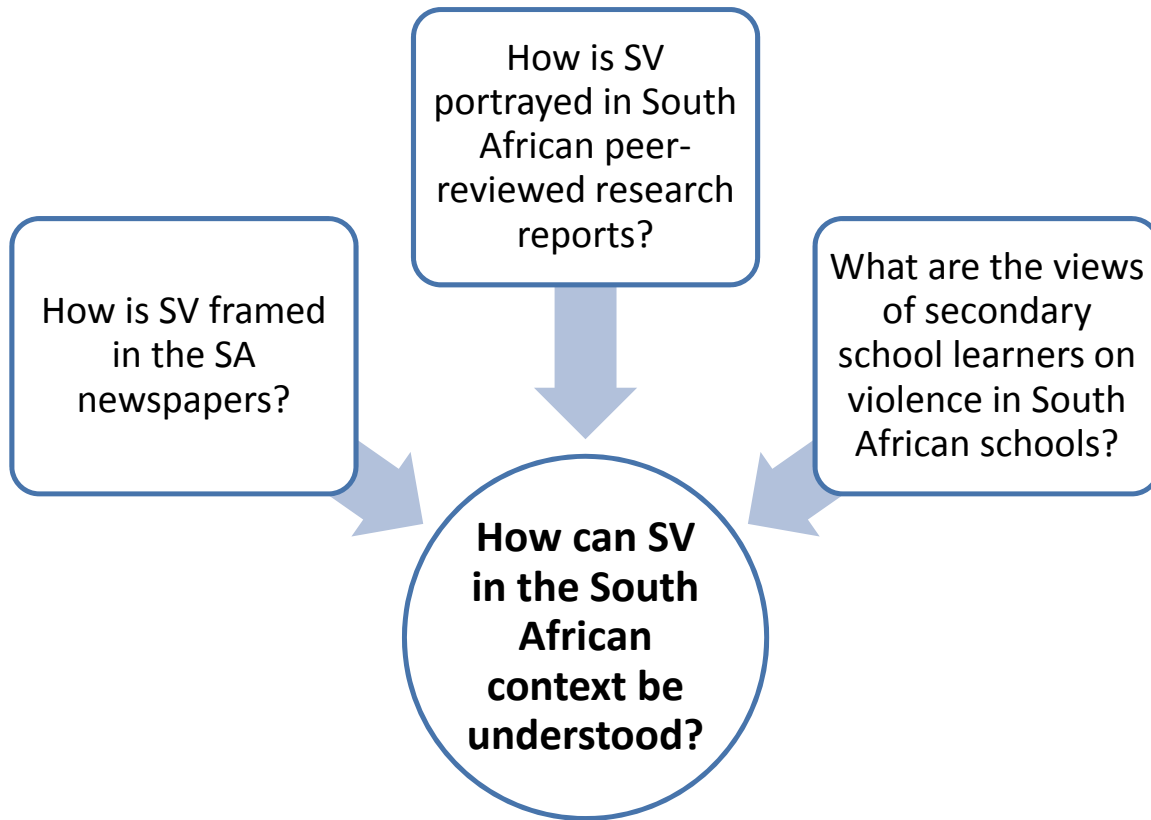


Figure 4: Research design

The following section describes the various parts of the research project. Although listed below in a sequential manner, the various parts of the research plan took place independently, framing the data on Burke’s dramatism model of violence, and were finally juxtaposed to address the research question. The three independent studies were a media study, a literature review, and a survey. Although the details of the methodology will be explained in each section of the thesis, there is a synopsis of each of the three studies below.

1.7.1 THE MEDIA STUDY

Public perception is largely formed by the portrayal of a phenomenon in the media. SV is an emotive public issue and, annually, receives wide media coverage in South Africa. A framing analysis was done to explore how SV is portrayed in the major South African public newspapers. Merriam (1998:113 & 115) categorises newspaper articles as documents that

fall into the category of “public records” and emphasises their importance for conveying what is of current interest. All newspaper articles, published between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2009, and which are classified as pertaining to SV by the SAMedia services on the campus of the University of the Free State, were included in the study. Firstly, I conducted a typical framing analysis by exploring the frequency with which specific frames were provided by the newspaper articles in the sample. Furthermore, in terms of Burke’s pentad, I reported the information provided in the newspaper articles.

1.7.2 THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Mertens (2005:90) points out that one of the reasons for conducting a literature review is to “provide a comprehensive understanding of what is known about the topic”. I did a comprehensive literature review to synthesise an overview of the current body of knowledge, and to understand what is known about SV in South Africa. I used mainly peer reviewed articles published in academic journals as my data source in this research project. The literature study consists of three parts. In the first place I used Burke’s pentad of terms as my framework to provide a description of what we know, through research, about the drama of SV in South Africa. Then I explored the recommendations made in the publications about changing the situation in South African schools and, finally, I assessed the methodologies used in research projects investigating SV in South Africa.

1.7.3 THE SURVEY

I conducted a survey to explore the views of secondary school learners on the current situation in South African schools. I used a convenient sample (*vide* Kemper, Stringfield & Teddlie, 2003:279, 283 & 291) of secondary schools in three of the nine provinces of South Africa. The provinces are Gauteng province, which is a typically urban province, the Eastern Cape is a typical rural province, and the Free State province is the province in which I work, and which has both urban and rural areas. I invited the schools that were willing to participate in the study⁵. A questionnaire based on the internationally used research

⁵ Initially I planned to use a stratified random sample, using the quintile-lists, obtained from the various provincial EMIS offices. However, in spite of my assurance that questionnaires would be completed anonymously, and that schools will not be identified, many school principals were unwilling to participate in the study, as they feared that the school’s reputation could be compromised. I thus resorted to use schools that were willing to participate.

instruments of Benbenishty and Astor (2005) was compiled for learners. The questionnaire was adapted for the South African school context and was administered to 80 learners in randomly selected classes at each school. Firstly, I analysed the data using Burke's pentad as a framework, after which I explored the relationships between the five aspects of Burke's dramatism using the terministic screens.

Green (in Stitzlein, 2009:662) highlights the importance of seeking out multiple perspectives on an issue. To conclude I juxtaposed the findings of the three data sets to offer insight into the multidimensional nature of SV in the South-African context. Using the above multifaceted research design, I employed various strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings.

1.8 VALIDATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

There is a detailed discussion of the validity, reliability, credibility, authenticity and related matters in the reports of each of the three studies. Thus, for instance, in 7.2.3 I discuss the issues of validity and reliability of the survey and in 2.4.4 I discuss the integrity of the media study.

However, I consider that a clarification of triangulation is important at this stage because I structured this research project according to a triangulation mixed method design, and triangulation takes place at various levels. Although I acknowledge the current discourse on the overuse of a concept "to the point where it means nothing" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:673), I believe that triangulation still plays an important role in improving the credibility of research. Triangulation implies that data from various perspectives should be used in a variety of ways from a number of sources (Kelly, 2006a:287; Kelly 2006b:380). In this study triangulation takes place, according to the following categories, named by Denzin (in Kelly, 2006b:380) and Janesick (in Kelly, 2006b:380):

- ▶ *Data triangulation:* Data was obtained from newspapers, research reports as well as learners.

- ▶ *Triangulation of methods:* I used a complementary variety of quantitative and qualitative methods and analyses.
- ▶ *Interdisciplinary triangulation:* This is an interdisciplinary study in the fields of Comparative Education as well as Policy Studies in Education.

These two fields of Education determined the demarcation of the study.

1.9 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study is demarcated within two sub-fields of Education, namely *Comparative Education* and *Policy Studies in Education*.

Vos and Brits (1990:12) point out that one of the aims of Comparative Education is to attempt to explain and elucidate phenomena in the education system, and they state that:

[Comparative Education] searches for and attempts to explain the relationship between education and society.

Kubrow and Fossum (2003:13) add to this by explaining that, although Comparative Education, *inter alia*, contributes to the edifice of theories on the relationship between education and the community, it also contributes to the practical application of research on how to improve education. As such, Comparative Education has, through the years, developed into a study that is used to address contemporary educational issues (Wolhuter, 2007:17). The exposition of the problem, which is explained in the introduction and the problem statement, clearly indicates that SV is a relevant, contemporary education issue in the current education system in South Africa, which needs to be improved. This study is a comprehensive attempt to explain violence in South African schools; therefore, it falls within the field of Comparative Education.

Pillay (2006:453-454) highlights the importance of research in policy making and in policy improvement and emphasises that “[r]esearchers have a critical role to play to ensure that policies that can make society better are implemented”. Berkhout and Wielemans (1999:404) are of opinion that:

Policy analyses should, by implication, be more than just the analyses of state mechanisms and policy documents as expressions of political purpose stating the actions and intentions to be implemented. ... policy and political analysis are themselves seen as a source of influence that could be used to shape the political process of which policy studies/analysis are deemed to be part.

In the South African education context, no single policy for the prevention and management of SV exist. However practitioners are compelled by legislation such as the *Constitution* and *The South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996* (hereafter SASA) (RSA, 1996b) and the amendments to SASA (e.g. RSA, 2007; RSA, 2001) to ensure a safe learning environment. Because legal perspectives on aspects of SV are provided in several publications (*vide* De Waal, 2011; De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010; Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw, 2004; Joubert & Wentzel, 2009; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005) I did not explore the legal framework dealing with SV in this study. Nevertheless, the study has the potential inform policy makers *inter alia* at school level (*vide* Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999:404) to develop a policy on school safety. That places this study in the category of *analysis for policy* (*vide* Codd, 1988:235) or *evaluating policy options* (*vide* Pillay, 2006:448). In addition to the above foci, Forester (1993:1) suggests “methodological approaches” and “analysis of practice” as focus points in policy research. I explored the *analysis of practice* (*vide* Forester, 1993:1) in Chapter 7 with the intention of informing practitioners and policy makers. The various *methodological approaches* explored in the study as well as the commentary on the current SV research agenda (Chapter 6), may contribute to new insights for practitioners and policy makers. Therefore, this study is also placed within the field of Policy Studies in Education.

Although the point of departure for these two sub-fields differ (one focusing on education systems and the other focusing on policy making, policy implementation, and so on), there are substantially common grounds in that both focus on deepening the understanding of contemporary education issues with the aim of improving education praxis. Therefore, this study in these two subfields could serve to strengthen both.

Further demarcation occurs in the chapters dealing with each independent part of the study. More details are given at appropriate points. (The media study is, for instance, limited to one year’s newspapers reports, which are electronically available through a

specific service, and the survey is limited to secondary schools in South Africa.) This research project, at all stages, transcends boundaries of race, gender, culture and social-economic status but, with the exception of some reference to international perspectives in literature, it is limited to the South African context.

1.10 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study could meaningfully contribute as follows:

- Firstly, it should contribute to the expansion of knowledge in the fields of Comparative Education and Policy Studies in Education, specifically on the subject of SV as a contemporary education phenomenon.
- Secondly, it should contribute to the establishment of scientific knowledge that can be used by education planners and policy makers to challenge SV.

1.11 RESEARCH OUTLAY

This chapter presented an overview of the research project, background information about the problem, and the objectives of the study. I explained the demarcation of the research project, as well as the research design. The project consists of three parts:

1.11.1 PART 1: THE MEDIA STUDY

- In Chapter 2 I report on the framing analysis that I did of articles about SV that appeared in South African newspapers during 2009. This provides a synopsis of public perceptions constructed by the media.
- In Chapter 3 there is, from the perspective of the printed media, a narrative about SV drama using Burke's pentad as a structure to organise the information.

1.11.2 PART 2: THE LITERATURE STUDY

- Chapter 4 discusses the literature study, offers an overview of the existing knowledge and, uses Burke's pentad as a framework to give a résumé of SV research findings.
- Chapter 5 summarises the recommendations made in the literature study about dealing with SV.

- In Chapter 6 I offer some critical perspectives on the research methodologies used in the literature towards understanding SV in South Africa.

1.11.3 PART 3: THE SURVEY

- Chapter 7 reports on the survey on the current situation at the schools. This was conducted amongst secondary school learners, and the analysis of the data in this chapter is based on Burke's pentad.
- In Chapter 8 I examine the survey data further through Burke's terministic screens in order to explore the complexities of SV in South Africa.

Chapter 9 describes a combination of the findings of the various parts of the study, evaluates the multiple realities of the phenomenon of SV, gives guidelines for policy makers on how to address SV in a systemic way, reflects on the path that was followed as well as on the strengths and weaknesses of the research, and makes recommendations for further research.

1.12 CONCLUSION

SV is a threat hovering over the shoulders of department officials, school principals, educators, learners, their parents and the rest of society. Although attempts are being made to safeguard learners in school, incidences of violence continue to occur everywhere in South Africa. This study attempts to move towards a better understanding SV in South African schools because, I believe, any plan of action to prevent SV should be informed by a clear understanding of the phenomenon. In this chapter I introduced the topic, formulated the research question, stated the research objectives, and explained the research design.

I draw from the WHO model, and defined SV in this study as follow (*vide* 1.2):

School violence refers to any intentional use of physical or other force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group, at school, that either results in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. It thus includes any intended use of psychological power or physical force with the aim to harm another physically or emotionally. It includes manipulation and coercion as well as rejection, and can take place during or outside school hours, during class times and breaks, at school-related events (sport, cultural and social), as well as while commuting to and from school.

In the following chapter there is a media analysis of newspaper articles related to SV.

THE MEDIA STUDY

CHAPTER 2: SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN THE SA MEDIA – A FRAMING ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 captures the essence of the purpose of this study and describes and motivates the research design. In an attempt to comprehend the ominous danger prevalent in SV, this study endeavours to understand how various role players make sense of the phenomenon. I selected Burke's dramatism model as the theoretical framework for the analyses. The two chapters that follow explores the perceptions that are created, and the sense that is made of SV through media reporting, and specifically through the portrayal of SV in printed newspaper articles in South African newspapers

I based this part of the study on the following reasoning:

Firstly, I consider SV to be newsworthy, and also a societal, and an educational problem. Newsworthiness matters because it makes the public aware of a problem. Media reporting has the power to shape the opinions of individuals, as well as the public in general, which makes people aware of which issues are important. Media reporting and concomitant public awareness have the potential to influence policy making, and what policy makers think of issues. The way in which the media portrays an issue also has implications because this shapes the social context in which people and organisations make decisions (Bullock, 2007:34; Carlyle, Slater & Chakroff, 2008:168-171; Snyman, 2007:115). Thus, media reporters are agents who help construct the public's perception of an issue (Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:169) and specifically on what should be seen as a problem (De Wet, 2009:46). The media influences beliefs and perceptions regarding "norms of acceptable behaviour" and "influence the shaping of conceptions of reality" (Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:168-169). Therefore, I argue that the way in which the South African media reports on SV shapes public perception of SV, and of what is seen as unacceptable, violent behaviour in schools, conceptions of the reality of SV, as well as the social context in which decisions about SV are made. It also has

the potential to influence decisions taken by policy makers regarding SV and the way to deal with it.

Secondly, I argue that whilst news is socially constructed, it is constructed on the needs of journalists, news agencies and consumers, and it is limited by economic imperatives and constraints (Bullock, 2007:35-38; Jones, 2005:153). While Froneman (in De Wet, 2009:48) emphasises that news articles “should, by definition, contain reliable, undistorted and accurate news, and strive to be comprehensive and unbiased” lack of good journalism is pointed out by Jones (2005:153), who *inter alia* highlights bias in reporting as follows (emphasis in original):

*Every journalist knows intuitively which terms to use when characterising the favoured and unfavoured players in a situation ... we **plan**, they **plot**. We **form strategies**, they **conspire** ... We **defend ourselves**, they **attack**.*

Whereas SV is an emotive public issue and annually receives wide media coverage in South Africa (De Wet, 2009:46), the coverage may thus be distorted. This possibility should be explored through research.

Studies focusing on media reporting of SV in South Africa and beyond are limited. I have, therefore, also referred to media studies on the portrayal of other kinds of violence.

2.2 STUDIES ON MEDIA REPORTING OF (SCHOOL) VIOLENCE

In a qualitative content analysis of newspaper articles on SV published between June and September 2008, De Wet (2009:46-67) focused specifically on how victims and perpetrators are portrayed in the South African printed media, as well as the nature of SV that was portrayed. She found that while harsh pictures of perpetrators of SV (learners, educators and parents) are regularly sketched in the South African printed media, some victims are “described in a sensitive way while others remain faceless and anonymous” resulting in a deficit of information that prevents the creation of a portrait of the “typical victim”. When journalists report sensational and brutal incidences of violence, they also suggest numerous reasons for these incidences. Newspapers focus mainly on punitive and security measures as the means to prevent violence in schools (De Wet, 2009:60-64).

Muschert and Carr (2006:747-766) explored how framing of similar events changes over time. They studied, over a five-year period, the portrayal in the *New York Times* of various rampant school shootings. They found that during this time, the framing evolved from the initial portrayal of SV as an individual problem, to a later portrayal of SV as a societal problem. However, towards the end of study period, they found that the number of societal frames decreased.

Although not focusing on SV, in a comparative analysis study on the media coverage of *violent conflict* in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Jones (2005:151-158) found a “significant breakdown in ethical journalism”, shallow and superficial reporting, racist bias in coverage and a trend to use police and other reports as the main source for reporting. She based these claims on analyses of a selection of articles from three KZN newspapers over decades.

Snyman (2007:103-118) did a content analysis on crime reporting in three Gauteng daily newspapers published during June 2007. She found that while the newspapers do make their readers aware of violent crimes taking place in the country, the three newspapers each portrayed only a fraction (and each newspaper portrayed a different fraction) of the crime-reality in South Africa. She also found that each newspaper presented a [distorted] view of reality to match the perceived worldviews of their target readers (Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, English-speaking White South Africans, or Black South Africans who read English). While all three newspapers frequently reported on *homicide*, *armed robbery* was, for instance, reported on much more frequently in the two newspapers with typical white suburban readers than in the newspaper read by Black English speakers. On the other hand, the latter newspapers more frequently reported on *assault*. *Drug dealing* did not get any prominence in the Afrikaans newspaper, while it appeared in both the two English daily newspapers. *Vandalism* was, frequently, only reported in the newspaper that had mainly black readers. Snyman used these and other examples to argue that newspapers make certain assumptions about the type of reporting that their readers want to read.

In a study on newspaper coverage of the xenophobic attacks during May 2008 in South Africa, Coplan (2009:64-83) found that while local journalists tried to report on these incidences in a responsible manner, “urging an end to violence” they too readily accepted

“the most obvious social and ‘pop’ psychology glosses as necessary and sufficient explanations.” He appealed for a long “walk to freedom from disorder, crime, insecurity and fear” by working towards a control society. He points out how imperative it is to recognise and address social exclusion and negative social identities that have arisen as a result of the degrading, and despised conditions under which many people live. He warns that by using “facile ‘explanations’ and self-serving denial concerning both the economic and social realities of life for the majority of South Africans”, reporters as well as the government create an “imagined South Africa of competing rhetorical discourses”, which makes recognition of the true situation impossible.

The above findings resonate with international research on media portrayal of various forms of violence. Andersson and Lundström (2007:175-188) studied two Swedish newspapers over a four-month period, focusing on press coverage of teenagers as victims. They found skewed representation in the press as far as immigrant teenagers are concerned. Risk to teenagers is perceived by the news agencies as gendered, and contextual and social issues receive little attention. Carlyle *et al.* (2008:168-186) explored media portrayal of intimate partner violence in a sample of daily newspapers in the USA. They found discrepancies between news coverage and the actual social reality. They argue that the way in which intimate partner violence is portrayed in the media fails to expose the societal problems that perpetuate this type of violence. Bullock (2007:34-63) found that media coverage of domestic violence fatalities in newspapers in Utah, USA, support patriarchy and men’s domination of women. She argues that newspapers tend to frame such incidences as isolated cases and omit the larger societal problem of gender inequity that permits men to maltreat and abuse women.

2.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

One can see from the above studies that newspapers definitely play a role in informing the readers about violence in its myriad forms, and by doing so, not only shape the perceptions of the public, but may do so in a biased or, at least, a narrow manner. The scarcity of research on media-portrayal of SV supports the need to explore the coverage of SV in South Africa’s newspapers. Specifically, there is a need to explore the way in which reporters *frame* SV.

Whether and how newspapers cover a topic (and thus also SV) could make a difference in how the public views such incidences and what should be done about them (Bullock, 2007:40). Whether readers perceive an issue to be an individual problem or a collective problem, concomitantly influences and contributes to perceptions concerning who is responsible for dealing with the problem. For instance would it be society or the legal system (Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:170-172)? It is thus important to note that the more regularly newspapers frame an issue in a specific way, the more likely it is for people to accept the media's frame as the truth.

Based on the above discussion and exploring the first objective stated in chapter 1, namely **to analyse how school violence is portrayed in the South African newspapers**, I formulated the following subsequent questions to guide my analyses:

- i. Bullock (2007:44) suggests that the most basic question to determine a media-frame of an event is simply: *Was the issue covered?* Because I wanted to know which SV frames appear most in the media, I expanded this question by asking: *Is the issue covered, and which frames are most often used in newspapers?*
- ii. The second question that I explored is: *In which way are the five aspects of Burke's dramatism framed in the coverage of SV?*

In the final chapter I included comparisons with other data. In this chapter, I pursue the first question, followed by my answer to the second question in Chapter 3. The methods I used is described in the next section of this media study.

2.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method that is used in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 is *framing analysis*.

2.4.1 FRAMING ANALYSIS

According to Gamson (1989:157) media framing is “a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue”. Pan and Kosicki (1993) describe *framing analysis* as a specific technique for content analysis. They describe news media framing as a “cognitive device used in information encoding, interpreting and retrieving...

related to journalistic professional routines and conventions” and note that framing can be studied as “a characteristic of the discourse itself”, and explain how the media promote certain aspects of a perceived reality (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:57). Carlyle *et al.* (2008:172) comments that:

[t]he efficacy of frames is found in their ability to make certain elements and perspectives more salient, thereby increasing the chances that certain schemas of interpretation will be evoked.

Pan and Kosicki (1993:58) note certain differences between framing analysis, and alternative approaches to news texts. They do not consider news texts as “psychological stimuli” of objective meaning, but rather “organized symbolic devices” that will interact with one’s memory for the construction of meaning. Framing analysis also acknowledges that frames in news texts to some extent depend on the readers of the text⁶. Pan and Kosicki (1993:58-59) suggest that framing goes beyond the obvious topic of a news article to look at themes that serves as central organising ideas.

Whereas media studies in the *agenda-setting tradition* look at the location and length of articles, work in the *tradition of media bias* measures and compares pro- and con statements (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:65). However, framing analysis goes beyond these, and also looks at *how* an issue is discussed in the media.

Framing analysis has, since its introduction by Pan and Kosicki (1993), evolved into a quantitative method often used in media analyses. Issues pertaining to frames provided in news reporting can include frequency of coverage, labelling, information included and omitted, and episodic or thematic focus (Bullock, 2007:40). The quantity of coverage also influences how visible and important the issue appears to be (Bullock, 2007:40). *Episodic coverage* focuses on individual instances by using explanations about, for instance, individual personalities, the abnormalities and motivational states of people involved, and their isolation from the social context. *Thematic coverage* focuses, in addition to the individual aspects, also on the role of society. Social explanations could include wider circumstances

⁶ Although Pan and Kosicki (1993:56) consider this approach *constructivist*, in my view it resonates with Derrida’s post-structuralist views on different meanings of texts.

and situationals (Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:172-173). These and other frames are usually presented in frequency tables.

Although framing analyses are mostly done using a quantitative approach, there limited examples of qualitative framing analyses. In their original work, Pan and Kosicki (1993:66-69) analysed, in a way that resonates Burke's pentad, a single media story, using specific elements such as *action, actor, time, episodes, background, script, and dramas*. Pan and Kosicki (1993) did not analyse the articles in a typical qualitative manner, and merely provided quotes in a tabular form, which they then discussed. However, I believe that the qualitative perspectives within the framing analysis move towards achieving the aim of framing analysis, which is to examine the way the media selects frames of news issues for the purpose of "audience processing" (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:69).

I, therefore, used newspaper articles as *textual data* to explore the framing of SV in South African printed newspapers, by using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods.

2.4.2 NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AS DATA

Creswell (2008:231) as well as Merriam (1998:113 & 115) state that newspaper articles are categorised as documents that fall into the category of *public records*, and are considered important in conveying news that has current interest. Merriam (1998:112-115) points out that documents (novels, newspapers, songs, etc.) offer qualitative data that does not depend on the cooperation of the participants. Such documents are not merely produced for research, and are not affected by the presence of the researcher, which is typical of qualitative research. Creswell (2008:231) considers documents as "a good source for text (word) data for a qualitative study". Documents that are available electronically furthermore provide data that is accessible to others and are easy to obtain (Merriam, 1998:126).

When retrieving documents electronically, the researcher is no longer the primary instrument for collecting data (Merriam, 1998:131). This has both positive and negative implications. In this study, I depended solely on the categorising of articles by analysts at the media services (*vide* 2.4.3). However, in retrospect, though this approach removed possible

researcher bias, I consider this to be a limitation of the study. This will be discussed further in 3.4.2.

Merriam (1998:124-127) notes a number of limitations in the use of documents, including the view that researchers consider documents only as secondary sources. However, in this study, media articles form the core of the research question and, as such, are the sources that provide specific frames to the public concerning incidences of violence in schools (as was argued before, framing matters because doing so influences public perceptions.) I, therefore, do not use the media articles as secondary sources to gain insight into *actual occurrences*, but rather as *primary voices informing the public* and thus shaping public perceptions.

2.4.3 SAMPLE

I chose the year 2009 as representative of this decade. I purposefully did not include a year in which a single incident attracted unusual public attention (such as the ninja sword killing in 2008⁷) as I believe that could result in unbalanced data. I obtained, electronically, from the SAMedia⁸ clipping services on the campus of the University of the Free State all the newspaper articles classified as pertaining to *school violence*, and which were published between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2009. This provided a set of copies of 134 newspaper clippings.

I then set out to scrutinise the articles and considered each for its suitability in view of the purpose of the research, namely the portrayal of SV in public newspapers: Only clippings from *public newspapers* were included, thus, I did not use articles in the sample that appeared in publications of churches (e.g. Die Kerkbode) and other organisations (e.g. Servamus). By removing the columnists' points of view as well as editorials and letters from the readers, I focused on journalists' reporting and not on the reaction to the reporting (This could be a study in itself and is not covered by this thesis). I also eliminated the cartoons

⁷ In 2008, a boy from a technical high school of the West Rand donning a paper-mache mask, pulled out a ninja sword before the start of the school day, killed a fellow-learner and injured another. Two groundsmen were also injured when they prevented the attacker from killing the second boy (Roestoff, 2008:20).

⁸ Available at url: <http://www.samedia.uovs.ac.za/>

depicting SV. This is another possible field to explore. After careful consideration, I also omitted articles in which the key words “school” and “violence” appeared unrelated and which, therefore, were irrelevant to SV. I was then left with a total of 92 different⁹ articles from 21 public newspapers that I finally used in this study. In Table 1 there is a list of the newspapers in which the articles appeared. I arranged the articles according to date of publication, and numbered them. Finally, I carefully read through the articles to get an overall sense of the dramas portrayed in the newspapers.

Table 1: Newspapers used in the study

Beeld	Burger	Cape Argus
Cape Times	Citizen	City Press
Daily Dispatch	Daily News	Diamond Fields Advertiser
Pretoria News	Saturday Argus	Saturday Star
Sowetan	Star	Sunday Argus
Sunday Times	Sunday Tribune	The Herald (EP Herald)
The Times	Volksblad	Witness

Using newspapers as data brought specific issues pertaining to the integrity of the research to the fore.

2.4.4 THE INTEGRITY OF THE RESEARCH

I had to consider several issues pertaining to the integrity of the research.

2.4.4.1 AUTHENTICITY OF THE DOCUMENTS

Merriam (1998:122), drawing on Clarke as well as Guba and Lincoln, suggests a number of matters that should be considered to establish the authenticity of documents. I consider the documents I used to be authentic because the media services on the campus provides a scanned-in unedited version of the original newspaper clipping, the name of the newspaper (the source), the date of publication, the page on which the article appeared in the

⁹ Often the same article appears in various regional newspapers of the same newsgroup. To avoid duplication, SAMedia classifies an article, describing, for instance, an incident of school violence that occurred in Gauteng, as appearing only in the *Beeld* (distributed in Gauteng and beyond), even though the article appeared in, for example, the *Volksblad* (which is distributed in the central parts of the country) and in the *Burger* (which is distributed in the southern regions of the country).

newspaper as well as the topic, in this case, *school violence*, as classified by the analyst at the media service centre.

2.4.4.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALISTS

Concerning the acknowledgement of the media sources in the study, I experienced difficulties because of the need to acknowledge the sources and accept the responsibility of protecting the people and/or the cases involved (*vide* Merriam, 1998:217). The information in the research books available to me was non-specific in this regard, and I was guided by the approaches used in similar research publications. The majority of quantitative media analyses do not include the various articles either in the bibliography or in a separate list, but merely identify the *newspapers* as well as the *period* (e.g. the years, or months of a specific year in which the sample of articles appeared in newspapers) (cf. Bullock, 2007; Snyman, 2007; Welch, Fenwick & Roberts, 1998). One qualitative media study refrained from listing the newspapers, but gave a description of the designated market areas of the selected newspapers, and the years of publication (Carlyle *et al.*, 2008). Other studies used a limited number of newspaper articles and included these as reference sources in the bibliography (cf. Coplan, 2009; De Wet, 2009). As I used an eclectic approach I had to compromise to some extent, and in view of the lack of a single accepted tradition, I was guided by the aim of this part of the study.

The focus of this chapter is not to compare the portrayal of the phenomenon of SV by the specific newspapers, nor is it an attempt to expose the possible biases in the reports of specific newspaper groups. I do not attempt to link any specific frame to a specific newspaper or journalist. Instead, I attempt to understand the *frames* provided on SV over a period of time in local newspapers, as these frames play a role in shaping public perceptions.

In the quantitative section I followed the example set by inter alia Bullock (2007) and Welch *et al.* (1998) and provided a list of newspapers from which I obtained the selected articles (*vide* Table 1). These articles are accessible electronically, and by providing the website address of SAMedia (p. 34), and the words used in the electronic search, I believe I have left an audit trail.

In the qualitative analyses, the aim is to provide a thick description of the portrayal of SV in newspapers. I consider each journalist in every article as representing “one person” (Merriam, 1998:120), therefore, a voice amongst many. I thus did not identify the journalists in 3.2 and 3.3, nor the newspapers involved. I handled the newspaper articles no differently from the way I would have handled multiple interview transcriptions. I also refrained from using pseudonyms or labels (e.g. *journalist A* and *journalist B*) as I believe that would have created interference in the thick description I provided.

2.4.4.3 EXTERNAL AUDIT

Beyond the audit trail for finding the documents and acknowledging the newspapers without exposing individual journalists, I used an *external auditor* to review the project and evaluate the findings of this chapter. Cresswell (2008:267) maintains that an external auditor contributes to the credibility of research projects. External auditing involves an individual “outside the study to review different aspects of the research”, and who reports back in writing on issues such as the logic of the inferences, the appropriateness of the themes, and the justification of the decisions. In this study on the media portrayal of SV, I used the services of a PhD graduate, who is a qualitative research specialist, to critically review the research. This was done twice during the process and once at the conclusion of each chapter. Each time I reworked the report in line with recommendations made by the auditor. In view of the reality that triangulation of data and member checking are not applicable to this part of the study, I consider that the external auditing was an effective strategy to address the issue of the validity and credibility of this research study.

In my opinion, the various routes I followed ensured that I pursued a credible analysis of the data.

2.4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this study the data obtained was initially quantified to provide an overview of the main frames provided in the newspaper coverage of SV. I report on this data analysis in the current chapter. This is followed in Chapter 3 by a qualitative exploration of the way in which the five aspects of Burke’s dramatism were framed in the coverage. The juxtaposition

of the findings with other results namely the literature review, and the quantitative survey appears in the final chapter of this thesis.

2.4.5.1 CODING

In line with the guidelines given by Merriam (1998:123) that the point of departure for analysing documents is to “adopt some system of coding and cataloguing them”, I carefully read through each article with the aim of coding the primary news frame as *episodic* or *thematic* (*vide* 2.4.1). The provinces, in which the incidences occurred, are also coded as well as the sources that the reporters used, and the suggested solutions. I tried to capture the essence of each article in keywords which I wrote down. I read through the articles again and coded them for a second time using Burke’s pentad of terms (act, scene, agent, agency and purpose).

I repeated this whole process with a second set of prints of the articles, and compared the two sets. I captured, in an Excel file, all coding, keywords, and extracts that represented Burke’s pentad. I scanned the articles through one last time, to check whether I had captured all the details in the spreadsheet. I also scrutinised the spreadsheet to check that I had entered everything in a logical way, and under relevant headings. I made adjustments where necessary. Although coding is typical of qualitative analysis, I used coding in various ways in the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

2.4.5.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

I used quantitative framing analysis as a means to initially unpack the contents of the articles and to get a general idea of the framing that occurs in the media. I portrayed, quantitatively, media framing in terms of frequency of reporting. Frequency tables provide information on the number of times newspapers reported on a specific issue during a specific time period. Frequency of reporting should, however, not be interpreted as frequency of incidence, but as a frequency of framing. I calculated frequencies by using the Excel file that I compiled as described above (2.4.5.1).

While exploring the issue of framing of SV in the media, I asked questions like: *What proportion of SV articles are primarily episodic vs. primarily thematic? What proportions of SV stories contain frames of solution, and what are these frames? Which sources do the*

media favour and which do they shun? Which violence frames appear in most articles, and which appear least? In which ways are the contexts framed? (vide McManus & Dorfman, 2001:7). I considered only three issues related to the last question: the provinces that appeared most and those that appeared least in articles; the type of schools that appeared most and least in the articles; and the weapons frames that were used. In a manner similar to the one I used to discuss the causes of SV, which are portrayed in the articles as part of the motive/purpose (3.2.5), I discussed other details concerning contextual factors, which are portrayed as part of the scene of SV (3.2.2), which is part of Burke's pentad.

2.4.5.3 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative perspectives on the framing of SV provided in this chapter are followed by the qualitative analysis in which Burke's pentad is used as broad themes in the next chapter. I built and described subthemes within each broad theme (*vide* Cresswell, 2008:256-260; Henning *et al.*, 2004:138). I followed the same procedure as I would have followed for a content analysis but I focused on the salient frames provided under each of the dramatism pentad. As explained above, I initially obtained the overview, and coded the segments. Once I had completed the quantitative analysis, I categorised related codes according to Burke's pentad, established thematic patterns, and wrote the themes using the texts as data. During the qualitative part of the analysis, I used the Excel file as an index to find the relevant articles, and the articles were constantly revisited to ensure correct depiction of the SV dramas as portrayed in the newspaper articles.

The above analyses provided the following findings.

2.5 FINDINGS

I presented the quantitative data and discussed the findings based on this data in this chapter. This chapter thus addressed the first objective of this chapter, namely to explore the frames on SV that are put forward in the South African newspapers. This provides an overview of the portrayal of SV in the printed media. Although it is typical of the *qualitative* approach, I integrate my discussion of the data and the findings in this (*quantitative*) chapter. Then I discuss the way in which the five aspects of Burke's dramatism are portrayed in the media in Chapter 3 by using a qualitative approach. Again the data and the

findings will be presented in an integrated way. Chapter 3 concludes with a summative table and a reflection on the media study that was covered in the two chapters.

2.5.1 FRAMING SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN NEWSPAPERS: A QUANTITATIVE OVERVIEW

During the year that I selected for this study, 92 newspaper articles directly pertaining to SV appeared in the 21 public newspapers listed in Table 1. One can give a simple affirmative answer to the basic framing question, suggested by Bullock (2007:44): *Was the issue covered?* I proceeded to explore further frames that were put forward in the coverage.

When looking at the findings of the number of articles purporting a specific frame, one needs to keep in mind that the *frequency of framing* should not be equated to the *actual frequency of violence*. In some cases there was only one article that described an incidence. In other cases the same incident was reported over and over again, sometimes in the same newspaper, but also in various other newspapers¹⁰. Some articles merely reported on campaigns to prevent violence, and did not report on any incidences of violence. The frequency tables that follow present the *frequency of frames put forward* in the selected sample of newspapers. Frequency of frames matters, because frames shape perceptions of the readers about the importance of an issue. I have converted the frequencies into a percentage format to ensure easy comparisons. One must however remember that some articles focused on campaigns and not on incidences of violence, whereas others reported on more than one incidence, therefore, the figures do not add up 100%. I also provided percentages to relativise the figures.

In the section that follows, I explain and discuss a number of frames. Owing to a lack of a single standard for framing analyses, I relied on the work of Bullock (2007), Carlyle *et al.* (2008), McManus and Dorfman (2001) and others who specifically did framing analyses on types of violence. I thus, firstly, explored *episodic framing versus thematic framing*, and then specifically looked at the *solutions* suggested, *sources of information* and the *contextual frames* that the selected newspapers used. Whereas the first set of frames provides the reader with the general message regarding the nature of the problem, thus whether the

¹⁰ I refer here to distinct articles, not identical articles that appeared in different newspapers of the same newsgroup (*vide* Footnote 9).

problem is individual or societal, the other sets of frames inform the public in a specific manner.

2.5.1.1 EPISODIC VERSUS THEMATIC COVERAGE

According to McManus and Dorfman (2001:1) certain frames appear to draw a social or political response while others promote indifference. Best (in McManus & Dorfman, 2001:5) argues that a plethora of episodic reports that accentuate violence, and the concomitant scarcity of thematic frames, contribute to civic powerlessness. Gamson (in McManus & Dorfman, 2001:6) calls for frames of injustices, rather than personal tragedies. Carlyle *et al.* (2008) also provide similar arguments bolstering the importance of these considerations. I thus considered it important to look at the episodic/thematic coverage of SV in the set of articles that I selected.

In terms of the primary news frame, I found that 69 (75%) of the articles were episodic reporting, that is, merely reporting on what happened, without placing the incidence within the larger societal picture, which was attempted in 23 (25%) thematic articles. The dominance of episodic coverage is in line with findings in other framing analyses, for example McManus and Dorfman (2001:12) found a ratio of 65:35, and Carlyle *et al.* (2008:177) found a ratio of 88:11.

The 17 articles (18,5%) that focused solely on campaigns to reduce the appearance of the levels of violence at South African schools, by bodies such as the DoE, the South African Police Services (SAPS) and others, showed a smaller proportion of episodic coverage (eight) compared to thematic coverage (nine) which constitutes a ratio of 47:53. In contrast, the 75 articles that reported on incidences of SV used 61 episodic frames compared to only 14 articles that used thematic frames which is a ratio of 81:19. According to the above figures journalists seem, when reporting on campaigns against SV, to be more prone to portray SV as a societal problem but, when reporting on incidences of SV, the portrayal moves to frames that ignore societal factors. Maxwell *et al.* (in Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:173) state that by doing this, the media shifts the responsibility of solving the problem from society to the individual (for instance the school, or the parent of the perpetrator).

2.5.1.2 SOLUTION FRAMES

Solution frames suggest some form of cure to a problem and send out a message to the public that something can be done to improve the situation (McManus & Dorfman, 2001:17). In 42,4 percent of the articles in my study, *no solution* to the problem of SV was offered. MacManus and Dorfman (2001:23) claim that the sense [provided in such a substantial number of the articles that I analysed] that there is little need for explanation of solutions, suggest that the public already understands violence [and thus also SV] and, therefore, there is no need to stimulate thinking about “what can be done”.

A wide variety of solutions were indicated in the rest of the articles. Table 2 offers all the suggested solutions that appeared in five percent¹¹ or more of the articles (*vide* McManus & Dorfman, 2001:17).

Table 2: Solutions for SV mentioned in 5 percent or more of the articles

Solutions for SV mentioned in the articles	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
Firearm/weapon control	17	18,5
Greater law enforcement	17	18,5
Teaching learners about the dangers of crime	9	9,8
Forming partnerships in the community	9	9,8
Introducing or improving a safety plan	7	7,6
Giving more power to principals to expel thugs	6	6,5
Strengthening discipline and/or providing a behaviour-support programme for learners	6	6,5
Visible policing	5	5,4
More adult-youth contact including better parenting	5	5,4
Teaching conflict handling strategies to learners and/or teachers ¹²	5	5,4

¹¹ Many of the solutions are only offered in one or two articles. Therefore I do not consider these to be frames, as frames are the product of repetition. I let myself thus be guided by McManus and Dorfman (2001:17) who suggested that solutions that appear in 5 percent or more of the articles can be considered as frames.

¹² In this thesis the term *teacher* is used to indicate educators who are teaching the learners who are victims, onlookers and perpetrators of SV. It is thus used more often than the generic term *educator*.

The two solutions that were most popular in the articles, both suggested that SV is a criminal justice problem rather than a societal problem¹³. Firearm and weapon control (18,5%) was one of the two most popular solution frames provided by the articles. This solution included random searches for weapons by staff members; searches and seizures by die SAPS using sniffer dogs; the installation of metal detectors at gates; and the issuing of hand metal detectors to security staff members. The other most popular solution frame was greater law enforcement (18,5%). This solution included, inter alia, arresting second-time offenders; using under-cover policemen in problem areas; introducing an amnesty period for perpetrators to hand in their firearms and knives; and an increase in visible policing. This, in my view, strengthens the perception that society is powerless when it comes to preventing SV and that it is simply a “law-and order” problem (*vide* Bullock, 2007:52). This supports the findings in 2.5.1.1.

2.5.1.3 WHO GETS TO SPEAK TO THE PUBLIC?

In a study by Graber (1980:45), she emphasised the importance of looking at the sources used in newspaper portrayal of crime when she found that the newspaper articles she used were solely based on police notes and contained little context (also refer to Jones, 2005:151-158, in this regard). She wrote that one rarely finds “interpretive analyses that place criminal justice information into historical, sociological or political perspective” in such articles as they emphasise the “what” rather than the “why”.

I found that reporting on SV was dominated by references to officials linked to either the DoE or executive provincial government structures, and what they thought of these situations (43,5%). These included, amongst others, Members of Executive Councils (MECs) and their spokespersons, district officials, and DoE spokespersons. The second most frequently quoted sources came from the criminal justice system (30,4%) - that is from members of SAPS, as well as from court officials and court proceedings. In only one article

¹³ While this might echo the findings in 2.5.1.1 to some extent, thematic coverage should not be reduced to the solution provided in an article. The focus in thematic framing is the portrayal of SV as society’s responsibility and does not necessarily require solutions to be provided. Nonetheless, certain solution frames certainly contribute to either episodic or thematic framing, and as such a degree of overlap occurs.

was the perpetrator used as a source and, likewise, in only one article was a relative of the perpetrator used as a source. Further details are supplied in Table 3.

Table 3: Sources quoted in the articles

Sources quoted in the articles	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
Provincial government sources	40	43,5
Sources from criminal justice	32	34,8
Victims and/or their relatives	20	21,7
Principals and/or teachers	19	20,7
Researchers, experts & health professionals	17	18,5
Other parents including SGB members	14	15,2
Other learners (including RCL members)	11	12,0
Community members	6	6,5
Perpetrators and/or relatives of the perpetrator	2	2,2

The majority of the articles were based on either only one source (37%) or two sources (30,4%), while very few obtained information from more than four sources (5,4%). In 3,3 percent of the articles the source was not identifiable. Details regarding the number of sources used in the articles in my sample are portrayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Number of sources of information acknowledged in the articles

Number of sources used for the article	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
1	34	37,0
2	28	30,4
3	14	15,2
4	8	8,7
5	4	4,3
0	3	3,3
6	1	1,1

The single article that used six different categories of sources used *a parent of the victim* and *the victim* herself, *other parents*, *other learners*, *a SAPS official*, *a hospital spokesperson* as well as *court proceedings* to obtain information. Likewise, one of only two articles that used five different categories of sources used *the victim*, *teachers*, *other learners*, *a DoE*

spokesperson and a *SAPS spokesperson*. Therefore, I believe these journalists have attempted to portray incidences of violence from various perspectives, even if they did not exhaust their options. However, reporting on SV seems to be dominated by official sources such as DoE members, district officials and other provincial officers as well as members of SAPS, and court officials. Furthermore, the majority of journalists seem to consider the views of the perpetrators and their relatives as well as community members as irrelevant when reporting on SV. This, to my view, represents a disproportionate voice.

2.5.1.4 CONTEXTUAL FRAMES

I have provided an overview of some contextual frames in this section. Contextual frames are important in the way news is framed, as they can strengthen, or weaken, society's perception of the culpability of their environment regarding SV (McManus & Dorfman, 2001:23), and they contribute to perception of dangerous school stereotypes. In their media framing study McManus and Dorfman (2001:19) ask the question: "How much context accompanies youth violence stories?". They proceeded to examine specific aspects of selected contexts such as the type of violence, weapon type and how the weapon was obtained. In a similar approach, I began by looking at the types of violence and the weapon types within the context of South African schools, after which I also looked at provincial frames and school frames, as these were recurring contextual factors that dominated in the sample of articles that I selected.

a) Frames provided on the types of violence

I looked at types of violence in detail when I explored *acts* in Burke's pentad (3.2.1). I considered it necessary to look broadly at what is regarded as newsworthy SV types. Details of reporting on the different types of violence (*vide* Figure 1) are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: Number of articles reporting on different types of violence

Type of violence	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
Physical violence	57	62,0
Psychological violence	26	28,3
Sexual violence	12	13,0
Deprivation	5	5,4

Media coverage focuses mainly on physical violence. Incidences of *physical violence*, which range from shoving and fighting to lethal stabbings and shootings, were reported in 57 articles (62%). Deprivation, categorised as SV, received the least attention in these articles (5,4%). None of the articles focussed specifically on *deprivation* and *psychological violence*. They were merely discussed as part of reports that focused on *physical violence*. Only two articles reported solely on *sexual violence*. Both these articles dealt with an incident in which a girl was gang-raped in a school dormitory by outsiders, which is a decidedly severe physical and sexual act of violence. In the other 10 articles which reported sexual violence, the focus was, once again, on physical violence. Carlyle *et al.* (2008:172) note that the repetitiveness with which certain frames are presented to the public slowly shapes the way an issue is seen. As such, the analyses above suggest that newspapers are gradually convincing the public that SV equates to physical violence.

While reporting on *psychological violence*, *sexual violence* and *deprivation* probably occurred during the year from which the sample of articles was drawn, these issues were clearly not as strongly framed as SV and, therefore, were not identified as such by the media service that I used. The possibility, however, also exists, that reporting did not take place because these crimes are not considered to be sufficiently newsworthy. Whichever is true (and I suspect both to be true to some extent) such framing strengthens the conceptualisation of SV as having a physical dimension only, and fails to acknowledge other forms of violence, in spite of the severity of their effects. This is an issue that needs to be explored in a follow-up study as it has implications in terms of social awareness, and how society should respond (*vide* Carlyle *et al.*, 2008:180-182).

b) Frames on weapons used

Weapons that were used most often, according to the reports of the selected articles on incidences of SV, are *knives and other sharp objects* (42,4%). Not all the articles reported what was used, and firearms were only mentioned in four articles (4,3%). Further details are provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Weapons reported to be used

Weapons used	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
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Knives and other sharp objects	39	42,4
Blunt objects	15	16,3
Fists, feet	9	9,8
Firearms	4	4,3

c) Provincial frames

The articles, reporting on SV in the various provinces vary in frequency. One must be wary of assuming that incidences of SV that occur in a specific province are always just reported in the newspapers that are distributed in that province, as I found it to be not the case. Details of reports of SV in newspapers in specific newspapers appear in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequency of newspapers reporting on SV in provinces

Province	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
Western Cape Province	34	37,0
Gauteng Province	21	22,8
Northern Cape Province	11	12,0
KwaZulu-Natal Province	10	10,9
Eastern Cape Province	8	8,7
Limpopo Province	6	6,5
Free State Province	5	5,4
Northwest Province	3	3,3
Mpumalanga Province	1	1,1

Newspapers reported on incidences of SV that occurred in the Western Cape Province, more often than the newspapers did on any other province (34 articles). SV in Mpumalanga was only referred to in one article. Some articles reported on SV in a specific province, while in other instances, more than one province was mentioned.

The articles I selected concentrated largely on incidences of SV at secondary schools, and only one article reported on violence in a pre-primary school. Specific references to school

types, such as farm schools, boys' schools and special schools were also made. The details are displayed in Table 8.

Reporting focused mainly on incidences of SV that occurred at secondary schools, while only one article reported on violence in a pre-primary school. Specific references to school types, such as farm schools, boys' schools and special schools were also made. The details are displayed in Table 8. Take note that the categories in Table 8 are not mutually exclusive.

Table 8: Number of articles reporting on different types of schools

Type of school	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage
Secondary schools	50	54,3
Primary schools	11	12,0
Boarding schools	8	8,7
Special schools	7	7,6
Boys' schools	4	4,3
Agricultural schools	3	3,3
Pre-primary schools	1	1,1
Farm schools	1	1,1
Girls' schools	1	1,1

Details on all the above and other contextual issues that have been included in newspaper reporting are discussed in Chapter 3. However, based on these examples of contextual frames provided by the media, I argue that specific perceptions regarding specific contexts that generate SV are created in the media. SV is specifically framed as an issue that mainly occurs at Western Cape secondary schools, where knives and sharp objects are used by the learners. None of the newspaper articles mentioned the matter of how learners obtained the weapons.

2.5.2 DISCUSSION

The above analysis suggests that while SV is an issue reported in South African newspapers, specific framing does occur. McManus and Dorfman (2001:1) argue that news *frames* are forceful in making certain aspects of topics and incidents available for mental processing and not others. Brief episodic reporting toss readers back onto their prejudices and

assumptions. 75 percent of the articles in the sample that I obtained supplied mere episodic reporting on SV, compared to the 25 percent of the articles that displayed thematic reporting. This way of reporting encourages readers to perceive SV as an individual, rather than as a societal problem (*vide* Bullock, 2007:40) and to encourage acceptance of assumptions and stereotypes in this regard (*vide* McManus & Dorfman; 2001:1).

Newspapers often use official spokespersons from provincial government structures and the SAPS as sources, and the frame of law-enforcement strategies and weapon reduction as a remedy for the problem. Again, both these sets of frames are likely to strengthen perceptions that SV is not a societal problem, but a problem to be solved by SAPS, the DoE, and other government structures. Physical violence, violence that takes place in the Western Cape Province, and violence that happens at secondary schools receives a great deal of attention. Whilst this might be a true picture of occurrences, it cannot be accepted or rejected.

I find it essential to briefly reflect on frames that I found lacking in the 92 articles in my sample. Costs of SV rarely appeared in the yearlong sample and where they did, only the cost of setting up security systems for schools was mentioned (but no figures were provided). Medical costs, police costs and court costs were, for example, not mentioned at all. Ethnic descriptions were omitted in all cases. In a study in California, USA, on the frames portraying youth violence, the race of perpetrators was mentioned in 39 percent of the articles that were studied (McManus & Dorfman, 2001:20). I can only assume newsrooms discourage such descriptors in the light of our country's history. However, the words "racial violence" and "racism" are used in a small number of the articles (6,5%) without giving any further details. I believe this lack of information could result in readers falling back to default frames of racial stereotypes that exist in South African society. I also found that there is a lack of follow-up articles on incidences of violence.

The public is rarely informed about the long-term effects of SV incidences on the people involved. Similarly, I found the outcome of judicial proceedings of SV scarce. While drug abuse is mentioned in three articles (3,3%), and alcohol abuse in two articles (2,2%), I did not find a strong frame to elicit a reaction in society to do something about the easy access that

learners have to these substances. In the USA study, this was also the case, and McManus and Dorfman (2001:24) state that such reporting has “far less chance to make an impression on public consciousness”. In line with the Coplan’s study (2009) I found that there was little or no mention by journalists of social exclusion and negative social identities caused by the degrading and dreadful conditions in which learners live.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In South Africa, and elsewhere, SV is regarded as newsworthy. Newspapers provide their readers with a selection of the SV facts and, thus, leave certain imprints in the minds of the readers about SV in South African schools. In this chapter I reported on a framing analysis that I did on 92 newspaper clippings from 21 newspapers. In an attempt to understand SV, I studied the frequency with which certain frames are offered to the public. I found that newspapers frames of SV generally failed to elicit social awareness and responsibility regarding SV. In Chapter 3 I explore the reporting of various aspects of SV as they are framed in newspaper articles. I used Burke’s pentad, and added detail to the images that were put forward in the frames provided by the articles.

CHAPTER 3: THE SCHOOL VIOLENCE DRAMA AS SHOWED IN THE PRINTED MEDIA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 I argued that SV is newsworthy, and that newsworthiness matters because the media informs the public. However, the information that is purported to the public is often limited, and sometimes distorted. I found that reporters mainly focus specifically on individual instances of SV, without providing the wider societal context, and because they largely depend on information from officials from the DoE and the SAPS, many role-players’ views remain silent. This results in a general message to the public that the responsibility to curb SV lies mainly within official structures. The focus in the newspaper articles is furthermore essentially on extreme physical violence taking place in schools. By ignoring the more concealed types of violence such as sexual harassment, bullying, psychological violence, deprivation and neglect the media fails to sensitise the public about these types of SV and leaves the public misinformed. I now further explore the details of the media messages, looking at the way in which the five aspects of Burke’s dramatism are framed in the coverage of SV.

I consider it essential to reflect for a moment on why I deem it important to add qualitative perspectives on frames that have already, to some extent, been covered in the previous chapter. Newspapers consistently bombard the public with information on SV. McManus and Dorfman (2001:3) explain that people make sense of issues and events based on information that is *most readily available* and information that has been *most recently acquired*. Chapter 2 provided me with an outline of the frames provided to the public in the newspapers but the details with which the public are inundated have not been looked at. By providing a thick description of the information that the selected articles made available to the readers I believe I am presenting, to some extent, the information that people “store” (*vide* McManus & Dorfman 2001:7-8) from newspaper articles and which, in the process, becomes the “available information” that is used to make sense of SV.

3.2 BURKE’S DRAMATISM MODEL

I used Burke’s dramatism model as a framework for analysis. Burke’s dramatism model seeks to explain human behaviour in terms of the following five questions:

- ▶ What was done? (**Act**)
- ▶ Where and when was it done? (**Scene**)
- ▶ Who did it? (**Agent** or Actors)
- ▶ How did he or she do it? (**Agency** or Props)
- ▶ Why? (**Purpose** or Motive)

When using Burke’s pentad of terms, one has to accept that the subsets covered by the five terms sometimes overlap and coincide (Burke, 1969:127). While some might, in the context of SV argue that a teacher leaving a class unsupervised, contributed to the fight that started soon after the teacher left, and thereby partly caused the violence that broke out - hence the teacher may have been partially the *motive*, others may see this action as part of the *scene* that led up to the *act*. It is furthermore not possible to look at the *actors*, without looking at what they did (*act*). A 17 year old boy can be the *actor*, but unless one considers the *act* that he did, little insight into the drama will be gained. This boy could have killed a fellow learner by stabbing him or her and, thus, is considered to be the *antagonist* in the drama. However, he could have been the boy who came to the aid of the security guard, then he would be the *protagonist* who began by being an *onlooker*, but who became a *victim* in a matter of hours when the *antagonist*, who initially fought with the security guard, returned to the school and stabbed the boy in an act of revenge. Krauss (2005:29) pointed out that when using the pentad, one should not strive for “reductionist constructs, true for all time and all places” but rather try to stimulate reflection about the relationships between the various facets of the pentad as well as the multiple ways of looking at aspects of the various incidences. I, therefore, from time to time in my analysis placed one of the five facets in the context of one or more of the other four. I discussed SV as portrayed in the media by using the pentad according to the sequence of the questions above, in order to reveal aspects of SV in the frames arising from repetition in media reporting.

3.2.1 ACT

I began by looking at different *acts* during incidences of SV. To recognize acts as they are portrayed in newspapers, one has to answer the question: *what was done?* The word act refers to any verb that is linked with consciousness or deliberateness. Burke (1969:14) explains this as follows [emphasis in original]:

*If one happen to stumble over an obstruction, that would not be an act, but mere motion. However, one could convert even this sheer accident into something of an act if, in the course of falling one suddenly **willed** his fall (as a rebuke, for instance, to the negligence of the person who has left the obstruction in the way) ... the basic unit of action would be defined as "the human body in conscious or purposive motion."*

In line with the notion of *act* as purposeful motion, unwilling motion would then be seen as part of the *scene* (Burke, 1969:14-15). Similarly strategies such as policies, although they prescribe what people should do, form part of the *scene*, and not the *act*. When I explored the acts of SV as portrayed in the newspaper articles, I placed them in the categories provided in Figure 1 namely *physical violence*, *sexual violence*, *psychological violence* and *deprivation*.

Acts of *physical violence* described in the newspaper articles were in abundance, and often had serious consequences. Victims were:

- ▶ Shot (*pulled out a gun and fired; met sy pa se pistool geskiet; shock shooting [took place]; pulled out a gun and shot [the victim]*);
- ▶ Stabbed (*stabbed ... with force; vier keer ... gesteek; stabbed repeatedly; in sy kop en rug gesteek; stabbed to death*);
- ▶ Beaten with objects (*met 'n gholfstok geslaan; [used] corporal punishment; lined up and beaten; assaulted with a cricket stump; attacked with an iron rod; beaten with cricket bats*);
- ▶ Kicked (*kicked ... in the chest; in die sy geskop; [the attacker] hit and kicked him ... breaking his hand; in die ribbes geskop*);
- ▶ Shoved (*pushed down the stairs, met geweld rondgeruk; pushed me around*); and

- ▶ Otherwise assaulted (*met die vuiste toegetakel; aan die hare gepluk; deur die gesig geklap*).

Violent behaviour by perpetrators was, furthermore, reported to be directed at private property (*in a fit of rage, the attackers damaged a car; my bril op die grond stukkend getrap; bakkie erg beskadig*) as well as school property (*stoele deur die ruite gegooi; smashing [a glass door]; kinders se vraestelle gegryp en opgeskeur; trashed the school and damaged vehicles and windows*).

In some cases an article describes a single act that occurred, but often newspapers report that a perpetrator kept at it (*carried on attacking him; hulle het my weer omgestamp en in die ribbes geskop; stabbed seven times; again assaulted him*).

Although of a limited nature (2.5.1.4(a)) examples of *sexual violence* that are noted in the newspapers include:

- ▶ Sexual harassment (*three girls ... sexually harassed; sexually harassing a younger pupil; stripped naked*);
- ▶ Sexual assault and rape (*sexually assaulting six girls; brutal rape incident; raped when he was at school*);
- ▶ Gang rape (*eight boys ... ganged up ... raped and indecently assaulted her; gang-raped by men*);
- ▶ Incidences targeting the victim's private parts (*had Deep Heat rubbed onto his genitals; giving me wedgies [i.e. pulling up her underwear]*).

Emotional and psychological abuse was described in some articles. This includes victims being:

- ▶ Verbally abused (*he called me names in front of other people; calling me names; used derogatory terms on us; insulted her*);
- ▶ Humiliated (*stripped naked; degradation [at home]; used his cell-phone to capture a video clip of a teenage girl urinating; racially abused [a teacher] in front of other learners*);

- ▶ Intimidated and threatened (*intimidate peers; pupils fear for their lives; scared to go back to school; received threatening phone calls; they are afraid; the boy pleaded for mercy; threatened a pupil; mes ... teen haar keel gedruk*);
- ▶ Marginalised (*feels isolated and lonely; constantly hide in corners*).

Lastly, cases were reported where actors were *deprived*.

- ▶ Learners were often not taken care of at home (*basics [such] as family care, nutrition, shelter and protection ... are not met; neglect; hunger; [mother] not feeding him*) or at school (*shortage of furniture; classes suspended; staff members were not prepared to help; hunger forced the pupils to take bread from the kitchen*);
- ▶ Actors were deprived from their dignity through racism (*racial discrimination; racially abused his Indian teacher in front of other pupils; racial violence that flared up; racial abuse*). One instance of such ill treatment led to a teenager committing suicide - the learner *hanged himself as result of bad treatment he has been receiving from a “racist and abusive teacher”¹⁴*.
- ▶ Actors were deprived of their dignity through other forms of humiliation such as those described under psychological violence in the previous paragraph
- ▶ Actors have their belongings taken from them (*gryp my selfoon; stealing lunchboxes; they are afraid to take pocket money to school because they get beaten up for it*).

The acts of SV, as portrayed above, occur in various scenes. I, therefore, portrayed the scenes as framed in the newspapers, as it describes the stage on which SV dramas took place.

3.2.2 SCENE

According to Burke (1969:3) the scene is the setting or background to human action. In this study the scene is, therefore, the background and settings of incidences of SV as described in the selected newspaper articles. The scene contains the act (the act of violence), as well as the agents (victims, perpetrators and other actors) and agencies (the stage props). To

¹⁴ For easy reading I merely included abstracts from the articles which I used directly in sentences, in italics, instead of putting them in inverted commas.

identify the scene, one has to try and answer the question: *Where and when did SV take place?* In the newspaper articles that I analysed, schools are invariably described as scenes set for violence. While some schools are portrayed as incapable of dealing with SV, others are reported as taking a stand. While mention is made of various types of schools, the articles produced strong frames for Cape Town secondary schools and boys' schools. After discussing these, I have given consideration to other frames, although some are less prominent.

3.2.2.1 SCHOOLS IN GENERAL

In general, newspapers portray schools as unsafe places (*outbursts of violent crime are the norm at the school; there is always violence; [o]ns kinders is nêrens meer veilig nie*). They report that violence takes place in most parts of the school grounds: *in the classroom*, on the *corridors (op die skool se stoepe)*, in cloakrooms (*boys' toilets; in die badkamer*), in the office block (*in his office*), on the playing fields (*on a grandstand; a playing field*), in the dormitories (*girls' dormitory; school hostel*), on the *playground* and even in forbidden areas (*verbode terrein vir leerlinge*). The reports state that violence has also occurred just outside the school gate (*voor haar skool; just outside his school*).

The newspaper articles portray violence as taking place at all times: during class times (*during a motor-mechanics class; the back of the classroom*), during breaks (*tydens pouse; during tea break*), before school (*voor skool*) and *after school*, even *in the middle of the night*. Violence happens during the normal term as well as during *exam times*; at school functions (*at a farewell function*) and at *sport meeting[s]*. Violence occurs at secondary schools and primary schools, inner city schools, suburban schools, township schools and schools in small towns and in rural areas. Newspapers report that there is SV in special schools, technical schools and agricultural schools and violent behaviour has even been reported in a pre-primary school¹⁵.

¹⁵ The media, very frequently name the schools at which incidences of SV occur.. I believe that this contributes to civic indifference (*vide 2.5.1.1*) as it strengthens the frame of school violence being an individual problem – in this context, an individual school's problem.

3.2.2.2 POWERLESS SCHOOLS

A strong scene-frame that the newspapers provide is that of schools not having the power to get rid of brutes (*thugs are allowed in the school*) because they are unable to deal with violent behaviour. One learner boasted that the school cannot do anything to a learner (*daar kan nie eintlik iets met jou gebeur nie ... dit is baie moeilik om geskors te word; onderwysers ignoreer sommige van die dinge ... omdat hulle nie meer soveel beheer oor die leerlinge het nie*). Another article reported that a school closed down because of a *reign of terror by a 17-year-old pupil*. A mother of a victim told the reporter that *[there are] not different punishments for children who don't do their homework and those who stab other children*. She said that her child was stabbed and beaten in a class while the teacher was present. Another concerned parent pleaded that schools must get rid of their ostrich mentality (*skole moet ophou om probleme onder die mat in te vee ... en 'n plan maak om geweld in skole uit te roei*).

3.2.2.3 SCHOOLS TAKING DECISIVE ACTION

A different frame from the one described above, is that of schools taking decisive action against SV. These schools take steps to promote school safety by instilling discipline (*we are focusing on the basics like wearing uniforms, neatness and instilling discipline*), introducing educational programmes (*programme to reduce levels of aggression at school; problem-solving techniques*), limiting access to the school premises (*[we] keep our gates closed; security guards [are hired]*), they take steps to monitor behaviour (*video cameras in the classrooms; daar is in elke vierkant 'n manlike onderwyser wat saam diens doen [pouses]*) and they identify drugs and weapons (*conduct searches*). Some schools empower teachers to deal with SV (*trauma awareness training for teachers; conflict management training*).

Apart from these general scenarios of schools in newspapers, specific school scenes are framed.

3.2.2.4 SCHOOLS IN THE CAPE TOWN AREA

The strongest scene-frame that was presented in the selected articles was that of secondary schools in the larger Cape-Town area (2.5.1.4). The articles portray the schools as being situated in a high-risk area (*in 'n bendegeteisterde gebied*). They describe teachers at these schools as being traumatised and under stress (*[s]everal teachers are on long leave for*

stress; [teachers are] threatened), and they portray principals as frustrated men and women with limited powers (*toothless hounds; hamstrung by laws that prohibit us to be decisive*). However, the articles depict most principals and teachers as being ready to curb violence (*it is sad that we’ve reached a stage where we need to conduct searches ... but it is necessary*) and these schools take steps to eradicate violence (*CCTV cameras are installed; [we] keep our gates closed; we are focusing on the basics*). At many of these schools safety volunteers from the community (also called Bambanani) assist with searches (*when pupils enter the grounds, Bambanani volunteers look out for weapons*) and in many instances schools work closely with the police to prevent violence (*the school also worked with the police*).

The articles describe these schools as being situated in areas where drug and alcohol abuse is rife (*kinders in sjebiens en dwelmsmokkalhuise rondhang; high risk areas; increased gangsterism*), and where violent behaviour has become normalised (*children emulated violent behaviour they saw in their communities; our learners are exposed to violence in society*), they report that resistance is growing in the communities against gangsterism, drugs and violence (*community activists ... have chosen to act; taking decisive action to break the cycle of gangs and drugs; community ... no longer prepared to tolerate drug dens in their streets; aksieplan [deur die] gemeenskapspolisiëringsforum*). They describe the Western Cape DoE as being committed to act to reduce SV (*we are trying seriously to do something about the safety of learners; CCTV cameras are installed at about 60 schools; metal detectors will be issued to 109 schools*). They portray the police in these areas as being intent on reducing the levels of violence (*they will be following a tough approach to dangerous weapons and drugs in schools; random searches for weapons; visit schools during assemblies; kinders teen die gevare ... waarsku; reservists are deployed at several schools*).

3.2.2.5 BOYS’ SCHOOLS

The articles created a different scene-frame for boys’ schools. Although they describe these schools as *prestigious*, they suggest a culture of violence, victimisation and unhealthy power-relationships. They describe dormitories as having *difficult living conditions because of these circumstances*. They state that learners at these schools disregard the property of other learners (*took [a pupil’s] scarf from his hostel room and it was later burned*). These schools seem to view physical violence as normal behaviour: after a boy *had been hit with a cricket*

bat, the perpetrator merely *later apologised* and that was considered to have settled *the dispute*. Rituals (*initiation abuses*) take place to *make pupils bend*, and when parents or learners complain, they are threatened (*[the mother was] warned “You haven’t heard the last of us”*) and victimised (*he was victimised because he had told his mother*). The articles reported incidences of violence that occurred in a dormitory, after school (*at supper*) and during the night (*in the middle of the night*). It appears that some of these acts of violence have been part of a *tradition that has [been] operating ... for years*.

3.2.2.6 OTHER SCHOOLS

In some articles references are made to other categories of schools.

A few articles provided a frame of former white schools as places where racial violence prevails. One article portrays parents who are concerned about racism and gangsterism being covered up at such a school in Limpopo (*daar is té veel gerugte van rassisme en bendebedrywighele wat net toegesmeer en agter geslote kantoordeure gehanteer word*). In a second article a provincial DoE spokesperson commented after a racial violence incident at a so-called integrated school (*geïntegreerde skool*) in the Northern Cape, that the process of transformation has not received enough attention (*hoe min aandag gegee is aan hoe transformasie moet geskied*). Chaos broke out at this school because the newly elected RCL members were mainly white (*gekleurde leerders is omgekrap omdat die meeste van die verkose leerlingraadslede wit is*). In a third incident the articles report that the teachers declared that the principal of the school was a *bad leader*, and one who *has failed to address the racial problems here and has actually fuelled them*.

Other articles describe an inner-city school as being *troubled by a tormented social environment*, and a school in a rural village as having *insufficient furniture* so that learners have to sit on *their school bags, chair and table frames, and old tins*. These frames did not recur.

Although other types of schools appeared in the articles, the school type was usually merely indicated as part of the school’s name (e.g. special school, agricultural school, and so on.) Specific frames were not purported for any of these schools.

3.2.2.7 THE DoE’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCENE

While to a large extent I considered the DoE as a role-player, and thus an actor in SV dramas, policies and the implications of policies are viewed by Burke as part of the scene (*vide* Burke, 1969:14-15). Legislation regarding suspension and expulsion provides a mechanism to deal with SV. This implies the involvement of the various education departments; therefore I view the DoE as being part of the scene of suspension and expulsion.

The articles portray part of the problem of *toothless* schools as being the result of the indecisiveness and sometimes unwillingness on the part of a provincial DoE to expel the perpetrators. In one such a case, a boy was *suspended [by the SGB] on June 1*. The school heard nothing from the DoE for 12 weeks¹⁶. On the 24th of August (thus 12 weeks later) the DoE informed them that *the boy had to return*. Another article describes a protest march by parents and learners *outside the education offices ... demanding immediate action*. A parent from yet another school stated: *Net die departement van onderwys kan ’n leerling skors. Hulle verwys maar net weer die probleem terug na die skool*. A journalist reported on a representative of an assembly of principals:

[He appealed to the provincial MEC] to allow “power to be given back to governing bodies” when it comes to deciding on the fate of “dangerous and violent” pupils. He said the “tedious and long-winded process” of expulsion and suspension often left the principals “toothless hounds” and allowed the children to “literary get away with murder”.

A DoE spokesperson defended their lack of action in another article as follows:

... behavioural problems could arise from problems at home and felt that the department should not react by “simply shifting the behavioural problem from one school to another school” by using suspension and expulsion.

A single article has a different message which portrays the Western Cape as the province with the highest expulsion rate in the country (*Over the 18 month-period, 145 Western Cape pupils were expelled from their schools, compared to [the other provinces where the figures*

¹⁶ It is clearly stated in the SASA that while schools have the power to suspend a learner for a limited period after a fair hearing (7 days), only the Head of the Department of the DoE in the province may expel such a learner permanently (DoE, 1996b:Section 9).

ranged between 1 and 30]). This newspaper obtained the information from the office of the national Minister of Education.

The role of the DoE is further explored as an agent in 3.2.3. Agents are the actors on the scenes that I described above.

3.2.3 AGENT

While one has to consider the question of *who did it* to identify the agents or actors in a drama, Burke (1969:xviii) suggests that when looking at an event or a drama, there are agents, co-agents and counter-agents. When analysing the agents or actors, in the case of SV there are usually many actors on the scene. One must thus not only determine who did the violent acts, and to whom, but one has to consider all the other actors as well, such as onlookers and other decision makers in the drama.

This distinction between who the victim, the perpetrator and so forth are, is however often not very clear and the situation is sometimes complex. One article describes learners at a school for visually disabled learners who took to looting the kitchen (acting as *perpetrators*). They however did this after the school was closed down and the staff (supposedly decision makers) refused to give them any food (*All the kitchen staff have remained in their rooms because they were instructed to ignore us*), and thus the learners can be considered as *victims* of deprivation. The closing down of the school happened after the learners locked officials in (learners again being *perpetrators*) *to prevent them from leaving without talking to them about the problems at the school*. The article describes these problems as being caused by corruption because the principal and other staff-members *embezzled tens of thousands of rands of school funds*. Who the perpetrators in this drama were, is thus debatable but, that a series of bad decisions were taken by various actors, is evident. The alleged misuse of money was not confirmed or denied in the single article that appeared on this incident, as the education spokesperson *could not be reached for comment*. There was no report on the outcome of this drama, apart from SAPS freeing the DoE officials.

Situations like the one described above are not unique. A number of articles describe learners who were provoked in some way (marginalised, teased, humiliated, disciplined), and who were thus victims, who later turned violent, and as a result became perpetrators. A

boy, for example, who had thumped a little girl and stolen her lunchbox, was reported to have tearfully revealed his own hunger because of a lack of food at home (victim of deprivation). Another boy was reported to have turned violent after he had been *relentlessly teased* and his scarf had been *taken from his hostel room and burnt*.

Instead of trying to pinpoint the victims, perpetrators, and so on, I have preferred to portray the different actors, described in the newspaper articles in various roles, on the violent theatre-stages of South African schools.

3.2.3.1 LEARNERS

The actors, who appear most often in scenes of SV portrayed in newspapers, are boys. In a few instances references are made to girls, but in many articles journalists used the words *learners* or *pupils* and did not state their gender. In the part that is to follow, I have discussed learners as perpetrators, learners as victims, and I have placed learners as onlookers into various frames.

An ongoing list of learner-perpetrators of various kinds emerged: *head boy of hostel, grade 12's, prefects; medeleerders; twee gr.8 meisies [sic]; 14-year old learner; 15-year old school mate; 17-jarige leerders; fellow pupil; grade 6 learner; a grade 11 learner; a grade 10 pupil; 13 jarige laerskoolseun*.

While these learners are frequently portrayed as acting impulsively (this will be discussed as part of *motive* in 3.2.5) contrasting frames are also provided of learners as thugs, who cause terror on the school grounds (*reign of terror*), and who act with intentional violence. An article describes one such a case under the subheading: *School closed for two weeks after pupil's death threats*. This article reports that a boy (13 years old) caused classes to be stopped because he *threatened to kill fellow pupils* if he were expelled. The same boy had previously been accused of *locking teachers into toilets for hours at a time*; he had *cut a pupil's ear with a pair of scissors* and *used his cell-phone to capture a video clip of a teenage girl urinating*. The description states that the boy *had severe and on-going behavioural problems which had from time to time resulted in violent and anti-social behaviour*. Similarly one perpetrator defiantly declared: *They can't do anything to me*. Another article reports

that a grade 12 boy who held a *haircut inspection* ... *pulled out one of the boys ... kicked the boy in the chest, causing him to fall ... then carried on attacking him.*

Only a limited number of incidences, which do not apply to the majority of episodes, provide the above strong frame of perpetrators as thugs. In the bulk of the reportings, specific information about the perpetrators is largely lacking. One perpetrator is described as having supposedly been previously involved in SV (*apparently this boy has stabbed [a learner] before ... this could not be confirmed*). There are hints that girls who engaged in fighting are not good enough to attend a prestigious school (*ouers met kinders wat nie by die etos van die skool wil inpas nie, moet eerder ... 'n ander skool vind*) and a male learner was described as being inebriated (*bedwelmdde tiener*). The articles state that another perpetrator was a former *track athlete and first team rugby player*. One article does provide more insight by suggesting that aggressors are often learners who feel *isolated and lonely and then become aggressive*.

The learner-victims list looked similar to the list of aggressors: *14-jarige leerders; 20-year old matric pupil; nine-year old boy; 16-year old boy; 13-year old boy; twee gr.11-leerders [sic]; girl in grade 7; 17-year old; in graad 10; a student representative council member; 13 jaar oud; 15-year old girl; 12-year old boy*. The list again seems to be never-ending

The articles identify victims' characteristics even less than in the case of perpetrators. Learners, who were killed in acts of SV, are usually portrayed in a positive fashion. One such a victim, for example was acclaimed as *a role model* at his funeral and as someone who was *always there to lend a helping hand*. Beyond that, the victims are mainly portrayed as simply regular learners who happen to be in the wrong place. In one article the mother is reported to admit that her victim-son *was not innocent [he teased the aggressor]*, and in another article it is argued that the victim was *partly to blame for his injuries*.

Learners who were onlookers are strongly framed as being scared and traumatised. The girls in the dormitory where a girl was gang raped in the middle of the night, were *traumatised by the brutal rape incident at their boarding house*. A matriculant in another article admitted: *[w]e are scared*, while a teacher informed a journalist that learners are too scared to go to the bathrooms on their own (*leerlinge gaan pouses in groepe toilet toe*). Learners at schools

are repeatedly described as fearful and intimidated (*so shaken ... she was scared to go back to school; students ... were shocked by the incident*). One mother told the reporter that her son ran away from school, and that she found him cutting himself:

He said he has to constantly hide in corners watching his back. ... A group of 20 boys will choose one boy to pick on. They will push him to the ground and then all of them will jump on him.

The articles portray onlooker-learners as being too scared to speak out - during an interview learners denied that a violent incident took place. The following message was sent by a learner via his/her cellular phone to a newspaper:

We're 2 scared of the bully, there4 hav [sic] given untrue statements. He has threatened 2 hurt us. I hope the principal can expel him. He makes our lives miserable. From class mate.

According to media reports learners seem to be afraid to stand up to thugs (*niemand tree regtig sterk op teen die ouens wat baklei nie*) and are hesitant to get involved. In an incident of violence where two outsiders stormed into a class and attacked a learner, the newspaper report states: *[h]is classmates did not join in the scuffle as they ... feared the boys and their friends would come for them*. Other journalists also refer to learners being too scared to intervene (*in front of terrified classmates; too scared to intervene*).

Contrary to the above frames, some articles describe how learners acted like heroes (*with the help of other pupils and teachers he was stopped and taken to the principal's office; totdat een van die seuns tussenbeide getree het*). There are articles reporting injuries that learners sustained while helping others, such as the incident where an attacker stabbed a boy in revenge because the boy had helped a security guard earlier that day (*[the victim] came to the aid of [the security guard], when [the attacker] was trying to force his way into the school*). The victim later explained that he had helped the security guard because his lip started bleeding (*I did not know if he could handle the guy alone, that's why I stepped in*). Another heroic learner was killed while trying to intervene (*he was trying to stop a fight*).

The articles also report that, on occasion, learners have taken protest action against SV (*Hundreds of pupils joined the protest*). In some cases the action taken is described as violent

behaviour: *On hearing the news that [the victim] was dead the pupils were so upset that they ran amok on the school premises ... baying for [the perpetrator's] blood).*

One article provides a specific frame of pre-school learners as *terror tots* who create *havoc* at school. They portray learners as *bullying, swearing, engaging in fist-fights* and being cheeky (*cheekiness*), and as naughty, and *displaying angry behaviour*. Neither this article nor any other article provides an alternative preschool-learner frame.

The lack of information on characteristics of victims and perpetrators corresponds with the findings of De Wet (2009). In my opinion this contributes to a lack of context, and perpetuates the individualised frame of SV, instead of contributing to information about what De Wet (2009:54) calls a typical portrait of victims and perpetrators.

3.2.3.2 PRINCIPALS

The articles portray principals in various frames. Some of the frames are negative, portraying principals as corrupt or unhelpful, other frames are more positive, and a number portray principals as victims of SV.

There is a strong frame portraying principals who are accused of acting unethically, and who are corrupt. The actions of such principals often cause violent protests. The report of one article reads: *School violence broke out ... after pupils protested against a principal who they accused of maladministration and racism*. Another report states that a RCL-member explained that learners at the school were *angered by the way [the principal] ran the school*. They accused the principal of misusing the funds and using *corporal punishment*.

Other articles portray principals as being unwilling to supply information to parents: (*the principal ... refused to show her footage of what had transpired that day; nobody from the school has given me any real answers*) or to reporters (*[the] school principal ... refused to speak to [the reporter]; [the newspaper] left two messages but there was no response; [die koerant] het 'n boodskap op die hoof ... se selfoon gelos, maar hy het nie gereageer nie*). In some cases the articles state that principals are unwilling to punish perpetrators properly (*are there not different punishments for children who don't do homework and those who stab other children; the assailant had been given a "mere rap over the knuckles" in the form*

of an hour's detention; [the principal] said there was insufficient proof to discipline the pupil allegedly involved).

A positive frame in some of the articles, portray principals as being committed to doing whatever is needed to stop violence. One article describes a principal who *organised a counter-attack to protect teachers and learners*. This involved *undercover cops crouching behind the toilets to catch dope smokers* and the banishing of all *weapons of playground wars*. The articles continue to describe *shock tactics* that a principal used that led to *the good eventually ... outweighing the bad*. Another article quotes the words of a principal:

One can't live with one's head in the sand and assume learners won't come to school with weapons. We have to take pre-emptive action.

Sometimes, the articles portray principals as victims, for instance, when a principal was *shot in the neck allegedly by an enraged parent*; in another instance the principal was *lucky to escape death after he was attacked*; and in yet another one, the principal was humiliated at assembly when *the matric pupils walked out*. The reports also portray principals as appearing to be shocked and scared: (*ek het my doodgeskrik*) and intimidated: (*some admit confidentially they are too afraid to act [against thugs] for fear of retribution*).

3.2.3.3 OTHER STAFF MEMBERS

In various reports there are frames of teachers that are similar to the frames of principals. However the teacher frames are decidedly more positive than those of the principals.

The articles portray teachers as acting bravely and responsibly, trying to improve the situation, or trying to help the victims. In one case the teacher: *tried to help, but they [the two assailants] even tried to stab him ... so he went to call for help*. Another article reports that teachers *chased after the attacker*. The attacker then ran away and jumped onto a bus, but *the teachers managed to stop it*. Another article gives an account of a teacher who: *tried to break up a brawl*, and in another incident the teacher prevented two aggressors from entering her class:

[The teacher] stopped them before they could enter the classroom. She saw the apparent knife and pushed the youths out.

One report describes teachers rescuing the perpetrator to prevent other learners from taking revenge for the death of a learner (*He was later rescued by teachers who locked him up in the staff room until the police arrived to arrest him*).

Some articles have a frame depicting teachers as being unprofessional when, for instance, they are out of their classrooms or absent (*not supervised; the teacher was not in the classroom*) or indifferent (*while the teacher was present ... ; how can the teacher say he did not see anything; we carried him to the staff room to get help but no one responded to our cries; die onderwyser het gesê dit kan wag tot Maandag ... hulle is op pad na die rugby*). A teacher was *suspended from the hostel*. Another article portrays a teacher (and the principal) as being corrupt (*embezzled tens of thousands of rands of school funds*).

Other reports portray teachers as either helpless (*[t]eachers say they feel helpless; onderwysers is deesdae bang vir die leerlinge; [a]s daar 'n geveg in 'n klas uitbreek, sal die onderwyser sommer uitstap*), or as victims (*personeellede is met geweld in klaskamers rondgeruk; [the thug] calls the teachers names; die wiskundeonderwyser is in die regterskouer geskiet; geen respek vir onderwysers*). According to various articles, teachers find the situations in schools traumatic and stressful (*teachers worry anew; I am still shaking; has left staff ... shocked and traumatised; teachers ... had to receive counselling to deal with trauma; with shaking hands described ... the attack; teachers are under more stress*).

3.2.3.4 EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

Burke (1969:171) postulates that agents can also be “super-persons” such as a church, a school and so forth. In my opinion, to some extent, the DoE form part of the scene that promotes or inhibits incidences of SV (3.2.2.7). However, one can also think of an education department as a “super-person”- actor in this drama. Three frames emerged from this perspective: the two paradoxical frames that emerged of the various education departments are: they are committed to curbing SV versus a lack of commitment. In the third frame the Departments of Education organise campaigns against SV (although commitment is not verified or refuted).

Reports on the Western Cape Education Department describe steps, taken by this Department, to prevent violence. One spokesperson was reported to have stated: *We are*

trying very seriously to do something about the safety of the learners in our schools. A description of steps reported in numerous articles include *CCTV cameras being installed at about 60 schools; programmes to help pupils handle conflict have also been implemented and the establishment of a call-centre (in one day ... the centre handled more than 100 calls)*. Specific instructions are given by die DoE to the Western Cape schools, including: *skole [in die provinsie] moet seker maak dat hulle 'n veiligheidskomitee in plek het; [veiligheidskomitees by skole is] verantwoordelik vir 'n veiligheidsoudit; [veiligheidskomitees] stel die skool se veiligheidsplanne op ... en moet dit gereeld hersien and skole behoort doeltreffende toegangsbeheermaatreëls in plek te hê*.

One of the articles argues that *statements from successive education spokespersons [are] so lacking in context they still take us by surprise*. The DoE was criticised because of the *ineffectiveness of the [safety programme]*. In reaction to an education spokesperson mentioning programmes in the pipeline the journalist stated: *That old pipeline excuse has been rattling around for years, just like the metal detectors story*. The article criticised even the then president (Mr Thabo Mbeki) for promising an improvement to the situation over a time-span of 10 years: *The best response to that now is: Yeah, right*.

There are reports of specific campaigns by other education departments. One frame of the ceremonies involved the so-called *torch of peace*. Each year, a different government department receives this torch as a pertinent reminder not to forget *issues of safety, human rights, gender-based violence, and the rights of women and children*. In 2009, the national DoE received the torch, which rotated from one province to the next. It started in Limpopo where officials took it *to schools most notorious for violence*. Later reports stated that the North-West province had handed the torch to the Gauteng education department, at which event they had described the torch as *a symbol of hope and commitment, to instil a strong sense of humanity ... and a commitment to preserve lives and reduce violence and crime*. The Northern Cape announced a campaign to *ensure that schools become safe, caring and child-friendly places*. The only detail supplied about these campaigns, was the establishment of a *safety forum*. However, not a single article provided follow-up reporting on these campaigns which had been promised by the Northern Cape DoE. The possible outcomes of such campaigns were (uncritically) omitted.

3.2.3.5 THE SAPS

As with the DoE, I consider SAPS to be a “super-person”-actor in SV dramas. There are mainly positive frames of SAPS working pro-actively, and also reacting to incidences of SV reported in the newspaper articles.

Steps taken by the police in the Cape Town metropolis include visits to schools (*visit [to] schools in the areas*), searches, and seizures (*random searches with sniffer dogs and [that] drugs and weapons ... would be confiscated; pupils were asked to leave the room as narcotics and [the dogs], did their job*), and information sessions (*during assemblies and create awareness; kinders teen die gevare van die middels te waarsku*). Reports on SAPS in other provinces describe how they successfully conducted searches at schools and confiscated weapons (*confiscated knives*), and narcotics (*the arrest of three boys who had dagga on them*).

The articles describe how the police came to the aid of victims (*[a principal's] life was saved by the ... police who rushed to the ... school; timely arrival of the police; called in to free the officials [who were locked in by the angry pupils]*). Frequent reports state that they are investigating cases (*police are investigating a case of murder*) and arresting perpetrators (*four people were initially arrested; being held at the ... police station; two people have been detained; police arrived to arrest him; in hegtenis geneem*).

The articles contained no negative frames of the police. I believe that the articles omitted any information that could possibly have portrayed SAPS negatively. In one such an article, the only information provided was: *A freelance photographer was arrested for allegedly punching a police constable. [The spokesperson] asked him to identify himself but he failed to do so*. The reporter did not follow this up with the photographer to provide an alternative voice in the article. The only source used in the article was the SAPS spokesperson (2.5.1.3).

3.2.3.6 PARENTS

The newspaper articles describing parents have various frames. The reports portray some parents as being concerned and taking action, whereas others depict parents as being

uncaring and not providing for their children. The articles have frames of parents as perpetrators, as undermining schools, and as victims of violence.

Frames depicting concerned parents portray them protesting *outside the education offices ... demanding immediate action [against violence]* and even taking legal steps to protect their children (*Parents ... have turned to the courts to stop a [perpetual perpetrator] from returning*). At another school parents stood up against a bad principal (*parents flocking to the school to demand that the principal be removed from his post*). One parent, a SGB member warned that schools should not pretend that nothing is wrong at the school: *Skole moet ophou om probleme onder die mat in te vee ... Elke skool wil die beste vertoon in die gemeenskap.*

The articles describe parents as being most distressed about SV. One report states that a mother, who expressed her concern for her son, said that it would take *years of love and therapy ... after he was raped*. Another mother stated that she prays every morning for her child's safety (*Elke oggend wat ek my kind aflaai, bid ek dat hy veilig sal terugkom*). This also affects parents at work, as one parent put it:

...having problems concentrating at work ... I'm scared of getting that same call. I am afraid that these drugged boys might catch her in a corner and rape her.

Some articles depict parents as *absent* and inadequate, *mothers having to leave young children to go to work*, and parents allowing children to watch *unsupervised television*. The frames of mothers portrayed them as being largely responsible for taking care of their children.

Other articles portray parents as undermining school discipline (*what the parents are at home, the children are at school; parents [do] not discipline their children*). One article complains that parents do not want to accept that their children are in the wrong:

Die grootste probleem is die ouers. Baie ouers kom by 'n dissiplinêre verhoor aan en is uitdagend. Hulle glo nie hulle kinders kan iemand anders bedreig nie. Van hulle bring hulle regsverteenwoordigers saam.

In one of the articles the reporter states that a parent *shot [a principal] in the neck* and in so doing portrays the parent as the perpetrator. However in other incidences the parents purported as the victims of violence (*[leerders het] die ondervoorsitter van die skool se beheerliggaam aangerand; father of [the school's] head girl, was stabbed repeatedly; [n lid van die beheerliggaam se] bakkie erg beskadig*).

3.2.3.7 YOUTH OUTSIDERS

Frames of youth outsiders are negative and limited to former learners and learners from other schools.

There are newspaper reports about an expelled learner who assaulted a security guard at a school. One of the learners came to the aid of the security guard. Half an hour later the learner, who had attacked the security guard and who was then accompanied by his older brother, forcible searched through the classrooms for their victim. They *stormed into a packed classroom and attacked [the learner who helped the security guard]* in the presence of the teacher.

The articles describe many cases of violent acts reported by learners from other schools (*two pupils from another school; 16 seuns van 'n ander skool; pupils from other schools; two pupils from another school; a pupil from [a] neighbouring [high school]*). Some articles mention the rivalry between schools which was prevalent in some of these cases.

3.2.3.8 ADULT OUTSIDERS

The newspapers mention various adult outsiders, such as community members, gang members and politicians.

The articles have frames of community members. One article reports on community members who signed *a petition against bail for the suspects*, while another article states that a community member was reported to have said: *we are sick and tired of the stabbings*. Instances are described of neighbours and passers-by who attempted to help the victims: a learner was *rescued by a Grade 10 pupil and his neighbour, who was driving past the school at the time of the attack*, another tried to help a girl who was assaulted outside the school gate (*n Man wat [die dogter wat aangeval is] probeer help het, het die seuns in sy voertuig*

agterna gesit en een seun gevang en opgelaai and in another instance community members rushed to the aid of a learner (*verskeie inwoners het uit hulle erwe gekom*) In this case violent youths attacked community members (*[die groep oortreders het] hulle met klippe bestook*).

The articles portray churches as trying to help schools in their fight against violence. In one report a church leader *urged young people in the area to stay away from drugs as they destroy people's lives*. Another school used a church pastor to act as a therapist for learners after a violent incident. One article reports that *[o]ur churches should be applauded for the laudable role they are playing in spreading the message of tolerance and peace*.

Another article reports on violent protests, forced entrance and physical violence at two schools (a suburban high school and a primary school in the township) by teacher union members not linked to the schools. In the case of the high school this SV led to exams being disrupted and exam papers being torn up. There were, however, allegations that this school had threatened not to allow learners with outstanding school fees to write examinations. The article also stated that union members were dissatisfied with the principal of the primary school. The schools' reactions to the allegations were not provided.

The articles contain yet another frame of actors, and these are gang members. Many of the SV incidences in the Western Cape are linked to gangsterism in the newspaper reports (*die voorval hou glo verband met bendegeweld*). The articles also refer to gang members as role-players in other provinces as well (*[g]ang violence has broken out at two Port Elizabeth schools; two gangs [at a school in Johannesburg] planned a fight [just outside the school] to avenge [a stabbing that occurred earlier at school]*).

The articles also portray a lack of commitment on the side of politicians to deal with problems related to SV. One article states that *politicians' platitudes ... have also gone on too long*. The articles even criticise the youth leagues of political parties as *remaining largely uninvolved in mobilising social action against violence on the school ground[s]*.

The above information makes it abundantly clear that there are many actors involved in various ways in the dramas intertwined with the SV acts. In the majority of articles that I

analysed, the actors are either victims or perpetrators. Yet, very few journalists succeeded in portraying the *perspectives* of both the victim and the perpetrator on SV acts. One reporter however wrote:

One must not merely think of the victim but also of the perpetrator, who often needs help from some form of oppression. ... often someone who is bullied by someone more powerful deals with his or her humiliation by bullying someone less powerful.

3.2.4 AGENCY

Agencies, or props, are identified by asking the question: *How did he or she [or they] do it?* (Krauss, 2005:30). Some form of weapon is often used in acts of SV even though they are not allowed in schools. Cellular phones also seem to be omnipresent on the stages of SV dramas.

According to the reports the kinds of weapons used in SV seem to be unlimited (2.5.1.4(b)). Knives are strongly framed because they are the most popular agency used by actors and they always appear to be at hand (*a 12-inch knife; pluk hy 'n mes uit; grabbing a knife from his sock; pulled out a knife, produced a fish-knife and sharpened it against the wall, knife from his blazer pocket*). Other sharp objects were also described in the newspaper reports (*met 'n stok gesteek; with a pair of scissors; met skerp voorwerpe; met 'n pen*).

The second type of weapon, which the newspaper articles mention, consists of objects used for clubbing such as sport gear (*cricket bat, hockey sticks, cricket stump; golf clubs*) as well as other objects (*whip; steel desk legs; broom sticks; metal pipe ... ripped off the school gate; knuckleduster; brick*).

Although carrying weapons is forbidden, and searches do take place at some schools (*random searches with sniffer dogs; volunteers looked out for weapons*), learners apparently carry weapons because they feel threatened. One article reports that a learner indicated that *he needed to arm himself for the big fight after school*. Another boy told a reporter that he went home to fetch a knife after he was stabbed.

The articles describe cellular phones as props that often appear on the school-violence stage. They cause disputes (*argument over a cell phone memory card*) and are violently taken from victims (*gryp my selfoon*). Cellular phones are used to intimidate victims (*received threatening phone calls*) and humiliate victims (*used his cell-phone to capture a video clip of a teenage girl urinating*). Onlookers record incidences (*die voorval ... is met 'n selfoonkamera afgeneem*). The teachers or the police sometimes get hold of such recordings (*die polisie is in besit van 'n selfoon-videogreep van die voorval; ons het amper al die gevegte wat gebeur het op selfone*). Cellular phones are, however, also used to call for help and to find a victim who has run away (*hom op sy selfoon probeer bel*). One journalist wrote about the negative consequences of accessing the internet through cellular phones:

In urban schools, cyber-bullying rules through mobile message network MXit, social networking website Facebook and posting videos on YouTube.

Thus, the above analyses place props on the SV stage into two broad categories: those that are merely around as part of the everyday school scene (stationary, sport equipment, cellular phones, etc), and those that are purposefully brought to school for learners to attack others or defend themselves.

3.2.5 PURPOSE

The fundamental question that must be answered to make sense of SV is the question: *why?*

The fundamental question that must be answered to make sense of SV is the question: *why?* Burke captures the aspect with the *purpose* in his dramatism model. He describes the purpose as “the motivating principle of ... conduct” (Burke, 1969:10). I believe the answer to the question *why?*, must be looked at on two different levels. One can ask the question *why*, and by asking this question look for the immediate act or scene that triggered the act of SV. However, I argue that there is a second set of answers, which provides deeper reasons for SV acts.

An overwhelming frame portrays SV erupting after arguments about insignificant issues. The articles describe an incident, in which a boy was killed in *a fight over a cigarette*, and in another incident a boy was killed in a fight *over a chair* in a school without enough furniture.

Another boy was stabbed five times after he had *bumped* into a grade 12 learner, and yet another learner was shot *after an argument over a cell phone memory card*. Besides these attacks, the articles describe how a learner was stabbed with a knife after splashing water on a fellow learner:

... die seun (17) het sy hande gewas en water op sy vriend ... gespat. Nog 'n seun (15) het verby gestap en nat geword. 'n Rusie het ontstaan toe die 15-jarige die ouer seun vra hoekom hy hom natspat. Die jonger seun het toe glo 'n mes uitgepluk en die ouer seun summier in die skouer en wang gesteek.

Contrary to the above frame where perpetrators are portrayed as acting or reacting without thinking, there are frames depicting SV acts that are aimed solely at purposeful revenge. In one such a case the aggressor claimed that he was *merely seeking justice for himself*. The articles report cases in which the perpetrator attacked, shot or stabbed the rival a day or two after an incident (*[the next day the perpetrator] entered the school grounds to confront the schoolboy; the following day the suspect had gone to school without his school uniform [goaded the victim and later shot him]*).

Another frame explaining why violence breaks out at schools portrays learners' dissatisfaction with aspects of school management. There are reports of maladministration of schools by principals and teachers: in one instance learners protested violently *against a school principal who they accused of maladministration and racism*. They were supported by parents *flocking to the school to demand [his removal]*. Another principal was *attacked by students who accused him of embezzling school funds*. At a third school reports stated that learners boycotted classes and walked out of the assembly because of the principal *fuelling [racial problems], manhandling learners and using derogatory terms*. Similarly, there are other reports naming reasons for SV incidences such as dissatisfaction with RCL elections (*leerlinge is omgekrap omdat die meeste verkose lede van die leerlingraad wit is*), and dissatisfaction with appointments that are made (*omdat [sekere mense] nie aangestel is nie*). Many assailants turned violent after being disciplined (*because he told him not to wear sneakers with his school uniform; after [the SGB member] evicted [the aggressor] from a sports meeting*). Reports claim that corporal punishment also triggers disruption (*pupils claim that they were victims of corporal punishment; violence is used as a form of discipline*).

Another frame, depicting gangsterism, provides further answers to the question why actors engage in violent behaviour at school, (*betrokke leerders is lede van twee bendes*). An article reports that an MEC said that gang members enter schools (*dié bendelede [kry] toegang tot ons skole*) and their gangs commit acts of SV (*rival gangs ran amok; the fight had arisen out of a dispute between two gangs at the school [and the gangs were named]*). A further report strengthens this frame because it portrays a SAPS spokesperson explaining that *although they are still investigating the role of the gangs in the stabbing [the police spokesperson] said that [the area] was "known as gang area"* (also refer to 3.2.2.4 and 3.2.3.7).

When I asked the question *why* are there initiation practices at boys' schools, I searched for information about why perpetrators do initiate other boys, and why the victims participate in these practices. Although little attention is given to hegemony in the newspapers articles, there are frames of hegemonic masculine identity and unhealthy power relationships in these schools. In spite of practices such as being *beaten with [sports gear], stripped naked, whipped ... until he bled*, reports portray parents defending such practices as they *build character*. A learner who went through the initiation practices said *we are not a girls' school, we are a boys' school*. Victims say they allow initiation *because we want to be stronger*. Reasons that trigger such actions are seemingly insignificant, for instance, a haircut that the aggressor did not like (*he swore at him about his haircut ... kicked him ... and carried on attacking him*).

Reports indicate that violent acts are often preceded by scenes in schools of undesirable or anti-social behaviour such as *smoking and dealing in dagga on the school grounds; anti-social behaviour; displaying angry behaviour; swearing; bendebedrywighede, dwelms en geweld*.

To support my argument that we need to understand the more fundamental reasons for SV I looked for frames that provide the reader with such insight. I posed the questions: Why does violence flare up as a result of insignificant issues? Why do learners resort to violence when they are dissatisfied with the running of the school? Why are initiation practices largely accepted in boys' schools? Answers to these questions in the newspapers were almost non-

existent. One frame portrays violence in the community, as can be seen from the following extracts:

Jeugdiges wat aan geweld in hul huis en skool blootgestel word, veronderstel dat geweld ’n kenmerk is van die sosiale ruimte waarin hulle beweeg.

Met [’n groot aantal] jeugdiges wat gesien het hoe familieledede en ander mense fisiek geslaan, geklap, aangerand of met wapens aangeval word, is dit nie verbasend dat jong mense geweld as ’n sosiaal aanvaarbare manier om met ander te verkeer, of interpersoonlike konflik op te los nie.

Geweld is in skole omdat daar ook geweld buite die skole is.

One journalist argues that not only is violent discipline at home regarded as acceptable, but this is true of schools as well:

If a child lives in a violent community, has parents who use violence to deal with problems or to discipline the child, and goes to a school where violence is used as a form of discipline, the message that we are giving that child is that it’s okay to use violence to address problems.

Some articles also suggest poverty as an underlying reason for SV:

[T]he spiral of unemployment, poverty and related problems ... domestic violence, substance abuse and gang activity [need to be broken if we want to stop SV].

It is widely accepted that societies with the greatest gap between rich and poor are the most violent.

One reporter mentions a lack of *sense of what is right and just*.

The data shows that while reporters do inform the public, and give some reasons why SV occurs, they generally fail to provide information that expose threats to what McManus and Dorfman (2001:23) call the “integrity of the society”. I argue that if the perception is created by the newspapers that SV is merely a problem related to silly incidents at schools, and unruly learners, this will cause, what sociologists call, a “fundamental attribution error” (*vide* Ross, 1977:10).

3.3 THE CURTAIN FALLS

Media coverage also portrays the end of the dramas. I looked closely at a few of these closure frames. One frame depicts an injured and traumatised victim who evokes sympathy. In contrast to this one there is an ending frame portraying planned vengeance and steps taken towards gaining the upper hand. Official and legal perspectives constitute the third closure frame.

The articles describe the injuries sustained during the acts and how they were treated. (*needed emergency surgery; in a critical condition; harsingskudding; deur 'n noodhulpbeampte behandel; received stitches; nose had been broken*). Many role-players in the dramas are traumatised (*has left staff and pupils shocked and traumatised; teachers and pupils had to receive counselling to deal with trauma*).

Some reports state that the schools provided some form of counselling for all their learners (*met elke graadgroep gepraat; plaaslike predikant het berading aan leerlinge gegee; [t]eachers and pupils had to receive some counselling*). After other incidents the schools involved requested or received counselling for their staff and learners from the DoE (*'n Berader van die departement het albei gesinne besoek; the departments of education and health sent a team of professionals to council those who were affected by the incident; teachers have called on the [DoE] to provide counselling for the staff and the pupils*).

In other cases, however, the threatened or injured actors prepared themselves for more violence. One victim, after being stabbed, said: *I ran home to wash off the blood and fetch my knife* while another told journalists that *he needed to arm himself for the big fight after school*.

The articles mention parents who wanted to remove their children from the school where the SV had occurred (*parents were thinking about whether to take their son out [of the school]; some parents are making arrangements to remove their children from the school*).

The newspapers tell of steps taken against the alleged perpetrators. In some cases the schools took action (*tugprosedures begin; [t]he school will institute its own disciplinary hearing*) and sometimes the DoE acted (*the department would open an inquiry; [the MEC]*

was in talks with the teachers [and the SGB members]; we will be providing the school with two metal detectors). The reports explain the legal steps taken as well as the charges against the perpetrators (*a case of murder; aanklag van aanranding met die doel om ernstig te beseer; charge of assault*) as well as prosecution and arrests (*in hegtenis geneem; charged with attempted murder; charged with murder; the arrest of three boys; aan die polisie oorgegee; they are being held at [a place] for juvenile offenders*). A limited number of articles reported on the court appearances (*sal in die hof verskyn op aanklagte van poging tot moord; already appeared in court; refused bail; onder die sorg van sy ouers vrygelaat*). Sentences are hardly reported on (*was sentenced to ... imprisonment*).

On a more holistic level, the articles mention the outcomes of certain incidences of SV that negatively affected academic progress (*die leerproses [word] benadeel; several parents have removed their sons from school*).

3.4 CONCLUSION

When my to-and-fro journey through the articles on SV drew to an end, I needed to ruminate on what can be learned from this study. Thus, to conclude this chapter I, firstly, provided a synopsis of the findings, after which I considered the strengths and limitations of the study, and lastly I used the reflective notes that I had made after initially reading all 92 articles to end with.

3.4.1 SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS IN THE MEDIA ANALYSES

Table 9 reflects the main findings of the media study. The findings must be read in the light of the overall aim of these two chapters, which is to explore the perceptions that are created, and the sense that is made of SV through media reporting.

Table 9: Synopsis of the findings of the media analysis (Chapters 2 & 3)

Issues	Findings	Reference
SV is newsworthy	South African newspapers report on SV, thus it is considered to be newsworthy.	2.5.1
	The most popular contexts provided by reporters are Western Cape schools and secondary schools.	2.5.1.4(c) 2.5.1.4(d) 3.2.2.4

Issues	Findings	Reference
Biased and shallow reporting	Reporters either omit solutions for overcoming the evil of SV, or they portray SV as a law-and-order issue.	2.5.1.2
	Reporters tend to use very few sources of information.	2.5.1.3
	Reporters tend to use official spokespeople as information sources.	2.5.1.3
	The main frame of SV is, more often than not, physical violence.	2.5.1.4(a)
	The media omit certain aspects of SV such as the cost of SV, racial contexts, and the conditions under which learners live.	2.5.2
	There are seldom any follow-up articles, related to incidences of SV.	2.5.2
	Although the newspaper articles tend to portray campaigns against violence from a societal perspective, this is generally done in an uncritical manner.	2.5.1.1 3.2.3.4
Civic responsibility	The way in which the articles portray incidences of SV often promotes civic aloofness and powerlessness.	2.5.1.1
	Reporters largely fail to critique society’s role in causing substance abuse amongst school learners.	2.5.2
Acts of SV	SV is framed as being mainly physical violence.	2.5.1.4(a)
	The articles portray physical violence as shooting, stabbing, kicking, shoving and other forms of assault.	3.2.1
	Physical violence can be aimed at a person or at property.	3.2.1
	Although physical violence, sometimes, constitutes a single act, at other times the attackers keep on attacking relentlessly.	3.2.1
	The articles portray sexual violence as deeds of sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, gang rape and acts that target the victim’s private parts.	3.2.1
	There is limited reporting on emotional violence and deprivation as a form of SV, and this is usually depicted as part of the context of physical violence.	2.5.1.4(a)
	The reports on emotional violence include verbal abuse, humiliation, intimidation and marginalisation.	3.2.1
	The articles limit deprivation to a lack of care and nutrition, to victims being deprived of their dignity through disrespect and humiliation and to victims’ property being taken from them.	3.2.1
Scenes for SV	Newspapers portray schools in general as unsafe places where SV occurs at all times, and at all kinds of schools.	3.2.2.1
	The articles generally portray schools as partially possessing some kind of physical infrastructure to address SV and, although the levels of the infrastructures vary, they may include features such as security guards, metal detectors and CCTV cameras.	3.2.2.1
	The articles generally depict schools as places which are often the scene of unwanted and unsocial behaviour.	3.2.2.1
	In some articles the frame portrays schools as being powerless in the face of SV.	3.2.2.2
	Some articles portray schools as taking decisive steps against SV.	3.2.2.3

Issues	Findings	Reference
	Newspapers portray schools in the Cape Town area as suffering from stress, and being vulnerable to gang activities and substance abuse. However, they also portray the DoE, SAPS, the community and the schools as joining forces to fight this constant threat.	2.5.1.4(c) 3.2.2.4
	The articles portray esteemed boys’ schools as the scenes of unhealthy power relationships. The dominant boys practice their hegemonic masculinity through victimisation and barbaric initiation practices that are the norm at these schools.	3.2.2.5
	Other articles describe the scenes of racial tension at former white schools and the difficult circumstances at inner city schools, and at rural schools.	3.2.2.6
	Newspapers express strong views about the role of the DoE in the suspension and expulsion of perpetrators, as either adding to the problem of SV or helping the schools to curb SV.	3.2.2.7
Actors in SV dramas	The lists of perpetrators and victims during acts of SV are similar.	3.2.3
	Articles provide both positive and negative frames of most categories of actors.	3.2.3
	Victims are either not characterised, or characterised as being the “good ones”.	3.2.3
	Perpetrators are either not characterised, or characterised as being the “bad ones” or being part of a “bad” mob.	3.2.3
	Victims include both boy and girl learners, principals, educators and parents.	3.2.3
	Perpetrators include both boy and girl learners, principals, educators, parents and other adult or youth outsiders.	3.2.3
	In the frames of learner and teacher onlookers, they are both scared and intimidated as a result of SV, or they are taking a stand against SV and coming to the aid of victims.	3.2.3.1 3.2.3.3
	In the frames the community-onlookers are depicted as coming to the aid of victims.	3.2.3.8
	The frames of SAPS are always positive.	3.2.3.5
	The frames depicting outsider youths are always negative.	3.2.3.7
	There is a positive DoE frame where action is being taken to curb violence, and a negative frame portraying a lack of will to eradicate violence.	3.2.3.4 3.2.2.7
Agency of props	Many weapons are reported to be used during acts of SV.	3.2.4
	These weapons include real weapons such as knives and firearms, but are often bits and pieces of sport gear, and other equipment that learners usually have such as pens and scissors.	3.2.4
	The articles mention knives and other sharp objects used most.	2.5.1.4(b)
	The articles report that cellular phones are often around during acts of SV, that they are used in various ways such as being used by the perpetrator, and used to capture photographs of the acts.	3.2.4

Issues	Findings	Reference
Purpose	SV often erupts after seemingly insignificant occurrences or frivolous arguments.	3.2.5
	SV also happens when perpetrators take revenge.	3.2.5
	The articles provide frames of some incidences of SV as the result of dissatisfaction with managerial issues at school and the DoE.	3.2.5
	The articles depict gangsterism and racism as the reason for SV in some instances.	3.2.5
	There are few articles that suggest societal problems as the reason for SV.	2.5.1.1 3.2.5
Closing of the dramas	Three strong closing frames, dominate the others and portray firstly, injured and traumatised victims, secondly, victims planning revenge, and thirdly, an official/legal closing to the drama.	3.3

While considering the insights that I gained during the analyses done in this study, I also needed to reflect on the strengths and limitations of this part of the study.

3.4.2 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

The first limitation that one should note in this study is the sole use of newspaper articles as resource material. Any future research on news media portrayals of SV should also focus on the portrayal of SV on radio, television and in popular magazines such as the SARIE, YOU, DRUM, BONA, etc.). I was restricted by my own language limitations because I cannot read any African language and I was, therefore, unable to read, view, or listen to anything that was written or spoken in one of these languages.

The second limitation came from choice of only two words, *school* and *violence*, to search *the SAMedia*. In retrospect, I believe, I could have expanded the search by using various other key words to include specific acts such as [school and rape], [school and bullying], [school and assault]. I intend to explore this in a follow-up research project.

The third limitation is the result of my not being able to compare the media coverage rate with the authoritative data on real incident rate. This gap in my study should be explored in further studies. However, I juxtapose the data, with other parts of my broad study in the final chapter of this thesis.

In spite of the limitations mentioned above, I believe, this chapter provides a fresh method in terms of education research, and specifically research on SV. Framing analysis, as a research technique, is still developing and many interpretations exist. Shaw and Giles (2009:223) state that while framing analysis has been applied for a number of years, it still lacks a comprehensive reasoned methodology. Other studies could be built on this one, possibly exploring other framing structures.

Furthermore, I believe that this chapter provides comprehensive insight into the information on SV that newspapers make available to the public. People use this, and other information, to make sense of SV.

3.4.3 REFLECTION

After reading through the 92 articles in a row, and before I started the formal coding, I wrote down a number comments based on my reflections. I use these as a point of departure for my final discussion in this chapter, as these were the frames that were left in my mind after simply reading the articles.

My first comment was: “I am left with a feeling of despondency. Images of bad decisions and instinctive aggressive retaliation to, in many instances, insignificant issues dominate my mind.” An expert, whom one of the newspaper articles quoted, expressed a similar thought, which the article captures in these words:

... these young people often misperceive social situations and make serious errors of judgements when interpreting social cues, body language and the intention of others. This agitation often finds expression in various forms of aggression when a youngster misperceives the intentions of another as hostile, and reacts impulsively to get even or to strike first ...

In a second comment I noted the following: “The style of journalism in many of the newspaper articles seems to be quite similar and remarkably uncritical. The articles are typically an assortment of: *this is what happened, this was the outcome, this is what the school/teacher/principal says; this is what the department/police says* and in some instances *this is what the victim says, this is what other learners say, this is how the parent reacted* – and journalists rarely went beyond that. For instance, the articles seldom portray the

perspectives of the perpetrators. While reading the articles I certainly had the impression that, although they use “correct” terms such as *the alleged attacker* and “*na bewering*”, they decide who is “good”, and who is “bad”, and then portray the role-players in that light. The journalists seldom sought the opinion of experts, or researchers, or showed any sign of doing research themselves.” This initial impression was confirmed during the analyses that followed because it became abundantly clear that the articles are based on limited sources, and that deeper insights were seldom pursued. There is no strong frame of civic responsibility and the effectiveness of DoE programmes remains largely unchallenged.

My third initial written comment was that the articles reported on sexual violence far less than I had expected, and that they gave very little information. This dearth of information may have been because of my limited search (3.4.2), or possibly because the articles do not have sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence included in SV frames *per se*, and therefore the media service I used did not classify them as SV. A third possible reason may be that newspapers do not consider sexual violence to be newsworthy. I intend to explore these considerations in a follow-up study.

I do not deny the responsibility of the parents to care for children, but I perceived that the articles are biased and sexist in their depiction of mothers as being solely responsible for children (*vide* 3.2.3.6). The reporters made no attempt to explore the responsibility of the fathers in caring for the children, or the societal problems that cause mothers to leave home early to go to work.

This chapter reports on the results of a framing analysis of articles classified as pertaining to SV, and which appeared in the South African newspapers during the course of one year. In this study I argue that SV is newsworthy, and that SV newsworthiness matters because it shapes public awareness regarding this issue. People make sense of issues based on the information available to them, and the news media is one such a source of information. I argue, too, that the manner in which the South African newspapers are currently reporting on SV, not only fails to inform the public in a comprehensive way about the dangers of SV, but contributes to misimpressions created in the minds of the readers. Physical violence, and the typical “blood-and-guts” reporting is popular, while other serious issues such as

emotional and sexual violence in schools appears, to some extent, to be unnoticed by journalists, and they do not see at all that deprivation and neglect is a kind of SV. The limited number of sources that newspaper reports generally use, as well as the trend to use official sources instead of other actors on the scene, provide frames of SV as a problem that individuals and officials must solve, and that it has nothing to do with society.

In the section that follows (Chapter 4 - Chapter 6), I report on the existing body of knowledge regarding SV, which has been presented in research reports.

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 4: THE DRAMA OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE AS PORTRAYED IN PEER REVIEWED ACADEMIC LITERATURE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

SV is a constant doom hovering over the shoulders of role-players in the current South African schools (*vide* De Wet, 2003b:89; Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63; Smith, 2007:53, amongst others). However, SV is neither a new phenomenon nor is it unique to South Africa. Violent behaviour of youth was for example recorded in ancient times (± 2000 BC) as well as during medieval times (± 1500 AC). Violence in schools seems to date as far back as schools themselves. European learners habitually were armed during the seventeenth century and were frequently involved in violent episodes. These included acts such as assaults on educators, attacks by learners on members of the public, learners duelling and fighting each other and educators using harsh discipline practices. Similarly violence in American schools can be traced back to the evolution of schools during early colonial time (Adams, 2000:141; De Wet, 2003b:89; Midlarsky & Klain, 2005:39-40). Greenberg (1999:1) in this regard writes: “If school violence wasn’t a problem back then, it’s only because few children went to school”. The intensity of SV increased with the worldwide trend towards compulsory schooling (Adams, 2000:141; Midlarsky & Klain, 2005:34) and the pattern was to some extent continued in post-modern times. Across the globe the public is confronted with news stories of children and adolescents engaged in acts of victimisation, aggression and violence (*vide* Miller, 2010; Saulny, 2010; Wong, 2010 amongst others). Shootings at schools in countries such as the United States of America, China and Germany drew public attention, also in the media, on an international scale (*vide* Amada, 2007; Ferguson, 2008; Midlarsky & Klain, 2005; O’Grady, Parnaby & Schickschneit, 2010; Warnick, Johnson & Rocha, 2010; amongst others).

One source of information on SV in South Africa is indeed the local media. In Chapters 2 and 3 I reported on the media study I undertook to gain insight into perceptions regarding

SV that are created in the South African printed newspapers. I found that whilst SV is considered to be newsworthy, the newspapers portray incidences of SV in a manner which largely fails to elicit society's ability and responsibility to prevent this tragedy. SV is mainly portrayed as physical violence, taking place at secondary school level. The DoE and the SAPS are portrayed as the key actors, responsible to address SV.

Another source of information is peer reviewed research publications on SV. While research is only one of many ways of knowing or understanding, it differs from other ways in that a process of systematic enquiry is used to obtain the insight (Mertens, 2010:2). Internationally, research publications on SV have escalated over the last two decades, some of which specifically focused on the South African context. A need exists to understand in a comprehensive way, what knowledge was produced through these publications. This I explore towards the second objective of the research in the three chapters that follow, namely to scrutinize research publications on SV in South Africa and beyond, in order to understand how SV is reported on in research publications. I scrutinized these research publications to acquire an understanding of their portrayal of SV.

In Chapter 4, I discuss *what* we know about SV as it is portrayed in relevant literature. I used Burke's dramatism as my framework for analysis. Thus the headings follow the pattern of Act, Scene, and so on. Finally, I report on the effect of SV under the heading *The curtain drops*.

In chapter 5, I name and discuss strategies to curb SV, which various authors have suggested. Because the concept of strategies to prevent SV does not fit into Burke's framework, I have included it in a separate chapter, and I have interpreted these suggestions as *Strategies to change the script*.

The focus in Chapter 6, however, is on the multiple approaches that researchers use to understand SV, and this is in line with my assumptions stated at the start of the study (*vide* 1.3) where I argue that researchers make certain choices concerning the methodologies that they use and, thus, merely provide us with a selection of reality (*vide* Burke, 1966:45). Thus, Chapter 6 takes the necessary critical look at the methodologies used to provide us with perspectives on SV in research publications.

4.2 RESEARCH METHOD

Research experts highlight the worth of reviewing existing literature. It provides a thorough comprehension of what is known about the topic, places a study within the context of what is known about the topic and it informs practice (Cresswell, 2008:89; Mertens, 2010:90-91). According to Mertens (2010:112) the author must organise the information obtained in a literature review in a “conceptual logical order” and provide as much detail as necessary about the studies to substantiate relevant critical analysis of it.

I focused on publications on SV in peer-reviewed academic journals. I go forward from the premise that the results of unpublished theses and dissertations are also published in due course, and I thus did not include these unpublished research reports. I searched electronically at regular intervals over a period of five years for articles. I used the keywords *[school violence]* or *[school]* and *[violence]* throughout. I also explored sources found the bibliographies of research publication. However in cases where I found a deficit of peer-reviewed articles, I also referred to books (for example Bloch (2009) in 4.3.1.4). I accordingly used two sources of literature for my literature review, namely mainly publications on SV in academic journals and some books on SV.

The focus of the study is SV in the South African context (*vide* 1.2). I proceed from the assumption that while SV is a world-wide phenomenon, and there are specific generic aspects to it, it also has a particular nature within the South African context¹⁷. Hence I used publications beyond the South African context primarily to strengthen my conceptualisation of SV and to provide new perspective on SV - not to compare the data from different countries. That could be a study in its own right.

Literature studies have different uses in qualitative studies and quantitative studies, in terms of the amount of literature cited at the start of the study, the purpose it serves at the beginning, and the purpose it serves at the end of the study (Cresswell, 2008:90). In these three chapters, however, the review of the literature is a stand-alone project with the aim to

¹⁷ Many of the international research publications focus for example on school shootings such of that at Columbine High school and Virginia Tech (*vide* Amada, 2007; Ferguson, 2008; O’Grady, Parnaby & Schikschneit, 2010; Warnick, Johnson & Rocha, 2010; amongst others). School shootings are however not typical of the South African SV scene.

understand the sense that researchers make of SV in South Africa, and I interrogate *what we know about SV*, and *how we know about SV*: The aim of this chapter (Chapter 4) is to provide the reader with a synthesis of the findings of the review of literature on SV to my avail, using Burke's pentad as a framework for analyses, while in Chapter 5 I provide a summary of the suggestions that were made in the literature towards changing the situations at schools. Lastly, in Chapter 6 I provide synoptically a critical discussion of epistemological, axiological and methodological issues on the South African literature on SV that I reviewed.

4.3 USING BURKE'S DRAMATISM TO ANALYSE LITERATURE DEALING WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE

In the following section, I strive to provide a synthesised answer to the question: *What do we know about SV?* In my search for the answer, I frame my discussion on the five aspects of Burke's dramatism: the act, the place, the actors, the instrument, and the reason for the action. I have posed an appropriate question for each aspect of the *pentad* (*vide* 1.4.3).

Fox (2002:366-371) argues that researchers need to get beyond their own perceptions of the "real" and highlights Burke's suggestion that researchers use his pentad as framework to observe beyond their own perspectives. The framework must not, however, be used to reduce human interaction to the "real" but, instead, the framework should reveal the messiness and complexity of human interaction. Therefore researchers should not use the pentad in a reductionist manner, but, preferably, consider the intricacy of the relationships that exist between the five aspects of Burke's dramatism (*vide* Figure 3). Burke particularly considers the *act-scene* and *agent-scene* as important because the scene contains both the actor and the act (Fox, 2002:369), whereas I explore the various relationship combinations portrayed by researchers in their endeavour to understand SV. I start by looking at how researchers report on the *acts* of SV.

4.3.1 ACT

In the context of the research question that drives this chapter, *What do we know about SV?*, I pose the following question: *What do we know about the act?* To answer this question I focus on the conceptualisation of SV. My point of departure in this study is the description

of violence provided by Krug *et al.* (2002:1084) (*vide* Figure 1) based on the definition of violence provided by the WHO (*vide* 1.2). Violence (and thus also SV) is divided into three broad strata namely *self-inflicted*, *interpersonal* and *collective*, while the types of violence are categorised according to the nature of each type, which may be *physical*, *sexual*, *psychological as well as deprivation and neglect*. This description is but one of many ways of analysing the concept of violence. De Wet (2007a:77-78), for instance, chooses to write of a continuum of behaviours (proposed by Jim Bryngelson) to consider acts of violence whereas Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:46) consider that the term violence applies to “all forms of physical and verbal abuse, including bullying”. Kgosimore (2007:64) adds the dimension of human rights to the above list of adjectives, by viewing violence as “verbal or non-verbal acts that are aimed at depriving the victims of their rights and dignity by hurting them physically or psychologically”.

Kgosimore (2007:64) points out certain principles that must be understood when dealing with violence [including SV]. Firstly, in line with Sartre’s philosophy, the victim is regarded by the perpetrator as a nothing or an object. Secondly, during acts of violence, the victims are forced to do what they do not want to do. Thirdly, the persons who use violence always try justifying or rationalising their actions and themselves while denying the loss of the victims.

Violence can be analysed from a variety of perspectives, however, *school* violence has a specific context. De Wet (2007a:77-78) typifies SV as intentional, detrimental to the educational mission, and damaging to a culture that is supposed to be conducive to teaching and learning. De Wet (2007b:249) uses the description drawn up by the Australian National Committee on Violence, which defines SV as the intimidation, abuse, threatening or assaulting of any member of the school community, as well as the deliberate damaging of their property. So while Krug *et al.* (2002:1084-1085) informs my understanding of violence in this study, what sets *school* violence apart from violence in general, is the context of schools, their fundamental purpose, the educational activities associated with schools, as well as the school community (learners, educators, parents, visitors to the school and other stakeholders) and its property.

DeVoe, Peter, Kaufman, Miller, Noonan and Snyder (2005:26-35) view SV as youth violence. In this study I have a different interpretation, and I maintain that the context of a school demarcates SV. Therefore, I consider that violent behaviour by adults at schools is also part of SV.

I unpack the multiple layers of SV by briefly conceptualising the various categories of SV. I firstly consider acts of physical violence, after which I explore psychological violence, sexual violence and acts of deprivation and neglect. Although bullying is not the specific focus of the study, it forms part of SV and as such, I briefly state what has been published on bullying, and then reflect on the value of categorising the various acts of SV.

4.3.1.1 PHYSICAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Physical SV is generally understood as being the use of physical force against another (Muro-Ruiz, 2002:109). McIntyre (2000:132) describes physical violence as actions or treatment using physical force that is rough or injurious, while Breet *et al.* (2010:515) view it as destructive behaviour towards one-self, another or property. Acts of physical SV include actors beating, kicking and punching one another (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26; Chen & Astor, 2009:7; Nesor *et al.*, 2004:145), hand-to-hand or fist-fighting (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26; Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), deliberately seizing, pushing and shoving (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26; Nesor, Ovens, Van der Merwe, Morodi, Ladikos & Prinsloo, 2004:145), tripping (Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), playing physically harmful tricks on another (Chen & Astor, 2009:7), using force to take something from another person (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26; Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), using a dangerous object, rock or instrument to hurt someone (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26; Chen & Astor, 2009:7) and cutting another person with a knife or other sharp instrument (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:26). It also includes other serious offences, prosecutable under criminal law, such as assault (De Wet, 2003c:88) and homicide (McIntyre, 2000:134).

Researchers are in agreement that physical SV is indeed a problem in South African schools. In a survey amongst some educators in the Eastern Cape Province, De Wet (2003b:102) for instance, found that 62,3 percent believe that learners are assaulted by other learners. In a study conducted in Free State secondary schools, De Wet (2003c:88) found that perpetrators

of SV had assaulted 9 of the 238 educators (3,8%) and 15 of the 288 learners (6,25%) in the 12 months preceding her study. The victims of these assaults were not so badly injured that they had to receive medical treatment. However, in addition to these figures, 2 (0,84%) of the educators and 2 (0,69%) of the learners had to receive medical treatment as a result of assaults during this time. De Wet and Jacobs (2006:62 & 69) similarly reported on educators in both primary and secondary schools who were physically victimised (14,3%) by learners.

Bender and Emslie (2010:181-183) found, when they conducted a quantitative study in two urban secondary schools in a relatively stable neighbourhood, that physical fighting and pushing/shoving are fairly common amongst learners. De Wet (2005:84) also found that physical victimisation (hitting, kicking, pushing, etc.) is fairly common (27,5%) amongst boys.

The above two studies focused on secondary schools, but research, which has produced similar results, has been conducted amongst Foundation Phase learners too. Marais and Meier (2010:50) found that these learners react violently to situations on a daily basis. One respondent in this study indicated that “learners are so mean and cruel and take pleasure in hurting one another”. Burnett (1998:790-793) furthermore reasons that disciplinary practices, such as corporal punishment, are forms of physical violence and contribute to a culture of violence. In spite of corporal punishment being illegal since 1996, it is still commonly used at schools, although not as frequently and excessively as before (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010:393).

Although, physical violence such as the type described above, is more visible and tangible than other forms of violence, De Wet and Van Huyssteen (2005:16), based on Behr, point out that “the damage to the psyche of a person should not be deemed less serious than physical violence [in the case of non-physical violence]”.

With this in mind, I discuss other forms of violence in the sections below.

4.3.1.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Benbenishty and Astor (2005:81) describe psychological violence as “emotional maltreatment” that includes verbal abuse and humiliation. They, however, consider threats to be *physical* as “part and parcel of the cycle of physical violence” (Benbenishty & Astor,

2005:31). Breet *et al.* (2010:515) on the other hand consider that *any* negative or degrading communication can cause emotional and psychological harm to the victim. For the purpose of this study, I consider threats as being part of psychological SV while recognising its relationship to physical violence. Breet *et al.* (2010:515) explain that perpetrators of such indirect violence can attack victims in a roundabout way, and often behave in a socially manipulative manner.

Psychological violence can take on many forms, which can include the betrayal of trust (Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), blackmailing (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:32; Chen & Astor, 2009:7; De Wet, 2005:85), persuading other learners to dislike a victim (Breet *et al.*, 2010:515); cursing and swearing at a victim (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:81; Chen & Astor, 2009:7), degrading behaviour towards a victim (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:81), humiliating a victim (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:81; Chen & Astor, 2009:7), insulting someone (Chen & Astor, 2009:7), name-calling (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:81; Nesor *et al.*, 2004:145), spreading rumours or writing insulting notes about a victim (Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), criticising, or poking fun at a victim's appearance (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:81; Breet *et al.*, 2010:515), ridiculing someone (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:414), purposely opposing someone (Chen & Astor, 2009:7), teasing, mocking and playing tricks (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:35; Chen & Astor, 2009:7; Nesor *et al.*, 2004:145), intimidating/scaring another by looking fixedly at someone; (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:34) the use of gestures (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:414) threatening someone, for instance threatening to harm or hit someone (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:32; Nesor *et al.*, 2004:145).

Psychological violence in South African schools is widespread. De Wet (2005:84) established that direct verbal victimisation is most common in secondary schools - 46,3 percent of learner-respondents in the study indicated that they are picked on in this manner at least once or twice a month. Other common forms of psychological victimisation, which also occur once or twice a month or more, are the spreading of rumours (34,5%) and the deliberate exclusion of a learner from a group, which is a problem amongst girls (18,4%). Studies also show that secondary school learners are *sometimes* intimidated by other learners, and *rarely* (but not *never*) intimidated by outsiders at schools (Masitsa, 2011:170)

and that educators are verbally victimised (48,3%) by their learners (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:62 & 69).

Psychological violence is furthermore closely linked with sexual violence (4.3.1.3), deprivation and neglect (4.3.1.4) and bullying (4.3.1.5).

4.3.1.3 SEXUAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence (also called sexual harassment) can be described as conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcomed and unwanted. Sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if it becomes persistent, if it makes the recipient feel uncomfortable, if the recipient has indicated that s/he considers it distasteful, or if the perpetrator should have known that such conduct is unacceptable. Sexual violence emphasises dominance and causes humiliation, intimidation, and submission related to sex, gender and sexual orientation. Though much of such sexually violent behaviour is perpetrated by males against female, it is not limited to such behaviour (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010:197; Du Plessis, Fouché & Van Wyk, 1998:418). Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:63) for instance, link sexual violence to “power and (male) dominance, rather than to sexual pleasure”. De Wet and Oosthuizen (2010:208-209) explain that while sexual violence is subjectively experienced, and it affects the victim’s dignity, it must also be objectively appraised by deciding whether any reasonable person, who has never experienced any sexual harassment, would also experience a specific act as sexual violence, if they were in the same position as the victim.

Sexual violence can take many forms and includes physical conduct (e.g. touching, brushing against a person, fondling, kissing, sexual assault and rape), verbal harassment (e.g. innuendos, whistling, jokes, comments, inappropriate conversations and the sending of sexually explicit texts), non-verbal harassment (like gestures, winking, unwanted displays of pictures, exposures), *quid pro quo* harassment (when someone who has authority expects some form of sexual favour in exchange for privileges, for example an educator who makes a learner believe that s/he must participate in unwanted sexual activities with the educator in order to achieve good marks in a subject), sexual favouritism/victimisation (when a person in a position of authority rewards only those who respond to his/her sexual advances or victimises someone because of his or her refusal to respond to such advances) and

secondary harassment (when someone who has filed a complaint of sexual harassment, is harassed by peers or supervisors), (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010:198-225; Du Plessis *et al.*, 1998:418). While sexual violence can take many forms, including physical, verbal and non-verbal acts as explained above, it is characterised by the emphasis placed on people's gender or sexual orientation (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010:197).

According to Lewis and Hastings (1994:22) as well as De Wet and Oosthuizen (2010:220) sexual violence can vary in severity: Gender harassment includes sexist remarks and jokes as well as impertinent, sexist attitudes; seductive behaviour involves sexual advances that are unwelcome, improper and insulting; sexual bribery includes the seeking of sexual activity or other sex-linked deeds by way of a promise or an incentive; sexual coercion entails exerting pressure on someone to participate in sexual activity or other sex-linked deeds by means of intimidation or punishment; and sexual assault which constitutes violent acts of sexual violence such as indecent assault and rape. Where rape specifically refers to sexual intercourse (irrespective of gender) without the consent of the victim, and including sexual penetration of genitals into or beyond the genitals of another person, indecent sexual assault then has a wider concept that includes sexual violation. This, *inter alia*, includes sexual acts such as "direct or indirect contact between the genital organs, anus or breasts of one person and any part of the body of another person ..." (RSA 2007: Section 1). Another dimension of sexual SV that needs to be noted is that, in terms of the South African Constitution, a person under the age of 18 is considered to be a child (RSA, 1996a: Section 28(2)) and sexual intercourse with someone who is under age, even with consent, is considered to be statutory rape. Sexual advances of an educator towards a learner could also constitute abuse of power (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010:216).

Examples of sexual SV that have been explored in research include making unwanted sexual comments (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59; De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:63), peeping while another person was in the bathroom or locker room (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59), showing obscene pictures or sending obscene letters to another (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59), leering at someone or staring lasciviously at someone's body (De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:63); spreading sexual rumours about someone (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59; De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:63), taking or trying to take another person's clothes off for sexual reasons

(Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59), touching or trying to touch a person in a sexual way without the person's approval (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59), sexually coming on to a person (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59), unwontedly trying to kiss (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59); making remarks about someone's sexual orientation (De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:63); touching, grabbing and pinching in a sexual way (De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:64); and writing sexually insulting remarks about someone (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:59). Sexual SV can also include more serious criminal offences such as attempting to have sex with someone against his/her will (De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:64); sexual assault (De Wet, 2003c:88) and rape (De Wet, 2003c:88; De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:64).

There is no denying that sexual violence is rife in South African schools. In terms of verbal sexual violence, De Wet, Jacobs and Palm-Forster (2008:106-107) found in a study conducted with secondary-school Free State learners that sexual comments, the telling of offensive jokes, and sexual name-calling amongst school learners are all fairly common.

De Wet and Jacobs (2009:64) also found that boys are subjected to name-calling by girls, such as "babe" or "sexy thing" or "hot". The girls, in their turn, are told suggestive stories and offensive jokes by boys. Learners are also subjected to non-verbal sexual harassment in the form of sexual gestures (perpetrators standing too close or leaning over the victim, eyeing the victim's body or displaying pornography) (De Wet *et al.*, 2008:106-107; De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:64).

Physical sexual harassment, such as unwontedly being kissed, touched, grabbed and pinched in a sexual way, seemed to be a particular problem amongst the secondary-school learners who participated in the survey of De Wet *et al.* (2008:106-107). In this study more than 15 percent of the respondents indicated that peers wanted to have unwanted sex with them, while 3,59 percent of the respondents indicated that they had been raped during the preceding year.

In a survey amongst some educators in the Eastern Cape Province, De Wet (2003b:102) found, that in a study she conducted, 31,6 percent of the respondents were convinced that learners are raped by other learners while 17,21 percent believe that learners are raped by educators. De Wet (2003c:88) furthermore found that three of the 288 learners (1,04%) in a

survey in the Free State indicated that they had been raped during the preceding 12 months, another six were victims of attempted rape (2,08%), and 11 experienced sexual harassment (3,82%). De Wet and Jacobs (2006:62-69), moreover, found that educators in both primary and secondary schools, experience sexual harassment when learners pass comments by about them (11,6%).

It was noted in a report by the Human Rights Watch (2001:5) that “[S]exual violence and harassment often go unchallenged and today constitute a significant hurdle to equal opportunity for South African girls. A more proactive, coordinated, and system-wide response is urgently needed.” Nonetheless, as can be seen from the above synopsis, the numerous forms of sexual violence are indeed still wide-spread in South African schools, even if obscured. However a form of SV that is even more normalised, and largely unexplored in research as a form of SV, is the notion of deprivation and neglect.

4.3.1.4 DEPRIVATION AND NEGLECT

According to Free Online Dictionary (2011) *deprivation* refers to a state of severe poverty or disadvantage. This also includes any disadvantage resulting from some or other loss. The word, *deprive*, specifically includes the concept of having possessions taken away, as well as preventing someone from having something. *Deprive* also refers to a worsening of conditions. The word *neglect* refers to anything or anybody that people disregard, ignore, and fail to care for. When intentional neglect and deprivation occurs at schools, these acts constitute SV.

Aspects of SV that was explored by researchers and that can be classified as deprivation and neglect are when learners *exclude* another learner from a group of friends (Breet *et al.*, 2010:517) and possibly *boycott*, or *ignore* someone else. (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:34; Breet *et al.*, 2010:515; Neser *et al.*, 2004:145). Deprivation in the context of SV could also include stealing from someone, (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:46), revealing secrets (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:415), and damaging another’s property or belongings (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005:46; De Voe *et al.*, 2005:26-35).

Stealing from others seems to occur often in South African schools and this constitutes deprivation. Marais and Meier (2010:51) found theft to be a daily frustration for Foundation

Phase educators because these learners steal each others' money, toys, lunch boxes, stationery, clothes and cellular phones. De Wet (2003c:88) found that the theft of personal belongings is a common problem experienced by educators and learners in Free State secondary schools. Similarly, in a study by De Wet (2003b:102) in the Eastern Cape, she found that 35,4 percent of educators that took part in the survey, indicated that they had been robbed by learners of one or more of their possessions. Educators and learners thus appear to frequently experience intentional deprivation or dispossession of their property.

De Wet and Jacobs (2006:62-69) found, in a study conducted with a sample of Eastern Cape educators in secondary and primary schools, that nearly half of the respondents indicated that they were ignored by the learners in their classes. These educators are therefore neglected by their learners. Their private property and their classrooms are damaged by learners. Marais and Meier (2010:50), likewise, found that Foundation Phase learners are often disrespectful towards educators by disregarding them because they “repeatedly ignore their teacher’s instructions/requests”.

Lack of quality schooling in South African schools is a problem, although it is usually not reported in the context of SV. Hadebe (2000:67) argues that educators deprive learners of quality schooling through their negative attitudes towards their work, their continual absenteeism, their lateness, and through their general lack of discipline. He points out that educators sometimes lack dedication, are often negligent and incompetent, and neither plan nor prepare their lessons. Bloch (2009:25) argues that, currently, education reinforces inequalities and continuously shuts doors for children, excluding them from any possible opportunity. Because many parents are unable to support their children in their academic endeavours, learners are often deprived of success at school (Bloch, 2009:77; Burnett, 1998:792). Furthermore, policies and practises at schools often lead to deprivation such as learners who are locked out of school when they are late (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63), detention (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63) and expulsion (Adams, 2000:143).

In many instances of deprivation and neglect, the problem appears to be the result of societal circumstances that stop learners from achieving academic success, but which cannot be classified as SV. Unemployment is, for example, prevalent in South Africa and

consequently families suffer from severe shortages of food, they live without electricity and water, and they have no hope that their lives will change. Bloch (2009:75-77) points out that many children, who live in such vulnerable and poor conditions, are not able to learn when they go to school. Malnutrition affects learners' ability to concentrate and learn. They cannot afford to purchase the required school uniform or stationery and books. He argues that the poor and the vulnerable experience social and economic marginalisation and, in addition, schools deprive learners of the space and order that they need to progress in life (Bloch, 2009:58). Because of the poor living conditions of many children caused by, *inter alia*, the high unemployment rates in the country, the impact of HIV/AIDS and other social dysfunctions, many children are neglected by society and school and, therefore, are deprived of any hope for the future (Bloch, 2009:77), and that falls under the category of SV.

A dimension of deprivation that McIntyre (2000:132) emphasises is environmental violence, which occurs when schools are polluted with piles of garbage, dirt and graffiti, all of which have a detrimental influence on learners attending such a school. Many schools are without electricity and running water, and do not have laboratories (Bloch, 2009:82). According to an OECD report, 79 percent of schools have no library facilities (OECD, 2008:187-188). Such poor school environments deprive learners of stimulating surroundings that are conducive to teaching and learning.

Deprivation and neglect are understated and inconspicuous in SV research publications despite their overwhelming and incessant presence. This SV category silently excludes learners from quality education, and violates the South African Constitutional values of human dignity and respect.

Bullying, too, is yet another practice that violates the South African Constitutional values of human dignity and respect.

4.3.1.5 BULLYING

Although bullying is not the focus of this study, it is part of SV. Olweus (1994:9) defines bullying as follows:

[A] student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more students.

While bullying includes most kinds of SV as set out in Figure 1 (*viz* “negative action”), it differs from the usual SV situation because the victim of bullying is repeatedly targeted over a period of time (De Wet, 2005:82; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:55; Joubert & Wentzel, 2009:252; Naser *et al.*, 2004:139; Olweus, 1994:9; Smit, 2003:81). To a large extent bullying is “manipulative, sneaky and subtle” and there are often personal nuances to it (Smit, 2003:82). Bullying is characterised by a deliberateness and an imbalance of power (De Wet, 2005:82; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:55; Naser *et al.*, 2004:139) It is aimed at harming the victim physically, psychologically, socially and/or professionally (De Wet, 2010a:190). The bully acts determinedly, and the victim is defenceless against the onslaughts (De Wet, 2005:82; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:55; Naser *et al.*, 2004:139).

Specific acts of bullying can include poking (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20) teasing (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20; Naser *et al.*, 2004:145), excessive tickling (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20) name-calling (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20; Naser *et al.*, 2004:145), saying mean things (De Wet, 2005:85), spreading rumours (De Wet, 2005:85), excluding victims (De Wet, 2005:85; Naser *et al.*, 2004:145), threatening (Naser *et al.*, 2004:145) hitting, kicking, pushing and shoving (De Wet, 2005:85; Naser *et al.*, 2004:145), forcing victims to give up lunch, pocket-money, foods, etc. (De Wet, 2005:85). Bullying can take on the forms of social exclusion (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20) and racial harassment (De Wet, 2006:55; De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20) as well as cyber harassment (Joubert & Wentzel, 2009:260; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:414). Sexual or gender related bullying can include making unwonted sexual comments (De Wet, 2005:85), acts of sexual harassment, exhibitionist and sexual positioning, sexual physical contact, and sexual assault (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20).

Naser *et al.* (2004:144) draws attention to the enormity of bullying that occurs in South African schools by pointing out that 90 percent of learner-respondents indicated that bullying occurs in the schools they attend. In their sample of 1873 secondary and primary school learners from Gauteng, 71,2 percent of the respondents indicated that incidents of bullying occur at least once a week or more. The severity of the problem was also established by a survey in which some educators in the Eastern Cape Province participated. In this study De Wet (2003b:102) found that 71,63 percent of the educators, who answered

the questionnaires, believe that, in the schools where they teach, learners are to some extent bullied by other learners. In a survey done in 60 secondary schools in the Free State, 83,78 percent of the respondents indicated that there was a bullying-problem at the various schools that they attend (De Wet, 2005:82). Qualitative data obtained through this study confirm the degradation and marginalisation of the victims who are bullied, as well as the nastiness of the perpetrators. In a survey conducted amongst a sample of educators in the Eastern Cape Province, De Wet (2003b:102) found that more than a third of these educators indicated that they were bullied by learners.

One kind of bullying that educators and parents need to be aware of is cyber bullying (Joubert & Wentzel, 2009:252). The victims of cyber bullying are learners who become victims because the perpetrators of cyber violence have posted hurtful information about them on the Internet. Bullies also contact victims unwontedly through instant messages or SMSs that threaten, humiliate, and insult the receiver (Robers, Zhang, Truman & Snyder, 2010:42). Swart and Bredekamp (2009:414) raise the concern that such victimisation, *inter alia* through text messaging, unidentifiable e-mail, Mix-IT or Facebook, allows victimisation to occur “24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

Bullying is a severe problem in South African schools. Although bullying includes dimensions of SV as discussed in 4.3.1.1-4.3.1.4, it is distinguished from these acts by its repetitive nature. It is personalised, and often so subtle, that it can go unnoticed. The emotional scars left in victims may never be overcome (*vide* 4.4). Awareness of bullying, as with all the different categories of acts of SV, needs to be enhanced.

4.3.1.6 REFLECTING ON THE VALUE OF CATEGORISING SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Krug *et al.* (2002:1084-1085) point out that the links between various types of violence must be noted. A typical example of this interconnectedness is, for instance, when the victims of child abuse turn violent in their adolescent or adult years, or when a victim of sexual violence commits suicide. Other links such as *psychological scars*, the *deprivation* of a victim’s dignity and security can occur through a single violent act such as rape, which is also clearly both *sexual* and *physical*. Acts of violence are commonly multidimensional, and cause harm in numerous ways. When a learner, for instance, mocks a teacher by making

personal and insulting remarks, not only is this *verbal abuse*, but the victim, the teacher, is humiliated. Humiliation is not only part of psychological violence, but it also *deprives* victims of their dignity and status. The South African school *system* that allows learners to victimise and humiliate educators should be closely scrutinised. I argue, therefore, that the various SV categories are not isolated and clear-cut that it should not be overemphasised.

To conclude: The discussions of various categories of SV confirm the view expressed by Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:44) that SV is a multifaceted phenomenon. The value of considering the various categories, I believe, lies in challenging the concept of SV as being essentially physical in nature, and characterised by extreme acts like killings or assaults while, simultaneously, recognising the multidimensional nature of SV acts. Overlapping is bound to occur in any discussion on categories of SV. I believe that categorising SV into the above or any other set of categories, can serve to sensitise stakeholders to the various faces of SV in the multitude of scenes in South African schools. As such, various SV scenes need to be considered.

4.3.2 SCENE

In the context of the research question driving this chapter: *What do we know about SV?*, and focusing on the scenes of SV, I ask the question: *What do we know about where the act was perpetrated?* To find the answer I explored the school environment, as portrayed in literature. It must however be understood that any school is part of a larger scene such as a community or the country, whilst the classroom, sport field, and so on, where acts of SV occur, are contained within the school. All the places where acts of SV occur can be considered to be scenes.

Research reports have accentuated that the South African school environments are often disastrous and destructive (Bloch, 2009:58; Kollapen, 2006:3; Mestry, Moloï & Mahomed, 2007:95; amongst others) and effective teaching and learning cannot take place in such environments (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17). Learners tend to use alcohol extensively (Prinsloo, Ladikos & Nesor, 2005:32-33), experiment with and use drugs (De Wet, 2007a:84; Prinsloo *et al.*, 2005:33-35), find it necessary to come to school armed (De Wet, 2007a:84), and are often disrespectful to educators and each other (Bloch, 2009:79; De Wet, 2007a:83-

85). Gangsterism seems to prevail in some schools (Bloch, 2009:79; De Wet, 2007a:84-85). Many schools buildings are uninviting and unattractive with unacceptably poor infrastructure, and degrading ablution facilities (Bloch, 2009:81).

Educators also face other challenges in the present-day school scene in South Africa. Smit (2007:53) posits that the demographic characters of many schools have changed over that last decade because there are more learners with special education needs in schools than before. Educators also experience learners' behaviour as disrespectful, with no regard for authority (Mestry *et al.*, 2007:99-100). Violence and disorder pose difficulties for educators, and there are often severe disruptions at school. In general one can conclude that schools fail to provide the "havens of stability and loving boundaries" (Bloch, 2009:81) that are essential for teaching and learning to be successful.

Specific contexts are explored by researchers. Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:53) found that while violence mainly occurs just *outside* suburban schools, violence tends to occur *inside* inner city schools. SV is not limited to previously (and continuously) disadvantaged schools, but also occurs in prestigious schools (Bloch, 2009:80). Nesor *et al.*, (2004:142) found amongst a sample of learners between grade 6 and grade 11 in Gauteng, that just more than half of the sample, *always* feel safe at school, and that the percentage of learners who feel safe, decreases as they progress towards grade 9. In the survey the researchers asked learners if they feel safe at school. The results revealed that the Grade 10 and 11 learners felt slightly safer than those of their younger peers.

There are specific areas that are reported to be unsafe in schools, such as empty classrooms (De Wet, 2003c:88), and learners' cloakrooms (De Wet, 2003c:88). Nesor *et al.* (2004:147) found that bullying is rife on the playground, and in classrooms, as well as at the bus stop, on the bus, and in the hall. Children are threatened, harassed, and attacked on route to and from school (Bloch, 2009:80; De Wet, 2003c:88). Learners specified that sexual harassment most commonly takes place in classrooms, the school yard and at sports events (De Wet & Jacobs, 2009:66).

However, many of the schools are considered to be mere blueprints of the destructive ecology reigning in communities where children, some of whom are without parents, are

living under circumstances of extreme poverty (Bloch, 2009:75). Violence is rife in these communities, the carrying of weapons is common, economic constraints face large sections of the communities, dagga and “hard” drugs are readily available, and alcohol and drugs are sold illegally to underage learners on a vast scale. People are becoming more and more concerned about their personal safety and well-being (Mestry *et al.*, 2007:95; Prinsloo *et al.*, 2005:37-38; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:48 & 56).

Reports state that these impoverished communities, where there appears to be no hope for a better future, are the scenes of self-destruction of the youth. In a study in Gauteng schools by Prinsloo *et al.* (2005), amongst 2281 male and female learners (of which 53,9 percent were younger than 17 years old) a significant amount of learners indicated that they experiment with drugs or use drugs. More than a quarter admitted to having taken illegal drugs, while nearly 17 percent indicated that they have used cocaine. Forty percent of the learners indicated that they get drunk at least once a month, and 80 percent indicated that alcohol is available at the parties that they attend. While such behaviour is not classified as SV in the context of this study (*vide* 1.12) I consider this to be part of the backdrop on the SV stage, because it depicts the scene where SV dramas thrive.

A specific scene that needs to be noted is the presence of South African gender inequalities. Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:62) argue that domestic violence, often rooted in male dominance, and frequently linked to alcoholism as well as to “social and psychological dysfunction”, prevails in many communities. Andrews (2007:17), based on several authors, argues as follows:

... the impressive array of legislative enactment and “transformative constitutional jurisprudence” masks the underlying reality of an “unacknowledged gender civil war” in which hundreds of thousands of South African women are victims of rape and domestic violence. The government’s persistent questioning and denial of the high incidence of sexual violence (and overall crime) in South Africa is a symptom of a ubiquitous masculinity, one that Judge Sachs has referred to as the “only truly non-racial institution in South Africa”.

Gender inequality and the normalisation of sexual violence referred to by Andrews (2007:17) have become part of school life. De Wet *et al.* (2008:101-102), in one of her reports, which is based on several authors, states that many South African girls perceive sexual violence as an inescapably part of the school milieu. De Wet and Oosthuizen (2010:195), furthermore, point out that limited understanding of what constitutes sexual violence results in the absolution or minimising of such deeds. Clearly, at least in terms of gender-issues, basic human rights are neither internalised in schools nor in the broader society (Andrews, 2007:18).

The history of the country, and specifically the years of intense political struggle left scars on the school community. Schools during the years of the liberation struggles were politicised and were used as sites of struggles and, as a result, there is a need for the development of an uncompromised culture of teaching and learning (Bloch, 2009:56). Bloch (2009:56) describes the wider society in South Africa as:

[A] society in deep conflict and trauma, where war and violence defined the relations of white and black for many years ...[and] education is seen in different and distorted ways.[Subsequently] education was caught up in the conflicts and tensions of [a] different world often in transition.

Kgobe and Mbokaze (2008:62) state that in many communities former liberation fighters found themselves poor and redundant after the 1994 elections in South Africa. They had, and still have, no other option than a life of violent crime.

The effects that destructive communities have on school communities are easily recognisable. Kgobe and Mbokaze (2008:62) found in a study at three schools in KZN and two in Alexandra, Gauteng, that faction fights, sexual violence, domestic violence, gang violence, and bullying are rife in school communities. Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:57), furthermore, point out that civil disobedience in the wider society fuels problems in schools.

The idea must, however, not be created that schools in disadvantaged communities are the only scene of SV. Another dimension, revealed by participants in the study conducted by Bender and Emslie (2010:195), is seen in the homes and schools where there is too much freedom, and too much wealth. The lack of solid parent-child relationships, and clear

discipline structures, in many of these homes appear to lead to unacceptable and violent learner behaviour.

Literature reveals that schools, like the communities in which they are situated, set the stage for uncontrolled and destructive behaviour. In general one can conclude that schools fail to provide the ideal scenes, described by Bloch (2009:81) as “havens of stability and loving boundaries”, which are essential for teaching and learning to be successful. These bad situations negatively affect all the actors in schools, which is a dimension of Burke’s pentad that is explored below.

4.3.3 AGENTS (ACTORS)

Krug *et al.* (2002:1084) views violent actors (and thus also SV actors) as *self, other individuals* and *groups (collective)*. I explored the literature for more detailed answers to the question: *What do we know about who is involved in acts of SV?* I took into consideration what was published on actors in the various roles of perpetrators, victims, onlookers, and decision-makers in an attempt to gain some understanding of the typical characteristics of actors in these roles. Whether as individuals or in groups, learners and educators are the most commonly found actors on the SV stage. Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:53) state: “there is a high level of learner on learner, learner on teacher and teacher on learner violence”. So while the stage does not belong solely to these sets of actors, I start my discussion by focusing on these categories of actors in their various roles.

4.3.3.1 LEARNERS

Learners often act violently towards one another, bully one another, and make victims of one another. They also watch acts of SV. While the various roles that learners take on vary, and they can be antagonists, victims, onlookers or protagonists, the typical characteristics of learners in these roles are not, generally, clear-cut.

Bender and Emslie (2010:189) suggest that “many aggressive learners have high levels of status, popularity, and admiration from their peer group, and the school”. This seems to make aggressive behaviour at school not only acceptable, but also a factor that adds to the popularity or social standing of a learner. Swart and Bredekamp (2009:421) warn that some

of these learners have developed skills that enable them to disguise their behaviour and, in this way, prevent educators from identifying their covert aggression.

Learners who engage in acts of bullying seem to have a desire to domineer and have power. They seemingly find pleasure in inflicting harm and suffering on others. Bullies are mostly physically stronger than their peers, are bossy, short-tempered with a low frustration tolerance. They are often insolent and rebellious towards adults, and show little sympathy towards victims. They commonly develop a negative attitude towards school, engage in other antisocial behaviour such as stealing and vandalism, yet they tend to have a support group amongst their peers, even if it is small (Smit, 2003:82).

Reports state that learners with quiet, compliant temperaments who passively respond to initial pestering, and those who are physically and/or emotionally vulnerable, often become victims of bullying (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:19; Smit, 2007:82). However, Smit (2007:82) points out that even those learners, who are not obviously different, and who do not appear to be vulnerable, also get bullied.

The dissimilarity in SV experiences of boys and girls have often been explored. A self-report survey amongst Free State secondary school learners, revealed that boys are more prone to bully than girls (De Wet, 2005). 51,8 percent of the respondents indicated that they were verbally bullied by either a boy or a group of boys, compared to being bullied by either a girl or a group of girls (43,2%). Boys are however mostly (but not exclusively) bullied by boys and *vice versa*. However, the percentage of boys bullying girls (15,1%) is slightly higher than the percentage of girls bullying boys (11,9%). In line with these findings, Nesor *et al.* (2004:144) reported that boy-respondents conveyed a slightly higher awareness of bullying in schools than their girl-peers. Observation revealed that single boys, and boys in a group are more inclined to bully others, than only girls or mixed groups do. (Nesor *et al.*, 2004:150). De Wet *et al.* (2008:107), furthermore, found that boys in secondary schools in the Free State are more often exposed to sexual violence than their girl-peers. Contrary to these findings, participants in a study by Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:57) indicated that violence in inner-city schools in Pretoria is generally more widespread amongst girls than amongst boys.

Researchers take note of the possible differences in experiences that learners have when their age, language and so forth vary. Breet *et al.* (2010:520-522) found that there was not a statistically significant difference in the physical aggression of boys who are taught in Afrikaans and those who are taught in English. Breet *et al.* (2010:521-523) also found no statistical evidence of varying levels of aggression amongst adolescent boys of different ages and grades. They, however, found that boys with internal locus of control are significantly and substantially less aggressive than the others. Nesor *et al.*, (2004:142) found that White learners feel less safe than their Coloured, Black and Asian peers, while Prinsloo and Nesor (2007b:325) found that Black and Coloured learners are more often victims of SV than are their White and Asian peers.

Nesor *et al.* (2004:144) found that nearly half of the respondents in grades 6, 7 and 10 daily witness bullying at their schools. Swart and Bredekamp (2009:417) reported that victims of non-physical violence described how other learners merely stood there and watched what was happening, without attempting to intervene. Respondents in a study on sexual harassment in Free State secondary schools, indicated that sexual harassment often occurs in the presence of a small group of onlookers, and even before a whole class of onlookers (De Wet, 2009:67).

To summarise: In the literature that I reviewed, some typical characteristics of antagonists, bullies, and victims of bullying were suggested. However, none of these are absolutes. Researchers have found insignificant differences amongst learners from various language and age groups, but boys seem to be, generally, the main target of bullies, sexual harassers and violent learners. Furthermore, sometimes acts of SV appear to take place in the presence of onlookers, who passively watch the SV play.

4.3.3.2 EDUCATORS

Educators are also actors in the SV drama. Educators, who should play a significant role in learners' learning, are expected to be role-models, promote learners' well-being, and take care of learners while they are at school (Chen & Astor, 2009:3). However, Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:53-55) found that many educators have either become complacent in this regard, or do not take action because they are afraid. Educators,

themselves, have also become aggressive as a result of SV. Educators are often the victims of various forms of SV (e.g. De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:54).

While educators are at times the targets of violence committed by learners at school, research evidence on this phenomenon is limited. De Wet and Jacobs (2006:54) consider that this could be ascribed to ignorance on the part of school managers as well as the hesitation of educators to admit that there is a problem. Instances of educator victimisation are also covered up by school managers to protect the reputation of the school. De Wet (2003b:102) found in a study amongst educators in the Eastern Cape, that 32,1 percent of the respondents indicated that they had been assaulted by learners. Similarly, in a study in two provinces of South Africa, De Wet and Jacobs (2006:62 & 69) found the levels of educator victimisation during one year to be notably high. 76,7 percent of the educator-respondents indicated that they had been exposed to some form of victimisation by learners. Educators are also victimised by principals, in what De Wet (2010a) describes as workplace bullying.

In spite of their duty to act *in loco parentis*, educators are sometimes the perpetrators of SV. In a survey amongst some educators in the Eastern Cape Province, De Wet (2003b:102) found that 41,4 percent of the respondents believe that learners are assaulted by educators. An example of violent practices by educators is the administering of corporal punishment (Kgobe & Mbowazi, 2008:63). In a survey conducted in 40 secondary schools in the Free State province, 30,8 percent of learners indicated that corporal punishment is often, or very often used (De Wet, 2003c:89).

The role of educators as onlookers must be noted. According to Swart and Bredekamp (2009:418) educators should not react indifferently when learners report incidences of bullying, and should understand that by the time a learner confides in an educator, other ways of handling the bullying have proved to be unsuccessful. Educators should listen to learners and be able to respond appropriately.

Research thus suggests that while some educators themselves are the victims of some forms of SV, they are also perpetrators and onlookers of acts of SV. Educators are duty bound to

take care of learners. They should also take the place of parents, when the parents are not present. Parents themselves are, however, also sometimes actors on the SV stage.

4.3.3.3 PARENTS

SV research describes both the negative and the positive roles of parents in this matter. A lack of parental involvement counteracts the efforts of schools to curb SV (Mestry *et al.*, 2007:103; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56). Parents are sometime over-intrusive, and prevent their children from building up self-confidence (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:418). Other parents refuse to accept that their children are at fault, that they use drugs or bully other learners. Parents similarly refuse to accept that their children have learning problems that could lead to disruptive and violent behaviour (Mestry *et al.* 2008:103). Hadebe (2000:67) indicates that parents are sometimes uninvolved, do not attend school meetings, divert their responsibilities to educators and, in general, lack insight into what happens at schools. Bender and Emslie (2010:191) point out that children often tend to behave aggressively when parents reject, neglect or are indifferent to them. However, Swart and Bredekamp (2009:418) argue that some parents do provide the necessary support and who build their children's self-esteem towards asserting themselves in aggravated situations.

4.3.3.4 THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Systemic violence is described by Adams (2000:143) as harm resulting from the policy and practice of an institution. Adams (2000:142) uses the term systemic violence to describe an act. Although systemic violence is closely linked with acts of deprivation or neglect (4.3.1.4), I disagree with his point of view because I consider the school system to be an agent that acts, and commits acts of depriving and neglecting learners, because steps have not been taken to provide good schooling conditions with adequate facilities and committed teachers. Because learners are unable to progress satisfactorily, the school system also commits the act of humiliating learners, who probably consider themselves to be inferior to other, more advantaged, learners. I, therefore, see the school system as an agent, or an actor in SV drama.

Epp and Watkinson (1997:4) distinguish between policies and practices in the school system that cultivate an atmosphere of violence, and policies and practices that give the impression

of neutrality, but that have discriminatory effects. As far as policies and practices that foster a climate of violence are concerned, Burnett (1998:789-790) points out that schools that are “competitive, hierarchal, nondemocratic and even unjust” violate the learners’ dignity. She also argues that harsh disciplinary measures to conform learners are often endorsed by school structures as “sound educational practice”. Examples of such practices are the administering of corporal punishment (4.3.3.2) the locking out, detaining, suspension and expulsion of learners (4.3.1.4). Mestry *et al.* (2007:102) found inconsistent disciplinary practices in schools to be detrimental to learners.

The school system abuses children who live in conditions of poverty, as they are *inter alia* unable to acquire the necessary material resources needed to make progress in schools, and are quite helpless in the school system (Burnett, 1998:792). Seemingly “neutral” policies and practices of the school-system actor cause deprivation and neglect (4.3.1.4). Bloch (2009:59) echoes the views of Burnett but also writes about the unofficial existence of two unequal school systems in South Africa, and states that children are disadvantaged in one of them. He states that:

[T]he vast majority of schools are dysfunctional in that they are not producing the meaningful outcomes that are their primary goal. These schools are township and rural schools, predominantly black, situated in the poor areas. Poor black South Africans continue to get a raw deal, educationally speaking (Bloch, 2009:59).

Many educators, who received limited training in the former black education colleges, do not have the required skills to effectively facilitate learning in the current educational context (Bloch, 2009:84) and thus the school system deprives learners from fulfilling their potential.

To conclude: In this section I looked at categories found in academic literature of actors on the stage of SV dramas. Mainly learners, but also educators, parents and the school system seem to have parts in the dramas that unfold. In the section that follows, I explore the agencies or props in these dramas that were included in the studies.

4.3.4 AGENCY

The question I pose, which is largely unexplored in the literature that I reviewed, and which concerns the agencies or props used during acts of SV are: *What do we know about what the actors used when they participated in violent acts?* Researchers seem to be more interested in knowing what happened, than finding out what was used. However, I ask this question in the context of the research question driving this chapter: *What do we know about SV?*

I found references to knives, fire-arms and unspecific “weapons”. Many male learners are reported to carry weapons such as knives (Bender & Emslie, 2010:181-183). While this is regarded as violent behaviour, or at least violence-related behaviour (Bender & Emslie, 2010:190; DeVoe *et al.*, 2005:26-35; Robers *et al.*, 2010:42), Adams (2000:143) has another argument, and states that the mere carrying of a firearm is not a violent act in itself is. He says that while it might be against the law to carry such a weapon, it constitutes a violent crime only when the gun is discharged. Adams (2000:143) continues to reflect on learners who bring weapons to school to defend themselves: “Perhaps more harmful than gun possession is allowing a climate of fear to be so prevalent and pervasive that students feel the need to bring a firearm for protection”. However, the South African literature that I reviewed, has not yet explored the frequency with which weapons of any kind are used.

A prop that regularly seems to be on the stage is the cellular phone which, as Swart and Bredekamp (2009:414) point out, is available around the clock to be used to threaten, victimise, intimidate or insult actors.

In the literature that I reviewed, the authors seldom mentioned the props that were used in acts of SV. However, many researchers focused on the purpose or motive for such acts.

4.3.5 PURPOSE

Violence can be cold and premeditated, which can result in a purposeful action to achieve a goal other than injuring the victim. On the other hand, it can be an emotional reaction dominated by the desire to hurt somebody (Muro-Ruiz, 2002:114). In the context of the research question driving this chapter, *What do we know about SV?*, and including the purpose of, or motive for SV, I pose the question: *What do we know about why the perpetrators committed the act of SV?* I acknowledge that one cannot look for an answer in a

reductionist way. The motives for violence, and thus also for SV, are complex and multidimensional in themselves (Krug *et al.*, 2002:1085), and this makes SV largely unpredictable (Muro-Ruiz, 2002:114).

Muro-Ruiz (2002:109) analysed theories of violence and came to the conclusion that violence is either a reaction, or a means to attain goals. Burke (1969:186) makes a similar distinction when he writes about reasons and final causes. The latter resonates with the use it serves (Burke, 1969:279). Midlarsky and Klain (2005:39) maintain that when one looks at SV throughout history, certain sets of reasons for its existence emerge. Although learners often initiate SV as a means to resist, or out of anger, or to protest, SV sometimes consists of random acts of violence. While the former categories can to some extent be predicted, or at least be explained in terms of a belief, purpose or cause, the latter is considered by the authors to be unnerving, as the choice of victims is not associated with the motive, and acts are very difficult to predict. There seems to be an agreement between the above authors that there are two dimensions to the purpose aspect of the pentad, namely *immediate reasons* (*vide* “reasons” (Burke, 1969:279); “random acts” (Midlarsky & Klain, 2005:39) or “reaction” (Muro-Ruiz, 2002:109)) as well as a *real purpose* (*vide* “final causes” (Burke, 1969:279); the “means to resist, out of anger or to protest” (Midlarsky & Klain, 2005:39) or as a “means to attain goals” (Muro-Ruiz:109)). In the discussion that follows, I will accordingly first look at *reasons* explored by researchers in the literature I studied, about why SV takes place, after which I will look for *final causes*.

Keeping in mind our inability to predict SV, I consider a number of reasons for SV, which various authors have suggested. Muro-Ruiz (2002:115) explains that, until recently, the stimulus for violent action was researched in terms of individual characteristics of the perpetrators. However, recent research, in addition, has explored external environmental factors as causes for violent behaviour. I first revisit, in the following paragraphs, some of the personal characteristics as causes of SV (also see 4.3.3.1) after which I discuss the external factors that have been suggested as causes of SV.

Some authors propose that SV stems from individuals’ inability to constructively resolve conflict (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8-10), lack of

academic achievement (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5), aggressive, bossy and domineering attitudes (Smit, 2003:82), individuals who can only suppress their anger up to a point (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8-10) as well as individuals with dominant external locus of control (Breet *et al.*, 2010:512-514), who blame external factors for things that happen, and thus believe that they are not in control. While there are most certainly aspects such as these that promote violent behaviour in individuals, the emphasis in the literature that I reviewed was more on external factors that contribute to SV. De Wet, (2003b:103) warns that some individuals seem to simply engage in violent acts “just for the fun of it”.

In schools, there are several factors suggested by authors that contribute to learners resorting to violent acts of SV. These include homophobia (Bender & Emslie, 2010:181-183), the isolation and rejection of some learners (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8-10), religious differences (Bender & Emslie, 2010:181-183), gangsterism (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5) and pressure from delinquent peers (Bender & Emslie, 2010:173; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5). Swart and Bredekamp (2009:419) warn that schools in which a social hierarchy exist in the form of social cliques, produce perpetrators who strive to dominate and to get to the top of the social hierarchy by often using cruel methods. On the other hand Kollapen (2006:4) suggests that insignificant issues can spark off SV.

Researchers state that school and home environments are sometimes conducive to causing SV: such as a school being too large (De Wet, 2003b:103), too much or too little discipline (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5); learners having too many rights (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56), a lack of morality (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5) and negative role-models such as violent parents who are specified in the literature dealing with SV (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:48), unprofessional and unethical educators (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:3) and specifically educators who use harsh disciplinary measures. Burnett (1998:793) maintains:

The principle moral that the children draw from teacher violence is that violence constitutes a justifiable mechanism to dominate others in search of gratification and control ...

Some authors also blame society for SV. Their reasons include the legacy of apartheid (De Wet, 2003b:103), and the acceptance by society that violence is a normal, and a legitimate way of resolving differences (Bender & Emslie, 2010:194; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4). Authors also accentuate the influence of the media (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:48) and specifically the television (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:3) which portrays violence as an acceptable way of solving conflict.

The assault of victims is furthermore often justified by the hegemonic outlook of parents and learners, and even educators. Bender and Emslie (2010:192) argue that many learners grow up with parents who perceive honour as the ability to protect what is yours at all costs, which originated from a cattle-husbandry culture where the honourable thing is to revert to violence when threatened. Andrews (2007:26) highlights what she describes as the tripartite origin of current masculinity in the present South African society that serves to sustain violence:

[F]irst, a masculinist culture emanating from [the] authoritarian and militaristic apartheid state; second, the masculinist cultural remnants of a violent anti-apartheid struggle; and third, aspects of indigenous customary law that continue to subordinate women.

Andrews (2007:28) states that it will take more than a liberal constitution and legal framework to change the hegemonic masculine society of today.

In the literature that I reviewed, most researchers focus on the immediate reasons for SV and the environmental factors that contribute to SV, or that are conducive to SV. However, in some studies, authors suggest that the purpose SV very often serves the perpetrator. These purposes include revenge (De Wet, 2003b:103; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8-10), power and dominance (Burnett, 1998:793; Smit, 2003:82), settling disputes (Pillay & Ragpot, 2010:S36) and gaining popularity (Burnett, 1998:793).

During my discussion of the different aspects of Burke's pentad, I realised that one cannot look at any one aspect, in isolation from the others, as they are interlinked. Although many of these relationships are discussed as part of the pentad, I will briefly focus on SV through Burke's terministic screens (*vide* Figure 3).

4.3.6 PERSPECTIVES THROUGH BURKE'S TERMINISTIC SCREENS

In 4.3.3.2 I made the statement, based on Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:53-55), that educators themselves also become aggressive as a result of SV. This is a typical example of how an *agent* reacts to an *act*. Burke (1969:16) explains that in terms of the *agent-act* relationship, the agent neither contains the act, nor does the act contain the agent. It is rather a case of the agents being the authors of their acts. At the same time, acts can make, or remake the agent, in accordance to their nature. Burnett (1998:789-790) argues that many of the disciplinary actions that educators take constitute violence which, particularly in the case of underprivileged children, humiliate learners and damage their self worth. The *acts* of degrading disciplinary actions thus influence the self-esteem of the learner-*actor*, strengthening the power-imbalance between educator and learner.

A study conducted with girls from a comprehensive school describes how the *act* shapes the *actor*. Swart and Bredekamp (2009:414) provide an example of the dynamics of the girls' verbal aggression by including the following quotation in their report:

Saying nasty things is often done in retaliation to someone who was nasty to you. The aim would then be to have a better comeback, and even nastier response. This is illustrated by the following extract: "Maybe this bully is calling you names and you can think of something more humiliating or maybe threatening or something like her parents had a divorce and you're like 'Ah, you don't have a dad'."

The act of victimisation towards the girl explaining the above situation, caused her to retaliate, and become nasty herself. In the interviews the respondents admitted that they are ashamed of their reactions to victimisation. A further example of the association between *actors* and *acts* is referred to in the research of De Wet *et al.* (2008:107) who found that older learners (*actors*) in secondary schools are more often the victims of sexual violence (*acts*) than their younger peers.

Burke also (1969:15) argues that the *scene* contains the *act*, and in the context of this study, it can be interpreted that specific circumstances (i.e. *scenes*), are conducive to SV, and to specific acts of SV, albeit they are not the reason for SV (also refer to 4.3.5). A school

environment in which, for instance, competitiveness prevails, and where some acts of violence are accepted on the school ground, and where educators tend to use violent disciplinary practices, creates a school milieu that is conducive to bullying (Smit, 2003:86).

In some studies the *scene-act* is specifically explored (albeit not framed on Burke's dramatism). The *scenes* of secondary schools seem to contain *acts* of violence. Examples of *scenes* in which sexual violence (*acts*) is more prone to happen, are large schools and schools in informal settlements (De Wet *et al.*, 2008:106-107). Schools in villages have *scenes* that contain *acts* of violence - Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:63) found that faction fights between villages in KZN would often spread out to the school itself, and sometimes lead to the school closing down.

Another perspective when viewing SV is to look at the way in which the *scene* contains and shapes the *agent*. I, therefore, reflect on how the school, or divisions of the school such as the classroom, the sport field, and so on, influence and shape the various actors in SV dramas. Burke (1969:16) maintains that a worthwhile activity is considering not only how a *scene* might influence an *actor*, but also how an *actor* influences a *scene*. If we revisit the earlier example of educators using violent disciplinary strategies with underprivileged learners through the *scene-agent* lens, we will understand what Burnett (1998:789-790) means when she explains:

[P]eople that are exposed to chronic poverty have less resources or mechanisms which could be employed to exercise control over their lives, while violence seems to be effective and one of the few available options.

Thus educational practices in poorer communities are often ruthless and domineering, and as such the *scene* of poverty makes the *actor* more vulnerable, with fewer options to respond to, and this intensifies the problem of SV.

Another instance of how the *scene* shapes the *agent* can be seen in the influence of the more liberal policy framework on educators: Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:49) point out that because educators feel a loss of power as a result of the ban on corporal punishment, and because of their lack sufficient knowledge about the nature and extent of

SV, the stage is set for SV to occur. It *inter alia* prevents educators from pro-actively taking the necessary steps to prevent both blatant and underhand forms of SV.

Using the above few instances, I confirm that SV is a complex issue, with several role-players acting and reacting in various ways. When the curtain falls, at the end of SV dramas, the audience often feel hopeless.

4.4 THE CURTAIN FALLS

As the curtain falls, the impact of SV drama needs to be considered. SV physically and psychologically harms actors as well as audiences, and is detrimental to the core business of schools, namely teaching and learning (De Wet, 2003b:89; Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:48). De Wet and Van Huyssteen (2005:17) state clearly that:

The social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of the child is the main concern in education and the different forms of violence work destructively towards developing these areas positively.

The damaging effects of SV on victims are not just short-term, but are damaging in many respects, and often stretch deep into adulthood and could have life-long effects (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20; Naser *et al.*, 2004:139; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:46). Victims of SV often experience difficulty concentrating, they feel cut-off and lonely, they develop a dislike of school, and withdraw from school activities. Many also develop psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. Their relationships with their parents commonly suffer, they are reported as becoming depressed or anxious, sometimes aggressive, and sometimes suicidal (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:20; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:406; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:49). The negative outcomes of specific categories of SV, as well as the reaction to these, have been explored by researchers.

Sexual violence is a severe problem in South African schools (4.3.1.3). Researchers have pointed out that the consequences of sexual violence are numerous and include not only similar effects to those noted above, but learners also develop emotional problems, they begin to see suicide as a way of escape from sexual violence in schools, they develop a low self-esteem, and there is a drop in school achievements. Besides these effects, sexual violence also causes stigmatisation and increases health risks (De Wet *et al.*, 2008:97-98;

Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63; Leach, 2002:110). However, despite these consequences, a culture of silence and acceptance of sexual violence is reported to prevail in South African schools. It is often taken lightly, considered to be part of school life or ignored (De Wet *et al.* 2008:98; Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008:63). Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:63) suggest that fear causes under-reporting of sexual violence in schools. De Wet *et al.*, (2008:98) based on Leach, warn, however, that unchallenged sexual violence negatively influences the formation of gender and sexual identities.

Severe disciplinary practices constitute SV (4.3.1.1). Burnett (1998:790-793) found that learners who were victims of physical punishment conveyed their bitterness, degradation, and feelings of powerlessness. Burnett (1998:793) observed that, because of learners' relative powerlessness against educators' in the face of physical punishment, parents or guardians often attempt to stand up for their children. This, however, usually has negative results for all involved, and is reported to result in the humiliation of parents, learners and/or educators as well as intensifying learners' feelings of powerlessness.

Some authors consider the effect of the inability of the education system (4.3.3.4) to effectively support role-players. Educators are reported to feel disempowered by the banning of corporal punishment, they believe they are unable to maintain discipline as a result of this, and have suggested that the reinstatement of this practice is long overdue (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010:392). Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55-56) found that disciplinary measures such as a credit system and detention are rarely successful. Learners fail to attend detention classes and ridicule educators. Despite the implementation of Codes of Conducts and other disciplinary policies, there is a perception that these do not work. This strengthens the educators' perception of powerlessness against the threats of SV. Some educators do not enforce discipline out of fear of retribution and gang vengeance. They are anxious and hesitant to say and do anything that can cause conflict (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55). Schools have been encouraged by the authorities to involve communities in issues pertaining to school safety, specifically through the establishment of disciplinary measures, safety, and security committees. These committees are supposed to consist of school managers, members of the community police forum, SAPS members, traditional leaders, and municipal councillors as well as other service members. However,

Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:64) found that these structures are not functioning, largely owing to poor communication and the unavailability of the members. Thus the education system appears to be failing all role-players as far as SV is concerned.

Educator-targeted SV (4.3.3.2) is reported to be harmful, has extreme negative effects on educators, and often leads to educators quitting the profession (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:69). Educators are disempowered by the learners' victimisation (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006:55) and this leads to educator absenteeism (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:49). Educators who have experienced workplace victimisation by their principals are reported by De Wet (2010x:1456) to feel ashamed, inferior and isolated. Their ability and their desire to teach is broken down and their careers are destroyed. How this *act* affects the *actor*, thus have further implications, which affect the quality of education that learners receive, and therefore constitutes *deprivation and neglect*.

Bullying is a severe problem in South African schools (7.3.1.5), and has long-lasting effects. Swart and Bredekamp (2009:415) report that learners deal with bullying by bullying others. De Wet (2005:87) points out that denial, or covering up of bullying is a problem, especially in the case of educators. Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008:63) correspondingly found that the response of schools to bullying is "lukewarm".

The effect of deprivation and neglect, a category of SV, is discussed by some researchers (4.3.1.4). Lack of success in school, and a concomitant bleak future for learners once they leave school, make learners susceptible to alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, other criminal activities, and the opportunities offered by the drug industry (Bloch, 2009:79).

SV does not only affect the victims of SV but has a detrimental effect on all role-players. SV affects the perpetrators. De Wet and Van Huyssteen (2005:22) state that if bullies are not assisted to transform their harmful behaviour, their health, their work, and their relationships as grown-ups can be adversely affected. Learners and educators in general are affected emotionally, and they become afraid as well as angry because of the high level of SV incidences in schools (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53 & 55). SV also causes tension between the school and the parents (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55).

In spite of the negative consequences of SV in its various dimensions, there seems to be a general reluctance and powerlessness to stand up against SV. De Wet (2007a:83) found that educators often downplay serious violence, and normalise acts such as fighting, scratching and scissor-stabbing. Educators appear to perceive the situation at schools as hopeless (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53). Educators and learners are reluctant to report incidences of crime and violence. The findings of a survey suggest that while most educator-victims seem to report incidences of SV *to the school principal*, whereas only a small percentage of learner-victims do so. Learner-victims are more prone to report criminal and violent incidences *to other educators* (excluding the principal). The percentage of learners who do report SV, is, however, low (39,5 %) (De Wet, 2003c:89).

Kollapen (2006:4) has expressed his concern that there is a tendency in South Africa to shift the blame in matters pertaining to SV, however, research does show that schools are trying to make a stand against SV. Some schools negotiate the Code of Conduct with the learners, and use it to deal with issues of SV (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53). Schools also implement security measures (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53), and liaise with the SAPS (De Wet, 2007a:85; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53). Some educators perceive dealing with SV as part of their daily work, while certain other schools appoint specific educators to deal with these issues (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53 & 55). SV is also discussed in Life Orientation classrooms (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:53). These and other strategies challenge SV. Thus, to change the script of the drama, the strategies, which are suggested in research publications, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I used mainly published, peer-reviewed, journal articles to report on the current body of knowledge about SV in the South African context. I acknowledge that this selection of literature is indeed a selection of the reality as presented in research reports, and is, therefore, limited. However, it does provide the reader with a reflection of the reality of SV in South African schools (*vide* Burke, 1966:45). The findings of this chapter are summarised in the next section.

4.5.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS

A summary of the narration that I provided on *what* we know about SV through research publications, using Burke’s dramatism as my framework for analysis, is offered in Table 10. The findings must be read in view of the overall aims of the literature study namely to explore what we know and how we know about SV through academic literature.

Table 10: Synopsis of the findings of the literature review framed on Burke’s dramatism

Issues	Literature suggest that:	Reference
Acts of SV	SV is not limited to learners only, but also include other role-players.	4.3.1
	SV in intentional.	4.3.1
	Physical SV includes beating, kicking, punching another, hand-to-hand or fist-fighting, deliberately seizing, pushing, shoving and tripping, playing physical harmful tricks on another, using force to take something from a person, using a dangerous object, rock or instrument to hurt someone, cutting another with a knife or other sharp instrument, assault and homicide.	4.3.1.1
	Physical violence is common in South African schools.	4.3.1.1
	Physical violence takes place in different categories of schools.	4.3.1.1
	Corporal punishment is a form of physical SV.	4.3.1.1
	Corporal punishment is still used in some schools.	4.3.1.1
	Psychological SV includes betrayal, blackmailing, marginalisation; cursing and swearing at the victim, degrading behaviour, humiliation, insulting, name-calling, spreading rumours or writing insulting notes about the victim, criticising the victim’s appearance or poking fun at the person’s appearance, ridiculing someone, purposely opposing someone, teasing, mocking and playing tricks, intimidating/scaring another by looking at the person, the use of gestures and threatening a person.	4.3.1.2
	Psychological SV is widespread in South African schools.	4.3.1.2
	Verbal cruelty and the ostracising of learners most commonly take place.	4.3.1.2
	Sexual SV takes on many forms such as physical conduct, verbal harassment, non-verbal harassment, quid pro quo harassment, sexual favouritism, sexual victimisation and secondary harassment.	4.3.1.3

Issues	Literature suggest that:	Reference
	Sexual SV includes acts such as the making unwanted sexual comments, peeping while another person is in the bathroom or locker room, showing obscene pictures or sending obscene letters to another, leered or eyed-up a person’s body, spreading sexual rumours about the person, taking or trying to take another person’s clothes off for sexual reasons, touching or trying to touch a person in a sexual way without the person’s approval, sexually coming on to a person, unwontedly trying to kiss, making remarks about a person sexual orientation, touching, grabbing and pinching in a sexual way, writing sexually insulted things about the person, attempt to have sex with a person against his/her will, sexual assault and rape.	4.3.1.3
	Sexual violence differs from other forms of violence in that it is conduct of sexual nature.	4.3.1.3
	Sexual SV is rife in South African schools.	4.3.1.3
	Intentional deprivation and neglect in the context of a school constitute SV.	4.3.1.4
	Deprivation and neglect as a form of SV is under-explored in research.	4.3.1.4
	Examples of acts of deprivation and neglect include depriving a person from belongings (stealing), depriving someone from having friends (marginalising), damaging somebody’s property, ignoring someone, depriving someone from rights (such as the right to education, the right to a clean and safe environment).	4.3.1.4
	Many South African schools deprive learners from quality education and from a future.	4.3.1.4
	Bullying constitutes SV of a repetitive nature, and is directed at a specific victim.	4.3.1.5
	Bullying can take on the form of physical, psychological and sexual dimensions and can also be deprivation or neglect.	4.3.1.5
	Bullying is a serious problem at South African schools.	4.3.1.5
	Cyber-bullying brings a new dimension to bullying as it targets the victim day and night throughout the whole week.	4.3.1.5
	The various categories of SV are not mutually exclusive and they are interlinked.	4.3.1.6
	The value of categorising SV lies in the awareness that it brings to SV acts other than severe physical violence.	4.3.1.6
Scenes of SV	Many South African schools provide unpleasant and destructive settings.	4.3.2
	Effective teaching and learning is often restrained by the school milieus.	4.3.2
	Many school buildings are unattractive with deficient infrastructure.	4.3.2
	The school scenes are often filled with disrespectful attitudes and behaviours.	4.3.2
	Schools are perceived by many school actors as unsafe.	4.3.2

Issues	Literature suggest that:	Reference
	Specific areas in schools are settings for SV, such as classrooms, cloakrooms, the playground and bus stops.	4.3.2
	Schools largely reflect the destructive communities that they are in.	4.3.2
	Substance abuse forms the backdrop for SV.	4.3.2
	Social disease such as gender inequalities, gender abuse, political intolerance, unhealthy family relationships and civil disobedience are brought into schools and internalised by schools.	4.3.2
	Schools set the stage for uncontrolled and destructive behaviour.	4.3.2
Actors in SV dramas	Learners and educators are frequent actors on the SV stage.	4.3.3
	Learners often act violently and disrespectfully towards each other.	4.3.3.1
	Learners often watch scenes of SV.	4.3.3.1
	Other learners often admire aggressive learners and bullies – they are esteemed and popular.	4.3.3.1
	Educators often fail to recognise the perpetrators as a result of their ability to obscure their unacceptable behaviour.	4.3.3.1
	Quiet complacent learners often fall victim to bullies.	4.3.3.1
	Boys are more often the victims of SV and specifically also bullying and sexual violence than girls.	4.3.3.1
	Learners with internal locus of control are less aggressive than those with external locus of control.	4.3.3.1
	Educators often fail to appropriately respond to SV, either because they became complacent or because they are afraid.	4.3.3.2
	Educators are sometimes victimised by learners as well as by principals.	4.3.3.2
	Educators sometimes act violently towards learners.	4.3.3.2 4.3.1.1
	Parents sometimes counteract attempts by schools to discipline learners.	4.3.3.3
	Parents who provide the necessary support can promote their children's self esteem which can counteract SV.	4.3.3.3
	The school system is an actor on the stage, that through policies and practices allows and cultivates SV.	4.3.3.4
	Competitive, hierarchical schools foster a climate of disregard for some learners.	4.3.3.4
Schools that condone harsh discipline practices violate human rights.	4.3.3.4	
The school system fails to adequately support many learners towards success, and thus neglect these learners.	4.3.3.4	
Agency or props	The props used to commit SV are largely obscure from literature.	4.3.4
	Weapons such as knives and firearms are sometimes brought to school.	4.3.4

Issues	Literature suggest that:	Reference
	The school environment motivates actors to be armed.	4.3.4
	Cellular phones are used extensively in acts of SV.	4.3.4
Purpose	The motives for SV are complex.	4.3.5
	SV is largely unpredictable.	4.3.5
	In some instances resistance, anger or protest is the reason for SV.	4.3.5
	SV often occurs randomly.	4.3.5
	The inability of actors to constructively resolve conflict result in SV.	4.3.5
	Aggressive, domineering and bossy personalities of actors contribute to SV.	4.3.5
	Lack of academic success by learners promotes violent behaviour.	4.3.5
	Homophobia and religious differences seem to foster SV.	4.3.5
	Rejection of individual actors can lead to SV.	4.3.5
	Gangsterism and pressure from delinquent peers encourage SV.	4.3.5
	Social cliques and social hierarchy in schools stimulate SV.	4.3.5
	Violence in the society and in the media incites SV.	4.3.5
	Hegemonic masculinity in the society procreates SV.	4.3.5
The underlying causes of SV are <i>inter alia</i> revenge, power, dominance and the settling of disputes.	4.3.5	
Terministic screens	The <i>act-actor</i> relationship can be seen in the way acts of SV engender SV when the victims retaliate.	4.3.6
	Specific scenes at schools are conducive to specific acts of SV, thus the <i>scene-act</i> relationship, such as hierarchical social structures stimulate domineering.	4.3.6
	The <i>scene-agent</i> link can be seen where the scene of impoverished communities make learners more vulnerable.	4.3.6
Closing of the dramas	SV physically and psychologically harms actors as well as the audience.	4.4
	SV is detrimental to teaching and learning at schools.	4.4
	The damaging effect of SV is often long-term.	4.4
	SV negatively affects learners' social, emotional, physical and intellectual development and well-being.	4.4
	Sexual violence <i>inter alia</i> causes emotional, physical and health problems as well as stigmatisation.	4.4
	Fear and a culture of acceptance are some of the reasons why sexual violence in schools is underreported.	4.4
	Harsh discipline practices humiliate learners, damage relationships and leave learners powerless.	4.4

Issues	Literature suggest that:	Reference
	The education system is failing the educators in their pursuit of order and discipline.	4.4
	Educator targeted SV disempowers educators, often leads to educators quitting the profession and is detrimental to the quality of teaching.	4.4
	Bullying in schools is often downplayed, ignored or covered up.	4.4
	Ineffective school contexts can deprive learners from a positive future.	4.4
	There is a reluctance and powerlessness to deal with SV.	4.4
	SV is normalised in many schools.	4.4

4.5.2 CONCLUSION

The description of SV in the literature, indeed confirms the complexity of this problem. While there are multiple variations in terms of specific *acts*, which may be physical, psychological, sexual and/or acts of deprivation and neglect, all are destructive on various levels. Schools are often portrayed as hostile *scenes*, albeit they may have various styles of hostility, so that scenes are uninviting, dangerous, lonely, competing, hierarchal, unsupportive and so on. Learners, educators, and other actors in the SV drama appear powerless, frustrated, unhappy, defiant and/or miserable. Vengeance, retaliation, supremacy, and power-seeking are argued to be the main purpose for the acts of SV, which is aggravated by a deficit of solid role-models. Although researchers acknowledge that schools largely mirror the damaged South African society, little was reported, in the studies, of schools that act as safe havens in the midst this hostile society.

The negative consequences of SV are widely recognised. It, impacts *inter alia* on teaching and learning at schools, and a need exists to challenge this phenomenon and, thereby, change the situation in South African schools. In the chapter that follows, I provide a description of the current body of knowledge provided by researchers in peer-reviewed articles, which are aimed at changing the scripts of the SV dramas in South African schools.

CHAPTER 5: CHANGING THE SCHOOL VIOLENCE DRAMA SCRIPT - SUGGESTIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of safe schools is in sharp contrast with the narration of the tragedy of violence in schools that appears mainly in the articles of academic journals such as those discussed in Chapter 4. A safe school is a place where learners can learn, and educators can teach in a safe, warm environment, free from any intimidation, humiliation, harassment and violence, and where there are values such as respect and dignity for all individuals, and where democratic principles at all levels, are upheld. Such a school will provide a physical and psychological, sanctuary for both learners and staff (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:14; Smit, 2007:55; Squelch, 2001:138).

Currently, many schools do not have a safe, warm environment that is conducive to teaching and learning, and parents, learners, educators and school managers are victims of SV, in one way or another, in South African schools. Therefore, because of this dangerous situation, challenging the presence of SV in South African schools has become crucial. Prinsloo (2005) points out that as South Africa is a signatory to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the country is duty-bound to take measures on social, educational and administrative levels to protect children against any form of violence, neglect, or maltreatment. He argues that schools are legally bound to ensure that they are places of safety, and that all actors are free from fear of being scorned, intimidated, bullied, pestered, degraded, or exposed to any kind of violence while at school. Masitsa (2011:166-167) points out that not only learners have a right to a safe school environment, but so do educators.

Researchers have put forward numerous proposals for changing the situations at schools to make them safer places. This chapter summarizes these suggestions, which appear in the literature study that is reviewed and discussed in Chapter 4.

5.2 SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO CURB SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Kollapen (2006:4) calls for multiple role-players, *inter alia* the DoE, parents, the community, law enforcement structures, governmental structures, and organised civil society to collectively tackle the problem of SV. Although authors have made a range of suggestions to reduce the levels of violence at schools, there seems to be a general understanding that prevention programmes should focus on various levels simultaneously, and concentrate on individuals, interpersonal relationships as well as communities (such as the school community). All role-players need to be prepared and supported to deal with the challenges presented by SV. The following strategies, to combat SV, are suggested in the literature study.

5.2.1 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A SCHOOL PLAN TO COMBAT SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Researchers agree that a comprehensive school plan combating violence should be developed at each school in partnership with educators, parents, learners, and the community. This plan ought to be available in hard-copy format (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5; Smit, 2007:54). Smit (2007:55-57) furthermore suggests that this school safety plan should include prevention measures, guidelines about managing situations, as well as plans to resolve situations when SV occurs. The plan must be systemic, comprehensive, sustainable, and must be reviewed and adapted regularly.

Similar to the notion of an Institutional-level Support Team for inclusive education (*vide* DoE, 2001:Section 4.3.6), a school safety team is suggested to coordinate security measures at schools (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5 & 11). The school safety team should be broad-based and should include partners from all interested groups such as learners, parents, educators, the SAPS, and community members (Smit, 2007:55-56). The various partners, specifically including learners, should take co-responsibility for creating a safe and nurturing school environment (De Wet, 2003c:90; Smit, 2007:57) and participate in anti-violence tactics and policies in schools (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:57). This team should use suggestions in authentic research such as surveys, incidence registers, and interviews for gathering information about their school (Smit, 2007:55-56).

School safety requires a team effort by all stakeholders, and Kollapen (2006:3) argues that to expect educators to take over the responsibility for the safety of the schools is unacceptable. Therefore, he suggests that suitably trained security officers should be employed by schools for this purpose. These officers can serve schools by ascertaining risks, developing safety measures, assisting and advising learners as well as staff members on matters relating to safety. These officers should be deployed on a 24-hour basis to, *inter alia*, protect the school against vandalism, theft and other criminal activities (De Wet, 2003c:90).

Although each school safety plan must be developed according to the context of a specific school to discourage or prevent potential perpetrators from doing harm to themselves or others (Gaglon & Leon in De Wet, 2007a:88-89), suggestions in the literature study recommend generic preventative measures:

5.2.1.1 DEVELOPING SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURES

Although financial realities often prevent schools from developing a security system, school authorities are encouraged to improve their security infrastructures. The school premises should, at the least be fenced and protected (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:15; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5; Smit, 2007:57), and telephones should be available to report emergencies (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:15). Intercom systems should also increase the safety infrastructure of a school, which could be further strengthened through (Smit, 2007:54), surveillance cameras (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55) and burglar bars (Smit, 2007:54). Masitsa (2011:172), in addition, notes that the abovementioned equipment must be serviced regularly to ensure its good working order.

5.2.1.2 RESTRICTING ADMISSION

Various authors state that admission to schools should be controlled and restricted (De Wet, 2003c:90; De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:15; Smit, 2007:57). This task should be the responsibility of security officers, and ought to help keep unwanted elements from the school grounds (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:12). The wearing of identification tags by staff and learners could assist with admission control (De Wet, 2003c:90).

5.2.1.3 PROHIBITION OF FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

Firearms and other weapons must be prohibited at schools (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:11) and schools should take steps to enforce this regulation. In this quest to make schools arms-free zones, metal detectors could be installed (De Wet, 2007a:88-89) and, if weapons are found, they should be confiscated immediately (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55).

5.2.1.4 SURVEILLANCE OF THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Oosthuizen and De Waal (2005:12) propose that security officers should patrol the premises during school hours to protect learners from one another. There should, furthermore, be sufficient, consistent and stern supervision as well as the monitoring of the entire school grounds (Smit, 2007:57), and specifically learners' cloakrooms (De Wet, 2003c:90), where incidences of violence often occur (*vide* 4.3.2).

5.2.1.5 COMBATING CRIME

It is suggested that crime in the school should be tracked, monitored and combated in schools (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5; Smit, 2007:57). This attack on crime can include searches and arrests in circumstances where there is reasonable cause to believe that the alleged perpetrator is indeed guilty (De Wet, 2003c:90; Kollapen, 2006:3).

Some educators seem to perceive police intervention as the solution to the problem of SV (De Wet, 2007a:85). If the act of SV indeed constitutes a criminal deed, the school or the individual can lay criminal charges against the transgressor. However, Joubert and Wentzel (2009:258) warn that the criminal law system does not necessarily make allowance for all categories of SV. It does not make allowance, for instance, for most types of psychological bullying. While criminal charges in the case of certain deeds such as homicide, culpable homicide and rape should definitely be laid against the perpetrators of these deeds, prosecution in other cases is not always possible. The criminal law system is furthermore specifically applicable to children older than 14, as children younger than that age are not considered to be fully accountable for their deeds (Joubert & Wentzel, 2009:255).

Joubert and Wentzel (2009:260-261) point out that, while laying criminal charges is an option in some cases and, notwithstanding the gravity of SV, schools ought to carefully consider the alternatives, such as using the school's disciplinary system before going that

route. Schools should not lay charges for minor transgressions, and should not be petty. Where there is uncertainty, schools should first launch their own investigation. On the other hand, if school governors are convinced of the seriousness of a deed, yet the SAPS refuse to open a case, Joubert and Wentzel (2009:261) suggest that the SGB should obtain legal advice about the matter.

5.2.1.6 RAISING AWARENESS

Being aware of the various forms of SV is essential, especially concerning the more subtle forms of victimisation. Such an awareness program should be directed not only at learners, but also at staff and parents (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:421).

5.2.1.7 A CONTINGENCY PLAN AND SAFETY DRILLS

School security plans should include contingency plans in the event of an incident of SV, or a serious threat (Smit, 2007:57) and schools should practise safety drills on a regular basis (Smit, 2007:54).

Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55) suggest that once the security plan has been designed, it should be rigidly implemented.

While the above suggestions would be part of the formal security plan, numerous other related aspects need to be addressed as either being part of the security plan, or not. School security is, for instance, closely linked with the issue of discipline in schools, and discipline must continuously be re-evaluated and adapted.

5.2.2 STRENGTHENING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Mestry *et al.* (2007:95) emphasise that good discipline is critical for a school. They describe the notion of good discipline as behaviour that honours the purpose of schools, which is to offer effective education to learners. A comprehensive school plan to promote good discipline should be developed in partnership with educators, parents, learners and members of the community, it must readily be available, known (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5; Smit, 2007:54) and be stringently implemented (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55). Mestry *et al.* (2007:102) suggest that educators in a school should have a common understanding of disciplinary practices, and be consistent in the implementation of these

measures. De Waal (2011:177), furthermore, points out that discipline is not something that must merely be applied, but it should preferably be instilled and gradually infused into learners.

Kollapen (2006:3) states strongly that “the abolition of corporal punishment did not mean a no-discipline regime”. Schools must act firmly against misconduct in all spheres (De Wet, 2003c:89; Smit, 2007:57). Attention should, *inter alia*, be given to school attendance, (Smit, 2007:54), discipline on and off the sport fields (Price, 2000:73) and good behaviour in the classrooms. Educators must furthermore be supported¹⁸ to deal with discipline (Kollapen, 2006:3).

Researchers generally accept that when learners are absorbed in a lesson, they are unlikely to be disobedient (Hadebe, 2000:67; Hayward, 2000:107). Learners should not be allowed to disrupt a class, and Hayward (2000:107) suggests that “time-out” can be used in the case of individuals who do so. This involves removing transgressors from their groups, but keeping them in the classroom. Such learners must work on their own, until they have settled down. When this happens they are allowed to return to the group. Claims about the rights of learners can be made when learners are isolated in this way. However, Kollapen (2006:3) accentuates the perspective of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) that rights can be limited, if the action taken is reasonable and justifiable.

Rules, in the form of a *Code of Conduct for Learners* (and also classroom rules), could be drawn up in partnership with the learners (Price, 2000:73), they should be available, and should be revisited regularly (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:13). The consequences for positive and negative behaviour ought to be clearly spelt out and be included in these documents. These codes must be explicitly communicated, unswervingly enforced, and impartially applied (Joubert *et al.*, 2004:82-83; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8; Smit, 2007:57; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55). Joubert *et al.* (2004:85) point out that a *Code of Conduct for Learners* guarantees that learners know exactly what is required of them, and that issues pertaining to the safety of learners, embargoed substances, the carrying of weapons, bullying and other forms of SV are addressed (Oosthuizen & De Waal,

¹⁸ No indication was however given regarding who should provide the support.

2005:10). These guidelines must be simple and preferably positive (for example *Be punctual* as opposed to *Do not be late*) (Hayward, 2000:104-105). Furthermore the basis for due processes in the Codes of Conduct must be included (Joubert *et al.*, 2004:83).

De Wet (2007d:186-188), based on several authors, suggests that a comprehensive plan to curb bullying must be implemented at schools. A number of steps towards implementing such a programme are suggested. Firstly, role-players must acknowledge the problem, instead of ignoring it. Then the problem should be investigated to understand its extent, and to identify typical targets as well as typical scenes where bullying occurs. All role-players should be consulted during the development of the programme. The programme must be implemented, and adapted when necessary. The programme should make provision for support for the programme, and explain what measures will be used to deal with the various levels of SV.

Price (2000:73) not only accentuates the importance of good discipline in schools, he also argues that “a caring attitude and a kind word” are vitally important within a school. Learners are still children, and often their irresponsible acts are cries for help (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:10). However, Hayward (2000:106) as well as Bender and Emslie (2010:194), suggest that educators should deal equally firmly with minor infringements as they do with major transgressions. By dealing firmly with issues such as being late or wearing an incorrect school uniform, the chances of major transgressions occurring are lessened¹⁹. Oosthuizen and De Waal (2005:10) recommend a zero-tolerance approach to weapons and drugs at schools, and this should be clearly spelt out in the Code of Conduct for learners. I believe that caring and strictness are not opposing alternatives, and that educators should act as *diligence paterfamilias*²⁰ towards learners. In dealing with negative behaviour, an educator should work towards amending (fixing what is wrong) rather than punishing (settling of scores) (Hayward, 2000:105). The aim of the first approach is to restore matters to their original state by making amends, whereas the latter approach can cause an increase in aggression, and may lead to bitterness or hatred (*vide* 5.2.8).

¹⁹ Hayward (2000:106) refers here to the “broken window” theory of a New York police chief.

²⁰ A caring/prudent/wise father of the family (De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2007:97).

Disciplining learners at school is not simply the responsibility of educators. Pretorius (2010:243) states clearly: “Parents are duty bound to raise their children to become responsible and well-adjusted young people”. She continues (based on McWhirter *et al.*) by arguing that the well-being of a society hinges on how well parents actually manage to do this. Parents or guardians are thus primarily responsible for the behaviour and discipline of their children, and should therefore share the duty of infusing discipline into the school setting too. (Smit, 2007:57). Hayward (2000:107) suggests that parents, educators and learners should come together to find a solution for any particular learner’s behavioural problems.

Contributors to the literature state emphatically that exercising self-discipline at school should not be limited to learners. Hadebe (2000:67-68) accentuates the importance of a self-disciplined educator-corps in every school so that teachers abide by regulations which stipulate arrival time-frames for educators, the honouring of first periods and periods after breaks, and the manning of classes at all times. Price (2000:73) mentions a school, where a school-specific Code of Conduct for Educators is accepted annually by the educators. Price (2000:73) also suggests that schools should consider annually negotiating, and accepting a Code of Conduct for parents. Such guidelines can be regarded as guiding principles of what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour. Therefore, they will contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of discipline in all spheres of school life.

Recommendations in the literature study state that school principals should not isolate themselves from the reality of their schools, but should spend time with learners. This time can, for instance, be during formal teaching periods, or during sports meetings, or while travelling to these meetings (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:13; Smit, 2007:56). There should be ample adult supervision on the school premises and Oosthuizen and De Waal (2005:12) even suggest that school managers’ offices [for instance, the offices of deputy principals and heads of departments] should be spread throughout the school building, and not be concentrated in the administration block.

The school principal and educators must have the authority to act decisively (Smit, 2007:55) and be able to address challenges posed by violence, which they could do through

disciplinary hearings and suspension. The Education Department should strongly support appropriate suspension and expulsion (Kollapen, 2006:3) and in that way protect the rest of the learners (De Wet, 2003c:90).

School authorities should know that there are cases in which a problem is too severe to be handled by a school. Because learners may be burdened by problems outside the jurisdiction of the school, they might need to receive help from a professional person, such as a psychiatrist, who has specific specialist skills. Hayward (2000:107) argues that a learner who continuously denies others the right to education through disruptive behaviour, or who acts abusively, needs to be permanently removed from the school. Schools themselves, with the support of the DoE and other professional institutions, should be able to deal with socially disruptive learners (even if that means removing such learners from the school), however, criminal behaviour should be dealt with by law enforcement agencies (Kollapen, 2006:4) (*vide* 5.2.1.5). The literature study, emphatically states that schools, and specifically educators, need help and support when dealing with the disruptive behaviour of learners.

5.2.3 *EQUIPPING AND SUPPORTING STAFF MEMBERS*

Researchers agree that staff members need to be better equipped to cope with the situation in schools, and should furthermore be encouraged to make use of relevant staff development opportunities. Researchers have made several suggestions about equipping educators for various situations, some of which may be directly linked to SV. Educators require essential communication skills and knowledge of child development (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17). They must be educated to understand and value diversity (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17) and be able to manage their classrooms effectively (Smit, 2007:57). Educators should be equipped to handle conflict in a constructive manner (Kollapen, 2006:4; Sathiparsad, 2003:109; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56), because conflict can be beneficial when it exposes important issues that need to be dealt with (Hayward, 2000:104).

Researchers agree that educators need to be prepared to deal with problems of SV, and that they should be equipped to help identify and treat problems causing SV and other unsafe practices, such as gangsterism and drug usage, at schools (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17). Teachers should be trained to protect their own personal safety, as well as

knowing what steps to take to ensure the safety of their schools and the learners (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:15). Teachers need to know, for instance, how to handle intruders (Smit, 2007:57; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56). They must be prepared to cope with bad learner behaviour (Smit, 2007:57) and be provided with more effective discipline strategies than those that are currently in place at many schools (De Wet, 2003c:89; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56) (*vide* 4.4).

Reports state that educators often support learners after incidences of violence at their schools. Thus, De Wet and Van Huyssteen (2005:17) suggest that educators should receive trauma support training, and be briefed on how to empower victims.

Researchers propose that there should be workshops and courses to equip staff members. All teaching and non-teaching staff members ought to be encouraged to attend courses and workshops (Lesele, 2000:70). Lesele (2000:70) recommends that their new insights and knowledge could then be shared with the rest of the staff, thus contributing to staff development at the various schools. For instance, school managers at various levels could be empowered by having clear guidelines on a variety of issues such as disciplinary measures, and on distinguishing between criminal behaviour and disruptive behaviour. Oosthuizen and De Waal (2005:11-12) suggest that all school managers should undergo formal compulsory training in Education Law so that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to help them deal with problematic situations at school.

Training of staff members should be proactive, and not merely reactive. At an undergraduate level, student educators should be equipped in matters pertaining to SV (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:57). However, learners themselves should know, too, how to put an end to SV.

5.2.4 EQUIPPING AND SUPPORTING THE LEARNERS

Learners must be empowered, supported and equipped to know how to prevent SV and, also, know how to deal with SV when it occurs. The principal, or the Life Orientation teacher, should discuss issues such as bullying, relationships, sexuality and responsible citizenship with learners (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17; Hayward, 2000:104; Kollapen, 2006:4; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:7; Smit, 2007:57; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55).

Breet *et al.* (2010:523) propose that learners must be taught to handle frustration and to react non-aggressively to emotional challenges and pressure. Problem-solving skills should be taught to learners (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17), and they should be equipped by participating in programmes that offer constructive conflict resolution and mediation skills (Sathiparsad, 2003:109; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56). Learners should be guided towards assertiveness and responsible decision-making (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17).

Accountability is a fundamental value underlying the discipline that is needed to promote school safety. De Waal (2011:177) defines accountability as:

... the extent to which each education partner is held responsible for specific aspects of maintaining safe learning environments, conducive to successful teaching and learning.

Breet *et al.* (2010:523) suggest that parents and schools should guide adolescent boys to take responsibility for their actions and decisions. This thought is echoed by a participant in De Wet's study (2003c:89) who stated that: "children's rights must be acknowledged, but they must be responsible for their deeds".

Oosthuizen and de Waal (2005:5) emphasise that learners should learn about safety and peace. Safety training must focus on personal safety, as well as on school safety (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:15) and could, *inter alia*, include aspects such as the safe-keeping of their possessions (De Wet, 2003c:90), self-defence techniques (De Wet, 2003c:90) and basic knowledge about firearms and other weapons (De Wet & Van Huyssteen, 2005:17).

The literature study emphasises the importance of fellow learners looking out for each other. Researchers support the idea of a *buddy system*, which can, *inter alia*, serve to uncover incidents of SV, and prevent potential incidences of SV. In the buddy system, learners are paired or grouped, and take responsibility for one other. This generates a powerful sense of security and belonging (Joubert *et al.*, 2004:85; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:12; Smit, 2007:55). Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55) suggest that peer counselling can help to counteract violence, and Price (2000:73) notes the importance of giving a true voice to learners through the Student Representative Council.

Staff commitment towards helping learners is vital (Drotsky, 2000:76). Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55) accentuate the importance of trust between learners and educators. These researchers found in their study that at one school a sound relationship, which had grown over years, between the Grade 12 learners and their grade tutor, gave learners the freedom to report negative issues to this specific educator.

Specific categories of learners need support. When support is needed, learners should have access to a professional counsellor, who may either be a member of the school staff, or an outsider (Hayward, 2000:107). When incidents of SV occur, adequate strategies aimed at protecting and supporting the victim should be in place (Smit, 2007:57). While most researchers focus on support for victims, De Wet (2003c:90) also noted the need for professional therapeutic support for transgressors. Some researchers argue that a small group of so-called “troublemakers” are usually responsible for creating “problems” in a school. Researchers suggest that that these learners should be identified and restrained from “victimising themselves and others” (Smit, 2007:56). De Wet (2007a:88-89, based on Gaglon & Leon) also suggest that schools should identify specific learners with antisocial behaviour, and provide special programmes to equip them with the necessary skills they need to cope with their circumstances. Another category of learners needing special care are the so-called “invisible” children, who are quiet and shy, and might feel isolated (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:9-10).

However hard the school tries to protect and support a child, the most important support in a child’s life is the parent or caregiver. Swart and Bredekamp (2009:418) note that parents can serve their children positively by building their children’s self-esteem. Parents should listen to their children’s problems, offer possible solutions, and provide social support in a non-intrusive manner. Parents must know where their children are, with whom they are, and what they are busy doing (Bender & Emslie, 2010:191). Bender and Emslie (2010:191) explain that:

Good supervision allows parents to respond appropriately to antisocial and delinquent behaviours, and minimize adolescents’ contact with risky circumstances.

Curbing SV depends vitally on the roles parents play, as well as the attitude of the community.

5.2.5 ESTABLISHING PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

A school should be the centre of a community, and researchers recommend that schools should make an effort to involve parents and the community in matters pertaining to the school. The community should see the school as an asset, and as such should contribute to the school, *inter alia*, through support and assistance (Kollapen, 2006:4). One of the solutions for SV lies in the creation of a sense of ownership by the community and the development of a sustained commitment towards solving problems (De Wet, 2003c:91; Krug *et al.*, 2002:1085-7). Such a communal responsibility is in line with what Ovens (2003:71) calls, the collective consciousness of the African psychology, and the spirit of *Ubuntu*.

De Wet (2003c:91) notes that an important part of school security is a positive parent-school relationship. Bender and Emslie (2010:186) accentuate that authentic parent-educator communication and parental support help to prevent violence in schools. These authors also pointed out the importance of a liaison amongst parents regarding the whereabouts of their children. Parents are the primary educators, and they should be involved in matters pertaining to the anti-social behaviour of their children (Smit, 2007:57). Parents of learners, and other members of the community, can also play an important role in providing a positive support system for their school (Drotsky, 2000:76). Parents need to experience a sense of belonging as far as the school is concerned. They can take ownership of a school by, *inter alia*, patrolling school grounds and assisting with gardens and vegetable gardens at 'their' school (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8). Parents can, therefore, play a crucial role in "creating a safety net for their children at school" (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:8).

Oosthuizen and De Waal (2005:5) advise schools to strive to build relationships between the school and the community. Price (2000:73) insists that authentic and effective communication between the school and other stakeholders is essential. Bender and Emslie (2010:194) argue that "the way school staff members and parents portray caring and respectful interaction among themselves influences learners' experience of being members of a community and a school".

Krug *et al.* (2002:1083) look at violence from an international health perspective, and suggest that there should be partnerships across sectors of the community, academic disciplines and other organisations. While services, such as emergency response and trauma support, need to be available in communities, communities themselves should play a central role in the prevention of [school] violence.

Researchers recommend partnerships with professional people to boost and provide support for the efforts made by schools to lower the levels of delinquency and disorder (Smit, 2007:57). Schools can liaise with the SAPS to provide training courses to counteract violence (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55). Schools could even appoint their own attorneys to deal with matters pertaining to violent incidences and disciplinary measures (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:55). Lesele (2000:71) found that when companies and businesses feel committed and accountable for a school, sponsors can be found to improve the property of the school by, for instance, sponsoring good fencing.

5.2.6 DEVELOPING A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP, BELONGING AND PRIDE IN SCHOOLS

Linked with parental and community support, is a sense of ownership. De Wet (2007a:88-89, based on Gaglon & Leon) suggests that school authorities should involve everyone connected to a school in one way or another so that there is a milieu in which learners can grow socially, and develop academically. This can happen when there is a sense of belonging, acceptance, pride and justice, amongst learners and staff members (De Wet, 2007a:88-89; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:13; Smit, 2007:56). Making every person feel like a key part of the school can promote these feelings (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:13; Smit, 2007:56). The management of the school must be inclusive in nature, and involve all stakeholders (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5).

The environment of a school should be clean, orderly, and inviting, there should be a studious atmosphere in the classrooms, and ablution facilities should be neat and clean (Hadebe, 2000:69). Learners should also be given reasonable responsibilities to ensure that the school is neat and clean (Lesele, 2000:70). Bender and Emslie (2010:194), based on

Snell, believe that a well-kept school environment contributes to better behaviour in learners²¹.

Staff members should also have a sense of worth and belonging. School management needs to appreciate and support staff members on a professional and personal basis (Lesele, 2000:70). Lesele (2000:70) suggests that non-teaching staff should also be given opportunities for self-development, no matter whether they are formal or informal opportunities. In addition to this, Lesele (2000:69) observes that when steps are taken to promote staff unity (as opposed to a divided staff with cliques) these efforts contribute to the success of a school.

Schools should be creative in engendering ownership amongst learners. Learners must get to know one another and connect with fellow learners (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:9). Drotsky (2000:76), for instance, reports that a feeling of belonging amongst learners was fostered at a school when a radio station on the school premises was initiated, and the learner-DJs played music on the school grounds before school and during breaks.

However, role-players at a school can only feel welcome and part of a school, if they are treated with respect, and their dignity is not in jeopardy. Researchers, therefore, suggest that a culture of human rights should be developed at schools.

5.2.7 *CREATING A CULTURE OF RESPECT AND HUMAN DIGNITY*

A culture of respect and human dignity ought to be developed in schools. Research suggests that all adults and learners should be treated with respect and trust, and that each individual should be appreciated (Joubert *et al.*, 2004:85; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:12; Smit, 2007:55; Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56).

Social norms and values that prevail in many schools contribute to the justification of violent disciplinary practices. Any programme that strives to reduce SV should work towards the promotion of norms and values in which violence is perceived as criminal and irresponsible (Krug *et al.*, 2002:1086). Hayward (2000:106) argues that every school should have a set of

²¹ Based on the “broken window theory”, putting forward that small signs of degrading leads to a snowballing feeling of abandonment.

core values, and that these values should be frequently repeated. This view was echoed by respondents in a study done by De Wet (2003c:90), who appealed to schools to return to traditional values in order to engender self-respect amongst learners, and “improve the personal value of the learner as an individual”. Smit (2007:57) proposed that curriculums should strengthen constitutional values such as respect for others and the dignity of all.

In line with the values of dignity and respect, staff-members must be fair at all times, and treat every learner as being of equal worth to every other learner and staff member (Price, 2000:73). Respect and courteousness are often mirrored by the other person (Hayward, 2000:104) and can, in the long run, change the behaviour of learners. Each individual educator should be a “peacemaker”, striving to reach inner harmony and dealing with problems in a non-confrontational manner (Hayward, 2000:103). Educators should thus treat learners with consideration and respect. Educators and principals should take time to get to know learners as individuals, and not regard them as mere numbers (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:9). Drotsky (2000:77) suggests that school principals should regularly have formal grade meetings with all learners in a grade so as to give learners a voice that is heard. Similarly Hayward (2000:106) suggests what he calls “circle time”, where learners and a teacher sit in a circle and openly air issues and discuss matters in a non-confrontational manner. What is discussed in this circle must, however, be treated as confidential by all involved. Both these approaches not only give learners an opportunity to raise issues and concerns as respected individuals (also see Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:12), but also involve learners in finding solutions to problems.

Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55) found in a study that some educators try to be positive role-models, practising appropriate behaviour, in order to reduce the cycle of violence. They, for instance, avoid using violent disciplinary measures, and show learners that problems can be solved in non-violent ways. This approach echoes the views of Burnett (1998:793) who argues that educational policies and praxis should reflect a “humane educational ideology” and that rigid social hierarchical structures in the education system should be changed.

Educators themselves should be aware of their own self-worth and dignity (Hayward, 2000:104). This is only possible if they are not overworked, fatigued and “overwhelmed with negative stress”. Negative self-concepts of educators and learners should be transformed so that they become self-respecting human beings, who believe that they are talented and able to be successful (Lesele, 2000:69).

Bender and Emslie (2010:193) argue that schools should incorporate cultural competence in their prevention strategies, use culture as an asset, and include issues of culture as part of intervention plans. They argue that:

If schools are to develop prevention strategies that are developmentally focused and culturally appropriate, they have to acknowledge and accommodate the specific needs and beliefs of their learners and their parents.

A culture of respect and dignity goes hand in hand with the concept of restorative justice.

5.2.8 APPLYING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

Restorative justice is based on the redefining of crime as an injury to the victim and the community, rather than a violation of the power of the state (Ovens, 2003:76). It is based on a set of values that guide decisions on policy and praxis. Ovens (2003:76) argues that in the African context, a restorative justice approach to criminal offences resonates the spirit of *Ubuntu*. The aim of restorative justice is to repair the harm caused by the crime in whatever way and degree possible.

I argue that these principles can, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied in the context of violence in South African schools. SV should thus be seen as harm done to the victim and the school community. Instead of punishing the perpetrators of SV in a way that marginalises them even further, principles of restorative justice can be applied. This focus on the settlement of conflicts and resolving the underlying problems, recognising that the control of SV rests within the school community rather than with criminal justice agencies, focusing on repairing damage caused by SV, either materially or symbolically, and putting the obligation or duty on the perpetrator to make these reparations, will involve the victim of SV to a large degree (*vide* Ovens, 2003:76).

5.2.9 PROVIDING A VARIETY OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNERS

The literature study stresses the importance of providing safe, interesting, challenging, pulsating extracurricular programmes at schools, in which learners can participate, instead of engaging in activities that they find uninspiring (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:5; Smit, 2007:56). Parents should encourage their children to participate in extracurricular activities (Bender & Emslie, 2010:185) and support them in these activities. Although not everybody can achieve equally well, they need to feel capable of being able to do at least one activity. Price (2000:73) suggests that in order to promote participation by all learners in these activities, schools should take care to offer beginner courses and, thus, introduce learners to new skills, as well as to the coaches and organisers of the various sport, social, and cultural activities offered by the school. Learners, therefore, need to be given opportunities to develop particular skills (Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:9). Such activities also provide outlets for energy and frustration (Bender & Emslie, 2010:185).

5.2.10 STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:56) call for the DoE and other relevant government divisions to send out a strong message against SV to learners and parents, and to deal harshly with offenders. Government should provide concrete and firm strategies to safeguard educators and learners in schools. De Wet (2003c:91), furthermore suggests, that the DoE must take the financial responsibility for school safety and, therefore, financially support schools when they purchase and maintain security equipment. Security officers should also be employed by the DoE. Schools must, on the other hand, communicate with DoE officials about security issues. School strategies to deal with SV should be strengthened by the services of professional counsellors (Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:56). Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:57) recommend that a compulsory community service year for all graduating educational psychologists should be introduced to support actors involved in SV at schools.

Joubert and Wentzel (2009:252) argue that the criminal law system can be used both in a pro-active and a reactive way to address SV (also see 5.2.1.5). Schools should establish a liaison with the SAPS and other law enforcement officials, be in direct contact with the commander of their local police station so that they can, *inter alia*, exchange information,

give support during investigations, help with the identification of culprits, and be involved with other crime prevention strategies (De Wet, 2003c:91; Mokonyane, 2000:84; Oosthuizen & De Waal, 2005:4-5; Smit, 2007:54-55). A decisive police sectoral response is, for instance, required when drugs are found on school premises and, when a crime is committed the SAPS should be informed immediately (Smit, 2007:57). Schools should similarly become involved in community police forums (De Wet, 2003c:91).

Regular visits by members of the SAPS are recommended by De Wet (2003c:91). Law enforcement officials ought to address learners on issues of crime and safety (De Wet, 2003c:91), and they should be included in curriculum development as well as with the drawing up of school safety strategies (Smit, 2007:57). A school, included in a study by Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:55), took SV transgressors on an outing to a prison to engender awareness of the consequences of crime.

To conclude: Kollapen (2006:3) points out that, there is truth in the argument that addressing community safety will result in safer schools, however, this action cannot be done instantaneously; therefore, short-term measures to inhibit SV must be taken, albeit with the view in mind of securing the safety of the broader community. Kollapen (2006:3) requests that a strong stand be taken against SV by adopting a “tough school regime” and addressing fundamental matters pertaining to the detrimental phenomenon of SV. School authorities need a broad perspective on the multiple faces of SV to understand this request. *Roberts et al.* (2010:2) warn that the amount of attention that is generally devoted to the few isolated cases of extreme violence inhibits the authentic understanding of the scope of crime and violence in schools, and limits growth towards safer schools.

5.3 DISCUSSION

5.3.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS

The following summary lists the recommendations made in the literature study. The findings must be read while keeping the overall aims of this literature study in mind, viz. to explore what we know about SV, and how academic literature has contributed to our knowledge of SV.

Table 11: Summary of the recommendations made in the literature about dealing with SV.

Suggested strategies	Recommendations made by authors of papers in academic journals	Reference
Develop and implement a school plan against SV	Recommendations made by authors	5.2.1
	Develop a comprehensive school plan against SV in collaboration with all stakeholders.	5.2.1
	Establish a safety committee to coordinate the plan.	5.2.1
	Learners, parents, educators, the SAPS, and community members must form part of the safety committee.	5.2.1
	Appoint trained security officers to oversee security at the school.	5.2.1.1 5.2.1.3
	Set up security infrastructures at schools, such as burglar bars, proper fencing, emergency telephones, intercom systems, metal detectors, and surveillance cameras.	5.2.1.1
	Service security infrastructure.	5.2.1.1
	Restrict admission to the school, preferably by employing security guards.	5.2.1.2
	Introduce identification tags for staff and learners.	5.2.1.2
	Ban fire-arms and weapons.	5.2.1.3
	Use metal detectors to spot weapons and fire arms.	5.2.1.3
	Confiscate all weapons at school entrances.	5.2.1.3
	Keep the school grounds under surveillance.	5.2.1.4
	Have school guards patrol the school premises and ensure close supervision in identified problem areas such as in the cloak rooms.	5.2.1.4
	Combat crime.	5.2.1.5
	Conduct searches and seizures when there is reasonable cause (e.g. suspect drugs and/or weapons).	5.2.1.5
	Use the school's disciplinary procedures to follow up on lesser transgressions.	5.2.1.5
Lay criminal charges in case of serious offences.	5.2.1.5	
Seek legal advice if necessary.	5.2.1.6	
Raise awareness of the various types of SV amongst learners, staff and parents.	5.2.1.7	
Strengthen discipline in schools	Include contingency plans and safety drills in the school plan against SV.	5.2.2
	Draw up a comprehensive disciplinary strategy for the school.	5.2.2
	Include all stakeholders such as learners, educators, parents and the community in accepting the disciplinary strategy.	5.2.2
	Develop a common understanding of disciplinary practices and ensure that all stakeholders implement them consistently.	5.2.2

Suggested strategies	Recommendations made by authors of papers in academic journals	Reference
	Refrain from using corporal punishment.	5.2.2
	Take firm action against all minor as well as major transgressions.	5.2.2
	Focus on school attendance, punctuality, good behaviour in class rooms, dress code, and discipline off and on the sport fields amongst other things.	5.2.2
	Keep learners meaningfully busy during class times.	5.2.2
	Respond decisively to any learner who disrupts the class, such as isolating him/her from the rest of the class until s/he behaves in an acceptable manner.	5.2.2
	In line with the Constitution, limit the rights of learners who transgress.	5.2.2
	The school governing body (SGB) must draw up a Code of Conduct for learners in collaboration with learners and educators.	5.2.2
	The Code of Conduct for Learners must have clear directives regarding the consequences of positive and negative behaviour.	5.2.2
	The Code of Conduct for Learners must be explicitly communicated, unwaveringly enforced, and impartially applied.	5.2.2
	The school must have a plan to identify bullying, and to act against it.	5.2.2
	Strive for a balance by adapting a zero-tolerance approach towards unacceptable behaviour; yet treat learners with kindness and respect.	5.2.2
	Include parents and care-givers in disciplining learners.	5.2.2
	Educators and parents must at all times behave in an exemplary way.	5.2.2
	Principals and other EXCO members should be visible at school and should mix with learners.	5.2.2
	Equip and support the staff members	Act decisively in the case of serious and continuous misconduct through disciplinary hearings and suspension.
Refer problems beyond the jurisdiction of the school to professionals such as a psychiatrist or the SAPS.		5.2.2
The DoE should support appropriate suspension and expulsion.		5.2.2
Equip and support the learners	Set up a support system for educators.	5.2.3
	Create appropriate staff development opportunities for staff members on topics such as communication, child development, conflict management, classroom management, personal safety, school safety, and Education Law.	5.2.3
	Prepare educators to deal with undisciplined behaviour.	5.2.3
Equip and support the learners	Invite educators to share insights from workshops with others.	5.2.4
	Inform and equip learners on issues such as relationships, sexuality, bullying, violence, problem-solving, conflict resolution, decision making, and responsible citizenship.	5.2.4

Suggested strategies	Recommendations made by authors of papers in academic journals	Reference
	Engender tolerance, patience, accountability, responsibility, safety, compassion and peace.	5.2.4
	Implement a buddy system.	5.2.4
	Provide true representation through the representative council of learners (RCL).	5.2.4
	Work towards good relationships between learners and staff members.	5.2.4
	Seek professional support when necessary for victims, onlookers, and transgressors.	5.2.4
Establish parental and community support	Encourage parents and caregivers to provide social support for learners while providing good supervision.	5.2.5
	Involve parents and the community in school matters.	5.2.5
	Set up communication channels between the parents, the school and the community.	5.2.5 5.2.10
Develop a sense of ownership, belonging and pride in the school	Form liaisons with the SAPS, lawyers, response units, businesses and community structures.	5.2.6
	The school environment should be clean, orderly and inviting.	5.2.6
	Give learners reasonable responsibilities to ensure that the school stays neat and well-kept.	5.2.6
Create a culture of respect and human dignity	Take steps to make learners, educators, parents, and community members feel welcome and at home at school.	5.2.7
	Develop a school culture where everybody is treated with respect, courtesy, and trust.	5.2.7
	Appreciate and acknowledge efforts of staff members and of learners.	5.2.7
	Create opportunities where learners, school management teach (SMT) members and staff can get to know each other.	5.2.7
	Educators must act as positive role-models for learners.	5.2.7
Apply restorative justice practices	Create opportunities to give learners a voice, and to promote authentic communication between staff and learners.	5.2.8
Provide a variety of extracurricular activities for learners	Focus on restoring the damage and the settlement of conflicts rather than on punishing transgressors.	5.2.9
	Provide a safe, interesting, challenging, varied extracurricular programme at school	5.2.9
	Encourage learners to participate in the programme.	5.2.9
Strengthen the role of the government	Offer beginners courses and do not focus only on top achievers.	5.2.10
	The DoE must provide concrete and firm strategies against SV.	5.2.10
	The DoE must employ security officers for schools.	5.2.10
	Schools must communicate problems to the DoE in good time.	5.2.10

5.3.2 CONCLUSION

Researchers agree that all stakeholders must join hands to create safe havens for learners at schools in spite of the social problems that prevail in the communities. They propose that schools must implement a comprehensive safety plan, in partnership with all stakeholders and interested groups to prevent SV and indiscipline. Research recommends that stakeholders must combat crime, create inviting school environments, and promote ownership, respect and harmony in South African schools.

However, in the majority of the research studies that I reviewed, these recommendations were mere suggestions, and were not based on insights after implementation. In the chapter that follows, I look at this critically, and at other issues pertaining to methodologies that were used in the literature that I reviewed.

CHAPTER 6: SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN PEER REVIEWED ACADEMIC LITERATURE - THE METHODOLOGIES CONSIDERED

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous two chapters I reviewed existing academic literature to understand the meaning that researchers attach to SV in South Africa. In Chapter 4 there is a narration of the dramas of SV in terms of Burke's pentad of dimensions. The hostile nature of the current school stages and the exasperation of the actors on the stages became clear. In Chapter 5 I summarised the recommendations suggested in the literature that I reviewed, and which are aimed at improving the situation at schools. While peer-reviewed literature provides various perspectives on the dramas of SV, and on the preferred steps to take towards curbing SV, there is agreement amongst authors that SV is currently a definite reality in South African schools.

In spite of SV being a reality, which has spanned many decades, it was, prior to the 1990s, essentially not acknowledged as a social problem. Furlong, Morrison, Cornell and Skiba (2004:6-7) comment on the significant increase in research publications on SV after 1993, but argue that SV research was largely driven by "public events (particularly school shootings) rather than by a well-considered research agenda". The authors also maintain that the need for immediate information about SV prohibits the possibility of meticulous development of new research methods in this field. Krug *et al.* (2002:1086) furthermore state that data from various countries and regions are largely incomparable because of differences in culture. Therefore there appears to be a necessity to examine the methodologies of SV research. So while we need to understand what is known about SV (the foci of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) we also need to reflect on current research agendas - methodological considerations and other aspects related to these research agendas - specifically in the South African context. I, therefore, explore this aspect of research agendas by reviewing the production of SV knowledge in this chapter.

I look critically at *how* meaning is made of SV through research publications in South Africa, and I take, as a point of departure, the following statement by Burke (1966:45) (emphasis in original):

*Even if any given terminology is a **reflection** of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a **selection** of reality, and to this extent it must function also as a **deflection** of reality.*

In my attempt to critically review the selected literature, I have examined how researchers select, reflect, and deflect reality in an attempt to make sense of SV in the South African context. As a novice researcher, I am not suggesting that I could have done any better. My reason for this critical review is to inform my own (and possibly others') future research, as I reflect on pitfalls, and good practice, as well as the theory that informed the research.

Firstly, I briefly discuss some of the research paradigms used in education research and I consider the research paradigms that underpin some of the studies on which the peer-reviewed publications used in this study are based. Secondly I discuss axiological issues and, finally, I focus on the strategies and the discussions of authors who try to understand SV in South Africa.

6.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

A research paradigm constitutes how the researcher sees reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge, and the relationship between the knower, and what is to be known (epistemology), how the knower goes about obtaining the knowledge (methodology) as well as what is seen as ethical behaviour (axiology) (Mertens, 2010:11). While a multiplicity of philosophical and theoretical perspectives are found in educational research, Mertens (2010:8) clusters them under four major paradigms that are commonly found:

- *Positivism/post-positivism* (*inter alia* associated with experimental, quasi-experimental, quantitative research),
- *Constructivism* (also *interpretivism*, *inter alia*, associated with naturalistic, phenomenological, ethnographic and generic qualitative research),
- The *transformative* paradigm (referred to as *emancipatory* in her earlier work) (that relates to standpoint theories such as the Critical Theory, Feminist theories, Disability

theories, Queer theory, and the Critical Race Theory that that aims to empower the participants through their research, e.g. in participatory action research), and

- The *pragmatic research paradigm* (including mixed models, mixed methods, and participatory action research).

6.2.1 POSITIVISM VERSUS POST-POSITIVISM AS RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Firstly I need to comment on the (mis)interpretation that all quantitative work is by default positivist. I argue that, although research in both the positivist and post-positivist²² paradigms rely heavily on quantitative methods, there is a distinct difference between positivist research and post-positivist research, and to understand the difference, I need to visit the views of two philosophers, namely Emile Durkheim and Karl Popper. Durkheim was influential in establishing positivism, or naturalism (*vide* Baert, 2005:10-36; Durkheim, 1984:11-30) in social research. According to Dressman (2008:25) Durkheim believed that “social sciences grounded in practices similar to those of the physical sciences could reveal objective knowledge that could then be rationally be used to improve society”. Baert (2005:17) explains that Durkheim assumed that social-science research can be truly value-free, and that it “observes, describes and explains social phenomena, and it may enable people to establish the causes of given ends and the means of achieving them”. Positivists typically strive to verify theories, and as such positivist research is designed to “preserve and elaborate on theoretical assumptions”, and to finally offer explanations “beyond reasonable doubt” (Dressman, 2008:34). Durkheim presented his methodology as free of ideology or bias, and based only on solid facts (Baert, 2005:33). Durkheim, for example, made absolute distinctions between what is normal and what is pathological, and between health and sickness. He presented his work as absolute criteria and truths. Typical positivist research would thus make absolute claims about social phenomena, or in the case of education, purport their findings on education issues as absolute truths.

Post-positivists, following the philosophy of critical rationalist, Karl Popper, take a more sceptical stance, and believe that men [read also women] are fallible. Popper argues that scientists, who claim that they can explain everything, are misguided. Instead of scientist striving to verify their claims, he proposes that they become more critical of their claims, and

²² Not to be confused with Weber’s *anti*-positivist stance (Dressman, 2008:25-26).

rather seek to falsify them (i.e. to prove them wrong). In Popper's view, one can never claim absolute truths. One can, however move closer to the truth, or an approximation of the truth. Popper also rejects absolute objectivity, and argues that scientists introduce a selective viewpoint. Post-positivist research often involves the statement of nil-hypotheses, and attempt to reject (refute) them with certain probabilities (Baert, 2005:61-86; Cruickshank, 2007: 263-288; Popper, 1991:355-363).

In the light of this brief discussion, I suggest that most SV research is not positivist, as numerical data is used to describe specific situations without claiming that it is universally applicable. Many of the publications, furthermore, resonate with these post-positivist views, rather than with positivism as they refer to probabilities (approximation of the truth) and they aim to refute nil-hypotheses. However, the majority of quantitative studies on SV reflect little of the epistemologies of either positivism or post-positivism. I suggest that such research merely uses quantitative research methods for practical reasons, without giving thought to the underlying paradigmatic assumptions. The discussion in 6.2.3, further explores the paradigms used in SV research. It is preceded in 6.2.2 by a short discussion on some of the anti-positivist research

6.2.2 ANTI-POSITIVIST RESEARCH

In order to complement the discussion of positivism and post-positivism, I briefly discuss some anti-positivist research paradigms, by looking at the ontology and epistemology that support them. *Interpretivists* proceed from the premise that multiple realities exist, that knowledge is subjective, and that researchers and the participants together construct knowledge in specific social contexts. In the *transformative paradigm*, researchers work from the assumption that reality is not only shaped by social realities, but also by issues of politics, gender, disability, and other constructs that marginalise and oppress people. As such, knowledge is value-laden and can be modified over a period of time. Knowledge seekers strive to reveal true conditions, and to help people to grasp a better way of life. Researchers in the transformative paradigm, *inter alia*, draw from the work of Paolo Freire, Jürgen Habermas and Herbert Marcuse (Baert, 2005: 37-59; Mertens, 2010:16-20; Neuman, 2000:85).

Post-structuralist researchers base their work on the philosophies of Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler, and Gilles Deleuze amongst others. Not only do they reject the notion of absolute truths, but also the notion of grand narratives and social theories of liberation. Post-structuralists claim that reality is constructed in and through language, as discourse, they reject the idea of literary text having a single meaning and propose that each reader creates different meanings for the text that he/she reads (Humes & Bryce, 2003:176; Mertens, 2010:9-10).

Pragmatists deflate the notion of truths and reality and focus instead on practical issues such as 'what works'. Pragmatism is founded on the works of John Dewey and William James but, more recently, their work has been influenced by the views of Richard Rorty (sometimes referred to as neo-pragmatism). He suggests that researchers treat knowledge as a type of action aimed at meeting our needs, and as such, should take a more practical stance towards research methods. He sees action as an instrument of change (Baert, 2006:126-144; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:713).

While the above short description of the various anti-positivist research paradigms is, by no means, exhaustive, and cannot provide the reader with full insight into the epistemological perspectives on the various research paradigms, they provide the background to my discussion on the paradigms that inform SV research.

6.2.3 PARADIGMS USED IN SCHOOL VIOLENCE RESEARCH

Mertens (2010:453) suggests that researchers should not only state the choice of paradigm in research, but should also include the philosophical assumptions that guide this choice. I reason that stating a research paradigm in any publication allows the reader to read and understand the work through the lens that is provided by such paradigm. A lack thereof can lead to a distorted understanding of the research and to misinterpretation.

I have observed that most South African SV research publications fail to provide the reader with clarity on the research paradigm within which the research was undertaken. However there are instances of research publications in which a paradigm is stated such as De Wet (2010b) who based her work on the Husserlian phenomenology within the broader interpretative paradigm, and Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009) as well as Bender and

Emslie (2010) who worked in the interpretivist paradigm and De Wet, (2007a) who worked in the post-positivist research paradigm.

Although the research paradigm within which an article was published is not always stated, it can sometimes be recognised. Burnett (1998) clearly worked from a transformative (Critical Theory) perspective when she exposed the oppressive nature of the school system. Andrews (2007) takes a Feminist stance, while looking at the inability of the male dominated legal framework to sufficiently protect women against violence and abuse. De Wet *et al.* (2008) worked in a post-positivist fashion, rejecting nil-hypotheses with a 95% probability. However, in many of the publications that I scrutinised, the paradigm was neither stated, nor implied.

There are, however, cases in which a paradigm is stated, yet it does not resonate with the data reporting in the research report. One such an example is Masitsa (2011:167), who states that he is working as a positivist, yet declares his work as exploratory. When reading the article, there is nothing that indicates the absolutism of positivism. The nature of the data analysis also indicates that the study is more descriptive than exploratory, and more in line with a pragmatic stance towards research.

I picked up an unscientific tendency amongst qualitative researchers to uncritically purport perceptions (often one-sidedly) as absolutes. This is in direct contrast with the assumption that informs qualitative research, namely that knowledge is subjectively constructed by people within their social contexts. This is done, for example by Marais and Meier (2010) who explored learner misbehaviour in the Foundation phase. Based on the perceptions of educators only, they make the following statement:

An important discovery made during the research and which related to all types of disruptive behaviour was a lack of parental care and adult role-models in society (Marais & Meier, 2010: 52).

They draw this unconditional conclusion based on the views of educators only, without exploring the views of parents or the situation in the community. So instead of acknowledging that this is the perception of the educator-participants (in line with the Interpretive assumption that knowledge is co-constructed within a certain context by certain people), the authors draw their conclusion in a positivistic fashion, as if it is an absolute

truth, disregarding the subjectivity of meaning that the educators brought to the study. An example of where the subjective nature of qualitative research according to my view were used appropriately is in the study of Bester and Du Plessis (2010), who for instance stated that a number of factors “are **perceived** as the main contributing factors to the escalating violence in the school context” [emphasise mine] (Bester & Du Plessis, 2010:225) after which the participants’ views were compared to literature.

Drawing from Mertens (2010:453) I argue that if researchers consider their own paradigmatic stance, and explore the ontological and epistemological perspectives of the paradigms, it will enhance the SV research in South Africa. Within each research paradigm, there are also specific views related to what is seen as good research and correct behaviour.

6.3 AXIOLOGICAL ISSUES

Axiological perspectives refer to the place of values in research, and to the nature of ethical behaviour (Mertens, 2010:10-11). This *inter alia* involves issues such as the values of the researcher, the interaction between the researcher and the participants, the honesty of the researcher during the data collection and analysis procedure, and how the researcher reports on the study. What is seen as ethical behaviour during the course of research is informed by (and informs) the other dimensions of a research paradigm, namely the ontology (the nature of reality), the epistemology (the nature of knowledge, and the relationship between the knower, and the would-be-known) and the methodology (how the knower obtains the knowledge and insight).

Researchers who employ quantitative methods are expected to be value-neutral (in line with positivist perspectives) ensure anonymity, respect privacy, and get informed consent from the respondents. Mertens (2010:11-12) asserts that researchers, working within this framework, consider “good” research as important, and take care to avoid the risk of harming or wronging respondents. They treat people with respect, consider a valid research design as essential, deem confidentiality as critical, and believe that the sample must be appropriate in terms of size and the unit of analysis.

Axiological aspects that were discussed by some of the quantitative researchers were voluntary participation, anonymity (Breet *et al.*, 2010:516), and permission from the DoE and the principals of schools (Masitsa, 2011:169). In some research reports, the authors discussed information regarding the administering and return of the questionnaires. De Wet *et al.* (2008:105), for instance, instructed learners to return the questionnaires in sealed envelopes.

In anti-positivist research (grounded in phenomenology and hermeneutics) there are other ethical issues to consider. Mertens (2010:11-18) shares the views of Guba and Lincoln and accentuates the dissimilar kind of researcher-researched relationship in this paradigm viz. personal and interactive. While respect and confidentiality are still essential, there is also a dimension of personal trust. Researchers working within this framework need to consider issues of fairness, authenticity, reflexivity and reciprocity. Van der Westhuizen and Maree (2009:52-53) use the following strategies to improve and enhance trustworthiness: credibility (triangulation and crystallisation), dependability, confirmability, and transferability. They consider that acquiring written permission from education authorities to gather and publish data, as well as the agreement of the participants in the research project, is important in terms of ethical research. Swart and Bredenkamp (2009:411), in addition to the above, include issues of power, ethical clearance from institutions, written consent from parents, and their own social responsibility. They indicate that participants are at liberty to discuss their concerns about the research with a person not involved with the research, and they are free to withdraw at any stage.

In the interpretive paradigm, I do, however, question the claim of ensuring *anonymity* for participants (e.g. Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:411). My understanding of the word “anonymous” is to be faceless. The Oxford Thesaurus provides the following alternatives to the word: “nameless, unidentified, unknown, incognito”. It suggests that the opposite of anonymous is “known” (Waite, 2006:17). In an interview, the participant is not faceless and unknown, and even less so in a focus group discussion or group interview. While qualitative researchers can (and must) take steps to protect the identity of participants, the more

appropriate word to use is “confidentiality”²³. Researchers usually assure participants that they will not disclose their identity in any way in the research reports, and they, *inter alia*, do this by using pseudonyms and excluding information that can identify the participants. However, I believe that qualitative researchers cannot claim to treat what was discussed in the interviews as confidential, as qualitative researchers use the words of participants as data, and they use direct quotes from the interviews in their research reports. Thus, these researchers disclose what was discussed in interviews, even if the disclosures are only partial, which negates the notion of confidentiality.

Instead of claiming confidentiality, researchers could accept the responsibility of protecting participants from harm and, therefore, should be discrete when selecting quotes. Thus, researchers should not include extracts that will identify participants, ridicule participants, or cause harm to participants in any other way. I believe that focus group discussions and group interviews have yet another ethical dimension, because participants must also respect one another, and treat the discussions and the interviews as confidential. I am also concerned that, despite the fact that group interviews and focus group discussions can be powerful, the potential to harm participants exists, and may occur, because confidentiality can be compromised not only by the researcher but also by any of those people who participate in the group discussions and interviews.

In qualitative research, the researcher must thus consider appropriate ways of protecting individuals who participate in individual or group interviews. In the study by De Wet (2010c), for instance, a relationship of trust was established between the researcher and the interviewees, and the researcher took steps to protect the identities of the interviewees.

Researchers working in the transformative paradigm, do not only have to take into account the same issues as those pertaining to the interpretive paradigm, but they also attach great value to giving a voice to the silenced and the marginalized. Of importance, in the transformative paradigm, is the exposure of inequalities between those in power and the powerless, as well as generating hope amongst participants by means of social action and research. Mertens (2010:33) states that “those who are most oppressed and least powerful

²³ I want to thank Dr. Annelie Ferreira for the valuable discussion that we had in this regard.

should be at the centre of the plans for action in order to empower them to change their own lives”. In the transformative paradigm the “quality of the human relations in the research setting” as well as the aptness and genuineness of understandings across various contexts is vital (Mertens, 2010:34).

The majority of the research articles that I reviewed described the strategies that they used to ensure ethically acceptable research. However, the apparent “paradigmless” nature of many of these publications, in my view, creates a dilemma for the reviewer. Because the ethics agenda differs in the various research paradigms, uniform criteria for evaluating ethics in research cannot be used.

Axiological issues not only need to be considered before starting with research, but researchers should be conscious of confidentiality, non-malevolence, beneficence, and justice (Wassenaar, 2006:67) throughout the time that they spend on their research projects.

6.4 RESEARCH STRATEGIES

In the section that follows, I discuss some issues pertaining to the strategies that researchers employ to make sense of SV in South Africa.

6.4.1 QUALITATIVE VERSUS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Contrary to the views of many, and in line with my pragmatic point of departure (*vide* 1.6) I consider quantitative and qualitative research, not as opposing sides, but rather as complementary sets of methods, each with its own strengths and limitations. I believe that researchers do take a number of issues into consideration when selecting an approach. While exploring the SV literature I could not find any dominant approach in research in South Africa. Some researchers used quantitative methods (mainly surveys), for example De Wet (2005), Masitsa (2011), Nesor (2006) and Prinsloo (2008). Other researchers used qualitative methods (e.g. Bender & Emslie, 2010; De Wet, 2010b; De Wet, 2010c; Marais & Meier, 2010; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009). Another group of researchers relied on an analysis of current literature, policies and laws for their research (e.g. De Waal, 2011; De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2010; Joubert & Wentzel, 2009; Prinsloo, 2005).

I believe that while exploring the wider research agenda on SV in South Africa, the level of analysis must be noted. While most qualitative and quantitative researchers do research on a first level (i.e. report on a new set of data), I did find one example of a meta-synthesis (Myburg & Poggenpoel, 2009) and I am in agreement with Myburg and Poggenpoel (2009:445) who state that meta-synthesis allows for a “common understanding of a phenomenon”. I furthermore observed that quantitative SV research rarely goes beyond descriptive statistics²⁴ (e.g. De Wet, 2005; Masitsa, 2011). In some of the publications differential statistics²⁵ were used to describe and compare the various subgroups in a sample, for example De Wet and Jacobs (2006) (who used the Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney statistics to compare the groups’ rank order) as well as Neser (2006) (who used the chi-square statistic to compare the various groups’ perceptions). I found no example of true inferential statistics²⁶, possibly because probability sampling is not easily obtainable.

6.4.2 SAMPLING/SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The original meaning of the word sample is a specimen, which can be used in a test. The researcher-researched relationship that is suggested by the word is one of a scientist in relation to a specimen in an experiment, i.e. unattached and at a distance. Best and Kahn (2003:12) explain a sample as being “a small proportion of the population selected for observation and analysis” and the assumption is that the researcher strives to select a sample as close to the selected population group as possible.

In terms of quantitative research, one has to acknowledge that most individuals and researcher-partnerships have financial, logistical and infrastructural limitations that affect sampling. Differing from natural scientists, social scientists do not work in laboratories, or with opinionless objects, but with human beings. Researchers in the education sciences, furthermore, work regularly with learners who are under-aged and vulnerable. The ethics involved are thus complex. If a researcher also focuses on sensitive issues like victimisation, bullying, sexual violence, and other harmful actions committed through SV, then these

²⁴ Descriptive statistics is used to describe the sample that is studied.

²⁵ Differential statistics typically refers to data analysis based on the differences between groups.

²⁶ Inferential statistics refers to data analysis that allows for an extension of the findings, based on a sample, to the wider population.

aspects complicate the issue of sampling further. Researchers often have to depend on the good-will of schools and educators to allow surveys to be conducted at their schools, and probability sampling is often unattainable. This is a challenge to those striving to do inferential research.

In the literature that I reviewed researchers predominantly conducted surveys in one province at a time. This was mainly done in Gauteng (e.g. Nesor, 2006; Prinsloo 2008), the Free State (e.g. De Wet, 2003c; De Wet *et al.*, 2008), the Western Cape (e.g. Breet *et al.*, 2010) and the Eastern Cape (De Wet, 2003b). De Wet and Jacobs (2006) conducted a survey in two provinces, namely the Free State and the Eastern Cape. Myburg and Poggenpoel (2009) did a meta-synthesis using data collected in four provinces (Gauteng, North West Province, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape) while Joubert *et al.* (2004) conducted a qualitative study at schools from four provinces (Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Free State and the North West Province).

The sample sizes vary in terms of the number of schools included and the number of respondents who participated. While no perfect sample size exists, and the complexity of the population needs to be taken into account, Johnson and Christensen (2004:218) suggest a sample-size benchmark of 384 for large populations (100 000 or more). Breet *et al.* (2010) used 440 respondents from 2 schools. They focused on the personal characteristics of learners and thus the number of schools included was irrelevant. De Wet (2003c) for example used 238 educators and 288 learners from 40 schools in her survey, while De Wet *et al.* (2008) used 474 learner respondents from 80 schools. Nesor *et al.* (2004) used 1873 learners from 19 schools in one school district of Tswane, while Masitsa (2011) used 348 respondents associated with 44 schools (11 from each of 4 of the 5 districts in the Free State province). Apparently, therefore, researchers who engage in quantitative research use adequate sample sizes. Sample strategies that were employed were stratified random sampling (e.g. Breet *et al.*, 2010; De Wet, 2003c), random sampling (e.g. De Wet *et al.*, 2008; Masitsa, 2011), purposive sampling (e.g. Nesor, 2006; Prinsloo, 2008) and convenient sampling (e.g. De Wet, 2007a; Nesor *et al.*, 2004). Studies did not only focus on secondary schools (e.g. Breet *et al.*, 2010; De Wet *et al.*, 2007), but also included primary (e.g. De Wet,

2003b, Prinsloo *et al.*, 2005), combined (e.g. Burnett, 1998; De Wet, 2003b), and comprehensive schools (e.g. Swart & Bredenkamp, 2009).

However, I consider that the use of the word *sample* in any anti-positivist research is inappropriate albeit commonly used (e.g. Van der Westhuizen & Maree, 2009:51). In interpretive or constructivist research, the assumption is that “knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process, and that researchers should attempt to understand the complex world of the lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Mertens, 2010:16). The relationship between the researcher and the researched is personal and interactive, and researchers strive to meet with participants on an equal level. Similarly, in the transformative paradigm researchers work from the assumption that “various versions of reality are based on social positioning” (Mertens, 2010:11) and the relationship between the researcher and the researched in qualitative research should be interactive and “empowering to those without power” (Mertens, 2010:32). I am convinced that in the light of the above-mentioned relationships, any suggestion of participants being a sample (read “specimen”) suggests detachment, and as such is in contrast with the assumptions driving research in the anti-positivist paradigms. I propose that researchers should preferably use the phrase, “selection of participants” as, *inter alia*, Swart and Bredenkamp (2009) and De Wet (2010a) chose to do.

I consider referring to a *sample* in a case study to be completely inappropriate. Bester and du Plessis (2010:204) did a case study about the experiences of *one* educator in a violence-affected school. They used the heading “Sample” for the section describing their method of data collection and analysis. I do not consider this heading to be applicable, and in line with my argument above, I am of the opinion that an individual participating in a case study is not a sample.

6.4.3 INDICATORS AND VARIABLES USED TO MEASURE SCHOOL VIOLENCE

I noted that in many quantitative research instruments, only a few indicators of SV have been used, and I am convinced, therefore, that researchers only made a *selection of reality*, and thus in the process, *deflect reality* (*vide* Burke, 1966:45).

I acknowledge that questionnaires should not be too long, but neither should there be a narrow or unbalanced list of items in a questionnaire. For instance, an unbalanced list could include only 1 or 2 items on emotional violence, maybe 7 items on sexual violence, and 1 on physical violence. This kind of unbalanced list of items has the potential to distort our understanding of the phenomenon. Breet *et al.* (2010) measured the aggression of adolescent boys based on 24 items in a questionnaire. Seven items measured physical aggression, five measured verbal aggression, and twelve measured indirect aggression. Six of the items in the first group fall into the category of physical violence (*vide* 4.3.1.1) and, in my research, I placed the latter 2 groups in the psychological-violence category (*vide* 4.3.1.2). One of the items for physical aggression referred to deprivation, and the researchers did not include any items to measure sexual violence. De Wet (2003c) used only 9 items: 2 for physical violence, 3 for sexual violence, and 4 measured deprivation or neglect. The study of De Wet *et al.* (2008) focuses only on sexual violence and has 27 items (physical sexual harassment (9); verbal sexual harassment (10), non-verbal sexual harassment (8)), whereas Neser *et al.* (2004) used 1 physical-violence item and 4 psychological-violence items to measure bullying. The only physical-violence item that was used in connection with violent, disciplinary measures used by educators was corporal punishment (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). No research study explored any other types of physical acts by educators such as punching, pinching slapping, etc.

Whereas South African researchers usually only provide a list of acts to indicate violence, some international researchers also acknowledge that acts can vary in intensity. Benbenishty and Astor (2005:26), for instance, used, *inter alia*, the following acts: *involved in a fist fight; involved in a fight, were hurt and required medical attention, and a serious beating*. While all three of these items refer to physical fighting, they differ in the amount of harm done to those involved. De Wet (2003c) specified the intensity of the assaults in the items she used.

I considered the variables used to differentiate between groups in the samples used in quantitative studies. Independent variables included in the studies for understanding differences in learner samples include gender (Neser *et al.*, 2004; Prinsloo & Neser, 2007a);

school grades (Breet *et al.*, 2010; De Wet *et al.*, 2008), population groups (e.g. Nesper *et al.*, 2004) and age (Breet *et al.*, 2010; De Wet *et al.*, 2008). Independent variables included in studies for understanding differences in educator samples include gender (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006), age (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006;), teaching experience (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006), post level (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). The various school contexts are learner enrolment (De Wet *et al.*, 2008; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006), school category (De Wet *et al.*, 2008; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Masitsa, 2008), language of teaching (Breet *et al.*, 2010), and school location (De Wet *et al.*, 2008). Other contexts that could possibly be included in SV research are the race-composition, the infrastructure level and the gender composition of the school.

6.5 PROVIDING EXPLANATIONS

Apart from using certain strategies for expanding the body of knowledge on SV in South Africa, researchers are required to make sense of what they find, and explain their insights. A number of issues emerged while studying the literature.

6.5.1 DEFINING CONCEPTS

I found that authors go to great lengths to delineate certain kinds of SV such as bullying (e.g. De Wet, 2007d:182; Joubert & Wenzel, 2009:252; Nesper *et al.*, 2004:139), educator-targeted bullying (e.g. De Wet, 2010a:190), work-place bullying (e.g. De Wet, 2010c:97-99) and sexual violence (e.g. De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2007:89; De Wet & Van der Westhuizen, 2010:198-225). However, they seemingly take for granted that one should know what physical SV is. In the publications that I reviewed, this phenomenon was not explained or demarcated, and I had to consult the items that were used in the research instruments for conceptualising this act (e.g. Breet *et al.*, 2010:515; Nesper *et al.*, 2004:145).

6.5.2 THE USE OF SOCIAL THEORY

Social theory provides the educational researcher with a basis for understanding social and educational problems that transcend modernity and rationalism. Dressman (2008:5) accentuates the power of using social theory in research in the following way (emphasis in original):

These qualities of social theory – its critique of the institutions and social order of modernity, the diversity and creativity of its multiple perspectives, and its

*argumentative, or **agonistic**, modus operandi – make it a powerful research tool within educational contexts.*

However, in spite of the abundance of social theories, and specifically theories on violence (*vide* 1.4), I found the usage of such theories in South African SV research publications predominantly lacking. The only example of social theory, that was indeed used, was the ecological systems theory in different forms (*vide* Bender & Emslie, 2010; Bester & Du Plessis, 2010; De Wet, 2010b).

6.5.3 DEPTH

Although I acknowledge that researchers are challenged because the lengths of journal articles are very limited, in some articles researchers really did not examine issues deeply, and these articles reflect shallow reporting. Smit (2007) for instance, in a literature study on SV, used only one author's view on what constitutes a safe school. (Smit, 2007:55), only used what was published in newspapers to portray the extent of SV. (Smit, 2007:53-54) uncritically provided a long list of strategies to protect learners without juxtaposing them with strategies from other findings (Smit, 2007:56-57).

In most of the reports on qualitative research that I read, participants were only interviewed once. However, if one reflects on the way Mertens (2010:18) views constructivism, namely that "reality is socially constructed. ... [And that] perceptions of reality might change throughout the process of the study" and, furthermore, if one considers the suggestions of Mertens and Ginsberg (2008:488): "... in the process [the participants] may become aware of feelings, beliefs or values of which they were unaware", then, perhaps, one should recommend that more than one, or a series, of interviews ought to be conducted with an interviewee and, thereby, follow the example of Swart and Bredekamp (2009). This will allow the participant to reflect on what was discussed between the interviews, and provide a richer understanding of the phenomenon at hand. The potential could thus be to "... leave the participants with richer self-insights and make a positive contribution to their well-being" (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2008:488). In the context of SV research, and specifically relating to the less obvious types of SV, a second or third interview can not only provide the researcher with valuable insights, but such insights could serve as a relief to the participant.

6.5.4 PERSPECTIVES

While I was studying literature dealing with SV, I asked: *Whose voices are heard?* Some authors relied on first-hand or self-reporting: De Wet (2005) for instance explored bullying in Free State schools by means of a self-report survey from the perspective of learners as victims; Bester and du Plessis (2010) explored the first-hand experiences of an educator in a violence-affected educational setting; and Swart and Bredekamp (2009) conducted group discussions with learners about their experiences of non-physical bullying. Many authors, however, explored SV from an indirect perspective. Nesor *et al.* (2004) relied on learners who had merely been onlookers of acts of bullying, De Wet (2003b) explored the perspectives of educators in the Eastern Cape on why and how learners engage in acts of SV, and Masitsa (2011) did a survey amongst educators on the safety of learners.

I do acknowledge that self-reporting in the case of vulnerable groups such as victims of SV is, for many reasons, not easy. Self-reporting becomes even more difficult, if a researcher wants to conduct qualitative research, in which the participants allow the researcher into their personal space. Identifying victims of SV is problematic. De Wet (2010a) overcame this difficulty by using a snow-ball technique to get access to educator-victims, and to get victims to confide in her in a safe environment. Swart and Bredekamp (2009) had access to a school “since the staff had expressed a need for this type of research” (Swart & Bredekamp, 2009:410). There are also many ethical issues involved when dealing with vulnerable groups such as learners, and victims of violence (*vide* 6.3). Researchers are largely dependent on the goodwill of schools to be allowed to conduct research on their premises.

SV, in its myriad forms, is researched from various academic perspectives, such as Anthropology (Burnett, 1998); Comparative Education (e.g. De Wet, 2003c; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; De Wet *et al.*, 2008), Criminology (Nesor, 2006; Prinsloo & Nesor, 2007a; Prinsloo, 2008); Education Law (e.g. Andrews, 2007, De Waal, 2011; Joubert & Wentzel, 2009) and Education Psychology (e.g. Breet *et al.*, 2010; Swart & Bredekamp, 2009; Van de Westhuizen & Maree, 2009). I could not, however, find one research study which used expertise from multiple academic disciplines.

6.5.5 INCONSISTENCIES

In the articles there are a number of inconsistencies regarding the details of the research methods, and the claims that are made.

Marais and Meier (2010:48-49) were inconsistent regarding their data collection method. They first stated that they used “[a] questionnaire with two semi-structured questions and one open question” which the “[r]espondents were asked to complete ... in written format using a narrative method”. However, in the same paragraph they stated that “[t]he interviews were conducted at the schools where the respondents taught”.

When juxtaposing various articles of the same (co-)authors I found that multiple articles often flow from a single set of data. Although I consider that a strength in the sense that this allows for thorough unpacking of data, I also found some inconsistencies within a set of articles. A survey conducted in schools in the Tshwane South District of Gauteng was, *inter alia*, reported on by Nesor *et al.* (2004), Prinsloo and Nesor (2007a), Prinsloo and Nesor (2007b) and Prinsloo (2008). While in most of the articles the sample was indicated to be drawn from “nine primary, eight secondary and two special schools” (Prinsloo & Nesor, 2007b), Prinsloo (2008:27) only indicated that the sample was “drawn from eight secondary, and two special schools.” In all the other reports, the sample selection was indicated as “purposive”, but Nesor *et al.* (2004:140) indicated the sampling as “convenient”. In these articles, I found that the authors did not explain the comprehensiveness of the survey by declaring that each article reported on a specific part of a single questionnaire. Their reports gave the impression that various questionnaires were administered. I appreciate that each article is a stand-alone research report; however, readers’ perspectives could be broadened on the matter of peer victimisation, if they understood the relationship of the various articles to one another. Also, the limited information on the contexts of schools, in this diverse district, weakens the interpretation of the findings. Respondents’ responses were aggregated in terms of gender, race, grade and age categories, while the specific school districts contain schools ranging from very affluent to very poor, and include single-sex schools, co-ed schools, single-race schools, multicultural schools to name but a few characteristics – these were not explored. The specifics of so-called special schools were also not explored in any of these studies.

Masitsa (2011:168) motivates his usage of the term “exploratory” to describe his research by declaring that “no previous research has been done on school safety in the Free State Province” while a number of research reports *inter alia* by Corene de Wet are available (*vide* De Wet, 2003c; De Wet, 2007a; De Wet, 2007c; De Wet *et al.*, 2008).

A common statistical error that researchers make is to ignore the direction of items in a questionnaire. An example of this is found in Masitsa (2011:169). In Table 2 of his research report, in a profile of an educator’s safety, he ranks items according to their mean score (\bar{x}). The direction of the items are, however, not congruent. The first three items indicate safety (*School is safe for teachers during school hours* ($\bar{x}=3,83$); *School is safe for teachers after hours* ($\bar{x}=3,47$); *School is safe for teachers during school holidays* ($\bar{x}=3,45$)) whereas the remainder of the items actually indicate a lack of safety. The responses should have been inverted in order for them to be comparable. As such, the mean score of the item ranked lowest (*Learners carry fire arms*), in terms of school safety, would have received a mean score of 3,72. If the scores were inverted, the item would then be interpreted as *Learners do not carry fire arms*, and would have been ranked second on the list. My argument here is that if statistics are to be compared and ranked, the items must all be unidirectional. If not, comparisons are meaningless.

6.5.6 MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a current trend to provide recommendations based on existing literature (e.g. De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; De Wet & Oosthuizen, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Masitsa, 2008; Prinsloo & Nesor, 2007a). Poggenpoel and Myburg (2006) triangulated views of township educators towards coping with violence with literature and the views of professionals. However, there are very few instances mentioned in the studies where “solutions” were actually implemented and evaluated or where strategies were employed to address SV. Researchers make recommendations based on literature, and not based on experience or evidence. This means that there are "solutions" in books, but not in practice.

Examples of studies in which solutions were actively sought or evaluated are Sathiparsad (2003) who trained facilitators in a conflict resolution programme, which was then implemented and Khosa (2002) who reports on a Safer Schools Project. Because cause and

effect is difficult to measure, many researchers tend not to go that way, and very few people go the transformative route to try and see if they can bring about a change. This approach could lead to recommendations becoming “truths”, without their ever being empirically evaluated. Therefore, SV researchers should be more critical of themselves and, either try to falsify these claims, or implement them in a real situation, to see if they bring any hope.

To conclude: SV is a threat to the core business of schools, namely effective teaching and learning. As researchers, we have the responsibility of providing educators, parents, learners and the general public, with solid, authentic research findings to inform them about SV, and support them in dealing with the problem. Muro-Ruiz (2002:116) states that in the case of organisations, violence is usually regarded as a wilful choice, in the case of individuals, there are many uncertainties. Dealing with SV in its myriad forms is challenging, but so is research on SV.

In this section I attempted to explore the question of *How do we know about SV?* Although I realise that what I discussed is only a selection of the reality of SV research, and is, therefore, my own deflection of this reality, I have tried to provide the reader with some food for thought.

6.6 SUMMING UP

In this chapter I considered the way in which researchers construct knowledge. Based on my review, I have summarised my findings in the section below.

6.6.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS

Table 12 is a synopsis of my findings on the literature that I reviewed. The findings must be read while keeping the overall aims of literature study in mind, which is aimed at exploring what we know, and how we know about SV through academic literature.

Table 12: Commentary on the methodologies used in South African SV research

Issues	My commentary	Reference
Research paradigms	Authors state that some SV research is conducted within specific paradigms such as interpretivism and post-positivism.	6.2.3

Issues	My commentary	Reference
	Although not stated, authors have conducted some SV research from a Feminist and a Critical Theory stance.	6.2.3
	Researchers often do not state a research paradigm.	6.2.3
	Many researchers do not explore the ontological and epistemological foundations of the paradigm that they work in.	6.2.3
	Some researchers state a paradigm, but then display thinking that is inconsistent with the ontology and epistemology of the paradigm.	6.2.3
Axiological issues	Most researchers take steps towards honest and principled research, and state them in their publications.	6.3
	Examples of strategies that are employed by quantitative researchers include voluntary participation, anonymity, permission from the DoE and the principals of the schools, as well as ensuring that questionnaires are returned sealed.	6.3
	Examples of strategies that are employed by qualitative researchers include written permission from the authorities and participants, ethical clearance by institutions, written consent from parents, social responsibilities and the acceptance of the possibility of withdrawal.	6.3
	Some qualitative researchers claim to ensure anonymity in spite of face-to-face participation in interviews. Others, more justifiably claim to ensure confidentiality.	6.3
	The specific nature of ethics in the various research paradigms necessitates epistemological considerations.	6.3
Research strategies	SV researchers employ a variety of strategies in research, including qualitative research, quantitative research, literature studies, and policy and legislative analyses.	6.4.1
	Only one example of a meta-analysis was found. Other analyses are on a first level.	6.4.1
	Quantitative researchers analyse data mainly on a descriptive level, and sometimes on a differential level.	6.4.1
	I found no example of inferential statistical analyses on SV research.	6.4.1
	Quantitative research is limited to survey research.	6.4.2
	Surveys are mostly conducted in one province only.	6.4.2
	Research on SV in the Limpopo province and the Northern Cape Province is scarce.	6.4.2
	The word “sample” is often used in qualitative research reports on SV which is discordant with the epistemology of qualitative research.	6.4.2
	Many quantitative researchers use limited and disproportionate indicators to measure the levels of SV.	6.4.3
	The variation in intensity of acts of SV is largely unexplored.	6.4.3
In SV surveys, a variety of independent variables are used.	6.4.3	

Issues	My commentary	Reference
Providing explanations	Bullying and sexual violence are clearly demarcated in SV studies.	6.5.1
	Physical violence is not clearly demarcated in SV studies.	6.5.1
	The use of social theory in SV research is scarce, and limited to the ecological systems theory.	6.5.2
	Explanations are sometime offered based on limited literature.	6.5.3
	I found only one study in which a series of interviews were conducted with interviewees. Interviews are thus mostly once-off events.	6.5.3
	The views of victims and onlookers are explored in SV research. However, perpetrators are mostly not heard.	6.5.4
	Interdisciplinary research on SV is lacking.	6.5.4
	Inconsistencies are found within research reports.	6.5.5
	Recommendations towards improving the situations in schools are largely based on other research reports and have scarcely been tested.	6.5.6

6.6.2 CONCLUSION

In my critical review of the literature dealing with SV, I looked at how researchers select, reflect, and deflect reality towards making sense of SV in the South African context. I identified a number of shortcomings such as the absence of paradigmatic considerations, the need to work across provinces and disciplines. Recommendations towards improving the situation at schools need to be put to the test. SV lends itself to more action-oriented research designs but such designs are almost non-existent. However, I acknowledge the difficulty of SV research, owing to the vulnerability of participants in the study, and the need to protect them.

In the literature study, I tried to provide a synopsis of what we, know about SV through existing studies. Framed on Burke’s Dramatism, the intricacy of SV was confirmed, and some implications were discussed (Chapter 4). However, the situation is not without hope, and comprehensive plans to curb SV have been suggested by various authors (Chapter 5). I concluded the literature study in Chapter 6 with some critical thoughts on the SV research agenda in South Africa. In Chapter 7, I examine closely what secondary school learners think about SV by studying the responses they gave in a survey that I conducted to gain understanding of their views on SV.

THE SURVEY

CHAPTER 7: VIEWS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE DRAMA

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first section of the thesis I reported on the media study undertaken to examine how the media portray information on SV to the public. I found that the media relied heavily on official sources, such as Departmental officials and members of the SAPS, for information. I furthermore found that the manner in which the information is provided to the public mainly presents SV as an individual problem and not a collective problem. In the second section I reported on the literature study. Not only did I narrate what is known through research in the South African context about SV, but I also provided some methodological considerations about how researchers go about to know about SV. While the vastness and complexity of SV were confirmed, little could be found on the outcome of plans to reduce the levels of SV.

In this part of the thesis I describe the survey conducted among secondary school learners, which is the third study that I undertook. Although a great deal of research on SV gets published, Furlong *et al.* (2004:7) argue that “empirically driven knowledge about school violence [is] not keeping pace with public interest and the demand for information to inform public policy”. Krug *et al.* (2002:1086) specifically call for a greater understanding of the magnitude and causes of [school] violence as the “quantity and quality of data are poor all over the world”. Although I do not claim to provide comprehensive data about SV, I do, however, believe that this survey adds to the understanding of the magnitude and nature of SV in some South African secondary schools, because it reveals the perceptions of a number of secondary school learners and their experiences of violence in certain South African schools.

Throughout this thesis I use Burke’s dramatism as the framework for my analyses. The five focus points of Burke’s Dramatism are: firstly what was done (the act), secondly the place where the action occurred (the scene), thirdly the people who were part of the action (the

agents or actors), fourthly the items which were used to carry out the acts (the agency), and fifthly, the reason for the acts (the purpose) (Burke, 1969:xvii; Krauss, 2005:29). Although Burke concentrates on the narratives of people involved in acts of SV, I relied on the responses to the questionnaires to gain understanding of SV in the South African context. . The challenge for me was to adapt the framework, which Burke used in narrative form, to explore quantitative data and make sense of the views of the respondents. To achieve this end, I identified items in the questionnaire of Benbenishty and Astor (2005) that fall within the scope of each one of the five parts of the pentad and used them to analyse the views of the respondents on each of the dimensions. As I have pointed out before, the dimensions of Burke's pentad should not be considered in isolation (*vide* Burke, 1969:3-20). Therefore, in addition, I used a few terministic screens (Fox, 2002:370-371) to statistically explore the relationships that exist between the dimensions.

This chapter starts with a discussion on the methodology of the survey, and is followed by a report on the analysis of the data based on the pentad. In chapter 8 I report on the analysis of the data according to the terministic screens. Finally, I provide a synopsis of the findings of the survey, and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the survey.

7.2 RESEARCH METHOD

Learners from secondary schools situated in three South African provinces participated in the survey. The aim of the survey was to understand how these learners experience SV at their schools. A closed questionnaire was the research instrument.

7.2.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I prepared the questionnaire (*vide* Addendum C) for learners based on a questionnaire used by Benbenishty and Astor (2005). I did, however, make some minor changes to the questionnaire. Firstly the items relating to demographic information were changed to suit the South African secondary school contexts. In a few instances, I split a single item into two, when I considered that the authors were addressing more than one matter in one item in the original questionnaire. Some minor changes were furthermore made in the wording to accommodate the South African context.

7.2.2 PARTICIPANTS

The survey was conducted in three of the nine provinces of South Africa, namely the Gauteng province, representing a typical urban province, the Eastern Cape, being a typical rural province (only rural schools were used), and the Free State, where both urban and rural schools were used.

I experienced numerous problems when trying to get schools to participate in the survey. Initially, I drew a stratified random sample in three provinces, using the quintiles as strata. The majority of the schools that I contacted were, however, unwilling to participate in the study despite my assurance that no individual or school would be identified in the study. The principals would not give permission for the survey to be conducted at their schools. Some principals bluntly refused, while others explained to me that they were afraid of being labelled negatively.

I resorted to contacting specific schools through people that I know, and put together a convenient sample. Mertens (2010:325) explains that "convenience sampling means that the persons participating in the study were chosen because they were readily available". However, I let myself be guided by Davies (2007:54-55) who provides guidelines for researchers to get a sample that they have access to; a sample that is as good as it can be; and a sample that researchers can reach with ease.

After securing permission from school principals based on their goodwill, I sent the envelopes with instructions and questionnaires to the schools. The questionnaires were supposed to be administered during the third term of 2010. I then encountered another barrier, namely the 2010 educators' strike. Shortly after the questionnaires were delivered to the schools, the educators went on a strike that lasted three weeks. This strike caused major disruptions at the schools and, therefore, some schools could not administer the questionnaires, although they were willing to participate initially. Thus, I had to negotiate afresh with other schools.

In spite of these obstacles, I managed to put together a convenience school sample²⁷ comprising 11 secondary schools in three provinces. In addition to the questionnaire, I obtained some information on the school context from the principals (*vide* Addendum D). Table 13 depicts the demographical details of the schools.

Table 13: Demographical details of the schools

School	Province	Size	Quintile	No-fees school	Race composition of learners
A	Eastern Cape	1001 - 1250	5	no	Multiracial
B	Eastern Cape	251 – 500	3	yes	Single race
C	Eastern Cape	501 – 750	4	no	Majority from one race (and a minority from other races)
D	Free State	751 – 1000	5	no	Multiracial
E	Free State	251 – 500	3	yes	Single race
F	Free State	501 – 750	4	no	Single race
G	Free State	751 – 1000	1	yes	Single race
H	Free State	501 – 750	3	yes	Single race
I	Gauteng	1251 - 1500	5	no	Majority from one race
J	Gauteng	251 – 500	Private	no	Majority from one race
K	Gauteng	751 – 1000	5	no	Multiracial

The principals were requested to classify their schools according to the various locations of their schools. They were allowed to give more than one category. Figure 5 is a graphic illustration of their responses.

²⁷ I want to thank everyone who assisted me in establishing this sample, and who helped to get the questionnaires back from the schools. I also want to thank all the principals and learners who agreed to participate in the survey.

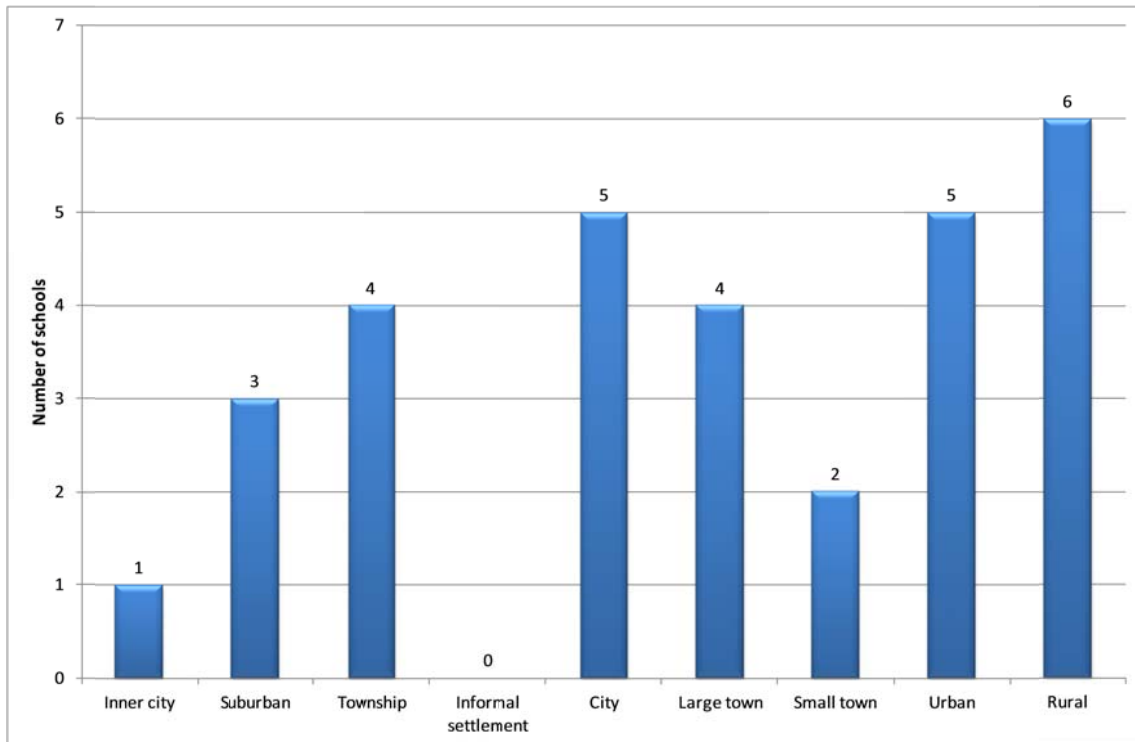


Figure 5: Locations of the participating schools based on the principals' classifications (n=11)

I provided each school with 80 questionnaires. Of the 880 questionnaires, the schools returned 713, and I was able to use 690. The 23 questionnaires that I did not use were either not filled in, or had only the demographic information filled in, or the respondents indicated that they were not filling it in honestly²⁸. Therefore I could use 78 percent of the questionnaires that were distributed. The details of the respondents are provided in Table 14. As this is a non-probability sample the sample does not permit generalisations outside the sample. However, it does provide insight into the situation at the schools that took part in the survey.

²⁸ Two items on the questionnaire explored whether the respondents were concentrating and responding frankly.

Table 14: Demographical details of the respondents

		n	%
Province	Eastern Cape	202	29,3%
	Free State	329	47,7%
	Gauteng	159	23,0%
		690	
Race composition	Single race	325	47,1%
	Majority from one race	156	22,6%
	Multiracial	209	30,3%
		690	
Quintile	1	53	7,7%
	2	0	
	3	203	29,4%
	4	135	19,6%
	5	243	35,2%
	Private school	56	8,1%
		690	
School size	251-500	191	27,7%
	501 to 750	203	29,4%
	751 to 1000	192	27,8%
	1001 to 1250	70	10,1%
	1251 to 1500	34	4,9%
		690	
Gender	Female	388	56,2%
	Male	298	43,2%
	Not indicated	4	0,6%
		690	
Grade	8	99	14,3%
	9	94	13,6%
	10	182	26,4%
	11	255	37,0%
	12	54	7,8%
	Not indicated	6	0,9%
		690	

In line with the pragmatic research paradigm, I reject the notion that absolute truths about SV exist. Empirical research can merely provide some insight into a phenomenon, and in this

case the insight into the phenomenon of SV came from learners' perspectives. Although these perceptions are only partial insights, I took specific steps to enhance the integrity of the survey.

7.2.3 THE INTEGRITY OF THE SURVEY

Firstly, I considered specific ethical issues, and then gave careful consideration to the reliability and the validity of the research in an endeavour to produce trustworthy findings.

7.2.3.1 ETHICAL ISSUES

At the time when I conducted the survey, no formal ethical guidelines or procedures existed at the Faculty of Education at the University of the Free State. I, therefore, could not apply for ethical clearance, and had to rely on the views of various authors to guide me.

In research involving human beings, ethical considerations are vast and complex (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:51; Strydom, 2005:56). Creswell (2008:11-13) states that throughout the research process the researcher should follow ethical practices such as respecting the rights of respondents, honouring the research sites that are visited, and reporting research findings fully and honestly. Wassenaar (2006:67) stresses the importance of the philosophical principles that guide ethical research. These principals include autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons, avoiding possibilities of harming others, and beneficence and justice. I took specific steps towards ethical research.

Firstly I applied for permission from the various education authorities to do this research in their provinces (*vide* Addendum B). Secondly I approached the various principals to allow me to do the survey at their schools²⁹ (*vide* Addendum A). I informed the schools fully, as well as the persons who administered the questionnaires, about the aim of the project, and the procedures that would be followed.

I requested that the Life Orientation teachers should administer the questionnaires at the schools during class time because, not only do issues pertaining to SV fall within the scope of the learning field of Life Orientation, but the Life Orientation class should also provide a

²⁹ In some instances I approached the principals directly, while in others I contacted the principals through a third person.

supportive environment to deal with issues relating to SV should any have emerged. In this way I tried to avoid harming any of the respondents (Strydom, 2005:58). I requested that the Life Orientation teachers should randomly select one or two of their classes (depending on the size of the classes) to participate in the study. I requested that the teachers give the questionnaires to the learners at the start of the Life Orientation class so that they could complete them, and hand them in towards the end of the period.

I took a number of steps to protect respondents and to acknowledge their contributions (Strydom, 2005:61-62). The questionnaires were neither marked nor numbered and, on the questionnaire, I included an instruction telling respondents not to write their names or the names of their schools on their questionnaires. This instruction was there to ensure the anonymity of the respondents. Learners were free to refrain from responding to the items and to return their questionnaires blank. In order to prevent any form of deception, I stated the aim of the survey on the questionnaire so that all respondents could read it. I provided the schools with stickers, and requested that learners fold their questionnaires double and seal them with the stickers to ensure the confidentiality of their responses. I requested, further, that the administrators of the questionnaires at the schools should acknowledge the contributions of the respondents, and that they also apologise because the questionnaires were only available in English and not in any other official South African language.

While I took steps to prevent respondents from harm, I had to also consider how the study could benefit the respondents (Wassenaar, 2006:67). The direct benefit to the respondents was limited to an increased awareness of the multidimensional nature of SV. However, I have also offered to provide the participating schools with feedback on the research project (Strydom, 2005:66), and I have made myself available to help with staff and learner development opportunities, if the schools ask me to do so. The feedback will only be provided after completion of this study. Development opportunities have not realised yet, but a member of the SGB at one of the schools that participated in the study, contacted me for guidance when an incidence of SV occurred at that school during 2011.

Strydom (2005:63) points out that researchers have an ethical responsibility to respondents and to the research community to provide honest and valid research results. Therefore, I took steps to enhance the reliability and validity of this research project.

7.2.3.2 RELIABILITY

Reliability refers to consistency of measurement (Uys, 2003:122). In the survey, I used an existing research instrument that has been used extensively in comparative international studies (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005). Thus I deemed the instrument to be reliable. I also measured the internal reliability (internal consistency) of the responses by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This statistic varies between 0 and 1. The higher the coefficient is, the higher the level of internal reliability. According to Nunally in Santos (1999:2), a value of 0,7 is generally accepted as the benchmark for acceptable levels of reliability. Pietersen and Maree (2007a:216) state that an alpha value of 0,9 is an indication of high reliability. This coefficient for the responses to the scaled items in my survey was calculated as 0,9176, which suggests a high level of internal reliability.

In addition, two items were built into the questionnaire to ascertain the level of concentration and commitment of respondents when responding to the items (*vide* Addendum C: questions 29 & 91). If, on the returned questionnaires, the respondents indicated that they were not carefully and truthfully responding to the questions, those questionnaires were not considered to be suitable for analyses, and the data from those respondents was, thus, not included in the analyses (*vide* 7.2.2). Therefore, I claim that the survey has an acceptable level of reliability.

7.2.3.3 VALIDITY

The validity of a research instrument refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure, as well as the extent to which it is suited to research subjects, contexts of research projects, and whoever the research participants are (Pietersen & Maree, 2007a: 216, 124; Uys, 2003:123). In this study I used a research instrument that has been used in international studies (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005) and which covers the topic of SV extensively. Thus I judge the content to be relevant, and that the research instrument measures what it claims to measure.

The questionnaire was specifically designed for learners, and I adapted it for the South African context, thus I consider it to be appropriate for the respondents (South African school learners). I believe, based on the above information, that the survey is valid.

7.2.4 CAPTURING AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

An experienced typist captured the data from the questionnaires on MS Excel. I found no mistakes when I did spot checks on the correctness of the data. The scores were aggregated per theme per respondent, and the data was then exported to the STATA-IC-11 statistical package of the UFS for analyses.

7.2.4.1 DEPENDANT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependant variables or constructs are different from independent variables in the following way: Independent variables are the various criteria that are used to describe respondents, such as the province in which the school is situated or the gender of the respondent. Dependent variables are the variables or constructs that are measured, such as the level of physical SV or the degree to which a firearm is used in SV (*vide* Cooper & Schindler, 2003:47).

The following variables obtained from the questionnaire were used to measure aspects of Burke's pentad:

Table 15: Variables used to measure the pentad constructs.

	Act	Scene	Actor	Props	Purpose
Independent variables		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Province Race composition Economic condition Area (urban/rural) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Grade 		
Dependent variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical SV Psychological SV Sexual SV Deprivation SV observed SV endured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destructive behaviour Feeling protected, accepted and respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner Staff member Outsider Gang member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on Cellular phones and electronic media Clubs, sticks and other hard objects Hand, feet and fists Firearms Knives and other sharp objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuable, food, etc. Racial differences Religious differences Immigrant status

I started the data analysis using descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and measures of central tendency to organise and summarise the views of the learners (*vide* Bernstein, Foxcroft, McCallum, Schultheiss, Seymour, Stead & Southey, 2005:7). The data was furthermore used to explore possible associations among aspects of SV using correlation and differential statistics (*vide* Durrheim, 2006b:200).

7.2.4.2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

Frequency distributions present variables in a summative way, to indicate the number of times a specific variable occurs in a set of data (Durrheim, 2006b:194). A frequency distribution can either be organised in a table or in a graphical display such as a pie-chart or a bar-chart. A frequency distribution gives an image of the data obtained for the variable.

7.2.4.3 MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY

Researchers use measures of central tendency to summarise data or to represent data collectively with a single score (Durrheim, 2006b:196-197). Generally, I used the mean score

as a measure of central tendency, but I sometimes referred to the median and the mode as other indicators of the general view of the respondents.

a) Mode (Mo)

The mode of a set of data is the “most common value(s) in the data” (Goddard & Melville, 2001:52), which means it is the value that most frequently occurs and is the only measure of central tendency that can be used when we have nominal data (such as weapons that learners bring to schools to defend themselves).

b) Median (Me)

The median is the middlemost score in a ranked data set. The median is used for ordinal data, and is particularly useful when the scores of a variable are strongly skewed (positively or negatively) (Durrheim, 2006b:197). Thus, for instance, when a 5-point scale is used, and the median is determined to be 2, this implies that half of the respondents scored 2 or less, while the other half of the respondents scored 2 or more, which is indicative of generally low scores.

c) Mean score (\bar{x})

The mean score is the arithmetic average of all the scores for a variable in a set of data. The mean score is well suited for use with ordinal data (such as the Likert-scale), as long as the various categories are equidistant, albeit not measurable (Durrheim, 2006b:196-197). I believe that the mean score, commonly known as the average, is a value that people intuitively understand to be a single score that is used to represent a construct.

7.2.4.4 MEASURES OF VARIABILITY: THE STANDARD DEVIATION

Measures of variability explore the extent to which the scores for a variable are similar or dissimilar from one another (Durrheim, 2006b:197). Although the difference between the maximum and the minimum (the range) is easy to understand, traditionally, when a sample is used, the standard deviation serves as an indicator of variability. The standard deviation provides an indication of how much the individual scores vary from the mean (Durrheim, 2006b:197-200) and is calculated as the square root of the variance {the sum of the squares of the difference between each individual score and the mean score, divided by (the number

of scores-1}). The answer is an indication of the distance from the mean in which the bulk (approximately 67%) of the scores fall (Watkins, Schaeffer & Cobb, 2004:89).

7.2.4.5 DIFFERENTIAL STATISTICS

In order to determine the degrees of difference amongst the groups in the sample, I used certain statistics that are known as inferential statistics. However, the sample used in this study is not a probability sample and, thus, the findings cannot, by means of inference, be applied to all South African schools. Therefore, I used inferential techniques to *differentiate* amongst the groups in the sample. At the same time, I also acknowledge that these differences occur in this specific sample, and not necessarily beyond its boundaries.

a) Student's t test

The Student's *t*-test can be used to explore the statistical significance of the difference in means between *two* independent groups. The calculated *t*-value is compared to a critical value, and if more than the critical value, the nil-hypothesis of equal groups can be rejected with a 95 percent confidence level (Bless & Kathuria, 2004:152-178; Goddard & Melville, 2001:82-83,139; Pietersen & Maree, 2007b:266).

b) One-way ANOVA

Similar to the *t*-test, the one-way ANOVA can be used to explore the differences between the means, but of *more than two* groups. An *F*-value is calculated and compared to a critical value, to reject the hypothesis of no difference with a 95 percent confidence level. While the ANOVA can be used to indicate that statistically significant differences between groups probably exist, it does not determine in which of the three or more groups the significance exists. In cases where a significant difference is found between groups, the ANOVA test must be followed up with a *post-hoc* test that explores specific differences. In this study, the conservative *Scheffé post-hoc* test was used to investigate the differences between pairs of groups in the sample (Mertens, 2010:406; Pietersen & Maree, 2007b:231-232; Tredoux & Smith, 2006:227-229).

For both the *t*-test and the one-way ANOVA, a *p*-value of 0,05 or less indicates that the nil-hypothesis of no difference can be rejected with a 95 percent probability level (Cooper &

Schindler, 2003:527). In my discussion on data where differences are noted, albeit only for the schools in my sample, I distinguish between differences that can be noted, and differences that can be noted with confidence. The above statistics were used to unpack the data that I obtained in the survey.

Inferential techniques are typically used to examine the effect of the different criteria on the dependent variable. However, when a researcher wants to examine whether there is any association between two dependent variables, the level of correlation is determined.

7.2.4.6 CORRELATIONS (r)

The relationship between two independent variables can be explored by determining the correlation coefficient between the two. The correlation coefficient can be negative, indicating a negative relationship, or positive, indicating a direct relationship. A coefficient of 1 or -1 indicates that the scores form a perfect linear relationship, and the smaller the value is, the more scattered the scores are (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:47). Durrheim (2006b:206) suggest that an r -value of 0,9 indicates a strong association and an r -value of 0,2 suggest a weak association. These are not exact figures. A 0 value indicates no relation. It must, however be emphasised that correlation statistics cannot be used to determine cause and effect, merely the level of association. Two variables may be substantially correlated without having any causal connection. No reason why two constructs are related can be deduced from the r -value (Watkins *et al.*, 2004:151).

The data portrays the views of learners as victims and onlookers. In the questionnaire, statements are made about SV. Respondents had to indicate their level of agreement, on a five-point scale, with 5 indicating a strong agreement, or a high level of occurrence, and 1 indicating a strong disagreement or non-occurrence. I used the statistics described above to unpack the data, using Burke's pentad as framework for my analysis.

The views of the respondents on each of the dimensions of Burke's dramatism was aggregated per construct within the pentad, and analysed in this chapter. Chapter 8 follows on this chapter where I explored possible connections between combinations of the pentad,

such as the association between the *scene* and the *acts*, and the association between the *act* and the *actor*.

7.3 RESULTS

I used Burke's pentad as a framework when I analysed the data. I began with the *acts* of SV followed by the *scene*, the *actors* or *agents*, the *props* or *agents* and the *purpose*. I conclude this chapter by exploring the overall perceptions of the respondents on the magnitude of SV.

7.3.1 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS

To understand how respondents perceived *what was done* at these schools, I examined the various *acts* of SV. Four constructs are used in this study to measure the level of violence, namely physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and deprivation or neglect. As I have explained throughout the study, the demarcation of these acts of violence is not absolute, and overlapping occurs. Focusing on the various dimensions of violence serves to heighten the awareness that SV is more than just physical violence. Table 16 is a summary of the statistics per type of violence.

Table 16: Summative statistics of acts of SV.

	\bar{x}	s^{30}	Me
Physical violence	1,7716	1,2037	1
Psychological violence	1,8268	1,2013	1
Sexual violence	1,4731	0,9723	1
Deprivation or neglect	2,2664	1,3630	2
Combined	1,7051	1,1589	1

Each of the categories of acts is discussed separately.

7.3.1.1 PHYSICAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

In the survey, I examined the various levels of severity and intensity in the acts of physical violence. The mean score of all items measuring physical violence is 1,7716 and the median is 1, which suggests that physical violence, in general, seems to occur between *rarely* (1) and

³⁰ The mean, median and standard deviation in this chapter was calculated using the raw scores and not the aggregated scores. The standard deviation thus differs from the standard deviations in chapter 8 which uses aggregated scores.

sometimes (2) in the schools in my sample. The relatively large standard deviation (1,2037), however, indicates that there is a substantial variation on the scores provided.

Figure 6 depicts specific physical acts of violence that, according to the respondents, occur regularly (*sometimes, often or always* on the scale) at their schools. The percentages in this figure refer to the percentage of respondents who indicated that these acts are within this frequency range.

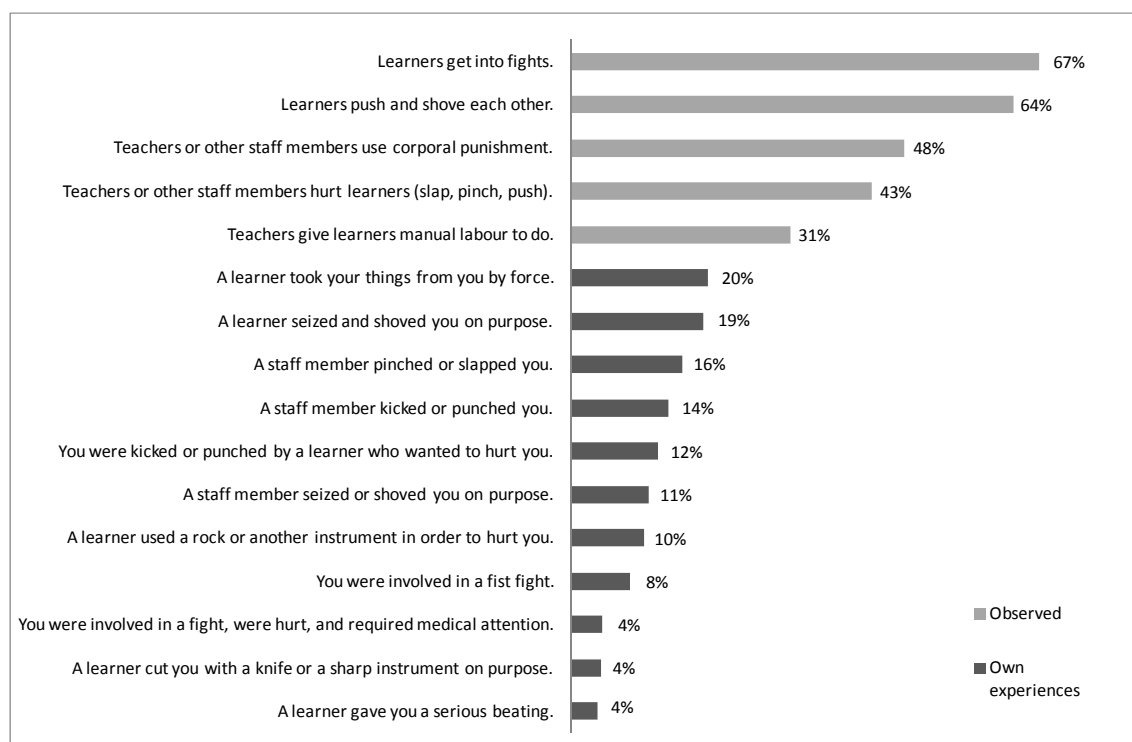


Figure 6: Physical acts of SV reported by respondents (n=690)

The perception of the respondents is that learners regularly fight (67%), and also push and shove each other on purpose (64%). Staff members are moreover reported to regularly use corporal punishment (48%). The respondents also reported that in a number of acts of physical violence they experienced firsthand, *inter alia*, being seized and shoved on purpose by peers (19%) and staff members (16%), as well as being hurt by learners with rocks or hard objects (10%), or with knives or sharp instruments (4%).

So while the mean score suggests that, on average, physical SV is not a daily problem for most respondents, specific acts frequently occur at the schools which participated in the study. In addition to physical SV, the questionnaire also addressed psychological SV.

7.3.1.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

The survey explored the occurrence of psychological violence at various levels of severity and intensity in the schools included in the sample. The mean score of all items measuring psychological SV is 1,8268 with a standard deviation of 1,2013. This suggests that psychological violence, generally, appears to be a minor problem at the schools in my sample, albeit that psychological violence is more common than physical violence (*vide* 7.3.1.1). Psychological violence on average occurs between *rarely* (1) and *sometimes* (2).

However, the study reveals that specific acts of psychological violence are common. Figure 7 shows the psychological acts of SV as perceived by the respondents. It shows the occurrences of specific psychological acts that regularly occur (*sometimes, often* or *always* on the scale).

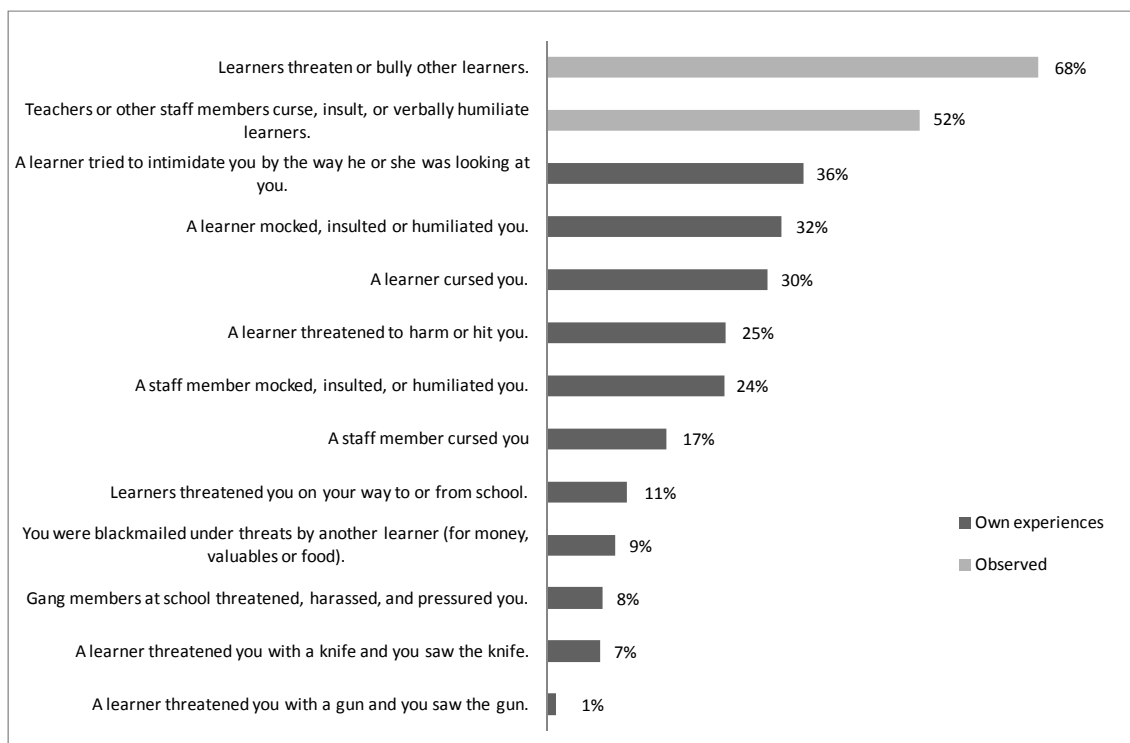


Figure 7: Psychological acts of violence reported by respondents (n=690)

The above diagram reveals that learners perceive that threatening and bullying is fairly common amongst learners, and that they believe that staff members engage in a number of psychologically violent acts that harm learners. Respondents, *inter alia*, indicated their own experiences of psychological violence, such as being mocked, insulted and humiliated by both peers (32%) and educators (24%) as well as being cursed by peers (30%) and by staff members (17%).

Another dimension of SV is sexual violence.

7.3.1.3 SEXUAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE

The study examines the occurrences of sexual violence, which occur at various levels of severity and intensity. The mean score of all items measuring sexual SV is 1,4731, ($s=0,9723$; $Me=1$) suggesting that at the schools in my sample sexual violence is, on average, not widespread. The standard deviation on sexual SV is smaller than the other types of SV, indicating less variation on the scores. However, when one looks at the specific acts of sexual SV, specific problems are pointed out by respondents. The frequency with which

specific acts of SV is indicated by the respondents is displayed in Figure 8 (observed)³¹ and Figure 9 (own experiences).

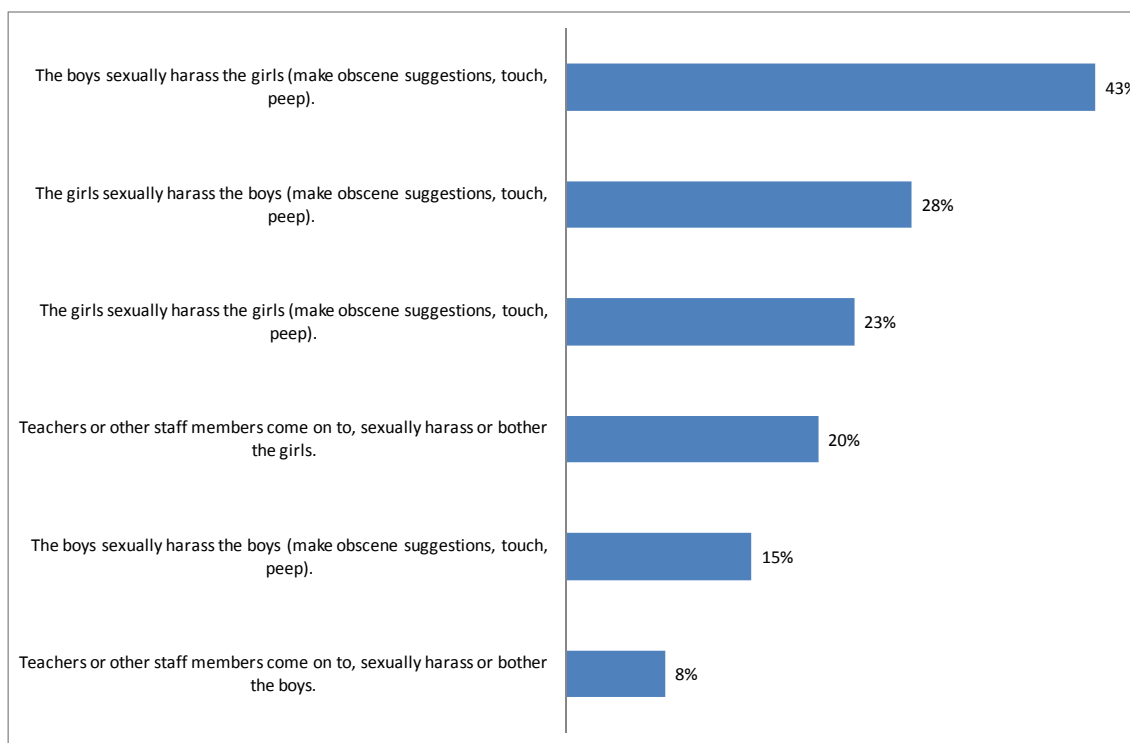


Figure 8: Sexual violence acts observed by respondents (n=690)

While 43 percent of the respondents indicated that at their schools, boys sexually harass girls, girls also often sexually harass boys (28%) and girls (23%). More teachers are reported to sexually harass girls (20%) compared to boys (8%).

³¹ As many indicators of sexual SV were included in the questionnaire, I split the observed experiences from the own experiences by the respondents, to make the detail in the graph readable.

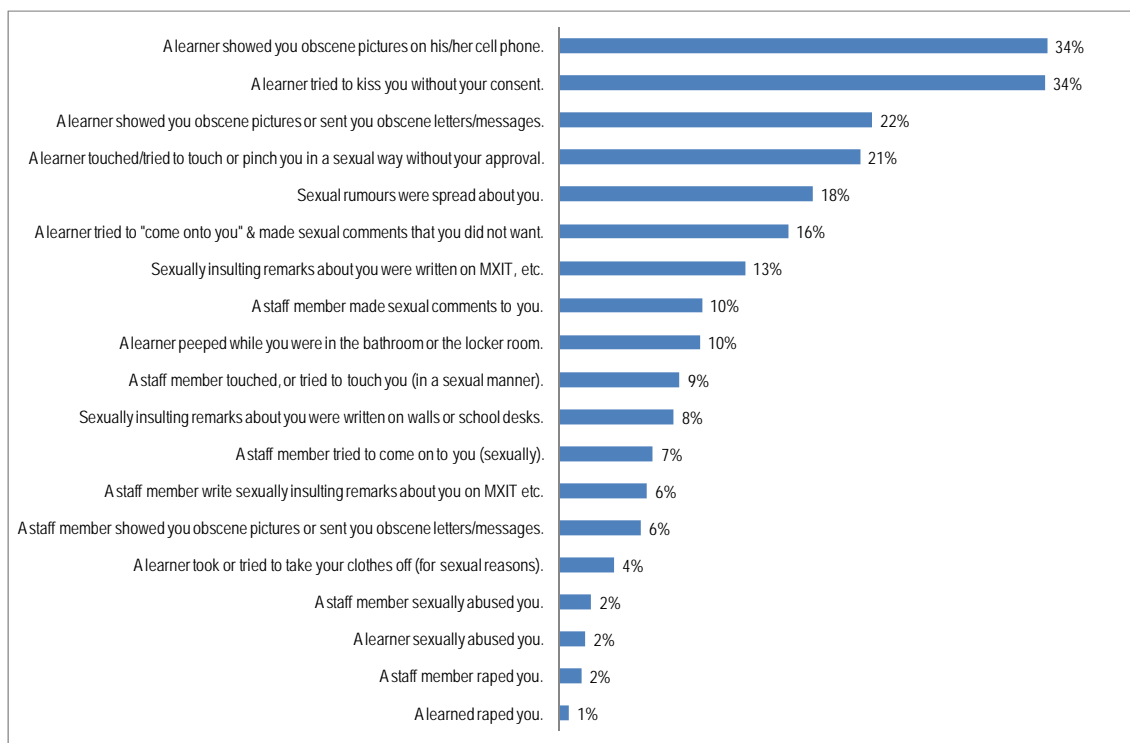


Figure 9: Respondents' own experience of sexual SV acts (n=690)

Respondents marked numerous acts of sexual violence as regularly (*sometimes, often or always*) being part of their own experience. These included being shown obscene pictures on a cell phone (34%), another learner trying to kiss a respondent without consent (34%) and a learner showing a respondent obscene pictures or sending obscene messages (22%). In some of these acts staff members were the transgressors. The following examples are instances of such acts involving staff members: 70 respondents (10%) indicated that a staff member had made sexual remarks about them, 69 (10%) reported that a staff member had touched them in a sexual way and 11 (2%) reported being raped by a staff member.

Lastly, the survey explores the last kind of SV, namely deprivation or neglect.

7.3.1.4 DEPRIVATION OR NEGLECT

The overall mean score with regards to deprivation or neglect, is 2,2664 (Me=2). This suggests that deprivation or neglect is a more widespread in the schools in my sample than any of the other kinds of SV. The standard deviation on this construct was 1,3630.

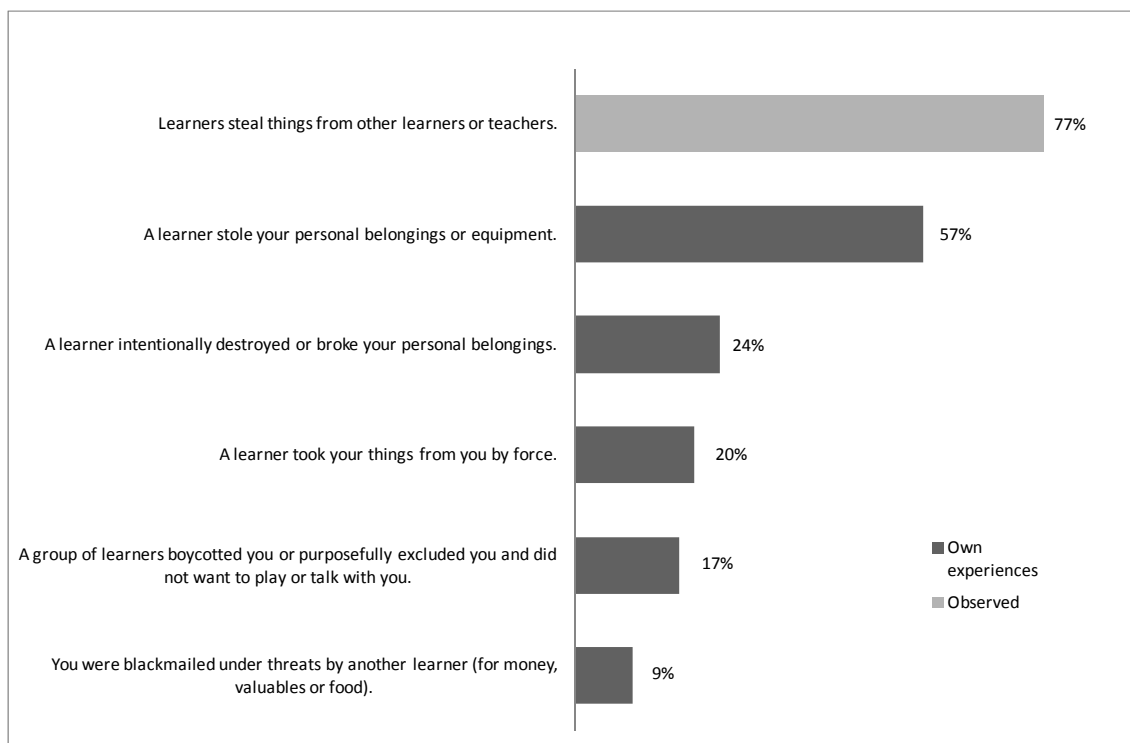


Figure 10: Acts of deprivation or neglect reported by respondents (n=687)

Only six indicators for deprivation or neglect are included in the questionnaire, and they appear to be problems at the schools in my sample. 77 percent (529) of the respondents indicated that learners regularly steal things from other learners and teachers. Of these, 40 percent (276) indicated that this *always* happens. 57 percent (393) of the respondents regularly experience that their personal belongings or equipment get stolen. Another problem is social deprivation as 17 percent (118) of the respondents were purposefully excluded from groups.

7.3.1.5 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT ACTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

I explored the possible association between the different types of SV without suggesting causality. As I have pointed out earlier, the distinction between the different categories of SV is not absolute, and overlapping occurs.

Table 17: Correlations between different types of SV

	Physical SV	Psychological SV	Sexual SV	Deprivation or neglect
Physical SV	1,0000			
Psychological SV	0,6941	1,0000		
Sexual SV	0,5488	0,5446	1,0000	
Deprivation or neglect	0,0023	0,0006	-0,0228	1,0000

The strongest association can be seen between levels of physical SV and levels of psychological SV. There is a moderate association between levels of sexual SV and levels of physical and psychological SV

7.3.1.6 DISCUSSION

More than 20 percent of the learners who completed the questionnaires are regularly exposed to SV of some kind. Although the diagrams that were displayed, focused on scores of 3 and above, the specific incidents that were reported by the respondents to have occurred at least once during the 12 months preceding the study (score of 2-5), shows a grim picture. For example, of the 690 respondents³²:

- 188 were kicked and punched by a learner;
- 246 experienced their possession being taken away from them by force;
- 75 of the respondents reported being stabbed or cut with a knife;
- 106 reported being threatened with a knife or a sharp instrument;
- 17 reported being threatened with a firearm
- 33 reported being sexually abused;
- 9 reported being raped;
- 450 reported that staff members use corporal punishment;
- 174 experienced being kicked and punched by a teacher;
- 107 reported teachers making sexual remarks about them.
- 26 reported being sexually abused by a teacher.

³² In this discussion I include all scores from 2 to 5, indicating that it happened at least once in the 12 months.

Based on the above discussions of the various acts of SV that occur at the schools in my sample, I am certain that a positivist would argue that, because of the relatively low overall mean score, as well as the mean scores on each construct, SV is not a problem at the schools in this study. However, from a pragmatic perspective I disagree with this view. Some learners are regularly exposed to physical (7.3.1.1), psychological (7.3.1.2) or sexual (7.3.1.3) SV as well as to deprivation and neglect (7.3.1.4) indicating that SV is a reality that has to be dealt with in all the schools in my study. Although I did not discuss the results from the individual schools in this thesis, a spectrum of SV acts occurred in the preceding 12 months in all 11 schools in my sample. The school environment is the focus of the next section, which explores the scenes of SV.

7.3.2 SCENE

By examining the views of learners, and in the context of the research question that drives this chapter, I explored the environment of the schools in the sample so as to be able to understand the SV scenes. In this section of the study, I looked closely at the scenes at schools by focusing on three matters. Firstly, I looked at the destructive behaviour (excluding acts of SV which is the focus of 7.3.1) of learners on the scene. Secondly, I tried to determine the general feeling of safeness and acceptance that learners have in the school environment, and then, thirdly, I tried to establish possible demographic links to violent scenes.

7.3.2.1 DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR

In this study the term destructive behaviour refers to acts that are harmful and often illegal. Although some of these acts can be classified as self-inflicted violence (*vide* Figure 1) I do not enter into that discourse in this study. I view these acts as being part of the backdrop against which SV occurs, and thus part of the *scene*.

The study explores the destructive behaviour of learners in the school environment. The mean score of all items relating to this construct is 2,4972, suggesting that, in general, these acts do occur, between *seldom* and *sometimes*. Figure 11 depicts the frequency with which specific behaviours occur regularly (*sometimes, often* and *always*).

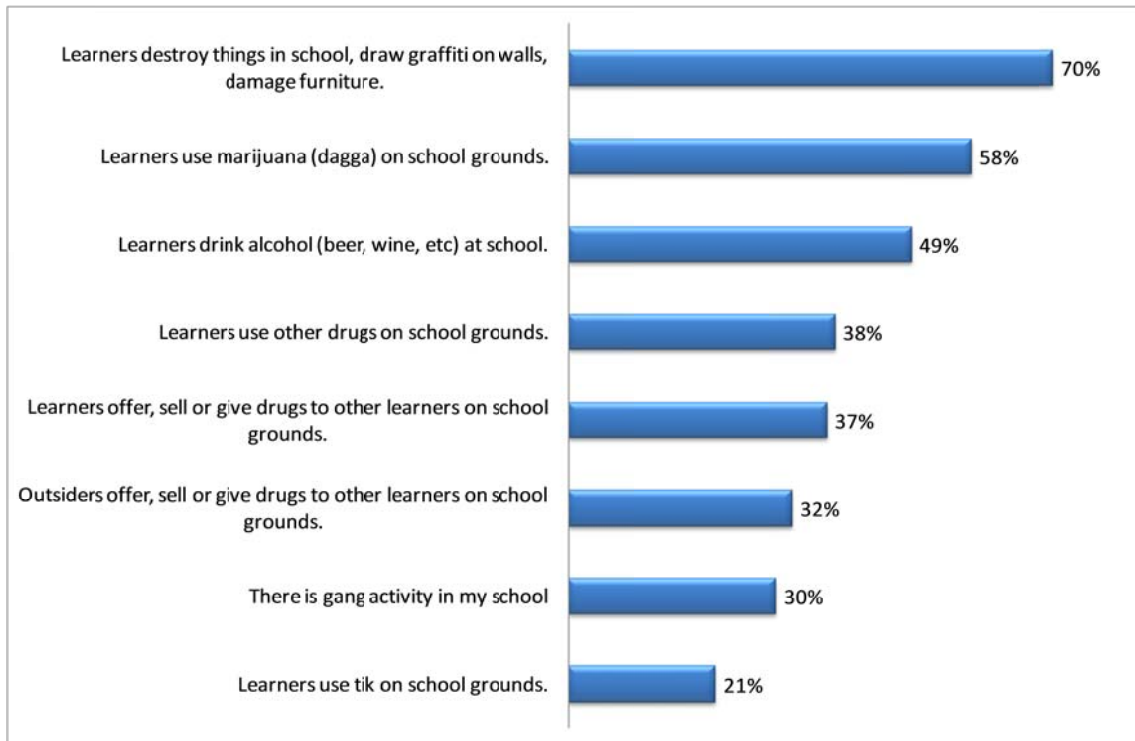


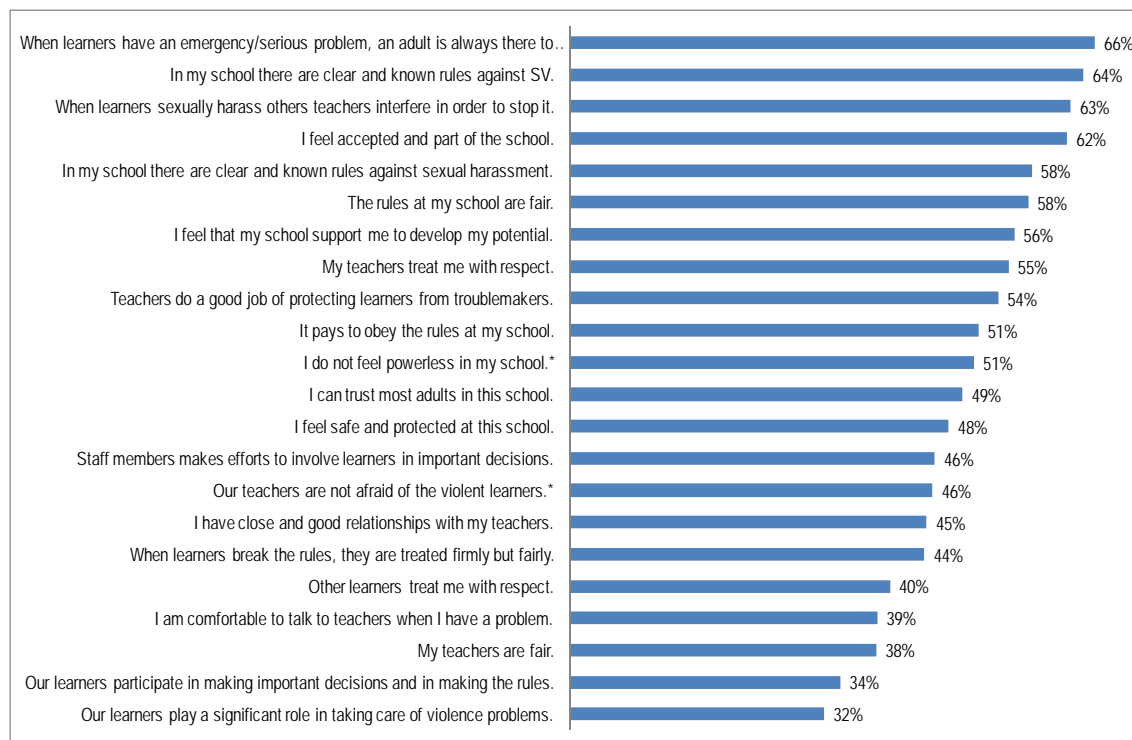
Figure 11: Frequency distribution of destructive behaviour which occurs regularly (n=687)

One can deduce, from the responses given in the survey, that destructive behaviour is fairly common amongst learners who attend the schools who took part in the study. The most common forms of destructive behaviour that are seen on school grounds are learners vandalizing school property (70%), learners using dagga on the school grounds (58%), and learners drinking alcohol at school (49%). Because of an awareness of school scenes filled with such illegal behaviour, I explored the extent to which learners feel safe and accepted at school.

7.3.2.2 FEELING PROTECTED, ACCEPTED AND RESPECTED

Several items in the questionnaire explore whether learners feel protected, accepted and respected at school. This is a positive construct where a score above 3 is an affirmative indicator. I inverted the scores of the two items on the questionnaire that indicated the opposite of the construct to correspond with the construct. I also changed the wording of those items so that their meaning, in this report, is the opposite of their meaning in the questionnaire, but in line with the construct of feeling protected, accepted and respected at

school. The mean score on all the items in the construct is 3,3307, with a standard deviation of 1,2860, which shows a slightly positive inclination. Figure 12 graphically illustrates the frequency distribution by showing the percentage of respondents who agree with the statements (*agree or strongly agree*).



* Inverted items

Figure 12: Frequency distribution of the respondents' perception of being protected, accepted and respected (n=685).

A number of encouraging aspects came to the fore, such as the percentage of learners knowing about clear rules against SV (64%), feeling accepted and part of the school (62%), and perceiving that school rules are fair (58%). However, there appear to be certain problem areas in the schools that participated in this study concerning feelings of protection, acceptance, and respect. Learners do not seem to play a significant role in finding solutions for violent problems (only 32% of the respondents indicated that they do), nor do they appear to play a role in decision-making (only 34% were positive), and only 40 percent of respondents felt that other learners treat them with respect. In spite of the perception that adults are there to help learners who have emergencies or serious problems (66%), only 39

percent of the respondents indicated that they are comfortable about talking to teachers about problems, and only 38 percent of the respondents believe that teachers are fair.

My next step was to consider the possibility of the existence of differences between schools with specific demographics.

7.3.2.3 SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Various constructs contribute to the scenes. Schools in the sample can be clustered according to certain demographic variables that describe the scene (*vide* Table 13). Dependent variables also give details about each scene such as the level of SV, the level of destructive behaviour, and the level of feelings about being protected, accepted and respected. In this section I statistically examined whether there are significant variations in the dependent scene constructs found in the various province scenes, school size scenes, scenes from varying economic circumstances, scenes with various race-compositions, and in the urban/rural scenes.

a) Provincial scenes

The statistics obtained for the various provinces are displayed in Table 18.

Table 18: Scene constructs per province scenes

Province	Levels of SV				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	202	1,7506#	0,4360	2,16	0,1157
Free State	329	1,6954	0,3816		
Gauteng	159	1,6673	0,3679		
Province	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	201	2,5632#	0,9949	0,64	0,5288
Free State	327	2,4650	0,9816		
Gauteng	159	2,4800	1,0194		

Province	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	201	3,2556	0,5874	7,74	0,0005*
Free State	326	3,4266#	0,6205		
Gauteng	158	3,2286	0,6208		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The levels of SV and the levels of destructive behaviour are notably higher in the Eastern Cape schools in the sample, than in the schools in the other two provinces. The Gauteng schools scored the lowest on these two constructs. However, the respondents from the Gauteng schools included in the sample had the lowest scores for feelings of being protected, accepted and respected, and the Free State respondents had the highest. A statistically significant difference exists between the three provinces for feelings of being protected, accepted and respected ($F=7,74$; $p=0,0005$). The Scheffé *post hoc* test shows that this difference is statistically significant between the Free State schools and the Gauteng schools ($p=0,004$), as well as between the Free State schools and the Eastern Cape schools ($p=0,008$).

b) Race-composition scenes

The scene differences between schools where the race-compositions differ were examined. The statistics obtained for the various groups are displayed in Table 19.

Table 19: Scene constructs per race-composition scenes

Race composition	Levels of SV (SV acts occurring)				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,6765	0,3840	1,89	0,1526
Unequal, mixed	156	1,7485#	0,3917		
Multiracial	209	1,7170	0,4153		
Race composition	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	323	2,4553	1,0000	20,40	0,0000*
Unequal, mixed	155	2,9050#	1,0618		
Multiracial	209	2,2596	0,8314		

Race composition	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	321	3,4685#	0,6124	18,47	0,0000*
Unequal, mixed	155	3,1250	0,5761		
Multiracial	209	3,2718	0,6042		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The following can be noted:

- Respondents from schools where the majority of learners are from one race, reported the highest levels of SV (\bar{x} =1,7485) and the highest levels of destructive behaviour (\bar{x} =2,9050)
- Albeit not statistically significant, the levels of SV are the lowest in the single-race schools in the sample (\bar{x} =1,6765).
- The levels of destructive behaviour are, statistically, significantly lower (\bar{x} =2,4553) in single-race schools than in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and the minority of learners from other races (\bar{x} =2,9050; p =0,000).
- Similarly the levels of destructive behaviour are, statistically, significantly lower (\bar{x} =2,2596) in multiracial schools than in schools where the majority of the learners are from one race (p =0,000).
- In line with the findings above, respondents feel the least protected, accepted and respected (\bar{x} =3,1250) when they attend schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and there is a minority of learners from other races. This finding is, statistically, significantly different from single-race schools (\bar{x} =3,4685; p =0,000).
- Respondents from single-race schools also feel, statistically, significantly more protected, accepted, and respected than do respondents who attend multiracial schools (\bar{x} =3,2718; p =0,001).

c) Varying economic positions

I compared the situation in the more affluent schools (quintile 4, quintile 5 and private) with the situation in those schools that are less affluent (quintile 1 to quintile 3, which are also no-fees schools). The following table depicts the statistics of these scene-constructs:

Table 20: Scene constructs per economic classification of the schools

Economic classification	Levels of SV (SV acts occurring)				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Private schools and quintile 4, 5 schools	434	1,7249#	0,3941	1,7201	0,0859
Quintile 1 – quintile 3 schools	256	1,6713	0,3976		
Economic classification	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Private schools and quintile 4, 5 schools	433	2,4981#	0,9736	0,0317	0,9747
Quintile 1 – quintile 3 schools	254	2,4957	1,0293		
Economic classification	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Private schools and quintile 4, 5 schools	432	3,2592	0,6260	4,007	0,0001*
Quintile 1 – quintile 3 schools	253	3,4528#	0,5826		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

From the above table it can be seen that learners from the more affluent schools experience higher levels of SV (\bar{x} =1,7249) and higher levels of destructive behaviour (\bar{x} =2,4981). While the differences on these two constructs are not statistically significant, the respondents in the more affluent schools in my sample (private schools and quintile 4 and 5 schools) feel statistically significantly less protected, accepted and respected (\bar{x} =3,2592) than respondents in the less affluent schools do (\bar{x} =3,4528; p =0,0001). However, both these scores are more positive than 3, which is the point of neutrality.

d) The urban and rural scenes

The statistics that compares the urban schools with the rural schools are displayed in the table that follows.

Table 21: Scene constructs for urban and rural schools

Area classification	Levels of SV (SV acts occurring)				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,7056#	0,3931	0,0356	0,9716
Rural	322	1,7045	0,3998		

Area classification	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	2,3889	0,9388	3,0886	0,0021*
Rural	319	2,6222#	1,0412		
Area classification	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	366	3,2691	0,6456	2,8133	0,0050*
Rural	319	3,4014#	0,5755		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Table 21 shows that while the levels of SV in the urban schools and rural schools in this sample seems to be on par, the level of destructive behaviour is statistically significant higher in the rural schools ($\bar{x}_r=2,6222$; $\bar{x}_u=2,2889$; $p=0,0021$). However, respondents in the rural schools also feels statistically significantly more protected, accepted and respected ($\bar{x}=3,4014$) than their peers in urban schools ($\bar{x}=3,2691$; $p=0,0050$).

7.3.2.4 DISCUSSION

The scene depicts the setting of human action (Burke, 1969:3). It contains the act, the actors and the props. In my analysis I focus on destructive behaviour (excluding acts of SV) by actors. The findings reveal that acts such as destroying and damaging school property, as well as substance abuse, are regularly seen on the school-scene. Although respondents indicated that they feel accepted and part of their schools to some degree, there seems to be a certain level of mistrust towards educators. School scenes that appear to be the most problematic amongst the schools in the sample are the schools where the majority of learners are from one race, Eastern Cape schools, as well as the more affluent schools. The general level of destructive behaviour ($\bar{x}=2,4995$) is higher than the general level of SV ($\bar{x}=1,7058$).

An essential part of the scenes are the actors acting in these scenes.

7.3.3 AGENTS OR ACTORS

Researchers may explore the many roles that actors play. Actors may be victims, perpetrators or onlookers. The questionnaire is designed in such a way that learners give their point of view either as victims, or as onlookers. Thus I distinguished in the diagrams

that represent the different types of violence, between own experiences and observations (*vide* Figure 6 - Figure 10). The items in questionnaire focus mainly on two groups of perpetrators: learners and staff members.

7.3.3.1 VICTIMS

The mean score of all items that explore the respondent's experience as a victim of SV is 1,5102 ($s=0,3617$), which suggests that, generally, respondents were between *rarely* and *not at all* the victims of SV. This score must, however, be read while keeping in mind the specific acts where respondents were indeed victims (*vide* 7.3.1.1-7.1.1.4).

The table below is a summary of the results of the respondents as victims:

Table 22: Respondents as victims

Grade	Experience as victims per grade				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,6088#	0,4374	6,71	0,0000*
9	94	1,5848	0,4139		
10	182	1,4995	0,3249		
11	255	1,4958	0,3367		
12	54	1,3256	0,2528		
Gender	Experience as victim per gender				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,4901	0,3595	1,6651	0,0964
Male	298	1,5365#	0,3634		

*# Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Table 22 reveals that the respondents' experiences as victims of SV decrease from grade 8 to grade 12. The one-way ANOVA shows a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F=6,71$; $p=0,0000$) and this is confirmed by the Scheffé *post hoc* test to be between grade 12 and each of the other grades (between grade 8 and grade 12: $p=0,000$; between grade 9 and grade 12: $p=0,001$; between grade 10 and grade 12: $p=0,042$; between grade 11 and grade 12: $p=0,038$).

Boys in the schools in this study seem to be the victims of SV notably more than girls. The differences are, however, not large enough to be classified as statistically significant.

7.3.3.2 ONLOOKERS

The mean score of all items that explore the respondents' perceptions as onlookers of SV is 2,4782 ($s=0,7590$), which suggests that, generally, respondents are more often onlookers than victims when SV occurs. This score, must again be read while taking into account specific acts where respondents were onlookers (*vide* 7.3.1.1-7.3.1.4). The table below is a summary of the results of the respondents as onlookers.

Table 23: Respondents as onlookers

Grade	Experience as victims per grade				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,6961#	0,6967	8,75	0,0000*
9	94	2,6712	0,6948		
10	181	2,2348	0,6754		
11	255	2,5105	0,7876		
12	53	2,4164	0,9064		
Gender	Experience as victim per gender				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	2,5156#	0,7616	1,4629	0,1440
Male	298	2,4300	0,7541		

*# Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The results indicated that Grade 8 respondents were not only more frequently victims of SV than respondents in other grades, but they were also the most exposed to SV as onlookers, whereas grade 10 respondents were the least exposed. The statistically significant difference pointed out by the one-way ANOVA test was explored using the Scheffé *post hoc* and the differences were found to be significant between grade 8 and grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$); between grade 9 and grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$); and between grade 11 and grade 10 respondents ($p=0,006$).

While boys were more the victims in acts of SV (*vide* 7.3.3.1), the table reveals that girls were more the onlookers of SV. The difference between the scores of boy-respondents and girl-respondents are, however, not statistically significant.

7.3.3.3 PERPETRATORS

Perpetrators are classified in the questionnaire as learners (boys and girls) as well as staff members (teaching staff, the principal and other staff members). There is furthermore one item that measures the perception of outsiders as perpetrators and one referring to gang members as perpetrators.

The mean score on all items that refer to learners as perpetrators is 1,6523 ($s=1,1065$) and the mean score on all items that refer to staff members as perpetrators is slightly lower but with a slightly bigger variation on scores ($\bar{x}=1,6030$; $s=1,1210$). The mean score on the one item that referred to gang members as perpetrators is 0,8419 ($s=1,2807$) and the mean score on the item that refers to outsiders as perpetrators is 2,4507 ($s=1,6997$). It thus seems as if, in the schools in my sample outsiders are a bigger threat than gang members. It must be noted that both these types of perpetrators were only explored in a limited way.

a) Perceptions of respondents who are in various grades

I explored the perceptions and experiences of respondents in various grades concerning perpetrator-actors.

Table 24: Perceptions of respondents, in various school grades, concerning perpetrators of SV

Grade	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,7536	0,4499	7,65	0,0000*
9	94	1,7731#	0,4486		
10	182	1,6344	0,3646		
11	255	1,6234	0,3728		
12	54	1,4607	0,3091		

Grade	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,7424#	0,5849	4,53	0,0013*
9	94	1,6444	0,5057		
10	182	1,4953	0,4290		
11	255	1,6394	0,5206		
12	54	1,5671	0,4655		
Grade	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,8990#	1,2079	2,98	0,0186*
9	94	1,6809	0,9861		
10	180	1,5056	0,9944		
11	254	1,6063	1,0111		
12	53	1,4340	0,7208		
Grade	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	97	1,4433#	0,8776	2,82	0,0243*
9	92	1,2826	0,6346		
10	181	1,2320	0,5881		
11	253	1,2332	0,6462		
12	54	1,1111	0,4196		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table reveals that grade 8 respondents appear to suffer the most at the hands of staff members, outsiders, and gang members, and that grade 9 respondents have the highest scores for items referring to learners as perpetrators. The table also reveals that Grade 12 respondents are the least concerned about gang members, outsiders, and learners as perpetrators, and that grade 10 respondents do not perceive staff members to be perpetrators of SV to the same extent as respondents in other grades do. The differences of opinion amongst respondents in the various grades are statistically significant for all four sets of data that are displayed in the table:

- There are statistically significant differences in how grade 9 respondents and grade 11 respondents ($p=0,039$) experience learners as perpetrators, and also between grade 9 respondents and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,000$) and between grade 8 respondents and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,001$).

- Grade 8 respondents experience staff members as perpetrators statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,004$).
- Grade 8 respondents' experience of outsiders as perpetrators is statistically significantly more than respondents from grade 10 ($p=0,049$).
- Grade 8 respondents experience gang members as perpetrators statistically significantly more than their peers in grade 12 ($p=0,046$).

b) Perceptions of respondents per gender-group

I explored the differences of perceptions and experiences of female and male respondents with reference to perpetrator-actors.

Table 25: Perceptions of boys and girls about perpetrators

Gender	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,6355	0,3986	1,1898	0,2345
Male	298	1,6718#	0,3921		
Gender	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,5899	0,4951	1,0845	0,2785
Male	298	1,6322#	0,5223		
Gender	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	383	1,5796	1,0069	0,9939	0,3206
Male	298	1,6577#	1,0300		
Gender	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	382	1,2539	0,6608	0,3680	0,7130
Male	297	1,2727#	0,6599		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The boy-respondents indicated that they experience all categories of perpetrator-actors more than their female peers do, however, none of the differences are statistically significant.

The above table depicts the views of boys and girls as victims and onlookers. The next section explores the views of respondents about boys and girls as perpetrators.

c) Perceptions about boys and girls

Although most items in the questionnaire refer to *learners* as perpetrators, without distinguishing between boys and girls, in one item the respondents were given a list of sexual SV acts and they had to indicate whether the perpetrators were boys, girls or both. Figure 13 is a graphic presentation of the results:

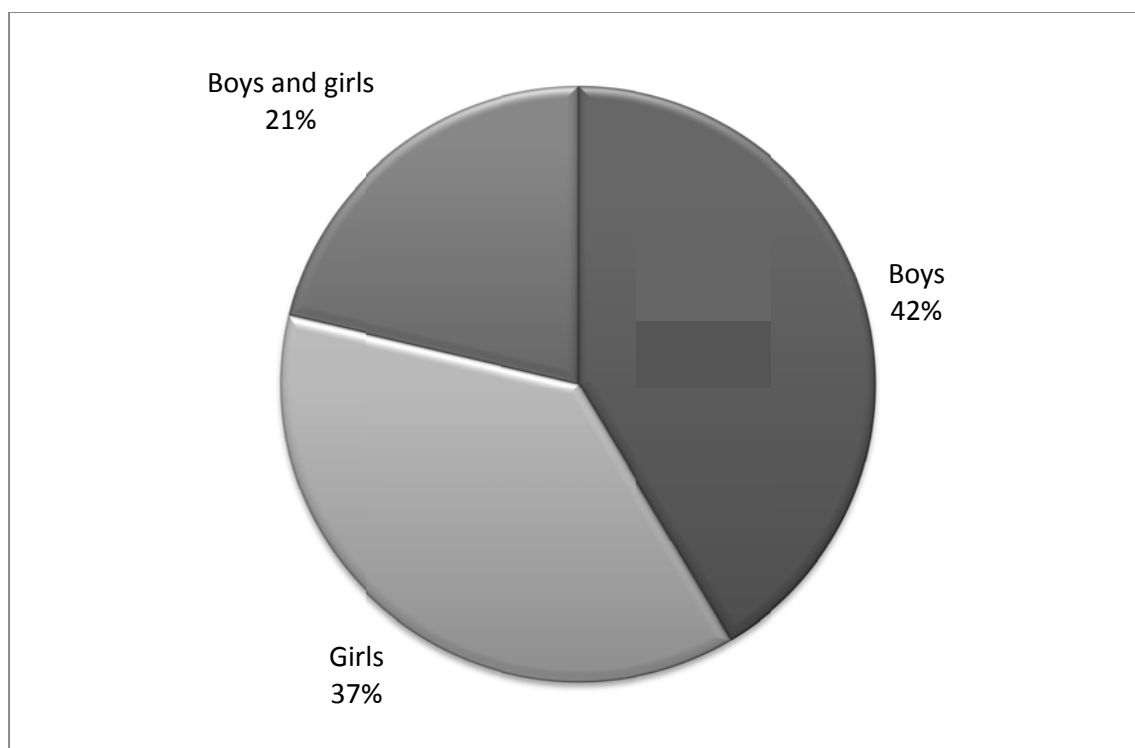


Figure 13: Learner-perpetrators in acts of sexual SV (n=413)

The respondents indicated that boys are, in more instances than girls, the perpetrators in sexual SV. In the questionnaire the gender distinction concerning perpetrators did not go beyond sexual SV.

d) Perceptions about staff members

Respondents were also given a list of acts of SV where they had to indicate whether the perpetrator in each act was a member of the teaching corps, the principal, or other staff. The results are indicated in Figure 14.

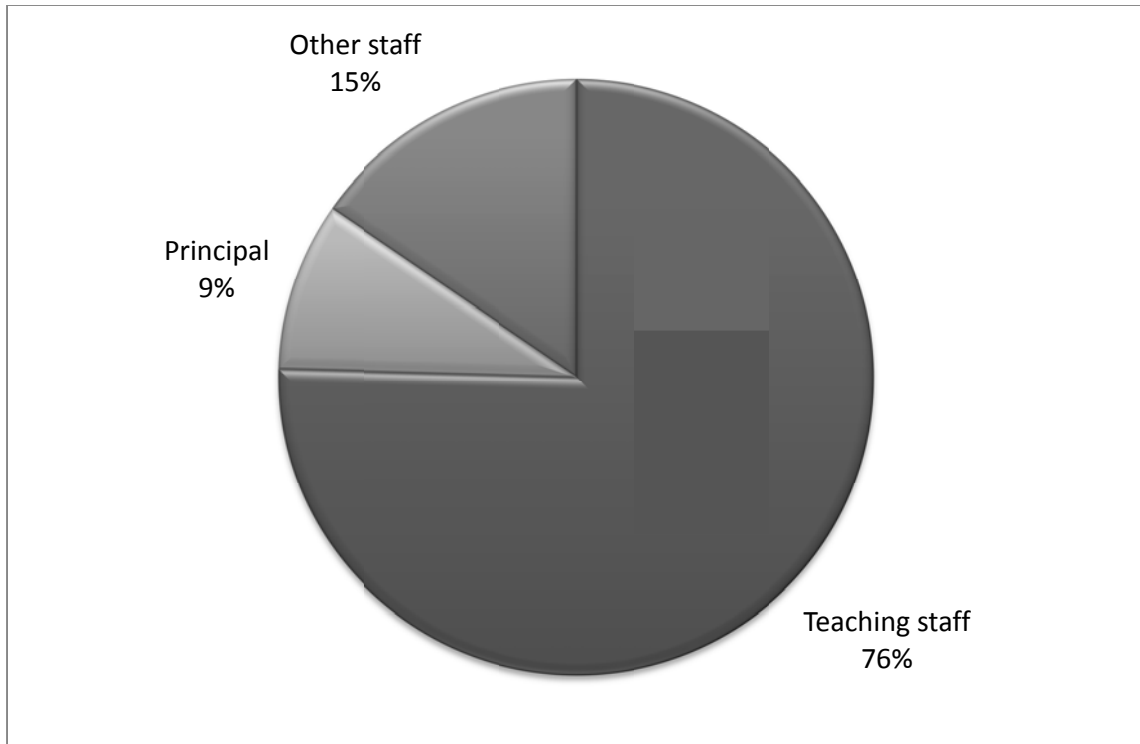


Figure 14: Staff perpetrators in acts of SV (n=303)

When respondents had to distinguish between teaching staff and other categories of staff members they indicated that, in 75 percent of the SV acts committed by staff members, the teaching staff were the perpetrators. It must be noted that “other staff” was not specified in the questionnaire, but judging by the comments that some of the respondents wrote on the questionnaire, they interpreted “other staff” inconsistently, and as any of the following:

- Groundsmen and cleaners
- Sport coaches
- Staff members on the SMT
- Staff members who act as disciplinarians but do not teach the respondent, such as grade heads.

7.3.3.4 DISCUSSION

The data received from the schools that were part of the sample show that staff members and learners are perpetrators in SV dramas. The responses of learners in the lower grades of the secondary schools reveal that they are more vulnerable than the senior learners. Boys are also more involved as both victims and perpetrators. Although the responses revealed that the teaching staff is more responsible for incidences of SV that involves staff members, the respondents named the school principal as the perpetrator in 9,2% of these cases (the average number of respondents is 7 respondents per SV item). When taking into account the power imbalance between a learner and a school principal, there is more than enough reason for concern. It must furthermore be remembered that the learners daily spend more time in the presence of teachers than any other staff member, and thus a large percentage is to be expected.

The next section discusses the agents or props that are available on the SV stage.

7.3.4 AGENCIES OR PROPS

In this section I report on props that were available and used in scenes of SV. There are three categories of props that I looked at. In the first category the onlookers see the prop that is used as a weapon. The props, in the second category, are those objects that learners bring to school to use as defence weapons. The props that perpetrators used to harm respondents, form the third category.

7.3.4.1 PROPS OBSERVED AT SCHOOL

The following diagram (Figure 15) depicts the percentages of learners who saw specific weapons being brought to school, and saw other props such as desks and cellular phones, which are used to write harmful messages about learners. The relative percentages are displayed in the diagram below:

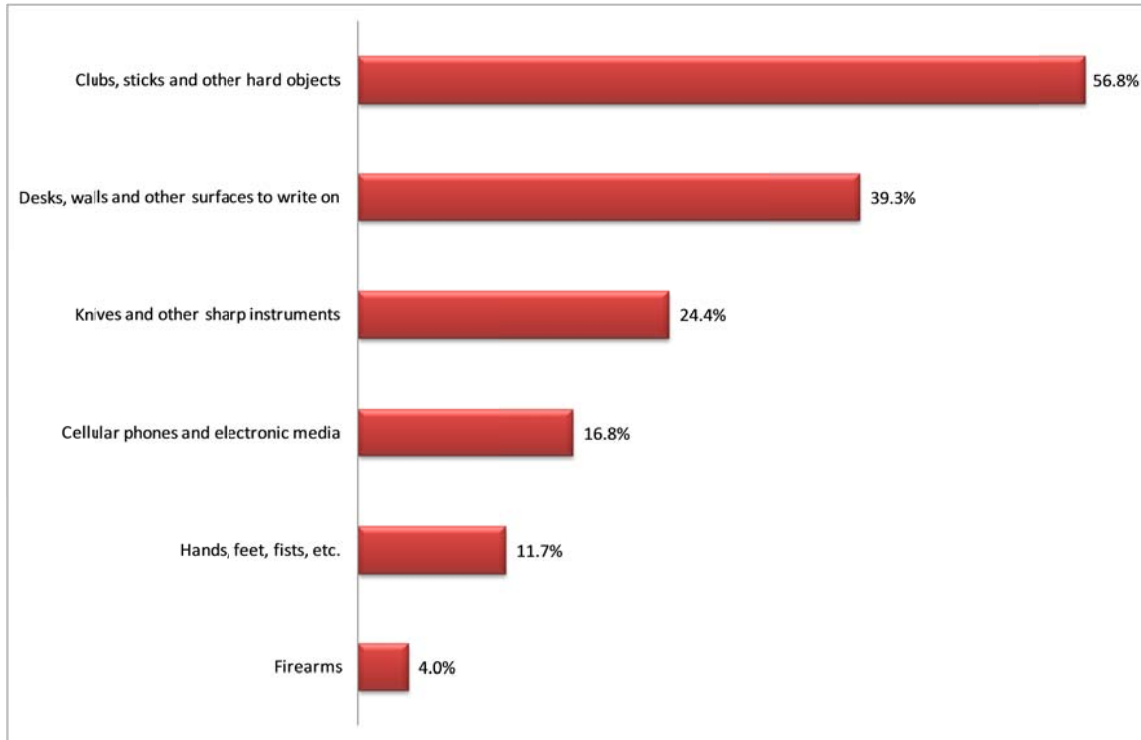


Figure 15: Weapons that respondents observed on other learners (n=683)

The kinds of objects most commonly observed by the respondents in the context of SV are clubs, sticks and other hard objects (56,8%). Walls, school desks and other surfaces to write on (39,3%) and cellular phones and other media (16,8%) are regularly used to threaten or humiliate victims. 27 (4%) of the respondents saw firearms being carried by other learners.

7.3.4.2 PROPS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

The respondents were asked about the weapons that they themselves brought to school. The diagram that follows (Figure 16) depicts these props that respondents admitted to carry at school:

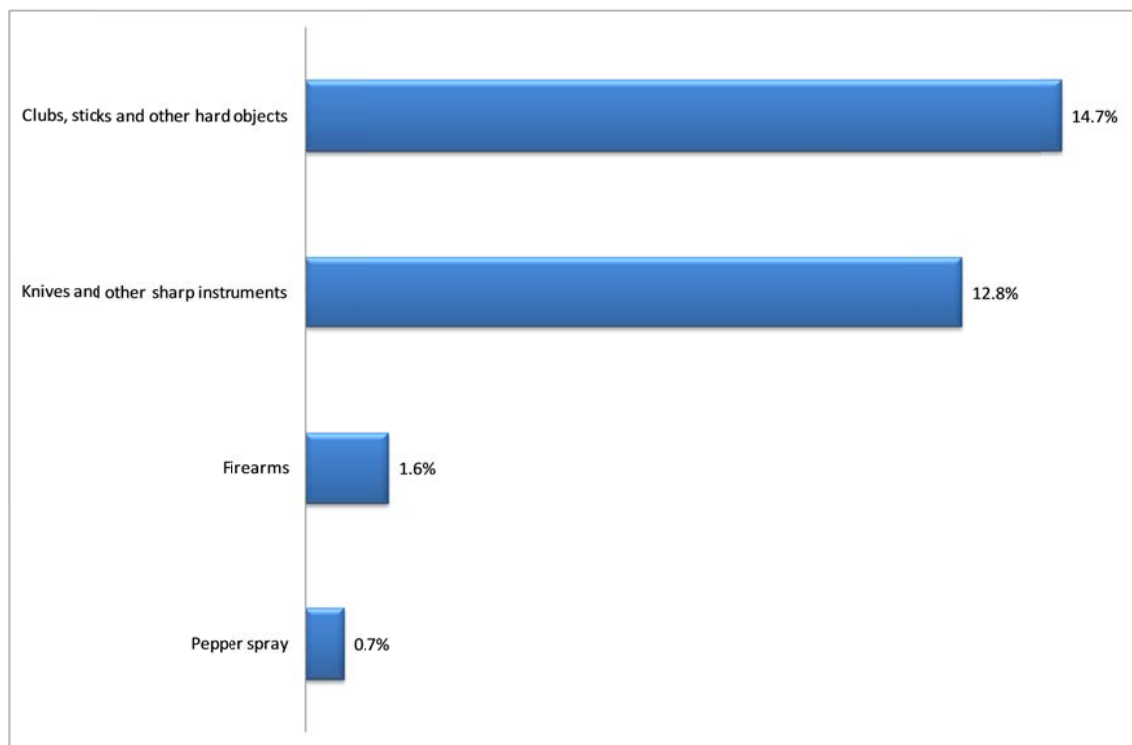


Figure 16: Weapons that respondents reported to bring to school (n=673)

Bringing weapons of some kind to school, seems to be a fairly common occurrence. 99 (14,7%) of the respondents indicated that they bring weapons such as clubs, sticks, *knopkieries* and knuckles that they can use to beat another person, to school. Knives and other sharp objects such as blades, scissors and broken bottles were listed by 86 (12,8%) of the respondents. 11 respondents (1,6%) admitted bringing fire-arms to school (Figure 16).

7.3.4.3 PROPS THAT WERE USED IN ACTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Lastly I analyse the props that were used by perpetrators in SV acts against the respondents during acts of SV.

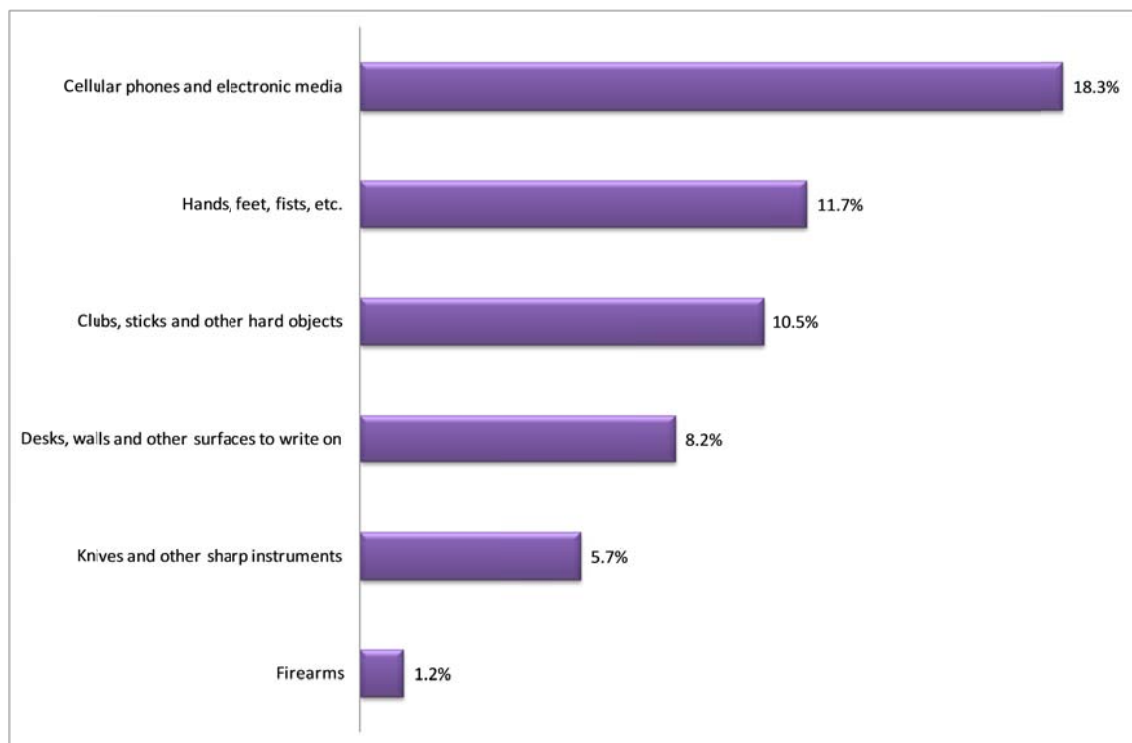


Figure 17: Props that were used in SV acts where the respondents were the victims (n=690)

Cellular phones and other electronic platforms are apparently regularly used to be cruel to learners. 126 (18,3%) of the respondents regularly experience such victimisation. 81 (11,7%) regularly get beaten or kicked with hands, fists and feet, while 8 (1,2%) reported being threatened at gunpoint (Figure 17).

7.3.4.4 DISCUSSION

Various props are used to harm learners. Some of them are objects that are readily found in schools nowadays such as desks, cellular phones, and scissors. There are other props that can be classified as weapons, and which learners bring to school to attack or to defend themselves. Some of these weapons, such as a stick could be argued to be legal whereas other weapons such as knives and firearms are prohibited.

Lastly, the reasons for SV are explored.

7.3.5 PURPOSE

In the last part of Burke's pentad I explore the purpose of, or reason for, SV. Only 4 items in the questionnaire explored the respondents' perceptions about the cause of SV. Figure 18 depicts the frequency distribution.

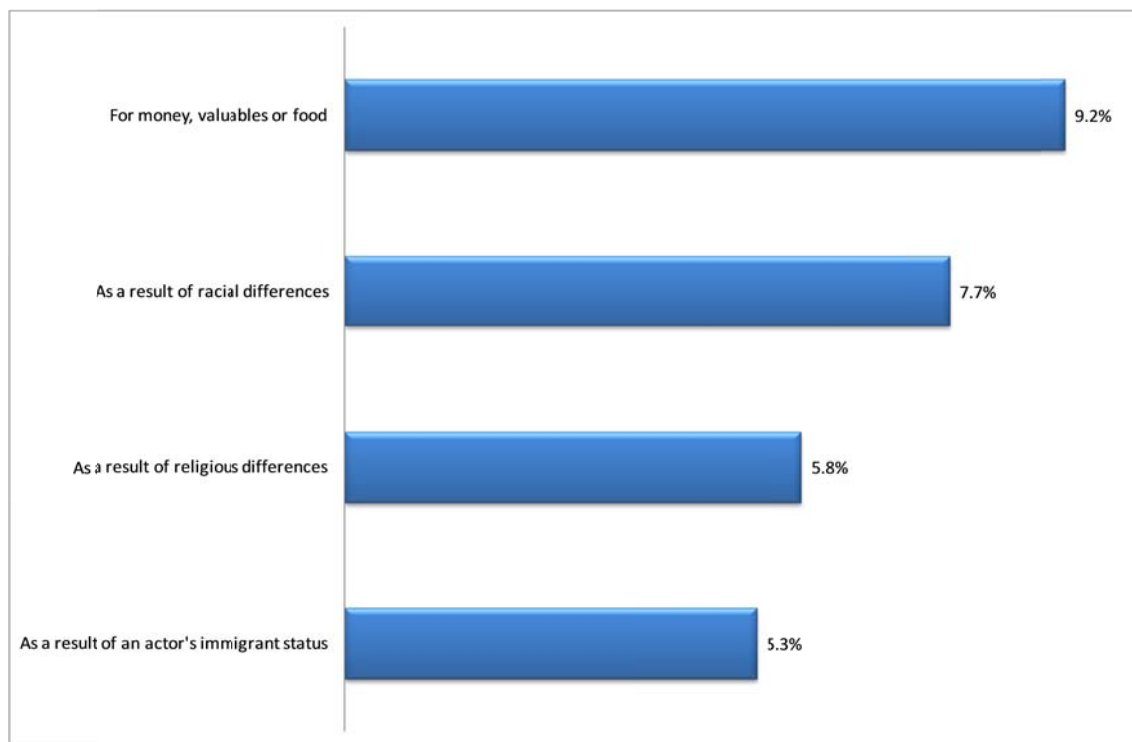


Figure 18: Respondents' perceptions on the reasons for SV acts (n=685).

Very few of the respondents perceive SV to occur for the reasons that are listed in the questionnaire, and displayed in the figure above. Of those listed, the option to get hold of victims' *money, valuables or food* received the highest score (9,2%). 53 respondents (7,7%) consider racial differences to be the reason for SV.

7.3.6 PERCEPTIONS ON THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

To provide an overview on how much of a problem the respondents regard SV to be, they were asked whether they perceived violence to be a problem at their schools. The responses showed that nearly half of the respondents (49,4%) consider SV to be a medium-level problem to a very large-level problem. I examined the data to see which specific

groups felt more unsafe than others. Using the t-test and the one way ANOVA test where appropriate, I found that:

While girls ($\bar{x}=2,699$) perceived SV to be a slightly more serious problem than boys ($\bar{x}=2,544$) the difference was not statistically significant ($t=1,571$; $p=0,117$). Respondents in grade 8 showed the highest concern about the level of SV at their schools ($\bar{x}=2,935$), followed by respondents in grade 9 ($\bar{x}=2,872$). Grade 10 learners were the least concerned ($\bar{x}=2,407$). The differences between the respondents were statistically significant ($F=5,13$; $p=0,0004$) between grade 8 and grade 10 respondents ($p=0,010$) and also between grade 9 and grade 10 respondents ($p=0,026$).

Respondents from the Eastern Cape Province ($\bar{x}=2,868$) were more concerned about the level of SV at their schools than their peers in Gauteng ($\bar{x}=2,684$) and the Free State ($\bar{x}=2,461$), but these differences were statistically significant ($F=6,65$; $p=0,0014$) only between the Eastern Cape Province and the Free State Province ($p=0,002$).

In this sample, in the schools where the majority of learners are from one race and a small percentage of learners are from other races, respondents were more concerned about the level of SV at their school ($\bar{x}=2,934$) than respondents from multiracial schools ($\bar{x}=2,780$) and those from single-race schools ($\bar{x}=2,389$). The difference between the first group of respondents and the latter two groups, are both statistically significant ($F=12,05$; $p=0,002$ & $p=0,000$). Furthermore, there is a statistically significant difference ($t=2,522$; $p=0,012$) between the views of the respondents from the more affluent schools (quintile 4,5 and private school) ($\bar{x}=2,726$) and those from the less affluent schools (quintiles 1-3) ($\bar{x}=2,474$), who consider SV to be less of a problem at their schools. SV is perceived by respondents at larger schools, which have an enrolment of more than 750 learners, to be more of a problem ($\bar{x}=2,752$) than it is perceived to be by respondents who attend smaller schools (750 or fewer) ($\bar{x}=2,540$) ($t=2,160$; $p=0,031$).

Figure 19 is a graphic portrayal of the respondents' perceptions.

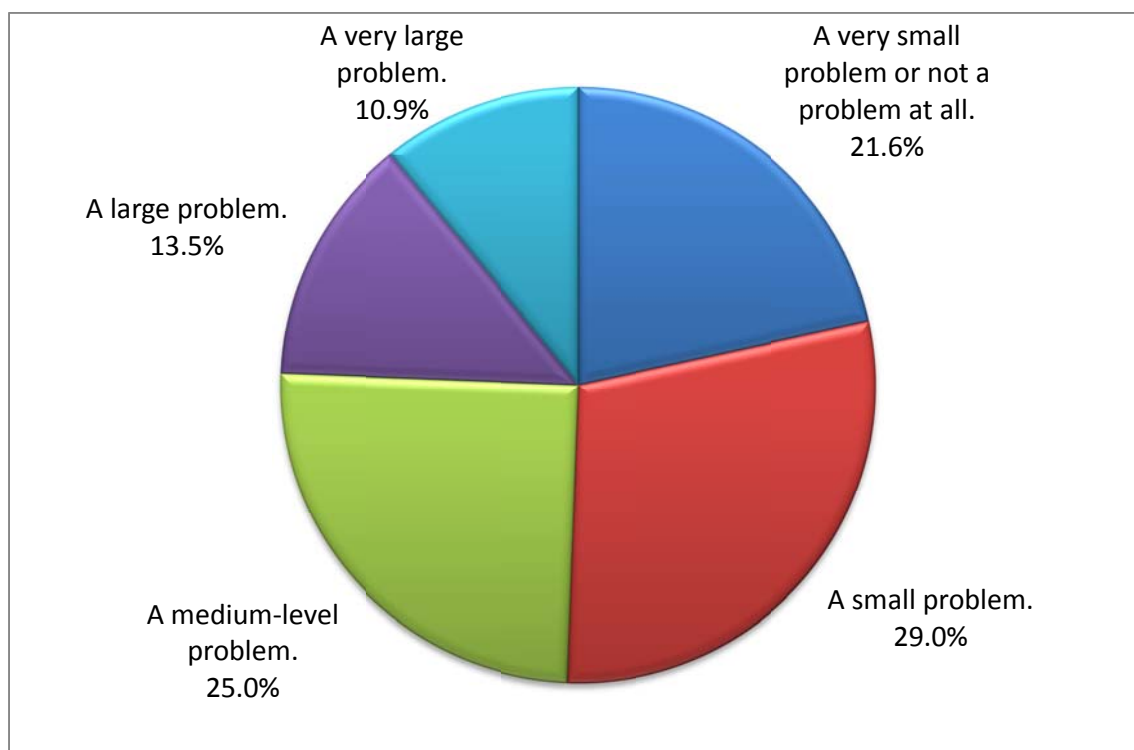


Figure 19: The perception of the respondents on the magnitude of the problem of SV at their school (n=672)

7.4 DISCUSSION

This section of the thesis uses data, attained through a survey conducted at 11 schools, to explore the perceptions and experiences of secondary school learners concerning SV. The survey covers the perspectives of both the victims and the onlookers of SV. Because the sample used for the survey was a convenient sample, the findings are only applicable to this sample. Although I worked from the premise that no absolute understanding of SV can be obtained, the findings of the survey lead to a greater understanding of the SV situation in schools.

The media have not considered a single incident that occurred in any of the schools in the sample to be newsworthy, yet the data reveals that learners regularly experience situations that violate their right to a safe and secure environment where quality education can be offered.

The responses reveal that staff and learners often act aggressively by kicking, slapping, punching, pushing, pinching and hitting learners. They also curse, mock, insult and threaten learners and, although corporal punishment is prohibited, it is still widely administered and substance abuse is fairly common amongst learners. There is general disrespect in the way staff and learners make use of obscenities and sexually harass learners. This lack of respect is extensive and perpetrators steal and damage school property as well as possessions that belong to their peers. Some learners bring weapons such as knives and firearms to schools, while others use their cellular phones to victimise others.

The most vulnerable learners seem to be learners in the lower grades, large schools and learners in schools where one race is dominant and there are minorities from other races. These learners feel the least safe, and are exposed to higher levels of violence and other forms of destructive behaviour. However, the respondents did not indicate that SV, in the majority of incidences, is the result of immigrant status or racial and religious differences.

This chapter specifically discusses occurrences of SV (acts), the school environment (scene), the people involved in SV (actors), objects used to harm others (props) and the reasons for SV (purpose). Chapter 8 enlarges on the discussion of the data, building on the understandings gained on each dimension of Burke's pentad, but focusing on how these five dimensions relate to one other.

CHAPTER 8: VIEWING VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGH BURKE'S TERMINISTIC SCREENS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 7 I reported on the survey that I undertook in 11 secondary schools during 2010. I used Burke's pentad as foci to analyse, from the perspective of victims and onlookers of SV acts, the views of learners who participated in the survey. The following variables were used in chapter 7 to describe each dimension of the pentad:

Act	Scene	Agent / actor	Agency / prop	Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical SV •Psychological SV •Sexual SV •Deprivation or neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Province in which the school is situated •Race composition of school •Economic situation of the school, based on the quintile classification •Area in which the school is situated (urban/rural) •Level of destructive behaviour at the school •Extent to which learners feel protected, accepted and respected at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gender of the respondent (victim or onlooker) •Grade of the respondent (victim or onlooker) •Learner-perpetrator •Staff-member perpetrator •Outsider perpetrator •Gang member perpetrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Desks, walls and other surfaces that are written on •Cell phones and electronic media •Clubs, sticks and other hard objects •Hands, feet, and fists •Firearms •Knives and other sharp objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Valuables, food and other belongings •Racial differences •Religious differences •Immigrant status

Figure 20: Variables used to measure Burke's pentad

The data reveals that learners at the schools regularly experience violent behaviour, which sometimes includes criminal deeds. Although some aspects of the school environment are positive, such as rules against violent behaviour, and the availability of staff to support learners, there are staff members and learners who engage in destructive behaviour such as

substance abuse, and damaging school property. They often use props generally found in a school, such as desks and walls to write insulting notes about victims and, they also, victimise them by using their cellular phones in similar ways. Some learners bring weapons such as clubs, knives and fire-arms to school and use them on victims. The reasons for SV, which I explored through the survey, did not yield a high response-frequency from the respondents, and thus did not really shed any light on why SV occurs. This leaves the reasons for SV largely unknown.

The data analysis depicts what happens at schools, what the situations are at schools, which actors are involved, what they use to harm others, and what possible reason caused them to engage in violent acts. Burke (1969:3-20), however, explains that the five dimensions must not be seen in isolation and suggests that researchers should strive instead to understand each aspect in conjunction with the others, in what he calls “ratios” and Fox (2002:370) calls “terministic screens”. Ratios³³ such as the “scene-act” ratio, or the “agent-scene” ratio open up possibilities of uncovering a variety of perspectives (Burke, 1969:3-20; Fox, 2002:371).

8.2 TERMINISTIC SCREENS

In this chapter I build on the analysis of the data that I discussed in chapter 7 by examining the relationships between the five aspects, represented by the lines in Figure 21 (adapted from Fox, 2002:370), so as to gain a better understanding of SV through the views and experiences of secondary school learners³⁴.

³³ Although Burke uses the term “ratio”, he uses it in a qualitative manner and it must not be interpreted as the mathematical concept of ratio, namely $\frac{a}{b}$. Instead, “ratio” refers to the association between pairs of dimensions in the pentad.

³⁴ In Chapter 7 I explored the experiences of respondents as victims and as onlookers separately in the various diagrams as well as in 7.3.3.1 and 7.3.3.2. However, I use the aggregated data per respondent in this chapter, irrespective of whether the respondent reported it as a victim or as an onlooker and thus I refer to their *experiences*.

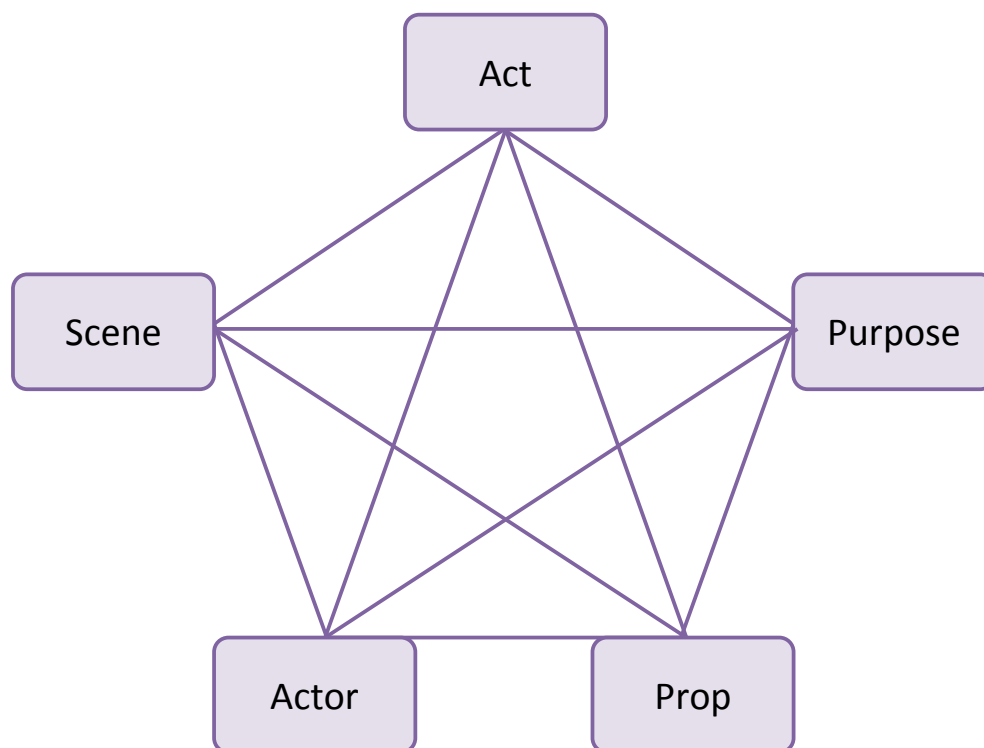


Figure 21: Terministic screens

When the connection between an independent variable and a dependent variable is examined, inferential techniques are used (*vide* 7.2.4.5). In cases where the association between two dependent variables is explored, the levels of correlation are considered (*vide* 7.2.4.6).

I start by examining possible links between act-variables and scene-variables.

8.2.1 ACT-SCENE

Based on its demarcation (*vide* 1.12), SV is measured in terms of the four types of violence namely, physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and deprivation or neglect. The concept of deprivation or neglect focused on limitedly in this questionnaire is limited, and only refers to being deprived of belongings and to school equipment being damaged. Four independent variables are used as school scenes (province, race-composition, affluence level and school size). In addition, three dependent variables refer to the school environment, namely the levels of SV, the levels of destructive behaviour, and the levels of feeling safe, protected and respected at school.

In order to understand the interrelationship between the *acts* and the *scenes*, I consider the levels of the types of SV acts per province scene. After this, there is a comparison of the levels of SV for schools with differing race-compositions, varying economic status, the size of schools and the location of the schools. Lastly I examine possible correlations between the dependent scene constructs and the various acts of SV.

8.2.1.1 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS PER PROVINCE SCENE.

I examined the levels of the various types of SV per province scene. The data is summarised in Table 26.

Table 26: Levels of types of SV acts per province scene

Province	Levels of physical violence				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,7971#	0,5015	0,76	0,4661
Free State	329	1,7708	0,4408		
Gauteng	159	1,7371	0,4314		
Combined	690	1,7707	0,4572		
Province	Levels of psychological violence				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,8704#	0,5503	1,21	0,2999
Free State	329	1,7999	0,4818		
Gauteng	159	1,8212	0,5080		
Combined	690	1,8255	0,5088		
Province	Levels of sexual violence				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,5190#	0,4261	1,78	0,1693
Free State	329	1,4579	0,4082		
Gauteng	159	1,4460	0,4222		
Combined	690	1,4730	0,4172		
Province	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	2,1980	0,6392	1,22	0,2959
Free State	329	2,1789	0,6790		
Gauteng	159	2,2812#	0,7582		
Combined	690	2,2081	0,6872		

Province	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	202	1,7506#	0,4360	2,16	0,1157
Free State	329	1,6954	0,3816		
Gauteng	159	1,6673	0,3679		
Combined	690	1,7051	0,3960		

Group with the highest mean score

The survey data show that the levels of physical SV, psychological SV and sexual SV are higher in Eastern Cape schools, than in the schools of the other two provinces. According to the findings in the sample, the level of deprivation is the highest in Gauteng schools, physical and psychological SV is lowest in Free State schools, and sexual SV is lowest in Gauteng schools. Overall, Eastern Cape schools, in this sample, experience a notably higher level of SV.

While the differences are notable, none of the differences are, however, statistically significant.

8.2.1.2 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS PER RACE-COMPOSITION SCENE

I examined the data to establish the levels of the acts of SV in schools, with particular race-compositions, which participated in this study.

Table 27: Levels of types of SV acts per race-composition scene

Race composition of school	Levels of physical violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,7434	0,4545	1,15	0,3186
Unequal, mixed	156	1,8035#	0,4857		
Multiracial	209	1,7888	0,4387		
Combined	690	1,7707	0,4572		
Race composition of school	Levels of psychological violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,7486	0,4696	7,29	0,0007*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,8777	0,5004		
Multiracial	209	1,9060#	0,5566		
Combined	690	1,8255	0,5088		

Race composition of school	Levels of sexual violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,4706	0,4156	3,65	0,0266*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,5431#	0,4420		
Multiracial	209	1,4245	0,3948		
Combined	690	1,4730	0,4172		
Race composition of school	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	2,1846	0,6770	0,69	0,5029
Unequal, mixed	156	2,2628#	0,7416		
Multiracial	209	2,2037	0,6611		
Combined	690	2,2081	0,6872		
Race composition of school	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,6765	0,3840	1,89	0,1526
Unequal, mixed	156	1,7485#	0,3917		
Multiracial	209	1,7170	0,4153		
Combined	690	1,7051	0,3960		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

In the above table it can be seen that in this sample, schools with the majority of learners from one race experience the highest levels of physical SV, sexual SV and deprivation or neglect. The multiracial schools experience the highest level of psychological SV. The significances of the differences between groups, that the one-way ANOVA pointed, out were explored through the Scheffé *post hoc* test and revealed the following relationships:

- Psychological SV at single-race schools in this sample (\bar{x} =1,7486) is statistically significantly lower than the levels in the schools where the majority of learners are from one race (\bar{x} =1,8777; p =0,032), and also statistically significantly lower than the levels are in multiracial schools (\bar{x} =1,9060; p =0,002).
- Sexual SV, in the multiracial schools in this sample (\bar{x} =1,4245), is statistically significantly lower than in the schools where the majority of learners from one race (\bar{x} =1,5431; p =0,032).

8.2.1.3 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS PER AFFLUENCE LEVEL OF THE SCHOOL

I analysed the levels of the various acts of SV according to the affluence levels of the schools.

Table 28: Levels of types of SV acts per affluence-scene

Levels of physical violence					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,7953#	0,4499	1,8376	0,0666
1-3	256	1,7292	0,4671		
Combined	690	1,7707	0,4572		
Levels of psychological violence					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,8733#	0,5218	3,2358	0,0013*
1-3	256	1,7444	0,4762		
Combined	690	1,8255	0,5088		
Levels of sexual violence					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,4712	0,4120	0,1474	0,8829
1-3	256	1,4761#	0,4268		
Combined	690	1,4730	0,4172		
Levels of deprivation or neglect					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	2,2172#	0,6745	0,4563	0,6483
1-3	256	2,1925	0,7092		
Combined	690	2,2081	0,6872		
Levels of SV combined					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,7249#	0,3941	1,7201	0,0859
1-3	256	1,6713	0,3976		
Combined	690	1,7051	0,3960		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

There are small differences in the levels of deprivation (the more affluent schools reflected a higher incidence) and the levels of sexual violence (the less affluent schools reflected a higher incidence). There is a notable difference between the levels of physical violence and psychological violence. The more affluent schools, in this sample, have higher levels of physical violence (\bar{x} =1,7953) than the less affluent schools (\bar{x} =1,7292). The Scheffé *post*

hoc test revealed, furthermore, that the more affluent schools in this sample experience statistically significantly higher levels of psychological violence ($\bar{x}=1,8733$) than the less affluent schools ($\bar{x}=1,7444$; $p=0,0013$).

8.2.1.4 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS PER SCHOOL SIZE SCENE

The following table depicts the comparison of the levels of the various acts of SV in the schools, which participated in the sample, and which have 750 or fewer learners, with the levels in the larger schools. The details are shown in the table below.

Table 29: Levels of various types of SV acts per school size-scene

School size	Levels of physical violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,7273	0,4565	2,8976	0,0039*
More than 750	296	1,8286#	0,4524		
Combined	690	1,7707	0,4572		
School size	Levels of psychological violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,7711	0,4752	3,2600	0,0012*
More than 750	296	1,8978#	0,5429		
Combined	690	1,8255	0,5088		
School size	Levels of sexual violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,4682	0,4254	0,3499	0,7265
More than 750	296	1,4795#	0,4067		
Combined	690	1,4730	0,4172		
School size	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	2,2009	0,6752	0,3175	0,7509
More than 750	296	2,2177#	0,7038		
Combined	690	2,2081	0,6872		
School size	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,6741	0,3845	2,3767	0,0177*
More than 750	296	1,7462#	0,4078		
Combined	690	1,7051	0,3960		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Levels of all types of SV acts are higher in larger schools than in smaller schools. The difference is, however statistically significant for the following variables:

- Physical SV in larger schools ($\bar{x}=1,8286$) is statistically significantly higher than in schools with 750 learners or fewer ($\bar{x}=1,7273$).
- Psychological SV in larger schools ($\bar{x}=1,8978$) is statistically significantly higher than in schools with 750 learners or fewer ($\bar{x}=1,7711$).

8.2.1.5 SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS IN URBAN AND RURAL SCHOOLS

The levels of different acts of SV in the urban schools in this sample were compared to the levels in the rural schools. The details are shown in the table below.

Table 30: Levels of types of SV acts in urban and rural scenes

Area	Levels of physical violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,7721#	0,4377	0,0847	0,9325
Rural	322	1,7692	0,4791		
Combined	690	1,7707	0,4572		
Area	Levels of psychological violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,8566#	0,5304	1,7189	0,0861
Rural	322	1,7900	0,4814		
Combined	690	1,8255	0,5088		
Area	Levels of sexual violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	394	1,4562	0,4106	1,1342	0,2571
Rural	296	1,4923#	0,4244		
Combined	690	1,473043	0,4172		
Area	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	394	2,1995	0,6749	0,3488	0,7274
Rural	296	2,2178#	0,7018		
Combined	690	2,2081	0,6872		

Area	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,7056#	0,3931	0,0356	0,9716
Rural	322	1,7045	0,3998		
Combined	690	1,7051	0,3960		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Although none of the differences between the levels of the various acts of SV appear to be statistically significant, the level of sexual SV is notably higher in rural schools, whereas the level of psychological SV is notably higher in urban schools. Physical SV seems to have similar levels in urban and rural schools.

8.2.1.6 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN DEPENDENT SCENE CONSTRUCTS AND ACTS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

The following table depicts the level of association between levels of destructive behaviour at schools, and the levels of specific SV acts:

Table 31: Correlation between scene constructs and acts of SV

	Physical SV	Psychological SV	Sexual SV	Deprivation or neglect
Destructive behaviour	0,5050	0,4568	0,5661	0,0568
Feeling protected, accepted and respected	-0,2205	-0,2775	-0,2259	-0,0301

The table shows a moderate association between levels of destructive behaviour (e.g. substance abuse, damaging school property) and acts of physical SV, psychological SV and sexual SV. A small negative association seems to exist between the levels of each of the physical SV, psychological SV, sexual SV, and the perception of being protected, accepted and respected.

8.2.1.7 DISCUSSION

In this section I considered how the various types of SV acts are experienced by respondents from various school scenes. Physical SV seems to be more of a problem in Eastern Cape

schools, more affluent schools, and in larger schools. Psychological SV is particularly a problem in larger schools. There are higher levels of psychological SV experienced in more affluent schools, multiracial schools, and schools where the majority of learners are from one race. Although school size and the economic status of schools, do not seem to influence the level of sexual SV, in Eastern Cape schools, and in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, sexual SV seems to be a problem. In the Gauteng schools, deprivation has the highest level in this study.

The interrelatedness of the *scene* and the *act* was explored in this section, and I now focus on how the *scene* and the *agents* or actors relate.

8.2.2 AGENT-SCENE

The following two indicators were used to examine the school scene, namely the levels of destructive behaviour in schools (a negative construct), and the levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected (a positive construct). I compare the levels of these two constructs as experienced by the various categories of respondents: female and male actors and actors who are in different school grades.

8.2.2.1 SCHOOL VIOLENCE SCENE INDICATORS PER GRADE OF THE RESPONDENT

I examined how the two indicators that describe the scene were experienced by respondents from different school grades.

Table 32: SV scene indicators per grade of the respondent

Grade	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,8540#	1,1321	6,91	0,0000*
9	94	2,5658	0,9715		
10	181	2,2564	0,8710		
11	255	2,5570	1,0084		
12	53	2,3014	0,8803		
Combined	682	2,5017	0,9956		

Grade	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	3,1932	0,6461	3,81	0,0045*
9	94	3,3057	0,6505		
10	180	3,4582#	0,6034		
11	253	3,2848	0,5827		
12	53	3,4110	0,6587		
Combined	679	3,3301	0,6184		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Grade 8 respondents experience levels of destructive behaviour the most, while grade 10 respondents' experience of this behaviour is the lowest. Grade 10 respondents feel the most protected accepted and respected, whereas grade 8 respondents scored the lowest on this variable.

The statistically significant differences between groups, indicated in the table above, were explored with the Scheffé *post hoc* test and it revealed that:

- Grade 10 respondents' experience of destructive behaviour ($\bar{x}=2,2564$) is statistically significantly less than grade 8 respondents' experience ($\bar{x}=2,8540$; $p=0,000$), and that of the grade 11 respondents' experience ($\bar{x}=2,5570$; $p=0,042$).
- Grade 12 respondents' experience of destructive behaviour ($\bar{x}=2,3014$) is statistically significantly less than grade 8 respondents' experience of this kind of behaviour ($\bar{x}=2,8540$; $p=0,027$).
- Grade 10 respondents feel statistically significantly more protected, accepted and respected ($\bar{x}=3,4582$) than grade 8 respondents ($\bar{x}=3,1932$; $p=0,019$).

The following section examines the perceptions of the two gender groups concerning scene constructs.

8.2.2.2 SCHOOL VIOLENCE SCENE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO THE GENDER OF THE RESPONDENT

The views of boys and girls on the levels of destructive behaviour at their school, and their own levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected are summarised in the table that follows.

Table 33: SV scene indicators according to the gender of the respondent

Gender	Levels of destructive behaviour				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	2,4678	1,0146	0,9473	0,3438
Male	298	2,5405#	0,9687		
Combined	683	2,4995	0,9948		
Gender	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	3,3178	0,6101	0,5642	0,5728
Male	296	3,3448#	0,6298		
Combined	681	3,3295	0,6184		

Group with the highest mean score

Male respondents, in the schools in the sample used in this research project, observe and experience destructive behaviour slightly more than the female respondents. But, they do feel slightly more protected, accepted and respected at school than the girls do. These differences are, however, not statistically significant.

In the above two sets of comparisons, I viewed the scene as the dependent construct. I then compared the differences between agent-dependent variables and independent scene-variables.

8.2.2.3 PERPETRATOR ACTORS PER PROVINCE SCENE

This section compares the levels of school violence committed by perpetrator actors in the various provinces:

Table 34: Level of SV committed by perpetrator actors per province scene

Province	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	202	1,6753#	0,4317	1,10	0,3327
Free State	329	1,6542	0,3785		
Gauteng	159	1,6135	0,3871		
Combined	690	1,6510	0,3968		

Province	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	202	1,6453#	0,5179	1,02	0,3623
Free State	329	1,6014	0,4983		
Gauteng	159	1,5702	0,5090		
Combined	690	1,6071	0,5066		
Province	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	199	1,5176	0,9992	1,82	0,1622
Free State	327	1,6881#	1,0423		
Gauteng	159	1,5849	0,9892		
Combined	685	1,6146	1,0190		
Province	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	199	1,3266#	0,7309	1,43	0,2407
Free State	326	1,2301	0,6120		
Gauteng	158	1,2405	0,6526		
Combined	683	1,2606	0,6584		

Group with the highest mean score

The levels of SV committed by learners and by staff members are highest in Eastern Cape schools according to the findings of the sample, and the lowest in Gauteng schools. The Free State has the highest level of SV committed by outsiders, whereas the Eastern Cape schools, which participated in the sample, have the highest level of gangsterism. However, none of these differences were large enough to be classified as statistically significant.

The following section examines the various perpetrators according to the race-composition of learners.

8.2.2.4 PERPETRATOR ACTORS ACCORDING TO THE RACE COMPOSITION OF SCHOOLS

The levels of school violence committed per perpetrator actor in the various race-composition categories of schools were compared.

Table 35: Level of SV committed by perpetrator actors per race-composition scene

Race composition of school	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,5916	0,5029	1,24	0,2914
Unequal, mixed	156	1,6631#	0,5192		
Multiracial	209	1,5894	0,5022		
Combined	690	1,6071	0,5066		
Race composition of school	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,6301	0,3819	0,94	0,3899
Unequal, mixed	156	1,6801#	0,4144		
Multiracial	209	1,6617	0,4060		
Combined	690	1,6510	0,3968		
Race composition of school	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,6947	1,0898	8,56	0,0002*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,7677#	1,1386		
Multiracial	209	1,3780	0,7375		
Combined	690	1,6146	1,0190		
Race composition of school	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	325	1,3022#	0,7108	1,24	0,2904
Unequal, mixed	156	1,2338	0,5577		
Multiracial	209	1,2163	0,6418		
Combined	690	1,2606	0,6584		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The levels of SV in acts, where learners were reported to be the perpetrators, where staff members were reported to be perpetrators, and where outsiders were reported to be perpetrators, are highest in schools where the majority of the learners are from one race. The ANOVA test showed that the differences between schools with varying race composition were statistically significant where outsiders were perpetrators. I used the Scheffé *post hoc* test to explore this difference, which showed that the level of SV, where outsiders are involved in acts of SV is, statistically significantly higher in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, with minorities from other races ($\bar{x}=1,7677$) compared to the levels in single-race schools ($\bar{x}=1,6947$; $p=0,002$) as well as the levels in

multiracial schools (\bar{x} =3780; p =0,001). The level of SV in which gang members are the perpetrators was the highest in the single-race schools and the lowest in the multiracial schools. These differences are, however not statistically significant.

8.2.2.5 PERPETRATOR ACTORS PER AFFLUENCE SCENE

The levels of school violence committed per perpetrator actor in the more affluent schools were compared to those in less affluent schools. The details are provided in the table below.

Table 36: Level of SV committed by perpetrator actors per affluence scene

Learners as perpetrators					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,6650#	0,3981	1,2085	0,2273
1-3	256	1,6272	0,3941		
Combined	690	1,6510	0,3968		
Staff members as perpetrators					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,6260#	0,5043	1,2745	0,2029
1-3	256	1,5751	0,5098		
Combined	690	1,6071	0,5066		
Outsiders as perpetrators					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	433	1,5173	0,9306	3,2987	0,0010*
1-3	252	1,7817#	1,1378		
Combined	685	1,6146	1,0190		
Gang members as perpetrators					
Quintile of school	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	429	1,2145	0,5806	2,3897	0,0171*
1-3	254	1,3386#	0,7671		
Combined	683	1,2606	0,6584		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The level of SV committed by learners, as well as the level of SV committed by staff members, is higher in more affluent schools than in schools that are less privileged, although these differences are not statistically significant. The level of SV committed by outsiders in less affluent schools (\bar{x} =1,7817) is statistically significantly higher than in the more affluent schools (\bar{x} =1,5173). The level of SV committed by gang members in less affluent schools

($\bar{x}=1,3386$) is, also, statistically significantly higher than in the more affluent schools ($\bar{x}=1,2145$).

8.2.2.6 PERPETRATOR ACTORS PER SCHOOL SIZE SCENE

The levels of school violence, committed by perpetrator actors in larger schools, were compared to those levels in smaller schools. The details are provided in Table 37.

Table 37: Level of SV committed by perpetrator actor per school size

School size	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,6172	0,3862	2,5891	0,0098*
More than 750	296	1,6959#	0,4068		
Combined	690	1,6510	0,3968		
School size	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,6062	0,5107	0,0555	0,9557
More than 750	296	1,6083#	0,5018		
Combined	690	1,6071	0,5066		
School size	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	389	1,6324	1,0581	0,5236	0,6007
More than 750	296	1,5912#	0,9664		
Combined	685	1,6146	1,0190		
School size	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	389	1,2571	0,6507	0,1618	0,8715
More than 750	294	1,2653#	0,6694		
Combined	683	1,2606	0,6584		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

There is little difference in the experiences of respondents from larger schools and smaller schools about staff members as perpetrators. Respondents from larger schools ($p=0,0098$) experience statistically significantly more SV where learners are the perpetrators, than the respondents who attend smaller schools, do. The findings illustrate that the levels of outsider perpetration and gang perpetration are comparable in small and large schools.

8.2.2.7 PERPETRATOR ACTORS IN URBAN AND RURAL SCENES

The levels of school violence committed by perpetrator actors in urban schools are compared to the levels in rural schools.

Table 38: Level of SV committed by perpetrator actors in urban and rural schools

Area	Learners as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,6408	0,3908	0,7218	0,4707
Rural	322	1,6626#	0,4038		
Combined	690	1,6510	0,3968		
Area	Staff members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,6227#	0,5072	0,8671	0,3862
Rural	322	1,5892	0,5061		
Combined	690	1,6071	0,5066		
Area	Outsiders as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,4592	0,8662	4,3554	0,0000*
Rural	317	1,7950#	1,1469		
Combined	685	1,6146	1,0190		
Area	Gang members as perpetrators				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	365	1,2082	0,5888	2,2348	0,0258*
Rural	318	1,3208#	0,7264		
Combined	683	1,2606	0,6584		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table depicts that, although the level of learner perpetration in rural schools is moderately higher than in urban schools, the level of staff member perpetration in urban schools is somewhat higher. What is statistically significant, are the higher levels of perpetration by gang members and by outsiders in the rural areas.

The dependent variables within the agent-scene terministic screen are examined in the next section.

8.2.2.8 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN PERPETRATOR ACTORS AND SCHOOL VIOLENCE SCENE INDICATORS

The levels of association between the perpetrator-actor category and scene variables were statistically determined, and presented in the following table:

Table 39: Correlations between perpetrator actors and SV scene indicators

	Learners as perpetrators	Staff members as perpetrators	Outsiders as perpetrators	Gang members as perpetrators
Levels of destructive behaviour	0,5100	0,4851	0,3494	0,1529
Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected	-0,1943	-0,3159	-0,0772	-0,1122

The strongest association, albeit moderate, is between the levels of destructive behaviour at schools and the levels of learner perpetration. The association between staff members as perpetrators and the levels of destructive behaviour, is also moderate. The strongest negative association is between staff members behaving as perpetrators, and the levels of respondents feeling protected, accepted and respected.

8.2.2.9 DISCUSSION

In this section I considered the actors or agents found in the various SV scenes. Grade 8 learners seem to be particularly vulnerable as far as being the victims of the destructive behaviour of others, and they feel less protected, accepted and respected. Although boys experience destructive behaviour more, they are seemingly less affected than girls as they feel more protected, accepted and respected.

The level of violent behaviour by learners appears to be highest in Eastern Cape schools, in mixed-race schools where one race is dominant, in more affluent schools, and in larger schools. Violent behaviour by staff members seems unaffected by the size of the schools, but is the highest in Eastern Cape schools, in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and in more affluent schools. SV committed by outsiders is the highest in less affluent schools, in mixed-race schools where one race is dominant and in Free State

schools. SV committed by gang members is the highest in single-race schools, less affluent schools and in Eastern Cape schools.

8.2.3 AGENT-ACT

In the preceding section I set out the results of my examination of the connections between agents and scenes. In this section I examine the agent-act relationship by comparing the levels of the various types of SV acts according to the grade and gender of the respondents, and possible associations between categories of perpetrators and SV acts.

8.2.3.1 TYPES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS PER GRADE OF THE RESPONDENT

The table below depicts the levels of each of the types of SV, which respondents from various grades experienced:

Table 40: Levels of SV that respondents experienced per grade

Grade of respondent	Levels of physical violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,9320	0,4991	11,54	0,0000*
9	94	1,9766#	0,4708		
10	182	1,6931	0,4206		
11	255	1,7205	0,4400		
12	54	1,6481	0,3829		
Combined	684	1,7733	0,4577		
Grade of respondent	Levels of psychological violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,9300	0,5594	4,85	0,0007*
9	94	1,9480#	0,5807		
10	182	1,7684	0,4957		
11	255	1,8281	0,4607		
12	54	1,6415	0,4605		
Combined	684	1,8287	0,5084		

Grade of respondent	Levels of sexual violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,5806#	0,4805	0,44	0,7781
9	94	1,4957	0,4109		
10	182	1,3919	0,3346		
11	255	1,5156	0,4472		
12	54	1,3341	0,3327		
Combined	684	1,4750	0,4177		
Grade of respondent	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,1934	0,6828	0,68	0,6085
9	94	2,2842#	0,7696		
10	182	2,1625	0,6411		
11	255	2,2286	0,7034		
12	54	2,1429	0,6205		
Combined	684	2,2068	0,6872		
Grade of respondent	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,8288	0,,4372	7,50	0,0000*
9	94	1,8077	0,4383		
10	182	1,6446	0,3559		
11	255	1,7031	0,3811		
12	54	1,5466	0,3365		
Combined	684	1,7078	0,3957		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

There is a statistically significant difference between the respondents of the various grades with regards to the levels they experienced physical violence, psychological violence, and SV in general. Grade 9 respondents experienced the highest levels of physical SV, and psychological SV. Grade 12 respondents were the least exposed to these two types of SV. The Scheffé *post hoc* test reveals that:

- Grade 9 respondents experienced physical SV statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$), grade 11 respondents ($p=0,000$) and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,001$);

- Grade 8 respondents experienced physical SV statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,001$), grade 11 respondents ($p=0,003$) and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,007$);
- Both grade 8 respondents ($p=0,022$) and grade 9 respondents ($p=0,013$) experienced higher levels of psychological SV than respondents in grade 12.

Grade 8 respondents experienced higher levels of sexual SV than respondents from any other grade. These levels are statistically significantly higher than the levels that grade 10 learners ($p=0,010$) and grade 12 learners ($p=0,015$) experienced.

Overall the grade 8 respondents experienced the highest levels of SV, followed by grade 9 respondents, with the grade 12 respondents experiencing the least SV. The Scheffé *post hoc* test reveals the following statistically significant differences:

- Both grade 8 respondents ($p=0,001$) and grade 9 respondents ($p=0,004$) experience higher levels of SV than the respondents in grade 12.
- Both grade 8 respondents ($p=0,006$) and grade 9 respondents ($p=0,028$) experience higher levels of SV than the respondents in grade 10.

8.2.3.2 TYPES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS THAT RESPONDENTS EXPERIENCED PER GENDER GROUP

The table below gives the levels that female and male respondents experienced of each of the types of SV:

Table 41: Levels of SV experienced by respondents per gender group

Gender of respondent	Levels of physical violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,7462	0,4457	1,6644	0,0965
Male	298	1,8046#	0,4688		
Combined	686	1,7716	0,4565		
Gender of the respondents	Levels of psychological violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,8305#	0,5029	0,2179	0,8276
Male	298	1,8220	0,5178		
Combined	686	1,8268	0,5091		

Gender of the respondents	Levels of sexual violence				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,4573	0,4226	1,1328	0,2577
Male	298	1,4937#	0,4092		
Combined	686	1,4731	0,4169		
Gender of the respondents	Levels of deprivation or neglect				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	2,2813#	0,6835	3,2874	0,0011*
Male	298	2,1088	0,6780		
Combined	686	2,2064	0,6860		
Gender of the respondents	Levels of SV combined				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,6960	0,3994	0,7373	0,4612
Male	298	1,7185#	0,3907		
Combined	686	1,7057	0,3955		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table reveals that the level of psychological SV experienced by girls and boys was similar. Boys experienced notably higher levels of physical SV and sexual SV than girls. Girls experienced statistically significantly higher levels of deprivation or neglect, which in the context of this survey, means that they were deprived of their possessions and from being part of the group, more than the boys. Overall, boys experienced more SV than girls, but the difference is not statistically significant.

8.2.3.3 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SCHOOL VIOLENCE ACTS AND PERPETRATOR CATEGORIES

Table 42 depicts the correlation between the various categories of perpetrators-actors and the levels of the types of SV:

Table 42: Correlation between categories of perpetrators and acts of SV

	Learners as perpetrators	Staff members as perpetrators	Outsiders as perpetrators	Gang members as perpetrators
Levels of physical violence	0,7683	0,6999	0,2948	0,3138
Levels of psychological violence	0,7795	0,6824	0,2445	0,3864
Levels of sexual violence	0,7398	0,7129	0,3519	0,2606
Levels of deprivation or neglect	-0,0044	-0,0051	0,0574	0,0583

Definite correlations were found between the levels of physical, psychological and sexual violence and learners and staff as perpetrators. Small correlations were found between the levels of physical, psychological and sexual violence and outsiders as perpetrators.

8.2.3.4 DISCUSSION

In this section I looked at the link between agent and act. The most vulnerable groups of learners seem to be the grade 8 learners and the male learners. Physical violence is the biggest problem for boys and the grade 8 and 9 learners. Psychological violence is comparably experienced by boys and girls, but learners in the lower grades are more the victims of this type of violence than the more senior learners. Sexual SV is a problem for grade 8 learners, and grade 11 learners, and for boys, while deprivation is a particular problem for girls. In the section that follows I look at possible links between *scene constructs* and *prop-constructs*.

8.2.4 SCENE-PROPS

In this section I examine the props that are used in the various SV scenes, through the *scene-prop* terministic screen, starting with props found in the various provinces.

8.2.4.1 PROPS OBSERVED ON THE PROVINCE SCENE

I examined the props that were used to harm others, per province and the details are displayed in Table 43.

Table 43: Props reported by respondents per province scene

Province	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	201	2,5373#	0,8499	7,91	0,0004*
Free State	327	2,3089	0,8901		
Gauteng	159	2,1918	0,7871		
Combined	687	2,3486	0,8641		
Province	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,6196	0,7410	4,26	0,0145
Free State	329	1,6393#	0,6511		
Gauteng	159	1,4560	0,6155		
Combined	690	1,5913	0,6741		
Province	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	2,3680#	0,9776	11,13	0,0000*
Free State	329	2,1363	0,8628		
Gauteng	159	1,9266	0,8188		
Combined	690	2,1558	0,9014		
Province	Hands, feet, fists, etc,				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,6432	0,6299	0,32	0,7288
Free State	329	1,6811	0,5687		
Gauteng	159	1,6861#	0,6150		
Combined	690	1,6711	0,5973		
Province	Firearms				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,1056	0,2507	9,42	0,0001*
Free State	329	1,1084	0,3870		
Gauteng	159	1,2704#	0,6002		
Combined	690	1,1449	0,4207		
Province	Knives and other sharp instruments,				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	202	1,8775#	0,7682	1,71	0,1809
Free State	329	1,7662	0,7460		
Gauteng	159	1,7547	0,7129		
Combined	690	1,7961	0,7459		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Analysis of the data revealed the following information about props that were used in the context of SV in the various provinces:

- Desks, walls, and other surfaces that were written on, harm others statistically significantly more in the Eastern Cape than in the Free State ($p=0,012$), and in Gauteng schools ($p=0,001$).
- Cellular phones and other electronic media were more often used in the Free State province to victimise others, than in any of the other provinces in the sample. This difference is statistically significant between the Free State respondents in this sample and those from Gauteng ($p=0,019$).
- Clubs, sticks and other hard objects were used statistically significantly more in the Eastern Cape schools than in the Free State schools ($p=0,015$) as well as in the Gauteng schools ($p=0,000$).
- Knives and other sharp instruments were used most often in the Eastern Cape and were the least used in the Gauteng schools.
- Firearms were props on the scene in Gauteng more often than in other provinces in this sample. The difference is statistically significant between the Gauteng schools and the Free State schools ($p=0,000$) and between the Gauteng schools and the Eastern Cape schools ($p=0,000$).

In the following section I consider the race-composition scene in relation to the various props used by perpetrators.

8.2.4.2 PROPS OBSERVED ON THE RACE-COMPOSITION SCENE

I examined the props that were used to harm others according to the race composition of the schools. The details are given in Table 44.

Table 44: Props reported by respondents per race-composition scene

Race composition of school	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	323	2,3142	0,9488	0,49	0,6155
Unequal, mixed	155	2,3839#	0,8351		
Multiracial	209	2,3756	0,7412		
Combined	687	2,3486	0,8641		
Race composition of school	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	325	1,6492#	0,7097	2,58	0,0762
Unequal, mixed	156	1,5716	0,6373		
Multiracial	209	1,5159	0,6378		
Combined	690	1,5913	0,6741		
Race composition of school	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	325	2,1574	0,8605	0,63	0,5308
Unequal, mixed	156	2,2158#	0,9615		
Multiracial	209	2,1085	0,9187		
Combined	690	2,1558	0,9014		
Race composition of school	Hands, feet, fists, etc.				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	325	1,6649	0,5850	3,60	0,0279*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,7730#	0,6753		
Multiracial	209	1,6049	0,5446		
Combined	690	1,6711	0,5973		
Race composition of school	Firearms,				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	325	1,1138	0,3898	9,07	0,0001*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,2692#	0,5988		
Multiracial	209	1,1005	0,2594		
Combined	690	1,1449	0,4207		
Race composition of school	Knives and other sharp instruments				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Single race	325	1,7464	0,7508	5,62	0,0038*
Unequal, mixed	156	1,9712#	0,8116		
Multiracial	209	1,7428	0,6668		
Combined	690	1,7961	0,7459		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

With the exception of cellular phones and other electronic media, the usage of all categories of props to harm others is the highest in schools where the majority of learners are from one race. Cellular phones are used more often to harm others at single-race schools in my sample, than in the other race-categories of schools. The scores of multiracial schools are the lowest for most of the props categories. The following statistically significant differences presented in the Scheffé *post hoc* test for this sample of schools:

- Perpetrators in schools with the majority of learners from one race use their hands, feet and fists significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools do ($p=0,029$).
- Perpetrators in schools, with the majority of learners from one race, use firearms significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools ($p=0,001$), and also more than perpetrators do, who attend single-race schools ($p=0,001$).
- Perpetrators in schools, with the majority of learners from one race, use knives and sharp instruments significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools ($p=0,015$), and also more than perpetrators do, who attend single-race schools ($p=0,008$).

8.2.4.3 PROPS OBSERVED ON SCHOOL SCENES WITH DIFFERING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

I compared the props used to victimise others that were reported by respondents from more affluent schools with those reported by respondents from less affluent schools.

Table 45: Props reported by respondents for scenes with differing economic conditions

Quintile of school	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	433	2,2921	0,8091	2,2429	0,0252*
1-3	254	2,4449#	0,9446		
Combined	687	2,3486	0,8641		
Quintile of school	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,5657	0,6351	1,3014	0,1936
1-3	256	1,6348#	0,7347		
Combined	690	1,5913	0,6741		

Quintile of school	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	2,1294	0,9066	1,0010	0,3172
1-3	256	2,2005#	0,8924		
Combined	690	2,1558	0,9014		
Quintile of school	Hands, feet, fists, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,6949#	0,5994	1,3612	0,1739
1-3	256	1,6309	0,5928		
Combined	690	1,6711	0,5973		
Quintile of school	Firearms				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,1567#	0,4184	0,9555	0,3396
1-3	256	1,1250	0,4247		
Combined	690	1,14492	0,4207		
Quintile of school	Knives and other sharp instruments				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,7967#	0,7260	0,0240	0,9809
1-3	256	1,7952	0,7801		
Combined	690	1,7961	0,7460		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Although the above table reveals some differences, the only statistically significant difference that came to the fore was about desks and walls being written on to victimise learners. The score on this variable for quintile 1-3 schools which participated in the sample ($\bar{x}=2,4449$), is statistically significantly higher than that of the more affluent schools ($\bar{x}=2,2921$; $p=0,0252$). Knives and other sharp instruments seemed to be used in a comparable manner in schools with differing economic statuses. Cellular phones and electronic media, as well as clubs, sticks and other hard objects were used more notably in the less affluent schools. Hands, feet and fists, as well as fire arms were used more notably in the more affluent schools.

8.2.4.4 PROPS OBSERVED PER SCHOOL SIZE

I compared the respondents' responses about props used to harm others in smaller schools with the props used to harm others in larger schools.

Table 46: Props observed according to respondents per school size

Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	391	2,2749	0,9250	2,5792	0,0101*
More than 750	296	2,4459#	0,7672		
Combined	687	2,3486	0,8641		
Cellular phones and electronic media					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,6096#	0,6931	0,8205	0,4122
More than 750	296	1,5670	0,6483		
Combined	690	1,5913	0,6741		
Clubs, sticks and other hard objects					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	2,0998	0,8904	1,8852	0,0598
More than 750	296	2,2303#	0,9119		
Combined	690	2,1558	0,9014		
Hands, feet, fists, etc.					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,6624	0,6141	0,4411	0,6593
More than 750	296	1,6827#	0,5749		
Combined	690	1,6711	0,5973		
Firearms					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,1083	0,3552	2,6506	0,0082*
More than 750	296	1,1937#	0,4910		
Combined	690	1,1449	0,4207		
Knives and other sharp instruments					
School size	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	394	1,7229	0,7523	2,9914	0,0029*
More than 750	296	1,8936#	0,7272		
Combined	690	1,7961	0,7459		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

With the exception of cellular phones and other electronically media, all props were used more frequently in larger schools than in smaller schools. The differences are statistically significant for desks, walls and other surfaces to write on ($p=0,0101$), firearms ($p=0,0082$) and knives and other sharp instruments ($p=0,0101$).

8.2.4.5 PROPS OBSERVED IN URBAN AND RURAL SCHOOLS

This section compares the respondents' reports of the props used to harm others in urban schools with the props used in rural schools.

Table 47: Props observed in urban and rural schools

Area	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	2,2011	0,8021	4,8857	0,0000*
Rural	319	2,5188#	0,9023		
Combined	687	2,3486	0,8641		
Area	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,5480	0,6297	1,8066	0,0713
Rural	322	1,6408#	0,7193		
Combined	690	1,5913	0,6741		
Area	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	2,0367	0,8783	3,7458	0,0002*
Rural	322	2,2919#	0,9095		
Combined	690	2,1558	0,9014		
Area	Hands, feet, fists, etc,				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,6818#	0,5819	0,5029	0,6152
Rural	322	1,6589	0,6151		
Combined	690	1,6711	0,5973		
Area	Firearms				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,1639#	0,4416	1,2702	0,2044
Rural	322	1,1232	0,3951		
Combined	690	1,1449	0,4207		
Area	Knives and other sharp instruments				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,7167	0,6899	3,0074	0,0027*
Rural	322	1,8869#	0,7967		
Combined	690	1,7961	0,7459		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Table 47 shows that desks, walls and other surfaces which were used by perpetrators to write harmful messages on, were statistically significantly more often used in rural schools than in urban schools. Similarly, the use of cellular phones and other electronic media used by perpetrators to send harmful messages occurred more notably in rural schools than in urban schools. Clubs, sticks and other hard objects, as well as knives and sharp instruments were used as weapons by perpetrators statistically significantly more in rural schools than in urban schools, while firearms observed were indicated notably more in urban schools than in rural schools.

8.2.4.6 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN DEPENDENT SCENE VARIABLES AND PROPS

This section examines the level of correlation between the dependent scene variables and props.

Table 48: Correlations between scene and prop dependent variables

	Destructive behaviour	Feeling protected, accepted and respected
Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on	0,4899	0,0277
Cellular phones and electronic media	0,3837	-0,1390
Clubs, sticks and other hard objects	0,5867	-0,1507
Hands, feet, fists, etc.	0,4285	-0,2441
Firearms	0,2496	-0,2019
Knives and other sharp instruments	0,5731	-0,1448

There is a moderate association between levels of destructive behaviour at the selected schools and the use of knives and other sharp instruments, as well as the use of hands, feet, fists, and the use of desks and walls to harm others. The levels of association were smaller between destructive behaviour and the use of firearms, cellular phones and electronic media to harm others. The negative association between the use of the various props, and a feeling of being protected, accepted and respected is small.

8.2.4.7 PROPS CARRIED FOR DEFENCE

I examined the props that the respondents carried for defence in the various scenes. The first comparison is between respondents from the provinces used in the study, followed by the other independent scene variables.

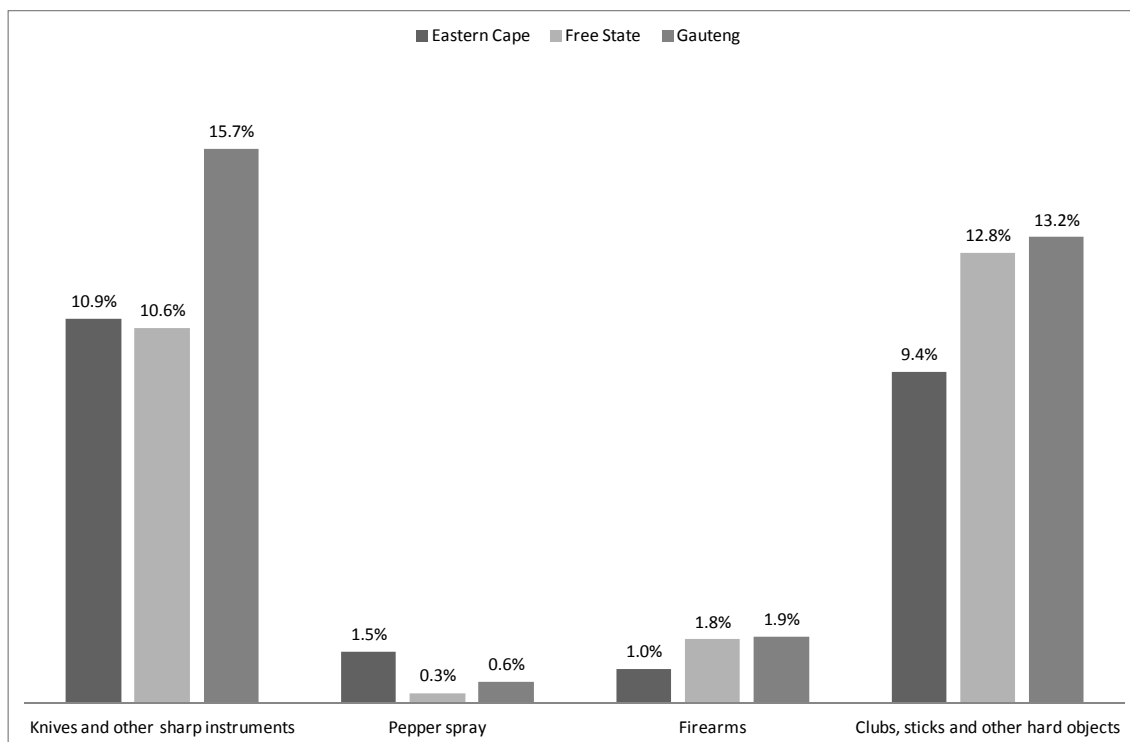


Figure 22: Props carried in defence per province

The above chart shows that Gauteng respondents carried knives and other sharp instruments more than the respondents did, who were in the other two provinces that were included in the sample. The Eastern Cape respondents carried fewer clubs, sticks and other hard objects for defence purposes, than the Free State and Gauteng respondents did. Similarly, firearms were carried more so in Gauteng than in the Free State province, and more respondents from the Eastern Cape carried pepper spray than respondents did in either of the other two provinces.

Next I looked at props carried by respondents from schools with differing race-compositions.

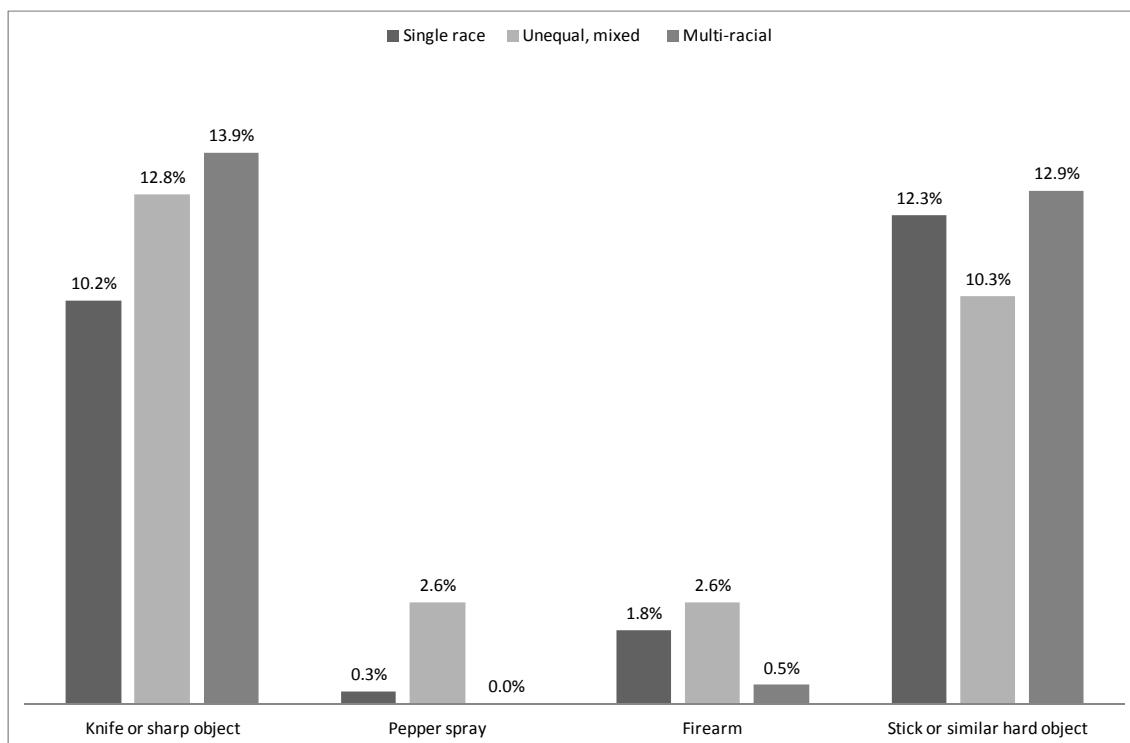


Figure 23: Props carried in defence per race-composition of school

Figure 23 shows that respondents from multiracial schools carried knives and other sharp objects more often than respondents from single-race schools did. Respondents from schools where the majority of learners are from one race, carried pepper spray as well as firearms more than the others did. Respondents from single-race schools carried more sticks and other similar objects as weapons than any other prop.

I examined the weapons respondents from more affluent schools carried, and compared them to the weapons carried by respondents from less affluent schools.

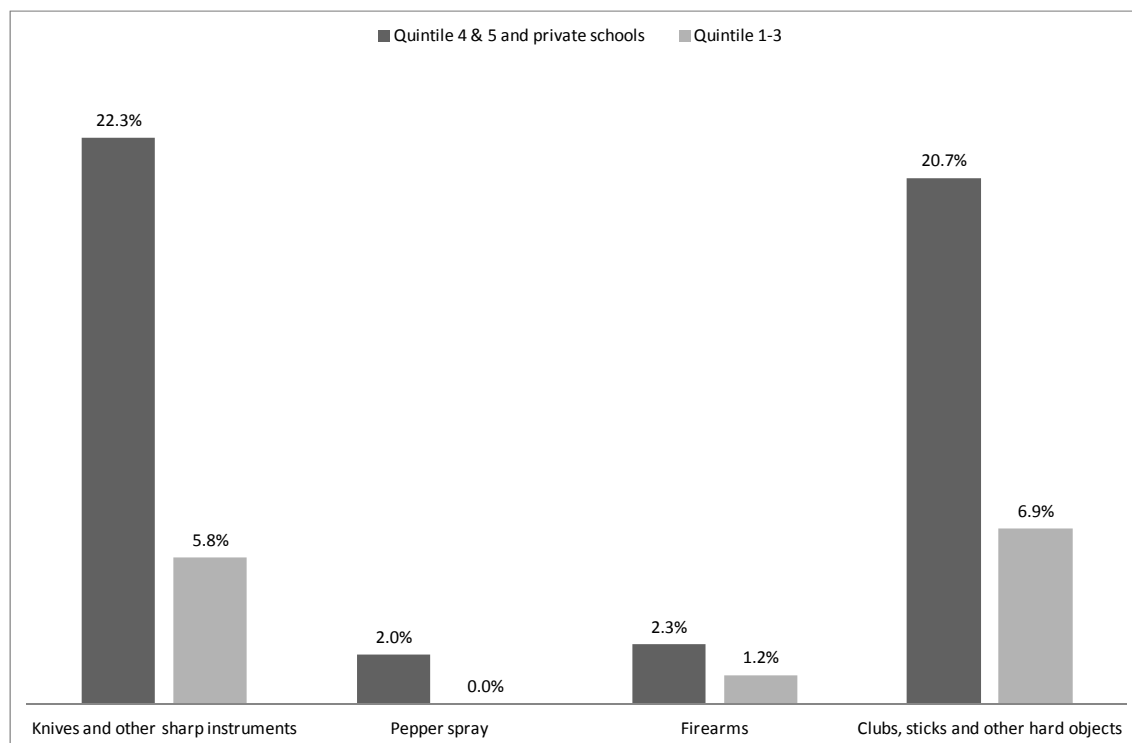


Figure 24: Props carried for defence per economic status of the school

Respondents from more affluent schools more often carried weapons for defence purposes than their peers did in the lower quintile schools. Clubs, sticks and other hard objects were the favourite prop in the lower quintile schools, followed by knives and other sharp objects. Respondents, who attend affluent schools, mostly carried knives and other sharp objects as weapons, followed by sticks and similar hard objects. Respondents from more affluent schools said they used pepper spray.

I compared the responses from respondents attending small schools with those responses in larger schools:

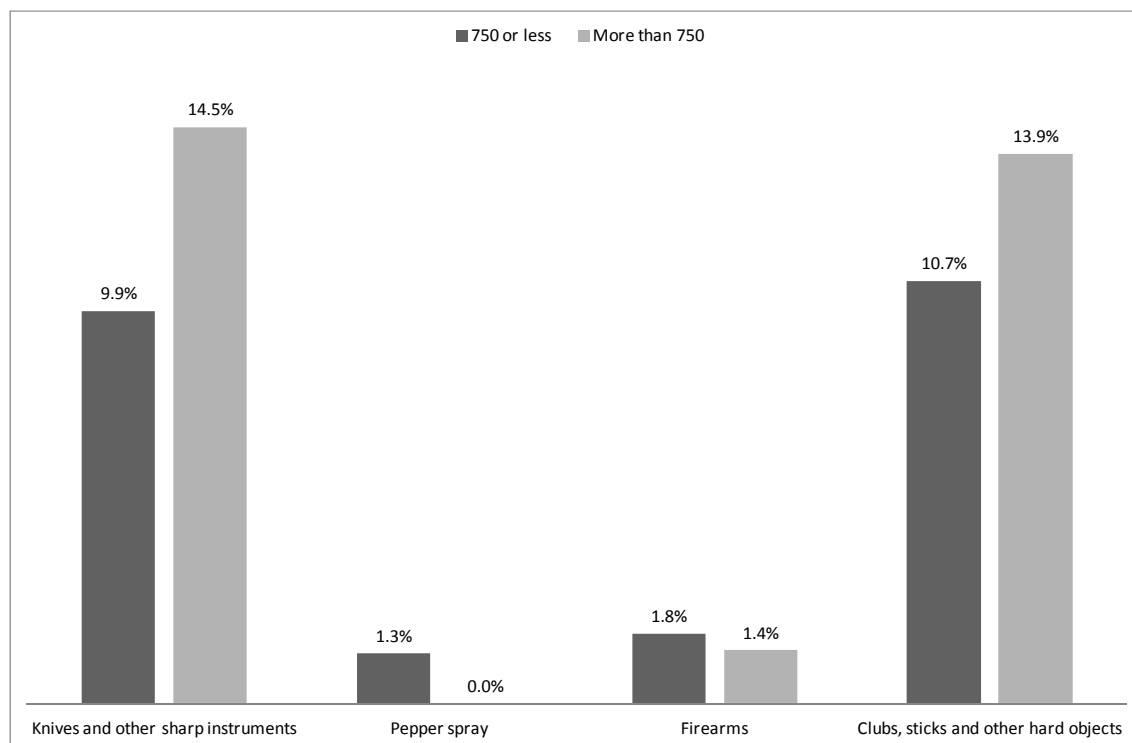


Figure 25: Props carried in defence per school size

Respondents from small schools were the only ones who said they had pepper spray. Respondents from small schools carried more firearms than respondents from large schools. Respondents from large schools carried knives and other sharp instruments as well as clubs, sticks and similar weapons for defence, more commonly than the respondents in small schools did.

8.2.4.8 DISCUSSION

In this section I looked at props in various scenes of SV. I found that desks, walls and other surfaces are used to write harmful comments on more frequently in Eastern Cape schools, quintile 1-3 schools and larger schools. Although cellular phones and electronic platforms are used on a similar level in smaller and larger schools, they are more commonly used in the Free State schools, in single-race schools and in less affluent schools. Clubs, sticks and other similar objects are used significantly more in Eastern Cape schools than in the other two provinces, and they are notably used more often in less affluent schools and in larger schools. Hands, fists and feet are used on victims significantly more in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and they are used notably more, in affluent schools than in less privileged schools. They are used similarly in small and large schools as well as in

the schools from the various provinces. Knives and other sharp instruments are used mostly in Eastern Cape schools, and are used significantly more in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and are used significantly more in large schools. Firearms are used on victims significantly more in large schools, and significantly more in schools where the majority of learners are from one race, and significantly more in Gauteng school, and notably more in affluent schools.

Knives and other sharp objects are carried as defence weapons more than any other prop in Gauteng and in Eastern Cape schools. Sticks and other similar objects are the most popular defence weapons carried by Free State learners. Pepper spray and firearms are carried notably more by respondents from schools where the majority of learners are from one race, with a minority of learners from other races than the other race-categories of schools. All categories of weapons are carried notably less in the lower quintile schools than in the more affluent schools. Knives and other sharp instruments, as well as sticks and other similar weapons, are carried more in larger schools than in smaller schools.

8.2.5 SCENE-PURPOSE

I explored possible relationships between the various scene constructs, and the four constructs used to measure the motives for SV.

8.2.5.1 PURPOSE PER PROVINCE SCENE

I started by analysing the reasons for incidents of SV obtained from the responses captured in the three provinces included in the study.

Table 49: Reason for SV reported by respondents per province scene

Province	Valuables, food, etc.				
	<i>n</i>	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Eastern Cape	201	1,3632#	0,8902	1,65	0,1924
Free State	326	1,3190	0,7861		
Gauteng	159	1,2138	0,6499		
Combined	686	1,3076	0,7905		

Province	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	200	1,1500	0,5468	3,24	0,0399*
Free State	328	1,3049#	0,7491		
Gauteng	159	1,2767	0,7284		
Combined	687	1,2532	0,6935		
Province	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	201	1,1741	0,5870	1,32	0,2685
Free State	328	1,2652#	0,6447		
Gauteng	157	1,2229	0,6465		
Combined	686	1,2289	0,6291		
Province	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Eastern Cape	200	1,1150	0,5030	3,06	0,0474*
Free State	329	1,2371#	0,6186		
Gauteng	157	1,1529	0,5680		
Combined	686	1,1822	0,5772		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Respondents from Eastern Cape schools that were part of the sample reported SV in which perpetrators took valuables and food from victims notably more than other respondents did in any of the other provinces. Free State respondents reported racial differences, religious differences, and immigrant status as reasons for SV more than the respondents from the other two provinces. The differences are, however, statistically significant only in the following two situations:

- SV as a result of racial differences is significantly higher in the Free State schools than in the Eastern Cape schools ($p=0,045$).
- SV as a result of the victims' status as immigrant is significantly higher in the Free State schools, than in the Eastern Cape schools ($p=0,049$).

8.2.5.2 PURPOSE PER RACE-COMPOSITION SCENE

I furthermore analysed the reason for incidences of SV as indicated by respondents from schools with various race-compositions. The details are provided in the table that follows.

Table 50: Reasons for SV reported by respondents per race composition-scene

Race composition of school	Valuables, food, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	321	1,3209#	0,8138	0,09	0,9183
Unequal, mixed	156	1,2949	0,8129		
Multiracial	209	1,2967	0,7390		
Combined	686	1,3076	0,7905		
Race composition of school	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	322	1,2422	0,6723	2,72	0,0666
Unequal, mixed	156	1,1667	0,5884		
Multiracial	209	1,3349#	0,7862		
Combined	687	1,2533	0,6935		
Race composition of school	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	323	1,2817#	0,6673	2,37	0,0940
Unequal, mixed	155	1,2065	0,6314		
Multiracial	208	1,1635	0,5580		
Combined	686	1,2289	0,6291		
Race composition of school	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
Single race	323	1,2601#	0,6503	5,85	0,0030*
Unequal, mixed	154	1,1364	0,5248		
Multiracial	209	1,0957	0,4707		
Combined	686	1,1822	0,5772		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

SV in which perpetrators took valuables and food from victims is fairly similar in schools with varying race-compositions, whereas, there are more notable differences for other reasons. Respondents from multiracial schools in the sample, reported more that SV occurred as a result of racial differences, than in any other school type in the sample. Respondents from single-race schools reported SV as a result of religious differences more than respondents who were affected by other variables. Multiracial schools scored the lowest on this construct.

The Scheffé *post hoc* test, based on the difference that was pointed out by the one-way ANOVA, showed that SV as a result of the victim being an immigrant is statistically significantly higher in single-race schools in this sample than in multiracial schools ($p=0,006$).

8.2.5.3 PURPOSE PER SCENES WITH DIFFERENT ECONOMIC SITUATIONS

Next, I compared the views of respondents from quintiles 1-3 schools to those from quintile 4 and 5 schools and private schools.

Table 51: Reasons, according to respondents, for SV in schools with varying economic positions

Quintile of school	Valuables, food, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	432	1,2755	0,7403	1,3886	0,1654
1-3	254	1,3622#	0,8681		
Combined	686	1,3076	0,7905		
Quintile of school	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	434	1,2465	0,6807	0,3330	0,7392
1-3	253	1,2648#	0,7162		
Combined	687	1,2533	0,6935		
Quintile of school	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	431	1,1903	0,5795	2,0950	0,0365*
1-3	255	1,2941#	0,7014		
Combined	686	1,2289	0,6291		
Quintile of school	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
4, 5 and private	432	1,1181	0,4888	3,8346	0,0001*
1-3	254	1,2913#	0,6900		
Combined	686	1,1822	0,5772		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Respondents from quintile 1-3 schools indicated, on average, a higher frequency for all the above possible reasons for SV, although the difference for racial discord as a reason for SV, is very small. The difference in the level of SV as a result of religious disagreements, and because a victim was an immigrant, presented as being statistically significant.

8.2.5.4 PURPOSE PER SCHOOL SIZE SCENE

The next comparison in the scene-purpose ratio is between the views of respondents from smaller schools and those from larger schools.

Table 52: Reason for SV reported by respondents from schools per school size

School size	Valuables, food, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	390	1,2769	0,7791	1,1662	0,2439
More than 750	296	1,3480#	0,8050		
Combined	686	1,3076	0,7905		
School size	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	391	1,1790	0,5581	3,2475	0,0012*
More than 750	296	1,3514#	0,8305		
Combined	687	1,2533	0,6935		
School size	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	391	1,2301#	0,6145	0,0630	0,9498
More than 750	295	1,2271	0,6489		
Combined	686	1,2289	0,6291		
School size	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
750 or fewer	391	1,1944#	0,5845	0,6348	0,5257
More than 750	295	1,1661	0,5680		
Combined	686	1,1822	0,5772		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

According to the above data, food and valuables seem to have been the reason for SV more often at larger schools, than at smaller schools. The immigrant status of the victim was more often the reason for SV in smaller schools than in larger schools. SV as a result of religious differences was quite similar in small and large schools, while racial differences were, statistically significantly, more often the cause of SV in larger schools ($\bar{x}=1,3514$) than in smaller schools ($\bar{x}=1,1790$; $p=0,0012$).

8.2.5.5 PURPOSE IN URBAN AND RURAL SCHOOLS

The last comparison in the scene-purpose ratio is between the views of respondents from urban schools and those from rural schools.

Table 53: Reason for SV reported by respondents from urban and rural schools

Area	Valuables, food etc,				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	366	1,2541	0,7049	1,8986	0,0580
Rural	320	1,3688#	0,8755		
Combined	686	1,3076	0,7905		
Area	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	368	1,2717#	0,7211	0,7493	0,4539
Rural	319	1,2320	0,6607		
Combined	687	1,2533	0,6935		
Area	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	365	1,2000	0,6031	1,2821	0,2003
Rural	321	1,2617#	0,6567		
Combined	686	1,2289	0,6291		
Area	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Urban	366	1,1257	0,4972	2,7566	0,0060*
Rural	320	1,2469#	0,6517		
Combined	686	1,1822	0,5772		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The levels of SV, as a result of racial differences, are moderately higher in urban schools than in rural schools. Religious differences cause SV notably more in rural schools than in urban schools. SV, because of valuables and food, occurs notably more in rural schools than in urban schools. A learner's immigrant status causes SV to be statistically significantly more prevalent in rural schools ($\bar{x}=2,2469$) than in urban schools ($\bar{x}=1,1257$; $p=0,0060$).

8.2.5.6 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN DEPENDENT SCENE-VARIABLES AND PURPOSE-VARIABLES

Possible associations between the level of destructive behaviour and the level of feeling protected, accepted and respected and the four variables that represent reasons for SV were explored.

Table 54: Correlation coefficient between scene variables and reasons for SV

	Levels of destructive behaviour	Levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected
Valuables, food, etc.	0,1830	-0,0872
Racial differences	0,1848	-0,1506
Religious differences	0,2562	-0,1051
Immigrant status	0,1852	-0,0220

The above data shows a weak correlation between the levels of destructive behaviour and the possible reasons for SV. The correlation with religious differences is the strongest. A small negative relationship can be seen between the levels of feeling protected, accepted and respected. Racial differences and religious differences emerged as reasons for SV.

8.2.5.7 DISCUSSION

Only four possible reasons for SV were explored in the questionnaire. These reasons were: SV occurs in order to deprive victims of their food or valuables, SV occurs as a result of racial differences, SV occurs as a result of religious differences, and SV occurs as a result of the immigrant status of the victims. A number of observations were made about this sample of selected schools. Firstly, food and valuables were more often indicated as the reason for SV in the less privileged schools than in more privileged schools; more in larger schools than in smaller schools and more in Eastern Cape schools than in the other two provinces. It was comparably a problem in schools with differing race-compositions. Secondly, racial differences were more often indicated to be a reason for SV in Free State schools, multiracial schools and larger schools. SV as a result of racial differences was shown to be as much of a problem in more affluent schools as it was in lower quintile schools. Thirdly, SV, as a result of religious differences, was on a par in smaller schools and larger schools; however, it is notably higher in Free State schools and single-race schools, and significantly higher in less

affluent schools. Fourthly, SV as a result of victims being immigrants was found to be significantly more in Free State schools, in single-race schools and in less affluent schools. None of these reasons, however, appeared to be a major reason for SV.

The section that follows, explores the link between the actors and the props.

8.2.6 AGENT-PROPS

Props are used *by* actors and *on* actors in the SV dramas. I start by comparing the props experienced by victims and onlookers from various grades, and then props as experienced by males and female. I further look at the correlation between the props and the various categories of perpetrators, but I have kept in mind that a possible correlation cannot be interpreted as causal. Lastly, I examine the props carried for defence purposes by respondents who are either male or female, and who are in various grades.

8.2.6.1 PROPS REPORTED PER GRADE OF RESPONDENTS

The props reported by respondents from various grades were compared and the statistical information is provided below.

Table 55: Props reported by respondents per grade

Grade	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,5051	0,7841	5,54	0,0002*
9	94	2,6011#	0,8085		
10	181	2,1906	0,8537		
11	255	2,3569	0,8940		
12	53	2,1038	0,8512		
Combined	682	2,3482	0,8646		
Grade	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,6465#	0,7301	1,63	0,1653
9	94	1,5957	0,6945		
10	182	1,6200	0,6148		
11	255	1,5993	0,7129		
12	54	1,3765	0,5059		
Combined	684	1,5936	0,6749		

Grade	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,5051#	0,9480	9,96	0,0000*
9	94	2,4557	0,8796		
10	182	1,9368	0,8198		
11	255	2,0765	0,8998		
12	54	2,1481	0,8533		
Combined	684	2,1591	0,9029		
Grade	Hands, feet, fists, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,9158#	0,6823	7,17	0,0000*
9	94	1,7872	0,5823		
10	182	1,5691	0,5556		
11	255	1,6324	0,5804		
12	54	1,5802	0,5504		
Combined	684	1,6737	0,5984		
Grade	Firearms				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,3502#	0,7021	8,23	0,0000*
9	94	1,1418	0,3641		
10	182	1,0641	0,2354		
11	255	1,1425	0,4069		
12	54	1,0741	0,2563		
Combined	684	1,1462	0,4223		
Grade	Knives and other sharp instruments				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	2,0816#	0,7407	8,04	0,0000
9	94	2,0106	0,7099		
10	180	1,6905	0,7313		
11	253	1,7127	0,7602		
12	53	1,6590	0,6042		
Combined	679	1,7969	0,7467		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The only props used to harm others that were comparably reported by respondents from all grades are cellular phones and other electronic media. The level of response for the grade 8 respondents was the highest, followed by the grade 10 respondents.

There were statistically significantly different levels of reporting by respondents in various grades for all the other props. Based on the Scheffé *post hoc* test the following should be noted about the schools in this sample:

- Grade 9 respondents reported desks, walls, and other surfaces used to write harmful messages on statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,007$).
- Grade 8 respondents reported clubs, sticks and other hard instruments statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$) as well as more than grade 11 respondents ($p=0,002$).
- Grade 9 respondents also reported clubs, sticks and other hard instruments statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$) as well as more than grade 11 respondents ($p=0,013$).
- Grade 8 respondents reported hands, feet and fists used in acts of SV statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$), grade 11 respondents ($p=0,003$) and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,023$).
- Grade 8 respondents reported firearms as props in SV acts statistically significantly more than grade 9 respondents ($p=0,016$), grade 10 respondents ($p=0,000$), grade 11 respondents ($p=0,001$) and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,004$).
- Grade 8 respondents reported knives and other sharp instruments as props in SV acts statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,001$), grade 11 respondents ($p=0,001$) and grade 12 respondents ($p=0,021$).
- Grade 9 respondents also reported knives and other sharp instruments as props in SV acts statistically significantly more than grade 10 respondents ($p=0,010$) and grade 11 respondents ($p=0,023$).

8.2.6.2 PROPS REPORTED PER GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

I compared the responses of female and male respondents on props used to harm others.

Table 56: Props reported by respondents per gender group

Gender	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	2,4078#	0,8322	1,9701	0,0492*
Male	298	2,2768	0,8978		
Combined	683	2,3507	0,8633		
Gender	Cellular phones and electronic media				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,5004	0,6265	4,0770	0,0001*
Male	298	1,7097#	0,7152		
Combined	686	1,5914	0,6740		
Gender	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	2,0958	0,9103	2,0750	0,0384*
Male	298	2,2394#	0,8825		
Combined	683	2,1582	0,9005		
Gender	Hands, feet, fists, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,5816	0,5685	4,5704	0,0000*
Male	298	1,7892#	0,6158		
Combined	686	1,6718	0,5980		
Gender	Firearms				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,1151	0,3680	2,1778	0,0298*
Male	298	1,1857#	0,4807		
Combined	686	1,1458	0,4218		
Gender	Knives and other sharp instruments				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,6866	0,7159	4,5165	0,0000*
Male	298	1,9427#	0,7612		
Combined	686	1,7979	0,7463		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

For all categories of props, there are statistically significant differences between the female and male respondents' reporting. Girls more so than boys, reported writing on desks, walls and other surfaces to cause harm to others, but boys obtained higher scores on all the other categories.

8.2.6.3 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN REPORTING ON PERPETRATOR ACTORS AND REPORTING ON PROPS

Table 57 depicts the level of correlation between perpetrator actors and props used in acts of SV at schools.

Table 57: Correlation between types of props used and categories of perpetrators

	Learners as perpetrators	Staff members as perpetrators	Outsiders as perpetrators	Gang members as perpetrators
Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on	0,3651	0,2283	0,2343	0,1002
Cellular phones and electronic media	0,5695	0,4773	0,2408	0,1642
Clubs, sticks and other hard objects	0,5971	0,6159	0,3184	0,2338
Hands, feet, fists, etc.	0,5505	0,6832	0,2762	0,2575
Firearms	0,3153	0,2895	0,2446	0,1380
Knives and other sharp instruments	0,6595	0,4239	0,3552	0,2659

While correlations must not be interpreted in terms of causality, the following moderate correlations came to the fore in this sample of schools:

- The level of staff members being perpetrators shows a medium correlation with the use of clubs, sticks and other hard objects, and also with the use of hands, feet, and fists, to harm others.
- The level of learners being perpetrators shows a moderate correlation with the use of cellular phones and electronic media to harm others. There is also a correlation with the use of clubs, sticks and other hard objects as well as with the use of hands, feet, fists, and so on, and with the use of knives and other sharp instruments.

8.2.6.4 PROPS CARRIED BY AGENTS FOR DEFENCE PURPOSES

I explored the frequency with which certain props are brought to school by respondents to defend themselves. I compared props carried by respondents³⁵ from various grades, to defend themselves. The following diagram depicts the details:

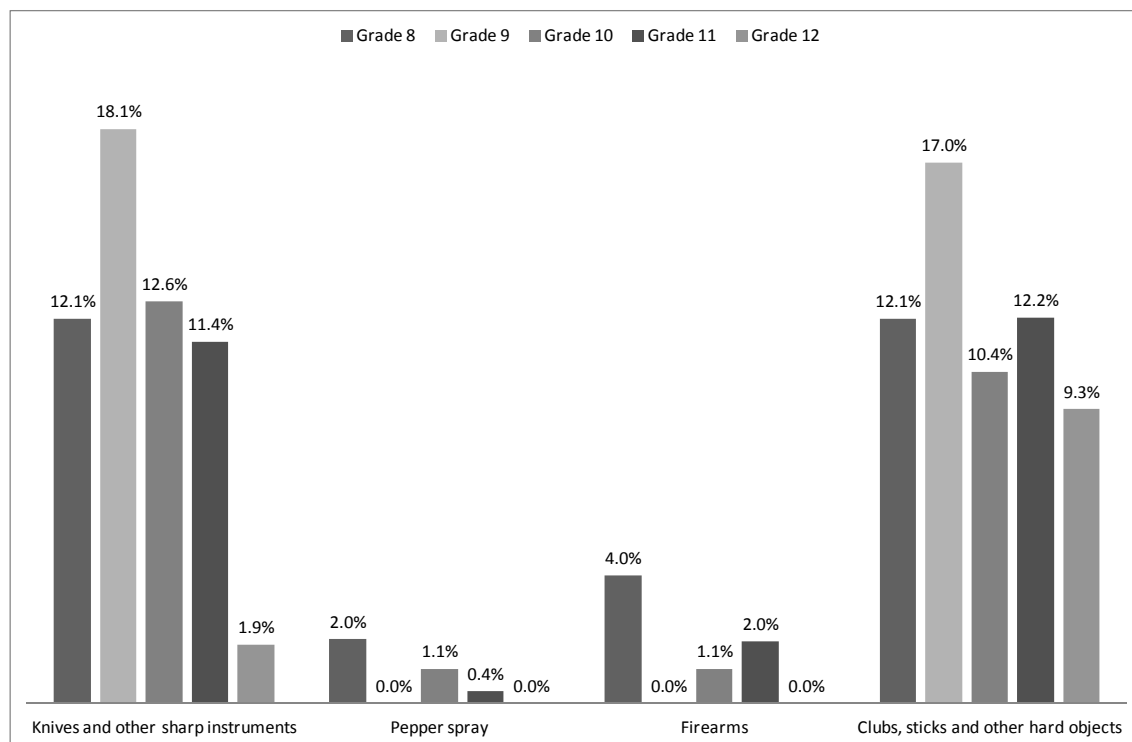


Figure 26: Props carried in defence, per grade of respondent

Grade 9 respondents admitted more frequently to carrying knives and other sharp instruments as well as sticks or similar hard objects, for self-defence than did learners from other grades. Grade 8 respondents admitted to carrying pepper spray and firearms for defence, more than respondents did from any other grade.

Props carried by the male respondents were also compared to those carried by the female respondents.

³⁵ This refers to what the respondents reported about *themselves*, and excludes props that were observed on others.

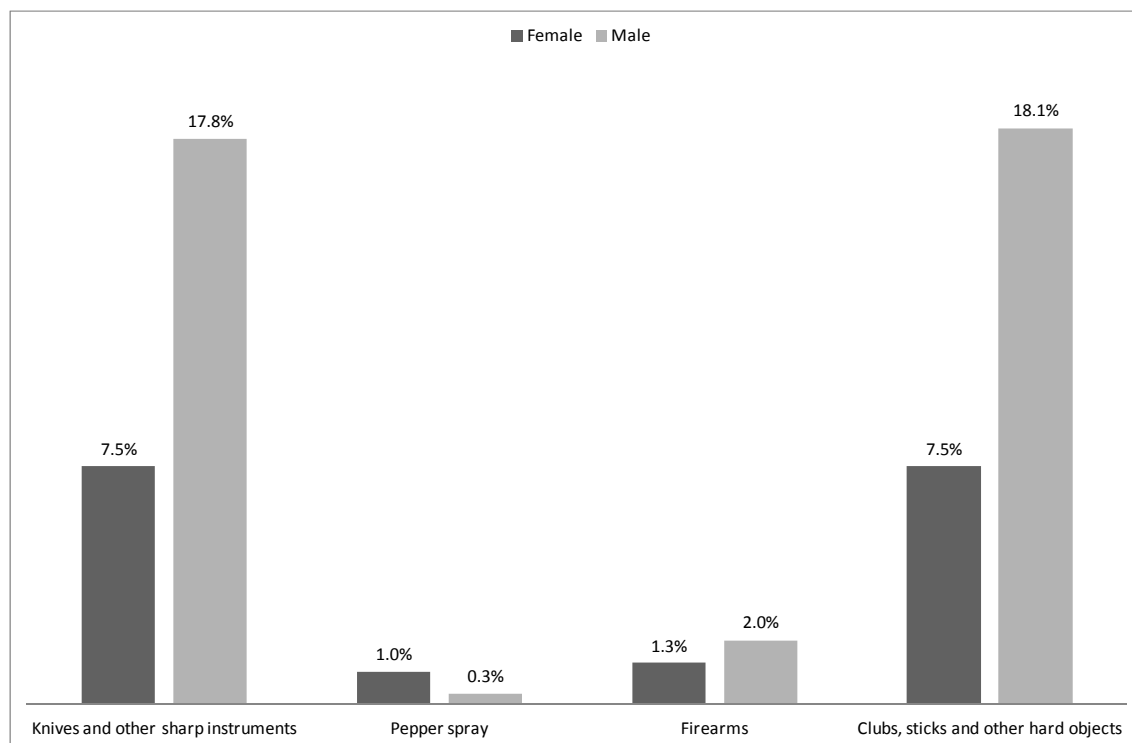


Figure 27: Props carried in self-defence, according to the gender of the respondents

More male respondents, than female respondents, indicated that they brought knives and other sharp objects to school for self-defence. Also, more male respondents, than their female peers, brought sticks and similar hard objects to school.

8.2.6.5 DISCUSSION

In this section I looked through the agent-props terministic screen. Agents use props in SV dramas to harm others, and also to defend themselves. Some of the props are regularly found in classrooms, whereas others are brought to school specifically to harm others, or for self-defence. While respondents from the different grades experience cellular phones and other electronic media to harm others comparably, boys reported this significantly more than girls. Grade 9 respondents reported on the comments written on desks, walls and other surfaces to victimise others the most, grade 8 respondents were second highest, and the grade 12 respondents experienced this phenomenon the least of all the respondents in the various grades. The girls reported significantly more on these written comments than the boys did. Male respondents, and grades 8 and 9 respondents, reported the most on the use of hands, feet and fists to harm others.

Grade 8 respondents reported seeing and experiencing clubs, sticks and similar weapons the most, followed by grade 9 respondents. More grade 9 respondents, than respondents in any other grade indicated that they brought clubs, sticks and other hard objects to school as defence weapons. Boys reported that they observed and experienced clubs, sticks and other hard object used as weapons, but also indicated that they themselves brought these weapons to school for defence purposes.

Grade 8 learners seem to be the group in which firearms are used the most, as they scored the highest in this category with regards to observing and experiencing firearms, as well as bringing them to school themselves. Knives and other sharp instruments were more often reported by grade 9 learners, than by the respondents in any other grade. In general, boys, as well as learners in the lower grades of the secondary school, appeared to observe, know about, and experience weapons as props in SV drama more so than the other respondents did.

Next, I examine the *agent-purpose* ratio.

8.2.7 AGENT-PURPOSE

In this section I look at possible links between the actors or agents in the SV dramas, and the reason why these dramas occur. I start by looking at the views of the respondents from various grades, and follow up with a comparison between the views of boys and girls. Lastly I explore possible associations between the various reasons for school violence and the categories of perpetrators. There are only four categories of reasons for SV listed in the questionnaire.

8.2.7.1 REASONS FOR SCHOOL VIOLENCE AS PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS PER GRADE

I examined the differences between the views of respondents from various grades about suggested reasons for SV, and the following table depicts the details:

Table 58: The purpose of SV as perceived by respondents from different grades

Grade	Valuables, food, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,4444	0,9060	3,14	0,0141*
9	93	1,4516#	0,9726		
10	180	1,3278	0,8244		
11	254	1,2441	0,7081		
12	54	1,0741	0,2644		
Combined	680	1,3103	0,7935		
Grade	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,3535	0,8489	2,44	0,0457*
9	93	1,3548#	0,8294		
10	182	1,2692	0,7275		
11	254	1,2047	0,5876		
12	53	1,0566	0,3048		
Combined	681	1,2526	0,6930		
Grade	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	98	1,3469#	0,8261	1,75	0,1379
9	93	1,3011	0,7191		
10	181	1,1823	0,5322		
11	254	1,2047	0,5943		
12	54	1,1481	0,4517		
Combined	680	1,2279	0,6279		
Grade	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	F	p
8	99	1,2347	0,7839	2,35	0,0527
9	94	1,3226#	0,6941		
10	180	1,1374	0,5017		
11	253	1,1700	0,5334		
12	53	1,0741	0,2644		
Combined	679	1,1838	0,5795		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Although the one-way ANOVA showed statistically significant differences between groups in two categories of reasons for school violence, the Scheffé *post hoc* test did not find a

difference between any specific two groups statistically significant. However, respondents from the lower grades, more so than respondents from the higher grades, reported that SV occurred for specific reasons.

In the next section I compared the views of male and female respondents.

8.2.7.2 REASONS FOR SCHOOL VIOLENCE AS PERCEIVED BY MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

The following table depicts how boys and girls perceive the reasons for, or the purpose of, SV:

Table 59: Purpose of SV as perceived by male and female respondents

Gender	Valuables, food, etc.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	387	1,2351	0,6971	2,8163	0,0050*
Male	295	1,4068#	0,8944		
Combined	682	1,3094	0,7925		
Gender	Racial differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	1,1740	0,5575	3,3645	0,0008*
Male	298	1,3523#	0,8247		
Combined	683	1,2518	0,6921		
Gender	Religious differences				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	385	1,1636	0,5369	3,1591	0,0017*
Male	297	1,3165#	0,7265		
Combined	682	1,2302	0,6307		
Gender	Immigrant status				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Female	388	1,1481	0,5317	1,8132	0,0702
Male	298	1,2290#	0,6325		
Combined	686	1,1833	0,5787		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

Male respondents in this sample experienced valuables and food, racial differences and religious differences statistically significantly more to be the reason for SV than female respondents.

8.2.7.3 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PERPETRATOR ACTORS AND PERCEIVED PURPOSE OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

This section determines the correlation between the various categories of perpetrators and the perceived reasons for SV.

Table 60: Correlation between categories of perpetrators and possible reasons for SV.

	Valuables, food, etc.	Racial differences	Religious differences	Immigrant status
Learners as perpetrators	0,4851	0,3677	0,3638	0,2661
Staff members as perpetrators	0,2414	0,2379	0,2929	0,1883
Outsiders as perpetrators	0,1331	0,1848	0,2291	0,1656
Gang members as perpetrators	0,2897	0,1459	0,2147	0,2396

Although there is a moderate correlation between learners as perpetrators and valuables, food, etc. as a reason for SV, there is a weak correlation between the other variables as shown in the table above.

8.2.7.4 DISCUSSION

In this section I examined the interplay of the agents and reasons for SV. Respondents from the lower grades reported more than the respondents from the higher grades did, that SV occurred for the given reasons. Male respondents also reported, more so than female respondents, that SV occurred for the given reasons. Grade 12 respondents experienced racial differences to be the least reason for SV, and religious differences as the most significant reason. Valuables and food were named as reasons for SV more than any of the other categories of reasons according to grade 8, grade 9, grade 10 and grade 11

respondents. Both male and female respondents indicated that valuables and food were more often the reasons for SV than the other reasons.

I then looked at the act-purpose screen to improve my understanding of the reasons for SV.

8.2.8 ACTS-PURPOSE

In this section I examined the association between the levels of the various types of SV and the possible reasons for SV. However, I am aware that there is a likelihood of association by chance, or as a result of an external factor, and that no causality should be read into the analysis.

Table 61: Correlation between the levels of SV acts and possible reasons for SV

	Levels of physical violence	Levels of psychological violence	Levels of sexual violence	Levels of deprivation or neglect
Valuables, food, etc.	0,3419	0,4568	0,2753	-0,0081
Racial differences	0,2807	0,3088	0,2775	-0,0141
Religious differences	0,2923	0,3179	0,3120	0,0355
Immigrant status	0,2648	0,2301	0,1912	0,0657

The above table shows that there is no notable correlation between the levels of deprivation or neglect and any of the given reasons for SV. Weak associations between physical, psychological and sexual SV and the given reasons for SV exist, with the strongest association existing between psychological violence and valuables and food as reason for SV.

8.2.9 ACTS-PROPS

In this section I examine the association between the levels of the various acts of SV and the props used in SV. I acknowledge that causality cannot be determined by using correlations.

Table 62: Correlation between different categories of SV and props used in acts of SV

	Levels of physical violence	Levels of psychological violence	Levels of sexual violence	Levels of deprivation or neglect
Desks, walls and other surfaces	0,3286	0,2874	0,3455	0,0418
Cellular phones and electronic media	0,3438	0,3537	0,6886	0,0178
Clubs, sticks and other hard objects	0,7406	0,5648	0,5250	0,0081
Hands, feet, fists, etc.	0,7703	0,5395	0,4875	-0,0049
Firearms	0,2498	0,2277	0,3571	-0,0666
Knives and other sharp instruments	0,5745	0,5394	0,5279	0,0133

The three strongest associations that can be seen are between

- levels of physical violence and hands, feet and fists used against the victim,
- levels of physical violence and clubs, sticks and other hard objects used against victims;
and
- levels of sexual violence and cellular phones and other electronic media used to harm victims.

A number of moderate associations can be noted namely:

- the levels of physical violence and knives and other sharp instruments used against victims;
- the levels of psychological violence and clubs, sticks and other hard objects, hands, feet and fists, and other sharp instruments used against victims; and
- the levels of sexual violence and clubs, sticks and other hard objects, hands, feet and fists, and other sharp instruments used against victims.

8.2.10 PURPOSE-PROPS

Lastly the possibility of associations between the purpose for SV and the props used in acts of SV is explored, through Spearman's correlation ratio.

Table 63: Correlation between reasons for SV and props used in acts of SV

	Valuables, food, etc.	Racial differences	Religious differences	Immigrant status
Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on	0,0837	0,1037	0,0949	0,0721
Cellular phones and electronic media	0,2689	0,2127	0,2777	0,1608
Clubs, sticks and other hard objects	0,2524	0,1813	0,2891	0,1844
Hands, feet, fists, etc.	0,2723	0,2481	0,2695	0,2339
Firearms	0,1720	0,2599	0,2422	0,1062
Knives and other sharp instruments	0,3271	0,2484	0,3554	0,1973

A number of small possible associations can be observed in the table above, of which the strongest are the following:

- the use of knives and other sharp instruments and religious reasons for SV;
- the use of knives and other sharp instruments and the victims' food or valuables as the reason for SV;
- the use of cellular phones and other electronic platforms and religious differences as the reason for SV; and
- the use of knives and other sharp instruments and religious differences.

In this section I looked at possible associations between reasons given for SV and props used in acts of SV. In the section that follows, I reflect on some insights gained by looking at the various terministic screens.

8.3 VIEWING SCHOOL VIOLENCE THROUGH BURKE'S TERMINISTIC SCREENS

Burke's dramatism framework provides a way to look at human action from five different angles, namely the act (what happened?), the scene (where did it happen?), the agents or actors (who did it?), the props (what was used?) and the purpose or motive (why did it happen?) (Burke, 1969:xv). Although Burke intended his framework to be used to analyse narratives, I used it as a framework to analyse the survey data. In chapter 7 I examined the data that I obtained in a survey amongst secondary school learners, focusing on one dimension at a time. In this chapter I looked at the links between aspects of Burke's pentad, as these terministic screens make it possible to become aware of the ways in which various elements influence one another (*vide* Fox, 2002:371). Although I mainly used aggregated mean scores, and measures of central tendency to compare groups within my sample, this method must not be used to argue that incidents of SV are low.

No two school situations are alike (*vide* Burke, 1969:xix) and findings in the study cannot be generalised. Although inconsistencies in the data and the interpretation thereof could have occurred, insight into SV, in some South African schools has been gained. Although no context can be excluded, certain constructs where SV occurs often, recurrently came to the fore. Examples of these constructs are Eastern Cape schools, schools in which the majority of learners are from one race, staff members as perpetrators, school boys and learners in lower grades in the secondary school. In order to make sense of SV I will now take some constructs and look at the factors that could possibly influence the situation.

Three schools from the Eastern Cape participated in the survey. Two of the schools were more affluent while the third was a no-fees school. One school was classified as multiracial, one as a single-race school, and there was one school, in which the majority of the learners were from one race. One was a large school, and two were smaller schools. Physical, psychological and sexual violence were reported to be on higher levels in these Eastern Cape schools than in the other provinces. Learners, staff members and gang members in this province were the perpetrator-actors more than in any other province. Weapons such as clubs and sticks, as well as knives and other sharp instruments, were reported to be used on victims more in the Eastern Cape than in any other province. Eastern Cape learners also

tended more to carry sticks and similar objects to defend themselves. SV occurred as a result of food and other valuables, which perpetrators took, more in this province than in the others.

Large schools seem to be problematic. Five large schools participated in the survey, namely one from the Eastern Cape, two from the Free State and two from Gauteng. One of these was a quintile 1 school while the other four were quintile 5 schools. Three were multiracial schools, one a single-race school and one a school where the majority of learners were from one race. All categories of SV were more common in large schools than in smaller schools. Learners acted significantly more as perpetrators in these schools than in smaller schools. Desks, walls and other surfaces were used significantly more in larger schools to harm others than in smaller schools. Clubs, sticks and other hard objects, as well as knives and similar sharp objects, were found more often in large schools, both in the hands of perpetrators, and in the hands of those who felt threatened. Racial differences stimulated violence more in larger schools than in smaller schools.

Schools with various race-compositions have their own dynamics, but schools with a majority of learners from one race and a minority of learners from other races, seemed to have specific problems. Physical SV and sexual SV were more common in these schools; violent acts by learners, staff members and outsiders were more likely to be present in these schools than in multiracial schools and single-race schools. Hands, feet and fists, as well as firearms and knives were used significantly more in schools in which a majority of learners are from one race. However, none of the reasons for SV, as suggested in the questionnaire, were strongly indicated to be applicable to these schools.

Some aspects of SV were similar in various school contexts. SV was a problem in both urban and rural schools. Physical SV was similar in urban rural schools. Sexual SV was just as common in small schools as it was in large schools, in more affluent and less affluent schools, and it was similarly experienced by learners from all grades. Levels of deprivation were similar in small and large schools. Hands, feet and fists were used comparably in schools from the various provinces. Knives and other sharp instruments were comparably used in more and in less affluent schools. The level of staff members acting as perpetrators,

gang members acting as perpetrators, as well as outsiders acting as perpetrators, appeared to be similar in small and large schools. Religious differences were similarly the reason for SV in small and large schools. Racial differences were similarly the reason for SV in more affluent and less affluent schools. Valuables and food were comparably considered to be the reason for SV in schools with differing race-compositions.

Boys are frequently found as actors in the SV dramas. They experience physical and sexual SV more than girls. They experience SV through cellular phones and electronic media more than girls. SV where hands, feet and fists were used, and also SV where weapons like clubs, sticks, firearms, knives and sharp instruments were used are experienced more often by boys than by girls. Boys also tended to carry knives and other sharp objects as well as sticks and similar objects, more often than girls. Boys indicated all the given reasons for SV more than the girls. Other experiences of boys and girls are similar; the levels of psychological violence they experienced were similar for boys and girls, and although only a few firearms were indicated, both boys and girls revealed that they carry firearms for self-defence.

Lower grade learners felt less protected, accepted and respected than learners in the higher grades. They experienced physical and psychological SV more, and brought more weapons to school for defence purposes than their senior peers. They also experienced the stated reasons for SV more than learners did in the higher grades.

Although staff members played a role to make some respondents feel protected, accepted and respected, they also contributed to this negatively. A number of respondents indicated that teachers were not fair, and that they were not comfortable about talking to teachers when they had a problem. Staff members appeared to be perpetrators in various contexts and were involved in various acts of SV.

Although the above discussion only considered some contexts and some role-players, examining the survey data through the various lenses that Burke suggested, allowed me to acknowledge the multidimensional nature of SV and gave me insight into its complexity. The findings of the survey are listed in the section that follows.

8.3.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE RESULTS

The findings of chapter 7 and chapter 8 are provided in the table that follows:

Table 64: Synopsis of the results from the survey

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
Acts	Although it varied in levels of seriousness, incidences of SV consistently occurred at the schools.	7.3.1.6
	Fighting, pushing and shoving were common amongst learners.	7.3.1.1
	Staff members regularly used corporal punishment in all the schools.	7.3.1.1
	Staff members regularly pushed, shoved and slapped learners.	7.3.1.1
	Stabbing and serious beatings occurred.	7.3.1.1
	Psychological violence was more common than physical violence.	7.3.1.2
	Threatening and bullying regularly occurred in schools.	7.3.1.2
	Learners were regularly exposed to being mocked, insulted, cursed and humiliated by peers and teachers.	7.3.1.2
	Sexual violence on average occurred less regularly than physical violence and psychological violence.	7.3.1.3
	Learners were sometimes sexually harassed, through being shown obscene pictures, receiving obscene suggestions, and unwanted touching.	7.3.1.3
	Sexual remarks were sometimes written about learners on walls and desks, as well as on cellular phones and electronic platforms.	7.3.1.3
	Some learners were sexually abused and raped.	7.3.1.3
	Learners regularly stole things from peers and teachers, sometimes by force.	7.3.1.4
	Learners intentionally destroyed possessions of peers.	7.3.1.4
	Some learners were deprived from interaction with others by purposeful exclusion.	7.3.1.4
There seemed to be some association between the levels of physical SV and the levels of psychological SV at the schools.	7.3.1.5	
Scene	Learners frequently destroyed things at school, drew graffiti and damaged school furniture.	7.3.2.1
	Substance abuse (alcohol, dagga and other drugs) was fairly common in the schools.	7.3.2.1
	Drugs were sometimes sold on the school premises by learners and outsiders.	7.3.2.1
	Gang activities sometimes occurred at schools.	7.3.2.1
	There were generally rules at the schools against bad behaviour and violence.	7.3.2.2

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Teachers were often perceived to help learners who had problems and to protect learners.	7.3.2.2
	Some learners perceived teachers to be fair.	7.3.2.2
	Some learners felt comfortable to talk to teachers about their problems.	7.3.2.2
	The levels of SV were higher in the Eastern Cape than in the Free State and Gauteng.	7.3.2.3(a)
	The levels of destructive behaviour were higher in the Eastern Cape than in the Free State and Gauteng.	7.3.2.3(a)
	Free State learners felt significantly more protected, accepted and respected than their peers in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape.	7.3.2.3(a)
	The levels of SV were the lowest in single-race schools and the highest in schools where one race group was dominant.	7.3.2.3(b)
	The levels of destructive behaviour were the lowest in multiracial schools and the highest in schools where one race group was dominant.	7.3.2.3(b)
	Learners from single-race schools felt significantly more protected, accepted and respected than learners from multiracial schools and schools where one race-group was dominant.	7.3.2.3(b)
	The levels of SV and the levels of destructive behaviour were higher in the more affluent schools.	7.3.2.3(b)
	Learners in the less affluent schools feel more protected, accepted and respected.	7.3.2.3(c)
	The levels of SV in the urban schools and rural schools in this sample seemed to be on a par.	7.3.2.3(d)
	The levels of destructive behaviour were significantly higher in the rural schools.	7.3.2.3(d)
	Learners in rural schools felt significantly more protected, accepted and respected than their peers in urban schools.	7.3.2.3 (d)
	Learners felt reasonably protected, accepted and respected at school.	7.3.2.3 (d)
	Levels of SV were lower than levels of other forms of destructive behaviour.	7.3.2.3(d)
Actors	Learners from lower grades were more often the victims of SV than learners from higher grades.	7.3.3.1
	Boys were more often victims of SV than girls.	7.3.3.1
	Grade 10 learners reported the lowest level of SV as onlookers.	7.3.3.2
	Learners and staff members acted as perpetrators with a similar frequency.	7.3.3.3
	Outsiders were a bigger threat to school safety than gang members.	7.3.3.3

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	The grade 8 learners reported the highest level s of learner-perpetration, outsider-perpetration, and gang members' perpetration.	7.3.3.3(a)
	Grade 9 learners reported the highest level of staff member-perpetration.	7.3.3.3(a)
	Boys were more the perpetrators in acts of sexual SV than girls.	7.3.3.3(c)
	Teaching staff were responsible for 75% of the acts committed by staff members.	7.3.3.3(d)
Props	Learners sometimes brought weapons such as clubs, sticks, knives and firearms to school.	7.3.4
	The category of weapons that were brought the most to school and the most observed at school was clubs, sticks and similar objects.	7.3.4
	The props used most to harm victims were cellular phones and other electronic platforms.	7.3.4
	Fire arms and knives were sometimes brought to school and used against victims.	7.3.4
Purpose	The reason listed mostly for SV was to obtain money and other valuables, followed by racial differences, although both categories were indicated by less than 10% of the learners.	7.3.5
	Categories of reasons provided for SV were not applicable to most acts of SV.	7.3.5
Magnitude of the problem of SV	Nearly 50% of learners believe that SV is a problem at their school.	7.3.6
	Grade 10 learners were the least concerned about SV.	7.3.6
	Free State learners were the least concerned about SV.	7.3.6
	Learners from schools where the majority of the learners were from one race, with a small percentage of learners from other races were the most concerned about SV.	7.3.6
	Learners from no-fees schools were less concerned about SV than learners in more affluent schools.	7.3.6
	SV were perceived by learners in larger schools as more of a problem than by learners in smaller schools.	7.3.6
Act-scene ratio	The level of physical SV was the highest in the Eastern Cape and the lowest in the Free State.	8.2.1.1
	The level of psychological SV was the highest in the Eastern Cape and the lowest in the Free State.	8.2.1.1
	The levels of sexual SV were the highest in the Eastern Cape and the lowest in Gauteng.	8.2.1.1
	Deprivation was the highest in Gauteng and the lowest in the Free State.	8.2.1.1

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Psychological SV at single-race schools was significantly lower than the levels in the schools where the majority of learners were from one race and a minority of learners from other races.	8.2.1.2
	Psychological SV at single-race schools was significantly lower than the levels in multiracial schools.	8.2.1.2
	Sexual SV in the multiracial schools was significantly lower than in the schools where majority of learners from one race.	8.2.1.2
	Levels of psychological SV were significantly higher in more affluent schools than in less affluent schools.	8.2.1.3
	Levels of physical SV were notably higher in more affluent schools than in less affluent schools.	8.2.1.3
	Levels of sexual SV were similar in more affluent schools and in less affluent schools.	8.2.1.3
	Levels of deprivation were slightly higher in more affluent schools than in less affluent schools.	8.2.1.3
	Levels of physical SV acts were significantly higher in larger schools than in smaller schools.	8.2.1.4
	Levels of psychological SV acts were significantly higher in larger schools than in smaller schools.	8.2.1.4
	Levels of sexual SV acts were similar in larger schools and in smaller schools.	8.2.1.4
	The levels of physical SV were similar in urban and rural schools.	8.2.1.5
	The level of psychological SV was higher in urban schools than in rural schools.	8.2.1.5
	The level of sexual SV was higher in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.1.5
Agent-scene	Grade 8 learners experience destructive behaviour the most, while the grade 10 learners experience it the least.	8.2.2.1
	Grade 8 learners experience destructive behaviour statistically significantly more than grade 10 and grade 12 learners.	8.2.2.1
	Grade 11 learners experienced destructive behaviour statistically significantly more than grade 10 learners.	8.2.2.1
	Grade 8 learners feel the least protected, accepted and respected and the 10 learners the most.	8.2.2.1
	Grade 10 learners feel statistically significantly more protected, accepted and respected than grade 8 learners.	8.2.2.1
	Boys experienced destructive behaviour slightly more than the girls.	8.2.2.2
	Boys seem to feel slightly more protected, accepted and respected than girls.	8.2.2.2
	The level of SV committed by learners was the highest in the Eastern Cape schools and the lowest in Gauteng schools.	8.2.2.3

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	The level of SV committed by staff members was the highest in the Eastern Cape schools and the lowest in Gauteng schools.	8.2.2.3
	The Free State appears to have the highest level of SV committed by outsiders and the Eastern Cape the lowest.	8.2.2.3
	The Eastern Cape schools in the sample have the highest level of gangsterism and the Free State the lowest.	8.2.2.3
	The level of SV where learners were the perpetrators was the highest in schools where the majority of the learners were from one race, and the lowest in multiracial schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV where staff members were the perpetrators was the highest in schools where the majority of the learners were from one race and the lowest in single-race schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV where outsiders were the perpetrators was the highest in schools where the majority of the learners were from one race and the lowest in multiracial schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV where outsiders were involved in acts of SV was significantly higher in schools where the majority of the learners were from one race, with minorities from other races than in multiracial schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV where outsiders were involved in acts of SV was significantly higher in schools where the majority of the learners were from one race, with minorities from other races than in single-race schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV in which gang members were the perpetrators was the highest in the single-race schools and the lowest in the multiracial schools.	8.2.2.4
	The level of SV committed by learners was higher in more affluent schools than in less privileged schools.	8.2.2.5
	The level of SV committed by staff members was higher in more affluent schools than in less privileged schools.	8.2.2.5
	The level of SV committed by outsiders was significantly higher in less privileged schools than in more privileged schools.	8.2.2.5
	The level of SV committed by gang members was significantly higher in less privileged schools than in more privileged schools.	8.2.2.5
	The experiences of learners from larger schools and smaller schools with regards to staff members as perpetrators were similar.	8.2.2.6
	Learners from large schools experience SV committed by learners significantly more than learners from smaller schools.	8.2.2.6
	The experiences of learners from larger schools and smaller schools with regards to outsiders as perpetrators were similar.	8.2.2.6
	The experiences of learners from larger schools and smaller schools with regards to gang members as perpetrators were similar.	8.2.2.6

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Rural schools experience perpetration by gang members significantly more than urban schools.	8.2.2.7
	Rural schools experience outsider perpetration significantly more than urban schools.	8.2.2.7
Agent-act	Grade 8 and grade 9 learners experience physical SV significantly more than the learners in the higher grades.	8.2.3.1
	Grade 8 and grade 9 learners experience psychological SV notably more than grade 10 and grade 11 learners, but significantly more than grade 12 learners.	8.2.3.1
	Grade 8 learners experience higher levels of sexual violence than grade 9 and grade 11 learners and significantly higher levels than grade 10 and grade 12 learners.	8.2.3.1
	The levels of psychological SV experienced by girls and boys were similar.	8.2.3.2
	Boys experience notably higher levels of physical SV than girls.	8.2.3.2
	Boys experience notably higher levels of sexual SV than girls.	8.2.3.2
	Girls experience deprivation significantly more than boys.	8.2.3.2
	Definite correlations were found between the levels of physical, psychological and sexual violence and learners and staff as perpetrators.	8.2.3.2
Scene-props	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on were used to harm other statistically more in the Eastern Cape than in the Free State and in Gauteng schools.	8.2.4.1
	Cellular phones and other electronic media were more used in the Free State province than in any other of the provinces in this sample. This difference was statistically significant between the Free State learners in this sample and those from Gauteng .	8.2.4.1
	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects were being used statistically significantly more in the Eastern Cape schools than in the Free State schools as well as more than in the Gauteng schools.	8.2.4.1
	Knives and other sharp instruments were more regularly used in the Eastern Cape and the least used in the Gauteng schools.	8.2.4.1
	Firearms were used significantly more in Gauteng schools than in the Free State schools or in the Eastern Cape schools.	8.2.4.1
	Cellular phones were used to harm others at single-race schools more than the other race categories of schools.	8.2.4.2
	Perpetrators in schools with the majority of learners from one race and minorities from other races use their hands, feet and fists significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools.	8.2.4.2
	Perpetrators in schools with the majority of learners from one race and minorities from other races use firearms significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools as well as more than perpetrators from single-race schools.	8.2.4.2

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Perpetrators in schools with the majority of learners from one race and minorities from other races use knives and sharp instruments significantly more than perpetrators from multiracial schools as well as more than perpetrators from single-race schools.	8.2.4.2
	Desks and walls was used to victimise learners significantly more in quintile 1-3 schools than the more affluent schools.	8.2.4.3
	Knives and other sharp instruments were used comparably in schools with different economic statuses.	8.2.4.3
	Cellular phones and electronic media were used notably more in less affluent schools.	8.2.4.3
	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects were used notably more in less affluent schools.	8.2.4.3
	Hands, feet and fists were used notably more in more affluent schools.	8.2.4.3
	Fire arms were used notably more in more affluent schools.	8.2.4.3
	Desks and walls was used to victimise learners significantly more in larger schools than in smaller schools.	8.2.4.4
	Cellular phones and electronic media were used similarly in small schools and in large schools.	8.2.4.4
	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects were used notably more in larger schools.	8.2.4.4
	Hands, feet and fists were used similarly in small schools and in large schools.	8.2.4.4
	Fire arms were used significantly more in large schools.	8.2.4.4
	Knives and other sharp instruments were used significantly more in large schools.	8.2.4.4
	Desks and walls were used by perpetrators to write harmful messages on statistically significantly more in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.4.5
	Cellular phones and other electronic media were similarly used by perpetrators to send harmful messages notably more in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.4.5
	Clubs, sticks and other hard objects, as well as knives and sharp instruments were used as weapons by perpetrators statistically significantly more in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.4.5
	Firearms were indicated notably more in urban schools than in rural schools.	8.2.4.5
	There was some correlation between the level of destructive behaviour and most of the props listed.	8.2.4.6
	Knives and other sharp objects were carried as defence weapons more than any other weapon in Gauteng and in the Eastern Cape schools.	8.2.4.7

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Sticks and other similar objects was the most popular defence weapon carried by Free State learners.	8.2.4.7
	Knives and other sharp objects was the defence weapon most carried by learners from multiracial schools followed by sticks and other similar objects.	8.2.4.7
	Pepper spray and firearms were carried notably more by learners from schools where the majority of learners were from one race, with a minority of learners from other races than the other categories of schools.	8.2.4.7
	Sticks and other similar objects was the most popular defence weapon in single-race schools.	8.2.4.7
	All categories of weapons were carried notably less in the lower quintile schools.	8.2.4.7
	Knives and other sharp instruments, as well as sticks and other similar weapons, were the most popular defence weapon in schools of all sizes.	8.2.4.7
	Knives and other sharp instruments, as well as sticks and other similar weapons, were carried more in larger schools than in smaller schools.	8.2.4.7
Scene-purpose	SV in order to take the victims food and valuables were the highest in the Eastern Cape and the lowest in Gauteng.	8.2.5.1
	SV as a result of racial differences was significantly higher in the Free State schools.	8.2.5.1
	SV as a result of the victim being an immigrant were significantly higher in the Free State.	8.2.5.1
	SV as a result of religious differences were notably higher in the Free State.	8.2.5.1
	SV in which valuables and food was taken from the victim was fairly similar in schools with different race-compositions.	8.2.5.2
	Learners from multiracial schools in this sample reported SV as a result of racial differences more than schools with other race-compositions.	8.2.5.2
	Learners from single-race schools reported SV as a result of religious differences more than learners from the other variables, with multiracial schools scoring the lowest on this construct.	8.2.5.2
	SV as a result of the victim being an immigrant was significantly higher in single-race schools in this sample than in multiracial schools .	8.2.5.2
	SV as a result of racial differences was comparable in more affluent schools and less affluent schools.	8.2.5.3
	SV in order to take the victim's food and valuables was notably higher in less affluent schools.	8.2.5.3
	SV as a result of religious differences was significantly higher in less affluent schools.	8.2.5.3

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	SV as a result of the victim being an immigrant was significantly higher in less affluent schools.	8.2.5.3
	Food and valuables were more the reason for SV at larger schools, than at smaller schools.	8.2.5.3
	The immigrant status of the victim was more often the reason for SV in smaller schools than in larger schools.	8.2.5.4
	SV as a result of religious differences was quite similar in small and large schools.	8.2.5.4
	Racial differences were statistically significantly more the cause of SV in larger schools than in smaller schools.	8.2.5.4
	Religious differences cause SV notably higher in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.5.5
	SV over valuables and food also occur notably more in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.5.5
	A learner's immigrant status causes SV statistically significantly more in rural schools than in urban schools.	8.2.5.5
Agent-prop	Cellular phones and other electronic media to harm others were experienced similarly by learners from the different grades.	8.2.6.1
	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on were reported to be used to harm others the most by grade 9 learners, followed by grade 8 learners and the least by grade 12 learners.	8.2.6.1
	Grade 8 learners reported clubs and sticks to be used to harm others the most, followed by grade 9 learners. Grade 10 learners report this prop the least.	8.2.6.1
	Grade 8 learners reported hands, feet and fists to be used to harm others the most, followed by grade 9 learners. Grade 10 learners report this prop the least.	8.2.6.1
	Firearms were reported by the grade 8 learners the most, followed by grade 11 learners, with grade 10 learners reporting this weapon the least.	8.2.6.1
	The grade 8 and grade 9 learners reported knives and other sharp instruments as props in SV acts statistically significant more than the higher grades.	8.2.6.1
	Desks, walls and other surfaces to write on were reported to be used to harm others significantly more by girls than by boys.	8.2.6.2
	Cellular phones and other electronic media to harm others were experienced significantly more by male learners than by female learners.	8.2.6.2
	Boys reported clubs and sticks to be used to harm significantly more than girls.	8.2.6.2
	Male learners reported hands, feet and fists to be used to harm others significantly more than female learners.	8.2.6.2

Topics	Results pertaining to the schools in the sample used in the study	Reference
	Firearms were reported by the male learners as props experienced in the context of SV significantly more than female learners.	8.2.6.2
	The male learners reported others using knives and other sharp instruments as props in SV acts statistically significant more than the female learners.	8.2.6.2
	More grade 9 learners seem to bring weapons such as knives and sticks to school for defence, than learners from any other grade.	8.2.6.4
	More grade 8 learners bring pepper spray and firearms to school for defence.	8.2.6.4
	More boys bring knives and other sharp instruments, and sticks and other hard objects and firearms to school than girls.	8.2.6.4
	More girls indicated that they bring pepper spray to school to defend themselves.	8.2.6.4
Agent-purpose	Respondent from the lower grades reported SV to occur for the given reasons more than the learners from the higher grades.	8.2.7.1
	Racial differences seem to be the least reason for SV as experienced by grade 12 learners, and religious differences the most given by them.	8.2.7.1
	Valuables and food were the reason for SV more than any of the other categories of reasons according to the grade 8, grade 9, grade 10 and grade 11 learners.	8.2.7.1
	Male learners reported SV to occur for the given reasons more than female learners.	8.2.7.2
	Both male and female learners indicated that valuable and food were more the reason for SV than the other categories given.	8.2.7.2

While considering the insight into SV that I had gained during the analyses done in this study, I also needed to reflect on the strengths and limitations of this part of the study.

8.3.2 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The survey provided comprehensive data based on the experiences of learners as victims and onlookers in SV dramas. The learners reported on their own experiences, and the data is, thus, first-hand. The stickers that I provided to seal the questionnaires worked well to ensure the confidentiality of the responses. The various dimensions of Burke's pentad facilitated the unpacking of the data layer by layer while I moved towards a more comprehensive understanding of the situation pertaining to SV in the schools in the sample.

The two questions that are included in the questionnaire in order to test the respondents' level of concentration, enhanced the trustworthiness of their responses. The very high alpha-coefficient confirmed the internal consistency of the questionnaire, and the reliability of the responses.

Even though I reached a deeper understanding of SV dramas, through the analysis of the survey-data, I have to acknowledge that there are weaknesses in the study. I did not explore the views of learners as perpetrators, and I did not triangulate the views of the learners with those of other role-players such as staff-members and parents. This should be done in further research. Many aspects of deprivation and neglect are not included in the questionnaire, and reasons provided for SV are thus limited.

The use of an international questionnaire was both a strength and a weakness. It allows for comparable data in follow-up publications, but limited me to its items, even though I adapted it for the current South African context. In terms of the model of SV that I used, as well as Burke's dramatism theory, I propose some adaptations for further use:

- The notion of deprivation and neglect must be expanded to include deprivation and neglect in the context of developing countries and to include, specifically, the context of disadvantaged schools.
- Many learners did not respond to the second part of questions 31-42, and questions 92-103 (*who did it?*). The questionnaire must be adapted to make it easier for the respondents to understand.
- The reasons for SV was limited to 4 variables only, and should be expanded, based on the insights gained through the literature review done in this thesis, and through open questions.
- For items 92-103 "other staff" needs to be specified, as learners interpreted the term in different ways³⁶.

The findings in the study must not be interpreted beyond what it was intended for, namely to gain a deeper understanding of SV in South African schools. The specific nature of

³⁶ Although no space was allowed for additional comments or explanations, quite a few learners added their own comments at various places on the questionnaire.

individual schools must at all times be acknowledged. One of the Free State schools, for example, is situated in the Eastern Free State, not far from the Lesotho border, which influenced the level of SV as a result of the immigrant status. While these findings cannot be applied to all Free State schools, insight can be gained from the schools that do have immigrant learners. The trend that learners in the higher grades reported lower levels of SV could mean that they truly experience lower levels. However, it could also mean that they have become less sensitive to SV and therefore do not report it. I, therefore, plan, when I have the opportunity, to explore this new insight through a qualitative data study, in order to reach a deeper understanding of SV.

A number of notable correlations came to the fore in the analysis of the data, such as the notable association between levels of physical SV and levels of psychological SV and the correlation between the levels of certain types of SV and staff as perpetrators. These should be explored in studies that could shed more light.

So while I believe that findings from this survey contribute to what we know about SV and provide a way to know about SV, the insights are partial and should be seen as such.

8.3.3 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 I reported on the survey that I conducted in 11 secondary schools. The results from the survey that are provided in Table 64, and were discussed throughout these two chapters, are applicable to the sample of schools only. Aligned with Burke's thoughts, I do not suggest that the complete situation can be reduced to these variables. Neither do I claim that the results are "true for all time and in all places" (Krauss, 2005:29). The results did, however supply me with insight in the situation at some South African schools.

SV is a reality in South African secondary schools, and while there are certain contexts in which the prevalence of SV is higher, and others in which the prevalence is lower, it is a problem that education stakeholders should not ignore, deny or obscure. Individual learners experience various kinds of SV. Some learners are coming to school armed against their rivals. Teachers and principals themselves engage in acts of SV. And while, based on the relative low average scores on some aspects of SV, one could reason that SV is under

control, only an average score of 1 would have been an indication of acceptable levels of SV (i.e. no violence occurs).

In the last chapter of the thesis I juxtapose the findings from the media analysis, the literature review and the survey in order to make sense of SV in the South African context.

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 9: UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA THROUGH BURKE'S DRAMATISM

9.1 INTRODUCTION

SV is a complex phenomenon that is an adversary to the South African education system (4.4). The media regularly has articles on incidences of SV that occur in various schools across the country (2.5.1), and even in “normal” schools that never attract the attention of the media, SV is ever-present (7.4). Although it varies in levels of seriousness, incidences of SV consistently occur at schools (7.3.1.6). SV negatively affects learners’ social, emotional, physical and intellectual development, as well as their well-being, and many of these affects are long-term (4.4).

In many schools SV is normalised and stakeholders feel powerless to deal with the problem (4.4). Yet because SV is detrimental to teaching and learning at schools and it violates learners’ right to education in a safe environment, stakeholders have to face SV and take steps to deal with it (1.2; 4.4). This can only be done if SV is comprehensively understood, and in this study I set out to contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of SV in the South African schools (1.2).

Although I could have consulted many sources of information and stakeholders in order to try to understand SV, I decided to explore three categories, namely the South African printed media, South African research publications in peer reviewed journals, and South African secondary school learners (1.7). Numerous theories on SV exist, and in line with my assumptions (1.3), I chose Burke’s dramatism theory (1.4.3) as a framework through which I made sense of the information obtained.

Based on the demarcation of violence by the WHO and the context of schools, I used the following definition of SV (1.12).

School violence refers to any intentional use of physical or other force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group, at school, that either results in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. It thus includes any intended use of psychological power or physical force with the aim to harm another physically or emotionally. It includes manipulation and coercion as well as rejection, and can take place during or outside school hours, during class times and breaks, at school-related events (sport, cultural and social), as well as while commuting to and from school.

This research project consists of three independent studies, namely a media analysis (Chapter 2-Chapter 3), a literature study (Chapter 4-Chapter 6) and a survey (Chapter 7-Chapter 8).

9.2 FINDINGS

Each of the three studies is independent of one another, and each one rendered findings, which are too comprehensive to include in this last chapter (summarised in Table 9, Table 10, Table 11, Table 12 & Table 64). In this section I juxtapose the main results in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of SV in South African schools. However, I again provide the reader with only partial insight into the understanding that I gained, and as such, offer a mere glimpse or *reflection* of the reality of SV (*vide* 6.1).

I start by using the five dimensions of Burke's dramatism (1.4.3) to provide some understanding in the drama of SV.

9.2.1 LOOKING AT SCHOOL VIOLENCE DRAMAS THROUGH BURKE'S PENTAD

The five dimensions of Burke's dramatism are: firstly the act that took place, secondly the place where the encounter occurred, thirdly the persons who played a part, fourthly the items which were used to carry out the action, and fifthly, the reason for the encounter (1.4.3).

9.2.1.1 ACT

The first dimension is Burke's pentad is the act (1.4.3), and in the context of this study, the spotlight is on what happened in the SV dramas. While the *media* frames SV as mainly being physical (2.5.1.4(a)) SV has many dimensions (1.2). Although I focused on four types of SV,

namely physical SV, psychological SV, sexual SV and deprivation or neglect, (4.3.1.6) these are not the only ways of classifying SV acts (4.3.1), but they are in line with the WHO classification of violence (1.2).

Physical violence is common in South African schools (4.3.1.1; 7.3.1.1). The *media* regards physical violence as shooting, stabbing, kicking, shoving and other forms of assault (3.2.1), whereas, in the *research publications*, physical violence is conceptualised broader to also include hand-to-hand or fist-fighting, deliberately seizing, pushing and tripping, playing physically harmful tricks on others, using force to take something from someone, using an object to hit someone, cutting someone with a knife or other sharp instrument, and homicide (4.3.1.1). Although physical violence, sometimes, constitutes a single act, at other times the attackers keep on attacking relentlessly (3.2.1). In the *survey*, I found *inter alia* that fighting, pushing and shoving are common amongst learners, and that stabbing and serious beatings occur to a lesser extent (7.3.1.1). The *survey* also confirmed other *research* findings about some staff members in schools who regularly use corporal punishment, and who push, shove and slap learners (4.3.1.1; 7.3.1.1). This behaviour was reported by respondents from every one of the schools that participated in the *survey*.

I found in the *survey* that psychological SV is the most frequent form of SV in the secondary schools in the sample (7.3.1). In *newspapers* there is, however, limited reporting on psychological SV and, when it appears in an article, it is usually part of the context of an act of physical violence (2.5.1.4(a)). The *media reports* on emotional violence focus on verbal abuse, humiliation, intimidation and marginalisation (3.2.1) while in *research publications* it is more comprehensively explored to also include betrayal, blackmailing, cursing and swearing at the victim, displaying degrading behaviour, being insulting, stooping to name-calling, spreading rumours or writing insulting notes about victims, criticising or poking fun at a person's appearance, ridiculing someone, purposely opposing someone, teasing, mocking and playing tricks, using insulting or aggressive gestures and threats (4.3.1.2). Findings from both the *literature study* and the *survey* confirm that psychological SV is widespread in South African schools. Verbal cruelty is most common, but threatening words and behaviour as well as bullying regularly occur in schools (4.3.1.2; 7.3.1.2). I found in the

survey that learners are regularly exposed to being mocked, insulted, cursed and humiliated by peers and teachers (7.3.1.2).

In the *literature* it is clarified that sexual violence differs from other forms of violence because it is conduct of sexual nature (4.3.1.3). Sexual SV takes on many forms such as physical conduct, verbal harassment, non-verbal harassment, *quid pro quo* harassment, sexual favouritism, sexual victimisation and secondary harassment (4.3.1.3). In *research* exploring sexual SV, numerous acts of sexual SV are examined. These include the making of unwanted sexual comments, peeping while someone is in the bathroom or locker room, showing obscene pictures or sending obscene letters to someone, leering at or eyeing someone's body, spreading sexual rumours about someone, taking or trying to take another person's clothes off for sexual reasons, touching or trying to touch a person in a sexual way without that person's approval, sexually coming on to a person, unwontedly trying to kiss someone, making remarks about someone's sexual orientation, touching, grabbing and pinching victims in a sexual way, writing sexually insulting comments about someone, attempting to have forced sexual intercourse with victims, sexual assaulting and raping victims (4.3.1.3). *Newspapers* merely report on the more serious cases of sexual violence, which include deeds of sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, gang rape and acts that target the victim's private parts (3.2.1).

Research papers claim that sexual SV is rife in South African schools (4.3.1.3). The *survey* confirms findings by other *researchers* that learners are sometimes sexually harassed, by showing obscene pictures to victims, sending obscene suggestions, and through unwonted touching. Both the *survey* and the *literature* study reveal that sexual remarks are sometimes written about learners on walls and desks and on electronic platforms, and that some learners are sexually abused and raped (4.3.1.3; 7.3.1.3). While I found in the *survey* that sexual violence on average occurs less regularly than physical violence and psychological violence (7.3.1), the findings of the study reveal that there is reason for concern, because sexual violence occurs in every school that participated in the *survey* (7.3.1.3).

Intentional deprivation and neglect in the context of school is SV, even though these acts are not commonly categorised as such (1.12; 4.3.1.4). Instances of acts of deprivation and

neglect, which have been explored in *research projects*, include depriving victims of their belongings (stealing from them), depriving them of having friends (marginalising them), damaging their property, ignoring them and depriving them of their rights (such as the right to education, and the right to a clean and safe environment) (4.3.1.4). *Researchers* have not thoroughly explored deprivation and neglect as a form of SV (4.3.1.4), and I have only partially explored it in my *survey* (7.3.1.4). *Researchers* claim that South African schools deprive learners of quality education and a future (4.3.1.4; 4.4). Learners, attending the schools that participated in the *survey*, regularly steal things from peers and teachers, and they sometimes do this forcefully. Learners, intentionally, also destroy possessions of peers, and deprive victims from interaction with others by purposeful exclusion (7.3.1.4). There is limited *media* reporting on deprivation as a form of SV, and this is usually depicted as part of the context of physical violence (2.5.1.4(a)). The *newspaper articles* that are part of this study, focused on a lack of care and nutrition, on victims being deprived of their dignity through disrespect and humiliation, and on victims' possessions being taken from them (3.2.1).

The above information reveals that various acts of SV take place in South African schools. The many categories of SV are not mutually exclusive, but they overlap and are interlinked (4.3.1.6). Instead of pondering over the classification of the acts *per se*, I argue that the value of categorising SV lies in the awareness that it brings of SV being more than just severe physical violence (4.3.1; 7.3.1). The acts take place on the SV stage, where specific scenes form the backdrop.

9.2.1.2 SCENE

Burke's second dimension is the scene (1.4.3), therefore I examined the school scenes where SV occurs. *Newspapers*, generally, portray schools as dangerous places where SV occurs at all times and in all kinds of schools (3.2.2.1). Although some *researchers* claim that schools are perceived by many school actors as unsafe (4.3.2), the respondents in the *survey* indicated that they feel reasonably protected, accepted and respected at school (7.3.2.2). However, the levels vary in various school scenes (7.3.2.3). I found Free State learners to feel significantly more protected, accepted and respected than their peers in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape (7.3.2.3(a)). Learners in the no-fees schools feel significantly more

protected, accepted and respected than learners in the more affluent schools (7.3.2.3(c)). Learners in single-race schools feel significantly more protected, accepted and respected than learners in multiracial schools (7.3.2.3(b)) and learners in the rural areas feel significantly more protected, accepted, and respected than those in urban areas (7.3.2.3(d)).

The selected *newspaper articles* generally portray schools as partially possessing some kind of physical infrastructure to address SV and, although the specifics vary at schools, they may include features such as security guards, metal detectors and CCTV cameras (3.2.2.1). Whereas some *newspaper articles* portray schools as taking decisive steps against SV (3.2.2.3) others portray schools as being powerless in the face of SV (3.2.2.2). *Literature* suggests a variety of ways in which schools can strengthen the security infrastructure at their schools (5.2.1). The physical infrastructure was not explored in the *survey* but I did find that, generally, there are school rules prohibiting bad behaviour and violence. Learners believe that teachers help learners who have problems, and that they protect learners. Some learners think that teachers are fair, and they are comfortable talking to teachers about their problems (7.3.2.2). Schools are accordingly advised in the *literature* to tend to definite rules against SV (5.2.2) and to create support for the learners (5.2.4).

The *newspaper portrayals* of schools as places which are often the scene of unwanted and unsocial behaviour (3.2.2.1) are in line with findings in the *survey* (7.3.2.1) and in *research publications* (4.3.2). Both the *survey* (7.3.2.1) and the *literature study* (4.3.2) confirm that substance abuse (alcohol, dagga and other drugs) is fairly common in schools. I found, in the *survey*, that drugs are sometimes sold on the school premises by learners and outsiders (7.3.2.1). Furthermore, schools provide the stage for uncontrolled and destructive behaviour where learners frequently destroy objects at school, draw graffiti on walls, and damage school furniture (4.3.2; 7.3.2.1). Although the *newspaper articles* describe the tension in schools in the Cape Town area, and the vulnerability of these schools when faced with destructive behaviour such as gang activities and substance abuse (2.5.1.4(c); 3.2.2.4), the *survey*-data shows that these evils are also a problem in other provinces and in other school contexts. I found the levels of destructive behaviour to be higher in the Eastern Cape than in the Free State and Gauteng (7.7.2.3(a)). The levels of destructive behaviour are the lowest in multiracial schools and the highest in schools where one race group is dominant

and the rest of the learners are members of minority groups (7.3.2.3(b)). Gang activities sometimes occur at schools (3.2.2.4; 7.3.2.1), and I found that the Eastern Cape schools (8.2.2.3), the rural schools (8.2.2.7) and the more affluent schools (8.2.2.5) are more vulnerable to gang violence.

I found the levels of SV, in the sample, to be highest in the Eastern Cape school scene, followed by schools in Gauteng, and then the Free State with the lowest level (8.2.1.1). No other research publication, that I had access to, compared the levels of SV in these three provinces, and in the newspaper articles that appeared in the year I selected for the *media analysis*, I found the number of articles on SV in Gauteng notably more than articles on the Eastern Cape, and on the Free State (2.5.1.4(c)). This skewed framing could possibly misinform policy makers and education planners about which problem areas to focus on.

Newspaper articles describe scenes of racial tension at former white schools and the difficult circumstances at inner city schools, and at rural schools (3.2.2.6). In the *survey*, three schools were former white schools³⁷, and they were the three schools that indicated that they are currently multiracial. The *survey* data confirmed the perception created in the *newspapers* that SV, as a result of racial differences at these schools, was indeed notably higher than in schools with other race-compositions, but the differences are not at a statistically significant level (8.2.5.2). However, only 7,7% of respondents in the *survey* indicated race as the reason for SV, suggesting that while this is a problem, it is not the most noteworthy problem (7.3.5). The only inner-city school that participated in the *survey*, was the private school (7.2.2) and I found the level of SV at this school ($\bar{x}=1,5556$) to be less than the combined mean score in the sample ($\bar{x}=1,7051$). I furthermore found the level of SV in the rural schools to be on a par with the level of SV in urban schools (8.2.1.5). The findings in the *survey*, therefore, refute the *media* frames for inner-city schools and urban schools.

The details about the acts of SV in various school scenes (8.2.1) suggest that, while variations do occur, stakeholders should not accept stereotypes about safe and unsafe schools. Levels of sexual SV are, for instance, similar in more affluent schools and in less affluent schools (8.2.1.3). Although I acknowledge that the examination of the concept of deprivation was

³⁷ This information was verbally obtained through contact with the schools.

limited, the findings indicate that these levels are slightly higher in more affluent schools than in less affluent schools (8.2.1.3). Levels of sexual SV acts are similar in larger and smaller schools (8.2.1.4), and the level of SV in general is on a par between rural and urban schools. So while each context has its own realities, this study confirms that SV is a common problem in the many school scenes, with their various kinds of actors.

9.2.1.3 ACTORS

Using the third dimension of the framework provided by Burke, I examined the various actors in the SV scenes (1.4.3). All three studies clearly indicate that learners and staff members are the main actors on the scenes of SV. They are at times the perpetrators in SV acts, and at other times they are the victims or the onlookers (3.2.3; 4.3.3.1; 4.3.3.2; 7.3.3.3; 8.2.2.3). There are also other actors who sometimes appear on the stage, such as gang members, parents, community members, SAPS, DoE officials and other outsiders (3.2.3; 4.3.3.3; 7.3.3.3; 8.2.2).

The *media* portray victims as being, *inter alia*, boy and girl learners, principals, educators and parents, whereas the perpetrators mentioned in the *newspapers* include both boy and girl learners, principals, educators, parents and other adults, or young outsiders (3.2.3). *Research publications* similarly portray learners and educators as victims, onlookers or perpetrators (4.3.3.1; 4.3.3.2). The *survey* was however conducted from the perspective of the secondary school learners as victims and onlookers only. Categorising actors as victims, onlookers, and perpetrators is a complicated task. The *newspapers* have, for instance, drawn a specific frame of victims who retaliated and became perpetrators, and other frames where onlookers became victims (3.2.3). The findings of the *survey* reflect this complexity because respondents (victims and onlookers) sometimes bring weapons to school to defend themselves and, therefore, can engage in SV and become perpetrators (7.3.4.2). The distinctions between victim, onlooker and perpetrator are thus unclear.

In all three studies I found that *learners* act violently and disrespectfully towards each other. (3.2.3; 4.3.3.1; 8.2.2.1). Specific categories of learners are more vulnerable. *Research* showed that quiet complacent learners often fall victim to bullies (4.3.3.1). According to the *survey* findings, learners from grade 8 and grade 9 are more vulnerable than learners in the

higher grades of the secondary schools, though grade 11 learners are more vulnerable than grade 10 or grade 12 learners (7.3.3.1; 7.3.3.2; 7.3.3.3(a); 8.2.2.1; 8.2.3.1).

According to both the *research publications* and the *survey* boys are more often the victims of SV than girls (4.3.3.1; 7.3.3.1). In *newspaper articles* the gender of the actors is often not mentioned, but where it is, the focus is mainly on boys engaging in acts of SV, (3.2.3.1). While *research* suggests that boys are more often the victims of bullying and psychological SV than girls (4.3.3.1), I found, in the *survey*, that psychological SV experienced by girls and boys is quite similar (8.2.3.2). Boys however experience notably higher levels of physical SV than girls do (8.2.3.2). The *newspaper articles*, reported more on sexual SV happening to girls than to boys (3.2.1). However, the *survey* findings confirm the findings in other *research publications* that boys are more often the victims of sexual violence than girls (4.3.3.1; 8.2.3.2). Nonetheless I found in the *survey* that boys seem to feel slightly more protected, accepted and respected than girls (8.2.2.2). But, according to the findings of the *survey* girls, who attend the schools that participated in the sample, experience deprivation significantly more than boys (8.2.3.2).

All three studies focus on the learners who are the aggressors. The *newspapers* created two frames, one of the learners who act impulsively (3.2.3.1; 3.2.5) and the second of learners who are thugs and terrorise the school (3.2.3.1). *Research* suggests that learners with external locus of control are more aggressive than those with internal locus of control (4.3.3.1). Some learners have the ability to hide their unacceptable behaviour, and this prevents educators from recognising them as the wrong-doers (4.3.3.1). According to the findings of the *survey*, boys are more often the perpetrators in acts of sexual SV than girls, although girls also sexually harass boys as well as girls (7.3.3.3(c)) and this corresponds with findings in other *research projects* (3.2.3.1).

The *research publications* point out that onlookers often admire aggressive learners and bullies, and that these perpetrators are often esteemed and popular (4.3.3.1). The *newspaper articles* portray learners, who are onlookers, as being both scared and intimidated because of SV, or they are sometimes portrayed as bravely taking a stand

against SV and coming to the aid of victims (3.2.3.1). However, according to the findings of the *survey*, this courageous act seldom happens (7.3.2.2).

Although *research publications* show that *educators* are sometimes victimised by learners, as well as by principals (4.3.3.2), this kind of SV is neither mentioned in any of the *newspaper articles* that I examined, nor did I explore it in the *survey*.

Research findings suggest that teachers sometimes treat learners violently (4.3.3.2; 4.3.1.1). The *survey* confirms this finding (7.3.3.3), but also points to principals and other staff members acting as perpetrators in SV acts. The *survey* reveals that staff members comparably act as perpetrators in SV in both larger and smaller schools (8.2.2.6). However, staff members in Eastern Cape schools (8.2.2.3), in schools where the majority of the learners are from one race (8.2.2.4), in more affluent schools (8.2.2.5) and in rural schools (8.2.2.7) are more often the perpetrators of SV, than are the staff members in other schools.

Staff members are often nearby when SV occurs and, therefore, they not only play the role of onlooker, but also of decision maker. The articles in the selected *newspapers* describe teachers as often being scared and intimidated because of SV (3.2.3.3). The *research publications*, on the other hand, state that, although teachers often fail to respond appropriately to SV because they are afraid, some have also become rather complacent (4.3.3.2). The *newspaper articles* mention that educators are sometimes unprofessional or even corrupt (3.2.3.3), and the *research reports* state that teachers face difficult challenges in the current school system because of the behaviour of learners (4.3.2). The *newspaper articles* have produced yet another frame in which staff members take a stand against SV and come to the aid of victims (3.2.3.3). This frame was confirmed in the *survey* (7.3.2.2).

The three studies depict the various roles that principals play in the drama of school violence, where they are sometimes the antagonist and sometimes the protagonist. *Research* findings show that some principals engage in acts of SV (4.3.3.2) and the *survey* supports this finding (7.3.3.3(d)). The *newspaper articles* report that there are principals who are corrupt and behave unethically (3.2.3.2), and the *survey* also implies this (7.3.3.3(d)). The *media* study suggests that principals have a further role to play because they have to take steps to curb violence (3.2.3.2), and *researchers* have suggested numerous ways in

which this can be done (5.2). However, neither the *research publications* nor the *survey* explore this role. Two other *newspaper* frames, which were not explored in the *survey*, or in the *literature* study, portray principals who failed to respond to SV, and who were victims in acts of SV (3.2.3.2).

So far in this discussion, I have looked at learners and staff members as the two main categories of actors on the SV stage. The findings of the *survey* reveal that the frequency with which learners act as perpetrators, and the frequency with which staff members act as perpetrators are comparable (7.3.3.3). However, there are also other actors that are sometimes found on the SV stage.

The *media study* (3.2.3.8), the *literature review* (4.3.2) and in the *survey* (7.3.3.3) deal with the threat of *gang members* in the context of SV. The *media* focuses mainly on gang violence in schools in the Western Cape and, also, to a lesser extent on gang violence in schools in Gauteng, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape (3.2.2.4; 3.2.2.6; 3.2.3.8). The *research* projects have reported on gangsterism in KZN and Gauteng (4.3.2). The findings of the *survey* confirm that there is gangsterism in the Eastern Cape, the Free State and Gauteng schools. The findings of the *survey* establish that the level of SV, as a result of gangsterism, is higher in Eastern Cape schools than it is in the other two provinces (8.2.2.3). The findings of the *survey* indicate that single-race schools (8.2.2.4), rural schools (8.2.2.7) and less privileged schools (8.2.2.5) are very vulnerable because of the power of the gangs. However, according to the data produced by the *survey*, learners in large schools, and learners in small schools have had similar experiences with gang members who are perpetrators of SV (8.2.2.6).

The *media* frames depicting *outsider* youths consistently portray them as trouble-makers (3.2.3.7), and the findings of the *survey* support this view that outsiders are a serious problem in specific school contexts, such as in the Free State (8.2.2.3), in schools where the majority of the learners are from one race and there is a minority of learners from other races (8.2.2.4), in less privileged schools (8.2.2.5) and in rural schools (8.2.2.7). Other *researchers*, however, do not consider that outsiders contribute much to the problem of SV (4.3.1.2).

Researchers have not yet explored some *media* frames such as community members coming to the aid of victims (3.2.3.8), the positive frame of the SAPS in the SV context (3.2.3.5), the positive DoE frame where action is being taken to curb violence, and a negative DoE frame portraying a lack of will to eradicate violence (3.2.3.4; 3.2.2.7).

Clearly, there is an array of actors present on the SV stage, and they use a variety of props in these dramas.

9.2.1.4 AGENCY

The fourth question that Burke's dramatism poses (1.4.3) is *what was used?* The *literature* study, to a limited extent, explores the props used to commit SV and, points out that weapons such as firearms, are sometimes brought to school (4.3.4). The data from the *survey*, however, confirm suggestions in the *newspaper articles* that many props are brought to school and used during acts of SV. The *media* study and the *survey* reveal that some of the props are real weapons, and include knives and firearms, but that perpetrators also use bits and pieces of sport gear, and other equipment that learners usually have with them such as pens and scissors as weapons (3.2.4; 7.3.4). According to the *literature study* the school environment compels actors to be armed (4.3.4) and the *survey* confirms this finding because respondents indicated that learners sometimes bring weapons such as clubs, pepper spray, knives and firearms to school (7.3.4). Learners in lower quintile schools carry noticeably less weapons than learners do in more affluent schools (8.2.4.7). Learners in the lower grades of secondary schools, use and carry more weapons than do learners in the higher grades (8.2.6.1).

Although the *literature* (7.3.4) and the *media reports* (3.2.4) point out firearms as props on the SV stage, the findings in the *survey* suggest that firearms are less popular than many other weapons (7.3.4). Firearms function as props on the stage more often in certain categories of schools that are represented in the *survey*, such as the Gauteng schools (8.2.4.1), in schools with the majority of learners from one race and minorities from other races (8.2.4.2; 8.2.4.7), urban schools (8.2.4.5), more affluent schools (8.2.4.3) and large schools (8.2.4.4).

The *literature* study shows that weapons such as knives are sometimes brought to school (4.3.4), and the frame put forward in the *media* is that knives and other sharp objects are the most-used prop in SV acts (2.5.1.4(b)). However, according to the *survey*, although these weapons are popular, they are not the most popular of the props (7.3.4; 8.2.4.7). It does nevertheless are used comparably in schools with varying economic statuses (8.2.4.3). The *survey* data suggest that knives and other sharp objects seem to appear more often on certain school stages than they do on others. These schools include those where the majority of learners are from one race and the minority includes other races (8.2.4.2), the Eastern Cape schools (8.2.4.1), rural schools (8.2.4.5) and large schools (8.2.4.4).

According to the *survey* data, the category of weapons that are the most often brought to school for defence (7.3.4.1) and the most observed at school (7.3.4.2) are clubs, sticks and similar objects. These are being used more in the Eastern Cape schools (8.2.4.1), in less affluent schools (8.2.4.3) and in larger schools (8.2.4.4). Sticks and other similar objects are, furthermore, the most popular defence weapon carried by Free State learners (8.2.4.7) and learners in single-race schools (8.2.4.7). The *newspaper articles* do not mention blunt objects such as clubs and sticks as often as they mention knives and other sharp objects (2.5.1.4(b)), however, the *articles* do mention specific objects such as golf clubs, cricket stumps and cricket bats (3.2.1).

Research reports confirm the findings of the *media analysis* which specify that perpetrators use their hands, feet and fists in violent acts (2.5.1.4(b); 4.3.1.1). Although, according to the *survey*, perpetrators use their hands, feet and fists on a comparable level in both small and large schools (8.2.4.4), as well as in urban and rural schools (8.2.4.5), they use their hands, feet and fists more commonly in schools with the majority of learners from one race and minorities from other races (8.2.4.2), and more commonly in more affluent schools (8.2.4.3).

Not only are weapons used as props on the SV stage, but perpetrators also write cruel messages on everyday objects such as cellular phones, school desks, and school walls. The *newspaper articles* report that cellular phones are more often than not in the vicinity during acts of SV, when these instruments are used in various ways to victimise others, and onlookers also use them to capture photographs or videos of the acts (3.2.4). The *survey*

and the *literature* study confirm the usage of cellular phones on the SV stage (4.3.4; 7.3.4). According to the *survey* data cellular phones and other electronic media are used more often in the Free State province than in any of the other provinces in the sample. Perpetrators use cell phones and other objects more often to injure victims attending schools housing only one race of learners, rather than those attending schools with learners from more than one race (8.2.4.2), and more often in rural schools than in urban schools (8.2.4.5). Cellular phones and other electronic media are used comparably in small schools and in large schools (8.2.4.4). Respondents from the various grades indicated that all learners experience the cruel use of cellular phones and other electronic media to harm others in a similar way (8.2.6.1), but that these SV props are used against male learners significantly more than against female learners (8.2.6.2).

The findings of the *survey* reveal that desks, walls and other surfaces are used to write harmful messages on (7.3.4), although neither the *media study*, nor other *research* projects have included this kind of SV. Writing cruel messages in public places occurs more in Eastern Cape schools than in schools in the other two provinces (8.2.4.1), and more in quintile 1-3 schools than more affluent schools (8.2.4.3). The surfaces of desks and walls are also used to victimise learners significantly more in larger schools than in smaller schools (8.2.4.4) and also more in rural schools than in urban schools (8.2.4.5). Desks, walls and similar surfaces are reported to be used to harm girls more than boys (8.2.6.2).

Some props are the cause of SV. The *media*, for instance reported on an incident where a quarrel over a school chair led to a learner being killed (3.2.5). The reasons for the occurrence of SV are discussed in the section that follows.

9.2.1.5 PURPOSE

The fifth dimension of Burke's pentad is the purpose or reason for human action (1.4.3), and in this study, the reason why SV occur.

In the selected *newspaper articles* the frames depict resistance, dissatisfaction and conflict as some of the reasons for SV (3.2.5). The *literature* study partially confirms this picture and points out that the inability of actors to constructively resolve conflict, results in SV. The findings of the *literature* study further suggest that when actors are aggressive and bossy,

when they are unsuccessful or when individual actors suffer rejection, these factors sometimes promote violent behaviour (4.3.5).

Some of the *newspaper articles* also suggest that societal problems are reasons for SV (2.5.1.1; 3.2.5), and this view is echoed in *research publications* (4.3.5). Societal problems were not fully explored in my *survey*, and substance abuse and gangsterism were already discussed under the *scene* (9.2.1.2) and the *actors* (9.2.1.3). The *survey*, however, does focus on four societal problems as possible reasons for SV, namely: theft, racism, religious conflict, and xenophobia.

The reason for SV indicated by the respondents above any other listed in the *survey*, was to obtain money and other valuables, although it was indicated by less than 10% of the respondents (7.3.5). The selected *media* items reported a number of incidences where possessions were the reason for SV, and amongst these coveted items were a cellular phone memory card, and a cigarette (3.2.5). The findings of the *survey* reveal that SV, in which perpetrators take victims' valuables and food, seems to happen in fairly similar ways in schools with differing race-compositions (8.2.5.2). The highest number of instances occurs in the Eastern Cape schools (8.2.5.1), in less affluent schools (8.2.5.3), in larger schools (8.2.5.4) and in rural schools (8.2.5.5).

The *newspaper articles* depict racial conflict as a reason for SV (3.2.5) and *research projects* have explored this possibility to a limited extent (4.3.5). This was partially discussed in 9.2.1.2, following the *survey*. Racial differences were furthermore listed in the *survey* as the second most common reason for SV, (although only indicated by less than 10% of the respondents) (7.3.5). The *survey* indicates that SV caused by racial differences occurs in both affluent and less affluent schools (8.2.5.3), but it seems most of all, to be a problem in Free State schools (8.2.5.1) and in larger schools (8.2.5.4).

Research has shown that religious differences foster SV (4.3.5). However, the findings in the *survey* reveal that respondents do not consider religious differences to be a major cause of SV (7.3.5). Both small and large schools in the sample experience SV, which is related to religious differences, in a similar manner (8.2.5.4). Of the listed reasons for SV, it was the reason most pointed by the grade 12 respondents (8.2.7.1), while the respondents from the

other grades had different views. Although the levels of SV as a result of religious differences are relatively low, it was indicated as reason for SV more by Free State respondents than respondents from the other two provinces (8.2.5.1), more commonly by respondents from single-race schools than schools with learners from different races (8.2.5.2) and more by respondents from the less affluent schools (8.2.5.3).

Another reason-frame put forward in the *media* is SV under the pretext of induction (3.2.5). *Researchers*, on the other hand, suggest that homophobia and political intolerance leads to SV (4.3.5). The *survey* suggests that SV as a result of actors being immigrant are limited (7.3.5).

The reasons for SV are complex and one has to acknowledge that there are sometimes immediate events that trigger SV, but there are also more fundamental reasons for SV. However, data from all three of the studies suggests that in many cases SV is unpredictable and occurs without any apparent reason (3.2.5; 4.3.5; 7.3.5).

9.2.2 OTHER FINDINGS

The above discussion captures the main results of the survey, the media analysis and the literature study, pertaining to what is known about SV in South African schools. I also, however, gained other insights into how we know about SV in this study and want to highlight some of these³⁸.

The *media* plays an important role in informing the public about SV (2.5.1.3), and journalists get quick access to sources that are beyond the reach of researchers (2.5.1.3; 3.2). However the way in which the articles portray incidences of SV is often partial (2.5) and promotes civic aloofness and powerlessness and frequently lacks social critique (2.5.1.1; 3.2.3.4).

A large quantity of research publications on SV is available, but empirically driven knowledge is not keeping up with the demand for information that is needed to guide policy makers (6.1). Although most South African researchers endeavour to deliver honest and principled research (6.3), they hardly ever use social theory (6.5.2), and researchers often fail to

³⁸ The complete findings are summarised in Table 9, Table 10, Table 11, Table 12 and Table 64.

explore or state the philosophical assumptions that inform their research (6.2.3). This inhibits rigorous research on issues pertaining to SV.

Although many strategies are suggested (5.2), SV research in South Africa largely lacks empirical evidence on the effect of strategies that are applied to address the problem (5.3.2). The *media* reports abundantly on campaigns to curb violence, but fail to explore the effects of these campaigns (3.2.2.7). While I found one study in which a series of interviews were conducted with the participants, interviews are mostly conducted once-off (6.5.3), and researchers do not return to gain more understanding. In my own *survey* I only attended to the views of learners, and not the views of the teachers or parents in the issues (7.2). Such strategies hamper a deep understanding of cause and effect in the SV dramas.

I found that explanations by *researchers* are sometimes based on a very limited literature study (6.5.3). In the *media analysis* I found that reporters tend to use very few role-players as sources of information, and then they are mostly officials (2.5.1.3). Researchers generally record the views of victims and onlookers in *SV research*, and perpetrators are seldom heard (6.5.4). This was also the case in my own *survey* (7.2), because the questionnaire was designed to ask the views of learners on experiences in which they were either onlookers or victims. There is also very little interdisciplinary research on SV (6.5.4). All of the above shortcomings in SV studies and events intensify subjectivity and result in skewed versions of reality, not only in *media* reporting, but also in research reports.

Thus, from knowing the shortcomings described above, we are aware that those who inform us about SV need to be more critical of their own strategies towards understanding SV. At the same time I must acknowledge that owing to the sensitive nature of SV, and gathering knowledge about SV is very challenging (7.2.2).

To conclude: in the above section I offered the insights that I gained through the three studies. I acknowledge that the new insight I have of the problem is merely partial, and is my selection of reality. In the section that follows, I critically reflect on the research done.

9.3 REFLECTION

My long journey with this study is coming to a closure, and I have to ask myself, what have I to offer to the research community, and to the stakeholders in education in South Africa?

SV is complex and it has many faces, some of which are difficult to see. Therefore, newspapers give SV unbalanced coverage and, in this way, they fail to inform and make the public aware of this menace. Scientific knowledge is also partial. While the kinds of acts differ from one school context to the next, SV seems to occur in all schools in South Africa. Sexual SV is a consistent menace, and so is corporal punishment. In this study I refute stereotypical thinking about vulnerable schools, but I confirm that large schools in particular are susceptible to SV. While outsiders in various capacities are sometimes involved in these SV dramas, most actors are those that spend their days at the school. Learners and staff members are guilty of SV, although they are also the victims and onlookers. A number of role-players in the schools do not feel protected, accepted and respected. Weapons and other instruments are brought to school, and this phenomenon is not limited to certain categories of schools. While many reasons for SV can be noted, there is no single explanation for the threat of SV at schools. Most acts of SV seem to happen randomly, often in instant retaliation.

I, therefore, suggest to schools that they should make role-players aware of the many faces of SV, and regularly explore the state of affairs at their own schools. Every school should, furthermore, explore its own contexts to decide how they will continue on their way forward, how they will identify vulnerable actors, and they should take note of the relevant recommendations made by researchers to help them address their own reality. Schools from all communities should take steps to prevent any armed person from entering their school premises, and they must be aware of every-day objects that are used to victimise others. Above all, schools should realise that acts of SV can happen at any time and in any place, therefore they must ensure that there is supervision in all possible areas. I also suggest that schools should collaborate with the media so that authentic information is provided via the schools to the public, and reporters should have access to information from the schools. While there should be an increase in the awareness of the threat of SV, and safety measures should be put in place at all schools, steps have to be taken so that by

strengthening the support provided to all individuals in the school, role-players feel accepted and respected.

Although the media only provided partial information, it led me to gaining new perspectives that I would otherwise not have obtained. No researcher can immediately go to where incidences of SV occurred, and get access to the sources, thus, such media-data is valuable. Using a framing analysis to examine the portrayal of SV in the South African media, I believe, gave me new perspectives, and when I went beyond quantitative analyses with the framing analysis, more vitality was added to the study. However, the study has limitations because I used only newspaper articles and not data from other news media, and another frustrating limitation is my inability to access news reporting in all official languages of South Africa.

A questionable decision that I made was to limit the literature study to publications that focus solely on the South African context in peer reviewed journals. I made that decision, however, because I believed that I should focus on the South African context, and most books on SV do not have this focus. I undoubtedly did not access every single journal article published, but worked up to a point of saturation. Although the chapter on recommendations to change the situations in schools can be seen as a collection of suggestions already based on the literature study only, I could not find many empirically based articles with solutions to SV. Despite the fact that the commentary on the SV research agenda in South Africa partially reflects my subjective views on research, I do believe, once this study is published, it can stimulate discourse on SV research.

Using an international questionnaire in the survey had advantages and disadvantages. It allowed me to collect data without being influenced by either the current SV research agenda in South Africa, or by the biased reporting on SV in the South African media. However, some critical issues that are unique to the South African SV situation (such as deprivation, and incidences of SV because of political differences) were left unexplored. Because these issues are unexplored, I plan to adapt the questionnaire before using it again. The sample that I used in the survey was a non-probability sample, and that limited its potential to apply the findings to the whole population. Nevertheless, the survey provides comprehensive results that can inform role-players and other researchers. I do not suggest

that these findings are general truths, but that they merely represent the situation in some schools and, thus, provide partial understanding of SV. As such, this research project can serve as point from which to move forward to explore other specific areas.

I consider the use of Burke's dramatism as a theoretical lens through which I could analyse the data, as a strong point. It helped me to make sense of extensive data. From a positivist perspective a multivariate data analysis would have pointed out the two or three dominant findings in the context of SV, but Burke's framework prevented me from working in a reductionist manner and opened up the various dimensions of SV. I am convinced that this will open the way forward for qualitative studies to narrate the stories of SV dramas.

In terms of recommendations for further research, I made a number of recommendations for each independent study. However, I suggest that researchers should also consider exploring the media framing of SV further, by analysing the editorials as well as the letters in response to the articles and editorials. To make the public more aware of SV and its implications, an electronic platform could be considered, and this can be used to collect data on the views of the public. Newspapers express strong views about the role of the DoE in the suspension and expulsion of perpetrators, stating that the Department either adds to the problem of SV or helps the schools to curb SV. There should be further investigation into the perceptions and experiences of schools in this matter. I also suggest that newspaper journalists and researchers should explore the notion of educator-targeted SV.

Although the media plays an important role in informing the public and as such is a source of data, researchers must be aware that the reports are biased. Nonetheless, a framing analysis using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques of newspaper articles can provide a fresh way of researching education phenomena. This method could be employed in other research genres such as policy analysis projects to explore the way policymakers frame issues pertaining to contemporary education issues in policies.

The selected newspaper articles portrayed highly esteemed boys' schools as the scenes of unhealthy power relationships. The dominant boys practise their hegemonic masculinity through victimisation and barbaric initiation practices that are the norm at these schools. These power relationships in boys' schools warrant further exploration. Researchers

regularly conduct research projects on SV in a number of the provinces in South Africa. They should, however, also research SV in the Limpopo province, the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga.

Researchers should comparably explore the various types of SV to prevent skewness, and also challenge stereotypes. The aspects of SV that show a relatively high correlation in the survey should be researched in order to explore cause and effect. The use of various props in SV should receive attention, and so should intentional deprivation or neglect. Furthermore, I suggest that qualitative studies should be embarked on to understand SV from the perspective of perpetrators. Above all, I believe that a group of researchers should work collaboratively to collect comparable data, and work towards a meta-analysis³⁹ of SV in South Africa, while also working with various schools in a participatory manner so as to develop relevant strategies to curb SV.

In terms of the practice of research, I suggest that researchers should explore their own assumptions when embarking on a study, delve into and state their research paradigm, and be critical of their own work in resonance with the stated paradigm. I also recommend that more than one, or a series, of interviews should be conducted, following the example of Swart and Bredekamp (2009)⁴⁰. This will allow the participants to reflect on what was discussed in the first interview and discuss it in the follow up. This should provide a richer understanding of the phenomenon being researched.

9.4 CONCLUSION

Freedom and security is the right of every South African, and more so of the children of South Africa who attend schools to learn and develop skills. Yet this study portrays that the behaviour of learners, staff members and other actors refutes this right. Learners and staff members retaliate aggressively, purposefully victimise others, are obscene and ruthless towards one another, and fail to stand up against violence. This intolerance, indifference, disrespect, and unkindness has brought the education community face-to-face with its nemesis – school violence.

³⁹ Following the example of Myburg and Poggenpoel (*vide* 6.5.3).

⁴⁰ *Vide* 6.5.3.

In an essay written during the Second World War, the novelist EM Forster called for “tolerance, good temper and sympathy” if the world is not to collapse (*vide* page xxii). We are currently observing the collapse of the South African community, and specifically of the South African school communities. I believe that every education stakeholder should take up Forster’s appeal, and start building towards tolerance, good temper and sympathy to give the children of South Africa, and society, a chance to live up to the ideals stated in our Constitution.

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ADDENDA

ADDENDUM A: LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Dear Sir/Madam

Research Project: School Violence

I am a lecturer and researcher at the University of the Free State, involved in research on school violence. The aim of the research is to develop a deeper understanding of the menace of school violence in our schools. In the study a broad understanding of school violence is used, and it is not limited to physical violence. It includes **any deliberate use** of psychological power or physical force with the aim to harm another physically or emotionally. It includes manipulation and coercion as well as rejection, and can take place before or after school, during class times and breaks, at school-related events (sport, cultural and social), as well as while commuting to and from school.

One of the imperatives of the project is to establish the extent and nature of school violence in South African secondary schools. In this regard I want to humbly request you and your school to participate in the study by taking part in the survey. I guarantee that all the analyses will be aggregated so that your responses are kept anonymous and confidential. No person or school will be identified in the research report.

Participation in this project will simply mean the following:

1. You, as school principals need to provide me with specific information regarding the context of your school.
2. In order to understand the experiences and perceptions of learners on school violence, I request that between 50 and 70 learners complete the questionnaire. In some schools, this would be the size of one register class, while in other schools it might be two. I suggest that a Life Orientation educator randomly select one or two of his/her classes to take part in the study. However, participation must be voluntary and any learner who do not wish to take part in the survey, are free to return the questionnaire without responding to the questions.

I request that the questionnaires be given to the learners at the start of the LO period so that they can complete it in class, and hand it in. Not only does it fall within the scope of the learning field of Life Orientation, but the Life Orientation class will also provide a supporting environment to deal with issues relating to school violence. It is important that the learners complete the questionnaires under supervision in a safe situation, seal it and hand it in without discussing it with friends. If not, it could compromise the validity of the results.

The questionnaires are not numbered or marked. I guarantee that all the analyses will be aggregated so that individual responses are kept anonymous. No person or school will be identified in any research report. Do note as well that for confidentiality purposes, stickers will be provided. Each participant must fold the questionnaire double and use the sticky label to seal it before handing it in to you. I then request you to send the complete set of questionnaires back to me using the envelope provided.

I do realise that participation in this project will be an effort. However I believe that school violence is taking its toll on the education system that it compromises effective delivery of education. While I do not claim to supply easy solutions to the problem of school violence through this study, I do aim to contribute to the understanding of the threat of school violence in order to make certain recommendations on how to deal with situations in schools. In this regard I need your valuable input. I intend to follow up the survey with a safe-school project at some schools. However, first need reliable data to plan this project.

Ek vra om verskoning dat die korrespondensie en vraelyste slegs in Engels beskikbaar is. Alhoewel ons vertaling na Afrikaans en Sesotho oorweeg het, verander vertaling dikwels fyner betekenis, en sou dit die geldigheid van resultate kompromitteer.

Ke kopa tswarelo haele mona mangolo le lipotso li ngotswe ka sekgowa (English) fela. Ke lekile ho li fetolela Sesothong le ho Afrikaans. Empa ho bonahala hore phetolelo e lahla moelelo oa lipotso, 'me tshabo ke hore eka ama liphetho tsa liphuputso tsena.

Thank you, kea leboha, baie dankie.

Lynette Jacobs

JacobsL@ufs.ac.za

051 401 3421 (W)

051 401 9292 (Fax)

ADDENDUM B: LETTERS FROM EDUCATION AUTHORITIES



education
Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Enquiries: Malmene M
Reference: 18/47/19-2010

Tel: 051 404 6062
Fax: 051 447 7318
E-mail: malmene@edu.fs.gov.za

2010 – 05 – 11

Ms. L JACOBS
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Dear Ms. Jacobs

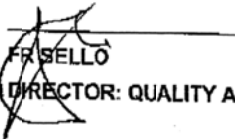
REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.
2. Research topic: **School violence: A Multidimensional Educational Nemesis**
3. Your research project has been registered with the Free State Education Department.
4. Approval is granted under the following conditions:-
 - 4.1 Principals, educators and learners participate voluntarily in the project.
 - 4.2 The names of the participants and the schools involved remain confidential.
 - 4.3 The questionnaires are completed and the interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time.
 - 4.4 This letter is shown to all participating persons.
 - 4.5 A bound copy of the report and a summary on a computer disc on this study is donated to the Free State Department of Education.
 - 4.6 Findings and recommendations are presented to relevant officials in the Department.
5. The costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. **You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing to:**

The Head: Education, for attention: DIRECTOR : QUALITY ASSURANCE
Room 401, Syfrets Building, Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely


F. SELLO
DIRECTOR: QUALITY ASSURANCE

Directorate: Quality Assurance, Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300
Syfrets Center, 65 Matieland Street, Bloemfontein
Tel: 051 404 8750 / Fax: 051 447 7318 E-mail: quality@edu.fs.gov.za

www.education.gov.za



UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries: Diane Bunting [011] 843 6503

Date:	27 August 2010
Name of Researcher:	Jacobs Lynette Ms
Address of Researcher:	6 Morgan Street
	Dan Pienaar
	Bloemfontein 9301
Telephone Number:	051 401 3421
Fax Number:	051 401 3421
Research Topic:	School Violence: A Multidimensional Educational Nemesis
Number and type of schools:	Fifteen [15] Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Not indicated

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management
Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0809 Fax: (011) 355-0734

4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.


The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Shadrack Phele MIRMSA
 [Member of the Institute of Risk Management South Africa]
 CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST: RESEARCH COORDINATION

27 August 2010

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.	
Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	31 August 2010

ADDENDUM C: LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE

SCHOOL VIOLENCE AS AN EDUCATIONAL PHENOMENON

We are conducting a study to determine the extent to which violence occurs in secondary schools in South Africa, and we ask you to please complete the questionnaire honestly. After you have answered all the questions you must please fold the document and use the sticky label provided to seal it to ensure that your responses remain confidential. Nobody at your school will be able to see how you answered. All the responses from all the schools will be added together. No individual learner's responses will be made known. **Please do not write your name or the name of the school on this form.**

*In this research project **school violence** refers to any intentional use of physical or other force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group, **at school**, that cause harm. This can either result in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. It thus includes any **intended use** of psychological power or physical force with the aim to harm another physically or emotionally. It includes manipulation, intimidation, bullying, cruelty as well as rejection. It can take place before or after school, during class times and breaks, at school-related events (sport, cultural and social), as well as while going to and from school.*

For the purpose of the study, we need a few details about you. Respond to the following question regarding yourself by providing the answer or marking it with a X in the **solid black** next to the question.

1. Your age in completed years (fill in)

2. Your current grade	8	1
	9	2
	10	3
	11	4
	12	5

3. Your gender Female 1 Male 2

We would like to ask you about the behaviours of other learners **towards you**. We are asking about what really happened to you, and not what you have heard about others. For each of the following behaviours, please tell us whether it happened to you at school **during the past 12 months**.

Use the following scale:

- 1 – Not at all**
- 2 – Rarely** (e.g. once or twice during this time)
- 3 – Sometimes** (e.g. 3 or 4 times during this time)
- 4 – Often** (e.g. once or twice a month)
- 5 – Always** (e.g. once or more than one per week)

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
4. A learner seized and shoved you on purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
5. You were involved in a fist fight.	1	2	3	4	5
6. You were kicked or punched by a learner who wanted to hurt you.	1	2	3	4	5
7. A learner used a rock or another instrument in order to hurt you.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A learner took your things from you by force.	1	2	3	4	5
9. You were involved in a fight, were hurt, and required medical attention.	1	2	3	4	5
10. A learner gave you a serious beating.	1	2	3	4	5
11. A learner cut you with a knife or a sharp instrument on purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
12. A learner threatened to harm or hit you.	1	2	3	4	5
13. A learner tried to intimidate you by the way he or she was looking at you.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Learners threatened you on your way to or from school.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Gang members at school threatened, harassed, and pressured you.	1	2	3	4	5
16. You were blackmailed under threats by another learner (for money, valuables or food).	1	2	3	4	5
17. A learner cursed you.	1	2	3	4	5
18. A learner mocked, insulted or humiliated you.	1	2	3	4	5
19. A group of learners boycotted you or purposefully excluded you and did not want to play or talk with you.	1	2	3	4	5
20. You saw a learner at school with a firearm.	1	2	3	4	5
21. You saw a learner at school with a knife.	1	2	3	4	5
22. A learner stole your personal belongings or equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
23. A learner intentionally destroyed or broke your personal belongings.	1	2	3	4	5
24. A learner threatened you with a firearm and you saw the firearm.	1	2	3	4	5
25. A learner threatened you with a knife and you saw the knife.	1	2	3	4	5
26. You were involved in a violent incident due to racial differences.	1	2	3	4	5

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
27. You were involved in a violent incident due to religious differences.	1	2	3	4	5
28. You were involved in a violent incident due to one of you being an immigrant learner.	1	2	3	4	5

29. I am reading and responding to this questionnaire carefully.	Yes	1	No	2
--	-----	---	----	---

30. How many times did you skip school in the past 12 months because you were afraid that someone would hurt you?	Never	1
	One	2
	Twice	3
	More than twice	4

In this part, we are asking you about the behaviour of other learners towards you related to sexual harassment. We are interested in what really happened to you, and not about the things that you heard from others. For each of the following, please indicate if it has happened to you **in the past 12 months** and on the same scale as above. If it has happened to you, **also indicate who did this to you**: A boy (B), a girl (G) or both (BG)

	How often did it happen to you?					Who did it?		
	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Boy(s)	Girl(s)	Boy(s) and Girl(s)
31. A learner peeped while you were in the bathroom or the locker room.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
32. A learner took or tried to take your clothes off (for sexual reasons).	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
33. A learner tried to "come onto you" (sexually) and made sexual comments that you did not want.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
34. Sexually insulting remarks about you were written on walls or school desks.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
35. Sexually insulting remarks about you were written on MXIT or any other electronic platform.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
36. Sexual rumours were spread about you.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
37. A learner tried to kiss you without your consent.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
38. A learner touched or tried to touch you or to pinch you in a sexual way without your approval.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG

	How often did it happen to you?					Who did it?		
	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Boy(s)	Girl(s)	Boy(s) and Girl(s)
39. A learner showed you obscene pictures or sent you obscene letters/messages.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
40. A learner showed you obscene pictures on his/her cell phone.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
41. A learner sexually abused you.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG
42. A learner raped you.	1	2	3	4	5	B	G	BG

Please indicate the extent to which each of the following regularly occurs **at your school**.

Use the following scale:

1 – Not at all

2 – A little

3 – Some

4 – Quite a bit

5 – Very much

	Not at all	A little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
43. Learners get into fights.	1	2	3	4	5
44. Learners push and shove each other.	1	2	3	4	5
45. Learners drink alcohol (beer, wine, etc) at school.	1	2	3	4	5
46. Learners use marijuana (dagga) on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
47. Learners use tik on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Learners use other drugs on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
49. Learners offer, sell or give drugs to other learners on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
50. Outsiders offer, sell or give drugs to other learners on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Learners destroy things in school, draw graffiti on walls, damage furniture.	1	2	3	4	5
52. Learners steal things from other learners or teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
53. Learners threaten or bully other learners.	1	2	3	4	5
54. Learners bring firearms to school.	1	2	3	4	5
55. Learners bring other weapons to school (such as knives, clubs).	1	2	3	4	5
56. The boys sexually harass the girls (make obscene suggestions, touch, peep).	1	2	3	4	5

Addendum C: Learner questionnaire

	Not at all	A little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
57. The girls sexually harass the boys (make obscene suggestions, touch, peep).	1	2	3	4	5
58. The girls sexually harass the girls (make obscene suggestions, touch, peep).	1	2	3	4	5
59. The boys sexually harass the boys (make obscene suggestions, touch, peep).	1	2	3	4	5
60. Outsiders enter the school grounds during the school day and threaten, harass, or get into fights with learners or teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
61. There is gang activity in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
62. Teachers or other staff members come on to, sexually harass or bother the girls.	1	2	3	4	5
63. Teachers or other staff members come on to, sexually harass or bother the boys.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Teachers or other staff members hurt learners (slap, pinch, push).	1	2	3	4	5
65. Teachers or other staff members use corporal punishment.	1	2	3	4	5
66. Teachers or other staff members curse, insult, or verbally humiliate learners.	1	2	3	4	5
67. Teachers give learners manual labour to do.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate how **you** usually **feel** at **1 – Strongly disagree**
school. **2 – Disagree**
 Select one of the following options: **3 – Neutral (I do not have a opinion about this)**
4 – Agree
5 – Strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
68. I feel safe and protected at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
69. I can trust most adults in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
70. I have close and good relationships with my teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
71. When learners have an emergency or a serious problem, an adult is always there to help them.	1	2	3	4	5
72. In my school there are clear and known rules against school violence.	1	2	3	4	5
73. My teachers are fair.	1	2	3	4	5
74. I am comfortable to talk to teachers when I have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5
75. I feel powerless in my school.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
76. My teachers treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
77. Other learners treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
78. When learners break the rules, they are treated firmly but fairly.	1	2	3	4	5
79. It pays to obey the rules at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
80. The rules at my school are fair.	1	2	3	4	5
81. Teachers do a good job of protecting learners from troublemakers.	1	2	3	4	5
82. In my school there are clear and known rules against sexual harassment.	1	2	3	4	5
83. When learners sexually harass other learners the teachers interfere in order to stop it.	1	2	3	4	5
84. In my school the teachers are afraid of the violent learners.	1	2	3	4	5
85. In my school learners play a significant role in taking care of violence problems.	1	2	3	4	5
86. Staff in my school makes efforts to involve learners in important decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
87. In my school learners participate in making important decisions and in making the rules.	1	2	3	4	5
88. I feel accepted and part of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
89. In my school it is important to win in sport.	1	2	3	4	5
90. I feel that my school support me to develop my potential.	1	2	3	4	5
91. My answers to the questions truly reflect my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5

In this section, we ask you about behaviours of school staff (teachers, principal, secretaries, etc.) towards you. We are asking about what really happened to you, and not what you have heard about others. If it happened to you, also indicate who did it to you. For each of the following behaviours, please tell us whether it happened to you at school **during this past 12 months.**

Use the following scale:

- 1 – Not at all**
- 2 – Rarely** (e.g. once or twice during this time)
- 3 – Sometimes** (e.g. 3 or 4 times during this time)
- 4 – Often** (e.g. once or twice a month)
- 5 – Always** (e.g. once or twice a week)

If it did happen to you, do indicate who did it to you (you may mark all three if it is applicable):

- T – Teaching staff**
- P - Principal** or
- OS – Other staff (secretary, cleaners, etc)**

	How often did it happen to you?					Who did it?		
	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Teaching staff	Principal	Other staff
A staff member:								
92. Seized or shoved you on purpose.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
93. Kicked or punched you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
94. Pinched or slapped you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
95. Mocked, insulted, or humiliated you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
96. Cursed you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
97. Made sexual comments to you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
98. Touched, or tried to touch you (in a sexual manner).	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
99. Tried to come on to you (sexually).	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
100. Showed you obscene pictures or sent you obscene letters/messages.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
101. Write sexually insulting remarks about you on MXIT or any other electronic platform.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
102. Sexually abused you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
103. Raped you.	1	2	3	4	5	T	P	OS
104. What is the magnitude of the school violence problem in your school?	A very small problem or not a problem at all.						1	
	A small problem.						2	
	A medium-level problem.						3	
	A large problem.						4	
	A very large problem.						5	
105. Did you bring any of the following weapons to school during this year? Indicate YES or NO to each.	Firearms (like a gun)					YES	NO	
	Switchblade knife, knife, razorblade					YES	NO	
	Brass knuckles, bat, club					YES	NO	
	Stick, board, rock					YES	NO	
	Other (Specify) _____							

THANK YOU for completing the questionnaire.

Please fold this questionnaire double and seal it with the sticky label provided so that your responses remain confidential.

ADDENDUM D: DETAIL ON THE SCHOOL CONTEXT, REQUESTED FROM THE PRINCIPAL

In order to understand the school context of the learners that are taking part in the study, I need a few details about your school. We want to remind you that all our analyses are aggregated so that all responses are kept confidential, and that no individual or school will be identified in any research report. Please do not write your name or the name of the school on this form. Respond to the question by marking it with a X or filling the response in where required **in the solid block provided**.

1. Number of learners enrolled at the school in this year (approximate)

2. Which quintile is your school classified in?

3. In which province does your school fall in?	Eastern Cape	1
	Free State	2
	Gauteng	3
	KwaZulu Natal	4
	Limpopo	5
	Mpumalanga	6
	Northern Cape	7
	North West	8
	Western Cape	9

4. How would you classify your school? (Mark all that are applicable and add any relevant detail under other)	An inner city school.	1
	A suburban school.	2
	A township school.	3
	A school in an informal settlement.	4
	A school in a rural area.	5
	A school in a city.	6
	A school in a large town.	7
	A school in a small town.	8
Other:		

5. What is the race composition at your school?	Single race.	1
	The majority of the learners are from one race, with a small percentage of learners from other races.	2
	Multiracial.	3

6. Do your learners wear unique (clearly identifiable) school uniform?	Yes	1
	No	2